Showcases of Revolutionary Transformation: Exhibitions in the Early Meiji Period

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RESÜMEE

Auf den – gemeinhin als *Meiji ishin* bezeichneten – politischen Umbruch vom Frühjahr 1868 folgte ein Jahrzehnt revolutionären Wandels, der die japanische Gesellschaft von Grund auf umgestaltete. Ohne die Berücksichtigung kultureller Praktiken jedoch lassen sich die Stoßrichtung und Tragweite dieser „Meiji-Revolution" nicht erfassen. Der Beitrag untersucht daher den Wandel anhand des Mediums öffentlicher Ausstellungen. Die Institution der Ausstellung offenbarte die revolutionären Ansprüche und Praktiken der neuen Eliten sowie die Reaktionen der Bevölkerung auf diese Ansprüche und Praktiken mit besonderer Deutlichkeit, denn es gab während der Meiji-Zeit keine andere Veranstaltungsform, die so viele Menschen an einem einzigen Ort hätte zusammenbringen können. Es wird gezeigt, dass Ausstellungen weniger Abbilder als vielmehr Träger des Wandels waren: Mit ihnen und durch sie ließen sich politische Ambitionen artikulieren, welche die im Entstehen begriffene Nation repräsentierten, Ordnungen des Wissens verhandelten und neuartige Konsumkulturen erprobten. Ihre Durchführung ließ dabei stets unterschiedliche, ja, entgegengesetzte Tendenzen hervortreten: Kontinuitäten und Brüche, wobei, längerfristig betrachtet, letztere dominierten.

1. On the use and abuse of examples

The power of example may serve as a useful means of legitimation for a bold undertaking. A group of Kyoto businesspeople planning an exhibition in 1871 had in mind a clear model, for in their public announcement they declared:

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The western countries have something they call 'exhibitions'. These are used to display to people both newly invented machines and ancient equipment with the aim of promoting knowledge, making discoveries and realizing profits. In imitation of this outstanding method we intend […] to hold such a meeting.[1]

At that time just three years had passed since the palace coup in Kyoto which had turned the system of political power in Japan on its head and formally re-established the emperor's supreme authority.[2] The upheaval which took place in the spring of 1868 – referred to as the Meiji Restoration [in Japanese: *Meiji ishin*] – marked the beginnings of radical change in Japanese society. The term *Meiji* [enlightened rule] served to designate the entire period of the emperor's reign (1868–1912) but also functioned as a motto for the government which represented, in particular, the reform efforts of the new rulers in the first decade after 1868. Within the framework of these reforms these rulers had few inhibitions about making repeated reference to their models. For a Tokyo exhibition held in 1877 they wrote in an English-language catalogue intended for western visitors:

The good results, which have followed the various European exhibitions, have not only induced our nation to take part in these rendezvous, but also have produced a desire of cultivating equally valuable fruits for the benefit of the country at large.[3]

Early Meiji-period Japan did not limit itself to such rhetorical genuflections before western models. Both of the above-mentioned exhibitions took place. The Kyoto exhibition of 1871 marked the beginning of a boom in exhibitions held in Japan in the first decade of the new era. The Tokyo exhibition of 1877 stood at the start of a long series of national industrial exhibitions. Many of the early domestic Japanese exhibitions were unable to fulfil the hopes placed in them and met with criticism. But this criticism referred to Japanese attempts and virtually never to the western models which – as we shall see – almost no one seriously dared call into question.

Yet foreign examples are sometimes of limited use and references to them at least open to question. This is doubly true for the upheavals in the wake of *Meiji ishin* and its potential models and precursors, the great western revolutions that occurred toward the end of the eighteenth century. On the one hand, Japan's new elites soon came to see these examples as unsuitable models for their own reform projects. On the other, however, scholarship on the Meiji period has repeatedly cited the western revolutions as a model by which to evaluate the change which took place in Japan after 1868.

1 Translated from the quotation in Hiroshi Maruyama, Meiji shoki no kyōto hakurankai [The Kyoto exhibitions in the early Meiji period], in Mitsukuni Yoshida (ed.), Bankoku hakurankai no kenyū [Studies on the world exhibitions], Tokyo 1986, pp. 221-248, here p. 228. Cf. Kyōto Hakurankai Kyōkai (ed.), Kyōto hakurankai enkakushi [A history of the Kyoto exhibitions], Kyoto 1903, esp. p. 27.

2 On the events in Kyoto in the spring of 1868 see Jun Suzuki, Ishin no kōsō to tenkai (Nihon no rekishi 20) [The development of Meiji ishin and its guiding idea (Japanese History 20)], Tokyo 2002, pp. 12-30. John Breen, The Imperial Oath of April 1868. Ritual, Politics, and Power in the Restoration, in: Monumenta Nipponica, vol. 51, no. 4 (winter 1996), pp. 407-429.

3 Exhibition Bureau (ed.), National Exhibition, 1877. Official Catalogue of the National Exhibition of Japan, Tokyo 1877, p. III.

On the first point, it should be noted that Japan's new rulers did not identify with the leitmotifs of the French and American revolutions. They were deeply troubled by demands for freedom or equality and thus rejected these western political and social revolutions as models for their reform efforts. The industrial revolution met with much less hostility, however, and the new elites rapidly adopted its agenda. But they did so without reference to the concept of "revolution" and instead embraced slogans of "progress" and "civilization" which were more innocuous in the second half of the nineteenth century. The reformers' distrust of the western revolutions can be traced in terms of changing language. The upheavals in the wake of 1868 soon came to be known as *Meiji ishin* (明治維新). *Ishin* originally meant "renewal",[4] but a comparison of dictionaries of the Meiji period shows how the backward-looking character of *ishin* became increasingly prominent; this is particularly so for translations into European languages, where "restoration" became the standard translation.[5] There was also an increasingly sharp conceptual distinction between "restoration" and "revolution", i.e. between *ishin* and *kakumei* (革命). At the same time, *kakumei* ("revolution") gradually vanished from the reformers' vocabulary. While in 1876 in an English-language brochure for the world exhibition held in Philadelphia, for instance, the Japanese ministry of education characterizes the events around 1868 as a "revolution", eight years later in a similar source – this time for the "Health and Education Exhibition" held in London – the same authorities now merely speak of a "restoration".[6] The political and social revolutions of the West were not permitted as an official model for the epochal upheavals which marked the early Meiji period.

On the second point, it should be pointed out that scholarship on Japan has made repeated use of the western revolutions as models by which to evaluate *Meiji ishin*.[7] It has thus arrived at quite different – and frequently contradictory – findings whose proponents can in broad terms can be classified in accordance with three different groups. The first of these groups denies the upheavals in the decade after 1868 any revolutionary character whatsoever. By comparison with the European revolutions, Japanese representatives of this group in particular have emphasized the restoration of imperial rule and

4 On the complex etymology of Ishin and its Chinese origin, see George M. Wilson, Reviewed work(s): Meiji Ishin. Restoration and Revolution by Nagai Michio, Miguel Urrutia, in: Journal of Japanese Studies, winter 1990, p. 173.

5 Masaaki Sōgō / Yoshifumi Hida (ed.), Meiji no kotoba jiten [Dictionary of the Meiji Period], Tokyo 1998, pp. 15-16.

6 Monbushō (ed.), Outline History of Japanese Education. Prepared for the Philadelphia International Exhibition, 1876, New York 1876, e.g. p. 6 and Monbushō, A Catalogue with explanatory Notes of the Exhibits from the Department of Education, Empire of Japan, in the International Health and Education Exhition, Held in London, 1884, London 1884, p. 19 et al.

7 For a comparison with the French Revolution, see e.g. Tadami Chizuka, Furansu kakumei to meiji ishin [The French Revolution and Meiji ishin], in: Akira Tanaka (ed.), Meiji ishin (Kindai nihon no kiseki 1) [Meiji ishin (Remnants of a Japanese Modernity 1], Tokyo 1994, pp. 244-266. An English-language guide to the scope of research on Meiji ishin may be found in Michio Nagai / Miguel Urrutia (ed.), Meiji Ishin. Restoration and Revolution, Tokyo 1985. See also Sven Saaler, Die Bedeutung der Epochenmarke 1868 in der Japanischen Geschichte. Restauration, Revolution, Reform, in: Saeculum. Jahrbuch für Universalgeschichte 56 (1 / 2005), pp. 69-104.

the uniqueness of *Meiji ishin*.[8] The comparison with western models has meant that even today Japanese scholarship refrains from using the term "revolution" (*kakumei*) in reference to the change which occurred after 1868.[9] Large swathes of western scholarship long followed such a reading, giving the upheavals a backward-looking character through their use of the term "Meiji restoration".[10] However, the mere fact that it was not the emperor who governed the country and instead a handful of ascendant oligarchs who controlled the reforms and the business of state means that the simple reestablishment of the old order – the emperor's supreme authority – which is implied by the term "restoration" is implausible.

A second, highly heterogeneous group sees *Meiji ishin* as a revolution which got stuck half-way.[11] Those who invoke political and sociological arguments criticize the fact that an independent civil society failed to emerge in Meiji-period Japan which might have countered the state's centralising tendencies.[12] Economically-oriented attempts at explanation are more strongly focused on the issue of whether a middle class arose in Japan in the second half of the nineteenth century.[13] Approaches devoted to the history of ideas

8 Such an interpretation of Meiji ishin extends far back beyond 1945. For a summary of the scholarship see Yasushi Toriumi, Masahito Masao / Hidemasa Kokaze (ed.), Nihon kingendaishi kenkyū jiten [Dictionary of Historical Research on Japanese Modernity], Tokyo 2004, pp. 15-19.

9 Japanese historians continue to use the term Meiji ishin almost exclusively. See, for example, Akira Tanaka, Meiji ishin [Meiji ishin], Tokyo 2003 and Jun Suzuki, Ishin no kōsō to tenkai (Nihon no rekishi 20) [The development of Meiji ishin and its guiding idea (Japanese History 20)], Tokyo 2002.

