



**Image d'une nation :
Marque-Pays
aux Expositions
Universelles**

**Image of a Nation:
Country branding
at World Expos**

Bureau International des Expositions (BIE)

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**Bureau
International
des Expositions**

BULLETIN 2019

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L' édition du Bulletin 2019 intitulée « Image d'une Nation : Marque-Pays aux Expositions Universelles » est consacrée au lien fondamental entre Expositions et diplomatie publique. Associant esthétique et fonctionnalité, culture et politique, tradition et innovation, utopie et réalité, les Expositions ont cette capacité unique à résonner auprès du grand public et à permettre aux nations de promouvoir leur image.

En créant des espaces publics axés sur la recherche de solutions face aux défis de l'Humanité, les Expositions sont d'extraordinaires vitrines offrant aux pays la possibilité de créer, de développer et de renforcer leur image sur la scène internationale. Elles forment un cadre qui favorise les coopérations politiques et économiques et sont des plateformes incomparables où chaque pays déploie ses réalisations, ses idées, ses innovations, son identité et par là même, son image. Chaque pays participant y développe un message faisant écho au défi mondial incarné par le thème de l'Exposition tout en reflétant son interprétation de cet enjeu et sa vision pour l'avenir. Le résultat est une rencontre singulière de pavillons exceptionnels, qui ensemble, font de l'Exposition un lieu de rassemblement unique capable à la fois d'informer, d'inspirer et d'émerveiller.

Pour chaque pays, participer à une Exposition est une occasion de se présenter au monde, de se mettre en lumière, de se distinguer de ses pairs, dans un contexte pacifique et sur un pied d'égalité ; les Expositions donnent la voix au monde entier.

Il en a été ainsi dès les toutes premières Expositions du milieu du XIX^e siècle, comme l'incarnait la *Rue des Nations* de l'Exposition Universelle de 1878 à Paris. Tout au long du XX^e siècle, cette tendance s'est accrue et s'est renforcée à mesure que de plus en plus de pays obtenaient leur indépendance et que le concept de puissance d'influence (*Soft Power*) gagnait du terrain.

Dans le contexte actuel de mondialisation, à un moment où certaines régions du monde ressentent une forme d'insécurité culturelle et tendent à s'éloigner du multilatéralisme, les Expositions se distinguent en tant qu'événements inclusifs invitant les pays à dialoguer, à coopérer, à échanger et à partager, avec les autres participants comme avec l'ensemble des visiteurs. Elles invitent les pays, en développant leurs réponses au thème de l'Exposition, non pas à se confronter à leurs pairs mais à se compléter, apportant chacun sa contribution.

Cette édition du Bulletin réunit des universitaires et spécialistes de Diplomatie Publique, de Communication, de Design et d'Histoire, ainsi que des praticiens expérimentés et reconnus en matière de création et de mise en œuvre de stratégies d'image de marque-pays au sein des Expositions. En examinant la marque-pays aux Expositions Universelles, selon différents angles et selon différents points de vue, cette édition du Bulletin révèle une multitude d'éclairages et d'analyses.

Dans une première partie, les auteurs explorent la manière dont les pays s'appuient sur les Expositions pour fabriquer et mettre en œuvre leur image de marque nationale au sein de la communauté internationale. Les premiers chapitres dépeignent sous un angle académique plus global, la théorie, le concept et la pratique de l'image de marque-pays au sein des Expositions. Ils reviennent sur l'histoire de la diplomatie publique et des Expositions, qu'elles soient Universelles ou Spécialisées, démontrant que leur lien n'est nullement un phénomène nouveau. Ils examinent

les enjeux et opportunités actuels quant à l'engagement du public et annoncent des pistes pour l'avenir alors que les frontières entre monde physique et numérique tendent à se dissiper.

Dans la deuxième partie du Bulletin, une perspective nationale est adoptée, examinant pays par pays, la manière dont ces derniers définissent et mettent en œuvre leur propre stratégie d'image de marque au sein des Expositions.

Retraçant les expériences de participation aux toutes premières Expositions comme celles plus récentes, ces contributions, études de cas et meilleures pratiques mettent en lumière les processus complexes nécessaires à une participation réussie, mémorable et inspirante, tout en soulignant ce qu'une telle participation apporte à leur nation.

Considérées dans leur ensemble, ces contributions offrent alors une vision incomparable du rôle essentiel joué par les Expositions dans la création et la mise en œuvre de l'image de marque des pays. Au sein des Expositions, chaque pays participant invite ainsi les visiteurs et le monde entier à une expérience unique qui constitue un élément clé d'un tissu narratif global plus vaste. Comme en témoignent les différents regards au sein de ce Bulletin 2019, c'est dans cette diversité de la participation que réside la force des Expositions en tant qu'instruments clés de la diplomatie publique au XXI^e siècle.

Preface

Vicente G. Loscertales
Secretary General
of the Bureau
International des
Expositions (BIE)

This year's edition of the BIE Bulletin, entitled "Image of a Nation: Country branding at World Expos", is dedicated to the explicit connection between Expos and public diplomacy. Encompassing connections between aesthetics and functionality, culture and politics, tradition and innovation, utopia and reality, World Expos have a unique ability to resonate with the global public and to advance the international image of nations.

By creating a public venue where a theme of international relevance is at the centre of discussions, Expos provide nations with a valuable platform on which they create, develop and project their image on a global scale. They are given an opportunity for political and economic cooperation and are provided with an ideal framework to promote their identity, their achievements, their ideas and innovations, and ultimately their image. Each participation is carefully designed around a message that both reflects major issues at the top of the global agenda, and a particular vision of the country in question. The result is a unique combination of remarkable pavilions, which creates an ensemble that is unrivalled in its capacity to inform, inspire and amaze.

Expos allow for the expression, on an equal footing, of voices from the whole world. They are an opportunity for countries to present themselves, promote themselves, and perhaps most importantly to distinguish themselves from their peers in a peaceful and non-confrontational setting.

This has been the case since the very first Expos of the mid-19th century, as manifested with the *Rue des Nations* at Expo 1878 Paris, and growing in importance throughout the 20th century as more and more countries gained their independence and as the notion of soft power became more significant.

In today's globalised context, where parts of the world are seeing feelings of cultural insecurity and a retreat from multilateralism, Expos stand out as inclusive events that encourage all countries to share what they can offer. In the spirit of exchange, Expos provide an opportunity not just to speak to visitors, but to listen to them and exchange with them. In addressing the theme, countries do not compete with each other but complement each other, with each pavilion making its own valuable contribution.

This edition of the Bulletin gathers experts in public diplomacy, country branding and history alongside practitioners with experience in preparing and executing successful nation branding strategies at Expos. By looking at the subject from different approaches and viewpoints, it offers a robust and insightful range of views and analyses.

The following pages explore the ways in which countries take the opportunity provided by Expos to reflect on and curate their national image within a global community. Beginning with an academic approach, the first chapters address the theory and concept of nation branding at Expos. The authors offer insights from the past by looking into the history of public diplomacy at Expos and demonstrating that it is by no means a recent phenomenon. They analyse recent challenges and opportunities in engaging with the public and also provide advice for the future in a world where physical and digital are increasingly intertwined.

Then, the second part of the Bulletin looks on a country-by-country basis at the concrete ways in which nations from around the world define and implement their

own national image strategies at Expos. Featuring the experiences of those who have been present from the earliest Expos to those whose participation is more recent, these articles, best practices and case studies shed light on the complex processes involved in preparing a successful, memorable and inspiring participation and what these participations brought to their nations.

Taken together, these contributions offer a fascinating insight into the role of Expos as highly visible platforms for country branding. Each and every Expo participant offers a singular experience that, for the Expo visitor and the wider world, forms a key part of a greater global narrative. As demonstrated by the different approaches laid out in this edition of the Bulletin, it is the genuine diversity of participation that underlines the strength of Expos as instruments of public diplomacy in the 21st century.







**Public
diplomacy
through Expos:
The nine
commandments
for Expo
pavilions**

Nicholas J. Cull

Some of the greatest successes in the history of national projection overseas have been accomplished by Expo pavilions: Finland’s presence at the Expo 1900 Paris was a spectacular ‘coming out party’ for the nation that predated the country’s independence from the Russian Empire by seventeen years. Weimar Germany’s pavilion at Expo 1929 Barcelona introduced the world to Bauhaus and created an enduring iconic modernist space and design. The United Kingdom’s wartime appeal to the neutral United States at the beginning of the Second World War built on foundations laid by the splendid British contribution to the Expo 1939 New York. The United States positioned its pavilions at Expo 1967 Montreal and Expo 1970 Osaka to perfectly promote that country as the home of creativity and a partner for the future.

Such successes beg the question of whether there is a formula of success. Certainly, unlike space technology, which proved such a draw for the United States in Montreal and Osaka, great pavilions are not themselves products of – in that favourite American phrase – ‘rocket science’ – but they do not happen by chance either. Successful pavilions are products of great design and looking at the recent and longer-term history of Expos, it is possible to isolate a number of lessons for future designers: nine commandments that a well-considered pavilion should incorporate.

1. Thou shalt listen first

Expo pavilions are a tool of public diplomacy, and public diplomacy, like all effective communication, rests on effective listening. Successful pavilions shine because they are in step with the tastes of the Expo-goers. Word of a terrific pavilion spreads and, whether or not it is a favourite of the global community of architects or local prize juries, lines to get in begin to lengthen and its message spreads. This kind of resonance begins with a process of listening: the pavilion team pay attention to the tastes and culture of their likely audience and design a pavilion that will meet the audience where they are rather than where the funding government might wish them to be.

Good recent examples of listening include Denmark’s pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai and France’s pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana. The Danes knew that one of the few things Chinese people knew about Denmark was that it was the home country of fairy tale writer Hans Christian Andersen and that their favourite landmark in the country was the Little Mermaid statue in Copenhagen harbour. It made sense to transport the statue to Shanghai for the duration of the Expo and build the pavilion around it. In a similar vein, the French began their pavilion in Astana with figures

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who were best known to Kazakhs: the writer and aviator Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and physicist Marie Curie.

Some nations are deft at shifting emphasis based on local opinion. In Shanghai, Israel presented itself as the country of Einstein; two years later at Expo 2012 Yeosu, the emphasis was more on the country of the Bible, which made sense in a country where nearly a third of people identify themselves as Christian. Notable failures in listening also include the Danes in Shanghai. The pavilion team failed to realise that the bicycles that also featured prominently in their pavilion at Expo 2010 were not seen as icons of the emerging green city as they were in Europe, but as relics of the 1970s in China, and moreover, that sending bikes with backpedal brakes of a kind unknown to Chinese riders would lead to broken bones. The miss-step led to days of partial operation and a scramble to find bikes of a more familiar design.



Top: The Little Mermaid statue in Denmark's pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai. Bottom: Picture of Marie Curie in France's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana.

2. *Thou shalt be relevant to thy audience*

Following on from listening, it is important to be relevant. That means selecting themes that engage not simply with the existing knowledge of audiences, but that might add to that knowledge in a satisfying and emotionally rewarding way. It made

American space technology on show at the United States' pavilion at Expo 1967 Montreal



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Beware of over-emphasising things that matter to you but are of limited interest to an outside observer

sense for the British pavilion in New York in 1939 to foreground the shared democratic heritage of the United States and the United Kingdom by making the centrepiece of their pavilion an original copy of the foundational legal document from 1215: Magna Carta. They added resonance by using the copy held by Lincoln cathedral, making a connection to the most admired of American presidents. The United States' pavilions at Expo 1967 Montreal and Expo 1970 Osaka worked with things that audiences already knew about the United States – its technology, art and popular culture – and

created immersive experiences to celebrate the best of that output. The Germans understood the appeal of their country's musical heritage to audiences in Japan and built their Osaka pavilion in 1970 around that. It was a clever extension of the declared theme of 'progress and harmony for mankind'. Sometimes, a detail can add relevance. The Israeli pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai included a wall thanking the people of the city for sheltering Jews during the Second World War. It is always nice to be thanked. The inverse of this is to beware of over-emphasising things that matter to you but are of limited interest to an outside observer. Poland has a history of sending representations of its history whether or not audiences are interest-

ed (witness the pavilions at Expo 1939 New York and Expo 2015 Milan). The Mexican religious art puzzled visitors in Shanghai who had no way to understand a sculpture of the Virgin Mary with a sword stuck in her heart until guides mentioned the contemporary monetary value of the gold leaf used in its creation. There will always be pavilions whose content appears wholly tone deaf and simply reflects the dogma of the point of origin. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran both fell flat in Shanghai, though the Iranian pavilion in Milan in 2015 did win fans.

3. *Thou shalt design both inside and out*

The processes of listening and ensuring the relevance of the eventual pavilion are two aspects of a wider process of design. The great pavilions have been products of experience and design both inside and out. Expos are associated with iconic host buildings, many of which have in time come to symbolise the city for which they were created – the Eiffel Tower in Paris; the Atomium in Brussels; the Space Needle in Seattle; the Oriental Crown (now the China Art Museum) in Shanghai. Some of the greatest pavilions have become equally iconic in their own right: the United States geodesic dome designed by Buckminster Fuller for Expo 1967 Montreal being the most obvious, though the pavilion created by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Lilly Reich for Germany in Barcelona has become an icon of design if not place. In recent years, especially well-remembered pavilions include the Dutch pavilion at Expo 2000 Hannover created by MVRDV, the Spanish pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai created by the Italian-born Benedetta Tagliabue with its walls of basket work, the British pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan – ‘The Hive’ – created by Wolfgang Buttress with its emphasis on sound. Foreign architects whose contributions have been recognised by local Expo juries include – perhaps embarrassingly – Albert Speer, whose Nazi German government pavilion in Paris in 1937 won a prize, and the Soviet architect Alexey Dushkin, whose Mayakovskaya underground station won a grand prize at Expo 1939 New York.

Germany's iconic pavilion at Expo 1929 Barcelona





Left: A 'talking' Benjamin Franklin in the United States' pavilion at Expo 2005 Aichi. Right: Virtual reality headsets in Georgia's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana.



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Successful interiors of recent years include those created by Germany for pretty much every modern Expo

Of course, a well-designed interior is as important as an exterior. Germany's Barcelona pavilion was as influential for its furniture as its architecture. Masters of Expo design include Jack Masey, the man behind multiple exhibits mounted by the Cold War United States Information Agency. Successful interiors of recent years include that of Austria at Expo 2015 Milan (a transplanted forest) and those created by Germany for pretty much every modern Expo, though some feel these err on the text-heavy side. The Swiss Pavilion in Milan managed a perfect integration of its external form and internal message. The prize-winning pavilion featured towers stocked with Swiss food products, the floors of which lowered as the products were consumed so the building metaphorically consumed itself.

From the days when the motion picture pioneers stunned Chicago audiences of 1893, Expos have featured state of the art display techniques. Pavilions introduced audiences to 'circarama' immersive motion picture projections in the 1950s, multi-screen displays in the later 1950s and 1960s, and high-resolution and IMAX formats in more recent years. Some recent pavilions have looked to blend movement and large format projection. Kazakhstan's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan accomplished this especially well. Others have sought to work with virtual reality. A talking 'hologram' of Benjamin Franklin was a centrepiece of the US pavilion at Expo 2005 Aichi. More recently, smaller countries looked to individual virtual reality headsets to transport the visitor to the midst of their landscape. A deft use of this technology by the Republic of Georgia at Expo 2017 Astana was an effective component and a little gem of a pavilion.

Big audiovisuals can sometimes be a trap. Some exhibitors place too much emphasis on an innovative format and not enough on the quality of their content. Canada has never fallen into this trap. Historically, Canada gained much from partnerships between its pavilions and the National Film Board of Canada, delivering excellent documentaries in astonishing formats at multiple Expos. A second trap can be the bottleneck that pausing to exhibit a piece of media places on the flow of visitors through a pavilion, and the feeling that some visitors might experience



of being captive and unable to explore a pavilion at their own pace. This was a major critique of the United States pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai.

Relatively small elements of design from some pavilions can have extraordinary reach. The best example is probably the uniforms designed by Mary Quant for the British pavilion at Expo 1967 Montreal, which launched the mini-skirt in North America. Sometimes, it has been the menu that provides the breakthrough: the Spanish pavilion at the non-BIE New York Fair of 1964/65 introduced the United States to sangria and in the process, helped to rehabilitate the regime of General Franco. Peru built its appearance at both Expo 2010 Shanghai and Expo 2012 Yeosu around its cuisine, and took a major step towards securing its position as one of the world's great gastronomic destinations.

The good news for exhibits is that well-designed pavilions regularly surpass well-funded pavilions in impact. Some low budget pavilions that shone in Milan at Expo 2015 included the pavilions created by Ireland, the Holy See and Save the Children. Sometimes the simplest and cheapest installation can lift the experience of the visitor to another level. The Chilean pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai included a 'well of the antipodes' into which visitors could look and see a screen relaying images of Chileans looking into their own well on the other side of the world. The United States pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana included a backdrop of the Hollywood sign where Expo visitors could pose for selfies.

4. Thou shalt not neglect a personal dimension

Amid all the attention to design, in an eloquent space full of stimulating materials it is easy to forget the human dimension. The experience of Expo visitors can often depend on interactions with pavilion staff. Since the days of Jack Masey, this has always been a strength of American pavilions. The United States has a tradition of hiring American students with local language skills to act as guides. The warmth of their welcome and their willingness to discuss the good and bad of American life and society has been a proven multiplier. The openness of the United States compared

Left: 'Breathe Austria' at Expo 2015 Milan.
Right: 'Well of the antipodes' in Chile's pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai.

well to the reticence of other countries that tended to hire guides locally or to field personnel with inferior communication skills. Nations that have mirrored the United States practice in recent years include the Russians who had excellent multilingual guides at Yeosu in 2012. Israel delivered similar personal results through technology at Expo 2010 Shanghai, by setting up video links in their pavilion so that Expo visitors could talk in real time to Israeli Mandarin-speakers located at home.

The personal dimension can sometimes raise unexpected issues. Elderly Korean visitors to the United States pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu were not always happy with the American guides of Korean descent. While their language skills were fine, they found the absence of the locally expected extreme deference to age to be disconcerting in someone who looked Korean. Koreans did not hold Americans of non-Korean origin to the same standard.

The most famous misfire of a human dimension was undoubtedly the decision of the Belgian Ministry of Colonies to represent Congo at Expo 1958 Brussels through a living exhibit of indigenous people from that country. A similar exhibit had been criticised back in 1897, but in 1958 the world balked at what was seen as a human zoo with visitors throwing food to Congolese participants. The Congo exhibit closed just a few months into the Expo.

Pavilion designers often foreground personal engagement through giveaways of badges or food samples and by installing interactive elements in displays. Path-breaking displays included the IBM computer from the United States pavilion in 1958, which ‘answered’ questions about the country. With this interactivity in mind, today, some pavilions work more like theme-park rides than old-style static museum spaces.

American pavilion staff welcoming visitors at Expo 2017 Astana



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5. Thou shalt not forget thine own pavilion

Historically, one of the great multipliers of a national pavilion's success is for the exhibitor to ensure that there is sustained interest in the pavilion from the home country. It is not enough to simply build and exhibit; real success needs ongoing evidence of a true national desire for a flourishing bilateral relationship with the host. The best way to demonstrate this is through visits of prominent citizens or even heads of state to the Expo. The high point of the British participation in Expo 1939 New York was the visit of the new king – George VI – and his young queen to the Expo. Their friendliness put the lie to American stereotypes of the icy Brit. Other examples of visits lifting Expo participations include the visit of Pope Paul to New York in 1965, or Jaqueline Kennedy and assorted astronauts visiting Expo 1967 Montreal. The Montreal Expo found celebrity guests to be something of a mixed blessing. Anti-Vietnam War protests overshadowed President Lyndon B. Johnson's visit, while French President Charles De Gaulle distracted from the message of the Expo by stoking the fires of Quebecois separatism with his famous cry of “*Vive le Québec libre!*”. It helped the United States pavilions in Yeosu and Milan to have visits from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

A standard feature of Expos since a long time has been integrating performers from participating countries to the pavilion or performance spaces: particular successes included New Zealand's great diva Kiri Te Kanawa at Expo 1992 Seville, and Canada's Cirque du Soleil at Expo 2010 Shanghai. Kazakhstan wowed audiences in Milan in 2015 with a sand artist who created shifting pictures of Kazakh scenes for each group as they entered the pavilion. Germany not only designed its pavilion for Expo 1970 Osaka as a circular concert hall to the specification of its greatest living composer – Karlheinz Stockhausen – but also presented the musician in residence, performing to over a million visitors during the season.

Left: Jackie Kennedy visit the United States' pavilion at Expo 1967 Montreal. Right: Germany's pavilion at Expo 1970 Osaka.

Left: Picasso's Guernica in Spain's pavilion at Expo 1937 Paris. Right: Space technology on display in the United States' pavilion at Expo 1970 Osaka.



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6. *Thou shalt be authentic*

Turning to the content of Expo pavilions, experience shows the special value in displaying authentic items. Like pilgrims heading to religious shrines, Expo visitors plainly crave a moment in the presence of an authentic object. Successful objects include the real Magna Carta and the British crown jewels at Expo 1939 New York, the real Little Mermaid statue in the Danish pavilion in Shanghai, Michelangelo's Pietà in the Vatican pavilion at New York in 1964, or the US Bill of Rights in Seville in 1992, all of which made an impact. The Spanish in Shanghai had the good fortune of being able to add the newly-won FIFA World Cup to their pavilion in 2010. For the United States, sending a moon rock to Expo 1970 Osaka was a sure-fire hit given that the Apollo XII moon landing had happened only a year before, but it took a more nuanced understanding of Japanese culture to understand that visitors to the pavilion would also be wowed by original relics of the legendary baseball player Babe Ruth. The exhibit included the Babe's uniform and equipment locker. Expo-goers, including Prince Hiro, were delighted.

Expo visitors have a nose for exaggeration and distortion, and Expos and pavilions that stretch the truth are hostages to fortune, and run the risk of being denounced. Some designs have deliberately sought to include a country's flaws. The United States' pavilion at Expo 1958 Brussels included a presentation about the country's racial problems (until the Senate intervened to close it down). The German exhibit in Shanghai included an example of a *Stolpersteine* or stumble stone, a small raised cobble stone set into the floor as a memorial to a victim of the Holocaust. Perhaps the most celebrated piece of work depicting a negative was Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, a painting depicting the horrors of the Spanish Civil War, which was commissioned as a mural in the Spanish Republic's pavilion at Expo 1937 Paris. Curiously, given its

status in the history of art, it made little impression of visitors to the Expo. Of course, not all authenticity is relevant. The British Government was widely criticised at home in 1937 for focusing its Expo pavilion on aspects of British domesticity, including handicrafts and a giant photograph of the new Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, dressed in a fly-fishing outfit. The controversy laid the foundation for the United Kingdom's attention-grabbing work at Expo 1939 New York.

For the United States, sending a moon rock to Expo 1970 Osaka was a sure-fire hit

7. *Thou shalt work with networks, both physical and digital*

One of the ongoing issues for any pavilion is the question of how it might connect to a wider community. Pioneering prestige projects overseas, Italy's Benito Mussolini developed his contribution to the Century of Progress exhibition, Expo 1933 Chicago, in concert with the city's Italian American community. The community raised money to raise a statue of Christopher Columbus that is still part of the Chicago landscape. Mid-century pavilions sought to extend their reach by hosting broadcasts and using the mail to distribute educational materials to schools. The British pavilion at Expo 1939 New York extended the reach of Magna Carta by mailing copies of it to schools.

Nations have used their pavilions as meeting points for trade negotiations and other exercises in outreach. Many of the pavilions at Expo 2010 Shanghai included especially elaborate reception spaces and their use as anchor-points for trade talks was part of the justification for their budgets. Beyond this, exhibitors have increasingly sought to use digital media as a multiplier of their pavilions. The websites of Shanghai had become Twitter, Facebook and other social media feeds in Milan. Sometimes the outreach has been physical. A number of Shanghai pavilions sent touring elements to venues beyond the Expo site. The staff of the United States pavilion in Yeosu impressed locals by taking part in voluntary environmental projects along the coast - showing a readiness to live the message of the pavilion of shared stewardship of the oceans.

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Poland's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan

8. *Thou shalt remember thy past*

The past is frequently invoked in Expo pavilions as they seek to revisit moments of cooperation or friendship with the host, or assert past national glories whether or not Expo visitors care (the run of recent chaotic Turkish pavilions fall into this trap).

Pavilions do best when they have the benefit of a dedicated supporting bureaucracy for pavilion creation and operation

The commandment to remember the past should focus on the history of Expos themselves. It is important that the work of preparing for an Expo does not take place in a vacuum, but with an awareness of the history and accumulated experience of the participant country and of other countries. Pavilions do best when they have the benefit of a dedicated supporting bureaucracy for pavilion creation and operation. Most countries find a way both to prepare for Expos long in advance and to retain knowledge and experience from the past. A major element in the ongoing success of the United States on successive Expo projects in the Cold War was the embedding of its Expo unit within the supportive bureaucracy of the United

States Information Agency. By this same token, a major reason for that country's under-achievement in post-Cold War Expos has been the absence, until recently, of a permanent Expo infrastructure and restrictions on the expenditure of government money on Expos. At the time of this writing, the United States Government is in the midst of an overdue attempt to rebuild its Expo infrastructure within the State Department, to arrange an ongoing mechanism for federal finance and thereby clear a pathway to a return to the tradition of excellence displayed during the middle and later Cold War.

9. *Thou shalt think of the future*

The final commandment for any pavilion must be to look to the future. Expos have always been festivals of the future, celebrations of the potential of human ingenuity, and places to see the latest technology. Great pavilions have engaged the future in two ways. They have understood the need to develop a legacy for their own exhibit. There is a history of governments commissioning great works of art for their pavilions and this work living on after the Expo. Picasso's *Guernica* is the best-known example. From the same Expo in Paris in 1937, the mammoth Soviet sculpture of a worker and a peasant woman with arms raised in shared struggle (Vera Mukhina's *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*) was shipped home for permanent display outside Moscow's Russia Exhibition Centre (it provided the logo of Mosfilm studios).

While host country buildings regularly survive Expos, to begin with, the survival of a national element of a pavilion was a matter of luck. Amazingly, a replica Viking ship, which sailed from Norway to the Expo 1893 – the World's Columbian Exposition – can still be seen in Geneva, Illinois, and Norway's pavilion – modelled on one of the famous stave churches – also lived on; equally remarkably, the Japanese tearoom from the Expo 1915 San Francisco was relocated and remains a landmark in Belmont, California. Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona pavilion did not even survive for a year but

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was lovingly reconstructed by Catalan architects in the 1980s in an acknowledgment of its significance.

By the second half of the 20th century, exhibitors aimed more consciously for legacy. The much-admired Yugoslav pavilion from Expo 1958 Brussels relocated to the Belgian town of Wevelgem. The frame of the United States pavilion from Expo 1967 Montreal lives in its original location on as an iconic exhibition space now known as the Biosphere, though it lost its acrylic skin in a fire some years ago. In the aftermath of Expo 1992 Seville, Canada donated its pavilion to be a trade school while Italy's pavilion survives as a business centre.

While some pavilions settle on an afterlife only at the end of the Expo, the entire concept of the British pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai included its ultimate fate. The United Kingdom conceptualised the entire pavilion as a gift to the people of China.

Top left: Violin-playing robot in Japan's pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai. Top right: One of the seeds in the United Kingdom's pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai. Bottom: The United Kingdom's pavilion from Expo 2015 Milan, relocated to Kew Gardens.

The design included a surrounding landscape shaped to resemble a newly opened piece of wrapping paper. The building was composed of 60,000 plastic filaments slotted into a cuboid structure, each one containing the seed of a plant preserved for the future. At the end of the Expo, the filaments with their seeds inside were dispersed to schools across the country as reminders of the Expo and the United Kingdom's connection to China. The United Kingdom also ensured an afterlife for its 'Hive' pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan. The building relocated to Kew Gardens in West London, where it became an addition to the national botanical collection. The United Arab Emirates has a habit of repatriating its iconic pavilions created by Norman Foster + Partners and making them part of projects at home. The country's Expo 2015 Milan pavilion is now part of a sustainable project called Masdar City. In an era focused on issues of sustainability and recycling, it is wise to ensure that a pavilion has enduring value of some kind and cannot be branded a waste.

But beyond the humdrum matter of the fate of a particular pavilion, Expos have regularly engaged the future of humanity. The importance of visions of the future should not be underestimated. Visions of the future have the ability to reassure, to inspire, to rally and, maybe most importantly, to wean humanity away from its most corrosive obsession: its past. Visions of the future are more than one way to move beyond global crisis; they are the only way to do so. The world's emergence from the Great War, the Second World War and the Cold War all required the articulation of a vision of the future attractive enough to inspire not only allies but adversaries, and much of those visions were regularly made material on Expo grounds.

Taken together, a well-designed national pavilion offers a country an opportunity to be known, and to open a dialogue with the citizens of the host country. The immersive experiences offered by pavilions provide a route into the consciousness of visitors of a kind that can only be matched by actually visiting the country, and which may even be more intense for their edited and refined quality, and for their ability to make an alternate future tangible. A wise country recognises the need to accumulate the expertise necessary to work consistently in this field and takes steps to pass the knowledge on within its bureaucracy. Diplomats need designers and do well to seek out their equivalent to Jack Masey and to cultivate and retain design expertise within the bodies responsible for mounting Expos, whether they are foreign ministries or cultural agencies. In a world in which a nation's success rests on its reputation with global public opinion, Expos remain a staple of public diplomacy and a sound investment in building reputational security.

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Further Reading

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Lloyd Morgan, C., and Masey, J., *Cold War Confrontations: US Exhibitions and their Role in the Cultural Cold War*, Zurich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2008.

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Diplomatie Publique aux Expositions Internationales : neuf commandements à l'attention des pavillons nationaux

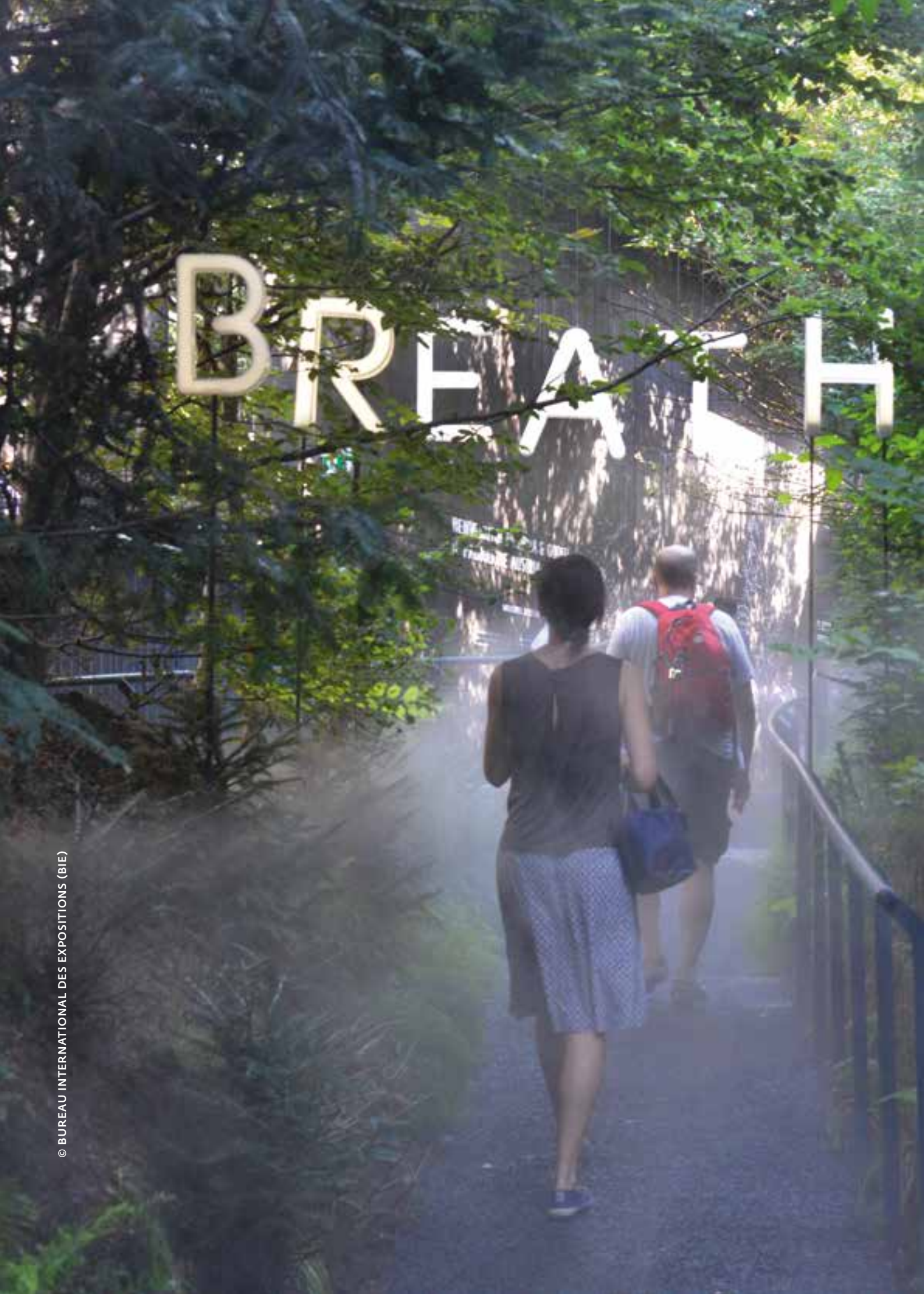
Au regard de l'histoire des pavillons nationaux au XX^e siècle, cet article définit neuf commandements susceptibles de contribuer au succès des pavillons des États participant aux Expositions Internationales, qu'elles soient Universelles ou Spécialisées, à savoir :

- 1) En premier lieu, tu écouteras ton prochain
- 2) Tu seras pertinent pour ton public
- 3) Tu concevras ton intérieur comme ton extérieur
- 4) Tu n'omettras point d'inclure une dimension personnelle
- 5) Tu ne négligeras point ton propre pavillon
- 6) Tu seras authentique
- 7) Tu travailleras avec les réseaux physiques comme numériques
- 8) Tu te souviendras de ton passé
- 9) Tu imagineras l'avenir

Cet essai conclut en soulignant la valeur des pavillons nationaux de qualité, à une époque où l'opinion publique mondiale détient la clé du succès international et où les pays se doivent d'assurer et protéger leur réputation pour l'avenir.

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BREATH



E

Experience marketing in building the image of Expo participants

Marcin Gębarowski

An underlying assumption of early marketing activities was that having a unique offer was a determinant for success on the market. In the contemporary world of the experience economy, this uniqueness is attached to products through enriching them with memorable experiences. An area that provides particularly favourable conditions for triggering senses are exhibition events, which stem from face-to-face contacts established by both exhibitors and visitors and the high diversification of means of expression used during ‘live’ presentations given at booths (at a traditional trade fair) or in national pavilions (during Expos).

Seeking effective forms of interaction with customers whose everyday lives have become faster and faster and who are affected by more and more stimuli led to the development of a marketing concept that is focused mainly on creating memorable experiences. Developing and offering extraordinary experiences is currently considered to be a new dimension of branding. Practitioners need an understanding of what is encapsulated in the essence of customers’ experiences and what are determinants for effective marketing activities based on experiences. Without this knowledge, we tend to rely too much on intuition and leave too much to chance. Therefore, customers’ experiences become more and more frequently a major point of reference in contemporary business.

It is believed that experience is not as well-established as other constructs and phenomena in the areas of consumer behaviour and marketing. Although we have learned a lot about this new and exciting topic, judging by the number of articles and books published over the last two decades, theory and marketing research on experience is still relatively underdeveloped.¹ Very few publications combine trade fairs with visitors’ experiences and only in rare instances mention is given to the application of the experience marketing concept to Expos. It is thus necessary to raise the awareness of people interested in Expos with regard to conditions and principles for creating extraordinary experiences for Expo visitors. And reading this paper is supposed to be beneficial in achieving that aim.

“I experience, therefore I am”

It was in 1999 that Schmitt signalled the emergence of a revolution which changed the face of market activity forever.² As a consequence of this revolution, which arose from the growing importance of the customer experience, the principles and models of traditional marketing became, to a large extent, out-of-date. Hence, the current approach that is based on a feature-and-benefit relationship must be replaced with experience marketing. This stems from the fact that contemporary customers



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Germany's pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu

consider marketing activities they have known so far to be obvious and do not commit them to memory.

Contemporaneously, Pine and Gilmore announced that the fourth stage of economic development, which they referred to as the experience economy, emerged. According to the authors of a book entitled *Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage*, we are currently living in a reality where experiences are becoming the predominant economic offering. This reality supplanted the service economy that flowered in the latter half of the 20th century. The service economy in turn superseded the industrial economy, which itself displaced the agrarian economy. Experiences are what people want, and therefore what companies must offer.³ Pine and Gilmore claimed that “commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, and experiences memorable”.⁴ The exhibition industry should be perceived as an important area of the experience economy. This is because all the important aspects of customer experiences could be easily found in the activity of exhibitors.⁵

Customer experience is a term which is hard to define. Taking into consideration the uniqueness of exhibition events, it

Experiences are inherently personal, existing only in the mind of an individual

can be assumed that an experience is something that happens in people's minds, it is determined by external stimuli and elaborated via the mental awareness that people have from earlier experiences, mental needs and personal strategies.⁶ An experience is often created while observing an event directly or taking an active part in it. Experiences are inherently personal, existing only in the mind of an individual who has been engaged on an emotional, physical, intellectual, or even spiritual level. Thus, no two people can have the same experience.⁷

A distinguishing characteristic of the experience economy is that customers very often seek strong feelings and emotions. They expect their imagination to be ignited continuously, amazing feelings to be aroused and entertainment to be enjoyed. To paraphrase Descartes, the major reason behind contemporary behaviour of purchasers can be expressed as "I experience, therefore I am". An ability of delivering planned and unique experiences must thus be currently perceived as a basic source of competitive advantage. Adopting the viewpoint of the experience economy causes a shift in focus for branding by concentrating meticulous attention on customer experiences and perceiving them as the root of all marketing activities.

Clockwise from top left: Smell - Slow food pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan, Sight - Monaco's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana, Touch - Denmark's pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu, Taste - Expo 2012 Yeosu



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It's time for experience marketing!

As a result of the aforementioned market changes, a new approach of marketing has emerged, experience (or experiential) marketing, focusing on the consumer experience in a holistic and coherent way. This type of marketing is perceived as the art of creating experiences, whose goal is to connect a brand with customers by using credible and important experiences for individuals.⁸

It must be noted that this new approach entails placing focus on customers' experiences alone, rather than on specific actions that aim to appeal to senses. This results from a methodical, strategic dimension of how interconnected experiences are tackled. Therefore, it is not only a question of the forms of marketing activity considerably stimulating senses, but also of the effect in the form of coherent experiences that are significant to customers (and remain etched on their memory for a long time).

Experience marketing is referred to as a growing trend, marketing's most contemporary orientation and the dominant marketing tool of the future.⁹ However, it must be noted that experience marketing is more complex than traditional marketing, requiring managers to complement their skills with creativity and innovation, talents which are typical of performers and artists, together with planning abilities, attention to detail and coordination skills.¹⁰ Nevertheless, it is worth making efforts to develop managerial competences, since compliance with the rules of experience marketing makes it possible to prepare exhibitors' presentations in a manner that is adequate for contemporary customers' expectations.

What is a well-designed experience?

In simple terms, it can be assumed that a well-designed experience is one which comprises proper components, is of a holistic nature and is co-created by customers. Also, it is important to apply triggers in a moderate way in order not to dispel the sensory perception of the recipients of marketing activities.

Poulsson and Kale argued that if contact with a brand is to be labelled as an experience, one or more of the following sensations and feelings need to be apprehended by the customer: personal relevance, novelty, surprise, learning, and engagement.¹¹ As supplementary elements of this proposal and essential realms of experience, one should also refer to entertainment and escapism.

Experiences will be remembered if they are of emotional significance to customers. Contrary to views adopted previously, which pointed to rationale behind consumer decisions, nowadays it is believed that emotions are of paramount importance when purchasing products. In experience marketing, it is thus relevant to take into account the emotional commitment of the recipients of marketing activities. Nevertheless, one should be aware of what emotions are desirable and how to evoke them.

It is important to apply triggers in a moderate way in order not to dispel the sensory perception of the recipients of marketing activities



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Angola's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan

It is important when senses are triggered in a holistic manner. We can then observe multisensory brand-experience. The synergy effect arises among various senses, because several triggers act concurrently, bringing more benefits than the sum of the effects of all factors operating individually. A multisensory approach in an application dimension entails supplementing two communication channels that are the most frequently used (sight and hearing) with stimuli triggering the sense of touch, smell and taste. The research confirms that the more positive the synergy established between senses, the stronger the connection is made between brand and customer.¹² Furthermore, the holistic nature of experiences makes them difficult to be reproduced by competitors – unlike many contemporary products and promotional activities.

When designing an experience for a given brand, a co-creation view should be adopted. This is because it is essential to enable the customer to co-create experiences. Consequently, they become customised and have greater value. Having considered this recommendation, contemporary customers, including people visiting Expos, should not be seen as the passive recipients of marketing activities, but as active individuals who desire to get involved in mutual interactions.

When planning new experiences, it is worth using a sustainable approach. If too many strong triggers appealing to customers' senses are utilised in one place and time, they can experience sensory-overload. In such a situation, experiences provided will overwhelm the receivers' perception. This remark seems to be particularly

reasonable in relation to exhibition events, which give exhibitors an opportunity for providing diversified and intensive triggers while talking about their offers during 'live' presentations.

The need for customer experience management

Nowadays, it is believed that positive experiences that the recipients of marketing activities have in relation to a brand must be perceived as one of the key assets of an organisation. This is an intangible asset, which should be managed properly – that is to say, in a manner which will make it possible to gain advantage over competitors. Such an approach is thoroughly different from the traditional management of tangible and financial assets, and its foundations should stem from the CEM (Customer Experience Management) concept. This concept entails providing intended experiences in an integrated manner to each customer, while taking into consideration the long-term assumptions of creating an image of a given brand and relying on acquired knowledge of the offer, customers and competitors. Experience management utilises several communication channels (for example, the mass media, the Internet, exhibition events) and operates on numerous planes of interaction (sensorial, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and relational). Where such a complex process of creating experiences is to be coordinated, the key requirements are coherence and consistency in actions.

For the CEM concept, customer experience is considered comprehensively, as a cumulative effect of numerous contacts with a given brand in a long-term perspective. However, this also refers to such contacts which are not planned by the brand owner. Hence it is necessary to intentionally design, shape, utilise and control as many experiences which are created during the customer's contact with a given brand as possible. Every moment when experiences are created is referred to as a touch point. Such touch points include, among other things, all types of advertisements, product attributes, points of sale in which goods or services are provided, customer service points, the appearance and behaviour of salespeople, contact established through a call centre, contents available on a website, profiles in social media.

In the national branding process, one of these touch points includes a presentation given by a country during an Expo. Experiences that have been designed for an exhibition held in a national pavilion should support a concept framed for a long-term horizon to build an exhibiting country's brand, which means that coherence between these experiences and communications given outside Expo through various forms of promotional activity should be maintained.

Palette of human senses

In experience marketing, it is of key importance to understand how triggers reach people, how customers interpret these triggers and how they impact the way we perceive a brand. This is because everything that appears in customers' minds is the

*People understand their world
mainly by looking at it*

result of their senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch – being appealed to. Each brand (including also a country's brand) must incorporate sensory appeals specific to its features.¹³

The sense which plays the most influential role in the process of people's perception of the world is sight. And as far as branding is concerned, sight should be also considered to be the most important. About 70 per cent of the body's sense receptors are in our eyes. To a large degree, people understand their world mainly by looking at it.¹⁴ Approximately one quarter of the human brain is involved in the seeing process. This level of engagement is much bigger than in the case of all the other senses. Colours serve crucial functions in marketing – they evoke specific emotions and teach by making associations with a given brand stronger. Nevertheless, preferences regarding colours depend on sex (women's sight is more sensitive and they are able to recognise more colours) and change with age (the peak of people's sensitivity to visual experiences is between 15 and 30 years of age). During exhibition events, it is the colours of a booth or a national pavilion that attract visitors' attention and immediately evoke their associations with the exhibitor's brand.

In a similar manner as the visual system makes it possible to distinguish between colours, forms and depths, the auditory system identifies different qualities of sounds within the complex signals it receives (such as tones, colour and flexions of the voice, volume, rhythm). All the complex functions of the auditory cognition are located in the cortical part of the brain. However, some processes of sound focalisation take place in the ears.¹⁵ Music makes it possible, first and foremost, to appeal (often subconsciously) to emotions experienced by customers. When sounds are used in a well-thought-out manner, they allow for creating a positive state of mind, including, for example, feelings: happiness, pleasure, amusement, romanticism, nostalgia. It is assumed that music evokes a mood that is directly transferable to a brand. Auditory stimuli, such as music, words or voices, touch an individual at a deeper emotional level than visual or tactile stimuli.¹⁶ It is worth mentioning that a characteristic musical phrase can be an element of a brand (similarly as in the case of a name, a graphic mark, an arrangement of colours, or an advertising slogan).

It is assumed that the sense that was of the greatest significance for the survival of mankind was smell. In the smelling process, the oldest (in terms of human evolution) part of the human brain is activated. Nevertheless, barely 1 per cent of the brain is involved in detecting smell. A base array includes 400 fragrance notes. However, for the purpose of marketing activities, individualised compositions are also designed. Fragrance can be a distinctive feature of a brand, which is the case for certain store chains. The pleasant scent serves as a special "memory marker" that gives brands distinctiveness.¹⁷ The problem is, however, that it is difficult to compose a scent which could be pleasant for every customer, since smelling fragrances is to a large extent subjective in its very nature. Specially selected aromatic compositions can be used to exert influence on customers' behaviour, create an exceptional atmosphere and evoke specific associations in a given place (including also in an Expo pavilion).

