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Introduction

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Introduction

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Abstract

The omnipresence of banal nationalism in the current world is to a large extent the residue of nineteenth-century cultural nationalism. The cultural construction of national identities can be studied from a new transnational and comparative perspective by examining the role of world fairs, as a kind of global test field. After a brief survey of the historiography on world fairs and a concise summary of the book's chapters, this introduction offers a brief reflection on the study of world fairs as global platforms of exchange and its relevance for nationalism studies.

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Introduction

Eric Storm and Joep Leerssen

Every nation is supposed to be unique. Nevertheless, they are all unique in the same manner. They all have a flag, a national anthem, a national personification, specific icons, a characteristic landscape, a typical animal, tree or flower, a signature dish, traditional costumes, folkloric dance and music, artisanal products, etcetera. In order to be taken seriously at the international stage, a nation needs to have all these ingredients, and every single one of them should be special and recognizable. This means that they should differ, not just from enemies or immediate neighbouring countries, but from all others. What nations need for international recognition informally involves a specific, separate character or profile in the eyes of the world. This “brand recognition” was pursued to a significant extent through the global display platform of the world fair, which arose in the nineteenth century as part of new forms of commercial mass entertainment.

Historiography

The transnational construction of national identities has only recently become a research focus in nationalism studies. Scholars tended to focus on the structural changes in the (Western) world that can explain the rise of nationalism and nation-states, or produced case studies dealing with nation-state formation or nationalization processes within one particular national context. Classical studies by the likes of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson present nationalism and nation-states as the outcome of a long process of modernization, involving the role of secularization and print capitalism and the subsequent rise of new conceptions of time and space (Anderson), or rising industrialization and mass education (Gellner), or the changing power and role of the state (John Breuilly, Michael Mann, Siniša Malešević, Andreas Wimmer¹). Although the authoritative Anthony Smith paid more attention to cultural factors, he did so primarily to underscore the continuity between the pre-modern “ethnies” and modern national communities.² Thus, on the whole, the “modernists” in this tradition tended to downplay the role of culture, while the culturalists tended to downplay the role of modernity.

Certain common elements could be discerned in almost all national collective self-perceptions, identified as myths and symbols by Anthony Smith or typified as “invented traditions” in the benchmark collection edited by Hobsbawm and Ranger. In the second edition of his *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson added two chapters on the role of maps, museums and memory in the national imagination. He even explicitly argued that nationalism and nation-ness – after they had

¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (2nd edition; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993); Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power: Volume II - the Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Sinisa Malešević, *Nation-States and Nationalisms: Organization, Ideology and Solidarity* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2013); Andreas Wimmer, *Nation Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Fall Apart* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018). See also: John Breuilly, “Modernism and Writing the History of Nationalism.” In *Writing the History of Nationalism*, edited by Stefan Berger and Eric Storm (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 61-83.

² Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1986).

been created – became “modular” and could easily be “transplanted” to other parts of the globe.³ These insights were followed by an avalanche of more detailed publications focusing on the construction and evolution of particular myths, symbols, traditions and institutions. However, almost all of these studies are limited to one national context and primarily focus on domestic actors and internal factors, thus implicitly succumbing to a form of methodological nationalism.⁴

As a corrective to this, a comparative approach has emerged dealing with the rise and evolution of national thought in Europe, and emphasizing the transnational character of cultural nationalism and foregrounding the role of cultural transfers in its development. Anne-Marie Thiesse’s benchmark study famously opens with the assertion that “there is nothing more international than the formation of national identities”;⁵ others also examined the international links and networks that enabled the transfer of nationalist ideas, forms and practices,⁶ and some ambitious international comparisons were undertaken on specific aspects of the construction of national identities.⁷ However, the process of modularization itself, as flagged by Anderson, has not been studied in a systematic way. The aim of *World Fairs and International Exhibitions* is to analyse world fairs in this light: as global platforms of exchange, where countries collectively learned how to give shape to their national identities.

World fairs themselves have been examined in a sizeable and still growing number of studies. Some of these are of a more general nature, touching briefly on the role of these enormous international exhibitions in the construction of national identities and stereotypes.⁸ Others focus on the contribution of one particular country, sometimes studying the evolution of its presence at world

³ Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 4, 81-82 and 163-207.

⁴ Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism and beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences,” *Global Networks* 2, no. 4 (2002): 301–34; Daniel Chernilo, “The Critique of Methodological Nationalism Theory and History,” *Thesis Eleven* 106, no. 1 (August 1, 2011): 98–117; Eric Storm, “Overcoming Methodological Nationalism in Nationalism Studies: The Impact of Tourism on the Construction and Diffusion of National and Regional Identities,” *History Compass* 12, no. 4 (2014): 361–73.

⁵ Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe-XXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1999), 11. See also: Joep Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

⁶ Stefan Berger with Christoph Conrad, *The Past as History: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Joep Leerssen, ed., *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018); Prasenjit Duara, *The Global and Regional in China’s Nation-Formation* (London: Routledge, 2008).