10 Recently some English-speaking historians of Japan have begun to criticise this choice of phrase and refer instead to the "Meiji Revolution". For example, Marius Jansen entitled a chapter of his well-known book The making of modern Japan "The Meiji Revolution". (Marius B. Jansen, The making of modern Japan, Harvard 2000). Andrew Gordon also consistently uses the term "revolution": Andrew Gordon, A modern History of Japan. From Tokugawa Times to the Present, New York / Oxford, 2003, e.g. pp. 61-62 and p. 75.

11 Such as Harry D. Harootunian, who refers to a "a passive revolution, a revolution / restoration that combined social forces in such a way as to install the contradictory impulse of both revolution and restoration" (Harry D. Harootunian, Overcome by Modernity. History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan, Princeton 2000, p. 301).

12 See for example Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, Japanese Civilisation. A Comparative View, Chicago 2006. This line of argument reaches back to Masao Maruyama in particular, who shortly after the Second World War published a series of highly influential essays on the issue of the origins of Japanese ultra-nationalism and identified as one of these the lack of a bourgeois revolution in the nineteenth century (see also Tino Schölz, Faschismuskonzepte in der japanischen Zeitgeschichtsforschung, in: Hans Martin Krämer / Tino Schölz / Sebastian Contrad (ed.), Geschichtswissenschaft in Japan. Themen, Ansätze und Theorien, Göttingen 2006, pp. 119-120). Several of these writings can be found in Masao Maruyama, Freiheit und Nation in Japan. Ausgewählte Aufsätze 1936–1949, Band 1, Munich 2007.

13 They primarily examined the role of the samurai and the merchants in Meiji ishin and the extent to which they contributed to the emergence of a middle class. For the classic analysis, see E. Herbert Norman, Japan's Emergence as a Modern State. Political and Economic Problems of the Meiji Period, New York 1940. See also Douglas R. Howland, Samurai Status, Class, and Bureaucracy: A Historiographical Essay, in: The Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 60, no. 20 (May 2001), pp. 353-380, esp. pp. 353-354. The role of the peasants has also been repeatedly examined, however: the historian Jūn'nosuke Sasaki maintained that the social movements of the 1860s had failed and that Japan's rich peasants were unable to develop into a bourgeoisie (cf. on this point Irwin Scheiner, The Japanese Village. Imagined, Real, Contested, in: Stephen Vlastos (ed.), Mirror of Modernity. Invented Tradition of Modern Japan, Berkeley / Los Angeles / London, 1998, pp. 67-78, here pp. 74-75. On the concept of a "bourgeois revolution" from the Japanese point of view see Germaine A. Hoston, Conceptualizing Bourgeois Revolution. The Prewar Japanese Left and the Meiji Restoration, in: Comparative Studies in Society and History, vol. 33, no. 3 (Jul. 1991), pp. 539-581.

for their part emphasize the conservative, backward-looking and traditional character of Meiji-period ideologies.[14]

In many ways closely connected with this second interpretation is a third line of argument which – always with a view to revolution in the West – refers to a "revolution from above" in the case of Japan. This includes scholars of quite different backgrounds such as William G. Beasley, Theda Skocpol, Ellen Kay Trimberger, E. Herbert Norman, Eric Hobsbawn and, most recently, Jürgen Osterhammel.[15] The assumption is that the social movements and restructuring of society which marked the western revolutions are missing in Japan in the aftermath of *Meiji ishin*. Such a reading is founded above all on the construction of the samurai as a closed-off class which had already ruled during the Edo period and then implemented the Meiji reforms, thus continuing to provide the country's elite.[16] This thesis is scarcely tenable in view of the diversity of the material, social and cultural circumstances of the samurai class in the Edo period. In fact, in 1868 a group of figures deriving almost exclusively from lower-status samurai families and Japan's periphery was able to supersede the power elite of the Edo period (1603–1867) which consisted of the shogunate and the daimyōs. In overall terms it is clear that the protagonists of the political upheaval and the civil war of the 1860s had entirely new opportunities for advancement.

A common feature of the interpretative approaches belonging to the second and third groups is their authorship of narratives emphasizing deficiency in one form or another. They either see *Meiji ishin* as an ideologically backward-looking reform process seeking to restore the emperor's "original" system of rule, or they interpret it as an uncompleted bourgeois or capitalist revolution or else as a purely political revolution from above. Their consistent conclusion is that by comparison with the implicit models – the major revolutions of the West – *Meiji ishin* remained incomplete or unfinished. These approaches are as normative as they are Eurocentric. They are normative in that they make individual models a norm which the rest of the world is to follow, simply negating the openness of the historical outcome entailed in the process of change which they describe. And they

14 For instance, Jack A. Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World, Berkeley, 1993, p. 458. On Meiji-period ideologies see also Carol Gluck, Japan's Modern Myths. Ideology in the Late Meiji Period, New Jersey 1985.

15 William G. Beasley, The Meiji Restoration, pp. 7-8. Theda Skocpol, Social Revolutions in the Modern World, New York, 1994, e.g. p. 125. Ellen Kay Trimberger, Revolution from above. Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt, and Peru, New Brunswick, 1978. E. Herbert Norman, The Meiji Restoration, in: Ulrich Menzel (ed.), Im Schatten des Siegers: Japan. Band 2. Staat und Gesellschaft, Frankfurt a. M. 1989, pp. 9-76, here p. 50. Eric J. Hobsbawn, Die Blütezeit des Kapitals. Eine Kulturgeschichte der Jahre 1848–1875, Munich 1977 [English edition: The Age of Capital: 1848–1875, London 1975], p. 186. Jürgen Osterhammel / Niels P. Petersson, Ostasiens Jahrhundertwende. Unterwerfung und Erneuerung in west-östlichen Sichtweisen, in: Ute Frevert (ed.), Das Neue Jahrhundert. Europäische Zeitdiagnosen und Zukunftsentwürfe um 1900, Göttingen 2000, pp. 265-306, here p. 272.

16 This line of interpretation reaches back in particular to the Marxist historiography which was long dominant in Japan after 1945: Yasushi Toriumi / Masahito Masao / Hidemasa Kokaze (ed.), Nihon kingendaishi kenkyū jiten [Dictionary of Historical Research on Japanese Modernity], Tokyo 2004, pp. 15-16.

are Eurocentric in that the western revolutions of the late eighteenth century serve as their absolute models.

This permanent comparison with the European revolutions has also meant that, up to the present day, the change resulting from *Meiji ishin* has mainly been described from a political, sociological or economic point of view. The change in cultural practices in the first decade after 1868 has received far less attention, as indeed has the question of how this change in cultural practices – if such a change did in fact take place – affected the society and the economic and political order of Meiji-period Japan. In relation to the French Revolution, cultural practices – such as festivals or ceremonies – have been receiving increasing attention for some time now but have never been a topic of key interest to historiography on Japan.[17] Where they have been considered, this has been more as a reflection of the process of upheaval and not as an agent of this change.

With reference to exhibitory and representational practices, the following study analyzes the extent to which Japan's social order underwent a radical transformation in the decade following 1868. As we have seen, the western revolutions of the eighteenth century are simply the wrong models to describe the scope of change in Japan in the second half of the nineteenth century. They obfuscate more than they answer the question of the extent to which the upheavals in post-1868 Japan were revolutionary in nature. Accordingly, for once the western revolutions will not be used as a template or model to interpret this change; instead, the sources and the models which the sources refer to will be taken seriously. Instead of focusing on the models of the American and French revolutions which Japanese contemporaries refused, my study is centred on a model of activity readily embraced by the relevant elites: the cultural practices of exhibition.

Why exhibitions? During the Meiji period no other type of events brought together so many people in a single place. The fascination with these events resulted not least from the fact that, from a global perspective, the second half of the nineteenth century was the age of (world) exhibitions. They were a phenomenon to which even a Japan which had only recently opened up was unable to remain immune. In 1867 the country – which was then still under the shogunate government – first participated in a world exhibition. Overseas participation was followed from the early 1870s by the first domestic Japanese exhibitions which deliberately followed western models. In the first decade after 1868, domestic exhibitions became a central instrument of popular education, cultural homogenization and the consolidation of political power. They thus illustrate with particular clarity the revolutionary aims and practices of the new elites and the reactions of the populace. Where the West's exhibitions served as a model, their realization in Japan gave rise to two different – apparently contradictory – reactions: ruptures and continuities. Leaving aside for the time being the issue of which of these predominated, my article

17 On the French Revolution see Roger Chartier, Les origines culturelles de la Révolution française, Paris 1990. And, above all, Mona Ozouf, La fête révolutionnaire. 1789–1799, Paris 1976. Cultural history studies of Japan may be found in Daikichi Irokawa, Meiji bunka [Meiji Culture], Tokyo 1997 and Takashi Fujitani, Splendid Monarchy. Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan, Berkeley / Los Angeles / London 1998.

describes the reciprocal relationship between the two, with this pattern of ambivalence between continuities and ruptures reflected in its structure. The first part of the article describes aspects indicating continuity in exhibition practice between the late Edo period (1800–1867) and the first decade of the new era. The second part then examines the ruptures occurring in the same period.

2. Continuities

In the period of the 1860s and 1870s which was so crucial for Japanese exhibition culture two different types of continuity can be identified: on the one hand, the continuity between the exhibition practices of the Edo and Meiji periods and, on the other, a continuity in the first decade after 1868 between the early, generally small and local exhibitions held immediately after 1868 and the first "national industrial exhibition" in the tenth year of the Meiji period. The former has been frequently described in the scholarship, the latter seldom.[18]

Traditional exhibition practices: continuities between the Edo and early Meiji periods

In what context is it possible to speak of a continuity between Japanese exhibition practices in the first half of the nineteenth century and the early Meiji period? *Meiji ishin* was followed by a full-blown boom in exhibitions. From 1871 such events were held throughout Japan; at regular intervals in the major cities of Tokyo and Kyoto and sporadically in provincial centres such as Wakayama, Matsumoto and Kanazawa. Between 1871 and 1876 more than half a dozen exhibitions were held each year on average.[19] A list from 2004 – which only includes events for which catalogues are extant – refers to a total of 42 exhibitions for the period.[20] Another even mentions 51 events in the years 1871 to 1877.[21] But while the former lists fifteen exhibitions for 1874, the latter notes just five in that year. Exact estimates of the number of exhibitions held in the first decade

18 On the former see in particular Peter Kornicki, Public Display and Changing Values. Early Meiji Exhibitions and Their Precursors, in: Monumenta Nipponica 49 (1994) no. 2, pp. 167-196, but also Angus Lockyer, Japan at the Exhibition, 1867–1877. From Representation to Practice, in: Tadao Umesao (ed.), Japanese Civilization in the Modern World. XVII Collection and Representation (Senri Ethnological Studies 54), Osaka 2001, pp. 67-75, here p. 73.