Another sense is taste. The average adult has approximately 10,000 taste buds that are able to detect the chemical constituents of food and beverages. Taste buds



The United Kingdom's touch-sensitive pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana

are grouped according to themes (salt, sour, sweet and bitter) at various locations inside the mouth.¹⁸ People's taste is closely related to the sense of smell (many taste perceptions are actually smell perceptions). Both of them are the only senses which in order to be activated need direct contact with particles of a stimulus. The five basic taste sensations are salty, sour, sweet, bitter and umami (described as a savoury flavour found for instance in mushrooms or seafood). The concept of "taste" is effectively an expression for the individual's supreme sensory experience, as what is eaten and drunk is seen as the whole experience of a product (even its smell, sound, appearance, and texture).¹⁹ This is why the sense of taste plays a pivotal role in marketing, and particularly in place marketing, which aims to present the uniqueness of various countries' and regions' cuisine.

And finally, there is the sense of touch. It is the first sense to develop in the womb and the last sense one loses with age.²⁰ Touch is responsible for receiving external stimuli through various types of receptors (e.g. Pacinian corpuscles react to squeezing and vibrations, Meissner's corpuscles react to a gentle touch and shiver, Krause end bulbs react to cold, Ruffini corpuscles react to heat, Merkel nerve endings react to continuous pressure, muscle and joint receptors react to motion and load). Customers who have already acquainted themselves with objects (including products) in their immediate proximity by means of the sense of sight, get additional information through touching them. Material, surface, temperature, weight, form and

steadiness can all contribute positively to the tactile experience of the brand and differentiate it from competitors.²¹ Tactile stimuli are often used to deepen interactions between the company and customers. Furthermore, in marketing, using touch impressions in a well-thought-out manner might result in favourable attitudes towards a market offer, thus enhancing loyalty.

Exemplification of the holistic stimulation of Expo visitors' senses

During every Expo, one can find exhibitions by participating countries that are used to appeal to visitors' senses in a unique way, while trying to make them remember a message conveyed for a long time. As a matter of fact, it is often these exhibitions that are first and foremost recalled by Expo visitors.²² However, in the vast majority of cases, these include presentations which strongly appeal only to sight (and possibly to any of the other, single senses). Therefore, none of the exhibitors takes a comprehensive approach to a sensory dimension of their presentation, which is one of the main assumptions of experience marketing.

The exhibition arranged in the Polish pavilion during Specialised Expo 2017 Astana provided an example where all Expo visitors' senses were activated. The ideas implemented in this pavilion were appreciated by the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), which gave Poland the Gold Award for Exhibition Design among pavilions covering less than 400m².

Poland's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana



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The country's promotional activities were being organised under the slogan "Poland: creative people, smart energy". People who visited the Polish pavilion followed a route passing through the following zones: Entrance, Technology, Forest, Rest and Regions. References to the theme of Expo 2017, "Future Energy", could be found in each part of the pavilion, where issues related to clean coal, revitalization and afforestation were presented (for instance, in the Technology zone, a 3D animation was used to demonstrate blue coal – a low-emission, rich fuel). The zones differed from each other in colours, interior finish, as well as temperature – in the Technology zone, which was located on the pavilion's ground floor, it was warmer than in the Forest zone, which was one level higher.

The exhibitor refrained from using excessive lighting installations and forms of multimedia communication, and instead, applied means of sensory interaction other than only visual ones to appeal to visitors. This could be clearly seen in the Forest zone. Those who entered this part of the pavilion could experience how their senses – sight, touch, smell and hearing – were strongly activated. The beauty of forests, which cover 30% of the country's area, was presented on the walls. The form of the presentation included both static graphics showing information about forest area and carbon cycle in nature and a film about plants and animals. The illuminated roof was almost entirely green and a graphic placed on it resembled sun rays passing through tree crowns. As to the haptic dimension, a soft floor finish (looking almost like grass) and wood veneers (black oak and gold birch) were used in the pavilion. Furthermore, visitors could use interactive touch screens, which displayed texts and graphics informing about Polish forests and phenomena occurring there. Visitors, by pushing appropriate buttons and pressing their ears to built-in loudspeakers, could listen to the sound of a wild boar and the song of a nightingale. People visiting the pavilion could also hear the songs of other birds. Buttons with special emitters were used to release the scents of plants growing in Polish forests – linden, pine, lily of the valley.

Taste was activated outside the main presentation. The floor of the building where the exposition was located accommodated a restaurant which served traditional Polish dishes (for example one dish whose ingredients included mushrooms picked in forests). The dining area, which was styled as a railway car, attracted particular attention. People sitting at the tables could admire diverse views through the windows in the form of moving pictures – which included also the scenery of Polish forests. Dynamic pictures were displayed on screens placed behind real train carriage windows. This gave an impression that pictures were seen out of a moving train.

In addition to the above description of the pavilion, it must be mentioned that on the initiative of Poland, the Forest Day was incorporated into the Expo programme. On 6 July, representatives of the Polish delegation and representatives of around 50 other countries planted trees in a garden adjacent to the Expo site. In the place where a botanical garden is to be created, more than 200 cuttings brought from Poland were inserted into the soil – oaks, lindens, rowans and apples.

*Poland's pavilion at Expo 2017
Astana provided an example
where all Expo visitors' senses
were activated*



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Activating senses at Poland's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana

The exhibition prepared by Poland in Astana was an example of the holistic appeal to the senses of Expo visitors. The presentation in the pavilion aroused all the senses in a cohesive and concentric manner (it was the only international pavilion at Expo 2017 which activated the sense of smell by means of scent emitters). Although the sensory information delivered was diversified and corresponded to the Expo theme, there was no strategic approach in line with a long-term country image creation strategy, i.e. an approach based on attributes used in promotional campaigns undertaken in the foreign media at that time and making use of advertising slogans and visual elements derived from such campaigns.²³ This shows the major difficulty that is encountered by exhibition designers who intend to create a brand by means of sensory marketing. The said difficulty arises when one wants to combine actions taken in three areas which are of key significance for the management of Expo visitors' experience: (1) the theme of the Expo, (2) actions relating to national branding, carried out for a given country contemporaneously with activity during the Expo, (3) a creative and integrated appeal to all the senses of visitors through diversified triggers.

Experience marketing – a chance for Expos in times of electronic communication

Describing opportunities for the application of the experience marketing concept during Expos, it is necessary to also give mention to the significance of the sensory approach in the era of the information society which is engaged in widespread electronic communication. Nowadays, the Internet is used by 4.5 billion people worldwide, while two-thirds of people all over the world have a smartphone. Consequently, a contemporary person receives during a day the same volume of data that people living in the 19th century could obtain throughout their entire lives. Life thus goes fast, and access to information on products has become very easy. New realities have emerged, and Expos must make their way by offering traditional face-to-face meetings.

Throughout their seventeen-decade history, Expos have changed their form, adapting to economic, social and political circumstances. Over time, apart from propaganda and educational functions served by Expos, importance has been attached to their marketing function, which is associated with creating the image of participating countries. Expos have thus become an important area where the objectives of national branding are accomplished. However, with the emergence of quick, easy, cheap and global electronic communication, some began to question the sense of participating in exhibition events (not only in Expos, but also in traditional trade fairs).

Fortunately, electronic forms of media are only two-dimensional – they activate sight and hearing. It might be thus assumed that when the short fascination with technological advancements has gone, in view of the atavistic need of exploring the world with all five senses, nobody will cast doubt on the sense of meetings held at booths and at national pavilions. And the well-thought-out marketing activity of exhibitors, which provides customers with experiences exceeding their expectations, can only be conducive to it.

Summary

As for the experience economy, marketing practitioners should be expected to perform innovative activities, and get out of old-fashioned ways of thinking adequate for industrial and service economies. The challenges of the present market require that a new paradigm for marketing activities be adopted, according to which the cognitive and emotional needs of a contemporary person can be met only if the image of a brand (including also of a national brand) is built in line with a coherent sensory strategy that creates unique and memorable experiences.

It is claimed that even though the concept of the experience economy was formulated almost two decades ago, it is still in the pre-theory stage and lacks empirical evidence.²⁴ The number of publications which demonstrate the effectiveness of experience marketing in various areas of communication with the customer grows year

*Expo 2020 Dubai will give us
an answer as to how many
exhibitors are able to meet
the challenges of the
experience economy*

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by year. Nevertheless, the aspect associated with evoking visitor experiences at exhibitions in a planned and consistent way is almost completely neglected. And even though there are already some works describing the selected aspects of a mechanism that allows people visiting booths at traditional trade fairs to have experiences, none of these works give mention to experiences enjoyed by Expo visitors. This provides a research gap for researchers, and raises a challenge for practitioners who need to devise methods for effective procedure (based on solutions implemented before – for example such as those seen in the Polish pavilion at Expo 2017).

According to Prahalad and Ramaswamy “the future belongs to those that can successfully co-create unique experiences with customers”.²⁵ In view of the comments contained herein, it is necessary to say that – also in the case of Expos – those who will be able to intentionally arouse the senses of people visiting national pavilions, thus enabling them to have unique experiences and triggering strong associations with the country’s brand, should have no worries about the future. The forthcoming World Expo, which will be hosted in Dubai, will give us an answer as to how many exhibitors are able to meet the challenges of the experience economy.

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- 23 An example of a presentation prepared in line with a long-term approach to brand creation (formulated in the "Brand Book") is the pavilion built by Slovenia during Expo 2015 Milan – where a slogan "I feel Slovenia" was coined to support both the concept of country promotion and exposition.
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Le marketing de l'expérience, outil de construction de l'image des participants aux Expositions

Les Expositions se distinguent d'autres plateformes de promotion par leur capacité à faire appel à tous les sens en même temps et à ainsi faire vivre des expériences uniques. Certains chercheurs en marketing assurent même que cet aspect a permis aux Expositions de perdurer à une époque marquée par un développement accéléré des moyens de communication électroniques. Les expériences induites par ce type de présentations doivent toutefois produire un effet désiré, obtenu selon un processus marketing sollicitant les cinq sens de manière planifiée, cohérente et concentrique. Créer de telles expériences suppose de suivre les postulats du marketing de l'expérience et d'adopter une approche stratégique, la Gestion de l'Expérience Client. Pour un pays, cette expérience et les activités entreprises lors d'une Exposition doivent, par ailleurs, s'inscrire dans le concept (placé dans une perspective de long terme) soutenant la création de son image de marque. En outre, elles doivent répondre au thème même de l'Exposition en question. Aussi la mise en place de la participation d'un pays à une Exposition en vue de créer les expériences désirées n'est-elle pas chose aisée.

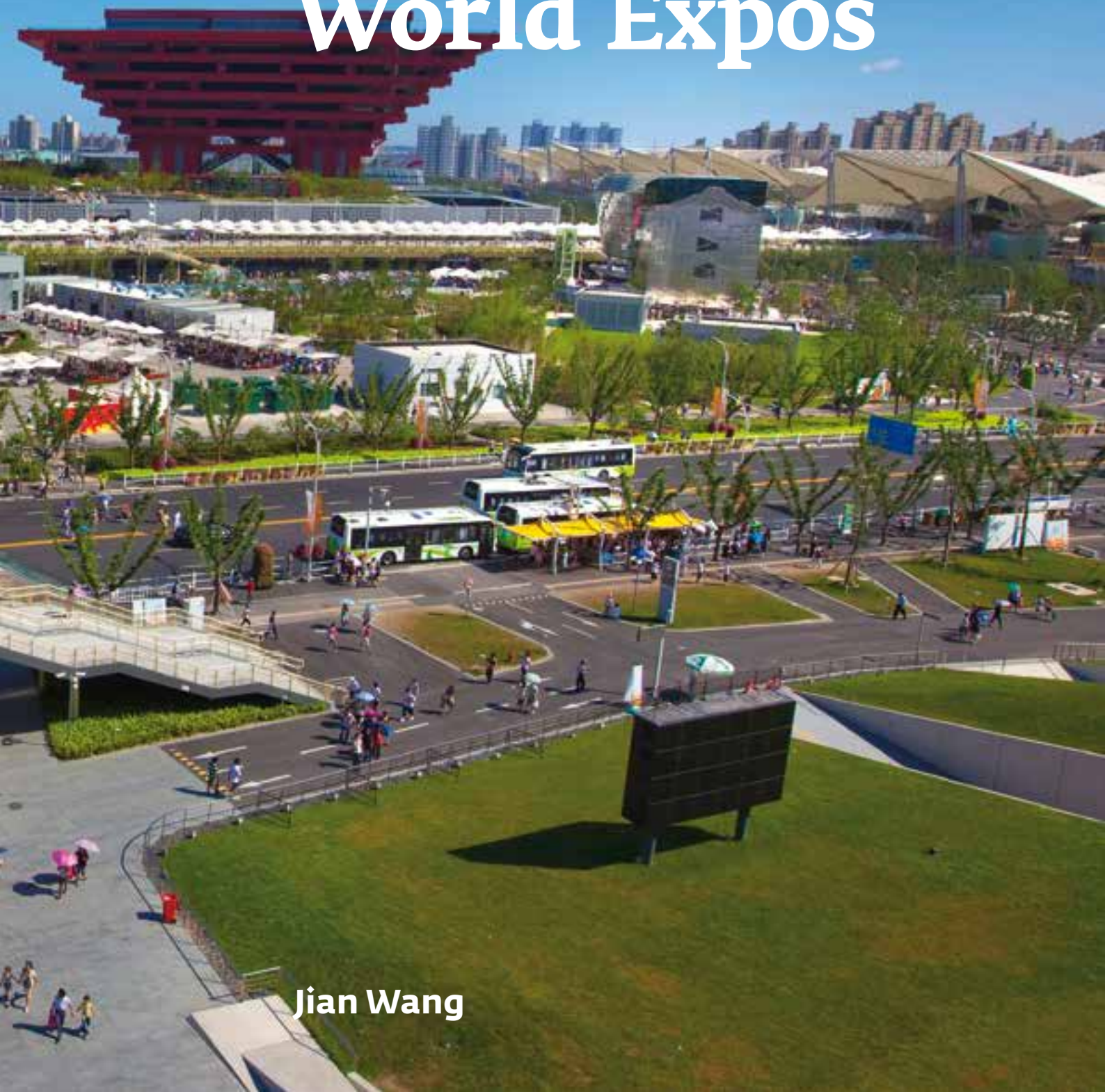
Cet article vise à sensibiliser ceux et celles qui s'intéressent aux Expositions, à la construction par les Participants d'expériences extraordinaires et intenses. En premier lieu, sont alors décrites les réalités de l'économie de l'expérience et les hypothèses sous-jacentes au marketing de l'expérience. Référence est ensuite faite aux défis provenant de la conception d'expériences sensorielles, démontrant ainsi le besoin de gestion d'expérience. Puis, les sens sont spécifiés en portant une attention toute particulière aux caractéristiques les plus pertinentes d'un point de vue marketing ; la vue, l'ouïe, l'odorat, le goût et le toucher. Des exemples de participations aux Expositions Universelles passées permettent alors d'illustrer la création cohérente d'expériences. Ainsi l'exemple spécifique du pavillon de la Pologne à l'Exposition Spécialisée 2017 Astana sert-il à illustrer cette création cohérente d'expérience. Enfin, est attentivement examinée la nécessité de planifier minutieusement cette création d'expériences dans le cadre des prochaines Expositions, et ce d'autant que la communication électronique affecte la perception de l'individu, et que la réalité est davantage appréhendée en deux dimensions, par la vue et l'ouïe.

Il y a vingt ans, un changement de paradigme en marketing était annoncé avec l'émergence de l'ère de l'économie de l'expérience. Depuis, de nombreuses publications analysant la création d'expériences consommateurs sont apparues. Cependant, très peu d'auteurs examinent le marketing de l'expérience et les activités des Expositions, voire le marketing de l'expérience et les présentations au sein des Expositions. Cet article vise en partie à combler un manque en littérature sur le sujet.

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Nation branding and World Expos



Jian Wang

World Expos are more than a platform for nations to promote their cultures and innovations; it is a stage for public engagement on a grand, global scale. They are by design to provide a mind-expanding experience to the broader public through real-world encounters, and are hence an important element of a nation's public diplomacy effort.¹

While the format of Expos has remained consistent over the years, contemporary Expos also embody nation branding practices through national pavilions, which are at the centre stage of the spectacle. The pavilions apply branding practices in design and narrative strategies about the countries represented. The stylised pavilions are *de facto* branded spaces for defining and delivering 'nation brands' to visitors in the hope of cultivating awareness and appreciation. Indeed, Expos are a site of the production and consumption of nation brands.

This essay explores World Expos through the lens of nation branding. As national pavilions are essentially a spatial form of storytelling to advance a positive narrative about a nation's image, it discusses the opportunities and challenges in the practices of nation branding in this particular medium. It concludes with observations about future Expos as visitor participation and experience continue to broaden and diversify in a world increasingly defined by connectivity between the digital and the physical.

Nation branding and its dimensions

To explore nation branding practices at World Expos, it is important that we first understand the relevance and significance of branding to communicating a nation's image on the world stage. The concept of branding has its own history and evolution. As an organised practice, it emerged and grew with the rise of the mass market, mass media and mass advertising during the first part of the 20th century. A brand is generally defined as a "name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers".²

Branding therefore refers to the process of defining, delivering and maintaining the identification of goods or services to achieve differentiation from their rivals and resonance with their customers. At its core, branding is about creating and communicating the sources of such identification. Brand identification is typically built around perceived benefits, such as functional, experiential, symbolic, or most likely a mix of these values, in consumers' purchase decision-making.

In contemporary parlance, a brand is more than a product or a logo. It is a perceptual entity consisting of a set of properties and associations that define one's competitive advantage in the marketplace. It seeks to generate consumer awareness and liking, motivate purchase action, and achieve customer loyalty. As Amanda Hess of *The New York Times* wrote, branding is "a process of humanization: It imbues companies with personalities".³ The consumer's relationship with brands is in many ways

akin to person-to-person relationship, with brands serving as “relationship partners”.⁴ It is indeed this emotional aspect that is becoming increasingly central to consumers’ purchase intention and action. Branding is, in short, “a vehicle of human agency”.⁵

For the purpose of this discussion, the enterprise of branding comprises three main sets of activities: brand definition, brand communication and brand management. Brand definition is the establishment of the identity of a product or an organisation based on functional, symbolic, and/or experiential benefits that target consumers seek in it. Brand communication represents “the voice of a brand and the means by which companies can establish a dialogue with consumers concerning product offerings”.⁶ It includes two basic aspects of designing an identity system for the brand and delivering communication and brand engagement through a variety of platforms and vehicles externally (e.g. customers) as well as internally (e.g. employees). In brand management, organisations need to not only determine an effective and efficient mix of products and brands in their portfolio and the relationship structure among the brands, but also put in place the structure, process and resources for brand protection, promotion and growth.

Needless to say, nations are not and certainly cannot be ‘brands’ in the ordinary sense of a product brand. Nevertheless, the concept and practice of branding is relevant and indeed crucial to the effective communication of a nation’s image, given the competitive nature of global politics and economy, the enduring significance of national narrative and identity, and the crowded, symbol-ridden information ecosystem. Nation branding therefore refers to the application of branding principles and practices to the projection and promotion of a nation among foreign publics. As in general branding, it encompasses three principal endeavours of branding definition, brand communication and brand management. Central to the nation branding process is defining a nation’s brand identity. It is to answer the basic question, ‘What does the country stand for in the minds of its international stakeholders?’. Countries then need to strategize on the means by which they can communicate the nation brand differentiation and resonance effectively and efficiently. In nation branding, it is virtually impossible to exercise the type of centralised control over communication as in the private sector; nor is such an attempt always desirable, especially in democratic societies. The multiple goals of nation brand management entail the involvement of various entities in the effort and a need for establishing mechanisms to facilitate coherence and consistency in nation brand communication.



Expo 2012 Yeosu

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The concept and practice of branding is relevant and indeed crucial to the effective communication of a nation’s image

Nation branding at World Expos

World Expos embody nation branding in vivid and varied ways, principally through the platform of national pavilions. National pavilions are built, themed environments that aim to craft a positive, distinctive identity about a country.⁷ They are typically designed as a multi-functional space, encompassing an architectural frame, indoor exhibitions, event and meeting spaces, and retail outlets (e.g., souvenir shops, restaurants), all with narrative possibilities for national representation. The physicality of a pavilion includes architectural design, physical layout and exhibition displays. By infusing it with national narratives and symbols, a mundane physical place becomes embodied and is transformed into a space of cultural meaning and significance.

As richly imagined, highly specific cultural spaces, pavilions are constructed realities that seek to stimulate the public's interest to visit and transform visitors' experience into understanding and even liking of the countries represented. As representations of their respective nation brands, national pavilions provide a multi-sensory experience of nations and cultures on a grand-scale. They are emotive spaces that embody shared experiences that are both spatial and temporary. And they provide a setting for direct contact and cultural engagement. As such, Expos are prime

Clockwise from top left: Iran's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan, Monaco's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan, Russia's and Estonia's pavilions at Expo 2015 Milan, the banners of Switzerland's and Austria's pavilions at Expo 2017 Astana



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venues for public diplomacy. Moreover, Expos are not only to be experienced, but also remembered. While the pavilion experience is ephemeral, one's impression of the pavilion and what it represents of the nation can be lasting. Such memory crystallizes visitors' pavilion experiences and is indicative of pavilions' communicative capability and effectiveness.

While the Expo experience is, by and large, leisurely, national pavilions are normative spaces and the embodiments of nation brands. The nation brand identity is defined and expressed through the physical space of the pavilion. The process of visiting national pavilions - the consumption of pavilions as 'experiential goods' - actualises visitors' dual identities as consumer and as citizen. On the one hand, visiting an Expo is an activity of fun and enjoyment, akin to visiting a theme park. On the other, nations are made visible through the pavilions. Indeed, national representation is the *raison d'être* for people to choose and visit a particular pavilion. The visitor's own national identity is in turn activated and made salient during the process. It is in the space of the pavilion that people and ideas from different countries are linked and connected.

As richly imagined, highly specific cultural spaces, pavilions are constructed realities

Visitors are immersed in Italy's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan



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Top: Pavilion Zero at Expo 2015 Milan.
Bottom left: display within the Republic of Korea's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan.
Bottom right: A visitor to Latvia's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana.



Nation branding in the age of cultural insecurity

The fundamental impact of globalisation and digital technology is reshaping international communication, including nation branding practices at World Expos. National self-representation aside, World Expos reflect the underlying landscape of international relations. The broader geo-political and geo-economic context for nation branding is undergoing rapid changes. The rise of China and other major emerging economies are engendering tectonic power shifts in world affairs. Uncertainties abound as the global political and economic order evolves.

Despite its tremendous benefits and positive impact over the last two decades, globalisation has also sharpened societal divides, heightening economic insecurity and

cultural anxiety among the broader public. Many, especially in the West, are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted by these changes, as they transition from a primarily mono-cultural existence to an increasingly culturally diverse environment. These encounters of cultures and peoples, however, have not turned out to be great opportunities for sharing knowledge and experiences; rather they have provoked our basic impulses of prejudice, especially in light of the real or feared downward socio-economic mobility. The French political scientist Laurent Bouvet calls the phenomenon “cultural insecurity”. Most lack the resources and capacity to address this transition brought forth by the fast face of globalisation. The rise of assertive nativism and re-nationalisation in many parts of the world is the consequence of a negative fallout of globalisation.

Adding to these complex dynamics, a crowded, fractured, and transparent information environment has become a part of our daily existence. The information cacophony in the digital space, with plenty of misinformation and disinformation, has exacerbated our incredulity and distrust. And to make matters worse, the excess of political rhetoric through these channels of communication makes the public’s existential fear ever more vivid and visceral. Popular emotion and public opinion are exerting greater constraints on policies and state actions, as nationalism goes global.

Moreover, advancements in digital technology have transformed platforms and tools for communication and engagement. For instance, in both developed and emerging economies, many more people now turn to social networking sites for news and information, bringing about a platform-based media ecosystem that is both fragmented and interlocking.⁸ Empowered by digital technology, users now often find themselves in the driver’s seat, signifying a power shift from producers to users; and audiences are now simultaneously communicators. Virtual reality and augmented reality tools are poised to re-define how people experience their life worlds. And artificial intelligence and automation are revolutionising communication placements with precise targeting. Furthermore, the acceleration of digital technology has dissolved the boundaries between domestic and abroad, making the interaction of national concerns and international engagement ever more dynamic and interdependent.

All these notable disruptive developments compel us to rethink the fundamental assumptions underlying the current and future practices of nation branding, including at World Expos. While the essence of nation branding remains the same, certain nation brand attributes are elevated to greater prominence in this age of information abundance and mobility, including transparency, authenticity, exclusivity, and convenience and speed, with creating emotional connection at the heart of the enterprise. Building upon what we have learned about nation branding at recent World Expos, we lay out the following six areas to underscore the importance of reviewing and reconfiguring our framework for nation branding at Expos.

*A crowded, fractured,
and transparent information
environment has become a part
of our daily existence*

New rules for nation branding

1. Storytelling that connects the digital and the physical

Storytelling with mass appeal remains the foundation of this type of nation branding effort. However, the endeavour is now taking place in a new, dynamic, mixed media environment. As in general branding practices, shaping perception in this instance is less about making good arguments than sharing a compelling and relatable story about a nation. In our tech-infused world, Expos are no longer a controlled physical space, but a fluid, expansive one where visitor experiences are increasingly transmedia and can be instantaneously shared beyond the Expo grounds. Think about all the potential selfies moments and instagrammable places that are available on the Expo site. Storytelling in such an information ecosystem requires a broadened view of brand communication in terms of audience and content that increasingly transcends the time-space of the Expo. Given the growing connectivity between the digital and the physical, storytelling to engage visitors in the nation brand, which begins as a place-based experience, needs to be re-imagined and transformed.

2. Co-creating a nation brand

Nation branding is not merely about selling a country or a cultural experience to a foreign public; it is about demonstrating how the nation and what it has to offer can enrich its audience's lives. At Expos, technology provides the tools that enable visitors to create their own narratives about pavilion experiences, thereby opening up diverse possibilities for co-creation of nation brand meaning in an immersive environment. Devising strategies that allow for visitor involvement in such storytelling requires a deep understanding of the audience's motivations and imaginations.

3. The importance of delightful surprises

In this age of predictive algorithms, the value of serendipity and spontaneity has increased steeply. It is ever more crucial to provide delightful surprises that are relevant to nation branding goals. On the one hand, it is necessary to present familiar national symbols to establish association and connection with the visitor. After all, much of nation branding serves the purposes of confirmation and reminding. On

Visitors enjoying themselves in Spain's pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai (left) and Austria's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana (right)



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the other hand, when the storytelling for the nation brand appears all too mundanely familiar, national pavilions will fail to spark any interest and capture any imagination among visitors. So there needs to be an element of surprise in presenting and delivering the experience or content at the pavilions. It is a balancing act of making the pavilions both familiar and unexpected places that are infused with a sense of discovery for the visitor.

4. Expos as playgrounds of creativity

Expos provide visitors an expansive exposure to the world in a confined space and time. The experience has always been both educational and recreational. Understandably, national pavilions seek to elicit an emphatic interpretation of the countries and cultures represented. Meanwhile, visitors to Expos also expect fun and excitement on this special occasion. The crowded environment of the Expo site is replete with real-world encounters that help to create memories of shared joy and wonder. It brings all one's senses alive. And new and emerging technologies play a central role in shaping and enhancing the in-person experience. A sense of play is integral and essential to visitor experience. The public diplomacy goal of national pavilions can only be realised in a non-intentional way.

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Top: Brazil's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan.
Bottom: Kuwait's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan.





A visitor to Germany's pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu

5. Communication with agility

High-tech, high-quality production is a hallmark of national displays at contemporary Expos. The production values of communication increasingly matter. This is a function of the ever-rising expectations of the growing global middle class - young, urban, and tech-savvy - of quality visual content and multisensory experiences. With real-time analytics and geo-location technology, national pavilions can now present their displays not necessarily as fixed exhibits throughout the six-month duration, but adjust and adapt them according to trending

interest and received feedback. Building flexibility into displays and presentations that allow for agility in communication for the nation brand requires a more layered strategy for storytelling as well as sophisticated mechanisms that capture real-time data for developing tailored content.

6. Nation branding for global communality

Every participant nation naturally tries to present the best of itself to the world in an Expo. With pavilions and attractions on abundant display, Expos are decidedly comparative and competitive places. They are never short of “national rivalry and pomp.”⁹ While the practice of branding calls for strategies to differentiate, Expos are cosmopolitan spaces, where national promotion takes place under a unified thematic framework that speaks to shared challenges. Branding national identity in a globalised context, rather than in its narrow, self-expression form, creates the very foundation for cultivating collective empathy and expanding social cooperation in an interdependent world. World Expos represent a rare global communal moment, with a sense of conviviality, as nations of the world come together for six months, every five years, to celebrate culture and innovation. This spirit of finding harmony amidst divisive and discordant voices in the international arena is important and urgent now more than ever.

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1 The essay draws on the author's research as published in his book *Shaping China's Global Imagination: Branding Nations at the World Expo* (New York: Palgrave, 2013).

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(Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001); Lukas, S., *The Themed Space: Locating Culture, Nation, and Self* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007).

8 See Pew Global Attitudes Survey, Spring 2017. Retrieved from http://www.pewglobal.org/2018/01/11/people-in-poorer-countries-just-as-likely-to-use-social-media-for-news-as-those-in-wealthier-countries/pg_2018-01-11_global-media-habits_3-02/.

9 Pelkonen, E-L., *Exhibit A: Exhibitions That Transformed Architecture 1948-2000* (Phaidon Press, 2018), p. 10.

Marque-Pays et Expositions Internationales


Les Expositions Internationales (Universelles et Spécialisées) sont bien plus que des plateformes permettant aux nations de promouvoir leurs cultures et leurs innovations ; elles sont des espaces de sensibilisation, de participation et d'engagement du public au niveau international et à grande échelle. Par essence, les Expositions Internationales ont pour but de permettre à une vaste audience de s'ouvrir à de nouveaux horizons au travers de rencontres réelles. Elles constituent ainsi pour les nations, un instrument important de diplomatie publique.

Alors que le format des Expositions n'a pas changé au cours du temps, les Expositions Internationales contemporaines incarnent la promotion de l'image de marque des nations par le biais de pavillons au cœur de l'événement. Ces pavillons nationaux utilisent des pratiques de *branding* pour leurs stratégies de design et de narration. Ils constituent de fait des « espaces de marque » (*branded spaces*) définissant et véhiculant « l'image de marque d'un pays » afin que les visiteurs puissent y acquérir une meilleure connaissance et appréciation du pays. Les Expositions Internationales sont ainsi des sites de production et de consommation d'images de marque-pays.

Cet article analyse les Expositions Internationales sous l'angle de l'image de marque-pays. Il examine les opportunités et les défis liés aux pratiques de marketing-pays mises en œuvre au sein des pavillons nationaux ; ces derniers étant essentiellement des organisations spatiales de mise en récit (*Storytelling*) permettant de promouvoir une narration positive de l'image d'une nation. Cet article présente enfin des propositions pour les Expositions futures alors que la participation et l'expérience visiteurs continuent de se développer et de se diversifier dans un monde de plus en plus défini par la connectivité entre numérique et physique.

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An aerial photograph of a modern architectural complex. In the foreground, a long, white, curved walkway with a metal railing runs across the frame. In the middle ground, a large, textured, spherical structure with a metallic, woven appearance is the central focus. The background shows a city skyline with various buildings under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. People are visible walking on the walkway and around the spherical structure.

**The whole is
greater than
the sum of
its parts:
Conveying
an (inter)
national image
at World Expos**

Silvio Carta

This article elaborates on some of the key aspects that characterise the history of Expos from 1851 to date. It suggests that Expo 2010 Shanghai should be considered as a milestone, as it coincides with the moment of full maturity of the ideas and aesthetic approaches defined by supermodernity. This work suggests that, starting from Expo 2010, national pavilions contribute, with their strong branding, their search for uniqueness, and their quest for identity, to the creation of a more general global image. Considered as a whole, national pavilions no longer express the characterising features and innovations of the country that they represent. Instead, they build an international, transnational and truly global image of the collective advancement of human knowledge through the unifying idea of World Expos.

1851 to 2010

Since London's Great Exhibition of 1851, each participating country has demonstrably put great effort into differentiating itself from the others, providing a sense of surprise, wonder and uniqueness. The idea of differentiation is strictly related to national pride and the willingness to demonstrate to the rest of the world the degree to which each nation was progressing, achieving new levels of technological and cultural development. This technological competition needs to be considered within the framework of the industrial revolution.

The revolutionising changes to new manufacturing and production processes that originated in Great Britain in the middle of the 18th century had a strong impact on the ways in which technologically advanced and powerful nations perceived themselves. One of the many results of the industrial revolution was a reconfiguration of the political landscape in the world, with the European continent and the United States at the centre of this. Many factors characterised this reconfiguration of national and economic powers, including conflicts over colonies, wars between countries (think of the Anglo-French wars at the turn of the 19th century), and the independence of nations (for example the 1776 United States Declaration of Independence). Among many important historical figures, Queen Victoria in Great Britain is perhaps one who perfectly embodies the spirit of those times. British people under Queen Victoria's reign were characterised by a great sense of national pride, driven by technological innovation, experimentation and a high trust in progress.

Built for Expo 1851 and designed by British architect Joseph Paxton, the Crystal Palace is perhaps the epitome of all this, with its astonishing and record-breaking numbers for its time. The Crystal Palace featured a 92,000m² footprint, with a length of 564 metres and an interior height of 39 metres, exceeding 14,000 exhibitors and



The Crystal Palace,
Expo 1851 London

with 6 million¹ visitors during the six months in which it was open. This building truly embodied the Victorian period, with the highest technological achievements² presented at the Expo in a grandiose structure built with world-leading manufacturing techniques and characterised by an overall sense of predominance of British industry over the rest of the world.

Within this cultural, economic and political context, we can clearly understand why individual nations were keen on partaking in World Expos with pride and a sense of competition. In this perspective, Expos became a testbed for each individual nation's achievements in a complex process of reconfiguration of global political, economic and symbolic power.

As an outcome of this situation, great buildings have been designed that are today recognised as true icons in their cities.

The Eiffel Tower is perhaps one of the most famous examples. Built for Expo 1889 Paris, this tower represented the highly sophisticated construction techniques and advanced structural design of French engineering that characterised France at the end of the 19th century. Not only was the Eiffel Tower a symbol of great achievement, with its record as

*Expos became a testbed
for each individual nation's
achievements*



Overview of Expo 2010 Shanghai

the tallest building in the world for many years, but it was also representative of many other important buildings in France where similar construction techniques were used. Amongst many illustrious examples, Henri Labrouste's Reading Room in the Sainte-Geneviève Library offers a clear demonstration of these architectural use of wrought iron and puddling process in large-scale structures.

Within this competition of national display, the 19th century was dominated by a small number of countries that included France, the United Kingdom and the United States. This is reflected in the history of Expos, that were, to give some

examples, held in London in 1851 and 1862, in Paris in 1855, 1867, 1878, 1889 and 1900, in the United States in 1876 (Philadelphia) and 1893 (Chicago), in Vienna in 1873, or in Brussels in 1897.

Fast-forwarding to after the Second World War, Expos organised from 1947 (the first after the end of the Second World War, held in Paris) to Expo 2008 in Zaragoza, Spain, are characterised by buildings that became iconic over time and widely recognised as being legacies of Expos. The Atomium in Brussels (Expo 1958), the Space Needle in Seattle (Expo 1962), Moshe Safdie's Habitat 67 in Montreal (Expo 1967), Álvaro Siza's Portugal Pavilion in Lisbon (Expo 1998), and, perhaps, Zaha Hadid's Bridge Pavilion in Zaragoza (Expo 2008) are just a few widely known examples. However, it is with Expo 2010 Shanghai that, I argue, the ways in which the strive for national distinctiveness takes a significant turn.

Globalisation and Expo 2010 Shanghai

What we can observe in Expo 2010 Shanghai could be considered as the ultimate result of the architectural experiments and discussions that characterised the transition from the postmodern movement to what has been called supermodernism. This passage has been thoroughly explored by Hans Ibelings in his 1998 work *Supermodernism. Architecture in the age of Globalization*.³ Ibelings explained how the fundamental notions of identity, place and context that heavily characterised the production of postmodernist architects and thinkers have gradually lost their significance, to be replaced by genericness, transition, non-spaces and ambiguity. Among other critical factors, Ibelings identified the increasing mobility and globalisation⁴ that characterised the 1980s, 1990s and then the flow of information in the 2000s as main drivers of such a radical shift. The tenets of the Modern Movement and the International Style have been somehow reconsidered under a new global perspective, where we witnessed the emergence of "monolithic architectures", "rectangular

volumes”, and “glassy, transparent and translucent buildings”⁵ around the world. Supermodern architecture is characterised by a “sensitivity to the neutral, the undefined, the implicit, qualities that are not confined to architectural substance but also find powerful expression in a new spatial sensibility”.⁶ The architecture designed in the 1990s by Jean Nouvel, Rem Koolhaas, Toyo Ito, Herzog & de Meuron or Dominique Perrault are a strong testimony to this tendency. Ibelings concluded his essay on this subject with a revealing thought: “architecture is [during the 1990s and 2000s] at the service of modernization which is currently most visible in the process of globalization”.⁷

This would suggest that new characteristics have emerged in architecture between the 1990s and the 2000s. These are somehow the continuation of some of the formal experiments of the Modern movement, where pure masses, volumes and geometries were considered expressive and representative, yet a new layer of conscious vagueness and ambiguity emerged, producing a new combination of aesthetical values that become characteristic of that period. One building that can perhaps epitomise this complex evolution is Rem Koolhaas’ Kunsthal in Rotterdam. Built in 1992, it materialises the sense of freedom of expression encapsulated in a rigorous and formal set of volumes. Interestingly, the Kunsthal is located in the proximity of the Sonneveld House, designed in the 1930s by Brinkman and Van der Vlugt in a pure Dutch Functionalist style (the same architects designed the Van Nelle Factory in Rotterdam). The principles underpinning the spatial composition of the Sonneveld Huis were “licht, lucht en ruimte ten bate van hygiëne en gezondheid” (light, air and space for the benefit of hygiene and health). The simple and regular volumes of the Kunsthal denote some resemblance with the Dutch Functionalist style, yet the entire building seems to be liberated from the internal consistency that would suggest that every part of the museum would need to obey to the same set of principles. The Kunsthal should be more regarded as a spatial experience, where sensitivity, interpretation and free flow of space are the main characteristics.

Moreover, the Kunsthal seems to be designed around its immediate location, considering the presence of the main road in the front, the park on the back and the different levels of terrain. It communicates little about Rotterdam or the Netherlands in a direct or explicit manner. It seems to perform a dual act: attract visitors with a pleasant yet intriguing building from the outside, while offering a sophisticated spatial and sensorial experience to visitors in the inside as people move through its spaces, from the entrance placed in the middle of a ramp, to the access to the roof through a spiral route.

To summarise: the Kunsthal can be considered, on the one hand, as a true embodiment of the values of supermodernity: with genericness, neutrality, a sense of transition and ambiguity, and surprise, iconicity, experientiality and sensoriality on the other. Significantly, there is also the duality of interior/exterior experience that becomes a key aspect in the projects of the supermodern architecture.

*It is with Expo 2010 Shanghai
that the ways in which
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a significant turn*

With this framework in mind, we will now observe Expo 2010 in Shanghai, where a large number of pavilions were designed and built with the aim of increasing each country's international reputation, in part by producing spectacular shells.⁸ The strategies adopted by the several countries vary considerably, from reference to local traditions (Norway, Pakistan or The Netherlands), to volumes that resemble animals or plants (Japan, Saudi Arabia, Finland, Romania or the Macao Special Administrative Region of China), or from creating evocative solid geometries (Australia, Canada, Sweden, Italy, Germany and the Republic of Korea) to working with sophisticated building envelopes (United Kingdom, Mexico, Austria, Egypt, France, Poland, Serbia or Switzerland).

If observed from a bit of distance, one may notice that most of the pavilions built for Expo 2010 have some common traits. They all strived to be unique, highly recognisable and memorable, sophisticated and iconic at the same time. Some of these aspects are also visible in previous Expos, for example in Expo 2000 Hannover, Expo 2005 Aichi, or Expo 2008 Zaragoza.

However, I argue that it is at Expo 2010 where supermodernity reached its complete maturity. In chronological terms, this makes sense, for the construction industry, architectural approaches and various trends in the design world take some years to be fully developed and encapsulated in the design process. The Kunsthall opened in 1992, Herzog & de Meuron's Signal Tower in Muenchensteinerbrücke (Basel, Switzerland) was originally designed in 1994 and completed in 1999, Toyo Ito's Sendai Mediatheque opened in 2001, and Diller and Scofidio's Blur Building for the Swiss Expo opened a year later (2002).

All the architects involved in the design of Expo 2010 were already well familiar with some of the supermodern projects listed above, as they had all been widely published on a variety of media. To add to this, we should also consider that during the 2000s, visual information about architecture increased exponentially with the creation of blogzeens and online architectural magazines and blogs. For example, ArchDaily, one of the most read architectural websites in the world, was founded in 2008, Archinect in 1997 and Dezeen in 2006. Among others, these new media outlets have facilitated the global dissemination of architectural projects around the world, reaching readers far more vastly, rapidly and with more granularity than any other print publication had ever done before.

In 2010, Marc Augé's book on *surmodernité*⁹ was already 18 years old, as was the Kunsthall. The time was ready for world-leading designers to conceive their pavilions by internalising the new aesthetics emerged with supermodernism. While, in fact, during the 1990s, surprise and iconicity achieved by genericness and neutrality were considered *avant-garde* and experimental, the same values were somehow consolidated and assimilated by both younger and older generations of architects by the end of the 2000s.

For example, in Expo 2010 Shanghai, the Swedish and the Italian pavilions appeared to rely on a similar approach, where a solid volume is broken into sectors by

Whilst Sweden's and Italy's pavilions offered completely different experiences on the inside, the outsides appeared to be clear evidence of supermodern ideas



Left: Sweden's pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai, exterior (top) and interior (bottom)
Right: Italy's pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai, exterior (top) and interior (bottom)

vertical cuts that determine slight alterations in the original geometry. This is combined with a sophisticated treatment of the façades that emphasises the volume. Both pavilions played a successful role in generating curiosity in the visitors from the outside, whilst attracting them in the building by showing a sneak peek of the exhibition content in the inside.

Whilst the two pavilions offered completely different experiences on the inside, with spatial perceptions focusing on the individual countries and their agendas for the Expo, the outsides appeared to be a clear evidence of supermodern ideas. The two buildings looked alike (and similar to others, including the Turkish or the Polish pavilions in some respect); they were unrelated to the contents inside as well as to the image conveyed (in the interior exhibitions) of their own countries. In this respect, their envelopes were neutral and said very little about Sweden or Italy in a strict sense.

Other pavilions were truly remarkable for their overall shape, being clear successful attempts at offering something unique and surprising. BIG's Denmark pavilion, Thomas Heatherwick's United Kingdom pavilion, or Miralles Tagliabue's Spain pavilion, to name but a few examples, were characteristic of this mature supermodern approach.



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Left: Mexico's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan, exterior (top) and interior (bottom)
Right: Germany's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan, exterior (top) and interior (bottom)

A similar tendency continued in later Expos, following Shanghai's example. For example, Mexico's and Germany's pavilions at World Expo 2015 Milan held some similarities in their outer shells, yet yielded very different spatial experiences, programmes and contents on the inside. It would be somewhat safe to predict that similar characteristics will be observed at World Expo 2020 Dubai as well.

A unifying approach

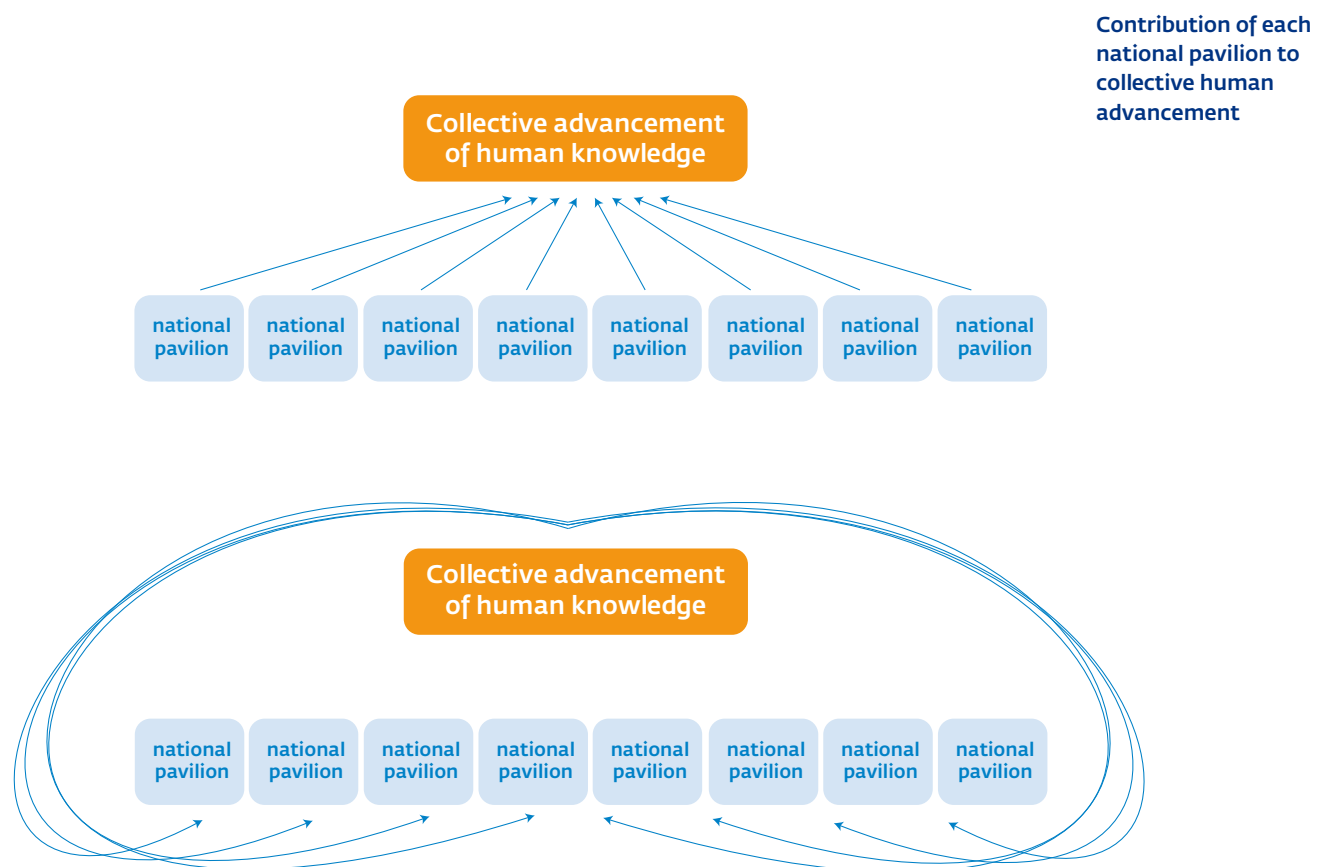
Supermodernity has freed architects from the need to constantly look for consistency, reference to context, and clarity of intent, in order to be able to fully concentrate on technology, progress and mediatic impact. Hans Ibelings recently went back to his work on supermodernism, considering a possible evolution that offers a new and more inclusive perspective: "whereas a postmodern perspective requires a laser-sharp focus to unmask the pretensions of a grand narrative, the metamodern perspective asks for a wide-angle view, to situate the subject in new ways, connecting the dots between seemingly isolated moments with all their possible conflicts and contradictions".¹⁰

Globalisation has put forward new challenges, where new types of spaces have emerged (transitional spaces, non-places etc.), new aesthetic qualities (neutrality,

vagueness etc.) are now widely accepted, and an increasing speed of communication and the development of sophisticated information systems have blurred those geographical and physical boundaries that characterised the idea of nations so far. People recognise places without ever having been there before and, at the same time, do not familiarise with a new class of buildings that share qualities and spatial connotations around the world (for example museums, airports and stations).