⁷ Gérard Bouchard, *The Making of the Nations and Cultures of the New World: An Essay in Comparative History* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2008); Gabrielle Elgenius, *Symbols of Nations and Nationalism: Celebrating Nationhood* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Alexander Maxwell, *Patriots against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe’s Age of Revolutions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

⁸ Thomas Schrievers, *Für den Abriss gebaut?: Anmerkungen zur Geschichte der Weltausstellungen* (Hagen: ardenkuverlag, 1999); Pieter van Wesemael, *Architecture of Instruction and Delight: A Socio-Historical Analysis of World Exhibitions as a Didactic Phenomenon (1798-1851-1970)* (Rotterdam: 010 Publishers, 2001); Paul Greenhalgh, *Fair World: A History of World’s Fairs and Expositions, from London to Shanghai 1851-2010* (Winterbourne: Papadakis, 2011); Alexander C. T. Geppert, *Fleeting Cities: Imperial Expositions in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

fairs over a longer period of time.⁹ Still others concentrate on one particular world fair.¹⁰ While the study of colonial representations constitutes a somewhat separate field in which the focus has been very much on the process of orientalizing hegemonism.¹¹ These studies focus mainly on the organizers. Recently, however, a number of authors also have tried to provide a more bottom-up perspective by thematizing the role of visitors and professional showmen in the ethnographic villages, many of whom were Indigenous Americans or inhabitants of the colonies.¹² Finally, there is a limited amount of more ambitious comparative studies.¹³ Still, when the existing studies deal with the process of national identity construction they do so by exploring how countries presented themselves at world fairs, not how the format of the world fair influenced this process. However, world fairs in fact were the main platform for the global dissemination of nation-ness. By modularizing national identities they had a decisive impact on the way they were moulded. The aim of this volume, therefore, is to provide a systematic analysis of the impact of the expositions' international "platform culture" on the transnational construction of national identities.

⁹ Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University Press, 1984); Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Paul Sigel, *Exponiert. Deutsche Pavillons auf Weltausstellungen* (Berlin: Bauwesen Verlag, 2000); Sven Schuster, *Die Inszenierung der Nation. Das Kaiserreich Brasilien im Zeitalter der Weltausstellungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2015).

¹⁰ Jean-Christophe Mabire, ed., *L'Exposition universelle de 1900* (Paris, France: Editions L'Harmattan, 2000); Beat Wyss, *Die Pariser Weltausstellung 1889: Bilder von der Globalisierung* (Berlin: Insel, 2010); Laura A. Ackley, *San Francisco's Jewel City: The Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Berkeley, California: Heyday, 2016).

¹¹ Patricia A. Morton, *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000); Nicolas Bancel et al. eds. *Zoos humains. Au temps des exhibitions humaines* (Paris: La Découverte, 2002); Dana S. Hale, *Races on Display: French Representations of Colonized Peoples, 1886-1940* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008).

¹² Sadiya Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011); Matthew F. Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs and Southwestern Memory, 1880-1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); Nancy J. Parezo and Don D. Fowler, *Anthropology goes to the Fair: The 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); James Gilbert, *Whose Fair? Experience, Memory and the History of the Great St. Louis Exposition* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009).

¹³ Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Martin Wörner, *Vergnügung und Belehrung: Volkskultur auf den Weltausstellungen 1851-1900* (Münster: Waxmann, 1999); Peter H. Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display: English, Indian and Australian Exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); David Raizman and Ethan Robey eds., *Expanding Nationalisms at World's Fairs: Identity, Diversity and Exchange, 1851-1915* (London: Routledge, 2017).



Fig 1: The Crystal Palace, London, 1851 (source: Wikimedia Commons).

World fairs as global platforms of exchange

The platform of the world fair was invented in Great Britain in 1851. At the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations in London's purpose-built Crystal Palace (Fig. 1) there were about 14.000 exhibitors from 25 countries; during the season, which lasted from May until October 1851, it was visited by over six million people, leading to a handsome surplus. Obviously, the Great Exhibition was not created out of the blue. At the time the British Museum had already existed for almost a century, while art expositions and travelling exhibits, such as Madame Tussaud's waxwork cabinet, attracted large crowds. Regional and national agricultural or industrial exhibitions arose towards the end of the eighteenth century and had become a recurring phenomenon in many parts of Europe.¹⁴ The introduction of steamships, railways and the telegraph and the conversion of a growing number of countries to free trade had initiated a first wave of globalisation, making an ambitious international venture like the Great Exhibition a logical next step.

The resounding success of the Great Exhibition inspired others to repeat, expand and improve the formula. At the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1855 the French government decided to give a more prominent place to agricultural products and art, fields in which France could more easily compete with, or even outshine Britain.¹⁵ In 1867, again at a Parisian world fair, the main exhibition hall was extended with dozens of national pavilions in a park-like landscape, where the cultural and culinary highlights of each participating country were on offer (Fig. 2).

¹⁴ Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); see also chapter by Leerssen.

¹⁵ Wolfram Kaiser, "Vive la France! Vive la République? The Cultural Construction of French Identity at the World Exhibitions in Paris 1855-1900," *National Identities* 1 (1999): 227-244. See for the French obsession with fine arts also the chapter by Hendren.