19 Cf., for example, Kornicki, Public Display and Changing Values (footnote 18), p. 189, Shinzō Ogi, Ai Maeda, Tōru Haga (ed.), Meiji taishō zushi. Dai ikkan Tokyo [Illustrations of the Meiji and Taishō Periods. First Volume, Tokyo], Tokyo 1978, p. 152, Maruyama, Meiji shoki no kyōto hakurankai (footnote 1), pp. 223-224 and Shunya Yoshimi, Hakurankai no seijigaku. Manazashi no kindai [A Political Science Analysis of Exhibitions. The Modernity of the Glance], Tokyo 1992, p. 122.

20 Cf. Bunkazai Kenkyūjo Tokyo Bunkazai Kenkyūjo (ed.), Meijiki fuken hakurankai shuppin mokuroku. Meiji 4 nen – 9 nen [Exhibition Catalogues of the Prefectures of the Meiji Period. Meiji 4 to Meiji 9], Tokyo 2004. It is not improbable that the sources for many smaller, provincial exhibitions are either not extant or else still slumbering in the archives.

21 Tsunoyama Yukihiro, Wīn bankokuhaku no kenkyū, [Studies on the Vienna World Exhibition], Suita 2000, pp. 180-181.

of the Meiji period are thus scarcely possible. The problem is not just that existing lists are incomplete and strongly differ, it must also be assumed that many smaller, provincial exhibitions are undocumented or else the relevant sources are yet to be discovered in the archives.[22] But in overall terms a far higher total figure should be assumed. While in the provinces it was generally local authorities which took the initiative, in Kyoto – where a strict annual rhythm was observed from 1871 onward – rich businesspeople cooperated with the city authorities, and in Tokyo officials of the "exhibition bureau" acted as organizers. Temples and shrines often served as sites, and sometimes so did castles, as in 1873 in Matsumoto and three years later in Hikone.[23]

Exhibitions in shrines and temples mark obvious continuities in relation to the pre-1868 period. For centuries there had been a practice in Japan of opening a temple's treasure vault to the general public several days a year. At these *kaichō* (開帳: [open exhibitions of temple and shrine relics]) religious artefacts and temple treasures could be viewed, including Buddhist sculptures. They were sometimes even sent on tours of the country (*degaichō* [出開帳: [carrying of the temple and shrine relics]).[24] For many people, it was not unusual to visit temples and shrines on special occasions to view interesting or lucky objects there, things which were normally concealed from their view. But their motives were more than mere curiosity and were also religious in nature.

There was also a whole series of further presentational forms which should all be considered precursors of the exhibition boom that occurred in the first decade after 1868. This includes the so-called *shogakai* (書画会: [society for painting and calligraphy]) society for painting and calligraphy), exhibitions of pictures and examples of calligraphy which were normally displayed in private to a group of experts. In this case, a considerable continuity is apparent at the level of the protagonists, as many of the key exhibition organizers in the early Meiji period belonged to such elite circles of connoisseurs and art-lovers. Tanaka Yoshio, for instance, who – in the service of the government – was one of the central figures involved in the renewal of exhibition culture in the Meiji period, had regularly participated at such meetings in the period since the late 1850s.[25]

22 For example, the archive materials of Tanaka Yoshio contain references to previously unknown exhibitions (Yoshio Tanaka, Kunshōjū, Main Library of Tokyo University, A 10: Volumes 12-15 [from 1871]).

23 See the relevant newspaper articles in Meiji Nyūsu Jiten Hensan Iinkai (ed.), Meiji nyūsu jiten. Dai ikkan. Keiō 4 nen-meiji 10 nen [Encyclopedia of News in the Meiji Period. Volume 1. Keiō 4 to Meiji 10], Tokyo 1985 (4th edition), p. 565.

24 Between 1590 and 1870 in Edo – today's Tokyo – alone more than 1,500 degaihō are said to have taken place (Tadao Umesao, "Keynote Address: The Comparative Study of Collection and Representation", in: idem (ed.), Japanese Civilization in the Modern World. XVII Collection and Representation (Senri Ethnological Studies 54), Osaka 2001, pp. 1-11, p. 8). On the kaichō see also Kornicki, Public Display and Changing Values (footnote 18), p. 175.

25 Throughout his life, Tanaka collected all types of material associated with the organization of exhibitions: exhibition plans, invitations, correspondence and also product descriptions. This archive material, comprising roughly one hundred volumes, shows that the young Tanaka was interested in shogakai. The first two volumes from the period from 1858 to 1859 include a large number of event announcements and invitations kept by him (see Yoshio Tanaka, Kunshōjū, Main Library of Tokyo University, A 10: 6010, Volume 1 (1858–1859) and Volume 2 (1858–1859), no page numbers).

His amusements in this period included attending so-called *bussankai* (物産会: [society for products]).[26] These were a type of product show which had its origins in the mid-eighteenth century and in formal terms probably most closely resemble the exhibitions of the Meiji period.[27] In 1757 a group led by Hiraga Gennai (1728–1779) in Edo, today's Tokyo, had organized a show of various medicines for the first time. From the early nineteenth century in particular such exhibitions – which were soon widened to include botanical materials – were held with astonishing regularity: in the period from 1832 to 1862 in only two years was not a single exhibition held.[28] The continuity in relation to the Meiji period is once again obvious at the level of the protagonists: like many of the scholars who organized the early *bussankai*, Hiraga Gennai stood at the beginnings of a blossoming "Holland science" (*rangaku)*. In the final decades of the Edo period, the schools subsequently founded by the "Holland scholars" (*rangakusha*) brought forth a large number of experts in western scientific disciplines, especially medicine. Besides Tanaka Yoshio, practically all those who had a hand in developing exhibition culture in the years of *Meiji ishin* – including Fukuzawa Yukichi, Sano Tsunetami and Machida Hisanari – derived from a *rangaku* background.[29] Through their training such figures were already familiar prior to 1868 with practices such as collecting, categorizing and exhibiting botanical objects and medical products.

With regard to these "product shows", notable continuities are also apparent in terms of the sites of exhibitions. Up to the end of the Edo period, *bussankai* were held in provincial cities such as Kumamoto but also in Kyoto, Nagoya and Edo – all centres of the post-1868 exhibition boom. The sites frequently even remained the same: in 1872, for one of the very first exhibitions organized by the government, the newly established ministry of education chose the Yushima shrine in Tokyo.[30] This was where the first *bussankai* had taken place exactly 125 years previously. This shrine – which honours Confucius – was constructed in the seventeenth century and is situated in central Tokyo. From the late eighteenth century onward the shrine grounds accommodated what was probably the most significant seat of shogunal learning and was a precursor of today's University of Tokyo.

Continuities in exhibition practices between the Edo period and the early Meiji period are not limited to the sites, origins and educational backgrounds of the protagonists, however, they also encompass the selection of exhibition items and their presentation

26 For example, volume 3 (1860) includes an announcement of an exhibition of medicines (Yoshio Tanaka, Kunshōjū, Main Library of Tokyo University, A 10: 6010, Volume 3 (1860), no page numbers).

27 On this point see Hideo Seki, Hakubutsukan no tanjō. Machida Hisanari to Tokyo teishitsu hakubutsukan [The Birth of the Museum. Machida Hisanari and the Imperial Museum in Tokyo], Tokyo 2005, pp. 44-46.

28 Kornicki, Public Display and Changing Values (footnote 18), p. 174. On bussankai in general see Umesao, Keynote Address (footnote 24), p. 7.

29 On the master-pupil relationships between rangaku scholars and botanists, which can be traced far back into the 18th century, see Shiina, Nihon hakubutsukan seiritsushi, p. 11.

30 Shiina, Nihon hakubutsukan seiritsushi, p. 11. The official announcements for this exhibition and further unpublished sources for it can be found in Yoshio Tanaka's 12th volume (Yoshio Tanaka, Kunshōjū, Main Library of Tokyo University, A 10: 6010, Volume 12 (from 1871), no page numbers).

and arrangement. So-called *misemono* shows (見世物: [things which are displayed]) had long been highly popular in Japan. *Misemono* included all kinds of commercial shows and displays; they were a vulgar entertainment featuring all manner of astonishing or absurd things.[31] The first exhibitions of the Meiji period frequently retained the *misemono* shows' sensational character and the transitions were generally fluid. At an exhibition held in Tokyo in 1871 besides plants and animals all kinds of curios could be viewed. As late as 1874 the *Yomiuri* newspaper wrote that a "beast with a face resembling a cat's or a monkey's" was to be displayed at an exhibition.[32] A glance at the catalogues of the early exhibitions shows that exhibition items continued to comprise curious, strange and rare objects.[33] It is thus hardly surprising that visitors frequently expressed difficulties in distinguishing between the conventional *misemono* (shows) and the new *hakurankai* (exhibitions).

"Progress" in jeopardy: undesired continuities in the first decade of the Meiji period

This continuity in exhibition culture irritated Japan's new rulers – above all Ōkubo Toshimichi, who may be considered the key figure in the new government in the period from 1874 to 1877 which is central to our analysis. His ministry of internal affairs began to sharply criticize the local exhibitions held in Kyoto, Wakayama, Nara etc. In 1876 it announced: "An exhibition of this sort displays only old objects and conventional knowledge while neglecting what is useful and practical. This situation has to change."[34] The ministry of internal affairs also asserted that from now on exhibitions were to serve the goals of progress, civilisation and industrialisation in Japan, and not than of entertainment.