If the spatial experience of buildings is detached from the physical boundaries that contain them, perhaps a new character is slowly and gradually emerging over recent years. Supermodernity and globalisation suggested that the spatial experience transcends the traditional envelope with which we identify our buildings. The outer shell of a building, and in the context of this article, of a pavilion, no longer represents its physical conclusion and definition. The architecture, in its spatial experience, in its unique character and in the development of a specific programme, exceeds the walls of the individual pavilion, expanding into something more complex and often difficult to re-define in spatial terms. The continuous movement of

The self-image that a country wants to convey through its pavilion transcends the building



Contribution of each national pavilion to collective human advancement

people which occurs both physically (increasing mobility, travelling and tourism for example) and virtually (exchange of data, information, social media etc.) makes it impossible for pavilions to be spatially confined within their own façade. Similarly, the self-image that a country wants to convey through its pavilion transcends the building, becoming part of something bigger and larger.

We already ascertained that technology, progress, the exchange of ideas, techniques and designers are among the main drivers behind the design of individual pavilions. This results in the image of the pavilion (and of its architecture) losing its relevance as the main conveyor of uniqueness. As designers, projects and knowledge are mutually exchanged among countries at every Expo, it makes it increasingly difficult for individual countries to differentiate themselves on these bases.

To untangle these new complexities, we should try to change the focus of this analysis, looking at what really happens to the brand that each nation produces and conveys of itself. My claim is that this image goes way beyond the pavilion through which the nation tries to communicate its message to the rest of the world. The individual image of each nation contributes to the construction of something bigger. If we assess the success of the construction of each individual nation brand through its pavilion, we will soon notice that various countries may have similar pavilions, conveying misleading images of themselves in a constant competition for visitors and media attention, which is chiefly based on a memorable experience or an innovative façade, shape, or building. However, if we think of each individual nation's image as a concerted contribution toward the formation of an overall image of human progress (as opposed to national progress), the value of the messages conveyed by each nation suddenly becomes clearer and greater.

In this perspective, each country is not competing with the others to be heard or noticed; it is instead helping and supporting the advancement of human knowledge and world progress. With this common goal as the main focus of the Expo, a possible cacophony of individual contributions becomes a collective effort to produce something good for the world. Only at this point, the individual contribution will become evident, and the achievements, the discoveries and inventions that each nation presents assume new importance and global relevance.

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1 <http://www.crystalpalacemuseum.org.uk/history/> last accessed 28 August 2019.

2 For more details on innovations and inventions in the nineteenth century, see Gideon, S., *Mechanization takes command*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1948.

3 Ibelings, H., *Supermodernism. Architecture in the age of Globalization*. Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 1998.

4 For a detailed account on globalisation see Steger, M.B., *Globalization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. On globalisation and the

decentralisation of cities and urban units see Sassen, S., *The Global City*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001. On globalisation and the production of global localities see: Appadurai, A., *Modernity at Large*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1996.

5 Ibelings, H., *Supermodernism. Architecture in the age of Globalization*. Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2002, p. 57.

6 Ibelings 2002, p. 62.

7 Ibelings 2002, p. 134.

8 I provided a detailed account of such

pavilions and the mechanism underpinning their iconicity in Carta, S., The image of the Shanghai 2010 Expo the contribution of single pavilions to Shanghai's global image, *Frontiers of Architectural Research* 2(4), 2013, pp. 387-399. In particular, the reference to spectacular shell is at page 6.

9 Augé, M. *Non-Places: An Introduction to Anthropology of Supermodernity*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1992.

10 Ibelings, H., *From Supermodernism to Metamodernism*, C3 Korea 402 (June), 2019.

Le tout est plus que la somme des parties : l'expression d'une image (inter) nationale aux Expositions Universelles

Depuis leur première édition en 1851, les Expositions Universelles représentent les avancées technologiques et culturelles de chaque pays participant. Les progrès importants qui y sont exposés font la fierté des pays participants et, plus important encore, leur sont propres. Les Expositions constituent ainsi une compétition positive de progrès et d'innovation entre les Participants. Il est devenu toutefois de plus en plus difficile, avec l'influence de la mondialisation et la généralisation des technologies numériques dans le monde, d'identifier la singularité des progrès technologiques de chaque pays.

Les entreprises évoluent de plus en plus dans un marché global, où l'échange de compétences, de savoir et d'expertise est continu. Les individus voyagent régulièrement et se déplacent de pays en pays, tandis que la conception et la fabrication des produits se font dans différentes parties du monde. Les techniques de fabrication sont partagées, les matériaux transportés à travers la planète, la conception pensée par des équipes internationales qui étudient et travaillent dans différents pays et, plus déterminant encore, l'accès facilité à l'Internet et aux flux de contenu provenant du monde entier, et potentiellement destiné à tout le monde, permettent une ouverture plus prononcée du monde et une atténuation des différences locales.

Les plus récentes éditions des Expositions Universelles reflètent cette nouvelle tendance ; les contributions de chaque pays semblent avoir de plus en plus de caractéristiques communes. Concepteurs, techniques de constructions et matériaux sont échangés entre les pays. Si cette transformation peut être considérée à court-terme comme une perte d'identité nationale et un nivèlement des particularités individuelles, cette tendance peut en revanche, en adoptant un point de vue plus large, être considérée comme un important pas en avant vers la création d'une contribution internationale aux Expositions Universelles.

Cet article contextualise et s'interroge sur cet important changement. Il affirme que, prises dans leur intégralité, les contributions nationales ont un rôle capital dans la création de quelque chose de plus grand et de plus important que l'ensemble des parties individuelles. Comme par le passé, les Expositions Universelles sont à l'avant-garde du progrès humain. Cependant, cette fois-ci, elles le sont à une échelle mondiale, une échelle où les individus de tous les pays collaborent pour créer ensemble une nouvelle image du monde, plutôt qu'une image de leur propre pays.

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An aerial photograph of the British Pavilion at Expo 1967. The pavilion is a large, modern structure with a prominent Union Jack flag flying from a tall pole. The building's facade is composed of several large, angular, grey panels with a grid-like pattern of small, dark, diamond-shaped openings. A long, striped awning in shades of yellow, orange, and blue extends from the building. In the background, a large body of water is visible, and the word "BRITAIN" is partially visible on a structure to the right. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

**‘A multifaceted
diamond’
out of steel:
Exhibiting
the European
Communities
at Expo 1967**

Anastasia Remes

In the 1960s, the European Communities' Joint Press and Information Service promoted the newly established European institutions (The European Coal and Steel Community – ECSC – in 1951, the European Economic Community – EEC – and Euratom in 1957) with a variety of cultural diplomacy initiatives. These addressed both the citizens of their Member States and audiences outside of the Community territory. In this article, I look at the latter, by examining the pavilion that was developed for World Expo 1967 Montreal. After briefly introducing Expo 1967, and its theme “Man and his World” (*Terre des Hommes*), I discuss how the European Communities' pavilion came into being, and how a specific image of the European Communities was developed with a North American audience in mind. A description of the pavilion's exhibition and its main messages is complemented with a close analysis of the pavilion's aim to connect Europe's reputation as the Old Continent, historically and culturally rich, with Community-driven technological and economic innovation. Finally, I explore how the pavilion and its messages were received, and how the Joint Service reflected on its participation in Expo 1967.

Expo 1967's theme and the rapprochement of men

The first time the idea of holding a World Expo in Canada in the 1960s presented itself was just as Expo 1958 Brussels was coming to a close. While attending the Brussels event during its last month, Canadian Senator Mark Drouin proclaimed that Canada should host the next World Expo in 1967. Here, he argued, the nation would be able to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the Federation.¹ Yet when the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) organised a vote on what country would host the next Expo, Canada lost its bid to the Soviet Union.² In 1962, however, the Soviets retreated, and the BIE extended the invitation to Canada, which accepted the challenge and promptly established the Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition.

The confirmation in 1962 left the Canadian Corporation with just five years to conceptualise the event and execute its organisation. First of all, a location for the Expo had to be found. Montreal's mayor Jean Drapeau successfully lobbied to organise Expo 1967 in his city. He came up with an ambitious idea: to construct a new, artificial island, the Île Notre-Dame, in the middle of the St. Lawrence river, as well as to enlarge the existing Île Saint-Helène. This “newly configured phantasmagoric urban space”³ would become the site for the coming Expo.

In order to meet the BIE's requirement that a World Expo is organised around a general theme, in May 1963, a group of prominent Canadian intellectuals were invited to a hotel in Montebello, Quebec. The Montebello Group, as they would be nicknamed, was tasked with developing a theme for the upcoming Expo. They proposed to take the book *Terre des Hommes* by French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry as the inspiration for Montreal's Expo. In this autobiographical novel, which had first been published in 1939, the pioneering aviator reflects on episodes of his life in a philosophical manner.⁴ Gabrielle Roy, who was part of the Montebello group, discusses why *Terre des Hommes* was chosen in an official catalogue of Expo 1967. Roy states that in his writings, Saint-Exupéry enabled a view of the earth "[s]een from above and from a slight distance", in this way opening a perspective that was "quite different from what we are normally accustomed to. Often, immersed in the hub-bub of daily life, we are too busy competing with each other to stop and wonder at its grandeur."⁵ Taking *Terre des Hommes* as inspiration thus allowed for a representation of the world that was abstracted from everyday realities.

The starting point for the Montebello group, the "one firm basis of accord [that] was established",⁶ was a shared faith in progress. Yet what they understood under progress was quite different from the concept of progress that was promoted by the World Expos that took place in the first half of the 20th century. Indeed, the Montebello group agreed that "[r]ather than the acquisition of more material and spiritual ease, progress should signify an increasingly equitable human distribution of misfortune and advantage", "to work towards a gradual 'rapprochement' of all men of every condition and origin."⁷ In a similar vein to the previous Expo in Brussels in 1958, the organisers of Expo 1967 thus proclaimed that the event could be an impetus for rediscovering "a sense of human dignity which comes from the bonds uniting

Overview of Expo 1967 Montreal with the France and United Kingdom pavilions in the background



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the community of men”.⁸ The Expo’s Commissioner General Pierre Dupuy argued that the ‘shrinking’ of the planet had had the most direct impact on contemporary civilisation,⁹ thus echoing the scholarship of Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan, who had developed his theory on the global village in the early 1960s.¹⁰

These ideas were also reflected in the writings of one of the early theme developers, architect Blanche Lemco van Ginkel. In January 1963, she had presented a concept for Expo 1967 at the *Congrès de l’Association des Architectes de la province de Québec*. She argued that in a truly international exhibition, there was no place for national pavilions. Rather, she believed that in Expo 1967, the exhibits should be displayed in pavilions that highlighted different aspects of the general theme.¹¹ With her plea, Lemco Van Ginkel touched upon a contradiction that is commonly present in World Expos’ relationship to nationalism. On the one hand, these events tend to promote a discourse of international collaboration, which is synthesised in a general theme. On the other hand, World Expos have functioned as one of the most important platforms for nation states – and empires – to stage themselves and have often been used as tools for national propaganda.¹²

In the end, at Expo 1967, the general theme “Man and his World” was exhibited in theme pavilions, which highlighted the four sub-themes of the Expo: Man the Explorer, Man the Creator, Man the Producer, and Man and the Community.¹³ National pavilions, however, remained a prominent feature of Expo 1967, with the pavilions of Canada, France, the United States and the Soviet Union attracting most attention in the press. Still, the international aspect of the Expo was certainly present on the site, maybe primarily in the pavilions of international organisations. The European Communities was one of them. In her 1963 presentation, Lemco Van Ginkel had already named the establishment of the Common Market, one of the Communities’ flagship programmes, as one of those events “that had fascinated the world in recent years”.¹⁴ Moreover, recent Expos had often included pavilions of international organisations. Themed “Building the World of Tomorrow”, Expo 1939 in New York had hosted a prominent pavilion of the League of Nations.¹⁵ Therefore, it was not surprising that the European Communities received an invitation to participate. The decision on whether to accept this invitation – and on how to realise the pavilion – was somewhat contentious, however, as we will see in the following section.

The Joint Service: developing the Community pavilion

In early June 1963, three invitation letters arrived at the European Communities. The EEC, the ECSC and Euratom were all invited by the Canadian Government to participate in the Expo that was due to open in Montreal in 1967.¹⁶ The evaluation about whether to participate was coordinated by the Communities’ Joint Press and Information Service’s *Conseil d’Administration*. This Joint Service had been established in 1960, joining the three separate services dedicated to press and information, to ensure a uniform political message.¹⁷ With the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, it had become clear that the European unification process was not limited to economic integration. The carriers of European integration hoped that in the long run, the European institutions would develop into a political organisation.¹⁸ Therefore the necessity of public



Overview of Expo 1967 Montreal with the pavilion of the United States (foreground) and the Soviet Union (background)

consensus became more apparent. The annual budget of the Joint Service almost doubled between 1961 and 1965, to reach the sum of 173.64 million Belgian francs.¹⁹ While in the earliest years, the Communities' information policy had been primarily directed towards elites, the focus gradually broadened to the entire European public. Everyone had to be addressed, if the rise of a European consciousness were to be stimulated.

The Joint Service not only developed materials for the European public, it was also responsible for cultivating the image of the European Communities abroad. The European Communities engaged in a variety of public diplomacy initiatives. Diplomatic visits of European officials to the United States were accompanied with large public relations campaigns, with this theatrical staging attempting to turn them from technocrats into statesmen.²⁰ Another, more enduring initiative to ensure the visibility of the European Communities was the establishment of information offices. Besides setting up offices in the Member States (Rome, Bonn, Paris), as early as December 1954, the European Coal and Steel Community had opened an information office in Washington.²¹ Moreover, the establishment of diplomatic representations to the Communities in Brussels validated the significance of the European Communities as an international actor. Canada, too, had appointed an ambassador in 1960. In fact, the invitation to participate in Expo 1967 was likely sent at the insistence of Sydney D. Pierce, the first Canadian ambassador to the Communities in Brussels.²²

Despite its young age, the European Communities already had quite substantial experience in developing contributions for exhibitions, which ranged from World Expos of the first

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European Steel and Coal Community pavilion at Expo 1958 Brussels



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category, to rather insignificant local fairs. These events were considered to be an excellent way to “divulge and promote the idea of European unification to hundreds of thousands of visitors.”²³ At Expo 1958 Brussels’ *Cité de la coopération mondiale*, the European Coal and Steel Community had erected an ambitious pavilion, which boasted an impressive model of a coal mine in its basement. Inside, the growth of the coal and steel industries was showcased, and the emerging social policies of the Community were exhibited, to stress that the institutions improved conditions for European workers.²⁴ Furthermore, a contribution had already been developed for an Expo outside of the Community territory, at World Expo 1962 Seattle, the ‘Century 21 Exhibition’.²⁵ It was with this experience in mind that the Commissions of the three organisations fairly quickly agreed to participate in the event with a joint pavilion.

Yet setting up this pavilion was a costly experiment, and a budget had to be provided on top of the normal working budget of the Joint Service. These additional funds had to be approved by the Council of Ministers, which, through the financial provisions of the EEC Treaty, could exert economic pressure on the executives.²⁶ The Council of Ministers was rather suspicious of the Communities’ information initiatives in third countries, as Member States, and France in particular, wanted to avoid European interference in the realm of foreign policy.²⁷ This became especially significant in the mid-1960s, as the executives were being challenged by Charles De Gaulle, the President of the French Republic. Opposition reached a peak in 1965 during the so-called Empty Chair Crisis, when France boycotted the Council of Ministers. This unwelcoming climate explains why the initial budget proposed by the Press and Information Service of 120 million Belgian francs was almost halved. When the Council of Ministers finally decided that the European Communities would participate in Expo 1967, the budget was set at 70 million.²⁸ Even though this agreement stipulated that this budget remained somewhat flexible, this was not the case in the end. When an additional 15 million was requested due to rising constructing costs in October 1966, only 5 million was granted. This led to significant adjustments to the exhibition inside the pavilion, as we will see later on.

The late acceptance of the Council to participate in Expo 1967 left the Joint Press and Information Service with just two years to conceive and execute the pavilion. By early 1965, the majority of the plots on the future Expo site had already been assigned. A central position for the Community pavilion, surrounded by its Member States, was therefore no longer possible. The Joint Service was very much aware of the importance of the location of the pavilion as is proven by the declaration that it would be “out of question to place the European Communities (...) between Hungary and South Africa, or between Portugal and Australia”.²⁹ Moreover, a position too close to the pavilions of other international organisations, such as the United Nations, UNESCO or the OECD was deemed problematic.³⁰ In the end, the lot awarded to the European Communities was located on Île Notre-Dame, just across the pavilion of Germany, and near an Expo train station.

Various committees were set up to prepare the European Communities' contribution. The *comité des idées* was the first one to be established; it brought together the Commissioners General from the Member States' pavilions. In fact, five out of the six countries (with the exception of Luxembourg) would be participating in Expo 1967, and the committee met once a month to discuss a common position and especially “to avoid the duplication of effort between the pavilion of the Communities and those of the Member States”.³¹ The conceptualisation of the pavilion and its various sections was entrusted to the architects André Crivelli, Augusta Desideria Serafini-Pozzi and Hans Bowenter, from France, Italy and Germany respectively.

In total, 15 architects, engineers and decorators and more than 100 experts from the six Community countries would take part in developing the pavilion.³² Moreover, all the texts in the exhibition were reviewed by the *Chefs de Cabinet*, the spokespersons of the three Communities and the members of the Joint Press and Information Service. The preparation of the pavilion was coordinated by the *comité permanent d'organisation*. René Lamy, the Head of the Joint Service's section devoted to fairs and exhibitions, was named Deputy Commissioner General, but during the initial period this meant that he acted as the *de facto* Commissioner General. Indeed, it took until the summer of 1966 for a Commissioner General to be appointed: Gerhard Ritter, who had been the Director of the Joint Research Centre in Ispra until that time.³³

Exhibiting Europe to Americans

Expo 1967 Montreal posed a challenge to the Joint Service, as the Communities' pavilion would be visited by an entirely different audience than the pavilions at European fairs. The overwhelming majority of visitors were expected to come from Canada and the United States.³⁴ Moreover, the Community's civil servants anticipated that a different segment of the population would be attending the Expo, than the audience they usually addressed in European fairs. Since Americans had a higher standard of living compared to Europeans, the European officials assumed that they would deal with a larger and more diverse audience than those who usually attended fairs

The Joint Service believed that it should not “disappoint the American and the Canadian for whom Europe is the last refuge of art and taste”

The pavilion was designed as a diamond with multiple facets, symbolising a Europe whose influence radiates under many and varied forms

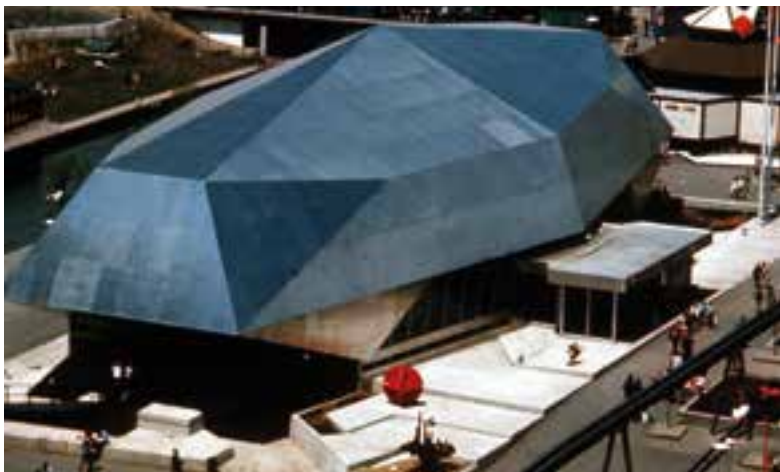
in Europe. With this, they also meant that the segment of the population that was less educated and less wealthy would be able to attend the Expo. While the information provided in the pavilion had to be accessible enough for everyone to understand, at the same time the Joint Service believed that it should not “disappoint the American and the Canadian for whom Europe is the last refuge of art and taste”.³⁵

Members of the Joint Service believed that the biggest challenge would be to interest visitors in the theme of European integration. Rather pessimistically, they stated that “not one in a hundred (or should we say, for our part, not one in 10,000) will be interested in our problems or our results in detail”.³⁶ Visitors of Expo 1967 thus had to be encouraged to step into the European pavilion, an invitation which was also reflected in the slogan of the pavilion “Take a stroll in Europe”. In order to draw visitors’ attention, and to seduce them to come have a look inside, a spectacular exterior for the pavilion had to be envisioned. The historian Jules Gérard-Libois, who was the Communities’ Honorary Director of Communication, stated that:

“The architectural design of the pavilion must itself be an element of attraction, so that the visitor, who by chance, did not see it, feels frustrated. But we usually have neither the attraction of power (United States, USSR) nor the appeal of sentiment (France, Great Britain). We need to bet on (...) the innovative – bold – spectacular character of the pavilion itself.”³⁷

The pavilion’s architecture that was chosen was highly symbolic, primarily through its hexagonal shape, alluding to the six Member States of the Communities. The flags of the Six were displayed next to the pavilion’s entrance. Expo 1967’s official guide stated that the architectural concept was supposed to evoke “the form of a diamond with multiple facets, symbolising a Europe whose influence radiates under many and varied forms.”³⁸

The steel ‘diamond’ roof of the European Communities’ pavilion



The building referenced the ECSC, the first Community organisation, in two ways. The image of the diamond alluded to the coal industry, since a diamond is “carbon in its most durable and expensive form”, as a journalist pointed out.³⁹ The reference to the steel industry was more literal: the roof of the pavilion was constructed out of layered ‘sandwich panels’, with a stainless-steel exterior. This roof structure was very complicated to realise, and due to unforeseen rising construction costs, more than half of the budget provided for the Communities’ participation in Expo 1967 ended up

being spent on building the pavilion.⁴⁰

The influence of Europe in the world – and the Communities' 'multifaceted' initiatives and activities – were to be explored in the exhibition inside, which was mainly laid out on two levels: B and C, with level A dedicated to the pavilion's restaurant.

To René Lamy, just as to Jules Gérard-Libois, it was clear that the European pavilion would not be able to compete with the grandiosity of some of the national pavilions, even those of its Member States. Therefore, he argued it was necessary for the European Communities to showcase what they could offer, on top of the national displays. He argued that the pavilion had to focus on the European story, when he said that it should:

“Simply raise awareness on what they [the European Communities] added, by bringing together people and opening for them the path of well-being and peace, as well as to the common heritage of Europeans. And also to showcase, modestly, the place now occupied by the European Community, with its new common institutions, with its new community spirit, with its new common economic and social rules, on this “*Terre des Hommes*” that symbolises the Exposition.”⁴¹

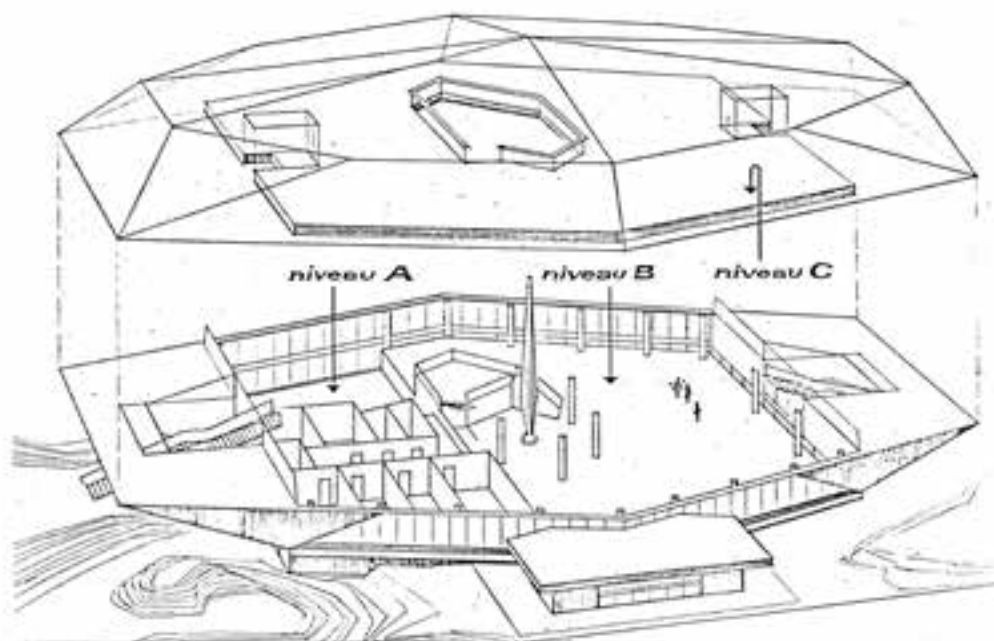
All of these elements were supposed to be visible in the foyer of the exhibition, which was the first station on level B.

Here visitors were greeted by the pavilion's hostesses, young Canadian women with European roots, who had completed courses on European history, economy and geography, the cultural history of Europe and the origins of European integration. They introduced visitors to the main themes of the exhibition. In the foyer, they would hopefully get a first impression of Europe as “a unity of civilisation of culture, of work and of spirit of invention”.⁴²

Just opposite the entrance, visitors found a decorative map of the Community territory by artist Ado Chale. The motive of the map of the Six as one, without visible internal borders between the Member States, was very similar to the ECSC's emblem that had been developed for its pavilion in Expo 1958. Yet there was one notable difference: in 1967, official representations of the Community's territory also included West Berlin. The construction of the Berlin Wall had started in 1961. This tiny dot of Berlin – and the empty space surrounding it – might have reminded visitors to Expo 1967 of the threat of the Soviet Union in the East. Moreover, it may have suggested that the European Communities could offer a way to mitigate it.



Photograph of map designed by Ado Chale for the European Communities pavilion (photographer unknown)



A look inside the three levels of the Community pavilion*

The text accompanying the map stated that six countries were “determined to lay the foundations of an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe”, part of the preamble of the Treaty of Rome.⁴³

To the left of the map, visitors found the display entitled “Europe Yesterday and Today”.⁴⁴ Here, two objects were exhibited side by side: a 17th century tapestry and a nuclear research device from the European research centre in Ispra. According to the pavilion’s brochure, the juxtaposition of these two objects was supposed to signify both “Europe’s glorious past and [...] the priority it accords to progress”.⁴⁵ This display

encapsulated the narrative of the entire exhibition, which attempted to connect the supposed greatness of the European past and the progress achieved and pursued by the European Communities. As we will see later on, representing a Europe at once ancient and modern was one of the main concerns of the creators of the exhibition.

The European past was also the topic of other displays on level B. The section on ‘Great Europeans’ meant to showcase the “contribution of Europe to the Culture and Civilisation of the entire world”.⁴⁶ Selected Europeans, who had made substantial contributions to music, art, literature, philosophy, natural science, technology and medicine, were exhibited here. Additionally, a catalogue named approximately 1,000 men who should be remembered as Great Europeans, with Jane Austen being one of the only women figuring on the list.

Another way to showcase the cultural contribution of Europe to the world – but this

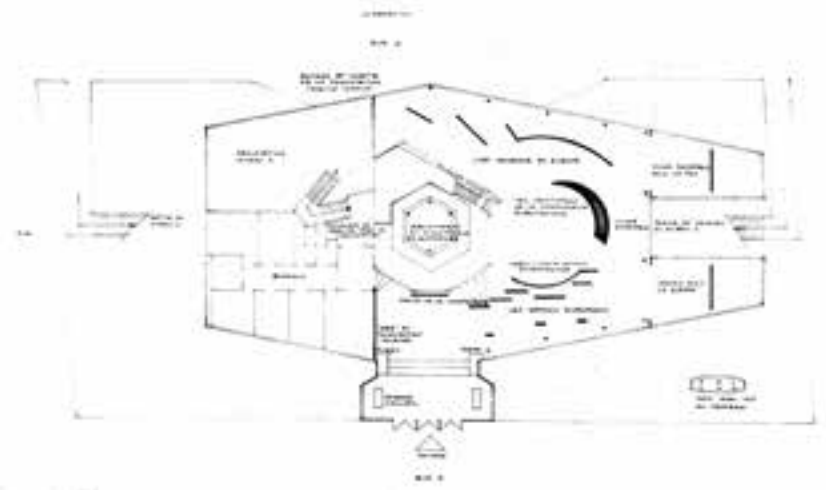
Representing a Europe at once ancient and modern was one of the main concerns of the creators of the exhibition

* Commissariat Général des Communautés Européennes près l’Exposition Universelle de Montréal. *Pavillon des Communautés européennes*, 1967 (technical drawing), BAC-0162/2012_0026, p. 9, HAEU, Florence, Italy.

time in the present day – was explored in an exhibition of modern art. Further onwards, a display on the choice of Europeans to turn away from wars, and on the decision to live together in peace, was followed by a timeline which recounted the process of unification, ending with didactic display on the new Community institutions that had been founded. After a visit to the pavilion's bookshop and record library, visitors took the escalator up to the level B to visit the second half of the exhibition.

Upstairs, on level C, the pavilion was dedicated to the steps the Community institutions had taken so far. One of the main initiatives to promote was the establishment of the Common Market, which resulted in the gradual suppression of trade barriers between the Community's Members States. It was so central, in fact, that the name of the pavilion on its façade was not 'European Communities' but rather 'Common Market', which was sometimes used as the synonym of the Community institutions, the EEC.

Originally, the Joint Service had come up with ambitious plans for its displays on the Common Market in the pavilion. Diorama's of real-time department store windows from different European cities would be changed every month. Another, rather innovative, idea was to offer visitors the ability to select videos on topics that particularly interested them. In this way, the pavilion could function as a proper "image distribution centre".⁴⁷ Yet due to budget cuts, the display on the Common Market ended up being more modest. When visitors pressed buttons, displays comparing the Community's production of electricity, steel, cars, textiles and wheat to the production of the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and Canada would light up. Furthermore, information panels stressed the significance of the Six as importers and exporters of products.⁴⁸ All of these exhibits were supposed to stress the importance of the European Community, not only for Europe, but also as an international actor.



Top: Level B floorplan.
Bottom: Level C floorplan*



* Commissariat Général des Communautés européennes près l'Exposition Universelle de Montréal. *Pavillon des Communautés européennes*, 1967, (technical drawing), BAC-0162/2012_0026, p. 21 (top) and page 42 (bottom), HAEU, Florence, Italy.



The image on the left shows a sketch of an infographic that was prepared for the exhibition. It declared that the Community was a “comparable and equivalent” partner to the United States and to the Soviet Union, due to its number of consumers and its steel production. The fact that the citizens of the Community’s Member States were defined as ‘consumers’ rather than ‘citizens’ suggests that the message pointed more to Europe’s political economy, rather than demonstrating a concern for a genuine political community. The United Kingdom’s consumers were also mentioned as, even after De Gaulle’s veto to British accession to the European Communities, it was considered a possibility in the foreseeable future that the United Kingdom would join. With the inclusion of the British economy, the infographic showed that the Communities would bypass the Soviet Union and the United States, at least in terms of consumers and steel production.

On the map, Community territory and “other (Western) European countries” are highlighted. Yet attention is also called to the countries associated with the Community ‘until this day’, thus indicating that this was an open-ended process. Next to Greece (1961) and Turkey (1963), the dotted territory also includes the Associated African States and Madagascar (AASM), which had signed the Yaoundé Convention in 1963.

Building on the clauses of the 1957 Treaty of Paris, it established the principle of free trade between the Community and the 18 AASM countries. Many of these countries had still been colonies of the European Coal and Steel Community’s Member States when it was established. The exhibition carefully avoided any references to European countries losing their colonies and thus political control over these territories. At the same time, information on the Yaoundé Convention was provided to showcase how through multilateral agreements, the European Communities ensured continued access to Sub-Saharan Africa, its natural resources, and its markets.

A slide-show accompanied by an audio recording aimed to promote the European Development Fund, which had been set up in 1957. The transcription of the audio reveals the neo-colonial reframing of an old narrative of Africa developing primarily through investment and technological innovations from Europe. Moreover, it sounds like the agricultural reforms had devastating effects on biodiversity:

“A land of sunshine and light, of bush and jungle, Africa is also a place where men live. [...] Eighteen countries, associated with the European Community, are expecting financial aid and technical assistance from Europe. [...] On the Ivory Coast, some 80,000 acres of jungle have been cleared and thousands of palm trees now stretch as far as the eye can see. Rice grown from seed brought

Consumers in the Common Market*

* Commissariat Général des Communautés Européennes près l’Exposition Universelle de Montréal. *Pavillon des Communautés européennes* (sketch for infographic), BAC-0162/2012_0020, p.52, HAEU, Florence, Italy.

in from another continent will keep famine at bay and cotton piles up white as snow drifts."⁴⁹

At the two corners of the second floor, there were two small projection rooms, where movies produced by the Joint Service, as well as by the Member States, were shown.⁵⁰ One movie, entitled *Canadian in Europe*, was made especially for the pavilion. Its main message was that Europe had become an economic entity of a global scale, while it had also managed to retain its 'traditional charm'.⁵¹

Finally, on level A, due to budget restraints, the fine dining restaurant, which had been foreseen, was replaced by a simpler *salle de dégustation*, or a 'sampling room'. By visiting the restaurant, and the pavilion at large, North American visitors could spend a few hours living *à l'euro péenne*, and could have a taste of the European lifestyle.⁵² The menu stressed that, thanks to the Common Market, these diverse European delicacies were now available to all Europeans in the Member States. The fact that the food was served on luxury porcelain, which visitors could select from a range of tableware from 38 producers, gave the restaurant a distinct appeal.⁵³

European dynamism in the past and present

World Expos are probably most well-known as places of innovation, as sites where utopian visions of the future are made visible. Here, visitors count on encountering the newest inventions, and getting previews of the latest technologies and their promising applications in industry. Yet more often than not, in national pavilions, these displays of modernity have been accompanied with exhibits whose purpose was to cultivate the image of the specific historical and cultural identity of the nation.⁵⁴ With the exhibited historical artefacts, but also through the architectural styles, displays of the fine arts and vernacular culture, Expo pavilions attempted to present the nation with distinction. An invention of the mid-19th century, national pavilions in World Expos rose at the same time as other initiatives to promote nation-building were being explored. Indeed, parallel to these mega-events, national history museums were established to present 'invented traditions' and construct invented national communities.⁵⁵

Building a new invented community was the purpose of the European Communities Joint Service's engagement in memory politics in the 1950s and 1960s. The material they prepared, which ranged from brochures, radio programmes to movies, often referenced the past. It generally argued that despite the recent bloody wars, which had been spurred by violent nationalism, there was an essential European civilisation that the citizens of Member States could find unity in.⁵⁶ Moreover, Europe's



European Communities pavilion at Expo 1967 Montreal

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cultural heritage was invoked to lend legitimacy to the new Community, which now worked to ensure European unity. As we will see, the narrative of the 1967 pavilion shows that the Joint Service also believed these messages were relevant to a North American audience. Yet how to represent the past was not uncontroversial, as just as with the data on contemporary developments, the story about the past was the result of a careful deliberation.

One historical event which European officials deemed they should exhibit was the Second World War. It had been a foundational moment for the establishment of the first Community organisation, the so-called ‘year zero’. Serafini-Pozzi, the

architect who was in charge of the conception of this section, suggested representing this difficult period of the European past by having visitors pass through a grey and black area, where the ruins of war would be represented, after which a bright zone emerged representing life in peacetime.⁵⁷ Yet the Head of the Joint Service, Jacques-René Rabier, wrote a letter to Gerhard Ritter, the pavilion’s Commissioner General, in which he voiced his concern about this proposal. He argued that the exhibition should not focus on the war’s ruins, but rather show “the future, youth, progress, hope etc.”⁵⁸ In the end, the Second World War was displayed through a very abstract, artistic representation of war, accompanied with the caption “Never again”.⁵⁹ In the pavilion’s brochure, the Second

World War is not mentioned explicitly, rather it stated that “despite having a common civilisation, the peoples of Europe have long been divided by bloody strife”.⁶⁰

Most other displays, unsurprisingly, showcased more positive aspects of the European past, promoting the contributions Europe had made to the development of civilisation. The display on ‘Great Europeans’ did so most literally, but also the restaurant with its gourmet products was supposed to reference Europe as a place of fine taste, presumably in particular to meet the expectation of the pavilion’s upper-class visitors. In any case, the members of the Joint Service argued that while there was a need to show Europe as a place of “culture, art, charm and good taste”, the new advanced techniques and economic means also had to be made visible.⁶¹ The two faces of Europe had to be exhibited: not only the Europe of “the cathedrals, the arts, gastronomy, but also of the major industrial complexes, social progress and the atom”.⁶² Showcasing the latter was supposed to take away the concern that Expo visitors might consider Europe to be just “a museum where you eat well,” as a common American expression at the time declared.⁶³

Therefore, the second floor of the pavilion was dedicated to the modernity of Europe, and particularly showcased the latest economic and technical realisations of the Communities. The cinema, too, was supposed to showcase the modern face of Europe, for instance with a film on the European schools that had been established for the children of Community officials. Here, the film argued, the first generation of real Europeans was educated. Furthermore, the fine arts exhibition on level B was to showcase the modernity of Europe through the selection of contemporary artists. André Lamy had originally envisioned a small museum that could give a certain dignity

*Europe’s cultural heritage
was invoked to lend legitimacy
to the new Community,
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to ensure European unity*

to the pavilion's atmosphere, as it could "symbolise the perennity of Europe."⁶⁴ He stressed that with the inclusion of ancient art, one could showcase Europe as a "land of traditions"⁶⁵ and thus offer a contrast to the modern Europe that was characterised by the construction of nuclear reactors. A jury with experts from the six Member States, however, convinced him otherwise. They argued that since the most modern economic science was applied in the Common Market, art of the present day had to be selected. The exhibition catalogue explicitly stressed the temporal link between the artworks represented and the European integration process, as the artists selected "were asserting themselves at the same time as the European Community was emerging, taking shape and developing".⁶⁶

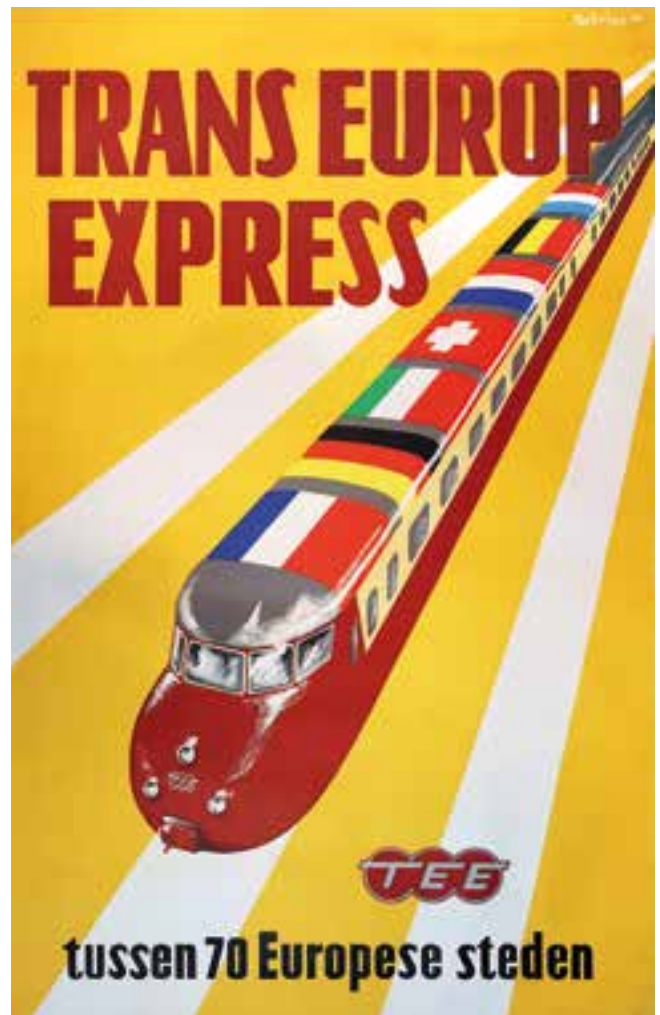
Rather than presenting the new, modern institutions as a breaking point, a new start, the continuities between Europe's past and present were cultivated. Indeed, the visitor was supposed to leave the pavilion with the impression of a Europe that is "the old land that advances and progresses, while also preserving the riches of its past".⁶⁷ Even more, he should notice the similarities between the ancient and modern realisations,⁶⁸ as the following quote shows:

"It would certainly be appropriate to insist on the continuity of a Europe which seeks itself, a continuity of which we find the testimony from the Roman roads to the itineraries of the pilgrims of the Middle Ages and from these to the networks of the TEE, after passing through the major cultural currents of Humanism and the Renaissance."⁶⁹

The TEE was the Trans Europ Express, a first-class railway service that had been established in 1957. Contemporary developments towards European unity were thus inserted into historical currents whose greatness seemed undeniable. Through this meticulously constructed narrative, the European Communities were represented as the legitimate carrier of this age-old dynamic towards European unity.

Reception and evaluation

In its final report on the Communities' participation in Expo 1967, the Joint Service offered a somewhat critical reflection on both the achievements and challenges of its pavilion. Due to the rising construction costs, over half of the available budget



Poster advertising the Trans Europ Express railway service

had been spent on building the exterior shell of the pavilion, which had led to insufficient funds for realising the exhibition inside. Moreover, the report states that the Czechoslovakian pavilion, a visitor favourite, showed that a spectacular exterior was not essential for the pavilion to be a success.⁷⁰ The investment in the steel-clad diamond pavilion may not even have been really worth it, as a report by the Canadian Ministers of Industry and Commerce called the building bulky and unattractive, despite the usage of expensive materials.⁷¹

In the Canadian press reports on the Expo, the European Communities' pavilion did not come up much. European newspapers, too, reported on it less than they did for Expo 1958 Brussels. Moreover, rather than engaging critically with the pavilion and its exhibits, they just copied the information provided in the press release.⁷² Yet despite the relative lack of press attention, the pavilion managed to attract a good number of visitors. Based on reports of the hostesses, the amount of Expo visitors that had made their way into the European pavilion was estimated at 2 million, a quite substantial number given that the United States and France, two of the most popular pavilions, both registered 9 million visits. Another Europe-based organisation with a pavilion at the fair, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), only received 300,000 visitors.⁷³

Around 60 heads of state or government made official visits to the pavilion. However, the Joint Service was especially interested to learn more about the profile of the regular visitors that came into the pavilion. A company was hired to undertake a survey among the pavilion's audience during the last two months of the Expo. 378 visitors filled in a questionnaire, which tried to find out more about the visitors' background, and about whether they had successfully understood the pavilion's message.⁷⁴ Almost 20 per cent of those interviewed said they were Europeans, even if the majority among them were living in Canada and the United States.⁷⁵ People who completed a higher level of education and businessmen were more likely to state that they were interested in European affairs.⁷⁶ Over 70 per cent of visitors declared they had entered the pavilion because they wanted to inform themselves on the issues treated in the exhibition.

To the question, 'What do you think the pavilion intended to communicate?', answers were varied. According to the survey report, the main message of the pavilion was the following: "to show the main achievements of the Common Market and highlight the beginnings of the construction of a unified European government so that visitors understand the Common Market a little better".⁷⁷ Yet only 35 per cent of visitors answered the question correctly. The pavilion's secondary messages, such as the cooperation among nations and the scientific, cultural and artistic progress of Europe also came up frequently in the visitors' answers.⁷⁸

In any case, the large majority of the visitors believed the pavilion had made a convincing argument and 85 per cent of them stated they agreed with what had been shown. Moreover, for many, this had been the first time they had heard about the Common Market. To ensure that the awareness on the existence of the European institutions would outlast the duration of the event, a research centre on European issues was established in Montreal. As the Expo came to a close, the publications that had been available in the pavilion were donated to this institution.⁷⁹



The pavilions of the United Kingdom (foreground) and France (background) at Expo 1967 Montreal

Conclusion

Cultural diplomacy has recently become central to the European Union's interaction with countries outside of its territory. Yet this concern has shaped the work of the Communities' civil servants working in the field of information from the very beginning. Looking at World Expos shows that the European Communities used this platform to inform citizens abroad about the project of European unification and to promote the European Communities, which were carrying this process.

Despite being an international organisation, which was open to the accession of new Member States, the European Community engaged in the same state-building practices as nations did at the time. In its Montreal pavilion, the map of the Community, clearly delineating its territory and outer borders, was found throughout the pavilion. The Communities' participation in Expo 1967 was characterised by the type of representation usually reserved to nation states. Yet in contrast to the context of national pavilions, which had a century of experience in participating in World Expos to lean on, the European Communities had to start from scratch. The process of European unification was a new experiment at the time, and was not well known, especially in North America.