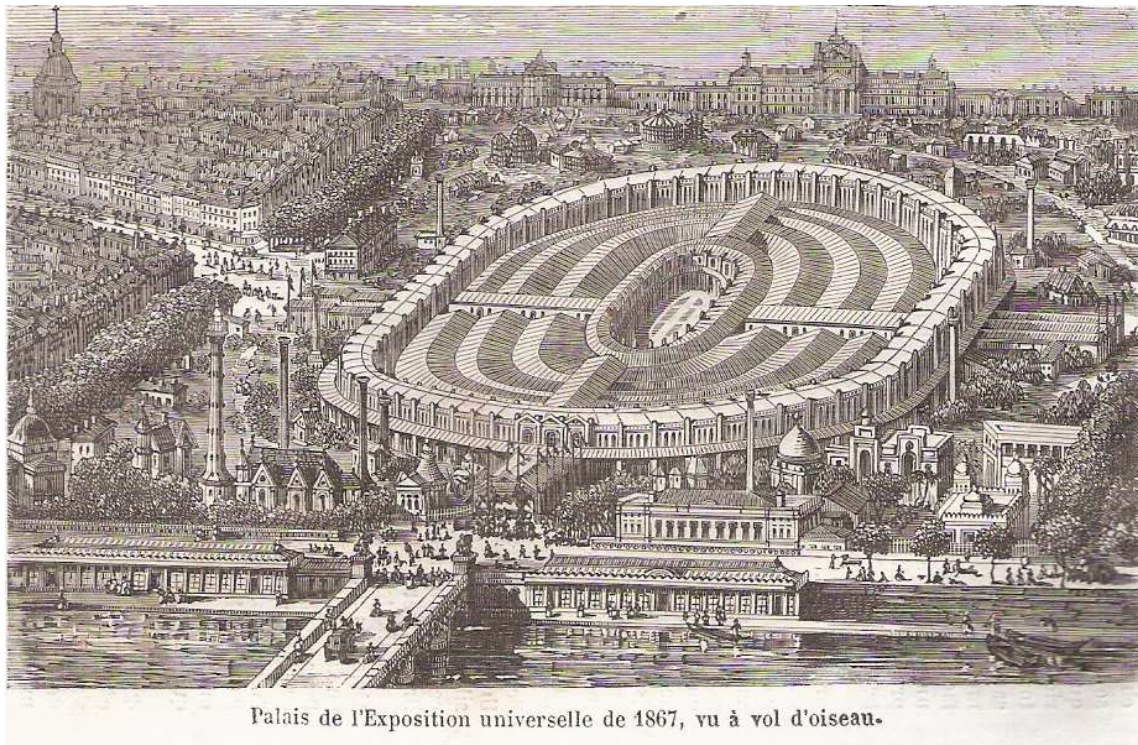


Fig. 2: Le Play's oval Exhibition Palace, surrounded by picturesque national pavilions in a park-like setting at the Universal Exposition, Champs de Mars, Paris, 1867 (source: Wikimedia Commons).

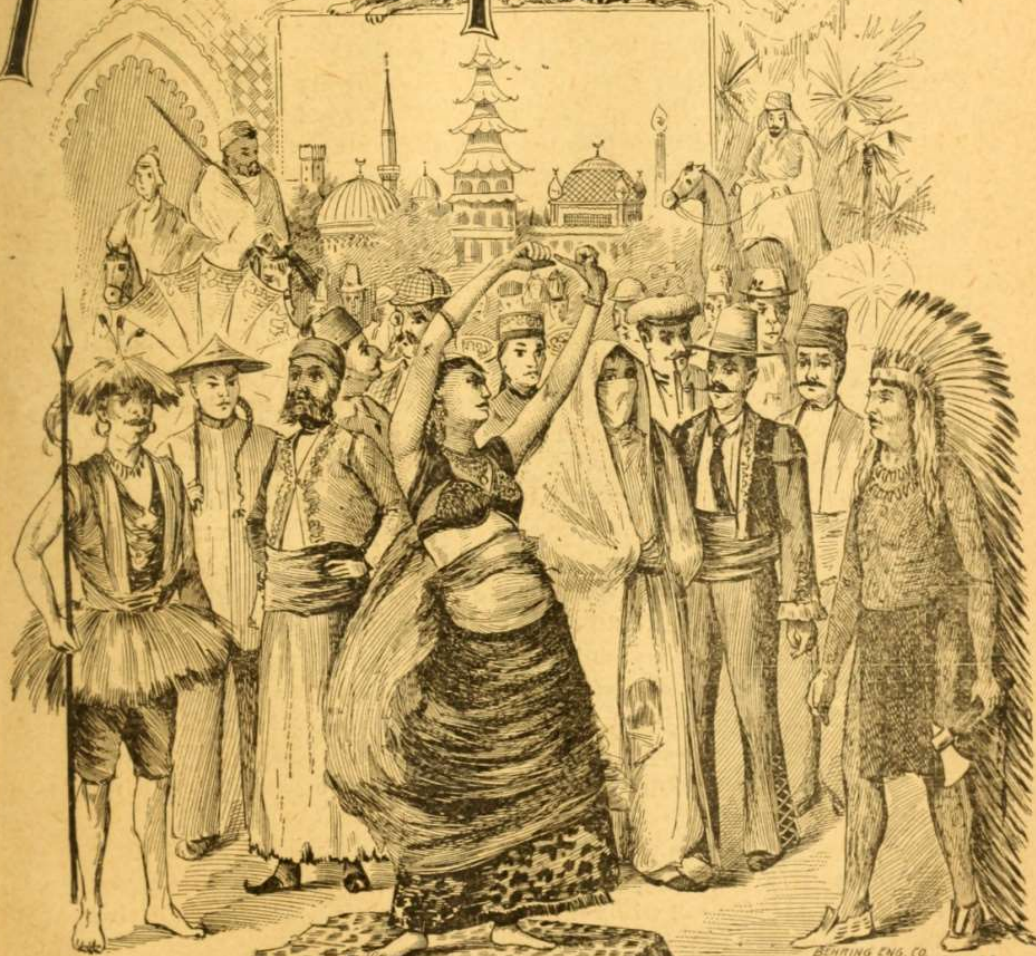
The World's Columbian Exposition of Chicago, held in 1893, added the Midway Plaisance, an amusement section which combined freakshows, the new Ferris wheel and ten ethnographic villages from around the world (Fig 3). One of the most impressive world fairs was the Universal Exposition of Paris in 1900. Its two locations, with a total size of about 230 hectares, housed over 80.000 exhibitors from 40 countries and 21 French colonies. It received more than fifty million visitors and hosted 127 international conferences dealing with a variety of scientific and social issues. To create some order in the flowering exposition business, in 1928 an international conference with 43 participating countries decided to create the Bureau Internationale des Expositions, which would coordinate the planning of international exhibitions, while also establishing official regulations for two different categories: world expos and specialized expositions. Although world fairs still exist, they were gradually outflanked by new media such as radio, film, television and internet. They are no longer the central platform of global display culture that they had been from the Great Exhibition of 1851 until the Brussels Expo of 1958, which will also be the timeframe of *World Fairs and International Exhibitions*.¹⁶

¹⁶ Greenhalgh, *Fair World*; Winfried Kretschmer, *Geschichte der Weltausstellungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1999). See for the internationalist aspects also the chapters by Voges and Remes.