A primary objective of the minister of internal affairs was to balance Japan's serious trade deficit. To Ōkubo's way of thinking, this required an improvement in the quality of products. To achieve this he planned national industrial exhibitions enabling the comparison of products from all over the country. The first industrial exhibition under Ōkubo's direction was finally held in 1877 in the newly-opened Ueno park in Tokyo.[35] The English-language brochure for this exhibition cited at the beginning of this study – which was specially published for the foreign public – commented critically on the boom in exhibitions that had occurred in the first few years after 1868:

31 On misemono in the Edo period, see Andrew L. Markus, The Carnival of Edo. Misemono Spectacles From Contemporary Accounts, in: Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, vol. 45, no. 2 (Dec. 1985), pp. 499-541.

32 Yomiuri Shinbun, November 24, 1874, p. 1.

33 A collection of many exhibition catalogues of the early Meiji period can be found in the library of the Japanese parliament (no author, Hakurankai shuppin mokuroku [Catalogues of the Exhibitions], n.p., 1873–1877).

34 Naimushō Kangyōryō, Kyū kangyōryō nenpō satsuyō. Dai ikkai, [Outline Annual Report on the Former Promotion of Industry. Volume 1], Tokyo, 1876, pp. 74-75.

35 Exhibition Bureau (ed.), National Exhibition, 1877. Official Catalogue of the National Exhibition of Japan, Tokyo 1877, pp. III-IV. On the role played by Ōkubo in the organization of the first national exhibition see also Seki, Hakubutsukan no tanjō, pp. 129-130.

> *Although several periodical exhibitions have thus taken place, yet the methods and systems of collecting and arranging the articles, together with the management of the affairs of the exhibitions, not being the result of a long experience, but rather the first steps upon a new course, it may fairly be asserted that these exhibitions did not produce all the happy results that had been anticipated.*[36]

The central authorities thus complained of the lack of modern selection systems and exhibition methods in Japan. In their eyes, the problem also related to the selection of objects. It was therefore only consistent to prohibit the display of "old objects" at the first national industrial exhibition.[37] To achieve this goal the ministry of internal affairs' "exhibition bureau" collected items from all over Japan and assessed their suitability for exhibition. This centralized form of organization yielded notable results: the government displayed more than 80,000 objects in Ueno park and Japan's first national exhibition drew almost half a million visitors in the three months that it was open.

Yet despite the official discourses and regulations it was not so easy to banish traditional presentation practices from the exhibitions, not even at the national industry exhibition of 1877. Well-known satirical magazines openly mocked the exhibition boom of the early Meiji period, and the first national exhibition in particular. One criticism was that the exhibitions organized by the new rulers continued to display items that were merely meaningless or peculiar, as at the earlier *misemono* shows. At the time of the first national industrial exhibition in 1877 *Marumaru Chinbun* published an extended series entitled *Naikoku takurankai shuppin* (内告宅覧会出品) which roughly translates as "Exhibition of the interior of a house". This is a play on words in reference to the tradition of homonym-based puns in Japanese satirical poems: the chosen title sounds almost exactly like the official title for the "national industrial exhibition" – *Naikoku hakurankai shuppin*.[38] This series showed caricatures of comical exhibition items. Four years later, on the occasion of the second national industrial exhibition, another satirical magazine named *Kibidango* published a series of articles with the title "Exhibitions to laugh about". They include "Newton's apple" as an exhibition item – a clear swipe at the new government's discourse of civilization and enlightenment.[39] The foreign press also complained of the (in its view) antiquated character of the first Japanese industrial exhibition. The *Tokyo Times* wrote of incongruous gothic buildings, unlabelled objects and the poor quality of many exhibition items.[40] For the *New York Times*, too, Japan's first industrial exhibition was no match for its western models:

36 Exhibition Bureau (ed.), National Exhibition, 1877. Official Catalogue of the National Exhibition of Japan, Tokyo 1877, p. III.

37 Exhibition Bureau (ed.), National Exhibition, 1877. Official Catalogue of the National Exhibition of Japan, Tokyo 1877, p. V. And see the more detailed regulations published in Japanese in: No author, Meiji jūnen naikoku kangyō hakurankai shoki soku, Tokyo, 1876.

38 For example, the series may be found in issues nos. 7, 24 and 25 of Marumaru chinbun in 1877.

39 Kibidango, no. 120, February 16, 1881, p. 1931.

40 Tokyo Times of October 6, 1877, quoted from Sidney Devere Brown, Ōkubo Toshimichi: His Political and Economic Policies in Early Meiji Japan, in: The Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 21, no. 2 (Feb. 1962), pp. 183-197, p. 196.

> *The Machinery Hall reminds one of its Philadelphia [world exhibition of 1876] namesake mainly by contrast; it is by no means large, and the most of its limited space is filled […] with emptiness.*[41]

All in all, between the Edo period and the development of modern Japanese exhibition culture in the decade after 1868 a notable continuity is apparent, both in terms of localities and protagonists and also certain exhibition practices. But is this enough to agree with Peter Kornicki's view that the domestic Japanese exhibitions in the early Meiji period "did not make any fundamental changes to the displays"?[42]

3. Ruptures

Analogously to the continuities, two successive ruptures are apparent in the exhibition practices of the early Meiji period. An initial rupture occurred immediately after 1868 – the early Meiji-period exhibitions entailed an entire series of revolutionary changes relating to their ambitions, organizational forms and look, which clearly distinguished them from their late Edo-period predecessors. The "First National Industrial Exhibition" of 1877 marked a second and – at first glance – more obvious rupture. It generated entirely new forms of organization for exhibitions held in Japan and made its immediate predecessors look old. Unlike in the case of the continuities, however, the scholarship has consistently emphasized this second, subsequent rupture while largely negating the former.[43]

The revolutionary change in exhibition culture in the first few years after 1868

With regard to the choice of localities for the early exhibitions, instead of continuity one might just as well emphasize change. While on the one hand exhibitions were held in hitherto unusual sites, on the other conventional exhibition sites were suddenly used quite differently, as in 1872 when the ministry of education organized a first major exhibition at the Yushima shrine. The ministry – which had only been established shortly beforehand – used for this event the sacred inner halls of the shrine which were dedicated to Confucius. This was a symbolic provocation which drew protests from Confucian scholars.[44] And this at a moment where, for a brief period of time, it still seemed unclear whether the newly-established educational institutions would teach Chinese-Confucian

41 New York Times, "The Japanese exhibition. First national fair. Uyeno Park, the exhibition grounds, opening ceremonies, the Emperor and Empress in attendance, display of national productions, Japanese fine Art" (October 21, 1877), p. 2.

42 Kornicki, Public Display and Changing Values (footnote 18), p. 195.

43 For example, by comparison with the first national industrial exhibition Maruyama referred to the provincial exhibitions held in the period up to 1877 as "exhibitions of curios" (Maruyama, "Meiji shoki no kyōto hakurankai", p. 227).

44 Masato Miyachi (ed.), Bijuaru waido meiji jidaikan [A Broad, Visual Museum of the Meiji Period], Tokyo 2005, p. 151.

or western learning. The manner in which the ministry of education's exhibition bureau used the locality not only signified a confrontation with the old, Confucian system of knowledge but also marked a rupture with it.

The use of castles as a location for exhibitions was even more unprecedented. For the population of the castle towns, this symbolized the end of the old regime and the beginning of a new state and social order. A newspaper report on the exhibition held in Hikone castle wrote of the "extraordinary blessing of visiting the former prince's living quarters."[45] But Kyoto is surely the most impressive example of the use of new localities. From 1873 the Kyoto imperial palace – a place which had previously been closed to the outside world for a millennium – served as exhibition grounds.[46] It was the opening-up of the imperial palace that made the Kyoto exhibitions a success with the general public. The level of interest in and the bustle at the exhibition in the first few years after 1868 is scarcely explicable without consideration of the appeal of these previously closed-off sites. But the activities of the Kyoto organizers were also motivated by a further factor which likewise heralded the collapse of the old order. In the aftermath of *Meiji ishin* it was unclear which city would serve as Japan's capital – Kyoto, the venerable old capital (since 794) or Edo, the upstart which had served as the shogunate's administrative headquarters. An imperial edict of 1868 merely stated that Edo was now to be known as "Tōkyō" – i.e. "eastern capital".[47] Kyoto was considered the "western capital" (*Seikyō*) for a time, so that the two cities were in direct competition with one another. The exhibition culture which emerged at the same time in Kyoto and Tokyo in the 1871-72 period can only be understood in this context. The exhibitions were intended to be something entirely new and were held in each city in order to present it as the country's cultural capital. But while this is particularly clear in terms of the relationship of competition between Tokyo and Kyoto, it is also true of Japan as a whole. In 1871 the old feudal principalities were broken up and transformed into (a much smaller number of) provinces. The abolition of the feudal principalities was one of the factors behind the boom in exhibitions in the early Meiji period: this administrative reform led provinces, prefectures, regions and cities to attempt to distinguish themselves from one another and to present themselves. Intensifying competition between Japan's centres, at a time when a new order was still emerging, was thus a direct consequence of *Meiji ishin*. This competition unfolded through the use of cultural practices such as exhibitions.

Upheavals are also obvious in terms of the protagonists: less on account of individuals' origins and educational backgrounds and more in terms of their ambitions and oppor-

45 See the newspaper article of June 3, 1876 in Meiji Nyūsu Jiten Hensan Iinkai (ed.), Meiji nyūsu jiten. Dai ikkan. Tokyo [4]1985, p. 565.

46 Up to the 1880s exhibitions were recurrently held in buildings of the imperial palace. The general public was granted access not only to the imperial palace itself but also to culturally significant outbuildings such as the Sentō-gosho and Ōmyia-gosho which had once served as a residence for abdicated emperors and emperors' widows (Fujitani, Splendid Monarchy, p. 60). On the Kyoto exhibition see in particular Maruyama, "Meiji shoki no kyōto hakurankai".