Looking closely at the exhibition in the European pavilion, it becomes clear that its narratives were translated for foreign audience, and that messages were shaped to interest the North American profile of the visitors. Yet the pavilion wanted to reach businessmen rather than the average working-class visitor, as the former needed to be made aware of the integration of Europe and the new institutions. The members of the Joint Service assumed that these elites had visited Europe and wanted to meet their expectations of a pavilion that would showcase Europe as a place of culture, of history and tradition.

The Communities' participation in Expo 1967 was characterised by the type of representation usually reserved to nation states

On the ground floor, the exhibition highlighted various aspects of the European past, for instance in its display on Great Europeans. Of course, these exhibits were not characterised by a concern for history “for history’s sake”, rather they held quite explicit political objectives. While in the material prepared for the citizens of the Communities’ Member States, a shared European past was narrated to stimulate the rise of a European consciousness, the pavilion at Expo 1967 had a different intention. In Montreal, the historical significance of Europe was highlighted to showcase how this legacy was recuperated in the present through the works of the European Communities. The members of the Joint Service worried that Europe might be perceived as a ‘museum’ rather than a modern power. In fact, the very reference to the European past were supposed to highlight its dynamism. The second floor, which showcased initiatives of the Communities, was supposed to reflect the vitality of Europe in the present day. The fact that the pavilion intended to showcase a multifaceted Europe meant that it was not evident for visitors to identify the main message of the pavilion. While the goal of the pavilion was to showcase the progress and modernity of Europe, this message got blurred through the many displays which referenced Europe's historical significance.

Still, the pavilion, and especially the documents that provide testimony to the process of conceptualising the exhibition, tell us an important story on the Joint Service. It provides a window into how its members viewed the position of Europe in the world and what they considered to be the best way to promote the institution abroad. By highlighting Community performance in steel, agriculture and trade, the Joint Service wanted the European Communities to be perceived as an economic power, in its own right. Indeed,

there was no mention of the Marshall plan, which had coordinated the United States’ aid in the reconstruction of Europe; neither was the importance of the trans-Atlantic alliance for the Communities mentioned. In this respect, the pavilion reveals a proto-assertion of European autonomy, a continent that has risen quickly from its post-war destruction. Moreover, through the displays of the EC as an international actor and especially its agreements with countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the exhibition seemed to suggest the United States could continue to depend on Europe to exert influence on this area, even after the rapid process of decolonisation throughout the previous decade.

European Community pavilion at Expo 1970 Osaka



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OSAKA 1970 OFFICIAL PHOTO ALBUM

While some displays may not have been as convincing or formally innovative due to financial push-back from the Council of Ministers, the overall reception of the pavilion was rather positive. Despite the small budget, the large majority of visitors were impressed with the exhibit and agreed with its message. The appreciation was especially high among businessmen, the demographic the Joint Service especially wanted to reach. The Joint Service was generally satisfied with the experience, so much so, in fact, that its members would make sure that the Communities would take part in the next World Expo, in Osaka in 1970, and in every World Expo that followed ever since.

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- 2 Bellat, *Les Amériques des architectes soviétiques*, p. 236.
- 3 Highmore, "Into the Labyrinth: Phantasmagoria at Expo 67," p. 139.
- 4 Saint-Exupéry, *Terre Des Hommes*.
- 5 Roy, "The theme unfolded by Gabrielle Roy", in: *Catalogue Terre des Hommes*, p. 21, P 312 - 1990-10-059/6, Fonds Compagnie canadienne de l'Exposition universelle de 1967, Centre Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BANQ) Vieux Montréal, Montreal, Canada.
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- 16 Lamy, "Note succincte relative à la participation des Communautés Européennes à l'Exposition de Montréal 1967 pour Rabier", 18 August 1967, BAC-0101-1999-0078, p.112-113, Historical Archives of the European Commission (HAEC), Brussels, Belgium.
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- 18 Campriani, "European Institutions and Information.," p. 548.
- 19 Ludlow, "Frustrated Ambitions. The European Commission and the Formation of a European Identity, 1958-67," p. 312.
- 20 Krumrey, *The Symbolic Politics of European Integration*, pp. 17-56.
- 21 Krumrey, p. 91.
- 22 Lamy, Note pour Rabier, 18 August 1967, BAC-0101-1999-0078, p.113, HAEC, Brussels, Belgium.
- 23 Hennigfeld, "Trente Ans d'activités de La Communauté Européenne Dans Le Domaine Des Foires et Expositions," 6. My translation.
- 24 Remes, "Exhibiting European Integration at Expo 58: The European Coal and Steel Community Pavilion."
- 25 Hennigfeld, "Trente Ans d'activités de La Communauté Européenne Dans Le Domaine Des Foires et Expositions," pp. 22-23.
- 26 Rye, "The Origins of Community Information Policy: Educating Europeans," p. 152.
- 27 Dumoulin, "What Information Policy?," p. 527.
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- 36 "Projet de présentation / Scénario", 31 March 1966, CEAB02-3539, HAEU, Florence, Italy. My translation.
- 37 "Memorandum de Rabier à Lamy", BAC 162_2012-20, p. 225, HAEC, Brussels, Belgium. My translation.
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- 46 "Compte-rendu des travaux pour la réalisation de l'EU des CE." September 1966, CEAB02-3539, HAEU, Italy, Florence. My translation.

- 47 "Les communautés européennes à l'exposition universelle et internationale de Montréal," BAC 162/2012-29, p. 432, HAEC, Brussels, Belgium.
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- 53 "Rapport Final Communautés Européennes à l'Expo 67", BAC 162/2012 67, p. 13, HAEC, Brussels, Belgium.
- 54 Smits and Jansen, "Staging the Nation at Expos and World's Fairs"; Greenhalgh, *Fair World*.
- 55 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*; Porciani, "Nations on Display: History Museums in Europe."
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Représenter les Communautés européennes à l'Expo 1967 : un diamant en acier aux multiples facettes

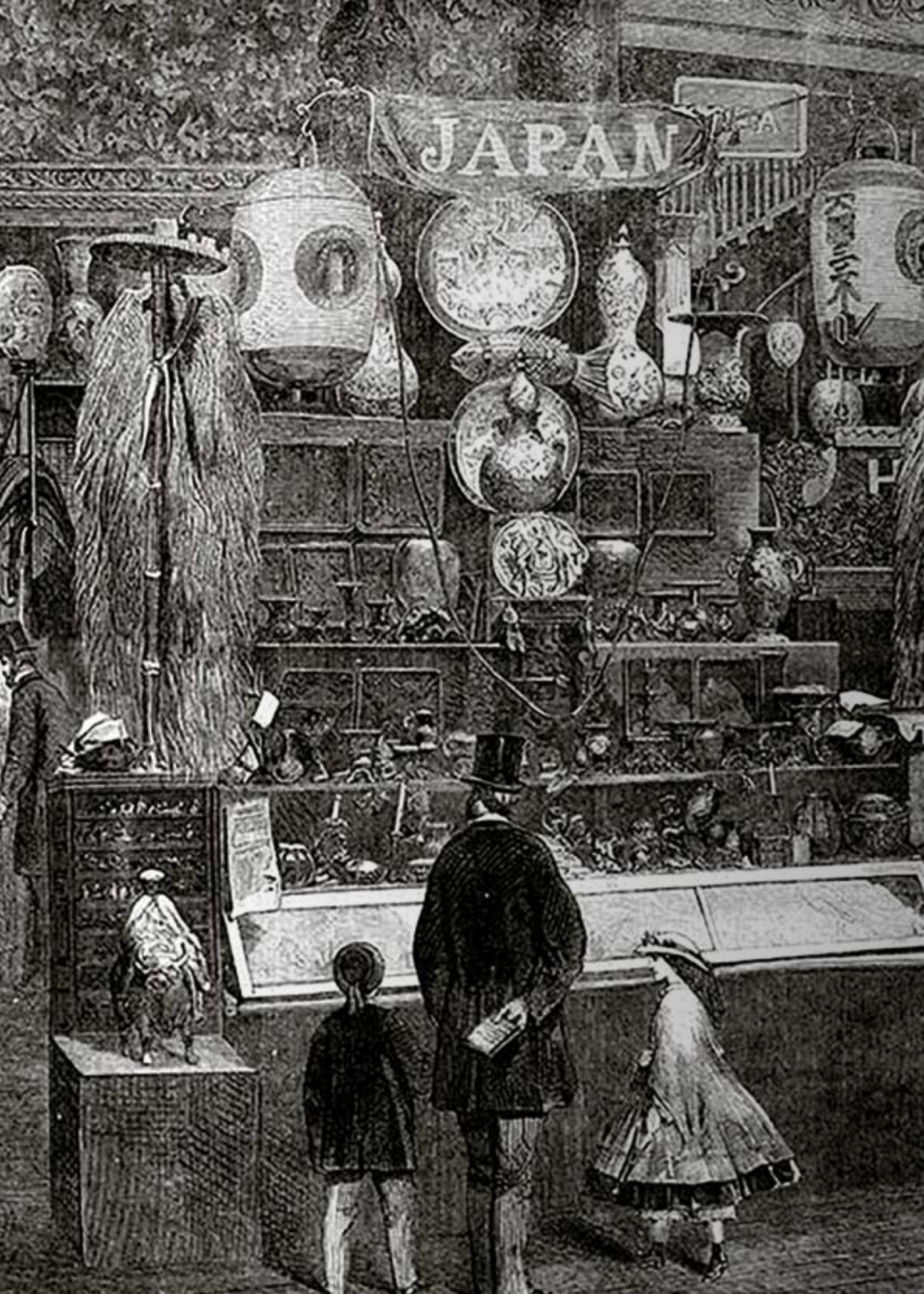
La diplomatie publique est désormais un thème central des recherches réalisées sur l'Union Européenne en tant qu'acteur international. L'importance grandissante de la culture dans les relations extérieures entretenues par l'UE a favorisé ce développement. L'implication de l'UE dans la diplomatie culturelle n'est cependant pas un phénomène récent. Les Communautés Européennes dialoguent en effet avec les publics étrangers dès le milieu des années 50 et les pavillons européens créés pour les salons et les expositions en étaient les principales manifestations.

Les Expositions Universelles constituent des étapes classiques dans la diplomatie publique ; leur rôle de plateforme de promotion de l'image de marque-pays est le sujet de nombreuses études. Cependant, peu d'études ont été consacrées à la manière dont les organisations internationales telles que l'UE ont utilisé leur participation aux Expositions Universelles pour accroître leur puissance d'influence (*Soft Power*). Ceci est l'objet de cet article, qui offre une analyse du pavillon de la Communauté Européenne à l'Exposition Universelle de 1967 à Montréal.

Le pavillon européen de l'Expo 1967 invitait les visiteurs à « faire un tour en Europe ». Apportant les informations les plus récentes quant au développement de l'intégration européenne au milieu des années 60, le pavillon en forme de diamant devait également représenter une Europe aux multiples facettes. Au moment du développement du concept de ce pavillon, les fonctionnaires européens avaient en tête un public nord-américain. Ils souhaitaient, d'une part, conforter l'image supposée des visiteurs se représentant l'Europe en tant que Vieux Continent de haute culture. D'autre part, ils aspiraient à mettre en avant l'innovation économique et technologique créée sous l'impulsion de la Communauté. Les visiteurs devaient comprendre que cette « région séculaire avance et progresse en conservant les richesses de son passé ». En retraçant le processus de planification, et en analysant ses présentations, cet article étudie l'histoire politique du pavillon européen. Son objectif principal est alors d'examiner la manière dont le pavillon européen à Montréal tendait à forger un avenir pour les Communautés par une conciliation du passé et du présent.

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JAPAN





**Nothing
but nation
building:
Promoting
Japan's
national image
at early Expos**

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Cover image: An illustration of Japan's section at Expo 1862 London

It was in the 1850s that Japanese policymakers had to become conscious of securing a good position for the country in international society, whilst putting an end to the so-called 'seclusion policy' maintained for more than two centuries. At that time, Japan was under the rule of the early-modern regime, the Tokugawa shogunate. During that decade, not only did Western diplomats arrive at Japan's shore, but they also started to reside in the country, and several first treaties were signed between the shogunate and the respective countries to mark 'friendship' and to allow 'free' trade. In the first stage, the Japan side was rather passive but the officials on the frontlines of interaction soon began to act more proactively for a better standing of the country. Particularly, the new Government that was installed in 1868 perceived of utmost importance to create and promote the nation's pre-eminent image as the possessor of a long, respectful history and a producer of highly artisanal, interesting articles.

The 'modernisation' of a non-Western nation is generally regarded as a process entailing an improvement in social systems as well as people's behaviour and ideas which took place within the national borders, though pressed by external factors in many cases. A much-overlooked aspect of this historical process in Japan was that it was inseparable from more outward motivations and was interdependent with efforts to renew the nation's image and possibly make it shine in international society. Both the outer and inner aspects were indispensable for surviving in the rapidly expanding Euro-centric world surrounding the nation, which was the ultimate purpose of nation building.

Expos at the time served as the unrivalled stage for such national efforts of Japan, and it is no exaggeration to say that Japan's modernisation was intertwined primarily with the history of Expos.

From this perspective, in the following pages, I will look at the course that Japan followed as an eager participant in Expos. Rather than the contents of the exhibitions, I will discuss political leaders' changing views and motivation towards national branding, the means they chose, and the results they achieved. I should start by touching upon Japan's first participation in Expo 1862 London, and then proceed to spotlight some chosen Expos where certain turns of Japanese efforts are illuminated clearly; these are Expo 1873 Vienna, Expo 1893 Chicago, and Expo 1904 St. Louis. Then, I will also consider Japan's early ambition to

*Japan's modernisation
was intertwined primarily
with the history of Expos*

host an Expo in 1912 which was not realised. Thus, the major chronological focus of the paper will be on the 19th and early 20th centuries – when Japan most critically relied on Expos for its international standing – but the concluding section will slightly touch upon Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai that Japan is now preparing for, based on historical analysis.

Japan's international début: Expo 1862 London

Expo 1862 London was the first Expo in which Japan participated. As this was the starting point of Japan's national brand making that evolved thereafter, it would be worth discussing briefly how it happened. Above all, the fact that Japan participated in that Expo was related interestingly with the basic, original framework of an Expo itself – that Expos were and still are sustained by the official diplomatic channels between nation states.

When the renowned Expo 1851 London was held, Japan did not have any inter-state relationships, except with the neighbouring Chosen and Ryukyu kingdoms, and there had been no opportunity for this 'nation' to be invited by Great Britain to its Great Exhibition of the Industry of 'All Nations'. By the time of Expo 1855 Paris, Japan had a treaty-based relationship with the United States and Russia respectively, but did not have one with France yet, and France was not in the position to invite Japan to its first Expo. In 1858, Great Britain concluded the Treaty of Amity and



Members of a Japanese diplomatic mission to Europe visiting Expo 1862 London

Commerce with Japan successfully, based on which the first British Consul-General (who was promoted to Minister soon after) arrived to reside in Japan in the following year. When Great Britain decided to organise its second Expo and its Foreign Office sent out a circular in early 1861 to instruct all its overseas diplomatic representatives to invite their respective countries of appointment to the Expo,¹ Japan was naturally included in the list of invitees for the first time.

By that time, British Minister Rutherford Alcock, on the one hand, had become fascinated with Japanese arts and crafts, and he had further become well-acquainted with Japan's various regional products during his inland travel in June 1861. He had received the above-mentioned Foreign Office instruction just before leaving for this travel and had it in mind during the journey. On the other hand, he had experienced much agony in settling in an unknown country and in developing a new relationship with it; particularly, the so-called Tozen-ji affair on 5 July 1861, where an anti-foreign clan attacked the British legation (Tozen-ji, a temple used for the purpose) and tried to kill Alcock and his colleagues,² inevitably shocked him. The attack occurred soon after he had returned from his travel and before he was slated to inform the Japanese Government (the shogunate) of the Expo.

What did he do then? The following text is from his letter addressed to the Japanese Foreign Ministers:

...Her Majesty's Government, directing me to acquaint Your Excellences that an exhibition of works of art and industry would be held in London in 1862, and that the people of every country were invited to send in whatever might best serve to illustrate the progress made by each in arts, manufactures, agriculture; every branch of industry in short. Should any Japanese be disposed to establish the claims of Japan to take a distinguished place in this Exhibition of the products of the whole world, as among the most advanced Eastern States and one capable of rivalling the best products of Europe in many industrial arts and manufactures, no fairer or better opportunity could be desired. ...The misguided men who sought to murder the inmates of the Legation the other night, would seem ... to have had some perverted notion that by such a deed of infancy they might achieve distinction for themselves, and "cause the might of" the Empire to sparkle in Foreign "Regions"!—I may be permitted to say therefore, that a truer notion of what confers real distinction on individuals, and glory on an Empire in Foreign Regions, might be suggested to the minds of the less educated classes of Japanese, if the Government of the Taicoon [Tycoon (shogun)] saw fit to profit by this occasion to make it generally known that a great exhibition of the world's industry was about to be held, to which there would be contributions from every country and people on the earth; and that no greater honour or glory could be achieved by individuals than for them now to show superiority over all competitions in any branch of industry or art.³

When the sarcasm with which he is interestingly connecting the recent incident and the Expo invitation is ignored, this letter is interesting in two ways in the light of the theme of the present paper: i) It testifies how Expos were explained for the

first time to the Japanese, and ii) it conveys Alcock's idea about the importance of self-promotion at an Expo to improve a country's international standing, if not said in an analytical manner. When the two aspects are combined, the letter could be considered as an initial contact for the Japanese with the idea of national branding. I may have to add an explanation that considering his other writings around the same time on Japanese artistic works, Alcock was sincere enough in thinking that Japan should be able to earn glory in that regard if it participates in the Expo.

Although I cannot outline all the steps taken towards Japan's participation in this Expo in this paper,⁴ to sum up, the Japanese Government replied positively, saying they were "not uninterested" in exhibiting Japanese products there,⁵ which Alcock reported to the British Government,⁶ and the country eventually became one of the foreign participants in Expo 1862 London.⁷ As it was not yet possible for the Japanese Government to designate its own commissioner to handle the necessary tasks for participation competently, Alcock decided to play that role for Japan.⁸ In addition, he prepared the *Catalogue of works of industry and art, sent from Japan*, London (published by William Clowes and Sons, 1862) to be associated with the Japanese exhibition at the Expo.

Having followed the above-mentioned process, it is interesting to observe that, in Japanese scholarship, for a long time, such a clear fact that Japan participated in Expo 1862 London was ignored, though not unknown, and there was, and still is, a persistent misunderstanding that Expo 1867 Paris was the first Expo in which Japan participated. This 'mystery' can be understood in two ways. One is rather simple: the first scholars who were interested in Expos in Japan were mainly historians of industry or architecture and they did not use diplomatic sources, which seems to have caused their impression that Minister Alcock had taken the liberty to bring Japanese articles to the Expo without the knowledge of the Japanese Government. Many of the later scholars based their analysis upon such early studies.

The other factor is related more deeply with how one understands the historical facts. Let us assume that Alcock took the liberty to bring Japanese articles to the Expo (though it was not true): this (mistaken) fact has apparently led many Japanese scholars to argue that Japan did not participate in Expo 1862 London, even if recorded as an official participant. For the Expo 1867 Paris, Japan was certainly more proactive, as the shogun sent his younger brother to represent him at that Expo, and the shogunate took more charge of preparations though still largely following the advice of French Minister Léon Roche; scholars seem to have accepted this as Japan's first participation in an Expo. While it shows the nation's historical frustration about its international standing well,⁹ I must pose a question about this attitude. In

Illustration of Japan's outdoor pavilion at Expo 1867 Paris



my opinion, even if Alcock took the liberty to bring Japanese articles to Expo 1862 London, the fact that Japan was exhibited there is undeniable, and it would have academically been more objective to admit, rather than ignore that stage in history, that Japan's first international promotion in an Expo had to be materialised by a foreigner. Indeed, this fact most honestly states what the first step into the international society was for a non-Western country. In any case, the reality was that Alcock played a major role in exhibiting Japan there, upon the shogunate's agreement, and it is clearly not appropriate to omit any mention of this Expo from the initial phase of Japan's participation in a series of Expos.

The participation was a success. To explain the nature of that success, the following passage quoted by Alcock himself from a letter to him from the painter, Frederic Leighton, would serve as a good example, possibly representing how the Japanese exhibition was seen and interpreted by the British, or European, and in particular, culturally influential people. The letter depicts well the writer's wonderment at a different sense of art he was encountering for the first time:

The quaintly-picturesque seems to govern all in Japan—harmony of color with extraordinary finish, avoiding symmetry and delighting in sharp angles—just the reverse of all other nations. They have many things in common with the Chinese, but a far finer touch. A great deal of this comes, I think, of their buildings being of wood, having a wooden architecture rather than an enduring one in stone; had they been masons, then would they have worked on a grander scale. They seem fond of sensations; the sweet, the soft and pretty, is heightened by the grotesque, yet all is in harmony.¹⁰

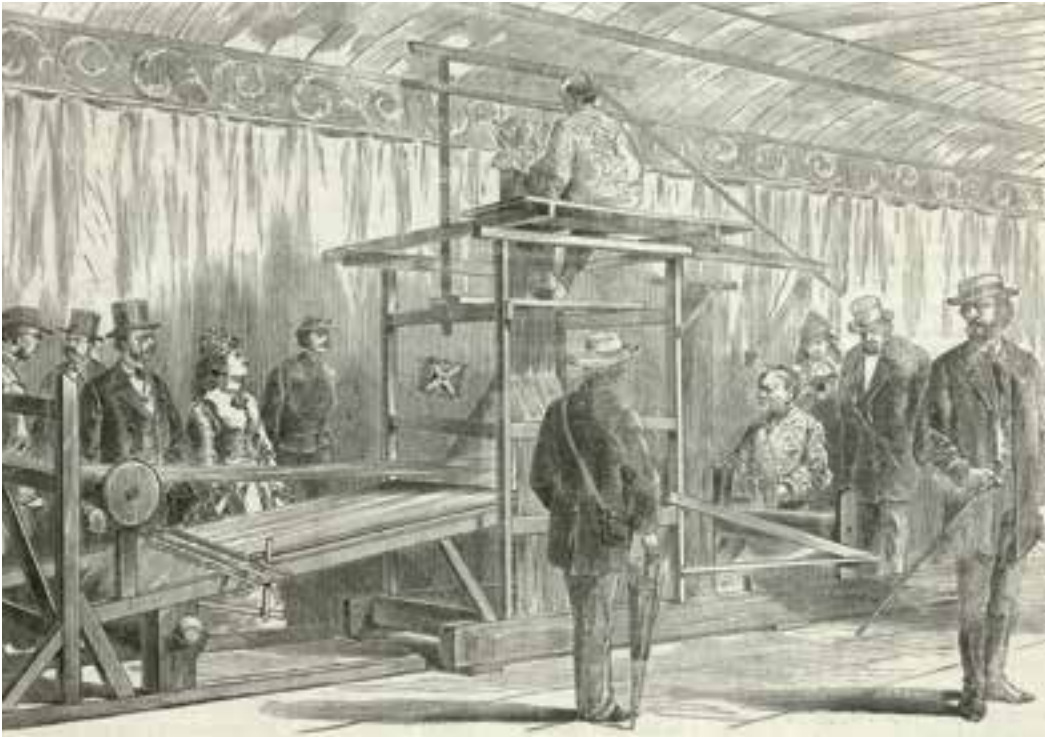
A few Japanese also had the chance to observe this Expo: they were the members of the Tokugawa shogunate's first diplomatic mission to European monarchs; again, Alcock calculated their arrival in England, in time for the Expo, while they had more practical business, too. It is known that these Japanese were rather disappointed with the Japanese objects that were exhibited, which they saw for the first time in an international comparison.¹¹ However, one vassal member of the mission, namely Ichikawa Wataru, sensed something differently. He left the following note:

... But I only found the fineness of Japanese lacquer ware unrivalled among the various articles sent from all nations.¹²

We may spot this as the first moment that the idea of brand making on the international stage somehow occurred to a Japanese.

The foundation for modern nation building: Around Expo 1873 Vienna

Expo 1873 Vienna was the third Expo for Japan, and the first, for the new Government established in 1868. For this Expo too, a foreigner played important roles in the preparation processes for Japan's participation; this time, Gottfried Wagener, a German chemist employed by the Japanese Government as an industrial consultant



Japanese weaver
at Expo 1873 Vienna

(particularly for realising the mass-production of ceramics) was the major figure. However, it can be observed that the role of foreign advisors was diminishing gradually, from Expo 1862 London and Expo 1867 Paris. On the Japan side, the people who were involved in the preparations for Vienna in the Government were an interesting mix of those who had been involved in the Expo-related works before the revolution of 1868, in the Tokugawa shogunate, as well as in the anti-Tokugawa sects.¹³ The early-modern experiences were thus handed over to the post-revolution Expos.¹⁴

The Government perceived that this Expo was a special occasion for the 'newly born' Japan to re-establish and improve its international standing. Let us first consider the result. The most eloquent description can be found in the records of the Iwakura Embassy, sent by the Government on a special mission around the globe (from late 1871 to 1873), representing the Japanese Emperor to greet foreign heads of states. While the Embassy was part of the new Government's desperate efforts to put itself properly on an international track as an independent state, the preparations for the Expo participation was parallelly done by the rest of the Government members,¹⁵ and the Embassy members had the chance to actually visit the Expo in Vienna nearly at the end of their itinerary. The official records used many pages on the Expo observation; nearly at the top of these Expo observations, the meanings and functions of an Expo they understood are explained fully. The following is a quote from this:

*The Government perceived
that Expo 1873 Vienna was
a special occasion for the 'newly
born' Japan to re-establish
and improve its international
standing*

A public display [of manufactured articles] is called an ‘exhibition’. Products from various countries are brought together to be exhibited within a single great exhibition hall, where they are viewed by large numbers of people, who are thus made familiar with the ways of life, the agricultural products, the industrial arts, and the tastes and customs of the peoples of the world. ... Exhibitions are, therefore, an all-important means of expanding trade, encouraging manufacturing and spreading knowledge among the general populace, thus helping to promote peace and order and to increase the wealth and strength of the host nation.¹⁶

Based on this understanding of an Expo, how did they see and evaluate their own, Japanese exhibition at the Expo?

The exhibits of our own Japan at the exhibition won particular acclaim from visitors. One reason was that the Japanese exhibits were different from European ones in design and tastes, so that to European eyes they had the charm of exoticism. A second reason was that there were few notable exhibits from countries neighbouring Japan. A third reason was the growing admiration for Japan among Europeans in recent years. ...¹⁷

We may conclude and call this a ‘success of exoticism’. The rareness of Japanese culture, or its difference from the European ways of life, had already attracted the audience at the time of Expo 1862 London as seen in Leighton’s words, and as duly mentioned in the above passage as the third aspect surrounding the Japanese exhibition, the so-called *Japonisme* had started by then. Based upon such foundations, not yet solid enough but important, it can be said that in Vienna, the Japanese became more aware that such rareness was an asset for finding their place, even a special one, in international society. Therefore, the report also shows the insight into the absence of substantial rivals from the same Asian region that helped increase the attraction of the rareness of Japan further. It is known that in the course of the preparations for Vienna, the emphasis on exoticism (mainly with artisanal objects), concealing Japan’s backwardness in modern industry, was suggested by foreign advisors;¹⁸ thereafter, this was to be deeply embedded in Japan’s self-curation strategies towards the outer world.

Then, what eventually happened? As the Japanese Government at the time was eager to modernise (Westernise) the entire industry and social systems, which proved to be successful rather quickly, it is natural that the country’s domestic reality and the exotic outer appearance were to become at polar ends, and the gap was to increase rapidly. Nonetheless, the outward exoticism was earnestly pursued, which I call a ‘double-face strategy’ as an explanatory term, not only about the Expo-related matters but also for Japan’s nation-building, or survival, in the international environment at the time. To maintain the exotic appearance of the country amidst the

In Vienna, the Japanese became more aware that cultural rareness was an asset for finding their place in international society

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Left: Japanese Garden at Expo 1873 Vienna.
Right: Japanese Garden (foreground) at Expo 1873 Vienna.

rapid Westernisation, it was necessary to preserve old objects purposely, useful to represent the Japanese culture differently from European life, or even create them.

First, at the time of Expo 1873 Vienna, several significant factors sustained this direction. The invitation to the Expo reached the Japanese Government through the diplomatic channel in 1871, the same year some internal cultural movements emerged at the government level: The Ministry of Education (more accurately, *daigaku*, in its former name) made a proposal to the Grand Council of State (*dajokan*) for preserving antiquities and old items remaining in the country as widely as possible, seriously worried that such items were being lost rapidly because of the civil war (1868-9) as well as the generally widespread idea among ordinary people after the revolution that anything new should be respected and the old things be abandoned. This was understood as a matter of deep regret that this would lead to the loss of the historical foundation of the nation. The same proposal urged that a museum for collecting such items be created.¹⁹ This proposal soon resulted in the 'decree for preserving antiquities and old items', which is now marked as the beginning of Japan's renowned history of the protection of cultural properties, and in the following year, a national exhibition was held to demonstrate the antiquities collected so far, to be developed gradually into today's Tokyo National Museum.²⁰

Originally, these domestic projects and the preparations for Expo 1873 Vienna were separate matters, but eventually, the functions were merged within the Government. Ninagawa Noritane, a major scholar-bureaucrat who carried out the preservation project entered in his diary that it was such a pleasure as the project budget was increased remarkably due to the merger with the Vienna project.²¹ However, this meant that the objective of 'preserving antiquities and old items' inevitably influenced the collection strategy for Vienna. Indeed, the above-mentioned national exhibition in 1872 was also used as the preshow of the Japanese exhibition to be taken to Vienna.



Left: Japanese bazaar at Expo 1876 Philadelphia. Right: Display of Japanese bronze birds at Expo 1876 Philadelphia

Therefore, having this Vienna example as the starting point, it was perceived as a natural course in the government operations that the self-promotion at Expos and the domestic concern for collecting and preserving old items were closely interdependent, and together, they formed one side of the aforementioned ‘double-face’ strategy, vis-à-vis the rapid Westernisation of actual life in Japan as the other side. In my view, this continued to be true, at least, until the early 20th century.

At the same time, not only were efforts to project the exotic image of the country relying on the preservation of existing items, but they were also relying on the (re)creation of similar products, in particular for the purpose of export. This was typified by the Government’s efforts after Vienna to prepare designs to be given to artisans of ceramics and artisans of other kinds of crafts and furniture, to model after for their production; these would be based on Japanese traditional motifs, but devised to be adaptable and more favoured in Western markets. A special department was created for this purpose within the Ministry of Interior in 1875 (shifted later to the Ministry of Finance, then Agriculture and Commerce), and a most remarkable set of design catalogues was prepared and named *Onchi zuroku* (after a traditional expression encouraging people to learn from the past to create new things).²² The hey-days of this activity lasted for a decade until the early 1880s, and it sustained Japan’s brand making, particularly through Expo 1876 Philadelphia and Expo 1878 Paris. In other words, the traditional cultural elements were consumed for, and absorbed into, the nation’s commercial development.

A shift towards the end of the century: Expo 1893 Chicago as a turning point

Therefore, ‘consumption’ continued, and a visible change had to occur upon Japan’s outer appearance. The following text explains it vividly. The text is by Rutherford Alcock, the first British Minister to Japan, who, as mentioned earlier, had successfully invited the country to Expo 1862 London, and he mentioned the change in his 1878 book on the Japanese art and art industries. He had already retired from his diplomatic career, and was serving as a commissioner of Great Britain as a participating country for Expo 1878 Paris. It is not clear from the text whether his writings here were based on his direct observation of the Japanese exhibition in Paris, but in any case, he had continually been a keen observer of Japan and its art products.

A writer in one of the weekly papers not long ago remarked, with some truth, that English taste was killing Japanese Art. "Everywhere there is a tendency to imitate European forms and patterns. ..."

It may be some counterpoise to this to remark, that whatever may be the tendency to imitation in Japan, the era of "*Japonisme*" which has overtaken Europe is to be traced not only in Ceramic productions, but in bronzes, textile fabrics, papers – in the whole range of Art manufacture in Europe. ... If the Japanese are losing their own original taste, the Western nations, it is hoped, may gain by its adoption. ...

I have indeed a melancholy conviction of the transitory nature of the excellence which all must admire in Japanese work. Much of its beauty and its excellence is passing away even now, from various causes, among the chief of which is the sudden and indiscriminating demand created by foreigners The impulsive desire [of Japan] to become cosmopolitan at a single leap, after having been the most stationary and isolated of Eastern races, had a fatal tendency to denationalise them. ... [T]hey are daily losing much that was most distinctive, and not a little that was truly valuable.²³

Alcock's evaluation is particularly worth considering as he had directly seen the state of Japanese arts and society as early as in the late 1850s, if we may need to carefully avoid the influence of his self-esteem as the pioneer who had successfully helped place Japan on the international stage, as an artistically interesting nation. His ideas on the 'adoption' of Japanese art is also interesting. However, the criticism on the current state of Japanese art products was not his speciality. The fact that he is citing another critic shows that the observation was shared among specialists, and it is also known that similar comments were prevailing around the same time particularly in France, where *Japonisme* was truly flourishing.²⁴

It took a further decade for the Japanese policymakers themselves to admit such change of their own representation and to decide to respond to the situation. It was soon after the next Expo in Paris in 1889 that the superintendent of the Japanese commission for the Expo participation, namely Yanagiya Kenichi, made clear his concerns about the quality of the Japanese products exhibited, that is, the outer appearance of the nation, in the official report on that Expo. He criticised Japan's efforts in its past participations in foreign Expos, and noted that those past participations had been directed completely by the motivation to be well positioned vis-à-vis the Western powers, and that for such a purpose it had been imperative to learn about western taste. Consequently, he regretted that Japan had invested too much in creating false things, and had finally lost the unique traits and nuances of Japanese art. Then, he invited his colleagues to a corrected endeavour, that is, to realise a more genuinely Japanese representation.²⁵

Yanagiya's lamentations here correspond with Alcock's observations. It may be said that Japan turned out to be an interesting example of a nation whose serious

*Traditional cultural elements
were consumed for, and
absorbed into, the nation's
commercial development*

pursuit of the exotic self-presentation only led to the loss of its cultural attraction.

Based on the understanding represented by Yanagiya's opinion, the next Expo – in Chicago in 1893 – served as a major challenge for Japanese policymakers. The principles for the Japanese exhibition at Chicago are in the government report of that Expo and they reflect Yanagiya's views entirely. To improve the critical situation drastically, the Government was determined to use the best possible human resources for the preparations towards Expo 1893 Chicago. Besides the successive Ministers of Agriculture and Commerce who played the role of the Japanese Commissioner, the two most substantive figures who moved the project forward were the following: Tateno Gozo, the then Japanese Minister to the United States, and on the Japan side, Kuki Ryuchi, a former Minister to the United States and the Director of the National Museum, called the 'Imperial' Museum at the time. As an extension of the earlier arguments of this paper, the continuing involvement of the Museum in the Expo matter, and in addition to it, the appointment of Kuki, who was to leave his remarkable footprints on the path of Japan's early cultural policy, especially concerning the preservation

The Japanese pavilion, Ho-o-Den (Phoenix Palace), modelled after the Byodo-in temple, at Expo 1893 Chicago



of old artistic treasures, are worth noting.²⁶ Although it is not possible to explain broadly Kuki's thoughts and works in this paper, it may be concluded that his appearance on the scene well met and accelerated the intended direction for the 'genuinely Japanese' representation at the coming Expo.

How, then, did the team try to achieve the goal? The clearest example of their efforts was about the architecture of the Japanese pavilion. They abandoned the past style of emphasising exotic features and ignoring the authenticity of Japanese architecture, and adopted a new method of constructing a miniature version of a real traditional building, which actually continued until Expo 1915 San Francisco. The traditional building selected for Chicago was the Byodo-in temple in Uji, Kyoto, built in the 11th century. This plan was understood by the team as the plan for 'expressing the reality of a great empire of the East and also declaring the long history of this nation'.²⁷ This passage states the new stage of Japan's national branding precisely.

It is doubtful if the firm will of the Japan side was conveyed to the American audience fully, as the appearance of the building may have been even more exotic to them. At least, as far as the outer appearance of the country was armoured with old cultural elements, the 'double-face' strategy was still present. However, at this stage, the change in the expression of Japaneseness may have been rather for the nation builders themselves, to update their own understanding of their country. It should be noted that this was the first Expo for which the country's legislative assembly decided upon Japan's participation; it was on the agenda of the first Imperial Diet, just inaugurated in November 1890. It is possible to understand the above-mentioned self-criticism on the past Japanese exhibitions, submitted by Yanagiya and no doubt shared by his colleagues, as an outcome of confidence. Now, 20 years after the revolution, Japan was experiencing a stage of the visible successes of nation building. Many more achievements, including the promulgation of the first constitution (1889) could now be seen.

In addition, it has to be mentioned here that, since 1868, every step of nation building by the new Government was entangled with the efforts for the normalisation of the so-called 'unequal treaties', concluded in the beginning stage of diplomacy with the Western powers before the revolution, infamously containing the extraterritoriality of those nationals in Japan as well as Japan's loss of tariff autonomy. It was believed that to overcome this heavy deficiency, Japan had to show that it was a civilised country. The act of promoting a national image as a respectful and dignified country was to contribute directly to that goal. In 1894, the year after Expo 1893 Chicago, Japan finally achieved the abolishment of extraterritoriality, though it had to wait until 1911 to be able to regain its tariff autonomy. Therefore, it would be meaningful in both Japanese and international histories, and in both political and cultural studies, to analyse precisely the relations between the history of Japan's Expo participation and the process of treaty normalisation, which has never been done. Here, I can only make a note of it as a topic worth researching.

The change in the expression of Japaneseness may have been rather for the nation builders themselves, to update their own understanding of their country



Illustration of Japan's pavilion at Expo 1900 Paris

Developments around the turn of the century

The early 20th century was to see another chapter of Japan's involvement in the Expos as a stage for national branding. In my view, light has to be shed on this chapter from two perspectives: one is about the change of the substance of national branding; and the other is more about the position of national branding in the government functions.

Here, the change in the substance of national branding is a remarkable curve to presenting the image of Japan as a 'representative of Asia'. Actually, this direction had been implied already when the Japanese policymakers were endeavouring to correct the Japanese exhibition to be a 'genuinely Japanese' one, towards Expo 1893 Chicago. In the search for such representation, they used the words cited in the former section, 'the reality of a great empire of the East'. Contrary to the first-glance understanding, for them, this was compatible with the notion of genuine Japaneseness: in combination with the other expression parallelly used, 'the long history of this nation', it was an answer, at the time, to their continued struggles to secure a good standing in international society – that is, the world operated by the

West. Thus, they needed a clearer discourse that Japan had a long history, different from but not inferior to the history of any European nation, and that such a history should naturally be rooted in Asian civilisation, equivalent to the Greek/Roman civilisation. The thoughts evolved as Japan should represent Asia and speak out for its neighbours, since the other Asian nations were not yet powerful enough to stand on their own feet in the international arena. This thought cycle encouraged them to no longer follow the Western taste for the self-introduction at Expos, but to just stick to genuinely Japanese expressions, which was to naturally convey the historical influence of Asian neighbours on the Japanese culture.

The ideas were further developed and condensed, and were typically mirrored in the first ever book on Japanese art history, compiled by the aforementioned Imperial Museum, for the particular purpose of dissemination at Expo 1900 Paris, with the

introduction by the cultural policy man, Kuki Ryuichi; the book was titled *Histoire de l'art du Japon* (published in 1900 by the Imperial Commission of Japan for the Expo), and the Japanese version of the book was only published in the following year.²⁸ It is said that the book had been prepared largely, under the patronage of Kuki, by Okakura Kakuzo (Tenshin), a Japanese philosopher/art historian/bureaucrat, who later became famous for his words 'Asia is one'.²⁹ In addition, Okakura had already been testing the concept in his lectures on Japanese art history – a newly recognised subject being taught for the first time from 1890 – at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (today's Faculty of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts) established in 1887.³⁰

I must add here that, actually, this was not the first time that the Japanese Government (or its successive commissions for each Expo) distributed publications on the occasions of Expos on the history of a specific field of the Japanese culture or industry, or generally about the Japanese society. For example, the former includes the one for the introduction of manufacturing industries for Expo 1876 Philadelphia, another on traditional music for Expo 1878 Paris, or agriculture for Expo 1900 Paris, and the latter, for Expo 1878 Paris. While the above-mentioned book on art history for Expo 1900 Paris has uniquely been well known among art historians and discussed from their perspectives, it is also important to see it as the peak of such group of publications. It seems that each of these books was rather spontaneously prepared when there were certain initiatives and motivations, and, unfortunately, they have not been preserved systematically; there may be much more examples than already known. What can be clearly said is that these publications were the most obvious part of the country's efforts of self-introduction, to present a proper image of the nation towards the world. At the same time, these books, the primary purpose of which was to inform foreigners about Japan, may have strongly influenced later historical narratives of the respective fields of the society prevailing in this country, as *Histoire de l'art du Japon* certainly did.³¹

Coming back to the emergence of thoughts identifying Japan as the representative of Asia, it further brought about an initiative to host an Expo in Japan (Tokyo) in 1912, though the plan had to be cancelled mainly for financial reasons. While this Expo was officially proposed to commemorate victory in the Russo-Japanese war (1904-5),³² it can be understood as apparently conceived as an extension of Japan's national branding experiences at overseas Expos so far. The following text, which is from the speech addressed to the foreign representatives in Tokyo, by Kaneko Kentaro, a renowned politician of the time who served as the Director-General of the Expo, would best depict this development:

... At this juncture, we thought it most necessary and important that we should have an Exposition in the nature of an international one, and invite the assistance of all nations. As in the sixteenth century, the world's commerce was concentrated in a small narrow space of the Mediterranean, but

The emergence of thoughts identifying Japan as the representative of Asia brought about an initiative to host an Expo in Japan

Policymakers were now clearly aware of the strategic importance of the nation's external appeal

on the discovery of America, its centre was shifted to the Atlantic, so in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the world's commerce has shifted to the Pacific at the opening of the Far East. Asia has now become one of the most important centres in the world of commerce, and Japan by her geographical position is in easy access to the continent of Asia, to the archipelagoes in the Indian Ocean and broad Australia. ... So it is our bounden duty to collect all the products of Asia in one focus, and show all the nations concerned in the Asiatic problem what markets are before them. ...³³

Here, we can observe a worldview that Japanese policymakers conceived, as ambitious as possible in the context of the time, and obviously based upon historical frustrations against the euro-centric international order.

The speaker, Kaneko Kentaro, is actually known as a key figure who was practically intermediating between the US and Japan through the time of Russo-Japanese war.³⁴ Actually, this war provided another turn on the course of Japan's self-promotion at the Expos, which goes to the second of the two perspectives mentioned at the beginning of this section: it is about the shift of the function of national branding, besides the change of the contents. The coincidence between the war and Expo 1904 St. Louis caused it.

The report on Japan's participation in this Expo particularly remarks on the fact that the Government decided to pursue the participation as planned, regardless of the war that the country was fighting on the other side, and is ostensibly proud that

Japanese tea-house at Expo 1904 St. Louis



the country did not abandon or diminish the peaceful project, that is the Expo, because of the war. The report emphasises further Japan's achievement of showing the country's cultural development at the Expo, vis-à-vis the military strength demonstrated through the war.³⁵ Particularly, it is worth noting that people around the Secretary General for Japan's participation believed that their efforts at the Expo were important for gaining the support of the US for Japan at the Portsmouth Russo-Japanese Peace Conference in 1905; further, consequently, they ended up with an understanding that war was not only about direct fighting, but was to be pursued through another kind of strategy to obtain and maintain friendship with the nations.³⁶

Rather than asking whether the understanding about the Portsmouth Conference was true, it seems to me more important to find that, here, the policymakers were now clearly aware of the strategic importance of the nation's external appeal, typically through self-representation at an Expo, and saw such operations as an independent field of the state functions. This has to be understood as a different stage from the one where the outer image making had been naturally merged with or undifferentiated from other major functions of governing. In other words, in the earlier stages, the outward image making had even preceded the substantive nation building. Now, signs were observed of the specialisation of such a function, nearly equal to today's soft power/cultural diplomacy, as an indispensable but different layer from hard politics, which would require a certain expertise eventually.

Conclusion

Thereafter, the function of cultural diplomacy was developed continually, and it led to the birth of specialised government agencies for promoting Japanese culture and international cultural exchange as well as tourism during the 1930s. Not only were these dedicated to Expo-related matters, but they were also engaged with broadened international cultural contacts, or the increased opportunities for national branding. For example, among those, Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, the semi-independent cultural wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the predecessor of today's Japan Foundation), established in 1934, played a major role in preparing for the Japanese exhibition at Expo 1937 Paris, but Expos were no longer necessarily the only serious gateway for Japan's national branding.

Therefore, I find it appropriate to conclude here, having followed Japan's desperate efforts for self-promotion at Expos for half a century starting from the one in 1862. I did not exaggerate the significance of Expos for Japan in this paper; until the stage I dealt with in the former section, Japan's steps in the international arena were focused seriously on successive Expos, and it was actually a story of Japan's survival as a nation. It is certainly possible to narrate a wider history of the country, by simply giving separate chapters on these Expos. I hope that the present paper has shown that not only did the participation in Expos reward Japan's enormous efforts of this era for impressively promoting its national image towards the outer world, but it also actually resulted in convincing the Japanese of that self-image, originally

*The significance of Expos
for Japan...was actually a story
of Japan's survival as a nation*



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Festival Plaza at Expo 1970 Osaka

constructed for foreigners. This cycle encouraged various internal reforms, which are generically termed modernisation. There is no doubt that Expos offered Japan a most attractive challenge and Japan made the most of it.

However, it is true that for any country in the 19th century, the communication channels for conveying cultural and societal information between nations were extremely limited, and were represented by Expos. Therefore, while the Japanese experiences that I described here were unique to Japan to some extent, they may also be understood as a typical example of the course taken by non-Western countries which opened themselves to broader international contacts around the same time, or even just an example among all the nations that were involved in the enterprise called Expo in their respective ways. I would like to note before concluding this paper that all these perspectives should be considered, for a fuller understanding of the history of Expos on the one hand, and if only for narrating the history of Japan's involvement in the Expos on the other hand. At least in Japan, the first angle – to understand the processes as unique to Japan – was too strong in the past studies, which I see has limited the scope of Expo research only within the context of Japanese history. To the best of my knowledge, an equivalent tendency can be found in many (non-Western) countries.