PRICE TEN CENTS.

2.6.

OFFICIAL GUIDE TO THE MIDWAY PLAISANCE



THE AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL GUIDE
TO THE
WORLD'S COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION.

A. N. Higinbotham President.

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Fig. 3: Guide to Midway Plaisance, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.

The list of international exhibitions is long, and although most world fairs took place in Europe and the United States the phenomenon encompassed all continents. Major expositions were organized in, for instance, Sydney (1879-80), Calcutta (1883-84), Kingston (1891), Nanking (1910), Rio de Janeiro (1922-23) and Johannesburg (1936-37).¹⁷ However, the phenomenon is even more widespread. There were many local, regional and national expositions, which often took on impressive dimensions. Thus, when plans to organize a world fair in the German Empire failed, the Association of Berlin Merchants and Industrialists decided to host a comprehensive trade fair in the capital. The more than four thousand exhibitors of the Berlin Industrial Exposition of 1896 made use of a terrain of 120 hectares and received about 7,5 million visitors. The streets of the Old Berlin exhibit contained about 120 reconstructed buildings, while an Egyptian pyramid functioned as an outlook platform. Other German cities, such as Munich, Frankfurt, Dresden and Bremen also organized major expositions; so did more modest towns like Detmold and Wetzlar.¹⁸ We notice similar events in provincial cities in other countries: Wolverhampton, Cork, Nancy (Fig. 4), Valencia, Geneva, Naples, Lemberg/Lviv and Dunedin.¹⁹ Between 1811 and 1926 the city of Düsseldorf organized twelve major exhibitions; In 1902, the Industrial and Trade Exposition for the Rhineland received over five million visitors on a terrain of 53 hectares and included an Arab Village with "authentic" inhabitants.²⁰



Fig. 4: Exposition Internationale de l'Est de la France, Nancy, 1908, general view of the exhibition halls (source: Wikimedia Commons)

¹⁷ Kretschmer, *Geschichte der Weltausstellungen*, 287-303. See also

<https://ernie.uva.nl/viewer.p/21/66/scenario/105/grid>

¹⁸ Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 16-52. Thomas Großbölting, „Im Reich der Arbeit“. *Die Repräsentation gesellschaftlicher Ordnung in den deutschen Industrie- und Gewerbeausstellungen, 1790-1914* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008) 441-458.

¹⁹ Marta Filipová, ed., *Cultures of International Exhibitions 1840-1940: Great Exhibitions in the Margins* (Farnham; Burlington: Routledge, 2015); Eric Storm, "World Fairs and (Inter)national Exhibitions." In *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe*, edited by Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018) 85-88. An illustrated and searchable checklist of exhibitions is online at the Encyclopedia's online version, [ernie.uva.nl](http://show.ernie.uva.nl/worldfairs), at <http://show.ernie.uva.nl/worldfairs>.

²⁰ Stefanie Schäfers, *Vom Werkbund zum Vierjahresplan. Die Ausstellung "Schaffendes Volk", Düsseldorf 1937* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2001), 21-59.

Many openly commercial ventures did not count as a world fair and as a consequence are ignored in historical overviews and largely disregarded in serious investigations. Thus, London is not considered to have organized another world fair after the 1862 International Exhibition on Industry and Art; nevertheless, large-scale exhibitions were organized regularly. Between 1908 and 1914 the impresario Imre Kiralfy organized a major international exhibition each year in the fairy-like White City, which he had constructed in Shepherd's Bush to the West of the city, including, for example, the Franco-British Exhibition of 1908 and the Festival of Empire in 1911.²¹

The reach of these international exhibitions was not limited to the organizers, participants and visitors. All major newspapers and journals, both in the host country and in many of the neighbouring states, reported extensively. Illustrated magazines dedicated entire issues to its star attractions and most curious exhibits, while photographs, maps and colour prints gave a vivid expression of the sights and the festive atmosphere.²² Professional catalogues with extensive lists of pavilions and exhibitors, and guides, both lavishly illustrated ones and more factual booklets, helped visitors to find their way. Many people took pictures and bought souvenirs, which often enabled them to tell others about their experiences, while later on they could evoke pleasant memories of a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Actually, at the American world fairs a large share of the visitors – James Gilbert estimates about 30-40% – were from the host city itself.²³ The city's middle classes generally acquired a pass that gave them access to the entire fair, while special rates for school children and lower entrance fees on Sundays attracted less affluent audiences. In Europe, the proportion of outside visitors was probably slightly higher. The world fairs often were the main event of the season and well-to-do tourists from surrounding countries spent various days at the fair. Provincial middle-class visitors and some members of the working classes took the train for a daytrip.

²¹ Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 101-133.

²² Thomas Smits, *The European Illustrated Press and the Emergence of a Transnational Visual Culture of the News, 1842-1870* (London: Routledge, 2020) chapter 4.

²³ Gibert, *Whose Fair?* 15-16; see also 37-125 and 153-193.



Fig. 5: Buffalo Bill and his Wild West show at the Troy Liberty Bell, World Columbian Exposition, Chicago 1893 (source: Wikimedia Commons).

The world fairs, moreover, also had a long prehistory and afterlife. Often various regional expositions were organized to select the best materials for the national representation at the upcoming international exhibition. Museum curators, art dealers and impresarios were enlisted for their knowledge and network to find the best exhibits, especially for national pavilions and the popular ethnographic villages. Many of the exhibits ended up in the collections of museums; sometimes a new museum was created to house the splendid collection that had been brought together for a world fair.²⁴ Orchestras, dancers and other spectacles – of which Buffalo Bill probably was the most famous (Fig. 5) – went on tour after the fair, or popped up at other international exhibitions. Thus, the world fair platform really was a nodal point in the visual display culture of the time where careers were made or broken.²⁵

The transnational construction of national identities

²⁴ Wörner, *Vergnügung und Belehrung*; Bjarne Stoklund, "How the Peasant House Became a National Symbol: A Chapter in the History of Museums and Nation-Building," *Ethnologia Euopaea*, 29-1 (1999), 5-18.