47 Hida Yoshifumi, Meiji umare no nihongo [Japanese Language Born in the Meiji Period], Tokyo 2002, p. 18.

tunities. For while the *rangakusha* still acted in semi-legality on the periphery of society, there were now entirely new opportunities for the rise of a new generation of experts in western learning. Figures such as Tanaka Yoshio, Fukuzawa Yukichi, Machida Hisanari and Sano Tsunenami had all attended world exhibitions in the 1860s and, following *Meiji ishin*, sought to put into practice in Japan what they had seen. These figures owed their rapid careers after 1868 to their knowledge of western languages. But not only did they command the vocabulary of the new age, they had frequently created it themselves: in 1866, following his return from overseas, Fukuzawa Yukichi had in *Things Western* introduced the concept of western exhibitions to the Japanese public. He coined *hakurankai* – a word still used today – as a new term for exhibitions on the western model.[48] Fukuzawa makes no reference to the traditional Japanese forms of presentation outlined above. It is as if they had never existed. In view of the novel exhibition practices which Fukuzawa saw in Europe and which he now described, Japan's presentation techniques simply seemed irrelevant to him. His book was highly successful, with a print run of several hundred-thousand copies in the years around 1868. It may be assumed that those responsible for the Kyoto exhibition – who deliberately used the term *hakurankai* to characterize their event – were familiar with Fukuzawa's work. *Things Western* was so well-known in Japan that, on the occasion of a smaller exhibition held in 1874 in Kanazawa, in the public announcement of their aims the organizers copied entire passages from it verbatim: for example, this announcement states that "consideration of products old and new from a variety of countries will enable recognition of peoples' wisdom and folly and of these countries' customs and level of development."[49] These are the very same words with which Fukuzawa had a few years previously introduced the West's world exhibitions to the Japanese public. The exhibition organizers in Kanazawa now used them to advertise their small local exhibition. The vocabulary established by Fukuzawa thus enabled the organizers of the first exhibitions held in the aftermath of the political upheaval of 1868 to realize a clear discursive rupture with older types of exhibition. But in the early Meiji period these ruptures were not merely linguistic: the abovementioned "Holland scholars" forged careers in newly established institutions such as the "exhibition bureau" which was initially directly subordinate to the ministry of education and later to the ministry of internal affairs under Ōkubo Toshimichi.

It was not only the localities and the social status of the exhibition organizers which changed as a direct consequence of 1868, the items exhibited did too. The political upheaval is in some cases already clearly evident in the early exhibitions in terms of individual objects displayed: the principal attraction at the exhibition held in the Yushima shrine was a gold-plate dolphin sculpture, which was three meters tall and weighed 300

48 The word *hakurankai* had already made a brief appearance elsewhere so it is not a calque created by Fukuzawa. But it was Fukuzawa who in Things Western gave it a detailed definition and mass appeal.

49 The announcement from Kanazawa may be found in Yoshio Tanaka, Kunshōjū, volume 14 (from 1872), no page numbers. Save for a few characters, this passage is also present verbatim in Seiyō jijyō. Cf. Yukichi Fukuzawa, "Seiyō jijō" [Things Western], in: Marion Saucier & Nishikawa Shunsaku (ed.), Fukuzawa Yukichi chosakushū. Daiikkai [The Collected Works of Fukuzawa Yukichi. Volume 1], Tokyo 2002 [first edition 1866–1870], p. 50.

kilograms. Pairs of golden dolphins or fish are one of the eight treasures of Buddhism and were placed on the gables of castles from the 16th century onward to confer protection against fire upon the fortification and the castle city below.[50] The pair displayed at Yushima was the largest and most renowned in all Japan. They had once adorned the castle at Nagoya, a city which in the Edo period had been the central junction for traffic between Kyoto and Edo and was under the direct control of a branch family of the Tokugawa shoguns. From its highest point the two golden dolphins watched over Japan's most significant castle city, symbolizing the ruling family's authority and wealth. Following the revolution, the new government brought the dolphins down from the roof and displayed them not only at Yushima but also as the main attraction in Japan's contribution to the Vienna world exhibition in 1873. The two dolphins were exhibited as artefacts from a bygone era. Their display at Yushima brought home to the inhabitants of Tokyo the recent abolition of the old feudal order.[51]

Alongside such political representations of the new order, modern exhibition objects and new inventions could be seen. For instance, Kyoto in 1872 featured Swiss watches and other foreign technical devices, while one year later a newspaper referred to "novel machines" at an exhibition in Matsumoto.[52] But the central ruptures in the first few years after *Meiji ishin* related less to the choice of individual objects and more to the manner of their collection, registration and presentation. Once again, this is particularly clearly demonstrated by the Yushima exhibition. During its preparations for the exhibition the ministry of education focused on producing a collection which would subsequently be housed in a permanent museum yet to be constructed.[53] While collecting activities were certainly already known of in Edo-period Japan, the situation is similar to that in Europe. As Tony Bennett has convincingly demonstrated for the West, even before the "birth of the museum" princely collectors accumulated cabinets of curios and similar objects; but their exhibition practices were quite different from those that were later to emerge with the modern museum and its collection and presentation practices.[54]

The establishment of an institutional network was directly associated with the attempts to systematize collectors' activities. From 1871 a whole series of offices and agencies were established which were intended to enable the creation of a national system of exhibitions and museums. In subsequent years, control of these institutions alternated between

50 On the symbolic significance of fish in Japanese art, see Merrily Baird, Symbols of Japan. Thematic Motifs in Art and Design, New York, 2001, pp. 136-140.

51 A more detailed studies of the golden dolphins from Nagoya may be found in: Naoyuki Kinoshita, Meiji ishin to nagoyajō [Meiji Ishin and the Castle at Nagoya] in: idem (ed.), Bijutsu o sasaeru mono. (Kōza nihon bijutsushi. 6) [Objects Promoting Art (Lecture on Japanese Art History. Volume 6)], Tokyo 2005, pp. 13-44.

52 On Kyoto see Maruyama, "Meiji shoki no kyōto hakurankai", pp. 235-236. On the Matsumoto exhibition, see the newspaper article of December 1873 in Meiji Nyūsu Jiten Hensan Iinkai (ed.), Meiji nyūsu jiten, Dai ikkan, Tokyo [4]1985, p. 565.

53 On the organization of collecting activities for the Yushima exhibition, see the ministry of education's announcements published in Tanaka, Kunshōjū, volume 12 (from spring 1872), no page numbers.

54 On the creation of museums in the West, see in particular Tony Bennett, The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics, London 1995.

the supreme state council, the ministry of education and the ministry of internal affairs; in some cases there were considerable disputes between these various ministries over their respective competences. The "exhibition bureau" proved to be central to the planning and execution of exhibitions, with branch offices established throughout Japan. For example, as early as the Matsumoto exhibition of 1873 the local authorities felt themselves compelled to obtain permission from the Tokyo exhibition bureau.[55] The "exhibition bureau" not only sought to bring local events under control by issuing exhibition regulations, it also coordinated Japan's participation in world exhibitions. Many of the exhibitions held in Japan were used for the selection of objects which were then transported overseas from Tokyo as elements of Japan's contribution to world exhibitions. This is true both of the ministry of education's Yushima exhibition and of the local variations: in 1872 the organizers of the Wakayama exhibition cited the government's order "to assemble from the empire rare and peculiar objects for the impending exhibition in Austria".[56] It would thus be mistaken to view the early provincial exhibitions as isolated, local events: in many cases they were integrated in an emerging national network whose declared goal was to represent Japan as successfully as possible at the world exhibitions held overseas.[57] The concomitant tendency toward centralization was associated with an increasing professionalization of exhibition culture. The Japanese public was able to learn about the form and look of western exhibitions long before the first national industrial exhibition: from Vienna in 1873 and Philadelphia in 1876 the newly-founded daily newspapers carried detailed reports on the world exhibitions.[58] Accordingly, for newspaper readers at any rate expectations of what an exhibition looked like had surely already begun to undergo radical change prior to 1877.

Ruptures between the early exhibitions and the first national exhibition

In many ways, however, the full scope of the reform programmes only made itself felt through the planning, preparation and execution of the first "national industrial exhibition". Compared to earlier exhibitions the first national exhibition, held in 1877, marked a rupture at three different levels: firstly, at the level of cultural systems of knowledge, i.e. a level concerning the selection, presentation and arrangement of exhibition items. Secondly, at an economic level in relation to the economic system and viewers' consumption behaviour. And, thirdly, at a political level since – as we shall see – representation of a unified nation was a key goal of the first national exhibition.

Apropos of the knowledge dimension first of all: in mid-1876 the ministry of internal affairs had announced that it would next year stage the first national industrial exhibi-

55 See the newspaper article of December 1873 in Meiji Nyūsu Jiten Hensan Iinkai (ed.), Meiji nyūsu jiten, Dai ikkan, p. 565.

56 See the newspaper article of June 1872 ibid., p. 564.

57 Seki, Hakubutsukan no tanjō, p. 52-53.

58 On Japan's participation at Vienna and Philadelphia, see Daniel Hedinger, Fighting a Peaceful War. Japan at World Exhibitions in the 1860s and 1870s, in: Bureau International des Expositions (Bulletin 2006), pp. 71-94.

tion.[59] Even during its preparations the competent "exhibition bureau" directed by the minister of internal affairs, Ōkubo Toshimichi, left nothing to chance:

> *At the first, an order from the Minister of the Home Department was given to each Fu and Ken-local government to send an officer especially in charge of the measures for the promotion of agriculture and industry, in order to receive information and advice from the Exhibition Bureau, and to consult with it about the collecting and arranging of the articles. In the mean time the local authorities also were instructed to do their utmost to induce the people to send as many articles as possible, and to encourage and assist them in coming to Tokyo [sic!].*[60]

Centralized planning of this sort, involving local authorities, was new. From mid-1876 the ministry of internal affairs published announcements and regulations for the exhibition on the front pages of daily newspapers.[61] One of the published rules stated that exhibitors were to handle transportation of permitted products and their arrangement and presentation in suitable glass boxes entirely at their own expense.[62] The government not only published in newspapers, but also circulated throughout the country in flyers details of exactly how the objects were to be sent in for inspection and how they were to be labelled and packaged for this purpose.[63] To mark a rupture in relation to the earlier exhibitions which had been organized by the ministry of education, the ministry of internal affairs categorically excluded objects from earlier periods.[64] So extensive and complex were the regulations that their meaning was not immediately clear to all those concerned. The rules' manifold publication in a wide range of media demonstrates both the novelty of a national exhibition for the Japanese public and the government's goal of reaching the entire population if at all possible.