The second and the third angles mentioned above would require and encourage extensive comparative studies between sometimes similar, but sometimes different experiences of various nations, to result inevitably in relativising each other's standpoint. I believe such studies will contribute to compiling a new version of world history through Expos – the history having an ever broader perspective, which can be heartily shared by all peoples from different corners of the globe.³⁷ May this paper be a contribution to such a new, inclusive world history.

Japan is now preparing to host Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai. From a historical point of view, this is no doubt an enterprise to be understood as an extension of the efforts of Japanese pioneers, not only for Expo 1970 Osaka and for the more recent Expos held in the country, but also for the aforementioned Expo 1912 and another unrealised one in 1940. While I have served as a member of two of the early committees relating to the coming Expo, if I allow myself to comment on the current planning from the position of historian, I can observe in many aspects a certain trait, or 'habit', which Japan may have inherited over generations since Expo 1912, that is, a tendency to take the entire Expo as a means for Japan's national branding, like preparing a bigger version of the Japanese pavilion.

It is of course not wrong to make the most of the organiser's position for promoting the nation's image. However, I have to find a national 'habit' here, seemingly acquired through the experiences as an eager participant, all the time until 1912, then in reality until 1970, of presenting itself in a broader context. Is it not time to transform ourselves to be something broader, in the first place to embrace all the national branding of other countries? I would call it real leadership in this era of cultural diversity, and I believe that it is the kind of leadership that Japan should aim at as a fitting role, since it is a country which has historically learnt from extremely varied positions in the world, from a non-Western latecomer to the international society to a rather successful Westernised nation, and from aggressor to loser in the imperialistic context, then again as an economic power. In my opinion, such an attitude pursuing truly embracing leadership as a host country would most reliably sustain the announced theme of the Expo, "Designing Future Society for Our Lives", and eventually make an epoch in both the histories of Expos as well as of Japan's involvement in Expos. Nothing but the processes of further such efforts will surely turn out to be the best national branding of Japan in the 21st century.

For any country in the 19th century, the communication channels for conveying cultural and societal information between nations were extremely limited, and were represented by Expos

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- 1 Circular No.29, 13 March 1861, FO 262/21, The National Archives, UK (hereinafter, NA).
- 2 Two of his colleagues, Laurence Oliphant and George S. Morrison, were severely wounded. This is a well-known incident that shook early Anglo-Japanese relations.
- 3 Alcock to the Japanese Ministers of Foreign Affairs, 16 July 1861, FO 46/14, NA.
- 4 For details, see Sano, M., "A Man of Expos, Sir Rutherford Alcock: 1851, 1862, 1878, and 1886", in M. Sano (ed.), *Bankoku hakurankai to ningen no rekishi [Expo and Human History]*, Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 2015, pp.21-52.
- 5 The Japanese Ministers of Foreign Affairs to Alcock, 25 Aug. 1861, in Tsushinzenran henshu iinkai (ed.), *Zoku-Tsushinzenran, Hennen no bu [Supplementary compilation of diplomatic correspondence, in the chronological order]*, 2, Tokyo: Yushodo, 1983. (Hereinafter, the English translation, when the quoted text is originally Japanese, is by Sano.)
- 6 Alcock to Russell, 19 September 1861, FO46/14, NA.
- 7 Authority of Her Majesty's Commissioners, *International Exhibition 1862: Official catalogue of the industrial department*, 2nd Ed., London: Truscott, Son & Simmons, 1862, p. ix.
- 8 Alcock to Russell, op. cit.
- 9 For example, Paul Greenhalgh does not hesitate in defining Expo 1862 London as the first occasion where Japan showed up in his integral work on the history of Expos: *FairWorld: A History of World's Fairs and Expositions, from London to Shanghai 1851-2010*, Winterbourne: Papadakis, 2011.
- 10 Alcock, R., *The capital of the tycoon: A narrative of a three years' residence in Japan*, Vol. II, London: Longman & Co., 1863, p. 246.
- 11 Sano, M., *Orukokku no Edo [Alcock's Edo]*, Tokyo: Chuokoron-shinsha, 2003, p. 229.
- 12 Ichikawa, W., 'Biyo oukoumanroku [A little servant's travel journal around Europe]', in T. Otsuka (ed.), *Kengai shisetsu nikki sanshu [Compiled journals of overseas missions]*, Vol. 3, Tokyo: Nihon shiseki kyokai, p. 359.
- 13 Expo 1867 Paris is famous in the Japanese history as a couple of anti-Tokugawa sects independently brought in some exhibits, to use the event to establish their own footing internationally in the context of domestic political conflicts. Not only did it worsen the turmoil, but it also resulted in leaving such human resources who knew the expo related practices.
- 14 I was struck by this continuity thanks to the unpublished MA thesis of Nishi Natsuki, 'Sano Tsunetami and Expos: From Expo 1867 Paris to Expo 1873 Vienna', Graduate School of Cultural Policy and Management, Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, Japan, 2012.
- 15 In addition, the Government sent many students and artisans to Europe to learn about new technologies taking the occasion of Expo 1873 Vienna.
- 16 Compiled by Kume, K., translated by G. Healey, E. Saviak, and C. Tsuzuki, "The Iwakura embassy, 1871-73: A true account of the ambassador extraordinary & plenipotentiary's journey of observation through the United States of America and Europe," Vol. 5, Matsudo: Japan Documents, 2002, pp. 11-2.
- 17 Ibid., p. 31.
- 18 This aspect was notably argued in the earliest stage of academic Expo studies in Japan: See Yoshida, M., *Kaiteiban Bankokuhakurankai: Gijutsu bunmei-shi tekini [The Expos: As a history of technology and civilisation, revised ed.]*, Tokyo: Nihon hoso shuppan kyokai, 1985, pp. 68-9.
- 19 'Daigaku kengen', in *Tokyo kokuritsu hakubutsu-kan hyakunen-shi [100 years of Tokyo National Museum]*, Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum, 1973, pp. 37-8. It is known that the proposal was primarily drafted by a civil servant of the new Government Machida Hisanari, who, as a member of an anti-shogunate sect, had observed Expo 1867 Paris as well as some major museums in Europe, and was to later become the first director of the museum.
- 20 For a brief history of the Museum, see the Museum's website: https://www.tnm.jp/modules/r_free_page/index.php?id=143 (accessed 27 Aug. 2019).
- 21 *Tokyo kokuritsu hakubutsu-kan hyakunen-shi*, op. cit., p. 79.
- 22 The original catalogues are held and have been studied at Tokyo National Museum.
- 23 Alcock, R. *Art and art industries in Japan*. London: Virtue and Co., 1878, pp. 284-6.
- 24 Teramoto, N., *Pari bankokuhakurankai to japonisumu no tanjo [The Paris Expos and the birth of Japonisme]*, Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 2017, pp. 301-8.
- 25 Nagayama, S. (ed.), *Kaigai hakurankai honpo sando shiryō [Collection of documents on Japan's participation in overseas Expos]*, Vol. 3, Tokyo: Hakurankai kurabu, 1928, pp. 132-40.
- 26 For Kuki in the development of cultural policy in the late 19th century, see Norota, J., *Bakumatsu-Meiji no biishiki to bijutsu seisaku [The aesthetic sense and art policy in the last days of Tokugawa shogunate and the Meiji era]*, Kyoto: Miyaobi shuppan-sha, 2015, pp. 434-65.
- 27 *Rinji haurankai jimukyoku hokoku [Report of temporary bureau for Expo 1893 Chicago]*, Tokyo: Rinji hakurankai jimukyoku, 1895, p. 493.
- 28 The Imperial Museum, (ed.), *Kouhon Nihon teikoku bijutsu ryakushi*, Tokyo: Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, 1901.
- 29 Okakura, K., *The ideals of the East, with special reference to the art of Japan*, London: John Murray, 1903, p. 1.
- 30 Okakura had to leave the project halfway due to some personnel as well as personal problems.
- 31 For a most substantive research on the editorial processes of *L'histoire du art du Japon* and its significance in the Japanese history of culture and cultural policy, see: Takagi, H., *Kindai tenno-sei no bunka-shi teki kenkyū [Cultural History of the modern Emperor system]*, Tokyo: Azekura shobo, 1997, pp. 345-81.
- 32 See the website of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/annai/honsho/shiryō/banpaku/page3.html> (accessed 27 Aug. 2019).
- 33 'Grand Exhibition of Japan: Its Aims and Scope', Viscount Kaneko's Speech at Dinner, Given to the Foreign Diplomatic Representatives in the Capital, in the Evening of November 21st, 1907, at the Peers' Club, Tokyo, *The Grand Exhibition of Japan, 1912: Its Aims and Scope*, Tokyo: Nihon daihakurankai jimukyoku, 1907, pp. 10-1.
- 34 Maesaka, T., *Meiji 37 nen no interijensu gaiko: Senso o ikani owaraseruka [Intelligence diplomacy in 1904: How to end a war]*, Tokyo: Shoden-sha, 2010.
- 35 Nagayama, op. cit., Vol. 5, 1930, pp. 20-1.
- 36 Tejima Seiichi kyouiuku shikin-dan, ed., *Tejima Seiichi sensei den [Biography of Prof. Tejima Seiichi]*, Tokyo: Tejima Seiichi kyouiuku shikin-dan, 1929, pp. 228-31.
- 37 Having in mind such a grand future of Expo studies, I launched in 2010 an interdisciplinary group research project now called 'Expos and human history'. Our first anthology was published in 2015 (Sano, M. (ed.), *Expo and human history*, Kyoto: Shibunkaku shuppan); though the publication was in the Japanese language, the table of contents and my introduction to it can be referred to in English at: https://nichibun.repo.nii.ac.jp/?action=pages_view_main&active_action=repository_view_main_item_detail&item_id=6888&item_no=1&page_id=41&block_id=63 (accessed 27 Aug. 2019). We aim to internationally expand this team and welcome approaches from concerned scholars and other professionals.

Rien que la construction d'une nation : la promotion de l'image nationale du Japon lors des premières Expositions Universelles

Au cours des années 1850, les décideurs politiques japonais prennent conscience qu'il faut assurer au Japon une bonne position dans la société internationale, alors qu'ils suppriment la prétendue « politique d'isolement » maintenue durant plus de deux siècles. Si leurs actions semblent, dans un premier temps, plutôt passives, elles deviennent rapidement proactives. Sous le nouveau gouvernement de 1868, en particulier, créer et promouvoir une image saisissante de la nation devient de la plus grande importance, une image d'une nation au long et respectueux passé et réalisant des produits d'intérêt ou artisanaux de grande qualité. Les Expositions Universelles constituent alors une scène sans commune mesure pour de tels desseins nationaux.

Cet article retrace le chemin emprunté par le Japon, participant enthousiaste aux Expositions Universelles. Il rapporte les changements de positions et leurs justifications par les responsables politiques quant à la promotion de l'image de marque du pays, ainsi que les moyens employés et les résultats obtenus. En premier lieu, est décrite la première participation du Japon à l'occasion de l'Exposition Universelle de 1862 à Londres, puis sont relatées plusieurs Expositions Universelles durant lesquelles les efforts japonais sont mis en lumière, l'article se concentrant principalement sur les Expositions du XIX^e siècle et du début du XX^e siècle. Le changement d'intérêt du Japon, avec son souhait de passer de la participation aux Expositions à l'organisation d'Expositions au début du XX^e siècle, est également évoqué ; ce dessein n'affecte néanmoins pas la participation du pays aux Expositions Universelles organisées par les autres États, et son ambition ne sera satisfaite qu'en 1970 avec l'organisation de l'Exposition Universelle à Osaka. Puis en conclusion, l'article commente brièvement la préparation actuelle de l'Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai.

L'analyse générale démontre que la participation du Japon aux Expositions Universelles a récompensé les efforts considérables du pays en vue de promouvoir son image nationale auprès du reste du monde. Elle établit également que cette participation a en outre permis aux Japonais de se convaincre quant à leur propre image et a encouragé le pays à mener certaines réformes internes génériquement qualifiées de modernisation. Les Expositions constituent indubitablement pour le Japon un défi des plus intéressants que le pays a su mettre à profit.

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A group of people is sitting on the floor in a dark room, watching a large projection of a cityscape on the left wall. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

L'Algérie et les Expositions Universelles et Spécialisées : histoire d'une heureuse rencontre

Mohamed Bensalem

Depuis son accession à l'indépendance en 1962, l'Algérie totalise dix participations aux Expositions Universelles et Spécialisées dont neuf avec pavillon et une (à l'Expo 2005 Aichi au Japon) sans pavillon, la participation ayant été limitée à l'organisation d'un événement culturel de 21 jours.

Le parcours n'a pas été linéaire avec :

- **Une phase de découverte et de familiarisation à l'Exposition Universelle 1967 Montréal au Canada et l'Exposition Universelle 1970 Osaka au Japon.**
- **Une longue éclipse durant les années 70 et 80.**
- **Une réapparition à l'Expo 1992 Séville en Espagne puis à l'Expo 1998 Lisbonne au Portugal avant une nouvelle absence à l'Expo 2000 Hanovre en Allemagne.**

Forte de l'expérience acquise durant les premières participations et des enseignements tirés mais également de l'adhésion en 1997 au Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), l'Algérie allait, à partir de l'Expo 2005 Aichi jusqu'à nos jours, stabiliser ses participations et en améliorer les contenus au point où quatre consécutions internationales ont pu être consécutivement obtenues entre 2008 et 2017, le plus souvent en récompense des efforts déployés pour le respect du thème et son traitement.

Pavillon de l'Algérie à l'Expo 1967 Montréal



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Les premiers pas

Expo 1967 Montréal

Cette première participation de l'Algérie visait essentiellement à une meilleure information du grand public, des autorités canadiennes et des visiteurs internationaux sur les atouts d'un pays qui venait à peine de recouvrer son indépendance. Dans un pavillon de style dit mauresque, différents produits et objets ont été exposés durant toute la période de la manifestation : tapis, pièces de musée, objets en cuir repoussé, costumes... Le succès obtenu par le restaurant du pavillon fut noté à cette occasion et en parallèle aux activités du pavillon, plusieurs contacts destinés à promouvoir la coopération avec l'Algérie ont pu être concrétisés.



Pavillon de l'Algérie à l'Expo 1970 Osaka

Expo 1970 Osaka

La participation y a globalement répondu aux mêmes mots d'ordre que pour l'Expo 1967 Montréal dans un pavillon situé sur un espace de 2 000 m² construit sur 3 niveaux, la participation algérienne intégrant en outre un restaurant de 150 couverts et une boutique de vente de produits d'artisanat. Il convient de noter qu'à l'époque, la gestion des participations relevait d'organismes sous tutelle du Ministère du Commerce. Cette courte expérience du monde des Expos, au demeurant fort utile, ne fut pourtant pas suivie d'effet dans la mesure où pendant plus de deux décennies, soit jusqu'à l'Expo 1992 Séville en Espagne, l'Algérie n'a pas pris part aux différentes Expositions organisées.

Expo 1992 Séville

Le retour au monde des Expos se concrétisa à travers un pavillon de 1 143 m² assorti d'un restaurant au cadre typiquement algérien. La gestion de l'opération fut confiée à un Commissaire relevant du Ministère de la Culture. Le pavillon mit en valeur aussi bien les éléments constitutifs de l'histoire et du patrimoine national que les efforts menés dans le cadre de la bataille du développement. Un programme culturel et d'animation intégrant notamment des prestations de troupes folkloriques agrémenta la participation. Ainsi, 1 170 000 visiteurs furent accueillis par le pavillon algérien.



Pavillon de l'Algérie à l'Expo 1992 Séville



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Artistes et patrimoine
culturel de l'Algérie
présentés lors de
l'Expo 1998 Lisbonne

Expo 1998 Lisbonne

Elle fut précédée par un fait important : l'adhésion de l'Algérie au BIE en 1997, ce qui contribua grandement à une plus grande prise de conscience des exigences et enjeux liés aux Expositions Universelles et Spécialisées et à une meilleure connaissance des usages et règles qui prévalent en la matière, le tout concourant, finalement, à une plus grande maîtrise des moyens et contenus de préparation et de participation. Initiée à un moment douloureux de l'histoire du pays, cette participation lança un signal fort d'un pays toujours debout, fier de ses origines et de sa personnalité et résolu à avancer dans la voie de la modernité et du progrès. Le concept central de l'Expo dédiée aux océans fut traité dans le pavillon algérien de 648 m² sous le slogan « L'Algérie, un pays continent aux deux océans (d'eau et de sable) ». Ainsi 1 148 711 visiteurs y apprécièrent le mélange de patrimoine et de développement présenté dans le pavillon.

Des faits majeurs méritent d'être rappelés et mis en relief pour la circonstance :

- La participation algérienne a permis de mettre en exergue l'amitié entre le pays hôte et l'Algérie à travers notamment l'hommage rendu à Monsieur Teixeira

*L'adhésion de l'Algérie au BIE
en 1997, contribua grandement
à une plus grande prise de
conscience des exigences et
enjeux liés aux Expositions*

Gomes, ancien Président de la République et écrivain Portugais (1862-1941) qui a vécu et terminé sa vie en Algérie et dont la statue trône dans le centre-ville de Bejaia (Algérie).

- ▶ Un arbre, le pistachier de l'Atlas, a été acheminé d'Algérie par avion-cargo et replanté à Lisbonne où il vit toujours.
- ▶ Ces deux exemples symbolisent autant l'amitié entre les deux pays que l'esprit de convivialité, de coopération et de paix que véhicule l'esprit des Expositions.
- ▶ A l'occasion de la Journée Nationale de l'Algérie, un spectacle andalou-fado, magistralement interprété, a soulevé les passions.

Expo 2000 Hanovre ayant constitué une étape non franchie avec l'annulation au dernier moment de la participation et Expo 2005 Aichi ayant plutôt reposé sur une présence ponctuelle de trois semaines, sans pavillon, axée sur un spectacle culturel, c'est à partir de l'Expo 2008 Saragosse que les enseignements multiformes tirés des participations et de l'adhésion et d'une plus grande implication au BIE allaient commencer à produire tous leurs effets.

Expo 2008 Saragosse

Consacrée à l'eau et au développement durable, la participation fut préparée en Algérie suffisamment en amont et permit ainsi au pays de décrocher sa première distinction sous la forme d'un prix d'argent attribué au titre du traitement du thème. Dans un pavillon de 750 m² qui put accueillir 440 931 visiteurs durant les trois mois de l'Exposition, furent privilégiés :

- ▶ L'axe patrimonial avec l'expérience des Foggaras dans le Sud du pays, système ancestral ingénieux de gestion de l'eau en milieu difficile.
- ▶ L'axe moderne et de développement autour du projet structurant d'amenée l'eau potable d'In Salah à Tamanrasset sur plus de 750 km, avec la création de plusieurs agglomérations le long du tracé, l'ensemble convergeant vers le principe de « l'eau qui crée la vie ».

La façade du pavillon donnait le ton avec une reconstitution de la gravure rupestre de la région de Tagherghart (Djanet) illustrant la « Vache qui Pleure » (pour cause de sécheresse, dit-on). L'implication de l'Algérie se fit remarquer à cette occasion autant par son pavillon lui-même que par sa contribution au forum thématique pour lequel une dizaine d'experts et universitaires algériens purent collaborer. Un riche programme culturel fut également développé, principalement lors de la Journée Nationale où le spectacle andalou-flamenco qui a fait salle comble et le dîner valorisant les spécialités culinaires nationales, ont produit une forte impression. A noter, enfin l'activité de la boutique d'artisanat et de souvenirs située à la sortie du parcours de la visite qu'elle a admirablement ponctué.

A partir de l'Expo 2008 Saragosse, les enseignements multiformes tirés des participations et de l'adhésion et d'une plus grande implication au BIE allaient commencer à produire tous leurs effets



Pavillon de l'Algérie à l'Expo 2010 Shanghai, extérieur (gauche) et intérieur (droite)



© BUREAU INTERNATIONAL DES EXPOSITIONS (BIE)

Expo 2010 Shanghai

Disposant d'un peu moins de temps de préparation, cette participation est probablement la plus aboutie pour l'Algérie. Dans un Pavillon de 1 000 m², une casbah reconstituée à l'identique, le thème central de l'Exposition Universelle 2010 « Meilleure Ville, Meilleure Vie » était traité en fonction des spécificités algériennes liées aussi bien à l'axe patrimonial qu'à l'axe moderne sur fond de primauté de l'urbanité sur les aspects purement architecturaux. Les visiteurs (au nombre de 2 816 141) ont d'autant pu apprécier cette approche que l'encadrement du pavillon s'est mobilisé durant les six mois de présence pour garantir le service d'un accueil digne de ce qui a été voulu, décrit et réalisé comme le « Pavillon à visage humain ». Le premier prix d'or obtenu au titre de la présentation et du traitement du thème est venu couronner ces efforts. Le programme culturel et scientifique développé reposa sur l'organisation de semaines spécialisées d'information, d'animation et de coordination dédiées notamment à l'habitat et l'urbanisme, au tourisme et au transport aérien.

Il convient de relever en outre :

Le thème central de l'Expo 2010 Shanghai était traité en fonction des spécificités algériennes liées aussi bien à l'axe patrimonial qu'à l'axe moderne

- ▶ La qualité des produits d'artisanat exposés et proposés dans la boutique intégrée au pavillon.
- ▶ La qualité du spectacle et du dîner offerts à l'occasion de la célébration de la Journée Nationale.
- ▶ L'animation créée au même moment et pour quelques jours par une troupe folklorique Targuie (de la région de Tamarrasset dans le grand sud algérien).
- ▶ La contribution de l'Algérie au nouveau musée de Shanghai consacré aux Expositions, le *World Expo Museum* (WEM), auquel ont été remis des costumes traditionnels.
- ▶ L'émission, comme pour les Expositions précédentes et depuis l'Expo 1967 Montréal, d'un timbre-poste commémorant la manifestation et son thème central.

Expo 2012 Yeosu

Une nouvelle fois dédiée aux océans, elle permit à l'Algérie d'y mettre en valeur ses atouts économiques, culturels et historiques et notamment son océan de sable, au nom de la préservation de l'environnement et de la protection des espaces protégés et de la durabilité. En dépit de délais de préparation fort limités (environ 15 mois), le pavillon (construit par les Organismes), d'une superficie de 750 m², reçut 593 419 visiteurs durant les trois mois que dura l'Exposition et put décrocher une nouvelle distinction internationale sous la forme d'un prix de bronze.

Quelques faits méritent d'être rappelés au titre de cette participation :

- ▶ La prestation du Ballet National et de l'Orchestre de Musique Classique pour la Journée Nationale.
- ▶ L'exposition tout au long du circuit de visite d'objets et costumes d'artisanat liés au traitement et à la déclinaison du thème.

Expo 2015 Milan

Dans un pavillon de 325 m² situé dans le cluster « Bio-méditerranéen », et avec son propre restaurant, l'Algérie, avec la même approche retenue précédemment, allait décrocher un nouveau prix d'or dans sa catégorie décerné pour le développement du thème central de l'Exposition. Au total, 1 771 598 visiteurs purent apprécier la prestation algérienne et découvrir pour une bonne partie d'entre eux les richesses gastronomiques mais également les différentes facettes de la culture algérienne (objets décoratifs, costumes, multiples représentations artistiques...).

Il importe aussi de noter :

- ▶ L'organisation d'une semaine promotionnelle touristique.
- ▶ La valorisation, très appréciée, du patrimoine musical national.
- ▶ La signature par un membre du gouvernement algérien de la Charte de Milan, document qui consacre les débats menés par les différents participants de l'Exposition pour la durabilité et la résorption de la famine dans le monde.

Expo 2017 Astana

Organisée autour du thème des énergies renouvelables, cette Exposition a compté dans ses rangs, le pavillon algérien d'une superficie de 340 m² qui s'était doté du slogan « Algérie, pays de lumières ». En dépit de la modestie du budget et du manque de temps imparti à la préparation, le cap a été maintenu pour une participation de qualité qui a permis à quelques 370 000 visiteurs d'apprécier l'histoire et la culture algériennes ainsi que les efforts déployés en matière de développement et d'exploitation durable des énergies nouvelles et renouvelables.



Intérieur du pavillon de l'Algérie à l'Expo 2015 Milan

Conclusion

Que retenir de toutes ces participations ? D'abord une expérience non négligeable au service de la valorisation de l'image de marque et des potentialités du pays et dans le même temps une meilleure appréciation du chemin à parcourir pour arriver, pourquoi pas, dans un avenir plus ou moins proche, à postuler à l'organisation d'une manifestation de ce type en Algérie.

C'est dire que « l'Esprit des Expos » est à présent bien enraciné. Globalement, passée la période de familiarisation et dépassée celle de l'incertitude sur la participation ou non, la jeune histoire de l'Algérie et des Expos s'est soldée pour 11 années (2008 à 2017) par quatre consécutions internationales celles-ci ayant, outre la fierté légitime qui en a été tirée, produit un surcroît de responsabilité vis-à-vis du monde des Expositions.

Si l'on devait caractériser les participations algériennes et le lien aux Expositions, il serait possible d'insister sur les éléments constitutifs suivants :

- ▶ Le choix, en règle générale, de pavillons autonomes de dimension moyenne.
- ▶ Une primauté donnée à la location plutôt que la construction, en référence au caractère éphémère (en termes de durée) de la manifestation.
- ▶ Des budgets se caractérisant par leur modestie (au regard de ce qui est déployé par ailleurs).
- ▶ Une modestie des moyens, certes, mais uniquement sur le plan financier et matériel car le mot d'ordre de chaque participation est de conférer un « visage humain au pavillon », le travail de proximité à mener quotidiennement par l'encadrement auprès de tous les visiteurs étant de mise.
- ▶ Une approche invariablement soutenue pour privilégier deux axes de participation et de présentation : l'un patrimonial valorisant l'histoire et la culture, l'autre moderne, soulignant les efforts menés dans le cadre de la bataille du développement et du progrès scientifique et humain.
- ▶ Une contribution sans réserve aux efforts déployés par le Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) et à la promotion de la cause du monde des Expositions : à l'intérieur du BIE (Vice-Présidence, Commissions), à l'occasion des Assemblées Générales de l'Organisation et pendant le déroulement des Expositions (Collège des Commissaires et relations inter-pavillons notamment).

Cette contribution a certainement dû être appréciée, si l'on en juge par le nombre de fois où le pays a été élu au Collège des Commissaires (Expo 1998 Lisbonne, Expo 2010 Shanghai, Expo 2012 Yeosu et Expo 2015 Milan notamment).

Le mot d'ordre de chaque participation est de conférer un « visage humain au pavillon »

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Algeria and the world of Expos: A happy encounter

Since its independence in 1962, Algeria has participated, on the eve of World Expo 2020 Dubai, in ten World Expos and Specialised Expos. Four of these participations have been rewarded, generally in relation to the interpretation of the Expo's theme.

The adventure began with World Expo 1967 in Montreal, Canada, and since the beginning of the 21st century, Algeria has participated in World and Specialised Expos on a recurring basis.

Algeria's early presence in Expos, considered as a way of promoting the continent-Country's culture and trade at a time when it was seeking its place in the concert of nations in line with its wonderful natural, historical, economic and cultural assets, allowed the country to familiarise itself with the world of Expos, their rules, functioning and particularities.

By joining the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) on 2 June 1997, Algeria consolidated this process, with its following pavilions – at Specialised Expo 2008 Zaragoza, World Expo 2010 Shanghai, Specialised Expo 2012 Yeosu and World Expo 2015 Milan – conducted with growing mastery and success. Presently, Algeria is also a member of the BIE's Administration and Budget Committee.

This happy encounter between an emerging country and an international organisation is developed in this article for the 2019 edition of the BIE Bulletin.

In doing so, and through vivid recounting of Algeria's Expo participations, the article presents the Algerian experience and tries to measure its constituent parts and impact.

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An aerial photograph of a large, circular, spiral-shaped structure made of wooden slats. The structure is composed of many thin, light-colored wooden slats that curve inward to form a central circular opening. The structure is surrounded by greenery, including small trees and bushes, and a paved area. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, looking down at the structure.

National image and the Expo Movement: The experience of Azerbaijan

Anar Alakbarov

From the snow-capped peaks of the Greater and Lesser Caucasus to the endless sandy beaches of the blue Caspian stretches the territory of Azerbaijan – the biggest country in the Caucasus, home for more than ten million people including nearly a hundred ethnic minorities living peacefully side-by-side, a nation with a rich history and fabulous nature.

Ancient castles and fortresses, mosques and caravanserais mark the routes of the Great Silk Road, which once reliably connected the sea ports that never slept day and night, to the markets of Europe and Asia. Millions of tourists come to this beautiful land every year, and their number is constantly growing. There are nine of the eleven climatic zones of the planet here, and within one day you can travel from spring to winter.

As a hub between different civilisations, Europe and Asia, East and West, people of Azerbaijan developed a unique model of respect and cooperation that survived through turbulent times. Many generations in Azerbaijan have been raised in the spirit of tolerance and friendship – it's our way of life, it's about mutual respect.

Azerbaijan is a reliable, active partner in international cooperation. It has proved to be the most reliable partner in the region by demonstrating loyalty in friendship, protection of peace and stability, tolerance and respect to all nationalities and confessions, and promoting national culture and values in the world.

As a global actor, Azerbaijan is actively working with international organisations and is playing an active role in international processes within both bilateral and multilateral frameworks. We do have a global perspective on a world with a better future, where everyone can live with dignity in harmony and prosperity. That is the reason why our country is on the front line in numerous international projects and has turned into a venue of global forums discussing pressing international issues. This stems from the country's growing significance and role in the region and the world, from its openness to cooperation and mutual integration formulating the true national brand of the country in the world arena.

As of today, six Baku Humanitarian Forums, and the VII Global forum of UN Alliance of Civilizations have been successfully held in the city of Baku. The Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Conference was held in Baku on April 2018 under the theme of "Promoting International Peace and Security for Sustainable Development". Hosting the Eurovision Song Contest in 2012, the First European Games in 2015 and the IV Games of Islamic Solidarity in 2017 is the best reflection of the country's equal respect to Western and Eastern values. This year, Azerbaijan hosted the 18th Summit of the NAM and will chair the movement in 2019-2022. On 30 June to 10 July, Baku hosted UNESCO's 43rd World Heritage Committee and the European Youth Olympic Festival on 21-27 July this year. At the same time, Baku witnessed, for the fourth time, the Formula 1 Azerbaijan Grand Prix on April 26-28 this year, with the fifth one to be followed in 2020.



Baku, capital
of Azerbaijan

Participating in Expos crowns Azerbaijan's active involvement in international projects. Azerbaijan attaches great importance to Expos, which aim at bringing people together and sharing ideas, educating the public, promoting progress and fostering international cooperation. The ancient Silk Road passed through the lands of modern-day Azerbaijan for 2,000 years and, much like World Expos today, it served as an important channel for the sharing of knowledge and skills. This rich exchange has helped shape the history, culture and tolerant outlook of Azerbaijan and her people. At the same time, Expos availed Azerbaijan to promote its country's brand in the world and to improve the perception of many aspects of its development. Despite its ancient traditions of statehood, Azerbaijan is a young country. Since our independence in 1991 we have managed to transform our country from a former Soviet republic into a modern state with an independent foreign policy and a strong economy. The country's achievements in the socio-economic sphere are reflected in the improving assessments of the Azerbaijani economy by international

*Expos enhance the cultural
and innovative attractiveness
of participating countries*

rating agencies (Fitch Ratings, Moody's, Standard & Poors). In the Doing Business report prepared by the World Bank and International Finance Corporation, Azerbaijan's position improved, and the country took the leading position among the CIS and regional countries in the Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum.

Besides, Azerbaijan is a politically stable country. It is widely acknowledged as a safe, visitor friendly destination, with a low crime rate and an extensive, highly capable security framework. Thus, the economic, political and social stability of Azerbaijan over the past 20 years demonstrates the viability of hosting the highest level of international projects and participating in Expos taking place in different parts of the world.

Being young, worldwide recognition of our culture and history is of utmost importance. In this regard, Expos are a recognised platform for the true presentation of countries. As a unique space for global discussion and cooperation, Expos enhance the cultural and innovative attractiveness of participating countries, proposing images and perspectives that appeal to the feelings and emotions of visitors.

Azerbaijan is always keen to take part in contributing to the outstanding issues facing this globe. The themes chosen for Expos address the pressing problems and concerns of our world. With this in mind, countries that participate in Expos showcase their cooperation and willingness to tackle those problems. Hence, Expos present endless options to shape country branding, ranging from focusing on selective topics to providing a panoramic view of the country, from politics and business, to culture and society. In this regard, the national pavilions of Azerbaijan, tailored to Expo themes, served as a gateway to culture and innovation and conveyed a message about the country's true image and its position in the world arena.

Recently, Expos have become a platform for Azerbaijan to show not only its opportunities but also the qualities that make the country stand out from different perspectives as a destination for tourism and investment.

National Pavilions of Azerbaijan in Expos

Azerbaijan is a fully-committed member of the Expo movement. Support at the highest political and public level lies behind our successful participation in World and Specialised Expos. All these initiatives enjoy the full support of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan first participated in an Expo at World Expo 2000 Hannover. This marked the first participation of the country, followed by such participations as Expo 2005 Aichi (Japan), Expo 2010 Shanghai (China) and Expo 2012 Yeosu (Republic of Korea). The country became a member of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) in 2008. In this short space of time, we have become well known for our participation.

Azerbaijan was represented for the first time with its own self-built pavilion called "Azerbaijan: Treasure of Biodiversity" at World Expo 2015 Milan, which was organised under the theme "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life".

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Top: Azerbaijan's former pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan, relocated to Seaside National Park, Baku. Bottom left and right: The interior of Azerbaijan's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan

With an area of 1,800m², the pavilion displayed Azerbaijan's ancient history and deeply-rooted cultural heritage along with its rich environment, energy resources and unique biodiversity, while the three different biospheres in the pavilion embodied Azerbaijan, which has managed to keep its environment and ancient culture in harmony with one another. The wave-like wooden walls of the pavilion symbolised the wind, a national feature, and the cultural and creative flow constantly circulating here. "Azerbaijan: Treasury of Biodiversity" was built especially for Expo 2015 Milan and reflected the inimitable natural and cultural treasure of this region, which acts as a bridge between North and South, East and West.

The three biospheres – Crossing Cultures, Biodiversity, Innovation and Tradition – showcased the country's natural biodiversity and cultural heritage and also symbolised the commitment of the Azerbaijani people to tradition, while at the same time portraying Azerbaijan's image as an innovative and forward-thinking country.

Azerbaijan's participation at Expo 2015 played a truly great role in promoting the country's history and cultural heritage

The interior design of the pavilion also reflected the ongoing work to protect Azerbaijan's biodiversity and to address environmental problems in the country, to restore and protect natural resources and to implement local and international environmental projects.

While Expo 2015 Milan attracted almost 23 million visitors, Azerbaijan's pavilion was visited by more than 3.25 million people over six months. A variety of presentations, conferences, exhibitions, and performances by Azerbaijani groups held in the pavilion by the end of the Expo also played a key role in boosting the number of visitors. The pavilion's design, characterised by the use of glass, steel, certified wood, and walls with an innovative shading system reducing direct solar radiation, won the "Towards a Sustainable Expo" award in the "Best Design and Materials" category from the Italian Environment and Sea Ministry.

The pavilion was originally constructed from environmentally friendly, easily recyclable materials. After being disassembled, it was brought to Baku, and reassembled on the territory of the Seaside National Park as an Expo legacy.

This project played a truly great role in promoting Azerbaijan's history and cultural heritage, the country's rich ecological and energy potential, as well as its rare biodiversity on an international scale, and formed the brand of a country that is always ready to take due action to contribute towards the solution of the issues in the modern world.

Another milestone in Azerbaijan's Expo history is its participation in Horticultural Expos

At Horticultural Expo 2016 Antalya, held under the theme "Flowers and Children", and with the motto "A Green Life for Future Generations", the Azerbaijani national pavilion occupied an area of nearly 2,000m². It was installed with the support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and featured the country's rich fauna, unique biodiversity and gardening culture, as well as arts exhibitions inspired by natural beauty.

The national pavilion was one of the most visited pavilions during the six months of the event and won first place at Expo 2016 Antalya for its interior and exterior design.

Azerbaijan's pavilion at Horticultural Expo 2016 Antalya



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This year, Azerbaijan was represented at Horticultural Expo 2019 Beijing, devoted to the theme “Live Green, Live Better”. The national pavilion was entitled “Azerbaijan: Harmony of Nature and Art”, tailored exactly to the theme of the Expo.

In the shape of a spiral, the Azerbaijan Pavilion stood for continuous, flowing development and the inner order of all beings. Following the path through the pavilion meant encountering the traditions and the culture of Azerbaijan and experiencing the close relationship between art and nature. The national fruit, the pomegranate, acted as a companion on the way and symbolised the fertile future of the country. From a bird’s-eye view, one could see the BUTA symbol which stands for life and fire – Azerbaijan, Land of Fire.

The steel wood structure is very special because each of the 84 ‘Gate/rip’ elements had a unique shape; each had their own construction drawings and were made of real wood – each one was like a piece of a puzzle. The gates from the outside part, for example, had more than 560 wooden pieces. For the outdoor space, there were 46 gates. When you put them all together it was like a big puzzle with so many details – more than 40,000 wooden pieces. The whole structure was twisted in several directions, making it very dynamic and alive. The wood made the pavilion organic and warm. It was the fusion of handcraft and art as reflected in the theme of the pavilion.

The four carpet regions were represented in the outdoor and indoor parts of the Azerbaijan Pavilion. The indoor exhibition referred to the four carpet regions and the colour of its typical plant dye. The visitor was guided through four areas presenting typical ancient carpets of the region in each one. The carpets and their



Azerbaijan's pavilion at Horticultural Expo 2019 Beijing

history could be discovered and experienced by visitors with the aid of symbols, descriptions, video material, magnifying glasses, sound and a large video screen.

The tradition of carpets is closely interwoven with nature. The base materials of the carpets like silk and wool are natural materials, and the huge variety of colours found in the carpet filament of Azerbaijan are traditionally dyed with natural plant and animal products. Moreover, Azerbaijani carpets tell entire stories of the country and her people through the symbolism of plants and animals woven into the carpets. Carpets connect nature with people. This concept manifests the power of nature through art and encourages people to rise up for its protection.

The spiral design of the pavilion “flowed” in with the landscape design. In the outdoor part, each region was represented with one typical plant, its colour and a big landscape poster of the region (journey from the sea to the Greater Caucasus). The Azerbaijani plants around these four outdoor spots framed the specific landscape picture. They were kept in the same colour range. The garden of the pavilion was abundant in plants, with more than 120 trees and flowers found in the regions of Azerbaijan representing the rich climate and nature of the country. The country was given a "Special Award" (second place) at the end of the Expo 2019 for its participation.

As can be seen in these pavilions at Horticultural Expos, Azerbaijan is interested in finding solutions to issues related to environmental protection and the rational use of natural resources. The rationale behind these pavilions is ensuring that people live in a healthy environment, protecting and developing the environmental values of society, and improving the quality of the environment. These two pavilions further proved that in Azerbaijan, addressing environmental issues and improving the environmental situation are essential parts of the state policy and country’s sustainable development strategy.

Azerbaijan is an active member of the Expo family by taking part in all types of Expos

In 2017, our country was also represented with a national pavilion at Specialised Expo 2017 Astana held under the theme of “Future Energy”. The Azerbaijani pavilion, organised by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and the Ministry of Energy, was designed on the basis of the concept of “Land of Energy – energy from the past to future”.

Today, Azerbaijan is fully aware of the problems worrying humanity related to energy safety, global climate changes and air pollution, and it supports all the initiatives in favour of solutions to these problems. The country has a great potential to harness alternative and renewable sources of energy thanks to the favourable geographic location and climatic conditions. Although it is an oil and gas exporter, the Government has realised a number of programmes for the development of alternative and renewable energy sources. Alongside with wind and solar energy, efforts have also been launched to increase hydroelectric, geothermal and biogas energy production. This is how the concept of the pavilion in Expo 2017 Astana was tailored.

Covering 403m², the national pavilion was a unique place for visitors. It demonstrated the country’s values such as Azerbaijani history, culture, art, science, human capital, traditions of tolerance, the country’s modern economy, the Caspian Sea, ancient Silk Road, Gobustan etc.

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Exhibits from Azerbaijan's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana

In the pavilion, using high-tech features, visitors were presented with the country's cultural and historical heritage, its rich energy potential, the energy panorama of the future, and the state's energy policy. The design of the entrance hall of the pavilion, consisting of three parts, was made in the form of a folded carpet. At the same time, through the photos and video materials presented there, visitors took a journey into the history of Azerbaijan.

The pavilion also demonstrated the development of energy in Azerbaijan from traditional to alternative, as well as about oil, oil products, gas, electric, wind, solar energy, etc. The pavilion's exhibits included mud volcanoes, new technologies for the use of biological waste, exhibits created on the basis of research conducted in Azerbaijan in the field of gas hydrates, a new energy source, horizontal drilling operations as the most environmentally acceptable way to extract hydrocarbons, and real samples of oil.

Meanwhile, the pavilion also provided virtual tours to Azerbaijan. Visitors, sitting on a real carpet, accompanied by national music through a video projector with a slope of 220 degrees, made a fantastic flight to the country of lights and energy, getting acquainted with the diverse panorama of the country.

Expo 2017 Astana received almost 4 million visitors. Our pavilion was consistently highlighted in the media as one of the most visited pavilions, receiving more than one million visitors. The pavilion won a Silver Award in the “Best Exhibition Design” category. This project further boosted the image of Azerbaijan as a country that is committed to supporting initiatives on developing renewable energy sources for a better world.

And the next Expo adventure is going on

Azerbaijan enthusiastically agreed to participate in World Expo 2020 Dubai, themed “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future.” The theme chosen for Azerbaijan’s participation is “Seeds for the Future”. This motto points out that it is only by investing in the future that we can truly achieve sustainable development and improve the places in which we live and work. The theme of the pavilion is the bright reflection of the value of human capital and closely linked to the theme of the Expo. The future must be imagined today, with ideas and projects that will mature tomorrow.

The design of the pavilion was inspired by two iconic elements, which then became real constituent parts of the architecture: a leaf and a tree. The leaf is a metaphor for an endless energy process. Every leaf transforms the sun’s energy into sap for growth. This is the same virtuous process with which Azerbaijan innovates and develops.

The tree makes life on this planet possible, it is a symbol of care and protection. It also became a symbol of Azerbaijan, as just like this country, it has a deeply rooted identity and fronds that look up to the sky, to the future.

The pavilion is designed primarily to be a welcoming space and the home of Azerbaijan at Expo 2020 Dubai, where Azerbaijani culture and art will come to life and which will be a crossroads for gathering and sharing.

The pavilion is located in the Sustainability District. Future sustainability is a concept that is born in the present. The pavilion will contain a space reflecting Azerbaijan’s focus on the future and its awareness manifesting that the events of tomorrow depend on the decisions made today. In a country’s vision, people are the main tools of change, so it is only by investing in the human capital of our nations that we can hope to transform current development models into more sustainable ones.

The Azerbaijan pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai will be full of possibilities, a space to share Azerbaijan’s increasingly rich constellation of experiences and case histories of recent years with the Expo family. This is why the visitor experience is conceived as a moment to reflect on the major themes of sustainable development. Every visitor will learn of the power they have to influence the environment and social ecosystems. But the pavilion, quite rightly, is also a theatre that explores the

*Azerbaijan’s Expo 2020 pavilion
will be a space to share the
country’s increasingly rich
constellation of experiences*



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country's natural and cultural treasures in an emotional and experiential way.

This future Expo experience, just like others, will also be a huge success and become an asset in the country's image and branding.

In order to showcase the true image of the country, Azerbaijan should not only manifest the history and the key foundations of the country's development to the world but also should take an active involvement in shaping modern events.

In this regard, last year, Azerbaijan put forward the candidacy of Baku as a host city for the World Expo 2025 under the theme of "Developing Human Capital, Building A Better Future." Azerbaijan chose this theme because it embodies the idea of the country and it is an issue of universal concern, affecting everyone on the planet. It is a priority for nations across the world, including Azerbaijan, with its codification in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It is about maximising the collective potential of humanity, and the sum of our creativity and knowledge, our talent and experience, and our ingenuity and promise. The Expo 2025 Baku bid was initiated to look beyond technology, and to focus on the people who power economies, communities and creativity. This bid further manifested Azerbaijan's prominent role on the global stage, its willingness to be a platform for discussing the major issues threatening our humanity and its readiness for action.



Renderings of Azerbaijan's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai

Conclusion

Promoting real projects backed by positive impressions and feedback is the driving force of national images and country branding. Expos definitely are of this nature. Active involvement on this platform has increased awareness about Azerbaijan, which has further advanced relations and cooperation with other countries, international, regional, commercial and non-governmental structures. A country can come up with sound and solid initiatives and programmes, but in order to promote those projects it should have a strong reputation and the credibility to implement and advocate them. Azerbaijan's Expo participation has bolstered its national image and beyond any doubt, Azerbaijan will continue to make the most of these opportunities.

In general, countries benefit most from participating in Expos as a platform to showcase their national image through their pavilions. So does Azerbaijan. For Expo visitors, Azerbaijan displays the image of a transparent, open, friendly nation promoting the preservation of biodiversity, the protection of

environment, innovation and the conservation of cultural heritage and human capital. One can also claim that lately, the country's brand is closely linked to World and Specialised Expos. Through Expos, Azerbaijan has conveyed images that it would like to broadcast to the international community. Moreover, people who visited the national pavilions of Azerbaijan now perceive Azerbaijan as a country possessing a unique culture and traditions, realising a peaceful foreign policy and a favourite tourist destination.

Through Expos, Azerbaijan has conveyed images that it would like to broadcast to the international community

Anar Alakbarov is the Director of the Heydar Aliyev Center and the Executive Director of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. He acted as Commissioner General of Azerbaijan's Pavilions at Expo 2015 Milan and Expo 2016 Antalya and was actively involved in the organisation of Azerbaijan's Pavilions at Expo 2017 Astana and Expo 2019 Beijing, supported by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Meanwhile, Dr. Alakbarov was a member of the World Expo 2025 Baku Taskforce. He has also been appointed Commissioner General of the Azerbaijan Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai.