²⁵ Robert Rydell and Rob Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of the World, 1869-1922* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs*, 114-138; see also the chapter by Minea.

How, then, did international exhibitions contribute to the modularization of nation-ness? The contributions in this volume make clear that world fairs had a serial character, that they quickly developed into the main exponent of a new commercial platform culture and that the participating countries were heavily influenced by the requirements of the organizers, the experiences of earlier fairs and the expected demand of the public. Moreover, the chapters also show that the self-presentations of the participating countries were subject to transformations and short-lived fashions.²⁶

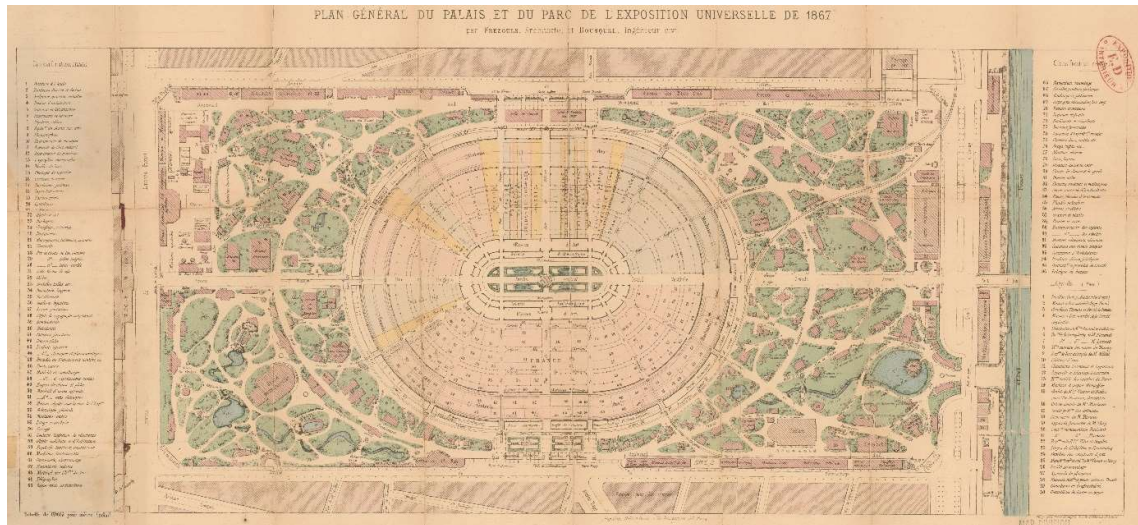


Fig. 6: Plan of the Universal Exposition, Paris 1867, indicating the location of each class of products and each participating country in the oval exhibition pavilion (source: Wikimedia Commons).

The first structuring element was that all world fairs contained an expanding number of elements that could be found at all international and even many national and regional exhibitions. At first all exhibitors were housed in one huge exhibition palace, where they were organized by country. Within their own section each participating country freely arranged its own exhibits. In 1867, at the Paris Universal Exposition, Frédéric Le Play devised a systematic categorization of the products of human activity by creating ten different groups, 95 classes and numerous subcategories. This scheme also determined the lay-out of the enormous oval exhibition palace, consisting of seven rings. Each of the seven galleries was dedicated to a particular type of product, from raw materials to fine arts. At the same time each of the participating countries was awarded a cross-section of the building (fig. 2 and 6). Visitors could thus devise their itinerary either country by country, or by visiting all parts of the world, while focusing on one type of product at the time. In the park outside the building each country had the opportunity to build their own national pavilion in a characteristic style, where food and entertainment were on offer as well. In general, the national pavilions were clustered geographically, but the exact location was often a matter of concern.²⁷ Thus at the 1939 New York World's Fair, the largely Christian organizers of the Lebanese pavilion, who aimed to present the

²⁶ See respectively the chapters by Gross, Leerssen and Storm. Also: Tony Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," *New Formations* 4 (1998): 73–102; Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 12–15.

²⁷ Harry Freemantle, "Frédéric Le Play and 19th-century vision machines", *History of the Human Sciences* 30-1 (2017) 66-93; Kretschmer, *Geschichte der Weltausstellungen*, 59-87.

country as a “Western enclave in an eastern region”, certainly would have been happy with its location between Iceland and Greece.²⁸



Fig 7: Rotunda Building, main entrance, World Fair, Vienna, 1873 (source: Wikimedia Commons).

In 1873, at the next world fair in Vienna, the organizers had given up the attempt to show all works of humankind in one building, creating separate exhibition halls for industrial products, machines, agriculture and art, while the park with national pavilions was maintained. The central eye-catcher of the Viennese exhibition was an impressive rotunda, whose double cupola was about 85 meters high. The lower cupola had an ambulatory from which visitors had a beautiful overview over the exhibition ground. The building thus functioned both as a structuring point of the exhibition and as an observation post. Other such eye-catchers would be the Trocadero of 1878, the Eiffel Tower of 1889, the Ferris wheel of 1893, the Tylon and Perisphere of St. Louis in 1904 or the National Palace of Barcelona 1929. As we have already seen the World's Columbian Exposition added the amusement section in the form of the Midway Plaisance.²⁹

Another serial structuring element consisted in the way in which objects were shown. Here we can detect a marked trend towards more lifelike representations. At the first world fairs, exhibitors did

²⁸ Asher Kaufman, “‘Too Much French, but a Swell Exhibit’: Representing Lebanon at the New York World’s Fair 1939-1940’, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 35 (2008), 59-77.