When the exhibition was finally held in the summer of 1877 – after more than a year of planning and preparation – a good 80,000 objects from more than 10,000 exhibitors could be seen in Ueno park in seven halls specially constructed for the event.[65] The products' allocation to different halls – including a brick art hall, two wooden main halls, a machinery hall and an agriculture hall – was intended to provide visitors with an overview. This classification followed western models. Tokyo in 1877 thus essentially mimicked the pavilion layout for the world exhibition at Philadelphia, where the Japa-

59 For secondary literature on the first national exhibition and Ōkubo's role see Takeyuki Kuni, Hakurankai no jidai, Meiji seifu no hakurankai seisaku [The Age of Exhibitions: The Meiji Government's Exhibitions Policy], Tokyo 2005, esp. p. 56.

60 Exhibition Bureau (ed.), National Exhibition, 1877. Official Catalogue of the National Exhibition of Japan, Tokyo 1877, p. IV.

61 Cf. the Yomiuri newspaper for the years 1876 and 1877.

62 Exhibition Bureau (ed.), National Exhibition, 1877, p. V.

63 Shin'ya Hashizume, Nihon no hakurankai. Terashita Tsuyoshi korekushon. (Bessatsu taiyō nihon no kokoro 133) [Japanese Exhibitions. The Terashita Tsuyoshi Collection (Special Volume from Taiyō, Japan's Heart 133)], Tokyo 2005, pp. 16-17.

64 Exhibition Bureau (ed.), National Exhibition, 1877. Official Catalogue of the National Exhibition of Japan, Tokyo 1877, p. V. See also Kuni, Hakurankai no jidai, p. 54.

65 On the halls, see also Exhibition Bureau, National Exhibition, 1877, p. V.

nese empire had been a highly successful participant one year previously. The placing of exhibition objects in clearly definable categories such as "art", "agricultural goods" or "machines" and their corresponding allocation to individual pavilions was new for Japan. But unlike categorization, free-standing pavilions were also a new trend at the world exhibitions in the West. Up to the Paris *Exposition Universelle* of 1867 exhibitions had sought to present all the objects in a single giant hall whose space was broken up according to the relevant categories. This undertaking increasingly proved impractical in view of the variety of exhibition objects combined with the growing number of participant nations.

The Japanese exhibition organizers likewise faced the problem of dual sub-classification – by product categories and places of origin – which it was impossible to fully resolve in spatial terms: on logistical and practical grounds the exhibition items had to be classified not only by categories but also by provinces of origin.[66] The organizers divided up the interiors of the individual pavilions – which were generally devoted to overarching categories – by provinces. This entailed a crucial disadvantage, however: direct comparison between the countless, intricate sub-categories was impossible and viewers were forced to inspect multiple collections of innumerable products from individual provinces. Internal sub-classification by place or province of origin was a further innovation taken over from the West which had not yet been present five years earlier at the Yushima exhibition, for instance. Japanese visitors to the first national exhibition thus saw an arrangement of rooms which was entirely new and accordingly alien to them. For those unable to visit the exhibition this new spatial order was recorded on plans, maps and colour woodcuts and distributed throughout the country.[67]

In addition, the categorisation of goods also followed western models, with six main categories: 1. mining and metallurgy; 2. products; 3. art; 4. machines; 5. agricultural goods; 6. horticulture. Each of these main categories was divided up into a large number of sub-categories. The significance of this categorization work for the "exhibition bureau" for outward representation is indicated by the "Official Catalogue". In this, the only known English-language guide to the first national exhibition, the individual sub-categories are described in great detail over 25 pages. The six main categories precisely matched Philadelphia's categorization,[68] save for one interesting exception: Philadelphia's

66 Cf. e.g. the exhibition catalogue in: Meiji Zenki Sangyō Hattatsushi Shiryō Kangyō Hakurankai Shiryō, Meiji jūnen naikoku kangyō hakurankai shuppin mokuroku (Kangyō hakurankai shiryō, 178) [Exhibition Catalogue of the National Industrial Exhibition of 1877 (Sources for the Industrial Exhibitions, Volume 178], Tokyo 1975, first few pages (no page numbers).

67 A coloured overview can be found in the official guide to the first national exhibition: Naikoku Kangyō Hakurankai Jimukyoku, Meiji 10 nen naikoku kangyō hakurankaijō annai [Guide to the Exhibition Grounds of the National Industrial Exhibition in the 10th Year of the Meiji Period], Tokyo 1877, no page numbers. Colour woodcuts of the first national exhibition documenting this novel use of space may be found in Kokuritsu Shiryōkan (ed.), Meiji kaika ki no nishiki e [Colour Woodcuts of the Period of Meiji Civilisation], Tokyo 1989, pp. 27-28.

68 Cf. the table in Kuni Takeyuki, Hakurankai jidai no kaimaku [The Beginning of the Age of Exhibitions], in: Matsuo Masahito (ed.), Meiji ishin to bunmei kaika (Nihon no jidaishi 21), [The Meiji Restoration and "Civilisation and Enlightenment"] (Japanese Contemporary History 21)], Tokyo, 2004, pp. 246-274, here p. 257.

“knowledge and education” category. Tokyo in 1877 made do without this. It is quite possible that the ministry of internal affairs – the exhibition’s organizer – thus sought to keep its rival, the ministry of education, away from the grounds: after criticism had been voiced regarding the internal arrangement of the early exhibitions organized by the ministry of education and Ōkubo had sought to make increased use of the medium to promote industry, the government had removed the “exhibition bureau” from the ministry of education and placed it under the purview of the ministry of internal affairs.[69] The transfer of exhibitions to the ministry of internal affairs – which in this period had through Ōkubo become the key government agency – shows that this was considered one of the government’s central tasks.

When the first national industrial exhibition – which drew almost half a million visitors – ended 102 days later, the work of the “exhibition bureau” was not yet over. New forms of publication emerged with the first national industrial exhibition. As a follow-up to the exhibition the bureau published an entire series of written works: thousand-page catalogues, reports, evaluations of all the exhibited products and lists of awards.[70] While earlier exhibitions had also featured catalogues, a comparison with those of 1877 reveals the depth of changes. These relate not only to the scope, but also the systematization and internal arrangement of the lists: the catalogues now consisted of the categories described above; followed by sub-categories; with the province of origin constituting the lowest level of classification. In broad terms the Japanese exhibition catalogues thus corresponded to their western models and – linguistic challenges aside – were easily comprehensible for European exhibition experts in terms of their internal logic. Foreigners commissioned by the ministry of internal affairs, such as the German Gottfried Wagner (1831–1892), evaluated the quality of individual exhibition areas and wrote detailed reports.[71] Also new was the system by which the jury awarded prizes to outstanding products in accordance with the specified method of categorization, which was a measure intended to promote industry. In 1873 at the Vienna world exhibition the Japanese empire had gained a favourable impression of the jury system and won a large number of awards.[72] Now, for the first time, a similar system was adopted for Japan. Following the first national exhibition the newspapers reported in detail on the winners of the various categories and popularized and thus naturalized the new system of products throughout the country.

69 Shiina, Nihon hakubutsukan seiritsushi, p. 232.

70 For example, the five-volume official list of exhibition objects published by the exhibition bureau: Naikoku Kangyō Hakurankai Jimukyoku, Meiji jūnen naikoku kangyō hakurankai shuppin mokuroku [Exhibition Catalogue of the National Industrial Exhibition of 1877], Tokyo, n.y. The assessment of the first national exhibition can be found in: Naikoku Kangyō Hakurankai Jimukyoku, Meiji jūnen naikoku kangyō hakurankai shinsa hyōgo [Critical Observations Apropos of an Assessment of the National Industrial Exhibition of 1877], Tokyo, 1877.

71 A report by Wagner in Japanese can be found in Zenki Sangyō Hattatsushi Shiryō, Meiji jūnen naikoku kangyō hakurankai shuppin hōkoku. Daihasshū [Report on the National Industrial Exhibition of 1877. Volume 8], Tokyo 1964.

72 On the exhibitions held in Vienna, see Hedinger, Fighting a Peaceful War (footnote 58), p. 85.

Insofar as the newly created system of prizes followed a western-inspired systematization of knowledge, it simultaneously revolutionized Japan's economic order. For in the long term the national publication of lists of awards in newspapers and reports had significant economic effects. The industrial exhibitions enabled the establishment of a national market in which the individual provinces began to compete with their best industrially manufactured products. At the first national industrial exhibition, visitors were able for the first time to directly compare a large number of modern products from the various provinces. It was not long before the *New York Times*' observation at the time of the national exhibition no longer held true:

> *The affair, or rather the fair, is purely industrial, with a two-fold object – to show foreigners what is made in Japan, and to show the natives what is made in their own country. Doubtless, the latter will receive the most instruction, as the Japanese are not very well informed about the products of the country in general. A native can tell you what his own district or province produces, but he is often lamentably ignorant of the resources of other provinces.*[73]

The exhibitions made domestic Japanese competition visible for all, not only for visitors to the exhibition site. The daily newspapers provided detailed reports on the products honoured and the winners and losers, while manufacturers frequently advertised awards they had received.[74] Through their presence at exhibitions and the awards they received shrewd producers gained access to the nascent national and international market. Only thus can voluntary, large-scale and costly private participation in national exhibitions be understood. In the aftermath of the national exhibitions for the first time something resembling national brands arose, mainly for products of the emerging industrial system of mass production such as toiletries and tinned foods. Tanaka Yoshio, for example, collected the packaging of these nationally distributed products, all of which bore their medals from individual exhibitions. Exhibitions thus gave rise to an imaginary topography of national products, a map of economic competences.