Image nationale et les Expositions : l'expérience de l'Azerbaïdjan

Dans un monde globalisé, l'image de marque nationale a une influence considérable sur de nombreux aspects de la vie d'un pays. La manière dont un État est perçu et la représentation que les autres pays ont de celui-ci, peuvent influencer sur leurs relations comme sur leur coopération. Ainsi, il est essentiel pour un pays de transmettre les messages appropriés quant aux valeurs qu'il incarne et à la vision qui l'anime. La politique extérieure, les initiatives, les actions, les postures et les projets soutenus par un pays forment son image nationale sur la scène internationale. Dans cet article est analysée l'image nationale de l'Azerbaïdjan dans le contexte de sa participation et de son engagement au sein de projets internationaux, notamment les Expositions Internationales (Universelles, Spécialisées et Horticoles).

De nos jours, l'Azerbaïdjan est présenté comme une nation séculaire, plurielle, pluriconfessionnelle, multiculturelle, tournée vers le futur et économiquement forte avec des aspirations à la fois régionales et internationales. Divers projets internationaux organisés par le pays ainsi que sa participation aux Expositions Internationales - Universelles, Spécialisées et Horticoles - ont contribué à véhiculer auprès d'un public international, cette image. Tous ces projets ont édifié l'Azerbaïdjan en tant que plateforme de rassemblement, de partage d'idées, d'éducation du public, de promotion du progrès et de renforcement de la coopération internationale.

Considérant, dans son ensemble, l'engagement actif de l'Azerbaïdjan dans les Expositions Universelles, Spécialisées et Horticoles, cet article examinera la portée que sa participation au sein de ces projets phares a eu sur l'image du pays. Afin d'illustrer ce propos, des exemples concrets des participations de la République d'Azerbaïdjan aux Expositions Universelles, Horticoles et Spécialisées seront présentés. Le thème développé et le concept de chaque pavillon seront exposés traduisant la volonté de l'Azerbaïdjan d'être un acteur majeur œuvrant pour l'innovation, le développement durable, les technologies vertes, la préservation de la biodiversité, la conservation de l'héritage culturel et la paix entre les nations. Ainsi, sera observée la manière dont ces projets, combinés à la politique étrangère du pays, ont fait de l'Azerbaïdjan un pays riche de culture et traditions uniques, une destination de choix pour les investissements et un lieu touristique sûr et paisible.

Anar Alakbarov
est le Directeur du Centre Heydar Aliyev et Directeur Exécutif de la Fondation Heydar Aliyev. Il fut Commissaire Général de l'Azerbaïdjan à l'Expo 2015 Milan et à l'Expo 2016 Antalya, et a activement participé à l'organisation des pavillons de l'Azerbaïdjan à l'Expo 2017 Astana et à l'Expo 2019 Beijing, soutenue par la Fondation Heydar Aliyev. Anar Alakbarov fut membre du groupe mis en place pour la candidature de Bakou à l'Exposition Universelle 2025. Il est Commissaire Général de l'Azerbaïdjan pour l'Expo 2020 Dubai.



An aerial photograph of a modern architectural complex. The central feature is a large, curved building with a vibrant, multi-colored facade in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. The building is surrounded by lush green trees and landscaped grounds. A winding road or path curves around the building, and a white van is visible on the road in the lower right. The overall scene is bright and colorful, suggesting a modern, eco-friendly urban environment.

China's country branding at Expos

Jinzen Wang

As the world's highest level of exhibition, World Expos have, after over 160 years of development, become important public diplomacy platforms for all countries to showcase their economic, cultural, social and technological achievements, to strengthen communication and exchange, and to promote mutual learning among civilizations. World Expos have played a crucial role in showing national image, publicising a nation's development philosophy, discussing human development, promoting international cooperation, driving the construction of infrastructure, boosting economic growth, strengthening cultural communication, reinforcing people-to-people bonds, displaying new technologies and facilitating trade and investment, among others.

Hosted by the government of a country, World Expos not only embody political, economic, cultural and other characteristics, but also feature a distinct theme, high specifications, a long duration, a large scale of exhibition, a large number of participating countries and visitors, a far-reaching influence, diverse functions, etc., with great significance in showcasing the national image of the host country and participating countries. Historically, each Expo has served as an important carrier to shape and present the national image of the host country and participating countries regardless of their different forms and scales since the first World Expo in London in 1851.

In recent years, the main forces bidding for and hosting Expos have gradually shifted from developed countries to developing and emerging countries as the influence of Expos keeps growing. The first World Expo held in a developing country took place in 2010, followed by the first Expo in Central Asia in 2017. Expos will soon take place for the first time in the Middle East, and then in Latin America. The reasons for these trends lie in that a growing number of countries have recognised the role of Expos as a cultural national business cards to introduce themselves to the entire world, and a platform to showcase their national image.

China has always resolutely supported and proactively participated in Expos. In addition to Horticultural Expo 1999 Kunming and World Expo 2010 Shanghai, China has participated in 17 overseas Expos and is now presenting the world with Horticultural Expo 2019 Beijing. For China, Expos have not only brought a great deal of investment and consumption or the medium- and long-term "exhibition effect", but have also served as important platforms to showcase its great achievements to the entire world and to share its development philosophy and its vision of building a community with a shared future.

*A growing number of countries
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The role of Expos in showcasing national image and expanding international influence

Being important carriers to display a country's economic, cultural, social and technological achievements, World Expos also help host countries showcase their image, publicise their philosophy of and achievements in development, improve their soft power, and strengthen external exchange and cooperation, thus enlarging their positive image and expanding their international influence.

Showcasing national image

As global events, Expos cover a wide range of fields in both space and contents and attract participating countries from all over the world regardless of their state systems, geographic locations, nationalities, religious beliefs, or education and economic levels, thus creating a platform for the host countries to display and introduce themselves to other participants.

The first World Expo in the modern sense was held in the United Kingdom in 1851. It substantially displayed the achievements of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain, with a view to highlighting its top position among countries

The Crystal Palace,
Expo 1851 London



Left: Poster for Expo 1970 Osaka. Right: Avenue of Europe at Expo 1992 Seville



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© OFFICIAL GUIDE OF EXPO 1992 SEVILLE

throughout the world. Surveys on super-large international events indicated that World Expo 1992 Seville had a contribution index of 75 per cent to Spain's international image, while those of the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Game and European Capital of Culture were 74 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively. Chancellor Schroeder emphasised the fact that Expo 2000 Hannover was the first World Expo hosted by Germany, which was a golden chance to present the world with Germany's international image after unification. As he noted, the country had to seize this opportunity to show the world an open and modern Germany with a profound culture and a prosperous economy.

Demonstrating a country's power and strength

The World Expo was born to demonstrate the power and strength of a country. The British Government demonstrated the development of the industrial civilization of the world for the first time through the World Expo in the mid-nineteenth century, which actually manifested the unprecedented national strength of Great Britain. At that time, Great Britain had become the world's leading power in the wake of the industrial revolution, which further motivated it to host the first Expo, an unprecedented Great Exhibition gathering the country's entire economic strength and receiving over 6.3 million visitors within 23 weeks. At this Expo, the British Government showed visitors the development of modern industry and the fertile imaginations of human beings, advocating free trade never heard before. Since then, the rising United States devoted great enthusiasm to hosting Expos. Up to now, the United States has hosted a total of 11 imposing and unforgettable Expos, vividly showing people around the world its history in becoming a powerful nation.

World Expo 1970 Osaka displayed the outstanding achievements made by Japan in social, economic and technological developments at that time. Attracting over

64 million visitors, it topped all the previous Expos in terms of visitor numbers. Being the first World Expo successfully held in Asia, it comprehensively demonstrated the impressive accomplishments of Japan in the economy, science, technology, culture, education, and the like, and vividly showed the world Japan's rapid rise and great progress towards a developed country after the war. This Expo advanced the scientific, technological and industrial development of Japan and further enriched its external trade activities on the one hand, and broadened the horizons of citizens, inspired the national spirit, and presented a brand new Japan to the international community on the other hand.

Expanding international influence

With sovereign states at their core, World Expos are platforms for international exchange led by state leaders, government officials and diplomats. As specified in the Convention relating to International Exhibitions, all invitations to BIE Member States or non-BIE member countries must be transmitted by the host government to the invitee governments through diplomatic channels. Therefore, a World Expo is bound to be a national act, a gathering organised by the host country for sovereign countries around the world, thus becoming an important carrier for the host country to expand its international influence.

An added value of World Expos is to dramatically raise the international popularity of their host cities. From 10 participating countries at the first World Expo to 174 international participants at Expo 2000 Hannover and then to 246 international participants at Expo 2010 Shanghai, a growing number of countries and organisations are present at World Expos, introducing host countries and cities to more and more countries and to the international community as a whole. This is an important indicator of increased international popularity.

China has continuously leveled up its exhibition standard and impact since it made its first presence at Expo 1982 Knoxville

China's experience in external promotion via Expos

Thanks to the guidance of the BIE, China has continuously leveled up its exhibition standard and impact since it made its first presence at Expo 1982 Knoxville, playing an increasingly important role on the Expo stage. China spares no effort in demonstrating the achievements in deepening its reforms and opening up in an all-round, multi-angle and three-dimensional way, sharing its new development concepts of innovation, coordination, green, openness and sharing, and expanding its multi-field exchanges and cooperation with other countries throughout the world by hosting and participating in Expos of various types.

Hosting Expo 2010 Shanghai

The Chinese Government successfully hosted World Expo 2010 Shanghai, themed "Better City, Better Life" from 1 May to 31 October 2010. With a total investment of RMB 45 billion, this Expo attracted 246 participating countries and international

Expo Axis and China pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai



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organisations and over 73 million visitors from across the world, with over 20,000 performances presented. Being the first International Registered Exhibition (World Expo) held in China, and in a developing country, this Expo created numerous records in the history of World Expos, such as the number of participating countries and visitors, and presented the world with a successful, wonderful and memorable occasion as the Chinese Government had committed to.

Hosting the Expo allowed China to present the entire world with the passion, foresight and determination of the Chinese people, as well as its culture, advanced technologies, sustainable development ideas, etc. Inheriting the concept of 'Scientific Expo', Expo 2010 Shanghai was a scientific festival that gathered brilliant scientific achievements from all over the world. In 2010, when the world was still suffering from the financial crisis, Expo 2010 Shanghai offered a chance for those with their eyes on China's economy to get deep insights into the global economic recovery.

Expo 2010 Shanghai formed a new mode of diplomacy, with remarkable results achieved in this regard both in the history of World Expos and for China's diplomacy record in 2010. It helped to present the world with the real China, a responsible world power, as well as its ideas, standpoint and image. Almost all modes of diplomacy including summit meetings, people-to-people exchange, green, economic, public, humanistic and multi-faceted diplomacy, were vividly integrated here.

Expo 2010 Shanghai was a golden opportunity for China to improve its international image and soft power following the Beijing Olympic Games. China had witnessed rapid growth in GDP since the beginning of the 21st century, which raised more obvious and urgent demands for improvement of its soft

*Hosting Expo 2010 allowed
China to present the entire
world with the passion,
foresight and determination
of the Chinese people*

power compared with rapidly increased material strength. It is a common consensus that a country can gain international respect by hosting international iconic events to showcase the rise of its international position. Fortunately, Expo 2010 Shanghai offered China that chance.

Over 73 million visitors and about 3,000 hours of media coverage dramatically improved the image of China and the host city Shanghai. The core topic covered by the media helped people all over the world learn more about and change their impression of China. Moreover, this Expo gave birth to 'World Cities Day'.

Participating in Expos in 2012, 2015 and 2017

The national pavilion of a country at an Expo functions to showcase its development and advancement. China pavilions at all previous Expos have shaped and demonstrated the image of China via different architectural styles, landscape or indoor exhibition models, all aiming to present the world a charming and powerful China.

Covering 1,000m², the China pavilion at Specialised Expo 2012 Yeosu was themed "One Sea, One Home". The China pavilion displayed China's advanced ideas from the three dimensions of marine and coastal development and protection, marine science and technology, and marine culture, by means of theme films, exhibitions, interactive activities, and the like, together with the Chinese



The interior of China's pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu

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*The China pavilion at Expo 2015
made a declaration about
the essential role of China
on the international stage*

white dolphin mascot, representing China's First Class National Protected Animals. Thanks to its exquisite design and proper organisation, the China pavilion stood out from over 100 participants and won a Gold Award in the A category for its Creative Display, the top prize at Expo 2012 Yeosu. This was the first time since China first participated in Expos in 1982 that the China pavilion won an award. It's no secrecy to say that the top award vividly presented the improvement of China's national image and soft power.

At World Expo 2015 Milan, the China pavilion was the second largest international self-built pavilion, which was themed with "Land of Hope, Food for Life" and covered an area of 4,590m². This was the first time that China participated in an overseas World Expo with a self-built pavilion with its own design. The rippling-wheat-shaped pavilion won the Bronze Award in the Architecture and Landscape Category for large self-built pavilions. The China pavilion vividly showed the world how China, a populous country, could feed its 1.3 billion population, and it presented China's history, culture, advanced technologies and achievements to people from around the world, making a declaration about the essential role of China on the international stage.

Themed "Future Energy, Green Silk Road", the China pavilion at Specialised Expo 2017 Astana comprehensively displayed China's proposition for energy development and insights into future energy development. As the world's second largest economy and the largest energy producer and consumer, the China pavilion fully demonstrated the country's advanced technologies and strategies in energy utilisation and sustainable development. It displayed and publicised China's achievements

Façade of China's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana



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and contributions in the field of energy, shared experiences, exchanged ideas and established cooperation with Kazakhstan and other participating countries, showing them China's image as a responsible power. The presentation of China pavilion led to it receiving a Silver Award for Theme Development in the A category.

Hosting Horticultural Expo 2019 Beijing

To date, we can still remember the success of the International Horticultural Exhibition held in Kunming, China in 1999, which was an A1 category Expo approved by the BIE and considered as the best Horticultural Expo ever held. Attracting the largest number of international participants in the history of Horticultural Expos so far, Expo 2019 Beijing, which was open from 29 April to 7 October, is another business card of China in hosting diplomacy as it coincides with the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Chinese President Xi Jinping attended and addressed the Expo's opening ceremony, fully interpreting China's thoughts on ecological civilization, clearly presenting the latest idea of building socialist ecological civilization, vividly demonstrating diverse practices in promoting green development and building a beautiful China, conveying to the world China's determination and confidence in achieving the goal of green development, and inviting countries from across the globe to make joint efforts for a beautiful planet.

China's pavilion at Expo 2019 Beijing

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China's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan

Suggestions for countries to promote their national image via Expos

Pavilion construction and design

At World Expos, the national image of a country may be better presented through exquisite pavilion structures and exhibition designs as compared to the traditional textual expression, as perceivable and physical architecture and exhibits make all visitors intuitively feel the cultural traditions, development ideas and comprehensive strength of a country. Each Expo is endowed with its own unique theme that keeps abreast of the times and gathers a large number of countries to demonstrate the theme in their own way, thus communicating their featured cultures.

Each country artistically embodies its unique features and spirit of the era in the design of its pavilion, as the pavilion is a symbol of a country that vividly demonstrates its national features, culture and spirit through a unique architectural appearance, design and colour application, with a view to obtaining recognition of its own people and in delivering a recognisable image to visitors from across the globe. World Expos are also universal occasions that demonstrate the future development trend of humankind and that witnesses progress in modern design. Hence, the focus of architectural design should be placed on the advancement of modern architectural technologies.

Internal exhibition space is the key for information communication. Revolving around the theme, diverse exhibits are displayed to deliver a country's understanding of the theme, efforts and achievements made, and thoughts on future development. Carrying forward the featured culture, ideas and propositions, pavilions also vividly present the real country to visitors by applying impulsive advanced technologies through multiple means.

Diversified Activities

Being a global stage, an Expo is always designed with wonderful activities such as National Days, cultural performances and forums to spread national images in an intuitive and interactive manner.

National Days are a must-hold activity at an Expo. Each participating country chooses a specific day as its National Day to showcase its participation, national image and profound culture by organising diversified forms of activities, which attract great attention, as evidenced by the participation of country leaders.

Increasing numbers of artistic forms are presented as times progress. Diverse cultural performances such as music, dance, drama, variety shows and interactive experience activities help visitors better understand a country and its culture, and present the world with the country's national identity, folk customs, culture and folk characteristics in a unique yet cheerful manner.

At previous Expos, a remarkable number of international conferences and forums of historical significance were organised, together with a variety of academic discussions and technical exchanges. International conferences and forums can most efficiently showcase a country's soft power, and form and display its national image.

Moreover, art exhibitions, film festivals, children's days and other activities may also be organised, taking the opportunity of the Expo to share cultural assets,

Diverse cultural performances such as music, dance, drama, variety shows and interactive experience activities help visitors better understand a country and its culture

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Chinese cultural performance at Expo 2015 Milan

civilization, social openness, and the like, with visitors, and to improve a country's cultural attraction. Restaurants and souvenir shops are also a good choice to promote a participating country's cuisine and tourism, further promoting its national image.

International Cooperation Platform

As world-level platforms that attract the participation of global leaders, Expos help to promote multilateral summit diplomacy and public diplomacy. Political leaders from all over the world enthusiastically participate in Expos, effectively promoting international exchange and cooperation between different countries, accelerating the integration of foreign affairs and diplomacy among countries and strengthening friendly relations in the international community. Broadly, Expos play an important role in promoting the international dissemination of national images.

World Expos provide an important platform for economic and trade interactions between countries. Governments and businesses of related countries take this opportunity to further deepen economic and trade relations, broaden economic and

trade cooperation channels, and expand the network of foreign economic and trade ties. Special areas are designated in pavilions for domestic enterprises to display their advanced technologies and products and organise economic and trade negotiations, project promotion and other activities, thus further showcasing a country's industrial characteristics and merits in development, and improving its image and popularity.

World Expos are a good opportunity for the improvement of people-to-people exchange and an indispensable link to spread a country's profound culture. At World Expos, a country's unique cultural symbol can be designed and promoted to showcase its splendid civilization, increase mutual understanding and contact with people from all over the world, enhance a country's international status and influence, promote progress of the world and friendly coexistence of mankind, and accelerate sustainable peace. In the meantime, touching stories at World Expos that reflect the interaction and cultural exchanges between different countries can be further explored and refined to represent national spirit and enhance national image.

Expos play an important role in promoting the international dissemination of national images

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L'image de marque de la Chine aux Expositions Internationales

Au cours de leurs plus de 160 années d'existence, les Expositions Internationales sont devenues d'importantes plateformes de diplomatie publique et jouent un rôle essentiel dans le développement de l'image de marque des pays. Fervent partisan des Expositions Internationales et participant actif, la Chine s'est saisie de cette plateforme pour présenter ses réalisations au monde, partager sa philosophie de développement et sa vision pour la construction d'une communauté de destin pour l'humanité.

Dans cet article, l'auteur présente le rôle des Expositions Internationales (Universelles, Spécialisées ou Horticoles) dans la mise en avant de l'image nationale d'un pays, l'exposition de ses ressources, et le développement de son influence internationale. Depuis sa première participation à une Exposition Internationale en 1982, la Chine n'a cessé d'améliorer sa participation en termes d'exposition et d'impact. Les expériences de la Chine en la matière sont ainsi relatées à travers les exemples de sa participation au sein d'Expositions Universelles et Spécialisées, notamment à l'Expo 2012 Yeosu, à l'Expo 2015 Milan et à l'Expo 2017 Astana, ainsi qu'en tant qu'hôte de l'Exposition Universelle 2010 à Shanghai et de l'Exposition Internationale Horticole 2019 à Beijing.

Des considérations sont alors apportées sur les meilleures pratiques utilisées pour le développement de l'image de marque d'un pays au sein des Expositions. Il est tout d'abord évoqué la mise en valeur de l'image de marque d'un pays à travers une structure de pavillon et une scénographie élaborées ; chaque pays peut incarner de manière artistique ses caractéristiques uniques et l'esprit de son temps dans la conception de son pavillon. L'accent est ensuite mis sur les nombreuses activités organisées dans le cadre des Expositions telles que la célébration des Journées Nationales, les spectacles culturels, les forums et autres initiatives permettant de présenter l'image nationale de manière à la fois intuitive et interactive. Des expositions d'art, des festivals de cinéma, des journées pour les enfants peuvent par ailleurs être organisées dans ce cadre pour œuvrer au développement de l'image de marque, tout comme les restaurants et boutiques de souvenirs constituent de bons vecteurs de promotion de l'image de marque pays. Enfin, les Expositions constituent des plateformes de coopération internationale visant à soutenir la diplomatie dans le cadre de sommets ainsi que la diplomatie publique, à renforcer les interactions économiques et commerciales et à améliorer les échanges entre les peuples. Tous ces éléments participent à la diffusion internationale de l'image nationale et à l'accroissement de son appréciation.

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Malaysia: The confluence of heritage, diversity and progress

Dr. Mohd Azhar bin. Haji Yahaya

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In a fiercely competitive global marketplace, a nation's brand image can be one of its highly valued assets or a devitalising disadvantage. How quickly a country is able to find a niche and succinctly position its brand compellingly to a global audience can have a weighing impact on its overall success and future sustainability. Given the rapidly evolving global landscape propelled by technological advancement and changing societal values, Malaysia has proven to be not just an adaptable but also a dynamic player, learning and growing from its engagement with the rest of the world to build its central identity premised on a powerful confluence of heritage, diversity and progress.

Brand Malaysia

What Malaysia stands for

Malaysia is a culturally diverse melting pot with friendly people, varied cultures, delectable cuisine, idyllic landscapes, robust development, hyper-connectivity, distinct demographics and progressive policies, all coming together to make Malaysia a haven for investors, innovators and tourists alike.

Advancing from a country renowned for its rich natural resources and commodities such as minerals, oil, rubber and spices, to become an export-oriented manufacturing hub leading in solar panels, furniture and rubber gloves as well as in the assembly of electronics and electrical products, Malaysia today has aggregated the learnings and successes of the past to now make its mark in innovation, encompassing a wide range of sectors as finance, food, technology and energy.

Malaysia epitomises an exceptional blend of modernity with heritage, unity with diversity, and tradition with progress, to build on its collaborations and commitment to stay ahead of the growth curve. These qualities have gone into establishing a well-rounded, integrated and strong brand Malaysia.

We have showcased brand Malaysia globally through diplomatic policies, economic activities, hospitable tourism and a conducive business environment, alongside hosting many international events, conferences and dialogues in exciting local destinations. Reciprocally, Malaysia has also participated in World Expos and Specialised Expos, which have contributed to brand Malaysia attracting foreign direct investments, enhancing trade, driving competitiveness and increasing our geopolitical influence.

*We have observed that
World Expos provide an
opportunity to showcase pride
in our national heritage*



Kuala Lumpur
cityscape

Showcasing Malaysia at World Expos

With an ever-increasing number of participating countries and visitors, World Expos are ideal platforms to showcase the country's achievements and aspirations to an audience that shapes opinions and decisions globally. The stated objective of these Expos is to be a platform for the discussion of global challenges; however, over the 50 years that Malaysia has participated in these World Expos, we have observed that the events also provide an opportunity to showcase pride in our national heritage and innovative achievements.

As such, for Malaysia, World Expos offer an indisputable platform to leverage off, both in terms of the exposure to the country as well as to learn from the achievements of all the other participating countries. Moreover, the friendly competitiveness among participating countries serves as an impetus for us to continually evolve and improve how we represent our nation within the dynamic narratives set by the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE).

Participating in World Expos has opened our eyes to vast possibilities, ranging from the architectural splendour of the pavilions, networking platforms with global decision makers, thought provoking insightful dialogues, eye-popping innovative creations and fascinating cultural extravaganzas, to the scrumptious culinary experiences.

World Expos have thus become the staple for Malaysia, capturing the essence of what the country is, what it stands for and what it has to offer to the world.

Showcasing
Malaysia's natural
resources at Expo 2012
Yeosu



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Malaysia's achievements

Innovation across industries

For a country with a population of just over 30 million, Malaysia has been at the forefront of technology and innovation across several industries ranging from oil and gas to halal food products, consistently raising the bar on quality and even international standards.

For a start, on the oil and gas front, Malaysia announced the world's first floating liquefied natural gas (FLNG) facility in 2017, proving the country's technological capability in adapting a conventionally land-based installation into a FLNG facility, which is a game-changer in the global LNG business landscape.

Malaysia is also the second largest producer and exporter of palm oil and palm oil products, taking a leadership role in meeting the growing global need for sustainably produced oils and fats. As a matter of fact, Malaysia accounts for 12 per cent and 27 per cent of the world's total production and exports of oils and fats respectively.

On the renewable energy side, Malaysia is now the third largest manufacturer of photovoltaic (PV) cells and modules in the world, boasting a complete solar power ecosystem of some 250 companies involved in upstream (producing wafers and cells) and downstream (manufacturing inverters and system integrators) activities.

In industrial manufacturing, Malaysia is the world's largest producer and leading exporter of rubber gloves, contributing 63 per cent of the global supply.

Another sector involving technology and innovation is our country's automotive industry. Malaysia took the bold step in 1983 with the Government establishing

Proton, the national car company. Encouraged by the success of Proton, in the early 1990s the government established another car company known as Perodua. With the establishment of Proton and Perodua, Malaysia became the first nation in Southeast Asia to have indigenous automotive companies.

In 1990, Malaysia took another strategic decision to establish Composites Technology Research Malaysia (CTRM) to helm the progress of the country's aerospace and advanced composites industries. Over the years, having further diversified its business into composite aircraft interiors, aircraft seats and transportation, we take pride in the fact that today CTRM is part of the global supply chain in composite aerostructures for major commercial and military aircraft manufacturers around the world.

On the halal economy side, the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, JAKIM, was in fact the world's first halal certification body responsible for monitoring the halal industry. JAKIM's recognition programme for international halal bodies is one of the most stringent and highly sought-after bilateral halal system recognition programmes in the world with over 50 international bodies registered to date. The iconic Malaysia Halal logo is a globally recognised hallmark that serves as an icon for the country's reputation as the world's leading halal hub.

The Malaysian halal standard is now being widely incorporated by several multinational conglomerates including Nestlé, Colgate Palmolive and Unilever. Backed by this, Malaysia's halal portfolio has also expanded beyond food and beverage into various other sectors including cosmetics, logistics, pharmaceuticals and tourism.

As a result, in the State of the Global Islamic Economy report by Thomson Reuters and Dubai Islamic Economy Development Centre (DIEDC), Malaysia topped the Halal travel index as the country with the most developed Islamic economy ecosystem for Muslim travellers for years 2014, 2015 and 2017.

Turning to the financial sector, the country has held its global leadership position on sukuk issuance volumes, both in the long and short-term markets. It accounted for over one-third of the global sukuk issuance for the first quarter of 2019, putting it ahead of Indonesia and Saudi Arabia which came in second and third respectively.



Malaysia's renewable energy technologies presented at Expo 2017 Astana

To further spur this thriving industry, Malaysia has spearheaded a number of innovative developments in Islamic finance including the issuance of the first Sustainable and Responsible Investment Sukuk (SRI) and Green Sukuk, the launch of the Investment Account Platform (IAP) and development of the Waqf Fund.

Further, according to the 2018 World Bank report, Malaysia's digital economy is well poised to be a new driver enabling an environment for economic growth, job creation, innovation and public revenues.

Coupling tourism with cutting-edge medical treatment, Malaysia has provided award-winning healthcare services to over 4.9 million medical travellers from all over the world. Being recognised as the "Destination of the Year" by the International Medical Tourism journal for three consecutive years, Malaysia recognises this segment as a potential sub-economy and is committed to ensuring an exceptional healthcare destination experience.

Balancing progress with sustainability

Malaysia adopted the United Nations' Global Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016 and has made significant progress towards their realisation. As part of its climate action strategy, the country has rolled out plans for establishing low carbon cities, increasing renewable energy generation, facilitating sustainable consumption-production, encouraging energy efficiency and eliminating single-use plastics through a phased approach.

On the environmental conservation side, with increasing tourism there are rising environmental concerns, especially with regards to maintaining the ecology of the flora and fauna. As per the Malaysia Sustainable Development Goals Voluntary National Review, under Environmental Endowment, the country has maintained 55.2 per cent forest cover, 12.1 per cent as terrestrial protected areas and 3.36 per cent as marine protected areas, paving the foundation for the country's ecological well-being.

These are impressive sustainability efforts for a country that is strongly committed to new developments, economic stability and social inclusivity.

Higher learning and better living

Besides being an attractive destination and ecological haven for international investors, businesses, tourists and medical travellers, Malaysia is currently home to 150,000 foreign students, 27,000 of whom have postgraduate degrees, with targets to increase this population of international students to 200,000 by the year 2020. According to QS Higher Education System Strength Rankings in 2018, Malaysia's higher education system was ranked 25th, reflecting the strength of its flagship universities. Malaysia also hosts leading universities, with Universiti Malaya ranked 87th in the 2019 QS World University Rankings, and some notable universities such as Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, to name a few.

To round up these accolades, given the integrated progress and liveability of the country in terms of being inviting, secure and stable, International Living, which has been researching and reporting on retirement opportunities overseas for the last 38 years, has ranked Malaysia 5th among the 10 best places to retire in 2018.

This is the trailblazing story of Malaysia, a story well worth sharing with an international audience. World Expos and Specialised Expos have offered Malaysia a perfect platform to share this narrative to a receptive audience, be this in the commodity-era when Malaysia participated for the first time in an international exhibition at World Expo 1970 in Osaka, Japan or showcasing clean energy development at Specialised Expo 2017 in Astana, Kazakhstan themed “Future Energy”.

Over the last 50 years, since our very first participation at a World Expo, the spirit of the organisers, the spectra of the pavilions and the vibrancy of the participants have helped advance the investment and trade prospects that Malaysia has to offer.

Historic participation in Expos

Expo 1970 Osaka and onwards

While the Sultanate of Johor (now one of Malaysia’s 14 states) participated in the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, the unified country of Malaysia, in its current form, which was established on 16 September 1963, participated for the first time in an international exhibition at World Expo 1970 in Osaka.

Here, the Malaysian pavilion was based on the architecture of traditional Malay homes and built entirely with indigenously sourced high quality wood. The pavilion roof had three symbolic structures in the style of “Minangkabau” houses popular in the southern region of the peninsula. The building stood on stilts, with the interiors embellished with a generous use of woodcarving, complex hand-painted batik and rattan panelling. The first pavilion thus represented the art, culture and history of different races of the country in a unifying Malaysian context.

Malaysia’s first pavilion represented the art, culture and history of different races of the country in a unifying Malaysian context

Malaysia’s traditional Malay-style pavilion at Expo 1970 Osaka

© JAPAN WORLD EXPOSITION, OSAKA 1970 OFFICIAL PHOTO ALBUM



Having witnessed the benefits of participating in World Expos and to play a more active role in their planning, Malaysia became a member of the BIE in 1995, giving it a vote in the BIE General Assembly and the opportunity to participate in discussions about upcoming Expos.

Malaysia put itself in front of a global audience at subsequent World and Specialised Expos, and was awarded the Bronze Award in its category for the content of its pavilion at Expo 2005 in Aichi.

Expo 2015 Milan

At the most recent World Expo, the Malaysian pavilion's theme, "Towards a Sustainable Food Ecosystem", highlighted Malaysia's transformation agenda of sustainability and inclusiveness, in line with Expo 2015 Milan's theme, "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life", which called for the world to rethink the way food is produced, recreate healthier and sustainable farming, as well as food production for the benefit of mankind.

In terms of impact, the pavilion featured 183 Malaysian companies, with keen interest in palm oil from several interested participants. The pavilion also hosted a total of 3.1 million visitors, which was almost double the targeted numbers, making it a beehive of business interactions and cultural activities.

A study by Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera* indicated that Malaysia was voted the third most preferred pavilion by Expo visitors and that Malaysian cuisine was highly rated. Overall, Malaysia's representation at Expo 2015 Milan was an exemplary success in terms of increased long-term interest in trade and investments.

Malaysia's pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan



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Expo 2017 Astana

In keeping with the spirit of showcasing its prowess at international platforms and learning from global leaders in various fields, Malaysia also participated in Specialised Expos from time to time with the latest one being Expo 2017 Astana in Kazakhstan, focusing on “Future Energy”.

During its three-month participation, Malaysia generated a total of RM 12.65 billion in potential business leads with companies based in Switzerland, China and Kazakhstan, well surpassing the RM 1 billion initial trade and investment target. A total of 14 memoranda of understandings (MoUs) were inked garnering potential trade and investment value of RM 5.05 billion. The business matching sessions yielded potential that was valued at RM 7.6 billion. The key industries for collaborations included green technology, education, energy, innovation, water and waste, providing Malaysian companies numerous opportunities to venture into new markets.

Some of the key events hosted by our country’s pavilion included the Malaysia Energy Forum, which focused on tapping the potential of the ASEAN energy market; the Malaysia-Kazakhstan Energy Business Forum, which highlighted trade and business opportunities, promoted green energy and introduced new financial instruments such as green bonds and sukuk; as well as the Malaysia-Kazakhstan Business Forum, which promoted inbound trade and investment opportunities in Malaysia by attracting Kazakhstan financiers and industrialists.

As part of these discussions, Malaysia and Kazakhstan agreed to join hands to achieve the countries’ mutually equivalent renewable energy generation mix target of 50 per cent by 2050.

As part of the Expo’s comprehensive three-month programme, Malaysia launched Sustainable Cities Week, involving a series of thought provoking talks and insightful panel discussions from industry leaders on the different aspects of city planning and development.

Additionally, the popularity of the Malaysia pavilion resulted in it being named among the top most visited pavilions. The pavilion played host to heads of states and dignitaries from several countries including the United States, France, Switzerland, Germany, China, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, India, Venezuela and Monaco, to name just a few.

Malaysia also launched the hugely visible #MyButterflyEffect Brand Campaign to encourage and empower Expo participants towards new thinking, new actions and new outcomes, premised on the fact that a small positive change can result in significant desirable outcomes.

Conceptually, the #MyButterflyEffect inspired a green future for Malaysia and the world, with the iconic Rajah Brooke’s Birdwing (*Trogonoptera brookiana*), Malaysia’s national butterfly, as the brand symbol. To give flight to the campaign,



#MyButterflyEffect brand campaign outside Malaysia’s pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana

© BUREAU INTERNATIONAL DES EXPOSITIONS (BIE)

there were several activities organised at the pavilion encouraging visitors to make small adjustments towards a more socially conscious and sustainable lifestyle, showing them how each change can collectively contribute to a much bigger result.

Given its creativity and impact, the #MyButterflyEffect Brand Campaign won Malaysia's prestigious Marketing Excellence Award 2017's gold prize in the "Excellence in Government Sector Marketing" category.

On the cultural and social aspect, we invited visitors to join in for the celebrations organised around Malaysia's 60th Independence Day at the pavilion. Over the many weeks at the Expo, we also conducted arts and crafts sessions, organised kite-flying sessions with visitors and their children, marketed #MyButterflyEffect merchandise and laid out Malaysian delicacies at the café.

Given the popularity, structure and set-up of the pavilion, as well as the programmes conducted therein, the Malaysian pavilion received an "Honourable Mention for the Best Interpretation of Theme" by US-based *Exhibitor Magazine*, marking a successful cross-national and cross-cultural concerted effort by all parties involved.

Malaysia at World Expo 2020 Dubai

Theme & Targets

Backed by this track record, Malaysia is now gearing up to participate in Expo 2020 Dubai, to join over 190 participating countries to be a part of "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future". To tie in with the Expo's objectives, the Malaysian Pavilion is centred on the theme "Energising Sustainability", which captures Malaysia's commitment to balance socio-economic progress with environmental concerns to ensure a secure and sustainable future. Malaysia's participation in the Expo is also aligned with the government's new economic initiative and direction for Malaysia, "Shared Prosperity".

"Shared Prosperity" is defined as an effort to make Malaysia a country that could be continuously developed sustainably in line with equitable growth at all levels of the supply chain, class, race and geography and to create a sense of harmony and stability among the people by 2030. One of its main objectives is for Malaysia to be dynamic and an important economic axis in Asia. It is aimed at making Malaysia a united, prosperous and dignified nation to emerge as the axis of the Asian economy.

In terms of setting tangible outcomes from its Expo participation, given that the focus is to bolster trade and investment, Malaysia is targeting USD 2.5 billion in potential trade and/or investment value, 1,000 business leads and 20 MoUs or Partnership Agreements.

To symbolise the continuation of the winning ripple effect, which was initiated in Malaysia and travelled to Astana, the #MyButterflyEffect Brand Campaign was relaunched in 2019 to lead the trail across continents and countries to Dubai for Expo 2020. The relaunch represents the collective aspirations of Malaysians to spread our wings to new territories, showcase Malaysia in the best light and forge new collaborations internationally.



Malaysia pavilion

The mandate to the winning designer of the Malaysian pavilion is to make it intriguing and invigorating, inspiring corporate leaders, entrepreneurs and individuals to take bold steps ensuring a sustainable future for Malaysia. The pavilion, which comes under the Sustainability subtheme, will see the participation of 200 companies from across various fields including sustainable agriculture, education, tourism, circular economy, and Industry 4.0.

Leading architecture firm Hijjas Architects & Planners, with decades of commitment to nation building behind them, won the heavily contested design submissions. Hijjas Architects & Planners boasts a string of awards and accolades, and was responsible for the much-acclaimed “four seeds” design at Expo 2015 Milan, which stood out as a visually distinctive organic treat in a sea of architectural extravagance.

For Expo 2020 Dubai, the architectural design of the Malaysian Pavilion mimics the rainforest canopy, depicting the symbiotic relationship between the natural habitat and human settlement. The building blocks are elevated for aesthetics and practicality. With an unobstructed inviting open space on

Rendering of
Malaysia's pavilion
at Expo 2020 Dubai

*The architectural design
of the Malaysian Pavilion
at Expo 2020 mimics
the rainforest canopy*

ground level, the Pavilion is split into two tiers: the floating exhibition spaces above and the underground business centre below, allowing for a spatial separation between these distinctive functions.

The landscape concept opens into a forest narrative, with a bioswale reed bed water pool creating a cooling effect, a water spring mimicking natural tropical scenery, with vertical gardens camouflaging the white steel poles, water rills meandering down, and sunken gardens bringing in natural light to the understory deck.

The pavilion will be portioned into four segments, the first of which, “Energising Today”, will journey visitors through a narrative about agricommodity, specifically palm oil, and how it has shaped the socio-economic development of the country. The middle segment of the pavilion will be on “Energising Tomorrow,” showcasing Malaysia’s commitment to becoming a developed and high-income nation, driving the agenda of carbon reduction and climate change with future-ready and green energy technologies as the core drivers.

The third segment of the pavilion, “Energising Harmony”, will encapsulate how Malaysians of diverse cultures, traditions, races and languages live harmoniously, working together towards the nation’s progress, unity and stability. This segment will host an exotic ensemble of multi-cultural heritage and contemporary experiences through daily shows of music and dance.

The final segment, “Energising Business”, portrays the role of private sectors, state-owned enterprises and government initiatives in promoting sustainable development across all industries. This segment will serve to increase business connectivity among academic, business, research and diplomatic communities through workshops, seminars and dialogues.

Overall, the pavilion aims to inspire visitors through an immersive experience of Malaysian hospitality, the biodiversity of the rainforest and the country’s efforts at long-term sustainability across various industries.

The theme of Energising Sustainability will also be expressed through the six clusters of the pavilion’s programme for the Expo:

- ▶ Agriculture and Primary Commodities Sustainability
- ▶ Energy, Science, Technology and Innovation, and Environment
- ▶ Culture and Tourism
- ▶ E-Commerce and Information and Communications Technology
- ▶ Trade and the 4th Industrial Revolution
- ▶ Education, Women and Youth

The pavilion will be assigning a month for each of the above clusters, offering visitors unique perspectives on Malaysia’s concerted actions to energise sustainability in these areas, through its range of talks, discussions and business matching sessions.

*Our efforts at Expo 2020
will present visitors with
a glimpse into all that
Malaysia has to offer*

Participation

To make a big impact in terms of opening doors for Malaysian businesses and innovators at Expo 2020 Dubai, there are over ten ministries and supporting agencies involved that are leaving no stones unturned. To encourage Malaysian companies to participate at the pavilion, there are special grants for SMEs, trade unions and professional service providers engaging in international export promotional activities. Additionally, there are provisions for tax exemptions for sponsors as part of public-private initiatives to encourage greater participation.

As we approach the start of Expo 2020 Dubai, we expect the pavilion to be filled with dynamic companies, creative innovators and talented artists. We are confident that our efforts at Expo 2020 Dubai will present visitors with a glimpse into all that Malaysia has to offer and further entice them to plan a trip to our country as we usher in “Visit Truly Asia Malaysia 2020”.



Malaysian cultural performance at Expo 2015 Milan

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Expos and the future

What's in it for participants

As Malaysia gears up to put its best foot forward for Expo 2020 Dubai, ministries, industries, entrepreneurs and individuals evaluate the significance and relevance of being part of World Expos as well as how they can optimise their participation and contribute to the Malaysian pavilion's success. Moreover, expectations are high as participants also look forward to experiencing the immersive journey they are promised at World Expos, and exploring the myriad of commercially viable technological advancements and innovations on show.

A captivating aspect of World Expos is that each one convenes an extensive network of influential decision makers and organisations, with numerous channels for face-to-face interactions. These unparalleled networking opportunities have often paved the way to untapped markets, creative ideas, new ventures and emerging industries.

Another dimension to Expos is the cultural and culinary aspect, which provides artists such as painters, dancers, musicians, weavers, designers and chefs an interactive stage to parade their best to a global audience, not just within respective country pavilions but also in specially curated cultural spaces interspersed across Expo sites.

Expos thus continue to offer immense potential, presenting participants with scientific advancements, business prospects and cultural richness of other countries, all in the convenience of an electrifying state-of-the-art setting.

Relevance of Expos, alliances and campaigns in nation branding

From the perspective of a nation, World Expos will continue to be a decisive platform for countries including Malaysia to not just showcase our prowess but to concurrently imbibe and emulate the development of other nations. With awe-inspiring pavilions and themes pertinent to fast transitioning times, these mega-events attract participation from over 190 countries, clearly sealing the fact that World Expos are global platforms that are here to stay and thrive.

As part of growing the nation's brand, Malaysia is also party to several international and regional alliances. One such key partnership is the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), which represents 60 per cent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) valued at USD 48 trillion and 47 per cent of the global trade worth USD 22 trillion. Malaysia has the privilege of hosting APEC 2020 guided by the three elements of Shared Prosperity, Malaysian Hospitality and Malaysia Boleh, truly capturing the spirit of us Malaysians.

A significant nation building campaign in 2020 is the distinctly successful tourism campaign that has been running steadily for nearly three decades, relaunched as "Visit Truly Asia Malaysia 2020". The campaign aims to bolster Malaysia's brand and tourism industry, given that the latter contributed 14.9 per cent to the national economy in 2017. It is envisioned that "Visit Truly Asia Malaysia 2020" will firmly place Malaysia on the map for travellers everywhere to experience the plethora of picturesque landscapes, culinary delights, colourful festivals, rich culture, adventure sports and entertainment avenues that the country has to offer.

For countries such as Malaysia that are serious about cultivating and shaping their image continually, World Expos, global alliances and compelling campaigns are indispensable aspects to building their nation's brand.

Malaysia's aspirations

As a young, vibrant, multi-racial nation steeped in rich cultural heritage, Malaysia has been recognised for its wide spectrum of achievements. We are constantly refining brand Malaysia so it remains relevant to the global audience and to us Malaysians as well. The emphasis has been, and will continue to be, to evolve without forgetting our roots.

Brand Malaysia has benefitted hugely from showcasing itself in front of a growing global audience at World Expos. As we mark the 50th year since our country first participated in a World Expo, we stand by our friends at the BIE to share Malaysia's success narrative of a culturally diverse melting pot emerging as a vibrant economy and innovation destination, at future Expos.

Together with the BIE, we are committed to connecting, collaborating and creating a promising future for all.

*We are constantly refining
brand Malaysia so it remains
relevant to the global audience*

Datuk Seri Dr. Mohd Azhar bin Hj. Yahaya (drazhary@mestecc.gov.my) is Secretary General for the Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment & Climate Change (MESTECC) of Malaysia and Commissioner General of Malaysia's Participation in Expo 2020 Dubai.

La Malaisie : riche héritage, diversité et progrès

Comment la participation de la Malaisie aux Expositions Universelles a-t-elle contribué à faire émerger de ce creuset culturel, une destination innovante à l'économie dynamique ?

L'accueil de sa population, le mélange de ses cultures, les saveurs de sa cuisine, la beauté de ses paysages, la solidité de son développement, son hyper-connectivité, ses attributs démographiques et ses politiques novatrices font de la Malaisie un paradis pour investisseurs, innovateurs et touristes.

D'un pays connu pour ses minéraux, son pétrole, son caoutchouc et ses épices, à un pays exportateur de premier plan dans l'industrie manufacturière de panneaux solaires, de meubles, de gants en caoutchouc et dans l'assemblage de produits électroniques et électriques, la Malaisie a aujourd'hui additionné les connaissances et les réussites pour désormais faire connaître son savoir-faire dans le domaine de l'innovation, dans des secteurs aussi variés que la finance, l'alimentation, la technologie et l'énergie.

Nous sommes fiers de partager le fait que la Malaisie est un chef de file mondial en matière d'émission de Sukuk sur les marchés à court- et à long-terme, que notre pays a soutenu les écosystèmes de l'industrie halal et qu'il a lancé de nombreux produits écologiques, contribuant ainsi à l'essor de nouvelles branches économiques. En outre, l'économie numérique de la Malaisie est sur le point de devenir un nouveau moteur de croissance économique, de création d'emplois, d'innovation et de recettes publiques, tel que l'indique le rapport de la Banque Mondiale de 2018.