²⁹ Kretschmer, *Geschichte der Weltausstellungen*; Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 94-97.

their best to display all their products in an orderly way, comprehensiveness being more important than focus. Smaller items were shown in crowded display cases. After the introduction of national pavilions in 1867, which was an open invitation to show a country's national cultural and ethnographic heritage, wax figures in traditional costumes were added, while the United Kingdom of Sweden and Norway used dioramas to show traditional scenes from daily life. In 1878, the Hindeloopen Room in the Dutch section caused a stir because it could be entered by the visitors.³⁰



Fig 8: Old Edinburgh, International Exhibition of Science, Art & Industry, Edinburgh, 1886 (permission: peter.stubbs@edinphoto.org.uk)

³⁰ Bjarne Stoklund, "Between Scenography and Science: Early Folk Museums and their Pioneers," *Ethnologia Europaea* 33-1 (2003) 21-36; Adriaan A.M. de Jong and Mette Skougaard, "The Hindeloopen and the Amager Rooms: Two Examples of an Historical Museum Phenomenon," *Journal of the History of Collections* 5-2 (1993) 165-178.

Around the same time, the first open-air exhibits with real people could be visited. They came in an urban and a rural variant. At the International Health Exhibition in South Kensington 25 full-scale reproductions of ancient buildings formed an attractive urban neighbourhood called Old London. The formula was a success and was copied at successive international exhibitions in Edinburgh, Vienna, Antwerp, Budapest, Berlin, Brussels, Stockholm, Paris and Liège (Fig. 8). The rural version was already invented in 1867, when both the Austrian and Russian Empire decided to build a village with various vernacular buildings instead of a more formal national pavilion. At the 1873 world fair in Vienna there was a small village with various peasant houses from different parts of Europe inhabited by real farmers, while the exotic urban-vernacular mixture of the Quartier Marocain and the Street of Cairo was a success at the universal exposition of 1878. Five years later at the International Colonial Exhibition in Amsterdam there was a fully-fledged colonial village from Java (Fig. 9). Chicago's Midway Plaisance standardized the format by including ten ethnographic villages from different parts of the world. From this point on, ethnographic villages – either representing “primitive” life in the colonies or rural traditions from the “civilized world” – were an indispensable part of each world fair. Since these villages and cities were staffed by people displaying traditional folkloric and artisanal activities, they manifested a wider – partly commercially driven – shift from past to peasant, or from historicism to rusticism.³¹

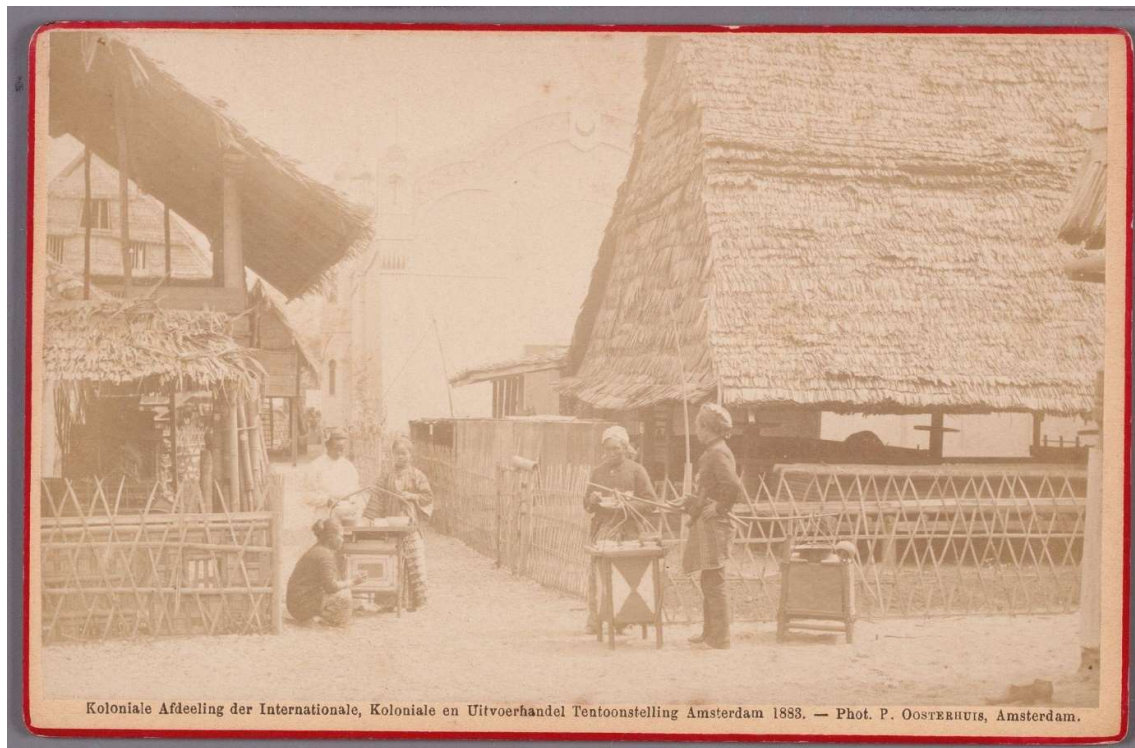


Fig. 9: Javanese Village, Universal Colonial and Export Exposition, Amsterdam 1883 (Source: Rijksmuseum Amsterdam).

³¹ Wörner, *Vergnügung und Belehrung*; Storm, “World Fairs and (Inter)national Exhibitions”; Joep Leerssen, “Introduction” In *Encyclopedia of Romantic Nationalism in Europe*, edited by Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018) 37-38.