A key issue here is not just the supply side – commerce – but also the demand side – consumption. For it were precisely the industrial exhibitions which triggered consumer visions among visitors. Consumer visions here means representations of possible consumption, whether western clothing, fashionable drinks such as beer or new practices such as the tourist travel which attendance of an exhibition entailed. This was frequently a form of consumption which, though as yet unrealizable, was nonetheless able to predetermine the shape of a future consumer culture. For consumer visions create expectations and generate needs.[75] The commercialization of the Japanese exhibitions is already

73 New York Times, "The Japanese exhibition", p. 2.

74 See e.g. Yūbin Hōchin Shinbun, volume 12, May 1877-August 1877, p. 432, and also Kanayomi Shinbun, volume 3, from July 4, 1877, p. 202.

75 Martina Hessler, Visionen des Überflusses. Entwürfe künftiger Massenkonsumgesellschaften im 20. Jahrhundert, in: Hartmut Berghoff (ed.), Wirtschaftsgeschichte als Kulturgeschichte. Dimensionen eines Perspektivenwechsels, Frankfurt a. M. / New York 2004.

visible in the first national exhibition of 1877. Immediately after it had closed, unsold products – whose return-transportation to the provinces would have been too expensive – were offered for sale in so-called *kankōba* (勧工場). The *kankōba* soon developed into Japan's first department stores.[76]

Closely associated with the presentation of products from all over the country was the representation of a unified nation which was made possible through a national exhibition. A comparison of the colour woodcuts from the first national exhibition with those of the Yushima exhibition indicates a rupture here. While the artists were still the same individuals and the technology had not changed radically in the intervening five years, the pictures of 1877 display a new kind of iconography and unfamiliar pictorial motifs. Symbols of the nation state suddenly appear: hi-no-maru flags; chrysanthemum coats of arms; the protagonists of *Meiji ishin* together with the emperor who, in the company of Ōkubo Toshimichi, had personally opened the exhibition at a ceremony attended by the country's entire political elite, the empress, the court aristocracy, the western powers' diplomatic corps, several handpicked exhibitors, journalists and guests. While it is documented that the emperor attended the Yushima exhibition with members of the government, there were no public opening ceremonies or accounts of the emperor at the 1872 exhibition. In fact the exhibition was closed to the general public during his visit.[77]

This in particular marks a far-reaching rupture in relation to previous exhibitions. In 1877 newspapers printed the full details of the ceremony, frequently featuring schematic plans of the seating arrangements.[78] Colour woodcuts of these national events proved highly popular and sold in large numbers throughout the country. [79] That this event was aimed at the general public and the nation is also indicated by the words with which the emperor had opened the exhibition:

> *Through the good quality of the exhibition objects and the careful preparation of the grounds we shall advance our civilisation. Through the (sun of) wisdom and the (moon of) the fine application of craft […] industry will blossom and bring wealth to our entire country/nation (*zenkoku*).*[80]

To the emperor's words Ōkubo had replied:

> *[…] Through the expansion of trade and the progress of knowledge the nation/state (kokka) will prosper […] Your majesty is promoting this progress through his felicitous visit to the exhibition grounds and his inspection of the list of exhibited objects.*[81]

76 Tōru Hatsuda, Hyakkaten no tanjō [The Birth of the Department Store], Tokyo 1999, esp. pp. 9-39.

77 Shiina, Meiji hakubutsukan koto hajime, pp. 63-64.

78 See Yomiuri Shinbun of August 20 and 21, 1877, 1st page, and Yūbin Hōchin Shinbun, volume 12, May 1877-August 1877, p. 382.

79 On the function of colour woodcuts in the Meiji period and their contents, prices and circulation etc. see Julia Meech-Pekarik, The World of the Meiji Print. Impressions of a new Civilization, New York/Tokyo 1986.

80 For the Japanese original, see Yūnosuke Shibata, Meiji shōchoku zenshū [The Collected Imperial Edicts of the Meiji Period], Tokyo 1907, p. 10 (chapter on kangyō/industry).

81 For the original see: Yūnosuke Shibata, Meiji shōchoku zenshū, Tokyo 1907, p. 11 (chapter on kangyō/industry).

In his speech the emperor used the word *zenkoku* and Ōkubo the word *kokka* in his response. Both terms designate in this context a concept which can be translated as "nation". It is precisely through the figure of the emperor – who formed the centre-point of this event – that the changing forms of presentation and exhibition – but also viewing – are especially clear in the first decade of the Meiji period. In the first decade after 1868 an entirely new system for the representation of political power developed, one which remained in existence well into the twentieth century.[82] Clearly this has to do with government representations of a unified nation which were certainly not always so palatable to the population. Nonetheless, the major national exhibitions offered the country's rulers an ideal platform by which to propagate this idea of the nation which was new for Japan, and they made frequent use of it over the next few decades. From the opening ceremonies rituals of power developed which not only reflected national hierarchies but could also potentially bolster or even establish them outright. As well as opening ceremonies, in time these events centred on the emperor also came to include awards and closing ceremonies. All these festivities simultaneously included and excluded people, created a sense of community and provided the possibility of nationally conceived participation. To be a part of this it was not essential to actually be there: colour woodcuts and newspapers enabled thousands of people to participate. They provided the media which were a prerequisite for a sense of national simultaneity which, together with all the national symbols and acts realized at the national exhibitions provided a basis enabling the experience of the nation as an imagined community.[83]

4. Epilogue

What is therefore ultimately more significant: the ruptures or the continuities? Which of the two characterizes the exhibition practices of the early Meiji period? The question cannot be unequivocally answered, since continuities and ruptures alternated and reciprocally influenced one another. Seen at close range, even the seemingly clearest ruptures become less unequivocal. In fact, for the change in exhibition practices in the first decade after 1868 four different – and partially contradictory – scenarios can be identified: first of all, a continuity between the exhibition practices of the late Edo period and the early Meiji period. This is a constant which is described in the scholarship time and again in order to avoid a Eurocentric view of the reforms of the Meiji period. Yet a strong emphasis on this continuity leads almost inevitably to an essentialization of Japan's case. Contemporaries – not only exhibition experts but journalists and visitors too – already

82 On the nation-state function of exhibitions during the war years 1931–1945 see: Daniel Hedinger, „Keines unserer Leben ist verschwendet, wenn wir auf dem Schlachtfeld sterben." Militärausstellungen und Erinnerungsfest im Japan der frühen Shōwa-Zeit, in: Journal of Modern European History, vol. 4, no. 1 (2006), pp. 114-132.

83 On the "imagined community" see Benedict Anderson, Die Erfindung der Nation. Zur Karriere eines folgenreichen Konzepts. Erweiterte Neuausgabe [English edition: Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (rev. ed.). London 1991], Frankfurt a. M. / New York, 1996.

criticized this continuity which, as a symbol of Japan's backwardness, was deeply repugnant to many. This criticism is one of the factors behind the organization of the first national industrial exhibition which for many scholars marks the decisive rupture in Japanese exhibition culture – in stark contrast to the continuity outlined above. However, such a line of interpretation – first continuity, then a clear rupture –largely follows the perspective of contemporaries and lapses into the omnipresent progress-and-civilization discourses of the era. This overlooks two things: first of all, a notable continuity between the early exhibitions of the Meiji period and the first industrial exhibitions, a continuity which ran counter to the plans of the organizers – particularly those at the ministry of internal affairs charged with responsibility for the exhibitions – and therefore found no mention in the official reports. Secondly, and more importantly, one thus negates the last of the four scenarios identified: the radical rupture which clearly differentiated the first post-revolution exhibitions from their Edo-period precursors. This was a rupture which had already occurred in Japanese exhibition culture before the first industrial exhibition of 1877.

Thus in overall terms it might also be said that the character of the exhibitions in the first decade of the Meiji period was highly ambivalent. In other words: scenarios marking both ruptures and continuities were intertwined at these events. But there is a need for caution here insofar as ambivalence might be interpreted as the outcome of the change following 1868. For the ambivalence was not at the end but at the beginning, it was more of a cause than a result. Its point of departure was the new practices of ordering and classification which had already been developed in the first decade after 1868. Zygmunt Bauman has correctly noted that ambivalence is always a by-product of the work of classification.[84] And the relationship between order and ambivalence is analogous to that between ruptures and continuities. That is to say, the change outlined above in the exhibition practices which followed the Meiji Revolution ultimately indicates one thing above all else: the ruptures should not be played off too strongly against the continuities. For in their interaction they provided the foundations of the change. For instance, it was the government's problematisation of the continuities which catalysed the upheavals in the first place. It was the permanent conflict between traditional practices and new goals which brought about this change.