L'histoire de la Malaisie est une histoire qui mérite d'être partagée avec le monde. Les Expositions Universelles et les Expositions Spécialisées nous ont ainsi offert une plateforme idéale pour partager notre histoire, qu'il s'agisse du récit de l'époque des matières premières brutes, lors de la première participation de la Malaisie à une Exposition Universelle en 1970 à Osaka (Japon), à celui du pays et de son développement d'énergies propres lors de l'Expo 2017 Astana (Kazakhstan) organisée sur le thème de « L'Énergie du Futur ». Au fil des ans, l'esprit des Expositions Universelles, la diversité des pavillons de notre pays ainsi que l'enthousiasme des participants ont contribué à faire progresser les perspectives d'investissement et de commerce de notre pays.

Ainsi, les Expositions Universelles continueront de constituer une plateforme essentielle pour la Malaisie dont la participation ira bien au-delà de l'exposition de ses prouesses et de l'atmosphère de collaboration avec les autres nations. Les Expositions d'aujourd'hui attirant une participation de plus de 190 pays, la Malaisie continuera de mettre en valeur ses meilleurs atouts à l'Expo 2020 Dubaï et au-delà.

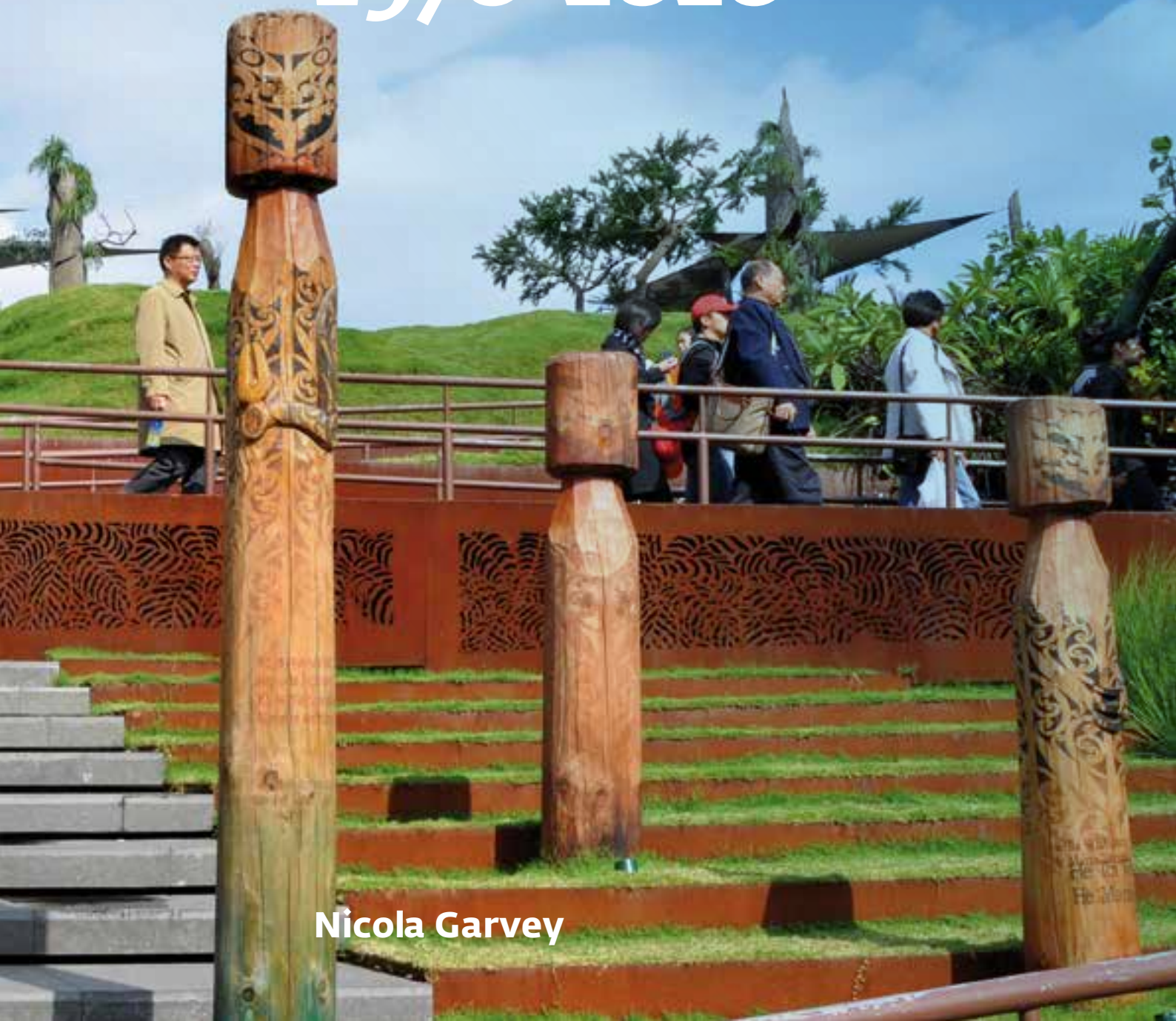
En effet, nous considérons que la Malaisie au sein des Expositions Universelles est un creuset de contrastes foisonnant d'opportunités de forger un brillant avenir.

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NEW ZEALAND
新西兰

New Zealand through the lens of Expos 1970-2020



Nicola Garvey

New Zealand's participation in Expos has not only given the country a platform to share its culture and values with the world, the stories we have told at Expos have helped to shape New Zealand's national identity at home. Our presentations at Expos over the years have captured the country's development, its position in the international community, nation brand and national psyche.

New Zealand has a long history of involvement in World Expos. We were there at the very first Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, London. As a new colony, following the 1840 signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi between indigenous tribal leaders and representatives of the British Crown, New Zealand's small exhibition was displayed among the British and colonial produce section. The exhibition comprised specimens of flax, raw materials such as copper ore and coal and Māori handcrafts. There were also models of a volcanic White Island and a Māori war pā (fortress).¹

New Zealand's attendance at International Exhibitions continued throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries as the country sought to promote its primary produce export products such as wool, timber and dairy, and its distinctive indigenous culture.

In recent years, New Zealand has become more selective in its participation in Expos. From 1950 to 2019, the country chose to participate in just five Expos and each time with a strategic reason to do so. Through this participation in World and Specialised Expos, we can trace New Zealand's national identity – both as it is portrayed internationally and understood at home.

Expo 1970 Osaka: A seminal moment for New Zealand

In the post-war period, New Zealand's sense of self was developing. A generation of service men and women had returned from war having served alongside the British and gaining a reputation for being dependable and egalitarian. Television in the 1960s strongly reflected the lives of New Zealanders² and the New Zealand dollar was introduced in 1967, cementing the country's identity further. The nation was growing more confident and carving out its own identity, distinct from that of the United Kingdom. This was a necessary move. The United Kingdom had joined the European Economic Community and suddenly New Zealand was in desperate need of new export markets for its meat and dairy products.

World Expo 1970 Osaka presented a grand opportunity for New Zealand to showcase its exporting prowess to a new market in Japan, that was also much closer to home.

New Zealand's pavilion at Expo 1970 was bold and striking. It consisted of different zones including a bush walk scene, a restaurant and a film screening room. The pavilion was a major attraction at Osaka and was visited by 7 million people.³

For the New Zealand Meat Producers Board, Expo 1970 was an opportunity to introduce our lamb to the Japanese market through its 'Geyser Room' restaurant inside the pavilion. The striking design of the restaurant featured a floor-to-ceiling geyser effect in the centre. Made of polythene pipes that were pumped with water, the geyser ran up the middle of the restaurant, giving patrons an immersive experience.

"It was lighting that moved and gave you this amazing sense of being somewhere that nobody could imagine... I wanted them to feel encompassed, to feel that they've come somewhere that was quite different" says architect Michael Payne, who was given influence over the design of the entire restaurant, from the crockery and chairs to the waitresses' uniforms.

"It's something more than just the design, it's what the design is going to do to the way people feel and think and experience" he says.

The leather upholstered chairs, custom-designed by Payne for the Geyser Room restaurant, are some of the most significant designs in New Zealand modern furniture making and 50 years on, the chairs now sell as collector's items. Serving New Zealand lamb and wine, the Geyser Room was one of the most popular restaurants at the Expo, and the pavilion's outdoor takeaway food store was popular for its lamb burgers and milkshakes.

Inside the pavilion exhibition space, New Zealand's innovative spirit and film-making talent was on display with a film called *This Is New Zealand*, directed by Hugh Macdonald. Using the latest technology, the film was projected onto three adjacent screens used to form one large screen in the pavilion cinema. *This Is New Zealand* shows the country's wide-open landscapes cut together with scenes of everyday life – old and young, people at work and school, in cities and rural areas. It depicts natural beauty and landscapes existing in harmony with people, while the clever edits convey New Zealand's sense of humour.

Serving New Zealand lamb and wine, the Geyser Room was one of the most popular restaurants at Expo 1970

Left: Displays within New Zealand's pavilion at Expo 1970 Osaka. Right: The pavilion's popular Geyser Room restaurant.

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© MICHAEL PAYNE



This is New Zealand, produced for and screened in New Zealand's pavilion at Expo 1970

“We just wanted to give an impression of the country, its landscape, a certain amount of its history. We also wanted to show the aspects of the way New Zealanders lived their lives, what their entertainments were, what their lifestyles were, what their livelihood was, just without any words” says director Hugh Macdonald.

“We just knew that it had to be appropriate, it had to be emotional, it had to be all engulfing and it had to capture the audience.”

And capture the audience it did. *This Is New Zealand* was seen by more than one million people at Expo 1970. It was then brought home to New Zealand where it played to sell-out audiences.

“We only thought we were doing it for a six-month trade show! We didn’t realise we would get New Zealanders themselves absolutely hooked on what we’d done. It had a very strong emotional impact, and nobody was immune from it. The men came out [of the cinema] looking extremely proud, the women were wiping tears of enjoyment from their eyes and the men weren’t immune to that either” says Macdonald.

For New Zealand, a sense of national pride was emerging. We were a nation on the go, distancing ourselves from the United Kingdom and moving out into the world.

“[The film] has a feeling of when we were young and could do anything” says Macdonald.

Expo 1988 Brisbane: Closer to home

Expo 1988 Brisbane was a Specialised Expo, hosted by Australia – our closest neighbour – and New Zealand had one of the largest exhibits. For New Zealand, Expo 1988 was an opportunity to show that despite our similarities, our cultural identity was quite distinct from that of Australia.

“There was a real desire to reflect the cultural difference that New Zealand would provide in an international fair or event like this. When we look for something original and local, we can’t really go past our own Māori cultural heritage,” says artist and graphic designer Roy Good.

Good had been commissioned to design the logo and graphic standards for the New Zealand pavilion at Expo 1988. In an initial meeting about the pavilion's brand identity, Good was thinking about the typography and how the numbers '1988' looked.

"As a graphic designer you latch onto the numerals, the typography, the name."

During the meeting, Good sketched on his notepad the numerals "88". He then added a Māori tiki tongue to the design. The sketch became the pavilion logo.

"Most designers will tell you those moments don't happen often, usually it's a struggle and you're doing hundreds of concepts, but that one I knew was going to work," he says.

A land-based strident green was used for the logo and it communicated New Zealand's bush and pasture, cultural identity and the year of the Expo.

The pavilion was one of the more popular ones at Expo 1988, with three-to-four-hour long queues stretching outside the pavilion alongside a waterfall and New Zealand pāua shell simulated wall featuring the bold logo in neon green.

Inside the pavilion, visitors experienced New Zealand's distinct landscape with native Kauri tree forests and glow-worm caves. The legendary story of Māui, a Māori demi-God who fished up the North Island, was projected onto mist and New Zealand's ingenious spirit was profiled through champions and inventors in a Hall of Fame. Visitors to the pavilion were guided by characters, including an animated cattle dog from the popular television cartoon comedy series 'Footrot Flats', allowing New Zealand humour to shine through.

"When we look for something original and local, we can't really go past our own Māori cultural heritage"

© ROY GOOD



The logo of New Zealand, designed by Roy Good, at Expo 1988 Brisbane

Expo 1992 Seville: Taking the Pacific to Europe

The theme for Expo 1992 Seville was “The Age of Discovery” to mark the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus’ first voyage. Visitors to the New Zealand pavilion went on their own journey of discovery, learning about New Zealand and its location in the South Pacific, the direct opposite side of the world from Spain.

New Zealand used the Expo theme to tell its own ‘discovery’ story. The pavilion entrance resembled high rock-face, just as English explorer James Cook would have seen when he first saw New Zealand in 1769.⁴ The exterior cliff face, water and a stream were a re-creation of New Zealand’s distinct landscape – something many in Europe would not have seen.

The brief for Roy Good, who was again designing the New Zealand logo, was centred around water as a theme. Good designed a double spiral logo, based on Māori koru designs, that inferred ripples in a pool of water. Continuing the water theme, a deep blue was the dominant colour and it was used to reinforce New Zealand’s location in the Pacific.

“The response was terrific. Most Europeans respond to the flavour and historical magic idea of the Pacific and it doesn’t take a lot to crank that emotion up,” Good says.

For the millions of people walking past during Expo 1992, the pavilion experience started well outside the building. There were kapa haka (Māori performing arts) routines performed on an outdoor stage five times each day, creating an intense experience for passers-by.

The message that New Zealand was in fact located in the South Pacific, not Europe, as many assumed, was especially targeted at consumers who could now choose to buy New Zealand food, especially kiwifruit, at local supermarkets.

New Zealand’s pavilion with its ‘cliff’ at Expo 1992 Seville





New Zealand's minimalist pavilion at Expo 2005 Aichi

Expo 2005 Aichi: Old friends

“When we came to Aichi in 2005, it was an opportunity really to recalibrate in terms of our relationship with Japan and remind New Zealanders about how important Japan was to New Zealand,” says Phillip Gibson, New Zealand’s Commissioner General to Expo 2005 Aichi.

The pavilion was designed to appeal to the Japanese aesthetic. It was minimalist and simple and easy to walk through, but also conveyed New Zealand’s atmosphere.

“The Japanese had preconceived notions of New Zealand as a ‘clean, green, beautiful and a great place to visit,’” says Gibson. “We also wanted to get across that New Zealand is smart, it’s innovative, it’s a great place to invest and it’s a great place to send your kids for education.”

As its centrepiece, the pavilion had a large pounamu, a two-tonne piece of nephrite jade (New Zealand greenstone). The pounamu “caught the imagination of the Japanese and it became for them quite a ritual to come to the New Zealand pavilion and pay their respects,” Gibson recalls.

The pavilion referenced New Zealand’s earlier success at Expo 1970 Osaka, with a film as an homage to Macdonald’s *This Is New Zealand*. In 2005, the film was a day in New Zealand through the eyes of a bird flying over the country.

Technology played a big part in the pavilion too, with a large touchscreen that conveyed messages about education, tourism and business. It was also interactive, with pavilion visitors able to use their mobile phones to get information or a livestream from New Zealand.

We found that human interaction was a real plus in setting us apart from some of the other pavilions

“We didn’t try and say to the Japanese... we’re smart and innovative,” Gibson says. “We did it by showing them what we were doing – that was how we really got the message across”.

To reinforce ties of friendship, the pavilion had a welcoming staff of young New Zealanders who spoke Japanese.

“We found that human interaction was a real plus in setting us apart from some of the other pavilions” Gibson says.

Expo 2010 Shanghai: A new trade horizon

In the early-mid 2000s, New Zealand’s trade with China was increasing and a Free Trade Agreement was being negotiated. China’s economic rise and growing middle class represented huge potential for New Zealand exporters.

Participation in World Expo 2010 Shanghai “simply made sense” according to Phillip Gibson, who had again been appointed as New Zealand’s Commissioner General.

In 2008, New Zealand became the first developed country to strike a trade deal with China. Heading into Expo 2010, this gave New Zealand a unique competitive advantage and helped to position us as “one of the pavilions to go to” according to Gibson.

For many New Zealand companies, Expo 2010 served as an introduction to the Chinese market. In support of this, the New Zealand pavilion had a strong business narrative.

“Coming to the Expo, coming to the pavilion and using it to help leverage your relationship with your clients, was about coming to an environment that showed New Zealand for what it is - sure clean, green, and beautiful - but also a very sophisticated business environment in which it makes sense to do business,” Gibson says.

With dairy and meat products among New Zealand’s top exports to China, our food and beverage offerings were an important part of the story at Expo 2010. VIP entertainment facilities inside the pavilion were used to showcase New Zealand cuisine. New Zealand businesses used the pavilion to build relationships, host

Left: Interior of New Zealand’s pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai.
Right: A young visitor touching the pounamu stone at Expo 2010 Shanghai



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important clients and profile goods and services in a distinctly New Zealand environment. More than 9,000 VIP guests attended events at the pavilion over the six-month Expo.

The pavilion itself was designed as a walk through a 'day in the life of New Zealand'. Visitors to the pavilion were greeted with the same pounamu stone that was used in the Aichi pavilion and walked through an exhibition that took them from the sea to the mountains and finished on a rooftop garden with a magnificent giant replica of a native Pohutukawa tree.

"With Expos, we probably think of all the high-tech and the important messages we were trying to get across. But really, what most people adored about the New Zealand pavilion was the pounamu and the giant Pohutukawa tree," Gibson says. "Hopefully with it you have people who say, 'I didn't realise New Zealand was so sophisticated'".

Gibson attributes New Zealand's success at both the Aichi and Shanghai Expos to our authenticity and honest approach.

"Sure, we wanted to get across some new messages, but they represented the reality - the way we are. I think that is very, very important in an Expo, not to try to pretend, but at the end of the day to be authentic. And who we are is a great story" Gibson reflects.

The New Zealand Story

A major evolution in the New Zealand country narrative since Expo 2010 Shanghai has been the introduction of the New Zealand Story.

Established by international-facing government agencies to enhance the country's reputation beyond natural beauty, the New Zealand Story is grounded in values and tells a narrative of New Zealand as a progressive nation of creative idea-makers delivering new solutions, while always caring for people and place.

Three values are the foundation of the New Zealand Story: kaitiaki (an indigenous Māori environmental ethos that represents care of people and place), integrity and ingenuity.

The cohesive narrative provided by the New Zealand Story has helped to unite and grow New Zealand's international reputation based on a set of values.

"The recognition that we're gaining globally is based on a much deeper set of principles and values" says New Zealand Story Group Director Rebecca Smith. "There's a duality of how we operate, it's the care and ingenuity that's wrapped up together that makes us different."

The New Zealand Story provides resources such as images and key messages via an online toolkit to businesses and government agencies to help them share their story on the world stage.

"Certainly, it has taken time, but it has been really encouraging, I think even in the last five years, to see that confidence build and for us to go, 'you know what, we're not perfect and we've got things to work on', but if we don't make a statement around our intent then we'll never get there," Smith says.

For many New Zealand companies, Expo 2010 served as an introduction to the Chinese market

The New Zealand Story represents a major evolution in the country's narrative. It has deepened New Zealand's reputation from the very successful '100% Pure' tourism marketing campaign, to that of a progressive society with Māori values at its core.

Expo 2020 Dubai: "Care for People and Place"

The New Zealand Story has provided a framework for New Zealand's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai.

We knew the story New Zealand told at the first World Expo held in the Middle East, South Asia or Africa, had to fall within the existing New Zealand Story. And the pavilion design brief specified that it must reflect the values of kaitiaki, integrity and ingenuity.

The successful design team, led by Jasmax architects, pitched the idea of having kaitiakitanga as the underlying theme of the New Zealand Pavilion for Expo 2020, inspired by the world-first legal status accorded to the Whanganui River.

"It is incredibly important for us to have Māori values at the core of the pavilion story. Through the story of the Whanganui River (Te Awa Tupua), we will show that New Zealand is a contemporary, forward-thinking nation that has come full circle to recognising that values such as kaitiakitanga are at the heart of who we are" says New Zealand's Commissioner General to Expo 2020 Clayton Kimpton.

In 2017, innovative legislation recognised the Whanganui River as a living entity, called Te Awa Tupua, and granted it the rights of a person.

For Whanganui Iwi, the indigenous people who live along the river, there is an intrinsic connection between their people and the river and its health and wellbeing. The legislation obligates the government, local authorities and all communities of the river to work together under the innate values of the river:

Ko te Awa te mātāpuna o te ora: the River is the source of spiritual and physical sustenance.

E rere kau mai i te Awa nui mai i te Kahui Maunga ki Tangaroa: the great River flows from the mountains to the sea.

Ko au te Awa, ko te Awa ko au: I am the River and the River is me.

Ngā manga iti, ngā manga nui e honohono kau ana, ka tupu hei Awa Tupua: the small and large streams that flow into one another form one River.

The pavilion experience will use the Whanganui River as a muse for a universal narrative conveying the importance of our relationship with natural resources and our relationship as people with one another. The theme is expressed as "Care for People and Place". It does not claim that New Zealand is perfect or that we have solved all our problems, rather the theme encapsulates the idea that over time, through this care of people and place, we are looking after our future generations.

*New Zealand is a contemporary,
forward-thinking nation
that has come full circle to
recognising that values such as
kaitiakitanga are at the heart
of who we are*



Rendering of
New Zealand's
'kaitiakitanga'
pavilion at Expo 2020
Dubai

In order to tell this story authentically, the New Zealand Government entered into a relationship agreement with Whanganui Iwi setting out a process for engagement as the pavilion experience is developed.

“We are honoured and humbled by the opportunity to share the story of Te Awa Tupua, the precious taonga (treasure) of Whanganui with the world. It is a story that has meaning and value, not only in New Zealand, it is also a story that is good for the world,” Clayton Kimpton says.

It is the first time New Zealand’s participation at a World Expo has been done in partnership with iwi Māori.

On the signing of the agreement, Whanganui Iwi representative Gerrard Albert said, “Te Awa Tupua heralded a paradigm shift toward recognising we are part of the natural environment. We are sharing the provenance of Te Awa Tupua to guide what we want to be a confronting and life affirming experience for those visiting the New Zealand pavilion. We are awakening as a nation to both domestic and global realities, so the story needs to cover the journey we’ve taken as a nation to arrive at this point and the journey ahead of us”.

The relationship represents a progression in the journey of New Zealand according to Rebecca Smith.

“I think a lot of countries with an indigenous culture really struggle through a period of understanding how to genuinely portray that, and we are not there as a nation yet. So, we are moving through a cultural competency phase where non-Māori

The people of Whanganui have generously shared their story with New Zealand, and in 2020, together, we will share the story with the world

Nicola Garvey (nicola.garvey@nzatexpo.govt.nz) is the Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement of New Zealand's participation in World Expo 2020 Dubai.

are beginning to understand and associate with Māori values.”

Māori culture has always been a strong feature of New Zealand's World Expo participation. At Expo 2020 Dubai, Māori values will be central to our story, with the experience grounded in the indigenous environmental ethos of kaitiakitanga.

“We are shifting from indigenous culture being seen as a cultural asset to be leveraged to the benefit of a particular outcome, to actually a true partnership and a true expression of who we are as a nation,” Smith says.

The relationship with Whanganui Iwi is one example of how New Zealand is moving into a phase of honest and transparent partnerships with authentic representation.

The people of Whanganui have generously shared their story with New Zealand, and in 2020, together, we will share the story with the world.

Visitors to the New Zealand pavilion will leave knowing that if we all embrace the ethos of kaitiakitanga, and care for people and place, together we can build a more sustainable future for generations to come.

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La Nouvelle-Zélande aux Expositions Internationales entre 1970 et 2020

La participation de la Nouvelle-Zélande aux Expositions Internationales, qu'elles soient Universelles ou Spécialisées, a fourni au pays une plateforme qui lui permet de partager sa culture et ses valeurs avec le monde. Parallèlement, les récits qu'elle y a contés ont contribué au sein même du pays à façonner et à refléter son identité nationale. Au fil du temps, les présentations de la Nouvelle-Zélande aux Expositions représentent son développement, sa place dans la communauté internationale, sa marque nationale et sa psyché.

En se concentrant sur les Expositions Internationales des cinquante dernières années, de l'Exposition Universelle 1970 à Osaka à celle de 2020 à Dubaï, il est possible de retracer la manière dont le pays a étendu sa politique étrangère internationale et ses relations commerciales, en s'appuyant moins sur ses partenaires traditionnels et en se tournant davantage vers de nouvelles opportunités en Asie-Pacifique et au Moyen-Orient.

Participer aux Expositions Universelles a également permis à la Nouvelle-Zélande de réfléchir au caractère de sa nation. Les Expositions Universelles constituent des plateformes qui permettent à la fois de forger de nouvelles relations diplomatiques et commerciales, et de partager son histoire nationale avec le monde entier.

Les Expositions Universelles ont par ailleurs été des catalyseurs de développement de l'identité nationale et de la manière dont celle-ci s'est affirmée. « *The New Zealand Story* » (« L'Histoire de la Nouvelle-Zélande ») – développée à l'occasion de la participation du pays à l'Expo 2010 Shanghai – en est un exemple prégnant. Cette Histoire a distingué un ensemble de valeurs – *kaitiaki*, intégrité et ingéniosité – qui définissent la nation et font sa singularité et son unicité.

Ces valeurs sont celles sur lesquelles repose l'histoire que racontera notre pays à l'Expo 2020 Dubai. Pour le pavillon de la Nouvelle-Zélande, situé au sein du district Durabilité, nous avons choisi de nous concentrer sur *kaitiaki*, sur le thème « *Care for People and Place* » (« Attention portée aux individus et aux espaces »). Alors que le monde se trouve à la fois face à des opportunités et à des défis, allant de l'Intelligence Artificielle au changement climatique, la Nouvelle-Zélande participera à l'Expo 2020 Dubai pour y partager son approche unique en matière de durabilité et ses solutions intelligentes au service du monde entier.

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A large, illuminated, cylindrical building at night, likely a pavilion or exhibition hall, with a person walking in the foreground. The building is lit up with warm yellow lights, and the sky is dark. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Showcasing a rich and diverse nation: Pakistan at Expos

Moin-Ud-Din Ahmad Wani

Moin-Ud-Din Ahmad Wani

*Delegate of Pakistan to the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE),
President (i) of the Information and Communication Committee*

Pakistan's participation in Expos dates to its earliest years after independence, and has continued in successive decades, growing in prominence and importance with each Expo. Pakistan recognises the unique opportunity that Expos provide in showcasing its rich history and diversity to the rest of the world and in promoting the country's image on the international stage.

Joining the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) in 2007, Pakistan has demonstrated its strong involvement in the Organisation, sitting on its committees on several occasions and assuming the presidency of the Information and Communication Committee since 2018. This engagement reflects the growing interest of Pakistan in Expos.

A brief history of Pakistan at Expos

Pakistan has a long and illustrious history of participation in World and Specialised Expos. Since its independence, Pakistan's first Expo participation was at Specialised Expo 1951 in Lille, while its first World Expo participation was at Expo 1970 in Osaka under the theme "Pakistan - Ancient Civilisation Linking Middle East and Far East". Over the years, Pakistan continued its regular participation in Expos of all categories, notably using these global events to demonstrate the country's development path and its cultural and geographical richness.

Following successful participations at World Expo 1992 Seville and World Expo 2000 Hannover, Pakistan participated with its own self-built pavilion at World Expo 2010 Shanghai with the theme "Harmony in Diversity in the City". Spanning

Pakistan's exhibit at Specialised Expo 1951 Lille, it's first participation in an Expo



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DU TEXTILE DE LILLE 1951



Left: Pakistan's Lahore Fort-inspired pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai. Right: Pakistan's participation in Expo 2017 Astana.

2,000m², the country's pavilion was its largest to date. Reflecting the theme of the Expo, "Better City, Better Life", Pakistan's participation focused on the country's considerable cultural and geographical diversity and on the importance of collective wisdom accumulated over thousands of years.

The pavilion itself was a replica of the Lahore Fort, a symbol of the country that has existed in different forms over hundreds of years, changing hands between numerous civilisations. It thus paid tribute to the merging of cultures past and present, and showcased Pakistan's successful blend of modernity with tradition. Inside, the pavilion used the latest technologies to present the country's culture, history, diversity of its people, its arts and crafts, its landscapes and its traditions, with a notable focus on ancient Silk Route connections between China and Pakistan. The pavilion also included traditional Pakistani products in the pavilion shop, as well as a selection of the country's dishes in the adjoining restaurant, allowing visitors to experience Pakistan in all its aspects.

Following the success of World Expo 2010 Shanghai, Pakistan participated in Specialised Expo 2012 Yeosu, where its pavilion had the theme "Sustainability through Humanity", where once again, the Pakistani values of tolerance, unity and harmony were presented. Five years later, at Specialised Expo 2017 Astana, Pakistan showcased its sustainability credentials, presenting a model of the solar-powered Parliament Building in Islamabad – the first in the world – in addition to a range of sustainable Pakistani innovations – both traditional and modern – to reduce energy and water use.

The country's nation-branding activities – both in Expos and elsewhere – is now undergoing a major change with the recent launch of the Emerging Pakistan initiative, which will be fully implemented and on display at World Expo 2020 Dubai.

The Emerging Pakistan initiative attempts to present Pakistan's real image as a vibrant and progressive nation, through a cohesive and convincing brand



Left: Showcasing Pakistan's geography at Expo 2012 Yeosu.
Right: Presenting Pakistan's renewable energy industry at Expo 2017 Astana.



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Revamping Pakistan's global image: Emerging Pakistan

Emerging Pakistan is a branding initiative launched by the Ministry of Commerce of the Government of Pakistan that aims at revamping Pakistan's global image and promoting the many investment opportunities offered by the country. This initiative enables the Government to interact with importers, investors, individuals, tourists and corporations in order to change flawed perceptions about Pakistan and to resume control of our national image and narrative by presenting Pakistan as a dynamic, promising and young nation that could be a preferred investment destination.

The aforementioned initiative attempts to present Pakistan's real image as a vibrant and progressive nation, through a cohesive and convincing brand that effectively communicates the opportunities offered by the country to a diverse national and international audience, the ultimate aim being to place Pakistan firmly on the global economic map. Emerging Pakistan is, in fact, an all-encompassing digital initiative that highlights the investment potential of a robust nation with a predominantly young population. Pakistan is a country blessed with an abundance of natural resources and food, vast human resources and that has embraced modern technology. This provides an ideal basis on which to build upon its resources to achieve advancement in all fields from agriculture to cutting edge science and technology.

The visual representation of Emerging Pakistan celebrates everything that makes the country special. The logo is inspired by Pakistan's national flower, the Jasmine. The country's national symbol, the crescent and star, are placed in the center while the five surrounding petals represent the five pillars of Pakistan's ascent:

The visual representation of Emerging Pakistan celebrates everything that makes the country special. The logo is inspired by Pakistan's national flower, the Jasmine. The country's national symbol, the crescent and star, are placed in the center while the five surrounding petals represent the five pillars of Pakistan's ascent:

1. People
2. Culture
3. Sights
4. Economy
5. Policy



Since its grand launch on 9 November 2017 at a flagship event held at the historic Mohatta Palace in Karachi, Emerging Pakistan has created an outreach within the Pakistani diaspora and international audience, with special focus on:

1. Trade
2. Investment
3. Tourism
4. Industries

Quite simply, Emerging Pakistan is a ‘truth-telling’ initiative, because for years, Pakistan has been cast in an image that has done little justice to the country’s reality. Actually, due to a rising economy, vast natural resources, and a young population, Pakistan is a dynamic nation brimming with potential, reaffirmed by ever-increasing foreign investment in the country. It is for the purpose of communicating this exciting reality to the world, that the novel brand of Emerging Pakistan has been devised. ‘Emerging’ is, after all, a word that carries a sense of promise and a positive outlook of the future.

In order to compete in this hyper-connected and fiercely competitive world, most countries employ elaborate marketing strategies in an attempt to stand out. However, our approach is a little different and is based on two guiding principles: simplicity and sincerity. Visually, the brand expresses the narrative in a simultaneously classic and contemporary style. At the core of the brand identity are our key national symbols: the star and crescent, the colour green, and our national flower, Jasmine. Accompanying these timeless elements is a bold dash of colour and texture, and confident, crisp typography. In short, the brand identity is rooted in our history and oriented towards the future.

*Our brand identity is rooted
in our history and oriented
towards the future*



Emerging Pakistan
on display

Examples of branding initiatives around Emerging Pakistan (EP) include:

Efforts through social media and digital branding

Through the social media EP initiative, endorsements of national and international social influencers were successfully achieved. Social media marketing served to highlight Pakistan as a country that was successfully moving towards socio-economic development and prosperity. In the first year, over seventy short video clips on various achievements and success stories were prepared and posted on EP Platforms with several of them receiving thousands of likes and shares.

Since its launch, Emerging Pakistan has been maintaining a robust presence on various platforms of social media with its followers increasing by leaps and bounds with each passing day. The Emerging Pakistan page on Facebook, for instance, has over one million likes since it was created in 2017. It has been updated regularly and is by far the fastest growing social media pages of Pakistan. Furthermore, it is estimated to be among the top 400 Facebook pages. It is also one of the most engaged government social media pages after ISPR and the Pakistan Army.

The Instagram page of Emerging Pakistan ([emergingpk.official](https://www.instagram.com/emergingpk.official)) has been equally active. It has 1,686 posts and 27.7k followers, thereby generating a great deal of interest among its followers.

As part of the activities envisioned under the social media initiative, the Emerging Pakistan website (<http://emergingpakistan.gov.pk/>) was established, to provide details of all activities carried out under the platform across the world. Pakistani trade missions in different parts of the world carried out extensive branding under this initiative through participation in various trade exhibitions, promotional events, trade seminars and other trade promotional activities.

Similarly, the official website of the Ministry of Commerce was totally revamped, giving greater prominence to this branding initiative.

The Emerging Pakistan Blog was also launched in order to alter the flawed narrative and promote investment opportunities in Pakistan. The blog is constantly updated with positive news and success stories related to Pakistan.

Other promotional activities carried out under this branding campaign inter alia included:

- ▶ Videos promoting Emerging Pakistan are being televised on in-house hotel channels of Pearl Continental and Marriott Hotels in Pakistan;
- ▶ Printing of trade promotional brochures especially textiles, leather and sports goods;
- ▶ Event backdrops and standees for various events.

Pakistan Trade Missions Abroad

In order to ensure the effective use of Emerging Pakistan as a nation branding initiative, feedback and suggestions have been requested from Pakistan Trade Missions Abroad. The Missions have conveyed the following feedback:

- ▶ Emerging Pakistan has helped in using a single slogan to promote Pakistani exports and Pakistan as a progressive nation.

Examples of major International events/trade fairs organised by TDAP with EP Branding

Event	Details
Single Country exhibition in Colombo, Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held on 12 January 2018 • The 3rd Edition of Pakistan Single Country Exhibition was held at BMICH, Colombo
Arab Health Fair 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arab Health fair – Dubai, UAE • Held on 29 January 2018 • Largest Gathering of Healthcare and Trade Professionals
ISPO Munich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held in February 2018 in Germany • It is the world’s largest trade fair for sports equipment and sports fashion • Exhibitors from 120 countries participated in the trade fair
Morocco Medical Expo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held on 1-4 March 2018 in Casablanca, Morocco • 20 Pakistani companies showcased surgical, dental and pharmaceutical instruments at the event
Single Country Exhibition, Bangkok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held on 13-15 July 2018 • The 1st Pakistan Single Country Exhibition was held at Queen Sirikit Convention Center, Bangkok • The event featured 68 exhibitors including SMEs and Women Entrepreneurs belonging to different sectors from Pakistan
Opportunities For Bilateral Investment & Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held in July 2018, in Seoul, Republic of Korea • The 1st Pakistan Single Country Exhibition was held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Seoul • The event was attended by over 140 representatives of Korean companies, and dignitaries from Ministries like MoTIE, MOFA, KCCI, KoIMA
20 th International Shoes and Leather Expo 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held in July 2018 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Single Country Exhibition, Chile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held on 26-29 May 2018 • The TDAP EXPO was held at Estacion Mapocho in Santiago, Chile • 70 Pakistani companies showcased textiles, pharmaceutical products, surgical goods, sports goods, agri-products, cosmetics, leather, jewelry and handicrafts
Pakistan-Belgium Business and Investment Opportunities Conference, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The event was organised by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) • A large number of Belgian companies, dignitaries from the Belgian government, and representatives from chambers of commerce and industry and regional trade bodies attended the event.
Beauty World Middle East Trade Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held on 8-10 May 2018 at Dubai World Trade Centre • 12 Pakistani companies exhibited fragrances, beauty and wellbeing products under the TDAP umbrella at the Pakistan Pavilion

- ▶ The presence of Emerging Pakistan at different exhibitions, commercial and other events as well as on social media has increased the visibility of Pakistan's major exports sectors, investment opportunities and helped present Pakistan as an attractive tourist destination.
- ▶ Various other ways to take this initiative further by targeting various traditional and online/digital advertising activities, awareness campaigns, involvement of international media in the lines of various other nation branding campaigns have been conducted by countries like India and Malaysia.

Building on these experiences, Pakistan's participation at Expo 2020 Dubai will be the first opportunity for our country to fully develop this new branding initiative at an International Exhibition.

Emerging Pakistan at Expo 2020 Dubai

Pakistan formally announced its participation in Expo 2020 Dubai in 2018.

At Expo 2020 Dubai, the first World Expo to take place in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) region, Pakistan will participate with its own pavilion centred around the Emerging Pakistan initiative and will constitute the very first Emerging Pakistan branding initiative at an Expo.

The pavilion is to be built on a large plot measuring 3,449.9m² in the Opportunity District. Its theme, "Emerging Pakistan", is fully in line with the theme of Expo 2020, "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future", and will convey the image of Pakistan at an international scale. A high-level steering committee, with representation from private and public sector stakeholders for effective participation, has been formed to manage the content of the pavilion and reflect on the overall theme of "Emerging Pakistan". As such, a special section for women and tech entrepreneurs and prominent Pakistanis who have succeeded in different segments of social and educational life will be showcased within the pavilion concretely illustrating Pakistan's talent.

The pavilion is seen as a unique opportunity to promote investments, tourism potential, important export segments, sustainability, digital economy and e-governance.

*At Expo 2020 Dubai,
"Emerging Pakistan"
will convey the image
of Pakistan at an
international scale*

Dr. Moin-Ud-Din Ahmad Wani is Delegate of Pakistan to the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), and President (i) of the BIE's Information and Communication Committee.

Présenter les diversités et richesses d'une nation : le Pakistan aux Expositions Internationales

La participation du Pakistan aux Expositions Internationales a débuté dès les premières années qui ont suivi son indépendance et s'est poursuivie depuis lors avec notamment durant la dernière décennie, une présence aux Expositions Spécialisées de 2012 Yeosu et 2017 Astana et à l'Exposition Universelle de 2010 à Shanghai.

En Chine, le Pakistan avait construit un pavillon de 2 000 m². Sur le thème « L'Harmonie est dans la Diversité de la Ville » (*Harmony in Diversity in the City*), ce pavillon mettait en exergue la diversité culturelle et géographique du pays et soulignait l'importance de la sagesse collective du pays forgée au cours des millénaires, rendant ainsi hommage aux différentes civilisations et cultures qui ont façonné le pays et où modernité et tradition se marient.

En 2018, le Pakistan annonçait sa participation à l'Exposition Universelle de 2020 à Dubaï. Situé au sein du District Opportunités, le pavillon du Pakistan s'étendra sur 3 449,9 m² et sera le premier pavillon à promouvoir le Pakistan selon sa nouvelle image de marque nationale : *Emerging Pakistan*. Développé en 2017, *Emerging Pakistan* est le fruit d'une initiative du Ministère du Commerce du Pakistan visant notamment à promouvoir les possibilités d'investissement offertes par le pays, à corriger les idées reçues et à se réappropriier son image et son récit national. En présentant de manière concrète et cohérente le pays comme une destination émergente notamment en matière d'investissement et la nation comme dynamique et prometteuse, la marque-pays *Emerging Pakistan* communique efficacement les opportunités et l'abondance des ressources offertes par le Pakistan.

Conscient de l'importance des Expositions Internationales pour contribuer à la diffusion d'une image positive d'un pays, le Pakistan considère l'Exposition Universelle Expo 2020 Dubai comme une plateforme exceptionnelle pour mettre en lumière sa marque-pays : *Emerging Pakistan*.

Dr. Moin-Ud-Din Ahmad Wani est Délégué du Pakistan auprès Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), et Président (i) de la Commission de l'Information et de la Communication du BIE.



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The background image shows a large, modern architectural structure with a facade made of a grid of small, red, spherical objects. The structure is partially covered by a dark, curved canopy. A large crowd of people is gathered in the foreground, looking towards the structure. The sky is a clear, bright blue with a few wispy clouds. The overall scene suggests a major public event or exhibition.

Les Expositions Internationales : une plateforme pour l'image de marque nationale de la Suisse

Présence Suisse

Qu'est-ce qui pousse un touriste à choisir la Suisse comme destination, un client à acheter un produit « *Swiss made* » (Fabriqué en Suisse), un homme politique à soutenir un accord d'échange ou un étudiant à opter pour une université suisse ? Si les mécanismes de telles décisions sont complexes, un fil conducteur s'en dessine cependant : le « *Soft Power* », ou la perception d'un pays et la force de ses représentations symboliques. Depuis quelques décennies, les pays ont pris conscience de la valeur de leurs marques et ont mis en place des stratégies de marketing de marque pour créer, modifier ou renforcer leur image. La Suisse ne fait pas exception dans ce domaine.

Les pays sont de plus en plus observés par les médias, les organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) et le grand public. Ils sont jugés et comparés en fonction de leurs performances économiques, de leur stabilité politique, de leur sens des responsabilités sur la scène internationale et de l'attrait de leur culture. Les discours et les prises de positions publiques influencent la manière dont une opinion se construit vis-à-vis d'un pays et par conséquent influent sur le comportement des acteurs étrangers tels que les touristes, les entrepreneurs, les investisseurs, les politiciens, les journalistes et le grand public. L'image d'un pays a un impact direct sur son économie et son tourisme ainsi que sur ses relations culturelles et politiques.

Selon une étude récente sur l'image de marque, menée dans 19 pays par Présence Suisse, l'agence gouvernementale responsable de la marque-pays, la Suisse est perçue très positivement à l'étranger. En soi comme en comparaison avec d'autres pays, la Suisse jouit d'une image positive et stable et est considérée comme un acteur important de l'économie mondiale. Le pays est spontanément associé à la nature, notamment à la montagne et à l'hiver, au chocolat, aux montres, au fromage, à la neutralité ou à une place financière de premier ordre. Notre capacité de recherche et d'innovation, tout comme notre multilinguisme ou notre système politique sont reconnus, même s'ils ne font pas partie des associations spontanées.

Les vecteurs d'images les plus importants de la Suisse sont ses produits exportés. Ils contribuent à une part importante de la perception, perception qui elle-même alimente leurs succès.

Le label « *Swiss made* » constitue aux yeux de nombreux consommateurs un gage de qualité, tant dans le domaine de l'industrie des machines que dans les secteurs de l'agroalimentaire ou du luxe. Pour certaines catégories de produits, les consommateurs sont concrètement prêts à dépenser plus, si le produit affiche une provenance helvétique. Cependant, cette image positive ne peut être éternelle et requiert à la fois de maintenir la qualité de l'offre, dans un environnement très

**Mettre le « faire savoir »
au service du « savoir-faire » :
un défi pour tous les pays**

concurrentiel et en pleine transformation numérique, et d'investir dans des mesures permettant de mettre en valeur cette qualité. Mettre le « faire savoir » au service du « savoir-faire » : un défi pour tous les pays.

Ainsi, dans ce contexte où la perception agit de manière croissante sur l'impact, le défi de communication consiste à rapprocher cette perception de la réalité, en s'appuyant sur les forces identifiées au sein des publics cibles afin de positionner les éléments moins connus mais tout aussi importants. « Venez pour le chocolat et découvrez ensuite qu'il n'existerait pas sous cette forme sans des innovations suisses ! »

La Suisse et sa marque-pays aux Expositions Internationales (Universelles et Spécialisées)

Cette dynamique de communication s'exprime tout particulièrement au sein des Expositions Internationales. Dans ce « monde miniature », chaque pays se met en scène ; il est par ailleurs impossible aux visiteurs de voir tous les pavillons. La perception du pays joue ainsi un rôle crucial dans la manière dont le visiteur définira son programme de visite. Le souvenir qu'il gardera de sa visite, confirmant ou modifiant la perception qu'il avait du pays, déterminera quant à lui l'impact en matière d'image.

Cette dimension a modifié le rôle des Expositions Internationales. Initialement et pendant de nombreuses années, les Expositions Internationales, qu'elles soient

La Suisse présentée au sein de son pavillon à l'Expo 2010 Shanghai

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Au sein des Expositions, les pays peuvent offrir une expérience sensorielle aux visiteurs et proposer des axes inattendus

Universelles ou Spécialisées, avaient pour objectifs principaux de développer les relations économiques et les échanges entre les nations. Elles étaient l'occasion de présenter les avancées technologiques et des produits nouveaux. Désormais, notamment du fait des technologies numériques, la communication des innovations et l'accès aux marchés rendent ces objectifs initiaux caducs.

Dès lors, le positionnement se fait en tant que moments d'échanges, qui contrastent avec le rythme effréné du quotidien. Au sein des Expositions, les pays peuvent offrir une expérience sensorielle aux visiteurs et proposer des axes in-

tendus, qui auraient pu passer inaperçus dans le monde virtuel en raison du cloisonnement algorithmique et de « l'effet bulle » qui en résulte. En effet, il est plus facile de découvrir ce que l'on ignorait chercher au sein d'une Exposition que sur un moteur de recherche ou des réseaux sociaux.

Ainsi, les Expositions sont plus que jamais des espaces de dialogue. La participation d'un pays à un tel événement est un signal fort à la communauté internationale et la confirmation de son intérêt à collaborer avec les autres pays, de coopérer dans la recherche de solutions face aux défis mondiaux, de renforcer les échanges commerciaux et de créer de nouveaux partenariats.

En matière de *Nation Branding* (Marketing Pays), les Expositions Internationales sont des plateformes jouissant d'une grande visibilité auprès des médias et du public tant sur le plan international que sur le plan local. Elles sont particulièrement efficaces pour toucher un large public, à la fois de manière directe et indirecte via les médias, nouveaux comme traditionnels. Les médias sociaux permettent en effet de renforcer l'engagement des visiteurs, qui deviennent eux-mêmes des vecteurs d'image. Cette nouvelle dimension a par ailleurs profondément modifié la philosophie des pavillons ; ces derniers existent dès lors en amont dans les médias, physiquement durant l'Exposition et numériquement après la visite. La dimension numérique se traduit, notamment, dans l'architecture (les espaces sont-ils « Instagrammables » ?), dans les interactions en ligne (quel suivi faire des publications et commentaires ?) et dans les abonnements (souhaitez-vous garder le contact avec nous ?).