Later expositions, particularly the Century of Progress International Exposition held in Chicago in 1933-34, and New York's Building the World of Tomorrow World's Fair of 1939-40, shifted the focus to technological progress. Thus, Chicago had a cable car, the Sky Ride, while many industrial corporations had their own ultramodern pavilion. The Expo of 1958 still tried to include everything, while even adding pavilions by international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Coal and Steel Community.³² It contained central exhibition halls in a park-like landscape dotted with dozens of national pavilions, an ultramodern eye-catcher in the form of the Atomium, high-tech buildings by corporations, a quaint *Belgique Joyeuse* neighbourhood and a Congolese village.³³

A third serial element consisted in the role of professional organizers and of the (generally poorly documented) companies that helped construct the pavilions and exhibits. Continuity in personnel could be found everywhere, notwithstanding a considerable difference between government-directed ventures (mainly in France and other Latin countries) and private-entrepreneurial ones (more foregrounded in the English-speaking world). Thus, Henry Cole was not only the driving force behind the Great Exhibition, he also served as the British commissioner at the Parisian universal exhibitions of 1855 and 1867. Alfred-Maurice Picard, who presided the Parisian Public Works Department, was one of the three directors of the Universal Exhibition of 1889 and the general commissioner of the 1900 world fair. Imre Kiralfy was the impresario of seven successive international exhibitions in London.³⁴ His American colleague Sol Bloom (the topic of Rydell's chapter) started his adventurous career by acquiring the Algerian Village and its alluring belly dancers at the Universal Exposition (Paris 1889) to put it on show in the United States, where he would be actively involved in the World's Columbian Exposition and the World's Fair in New York. Architects, engineers, art dealers and staff members from museums in various parts of the world collaborated actively in various exhibitions.³⁵

All countries that wanted to participate in a world fair had to adjust to its structures, formats and regulations. This could be done in a fairly spontaneous learning process in which specific domestic priorities were cast in the world fair mould. Since the nation's prestige was at stake this was often accompanied by fierce political scheming and heated debates in the press. As many chapters of this book show, foreign appreciation and slighting remarks in particular provided crucial incentives. Lessons from earlier exhibitions were explicitly taken into consideration in order to make a good showing at the next occasion.³⁶ In many instances professionals from the host country were hired for practical help. Experienced French architects, for instance, designed national pavilions for a considerable number of countries in Latin America, Asia and East-Central Europe.³⁷

Highly illustrative is the case of Japan. When shortly after the Meiji Restoration the country participated for the first time in a world fair, in Vienna in 1873, it commissioned a large delegation to make a profound study of the exhibits from the Western world, finally producing an exhaustive

³² For the pavilion of the ECSC see the chapter by Remes.

³³ Lisa D. Schrenk, *Building a Century of Progress: The Architecture of Chicago's 1933-34 World's Fair* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Rika Devos and Emiel De Kooning, *Moderne architectuur op Expo 58: voor een humaner wereld* (Brussel: Mercatorfonds, 2006).

³⁴ Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 101-134 and 261-279.

³⁵ Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 261-280; Stocklund, "Between Scenography and Science"; Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display*, 31-99.

³⁶ See for instance chapters by Groß, Swift, Romlid, Dziwanowski-Stefańczyk, Romlid and Oesterreich.

³⁷ See chapters by Minea and Schuster.

report in 96 volumes.³⁸ As the chapter by Oshikiri makes clear, Japan, unfamiliar with the Western concept of art, had to navigate a distinction between art works and artisanal products.³⁹ In addition, other abstract concepts such as civilization, culture, nation, freedom and progress – most of which only had received their modern meaning in Europe during the eighteenth century – had to get a Japanese equivalent. The Japanese, in having to adapt themselves to the categories defined by the organizers of the world fairs, began to distinguish fine arts from handicrafts in Japan as well. A similar predicament affected a whole range of other non-Western languages.⁴⁰ Western residents and visitors in Bali, for instance, urged the local population to transform customs and objects that were part of a profoundly religious cosmology into art, crafts and folkloric traditions. Exhibitions, where objects from Bali were in high demand, played a crucial role in this process.⁴¹ In British India officials also gathered outstanding pieces of local artisanal work for display at world fairs, which subsequently ended up in museums as highlights of a newly created category of Indian crafts.⁴²

World fairs thus obtruded upon buildings, objects, traditions and dishes the function of national representativity, even where this raised issues of representativity or status, e.g. in multi-ethnic empires or colonies. It naturalized a modular world view of discrete nations, each with its own characteristics and cultural heritage; this was what the visitors actually experienced at the international exhibitions. In order to be recognizable and attractive, all elements of this national identity had to be striking, unique and extra-ordinary. The platform of the world fair, thus, had a strong influence on the harmonization of national self-representations across the globe. In order to be taken seriously a state had to conform to the format.

Even so, it was not the nation as such that was represented at world fairs, but the state. Governments were the sole arbiters who decided how their country would be represented, while indigenous communities, ethnic minorities and aspirational nations were largely ignored, or relegated to a subordinate position in an anodyne “unity-in-diversity” nationalism.⁴³

Structure of this book

World Fairs and International Exhibitions opens with two programmatic essays by the editors, followed by thirteen case-studies in loose chronological order, aiming to show how the world fair

³⁸ Caroline A. Jones, *The Global Work of Art: World's Fairs, Biennials, and the Aesthetic of Experience* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2016) 54.

³⁹ See also more broadly Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

⁴⁰ See for instance: Christopher L. Hill, *National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France and the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008) 47-80; Weigui Fang, *Modern Notions of Civilization and Culture in China* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Adrian Brisku, *Political Reform in the Ottoman and Russian Empires: A Comparative Approach* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017) 84-85.

⁴¹ Michel Picard, *Bali: Cultural Tourism and Touristic Culture* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1996); Marieke Bloembergen, *Colonial Spectacles: The Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies at the World Exhibitions, 1880-1931* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006).