Seen from some historical distance, however, ultimately it was the ruptures which predominated in exhibition culture in the early Meiji period. For in overall terms, Japanese exhibition culture and its practices underwent revolutionary changes in the period roughly between 1860 and 1880. While Japan had felt unable to participate at the world exhibition held in London in 1862, its subsequent attendance at Vienna, Philadelphia and Paris in the 1870s secured international triumphs for the new government in the first decade after the Meiji Revolution. These successes only became possible through fundamental changes in domestic Japanese exhibition practices, whether in terms of the

84 Zygmunt Bauman, Moderne und Ambivalenz. Das Ende der Eindeutigkeit [English edition: Modernity and Ambivalence. Ithaca, N.Y. 1991], Frankfurt a. M., 1995, p. 15.

organization of exhibitions or their economic and political focus. Certainly no later than the first national industrial exhibition the medium could be used to represent a unified nation. At the same time, the exhibitions simulated an emerging national economic and consumer realm – or rather prepared the ground for this. Some scholars see the first national industrial exhibition as already marking the end of the "exhibition boom" of the early Meiji period.[85] But this is surely inaccurate. The medium remained as alive as it was flexible: in the period up to 1903 four further national industrial exhibitions were held, as well as a large number of minor events, with a wide variety of methods of organization. For example, specialist exhibitions for individual branches of industry – which were frequently known as *kyōshinkai* (共進会) – were highly popular. And nor did the major national exhibitions evidently lose any of their appeal up to the end of the Meiji period. The constantly increasing numbers of visitors suggest the opposite: the Osaka national exhibition of 1903 was seen by a good four million people, the Tokyo industrial exhibition four years later by almost seven. In addition, the exhibition practices introduced in the 1870s played a key role in the establishment of Japan's first museums and also its department stores. In overall terms, though, in view of the revolutionary ruptures in exhibition, display and representation practices during the first decade of the Meiji period it is the continuities which sooner predominate for the remainder of the era.

But what does the conclusion that exhibition culture in Japan underwent revolutionary change in the first decade after 1868 tell us about the character of *Meiji ishin*? What does it mean for the question raised at the outset regarding the Meiji Revolution and its models? It is *firstly* notable that, through their recourse to western exhibition practices, ultimately the Japanese elites very much adopted cultural practices of the western revolutions as a model. On the one hand, national industrial exhibitions reached directly back to the French Revolution,[86] while on the other they were a product of the industrial revolution in general. And yet industrial exhibitions' French Revolution origins were evidently unknown to the Japanese exhibition organizers of the early Meiji period. *Secondly*, the interaction between ruptures and continuities demonstrated with reference to exhibitions is characteristic of the Meiji Revolution as a whole. It is only the new elites' fight against seemingly harmful continuities vis-à-vis the old order which lays the foundation for revolutionary ruptures. This is probably part of the essence of revolutions *per se* which, as Reinhart Koselleck noted, always remain prone to the influence of the opposing tendency of reaction.[87] *Thirdly*, in the exhibitions held in the first decade after 1868 the end of the old order manifested itself. This was perhaps most evident at the first Kyoto exhibition. Not only was the imperial palace opened to visitors in 1873, one year previously foreigners had been permitted to enter the imperial city for the very first

85 Kornicki, Public Display and Changing Values (footnote 18), p. 195.

86 In 1798 François de Neufchâteau – at that time France's minister of internal affairs, had organized a first national industrial exhibition. The venue and timing of the exhibition reflect its significance for post-revolutionary France. It took place on the Champ de Mars, during the key days of the revolutionary festival calendar, the so-called *jours complémentaires* and the 1er vendémiaire.

87 Reinhart Koselleck, Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten, Frankfurt a. M. 1995, p. 35.

time. Foreigners wandering through the interior of the holy palace to view an exhibition – what clearer symbol could there be of the rupture with the old order? Only a few years previously many of the insurgent samurai would surely have been ready to die to prevent such blasphemy. But just a few years after the revolution the new government presented this measure self-confidently and aggressively.[88] *Fourthly*: the change which unfolded in the exhibition culture contradicts the thesis that *Meiji ishin* was a "revolution from above". It is precisely the exhibitions which demonstrate increasingly complex interaction between local protagonists and centralized authorities. Many of the small early exhibitions which – at least in terms of their goals – were frequently new and revolutionary were the products of local initiatives, such as in Kyoto. Nor would the largely centrally planned national industrial exhibitions have taken place without the voluntary participation of more than 10,000 private exhibitors. This brings us to the *fifth* and final point: as the exhibitions demonstrate, the scope of changes in the 1870s is particularly evident in terms of cultural practices. Changing exhibition practices entailed new kinds of power technologies. Michael Foucault noted for Europe that the bourgeois revolution did not simply represent the appropriation by a new social class of the monarchy's apparatus of state. On the contrary: "The bourgeois revolution of the eighteen century and the beginning of the nineteenth century was the invention of a new technology of power […]."[89] But this first required places to be established where these technologies could be implemented. In the nineteenth century exhibitions were such places and this is also true of post-*Meiji ishin* Japan. The novel exhibition practices which emerged in the first decade after 1868 enabled entirely new, more complex technologies for the exercise of power which had been previously unknown in Japan. The described ruptures in exhibition culture were thereby less a product and more an agent of this process of change: in this first decade cultural change tended to anticipate social, political or economic upheaval, as the example of exhibition, display and representation practices makes clear.

88 On the admission of foreigners to the 1872 exhibition, see e.g. the newspaper article of March 1872 in Meiji Nyūsu Jiten Hensan Iinkai, Meiji nyūsu jiten, p. 564. Some foreign diplomats had already visited Kyoto in the 1860s. Accounts of their experience and reports on the first Kyoto exhibition may be found in Hugh Cortazzi, Victorian in Japan. In and around the Treaty ports, London 1987, pp. 188-191.

89 Michel Foucault, Die Anormalen. Vorlesung am Collège de France (1974–1975). Aus dem Französischen von Michaela Ott, Frankfurt a. M. 2003 [Paris 1999], p. 117.

Bolshevik Modernity in Collision with Islamic Culture: Representations of Exclusiveness in the Soviet "Orient"

Jörg Baberowski

RESÜMEE

Die Bolschewiki versuchten in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts, die analphabetische Bevölkerung des sowjetischen Imperiums durch Praktiken der zeremoniellen Pädagogik zu erreichen und zu disziplinieren. Voraussetzung aller Integration aber war die Indigenisierung der lokalen Herrschaftsverhältnisse. Sie führte zu einer kulturellen Nationsbildung, die am Ende in einen Konflikt mit der sozialistischen Ordnungsstrategie geriet. Als die Bolschewiki im Kaukasus und in Zentralasien damit begannen, die lokalen Gesellschaften durch Erziehungskampagnen zu verändern, wurden die nationalen Eigenschaften der lokalen Gesellschaften in Frage gestellt. Der Konflikt um Souveränität und Deutungshoheit entzündete sich an der Frage, welche Funktion die Frauen in der neuen Gesellschaft spielen sollten. Sie sollten befreit werden, sagten die Bolschewiki. Sie sollten bleiben, was sie waren, sagten die Dorfbewohner, weil bolschewistische Frauen aufgehört hätten, Muslime zu sein. Der Tschador wurde zum symbolischen Streitobjekt der Kontrahenten, und in der Auseinandersetzung wurde er für die einen zu einem Symbol der Rückständigkeit und für die anderen ein Symbol nationaler Eigenständigkeit. In z. T. dramatischer Zuspitzung demonstrieren die Ereignisse im sowjetischen Orient, wie Repräsentationen die Welt nicht nur abbilden, sondern sie so verändern, daß nichts mehr ist wie zuvor.

On the night of September 8, 1925, in an *aul* (village) in the district of Dzharkent in Kyrgyzstan a murder took place which might have occurred in any other region of the Soviet East at that time: two members of the community strangled their sister-in-law for her refusal after her husband's death to marry his older brother as was plainly the

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custom.[1] The *aul*'s inhabitants kept silent about the deed and the elders – who also controlled the local soviet – were rewarded by the murderers for their silence with a gift of a camel and a horse. The dead woman was hurriedly buried and spoken of no more. It was as if she had never lived.

Eventually, however, the authorities learned of what had occurred and in early October 1925 an investigative commission of the GPU appeared in the *aul*. The murderers and their accessories were arrested and brought before a court. Shortly afterwards the GPU's leadership in Moscow took up the case, albeit with an unconventional interpretation. The head of the GPU's information department, Georgii Evgen'evich Prokof'ev, did not see murderers who needed to be called to account under criminal law for their deed; he instead saw class enemies who assaulted women who were enslaved and deprived of their rights. "If a woman will not agree to marry a *bey*, then without much ado she gets a rope around her neck and it's off to the grave for her."

The perpetrators had only remained unpunished because the "power of the *beys*" held sway in the *aul*. This power must be broken to prevent "such cases happening again," Prokof'ev added.[2] The GPU thus intended not just to punish the murderers and their protectors, it wished to be rid of them and the representations by which the perpetrators rationalized and justified their violence.

This statement was evidently nothing unusual for the GPU's leadership: in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Adzharistan, Azerbaijan and the North Caucasus too members of the secret police worked on bringing such crimes to light. Where women were kidnapped or murdered and where underage girls were married off, where polygamy, bride money (*kalym*) and alien rules on clothing symbolized the relationship between the sexes, the agents of the secret police immediately became active. In 1925 alone, dozens of reports were compiled in the GPU's Moscow headquarters on "crimes against the socialist way of life".[3]

What in the Soviet Union's European regions would have been a case for the criminal police was treated as a political crime in the Soviet East. For the communists from the centre, the murder of a Kyrgyz woman was a counterrevolutionary act, a deed perpetrated by class enemies against oppressed women. This was why a woman's murder became a matter for the political police. But for the local society too there was more at stake here than first seemed the case: the elders, who were supposed to represent the interests of government power in the *aul*, took the side of the perpetrators, while all the other inhabitants of the nomadic settlement said nothing. Through their collective silence concerning the murder the *aul*'s inhabitants made it plain to the Bolsheviks that they did not

1 This is the English version of an article already published in German as: Jörg Baberowski, Repräsentationen der Ausschließlichkeit. Kulturrevolution im sowjetischen Orient, in: Jörg Baberowski / Hartmut Kaelble / Jürgen Schriewer (eds), Selbstbilder und Fremdbilder. Repräsentationen sozialer Ordnungen im Wandel, Frankfurt a. M. / New York 2008, pp. 119-137.

2 Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoi Istorii [Russian State Historical Archive, subsequently referred to as: RGASPI], Fond 17, opis' 10, delo 138, p. 45.

3 Ibid., pp. 5-51. Cf. on this point for general information Jörg Baberowski, Der Feind ist überall. Stalinismus im Kaukasus, Munich 2003, and also Douglas Northrop, Veiled Empire. Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia, Ithaca, N.Y. 2004.