La participation de la Suisse aux Expositions Internationales est donc un instrument important de communication internationale. Membre fondateur du Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), la Suisse a participé à la plupart des Expositions reconnues par le BIE. Depuis le début du siècle, elle était ainsi présente aux Expositions Universelles et aux Expositions Spécialisées, Expo 2000 Hanovre, Expo 2005 Aichi, Expo 2008 Saragosse, Expo 2010 Shanghai, Expo 2012 Yeosu, Expo 2015 Milan et Expo 2017 Astana.

Le pavillon national de la Suisse s'est peu à peu imposé comme une marque at- trayante. Il permet à la Suisse de se présenter autour de thèmes prioritaires, de communication internationale, tels que l'économie, les sciences, l'éducation, l'en- vironnement ou la culture. En outre, il permet de donner à la Suisse une image à la fois innovante, compétitive et responsable tout en soulignant son attachement à ses traditions.



Pavillons suisses à l'Expo 2010 Shanghai (gauche) et à l'Expo 2017 Astana (droite)

Le Pavillon suisse figure en général parmi les pavillons accueillant le plus grand nombre de visiteurs et générant un fort écho dans les médias et sur les réseaux sociaux, grâce notamment à des actions de communication en amont des Expositions. Lors de l'Expo 2015 Milan par exemple, le Pavillon de la Suisse avait ainsi non seulement été primé par les professionnels pour son interprétation du thème de l'Exposition (« Nourrir la Planète, Énergie pour la Vie ») mais aussi été reconnu pour sa campagne de communication. Il avait ainsi accueilli 2,1 millions de personnes (environ 10 pourcent du nombre total de visiteurs) et était le pavillon étranger le plus cité dans les médias italiens. Au total, plus de 1 650 articles de presse et autres médias et quelques 164 millions d'interactions numériques avaient été générés à cette occasion.

Au-delà du simple nombre de visiteurs, demeure la question essentielle de l'impact de la visite sur les visiteurs et leur perception du pays. Dans ce domaine également, les résultats sont positifs. Des sondages réalisés régulièrement auprès des visiteurs confirment l'impact positif de ces participations sur l'image de la Suisse. À travers des questions simples, les sondages vérifient si l'image générale est meilleure avant ou après la visite, mais également si les connaissances du pays ont évolué grâce aux présentations thématiques.

La participation de la Suisse aux Expositions Internationales intéresse également fortement le public helvétique. Outre les partenaires issus des milieux politiques, touristiques et culturels, de nombreuses entreprises suisses saisissent cette occasion pour se faire connaître au sein du pays hôte. De telles actions conjointes peuvent être bénéfiques aussi bien pour la Confédération que pour les entreprises partenaires car elles permettent de mettre en avant des atouts communs, tels que la qualité, l'esprit d'innovation et la fiabilité. Il se produit alors un transfert réciproque d'image : les entreprises bénéficient de l'effet « pays d'origine » et la Suisse de l'excellente réputation de produits et de services de qualité supérieure. Les entreprises contribuent, par ailleurs, à l'évènement par des activités de sponsoring et des prestations en nature.



Intérieur du pavillon de la Suisse à l'Expo 2005 Aichi

Le Pavillon suisse : une expérience !

A chaque Expo, le défi est le même : comment se démarquer de la centaine de participants et proposer une expérience différente et enrichissante aux visiteurs ?

Pour cela, il est tout d'abord nécessaire de comprendre comment la Suisse est perçue dans le pays hôte de l'Exposition. A partir d'études réalisées sur l'image du pays (médias, sondage et monitoring digital), des thèmes importants à nos yeux et susceptibles de résonner au mieux au sein du pays hôte sont définis. Il est toujours important pour la Suisse de jouer sur ses atouts, tout en s'interrogeant sur

les raisons éventuelles de sa faible identification dans certains domaines, afin de pouvoir également informer les visiteurs sur ces domaines d'excellence moins connus.

S'il n'y a pas de recette miracle, l'impact est souvent le résultat d'une histoire originale, différente et vraie, offrant aux visiteurs un ou des moments qui font appel à l'émotion et à l'intelligence. Au sein du Pavillon de la Suisse, l'accent est toujours mis sur l'expérience. Les visiteurs doivent avoir une vraie rencontre avec la Suisse. Nous aimons jouer de manière créative avec les clichés et faire preuve d'inattendu ; les visiteurs doivent pouvoir à la fois confirmer les aspects qu'ils apprécient de notre pays et également se laisser surprendre.

Ceci se retrouve dans de nombreux exemples de ce que la Suisse a pu mettre en place au sein de ses différents pavillons en matière de marketing sensoriel, en écho au thème respectif de chaque Exposition concernée.

Les visiteurs doivent avoir une vraie rencontre avec la Suisse

Expo 2005 Aichi: « La Sagesse de la Nature »

Le Pavillon de la Suisse à l'Expo 2005 Aichi, organisé autour du thème « La Montagne », faisait directement référence à l'image de la Suisse. Le message était immédiat et avait un lien étroit avec le thème de l'Exposition. Le Pavillon s'adressait aux visiteurs du pays hôte à partir d'une image familière de la Suisse. Un massif montagneux de neuf mètres de haut, construit au sein d'un module standard de l'Exposition, présentait des paysages connus et appréciés, surplombés par une terrasse panoramique, qui permettait aux visiteurs de prendre une photo souvenir dans ce monde reconstitué. A l'intérieur, « La Montagne » surprenait par une multitude d'objets d'origines, de sens et de formes différentes, qui offraient une représentation multiforme d'une Suisse cosmopolite, innovante et tournée vers l'avenir.

Expo 2010 Shanghai :
« Meilleure Ville, Meilleure Vie »

Au sein de l'Expo 2010 Shanghai organisée sur le thème « Meilleure Ville, Meilleure Vie », le Pavillon de la Suisse répondait à l'un des sous-thèmes de l'Exposition, « Interaction entre la ville et la campagne », sous-thème idéal pour la Suisse lui permettant de présenter à la fois son côté rural idyllique bien connu mais aussi son côté urbain et innovant inattendu. Le pavillon se présentait alors sous forme d'une structure ouverte et hybride alliant technologie et nature, symbolisant l'équilibre ville et campagne. L'attraction principale pour les visiteurs fut le télésiège suisse qui montait vers le toit végétal du pavillon et conduisait les visiteurs loin du bruit, de la foule et de la ville vers une nature tranquille.

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Pavillon de la Suisse
à l'Expo 2015 Milan

Expo 2015 Milan :
« Nourrir la Planète, Énergie pour la Vie »

Jamais une Exposition Universelle n'avait été aussi proche de la Suisse. Les visiteurs italiens connaissant bien le pays, les surprendre n'était donc pas chose aisée. Le Pavillon de la Suisse se structura autour d'une architecture simple composée de quatre tours et d'une déclaration claire sur la rarefaction des ressources, en écho au thème général de l'Exposition axé sur les défis de l'alimentation dans le futur. Les tours étaient remplies d'aliments typiquement suisses tels que le café, les pommes (découpées en rondelles), le sel et l'eau. Tout au long de leur visite, les visiteurs étaient invités à réfléchir à leurs habitudes de consommation. Les denrées étaient à leur disposition et ils pouvaient se servir comme bon leur semblait tout en gardant à l'esprit que le stock était limité. Il s'agissait donc de s'interroger quant à leur intérêt et à leur consommation personnels au vu des besoins futurs de la communauté. Chaque visiteur était alors l'acteur principal de l'évolution du pavillon.



Façade du pavillon de la Suisse à l'Expo 2017 Astana

Expo 2017 Astana : « Énergie du Futur »

A l'Expo 2017 Astana, pour sa présentation, la Suisse avait développé son concept autour du thème « Flower Power » : jouant sur le double sens de l'expression qui illustre à la fois parfaitement la Suisse tout en symbolisant la force de la nature et son potentiel en matière d'énergies renouvelables. Le pavillon présentait, de manière ludique, amusante et interactive, ses solutions quant à l'efficacité énergétique, aux énergies renouvelables et à la gestion globale de l'eau. Au sein d'une cabane de montagne traditionnelle suisse, s'inspirant

de la cabane du Mont Rose largement autonome sur le plan énergétique et innovante dans l'approche architecturale, les visiteurs découvraient l'esprit pionnier et novateur de la Suisse en matière d'énergie.

Expo 2020 Dubai : Une opportunité pour l'image de la Suisse aux Émirats Arabes Unis

La prochaine Exposition Universelle en 2020 à Dubaï sera la première dans un pays arabe et musulman, ce qui lui vaudra, indubitablement, une attention particulière. Cette Exposition constitue pour la Suisse une opportunité de communication dans une région importante.

La Suisse jouit d'une excellente réputation au sein des Émirats Arabes Unis. Elle y est associée aux produits de luxe et de qualité, aux montagnes, à la neige, aux beautés de la nature, au chocolat et à une économie performante. Elle est, en outre, perçue, en particulier par les classes moyenne et supérieure, comme une destination touristique attrayante, malgré un niveau de prix supérieur à la moyenne.

Dans d'autres domaines, il existe un véritable potentiel de développement, notamment quant à la perception de la Suisse en tant que pays innovant et disposant de produits technologiques de haut niveau et du savoir-faire correspondant. C'est précisément dans ce domaine que les entreprises suisses ont beaucoup à offrir. Le défi consiste dès lors à s'appuyer sur ces forces identifiées (haute qualité, durabilité, force économique) pour asseoir notre image dans des domaines moins associés à la Suisse.

L'Expo 2020 Dubai, avec sa force d'attraction locale, régionale et internationale, offrira à la Suisse une visibilité importante. Les Émirats Arabes Unis sont un point d'ancrage solide au cœur d'une région primordiale d'un point de vue économique et géopolitique. Considérée comme la principale place

Le défi consiste à s'appuyer sur ces forces identifiées pour asseoir notre image dans des domaines moins associés à la Suisse



Illustration du pavillon de la Suisse à l'Expo 2020 Dubai

financière de la région, l'émirat est également un centre incontournable pour les foires et les salons et une plateforme logistique cruciale. Par ailleurs, la Suisse a toujours entretenu de bonnes relations diplomatiques avec le pays.

La coopération bilatérale s'est développée dans différents domaines ces dernières années, notamment dans ceux de l'énergie ou de la coopération internationale. Dans la perspective de l'Expo 2020 Dubai, dont les sous-thèmes sont notamment les Opportunités et la Durabilité, la Suisse aura de nombreuses occasions d'approfondir le dialogue sur la coopération internationale.

L'Exposition Universelle sera également une plateforme décisive en matière de coopération économique. En effet, les Émirats Arabes Unis sont aujourd'hui, le principal partenaire économique de la Suisse dans la région du Moyen-Orient. Afin de continuer à améliorer l'accès des entreprises helvétiques au marché de la région, la Suisse a conclu avec le Conseil de Coopération du Golfe, dans le cadre de l'Association Européenne de Libre-Échange (AELE), un accord de libre-échange, entré en vigueur le 1^{er} juillet 2014. Il s'agit du premier accord de libre-échange signé par le Conseil de Coopération du Golfe avec un État non arabe (à l'exception de Singapour). Bon nombre d'entreprises suisses ont choisi Dubaï comme siège de leurs activités dans la région du Golfe. Les Émirats Arabes Unis abritent ainsi plus de 300 sièges d'entreprises suisses et une diaspora de 3 000 Suisses.

De la tradition à l'innovation

*A l'Expo 2020 Dubai, la Suisse
souhaite donner l'image
d'un pays à la fois innovant
et fidèle à ses traditions*

A l'Expo 2020 Dubai, la Suisse souhaite donner l'image d'un pays à la fois innovant et fidèle à ses traditions. Le pavillon a donc été conçu sur le modèle d'un voyage, alternant immersion dans un univers poétique inspiré de ses paysages et centre d'innovation. Ainsi, tout au long de leur parcours, les visiteurs découvriront les valeurs de la Suisse, ses atouts dans le domaine de la formation, de la recherche et de l'innovation et de l'économie, mais aussi les qualités et le savoir-faire spécifiques à la Suisse, qui lui permettent d'avoir des éléments de réponses aux défis de l'avenir. Des expositions temporaires organisées conjointement avec les partenaires des secteurs privé et public permettront de découvrir « les secrets de notre pays », notamment la capacité à collaborer entre les secteurs et les pays en vue de trouver des solutions utiles.

La Suisse souhaite apporter une contribution substantielle au thème de l'Expo 2020 Dubai, notamment en ce qui concerne le développement durable, les énergies renouvelables, la mobilité, l'environnement mais aussi de manière plus transversale, aux thématiques liées à la jeunesse et aux nouvelles technologies. La Suisse participera activement au programme de l'Exposition, non seulement au sein de son pavillon mais également au cours des semaines thématiques prévues au programme officiel de l'Exposition.

Rendez-vous à Dubaï en octobre 2020 !

Présence Suisse

(prs@eda.admin.ch) est l'Organisation suisse, subordonnée au Secrétariat Général du Département Fédéral des Affaires Etrangères, ayant pour vocation de promouvoir l'image de la Suisse à l'étranger.

Expos: A nation branding platform for Switzerland

What drives a tourist to choose Switzerland as a destination, a customer to buy a Swiss made product, a politician to support an exchange agreement or a student to opt for a Swiss university? All countries are increasingly aware of the value of their brands and are implementing nation branding strategies to create, change or enhance their image. Switzerland is no exception.

Switzerland enjoys a good image outside of its borders, with the global public accorded a high degree of trust to Swiss-made products and considering the country a strong and stable player in the global economy. In an era of ever-growing competition, this good reputation needs to be maintained and promoted.

Switzerland's participation in Expos serves as an important instrument of international communication, allowing the country to strengthen its positive brand image and to focus attention on its innovative and competitive reputation as well as its attachment to its traditions.

At Expos, Switzerland's pavilions are often among the most visited and talked about. Beyond this, the pavilion also has a positive impact on visitors' perceptions of Switzerland and contributes to a better understanding of the country.

This article offers a brief overview of Switzerland's successful pavilions at Expo 2005 Aichi, Expo 2010 Shanghai, Expo 2015 Milan and Expo 2017 Astana. It provides insights in the means used by Switzerland to stand out from the hundreds of other pavilions at each Expo.

It then provides an introduction to the Swiss pavilion at World Expo 2020 Dubai, and how this will constitute a key opportunity for Switzerland to strengthen its visibility in the UAE and in the Middle East.

Presence Switzerland
(prs@eda.admin.ch) is the official Swiss organisation, part of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, whose aim is to promote the image of Switzerland abroad.



Thailand

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A green statue of a Thai deity, possibly a guardian spirit, stands in the foreground. The statue is intricately carved and holds a staff topped with a crown-like ornament. In the background, a white building with classical architectural features is visible. A sign with Thai script is mounted on the building. The sky is clear and blue.

**The century
and a half
journey of
Thailand's
branding
at Expos:
Unveiling
intriguing
stories across
the last decade**

Kreingkrai Kanjanapokin

Kreingrai Kanjanapokin

Creative Director for the concept and the management of the Thailand brand at Expos in the past decade

Before people throughout the world can see Thailand through their own eyes as a country blessed with pristine seaside destinations, flavoursome cuisine, a truly-beautiful culture, and the Thai hospitality reflecting the country’s famous nickname, “The Land of Smiles”, it requires effort and dedication to communicate our stories. Multifaceted tales about Thailand, such as our culture and arts, our talk-out-the-town happenings, our country’s milestone projects, as well as our Thai livelihood, should be shown and told to the world in as many ways as possible. A fruitful way to promote the Thailand Brand is to take the centre stage at Expos. These extensive International Exhibitions have been serving as an extraordinarily impactful platform for Thailand to communicate with people from around the world and to gain massive brand exposure for over a century until now.

Thailand, known as ‘Siam’ in the past, has a long-standing interaction with Expos since its original involvement more than 160 years ago. “The first historical evidence was found in ‘Nirat London’ (The Journey to London), composed by Mom Rachotai (Toh Isarankura), one of the ambassadors from Siam to travel to the

Thailand’s first Expo participation at Expo 1862 London



United Kingdom in order to develop relations with the British court in 1855. The Siamese members of this diplomatic mission were invited to visit the 'Crystal Palace', an architectural marvel that housed the first World Expo in England, best known as 'The Great Exhibition of 1851'. Afterwards in 1867, during the reign of King Rama IV, the Siamese Government was officially invited to attend World Expo 1867 as an exhibiting nation for the first time. Several interesting exhibits from Siam sent by King Rama IV (King Mongkut), such as samples of tobacco leaves, cotton, seeds of local crops and fishery tools, were awarded gold medals. Furthermore, the replicas of ornate Royal Barges earned Siam a medal of honour as a memorable souvenir. Historical evidence also confirmed that 'The Stuffed Elephant' at the Pavilion of Siam had been recognised as a hallmark symbol of the Asian Exhibition Buildings, prompting visitors from around the world to be acquainted with Siam and remember its reputation for centuries from then," narrated Krairoek Nana, a scholar of Thai history.¹

Although World Expo 1867 Paris is widely considered to be the first Expo at which Siam provided a formal exhibit and pavilion, records indicate that even earlier than that, in 1862 at the World Expo in London, Thailand or so-called Siam was represented to some degree.²

The 168-year-long history of World Expos is commonly divided into three eras: the era of industrialisation (1851–1938), the era of cultural exchange (1939–1987), and the era of nation branding (1988–present). Interestingly for Thailand, our circumstances were somewhat different to those of other countries. It seems that the participation of Thailand in Expos has been serving a sole purpose throughout these three eras. Historically, Thailand has made its presence at World Expos for the purpose of nation branding since its very first participation, at World Expo 1862 in London.

Expo participation with a sole purpose from day one

After the emergence of the Industrial Revolution³ spanning across the Western world, those countries might have benefitted from participating in Expos as a stage for launching new innovations; this was not the case for Thailand. At that time, as an agriculture-based country, we were not equipped with innovative technologies or marvellous advancements. Our Expo participations mainly served the purpose of introducing ourselves to the global public, as well as promoting the image and stories of our nation during the peak of the Western colonialism, which had stretched across the East.

We have been using Expos as communication platforms to tell our country's stories to the world since the first day we took part in these events. As a result, Thailand was able to grasp more attention from the international community. We gained more recognition as a country with the potential for trade and investment despite the fact that Thailand was not included as a main commercial target for the Western world. Countless people from around the world learned about Thailand, made their voyages to Siam and connected for trade relations.

From that point on, Thailand has been invested in its dedication to participate in Expos. The inundated exposure that

We have been using Expos as communication platforms to tell our country's stories to the world since the first day we took part in these events



Thailand's pavilion
at Expo 1900 Paris

Thailand received from these world-class events has become one of the crucial factors that supported Thailand in retaining its independence during the hunt of Western colonialism.

At Expo 1900 Paris, the above picture shows the richly ornamented pavilion of Siam located at the foot of the Eiffel Tower. By that time, country pavilions were mostly allocated by region. Siam was allocated a location close to other pavilions from Asia. However, Thailand had insisted on erecting a pavilion at another location, ending up located on the Champs de Mars, next to the foot of Eiffel Tower, in order to reaffirm the fact that Thailand was not colonised by another nation.

Some 160 years later, where country branding and connections with world citizens can be done more smoothly through advanced transportation and logistics as well as digital technologies, Thailand still treats Expos as very important stages for country branding, where people from around the world can get a real and impressive experience of Thailand within 15 minutes.

Concept initiation & fine-tuning the strategy

For each Thailand pavilion, we do not give weight to the structure or any particular component in the thinking process of conceptualisation and in the management of exhibitions. We view our work at Expos as an expressive means of communication for visitors to learn about the origins and historical milestones of Thailand from each period. It is ultimately the country's branding that needs different concept ideas reflecting the different themes of each Expo.

In order to craft a journey for visitors who will spend an average time of 15 minutes at the Thailand pavilion, we have integrated the 'Theory of Experiential Marketing' to

create an experience for people around the world to learn and experience the uniqueness of Thai culture, to understand and to be impressed with different aspects of Thailand – evoking a brand experience through the Total Communications method.

To illustrate, in the interpretation of the country's branding in Thailand pavilions, we communicate 'Thainess' through a well-rounded multisensory experience derived from physical forms, taste, smell, sound, and touch. The experience is simulated through the Thai people, Thai food, Thai hospitality, and Thai-style architecture presented with its unique look and feel.

This multisensory experience provided in Thailand's pavilion can be divided into four different elements for visitors' participation at the Expo, which includes Architecture, Content & Exhibition, Live Performances, and Thai Touch:

- ▶ Architecture – highlighting distinctive architectural forms and decoration that truly reflect the Thai identity.
- ▶ Content & Exhibition – presenting concise and recognisable exhibition content.
- ▶ Live Performances – staging selected cultural performances in an area outside the pavilion.
- ▶ Thai Touch – simulating a real atmosphere of Thailand through a multisensory experience.

Architecture: A distinctive and truly Thai essence

Architecture is a primary element that is considered one of the most important parts of Thailand's pavilions, creating the first impression for visitors. The architecture should reflect the brand essence of our country and be eye-catching enough for people to instantly recognise a remarkable Thai structure right from the first glance.

The architecture of the pavilion also serves as a brand experience that prompts people to immerse themselves in a visit to its internal and external exhibitions. Therefore, it is of paramount importance from the thinking process of the country's branding, to replicate the Thai identity through a distinctive pavilion façade.

We are cracking the challenge of branding through an architectural structure; therefore, we need to put forth a Thai identity that is instantly recognisable by people from all over the world at their first glance. This has been a customary tribute that our designers strive to achieve and why we have incorporated components which are unique to Thai-style architecture, such as triangular gables, Thai kanok patterns, the wai gesture and the Thai pavilion, into Thailand's pavilion at each Expo. Nevertheless, simply bringing Thai identity into the design does not guarantee success to the nation's brand building, without first deciding on the concept and appearance of the pavilion. We need to have a profound understanding of each Expo's context, as well as its target visitors.

A good example of the conceptualisation of the country's branding through Thailand pavilions is the one applied at World Expo 2010 Shanghai, themed "Better City, Better Life", where the country had an exhibition space of 3,267.9m² (equal to just

*We communicate 'Thainess'
through a well-rounded
multisensory experience*

over 2 rais). This World Expo was the first of its kind to highlight urban challenges, and focused on the aim to improve quality of life in the cities for the 21st century, when over 55 per cent of the world's population will be residing in growing urban communities worldwide.

This event opened an opportunity for participating countries to showcase the fullest potential of their modern city lifestyles. Thailand encountered challenging factors at the Expo: being a small country yet to be known by the world, where Expo visitors would not like to spend time visiting Thailand's pavilion, coupled with a number of Chinese people lacking knowledge about Thai culture, back when most Chinese people knew only little about Thailand. To make matters worse, at this Expo, we were stranded with a small pavilion and had a limited budget. Despite the circumstances, everything was organised to be precise. We therefore decided to follow our strategy to study and forecast the pavilion design trends of other countries participating in the Expo, and to understand the target audience of the Expo in great depth.

Identify the circumstances and be different

Expo 2010 Shanghai was held when China was beginning to open its doors to the world. There were still several restrictions and limitations to be addressed in the work process. From a preliminary study of pavilion from other countries, we found that the designs were trending towards modern styles. In addition, the design trends of many countries were mostly similar, such as the design of a double-skin building and a circular shape, reflecting a popular architectural trait at the time.

As a result, Thailand decided to break all the rules by creating its brand differentiation with the conceptual design of Thailand's pavilion in a traditional Thai style, nestled among other countries' modern architectural structures. The execution of this idea made Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2010 distinctively unique amidst over 240 pavilions from international participants coming from across the globe.

Insightful design down to the details

With China's population of over one billion, the main target audience of Expo 2010 Shanghai was Chinese visitors. In order to succeed in this Expo, it was essential to catalyse the design and presentation of Thailand's pavilion by gaining a deep understanding and insights into China.

We conducted research to find brand insights from the main target group, all consisting of Chinese people. The research involved a survey and interviews with focus groups of Chinese respondents about their opinions towards Thailand, their favourite things and main interest about the country, how much they care to learn about Thailand, what would first come to their mind when thinking about Thailand, and how much they know about Thai people. Part of the studies showed that Chinese people at the time recognised only Thai temples. Therefore, we used the insights to help interpret what would be quintessential 'Thai architecture' to best convey Thai identity and create differentiation at first sight.

The architectural design of Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2010 championed very clear objectives of presenting Thailand and expressing Thainess to Chinese visitors. As a

**The century and a half journey of Thailand's branding at Expos:
Unveiling intriguing stories across the last decade**

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**Thailand Pavilion,
World Expo 2010
Shanghai**

country blessed with uniqueness and a rich cultural heritage passed on from generation to generation, Thailand's pavilion was presented under the theme "Thainess: Sustainable Ways of Life", illustrating sustainable Thai livelihoods through a combination of iconic architectural structures, Thai arts, and its unique culture. Inspired by the traditional Thai architecture of Phra Yuen Temple in Uttaradit Province, Thailand's pavilion featured the national structure of Sala Thai, which became a sensation at Expo 2010.

The distinctiveness of the Thailand pavilion, uniquely constructed in the heart of Shanghai, impressed the audience with its collection of storytelling about the traditional wisdom of Thai arts and culture, as reflected in the exterior architecture down to the exhibition content inside the building. The storytelling technique was a perfect blend of ancient history and modern technology, underlining Thailand's readiness in its national development to keep up with the pace of the transforming modern world.

The creation of Thailand's pavilion, for the first time making use of a full nation branding strategy, became the remedy for success in an expression of uniqueness which resonated very well with the Chinese audience. Thailand's pavilion was viewed as one of the most popular destinations at the event and ranked in the top seven most visited pavilions among over 240 international participants. Apart from attracting nearly 6.5 million visitors during the six months of the event, Thailand's pavilion was awarded the 'No.1 Popular Vote' by Shanghai Daily online newspaper, an official media partner of Expo 2010. This can be said to be a starting point of a decade of boosted

*The tremendous success
of Thailand's pavilion at Expo
2010 resulted in Thailand today
becoming a dream destination
for Chinese people*



Left: Thailand's 'Ngob'-hat inspired pavilion at Expo 2015 Milan. Right: The façade of Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana

awareness for Chinese people knowing about Thailand and getting more familiarised with the Thai people. The tremendous success of Thailand's pavilion resulted in Thailand today becoming a dream destinations for Chinese people, welcoming more than 10 million Chinese tourists per year.⁴

From that point on, Thailand has always held on to the concept of 'Architecture for Outstanding First-Sight'. For instance, Thailand's pavilion at Specialised Expo 2012 in Yeosu, Republic of Korea, featured a uniquely Thai façade instantly recognisable at first glance, while at World Expo 2015 held in Milan, Italy, the pavilion design followed the concept of a traditional Thai farmer's hat, or 'Ngob', a symbol of agriculture. The building reflected the main idea of Thainess and of Thailand's importance as an agricultural country supplying the world markets with a myriad of food products and raw materials. Furthermore, Thailand's pavilion once more championed a stunningly remarkable Thai design at Specialised Expo 2017 in Astana, Kazakhstan, where the traditional Thai style was reflected in the doors at the pavilion's entrance.

Content & exhibition: concise, coherent & recognisable

The next important element is the exhibition content, which is comparable to the 'Brand Story' of the nation's branding strategy. We found that an effective way for the presentation within the pavilion is to give an overview of the country in a short, concise, and easy format that can be instantly recognised.

There is no need to delve into lengthy details, as we should focus on creating a good impression, which leads to a smile and happiness at the end. This way has proved to be more enticing for visitors, prompting them to find out more about Thailand later.

Concise, coherent & recognisable

An example to demonstrate challenges in the selection of content and presentation was the case of Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana, held under the theme "Future Energy", in which Thailand participated with its own theme "Bioenergy for All" to show off the country's potential in the development of renewable energy and progress in the development of bioenergy.

The century and a half journey of Thailand's branding at Expos: Unveiling intriguing stories across the last decade

The presentation within Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2017 aimed to communicate the country's branding through concise and recognisable mediums, sprinkled with an element of fun in the presentation. We decided to portray an overview of Thailand in an 'Edutainment' style with a journey through three main exhibition rooms displaying creative content under the theme "Bioenergy for All".

The challenges emerged from the fact that the main target of Expo 2017 was the population of Kazakhstan. Because of the country's location, Kazakhstan receives a limited number of foreign tourists annually. Our work started again with research, and although the initial results made us feel more relaxed when most of the Kazakhstani respondents recognised Thailand and viewed it as one of their dream travel destinations, they indicated that they would not visit Thailand's pavilion at the Expo. In their opinion, the "Future Energy" theme did not correspond well to Thailand; in addition to this, the annual income of Kazakh people was not so high compared with the costs of living in the country. As tickets for the Expo were considered expensive, those who purchased them would like to spend more time visiting leading pavilions from technology-oriented countries as they thought this would be more fruitful in terms of the theme. A lot of them had no plans to include Thailand on their visiting list.

Based on gathered data and research, at Expo 2017 we employed a strategy to reach young family groups as the main target. According to the country's demographical information at the time, the population structure in Astana mostly consisted of families with young children and youths. This growing new generation has more purchasing power than before and is generally interested in alternative energy. We paid utmost importance to the content creation that conformed well to the target group's behaviours. We studied what they like and what may be appealing to their interest, and found that young Kazakhstani families are fond of music, fun activities and entertainment. The study also shown that dark, dull colour tones were not popular among Kazakhstani people. As a result, Thailand changed the design colour

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Bioenergy on display
in Thailand's pavilion
at Expo 2017 Astana

inside the pavilion from black, as was originally planned, to white, as well as the structural design and the content that essentially provided both knowledge and entertainment at the same time.

Storytelling that connects the dots

The storytelling style is crucial in delivering a single message about Thailand and establishing brand recognition among visitors. We created a fun and unique way of telling the stories through modern presentations and a variety of techniques that could involve everyone. An example of this idea can be illustrated by the 'interactive exhibition' rooms where concise and uncomplicated knowledge about nine types of biomass and bioenergy were presented in the pavilion's 'Energy Creation Lab'. Another example was the 3D movie room featuring a story narrated by the pavilion's mascot. The corn-shaped mascot, named 'Pa-Lang' (Power), was created as a key storyteller to connect with the content, starting from the front of the pavilion to the last exhibition room.

The success was also a result of our marketing strategy, which was rolled out beforehand in order to draw the attention of the target group through 'Total Communications' channels. Before the opening of the Expo, we made use of the mascot in our marketing communication channels. Gradually introducing 'Pa-Lang' through several public relations activities, a road-show campaign was organised in several key attractions around Almaty and Astana in order to offer people

a sneak preview of Thailand's pavilion using advanced virtual reality (VR) technology. Moreover, social media was a very powerful channel of communication to raise awareness among Kazakhstani people, which resulted in Thailand being able to increase public awareness of Thailand's participation in Expo 2017 ahead of time.

We aimed for public recognition of the mascot as a 'memorable image' that prompted public aspiration to visit the Thailand pavilion. Our marketing strategy stimulated local interest in visiting the pavilion ahead of the Expo. Throughout Expo 2017, our star of the stage, 'Pa-Lang', was stationed in front of the pavilion in order to welcome visitors and to draw the attention of children, who stopped by to visit the exhibition rooms equipped with 3D animation storytelling.

In addition, our methods of selecting storytelling content also covered all aspects of presentation best practices, including attention to cultural sensitivity. To create a harmonious connection with Kazakh culture, we highlighted elephants to communicate about the production of biogas in Thailand, with the message that this energy source was derived from elephant droppings, rather than projecting the quantitative fact of using pig dung. This demonstrated our sensitivity towards Kazakh people who mostly practice Islam.

These components enabled the effective communication of a meaningful single message to visitors in a memorable way. As a result, Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2017 Astana was graciously awarded by Astana Expo TV as the 2nd runner-up for the most popular pavilions for children and families, as voted by Kazakhstani visitors, and

*The storytelling style
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The exhibition inside
Thailand's pavilion at
Expo 2017 Astana

it ranked in the top four most visited pavilions among the 115 international participants. The positive impression about Thailand could yield a long-lasting benefit to our country, especially as the good feelings among our young family targets will have an impact on the children who will grow up to become important decision makers one day.

Within a short timeframe of only 15 minutes, the exhibition content needs to be differentiated and recognisable. Being concise and fun, and using storytelling, are key parts of an effective presentation of content for our country branding, because enjoyment during the visit is the best way to let the pavilion's visitors experience real 'Thainess', since being happy, having fun and being welcoming are seen as traits of Thai people.

Live performances: Activities stoke the target audience

Live performances are the third most important element for the country's branding at Expos. This element should be weighed as a main method of brand engagement that helps connect passers-by in the reception areas of the Expo to come and visit Thailand's pavilion.

In each Expo, the host country's assignment of the location of Thailand's pavilion is random. We may not be situated in a strategic or noticeable location. As a result, live performances have a crucial role in creating awareness and attracting visitors to our pavilion. As an experienced event organiser at Expos, the key to a successful show is to understand the behaviour and psyche of the target groups. Insights about target groups are great substrates on which to build an outstanding communication tactic, which may range from a mascot troop to live cultural performances.

Live performances: Livening up the contemporary with multimedia

Thailand is a country with rich cultural diversity and unique etiquette; therefore, we consider live performances as a platform to present our attributes to draw viewers' attention to the Thailand pavilion at each Expo. In some Expos, live performances had been leveraged as a vital and integral part of the branding strategy from the start of the design conceptualisation. As a good example, Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu integrated live performances as the main element of brand engagement from the design process.

When wearing a brand builder's thinking cap, insights from research about target groups became an extremely powerful tool in tackling the challenges. We found that Korean people are enthusiastic audiences of live performances, so since the beginning of the design process, we decided to allocate a dedicated space in front of the pavilion as a stage for cultural performances. In doing so, Thailand was one of only two countries to have a stage clearly visible in front of the exhibition buildings at Expo 2012 Yeosu.

The live performance format was far from an ordinary traditional Thai style. Exuding a modern and sensually contemporary feel, the performances were designed to be presented in a grand fashion, backed with advanced multimedia (large LED screens) technology to create a sensational impression for viewers.

The daily scheduled shows highlighted four sets of cultural performances including *Khon*, in a contemporary style with magnificent scenes created by astounding multimedia backdrops, the legendary *Love Story of the Ocean*, the *Harvest Dance*, as well as the Thai martial arts of sword fighting and Muay Thai. During the intervals, the 'Actoid' (Android + Actress), the world's first android mermaid, came to interact with spectators and informed visitors about epic literature stories displayed in the pavilion's exhibitions. The sensational robot was manufactured from special-grade silicone materials, enabling a natural skin-like appearance similar to that of a human. It could move its lips, neck, arms, legs, and swaying its tail to impress visitors. Complementing the mermaid 'Actoid', the 'Humanoid' named 'Maiyarap' depicted a demon ruler of the underwater world from Thai literature.

The Live Performance stage in front of Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu

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Thailand's mascot
at Expo 2012 Yeosu
greeting visitors

Mascot troop: When the star of the stage comes alive

Once it came to responding to the Korean preference to watch live performances, every country's pavilion faced the same problem of how to garner attention from visitors who spent a fairly long time watching a myriad of performance activities provided by the host country in the reception area.

Expo 2012 Yeosu was centred on the theme "The Living Ocean and Coast", and Thailand's pavilion featured the concept of "Colors of Diversity: Capacity of Thailand".

The concept was determined through research insights that Korean people are generally interested in cartoons and animations. Thailand's Pavilion at Expo 2012 portrayed the stories of Thai seas with graceful designs of foamy waves and Thai culture. Three leading characters from Thailand's epic literature, *Phra Aphaimani*, including 'Sutsakorn', the Dragon-horse, served as the pavilion's hosts and mascots to take visitors on a journey through spectacular seascapes showcasing the richness and beauty of Thailand's seas.

Not only storytellers inside Thailand's pavilion, the adorable mascot characters were also designed to act as the master of roadshow activities taken place outside the pavilion area, leading visitors into the exhibition and altogether conveying the message of Thailand's abundant tourism potential, fishery and food security, as well as ways of preserving the seas and the coastlines of Thailand.

Visitors to Thailand's pavilion at Expo 2012 Yeosu enjoyed daily events as well as extraordinary happenings throughout the Expo. On top of our strategy to draw passing visitors into

*Expo 2012 visitors stood in
a long line at the pavilion's door
in order to get their turn to take
photos with the lovely mascots*

Thailand's pavilion with live staged performance in the front area, our team monitored the situation and adjusted each day's tactics to tackle surrounding contexts throughout the Expo. We believe that another key to success in experiential marketing is to create additional stimulations on top of planned experiences each day in order to deliver an extraordinary impression to visitors.

A number of visitors to Thailand's pavilion posted photos and shared stories on social media, instantly becoming viral among Korean people. The Thai cultural live performances and the mascot characters earned a place in the hearts of locals and gained loyal fans in a short period of time. Each morning, visitors stood in a long line at the pavilion's door in order to get their turn to take photos with the lovely mascots. Understanding the positive impact of social media, the staff of Thailand's pavilion helpfully supported the arrangement of photo sessions each day. The result of this dedication meant that Thailand's pavilion ranked third of the most visited pavilions at the Expo, among 110 international participants.

Tangible Thai touch: Impressive sensory experiences

The final element which reflects the entire picture of our experiential marketing method is to incorporate a well-rounded multisensory experience⁵ derived from the five physical senses of sight, taste, smell, hearing and touch in the visitors' journey at each Expo.

A series of Thailand pavilions representing uniquely eye-catching Thai designs across the decades. Clockwise from top left: Expo 1904 St. Louis, Expo 1958 Brussels, Expo 1970 Osaka, Expo 1967 Montreal.



Uniquely eye-catching Thai design

In order to impress visitors, Thailand's pavilions at Expos are the epitome of eye-catching architectural forms that are recognisable at first glance. We want people to be stunned and drawn to view the exhibitions inside our pavilions. From the old days, the looks of Thailand's pavilions were designed to reflect the country's identity, which clearly raised the awareness and recognition. These included the Siam pavilion at Expo 1889 Paris, Expo 1904 Saint Louis, Expo 1958 Brussels, and Expo 1967 Montreal.

Thai scents & music

Scents and melodies are two other senses that we pay importance to when it comes to the details of the pavilion. Quintessential Thai scents such as jasmine and the charm of the Thai traditional music can create a sensory experience for visitors. We often incorporate Thai musical sounds into our Expo theme song.

Thai Taste, nation branding through delicacies

Thai flavours are well known throughout the world thanks to the country's tasty cuisine. It has become one of the most anticipated elements that international visitors yearn for as part of an iconic Thai experience in modern-era Thailand pavilions. The Thai taste component in World Expo 2020 Dubai will be elevated by the collaboration between the Thailand pavilion and one of the most famous Thai restaurants in Dubai, 'Little Bangkok', to present Thai flavours at Expo 2020. The Taste of Thai Restaurant will be located on the first floor of Thailand's pavilion, within a 160m² area, using contemporary decoration to emphasise Asian cosiness and catering to 50 people, comfortably seated. The restaurant will be capable of welcoming over 500 customers per day and is expected to receive over 100,000 guests throughout the six-month period of Expo 2020.⁶

*Quintessential Thai scents
such as jasmine and the charm
of the Thai traditional music
can create sensory experience
for visitors*

Thai flavours once more will be part of the charm of the Thailand pavilion at World Expo 2020 Dubai





The Thailand pavilion ambassadors welcomed all visitors with 'Thainess' and Thai hospitality at Expo 2010 Shanghai

A Truly Thai touch

A true touch of Thai hospitality will never be complete without mentioning Thai people's warmth and friendliness. Our smiley, welcoming spirit is best known to the world and voted by readers of Conde Nast Traveller as the 'Best Country for People' in its 2008 Best Country Awards.

"This award shows that Thailand not only remains a popular tourist destination for UK citizens, but the Thai people themselves are regarded as the best people in the world," indicated Richard Barrow, a travel blogger based in Asia.⁷

At each of Thailand's pavilions, Thai nationals are stationed to welcome visitors with real Thai hospitality. Thailand's pavilion is one of the few country pavilions using its own people as hosts. Operating staff at the pavilion are also of Thai nationality. This derives from a singular reasoning – a true Thai touch can only be achieved through the people of Thailand, alongside the Thainess and the country's unique cultural diversity.

At Expo 2020, Thailand is preparing to write a new page of history by considering the importance of Thai DNA

Looking forward to 2020

Embarking on its participation at World Expo 2020 Dubai, Thailand is preparing to write a new page of history for itself by considering the importance of Thai DNA, to be reflected in the upcoming Expo. To create a charming atmosphere and to make the Thailand pavilion stand out, the design of a Thai garland will be the centrepiece, in order to communicate Thai hospitality and our welcoming friendliness to people from



**The design of
Thailand's pavilion
at World Expo 2020
Dubai**

around the world. The exhibition concept will follow the theme: “Digital for Development”, highlighting the presentation of the Thai identity through outstanding digital technologies. The pavilion will be located on the country’s largest ever exhibition space in the history of its participation at World Expos – covering an area of 3,600m² (or 2.25 rais) within the Mobility District under the display topic “Mobility for the Future”.

The differences and challenges of Expo 2020 lies with the target groups; 70 per cent of visitors are set to be international, rather than a majority of nationals like in previous Expos. As a result, Thailand’s pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai will have to be distinctive and universally recognisable for its true Thai identity, yet communicated in an easy concept which can be understandable in any language and to any nationality.

Conclusion

Country branding at each Expo gives different weight to the four aforementioned elements, according to the suitable strategies for each participation. In the past decade, the participation of Thailand at Expos has changed into the form of a ‘Total Solution’ using a turnkey project management style, which enables a connection between strategy, concept, design, construction, human resources, operational management, activities, and communications. From the starting point of Expo 2010 Shanghai, the creation of Thailand’s pavilion with the integration of all aspects together had become more flexible, convenient and financially effective. For the following 10 years, we adopted this model of work in support of the country’s branding and created outstanding and more iconic Thailand pavilions at each successive Expo.

Up to the present, Expos have undoubtedly played a crucial role for our country to communicate directly to the world without traditional boundaries. Expos have served as international platforms for Thailand to deliver our peaceful, impactful, and meaningful messages via various types of participation. The global exposure of these events has helped strengthen Thailand's national branding in many aspects, such as economics, politics, international relations, tourism and so forth.

Looking into the future, we do not seek only the opportunities to extend our gratitude to Expos as one of the greatest stages for our country's branding, we also strive to go beyond the status of being a participating country. With an aim of creating pride for Thai people, we will continue to explore opportunities to become the selected host country of Expos. In any role, the participation in an Expo is, for a country, an experiential opportunity to create a deep impression inside visitors' hearts. It is also an impactful way to present the country in means other than a mass-targeted branding strategy.

Experiential marketing tactics are among the emerging trends in today's transformational age of digital technology and social media. The synergy between experiential marketing and the power of social media could accelerate any country's branding efforts to achieve more benefits in both the short and the long term. While visitors to a pavilion will receive a good impression that results in long-term appreciation in their hearts, most of them also like to share nice stories they have experienced through their personal social media channels and by inviting their followers or friends to come and visit the pavilion. To brand our nation via Thailand's pavilions at the next Expos, in the digital world, the exposure of Thailand can go beyond traditional boundaries which are restricted to the numbers of visitors or flight tickets available to those who attend the Expo.

Thailand's Expo pavilions will continue to play an important role as means of presenting 'Thainess' to people around the world. Visitors can enjoy well-rounded aspects of Thailand and be immersed in the charms of the 'Land of Smiles' during their visits to our pavilions.

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La Thaïlande : Récit d'un siècle et demi de développement de l'image-pays aux Expositions Internationales, lumière sur la dernière décennie

L' image de la Thaïlande au regard du monde: Mer cristalline, saveurs culinaires, authenticité culturelle et pays du sourire, telle est la perception consacrée de la Thaïlande. Ces derniers siècles ont permis au pays de promouvoir activement son image de marque à travers le monde et les Expositions Internationales constituent l'un des instruments les plus importants y ayant contribué.

La marque-pays Thaïlande:

Depuis la première participation de Siam ou Thaïlande, lors de l'Exposition Universelle de Londres en 1862 jusqu'à aujourd'hui, la Thaïlande a toujours été enthousiaste, active et engagée au sein des Expositions Internationales. La Thaïlande se réjouit de participer à ces événements, afin d'y présenter l'essence de sa marque-pays et d'ouvrir par ce biais d'importantes perspectives en matière notamment de tourisme, de relations internationales et d'investissements.

La marque-pays de la Thaïlande aux Expositions de la dernière décennie:

Au cours des dix dernières années, que ce soit à l'Exposition Universelle 2010 de Shanghai, en Chine; à l'Exposition Spécialisée 2012 à Yeosu, en République de Corée ou à l'Exposition Spécialisée 2017 à Astana, au Kazakhstan, les pavillons de la Thaïlande ont tous rencontré un fort succès auprès du public. Consciente de l'importance des Expositions Internationales pour construire ou renforcer l'image de marque d'un pays, aujourd'hui, la Thaïlande voit également l'organisation d'une Exposition comme une opportunité.

L'Exposition Universelle 2020 Dubai, aux Émirats Arabes Unis, constitue une nouvelle occasion pour le pays de promouvoir son image par le biais d'un pavillon incontournable. Cet article partage des réflexions et analyses de la vision créative et de la force de l'engagement des acteurs de la participation de la Thaïlande aux Expositions Universelles, de ce qui fait la notoriété de ses pavillons et de sa capacité à invariablement émerveiller le monde.

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The BIE oversees four types of International Exhibitions: World Expos, Specialised Expos, Horticultural Expos and the Triennale di Milano. Expos are global events centred around a theme addressing fundamental challenges faced by humanity. Gathering nations from around the world, they are a stage for innovations and solutions and an invitation to explore a theme through engaging and immersive discoveries.

The mission of the BIE is to ensure the quality and the success of Expos by protecting the rights of their organisers and participants, and by preserving their core values of Education, Innovation and Cooperation.

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