⁴² Abigail McGowan, *Crafting the Nation in Colonial India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

⁴³ Eric Storm, *The Culture of Regionalism: Art, Architecture and International Exhibitions in France, Germany and Spain, 1890-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010) 195-285; Eric Storm, “Ausstellungen als Schaufenster der regionalen und lokalen Identität. Einige Transnationale Überlegungen.” In *Rheinisch! Europäisch! Modern! Netzwerke und Selbstbilder im Rheinland vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg*, edited by Gertrude Cepl-Kaufmann, Jasmin Grande und Georg Mölich (Essen: Klartext, 2013) 188-199.

platform affected the collective identities that were represented in the various pavilions. Most of the chapters focus on Europe and the United States, but two authors deal with a Latin American case study, another with Japan and two with international organizations.⁴⁴

In the first survey chapter Joep Leerssen shows how world fairs were the crucial link between nineteenth-century cultural nationalism and the omnipresence of banal reminders of nation-ness in our current world. He contextualizes international exhibitions as part of a new “public-event display culture”, which grew in significance during the first half of the nineteenth century in the form of commercial entertainments, pleasure gardens, museums and travelling exhibitions. The international exposition, thus, became the ultimate form of a “panoramic” modernity (a term here adopted from Walter Benjamin’s coinage), where the world becomes a well-structured, full-immersion spectacle for mass consumption. The world fairs, with their flagship buildings, turned cities into tourist attractions in which each participating country tried to stand out. Its pavilion, cultural highlights, industrial products, dishes and folkloric traditions had to compete with those of other nations in this huge bazaar, converting national identities into a brand. This was not only done by the industrializing countries of the West, but also appropriated in the periphery. Thus the platform of the world fair, in wrapping the nation into a welter of superficial, transitory and commercial encounters and exchanges, paved the way both for the emergence of “nation-branding” and for the process of rendering nationalism “banal”.

The second chapter by Eric Storm has an equally global reach but focuses specifically on architectural typologies. By analysing a large number of national pavilions at a wide variety of world fairs he identifies a typology which is not based on the current architectural classifications but on the way these pavilions represent the nation’s identity. Combining the axes universal–national and high–low culture allows us to distinguish four major options for designing a national pavilion. The first is “universal fashionable”, which during the late nineteenth century mostly meant a neo-classicist structure, while from the 1920s onwards modernism became the preferred style. “Universal commercial” buildings, in turn, were mainly used for central exhibitions halls and were done either in an austere functionalist or an exuberant festive style. “National historical” pavilions constituted the third and probably the most popular option. It could copy a well-known monument or invoke a recognized historical style. The last option was the “national vernacular” category. Replicas of vernacular buildings abounded in the ethnographic villages and old city neighbourhoods that proliferated in world fairs from the 1880s, while regional pavilions were sometimes executed in a vernacular style. During the first decades of the twentieth century there were various attempts to create a truly national architectural style by combining supposedly characteristic historical and vernacular elements in a highly picturesque national pavilion. The architectural options available at world fairs were, then, clearly subject to transnational trends and fashions and countries were not free to do whatever they liked. In order to attract attention at this global stage they had to adopt a template that was both up to date and had proven its worth at earlier occasions.

Florian Groß’s chapter explores the second world fair, the so-called New York Crystal Palace of 1853 and 1854. The exhibition played a vital role in the formation of a “modern” and “American” popular culture within the transnational series of universal exhibitions. World fairs had in common that they became cultural icons for the nation’s hopes and futures. At the same time, they also exemplified how their attempts at expressing national supremacy paradoxically called into question the idea of a

⁴⁴ A first draft of most contributions was presented at a workshop at the University of Amsterdam, held in March 2018, for which the editors would like to thank the Study Platform for Interlocking Nationalisms, the Department of European Studies of the University of Amsterdam and the Institute for History of Leiden University for their financial and logistical support.

contained, national culture in favour of a “more dynamic, transnational picture”. On the surface, the exhibition was an obviously derivative transposition of the original, the Great Exhibition in London’s Crystal Palace. However, the American version also introduced significant innovations to the format, such as the establishment of a private, republican, and capitalist rather than royal enterprise and the explicit inclusion of popular entertainment—and thus contributed to a national agenda that sought to define “Americanness” in an ambivalent dialectic between distinction from and reliance on European cultural forms. Due to this “productive ambivalence”, the New York Crystal Palace was a crucial instance in the establishment of the transnational, popular, and serial form of cultural self-fashioning that is the world fair. By repeating the formula introduced two years before in Europe and adapting it to another national context, it consolidated and exemplified a cosmopolitan series whose respective instances asserted national specificity at the same time that they linked their national(ist) agendas to transnational modernity.

The tension between self-image and foreign perceptions was acute in peripheral countries such as Russia, as Anthony Swift shows. In chapter 4 he examines the Russian participation at world fairs between 1851 and 1900 and shows how the growing focus on distinct national cultures after the Great Exhibition of 1851 stimulated the Tsarist Empire to put more emphasis on the so-called “Russian style”, a historicist pastiche inspired by remarkable buildings from the late medieval and early modern era. This became particularly clear at the Parisian Universal Exhibitions of 1867 and 1878. Typical decorative and fine arts received more attention in the Russian pavilion and sections in the main exhibition halls than the less striking raw materials and manufactured goods. This inspired some foreign commentators to make remarks on Russia’s “backward” or “oriental” character. In order to celebrate the recent Franco-Russian alliance in 1900 Russia received a very large central plot at the Universal Exhibition of 1900. At this occasion the Russian authorities awarded a more prominent place to modern machinery, the new Trans-Siberian Railway and its “civilizing mission” in the Far East. However, the impressive Russian Borderland pavilion – inspired by the Kremlin – and the Russian village also showed picturesque vernacular arts, craftsmen at work, and exotic folklore. The message was that authentic Russian traditions were compatible with modernization and economic progress. At the same time, through its frequent participation in world fairs, Russia also had become a recognizable brand.

Whereas Russia could also take pride from its imperial possessions and its status as a great power, this was not the case for Europe’s smaller peripheral countries. As Cosmin Minea shows in chapter 5 – which deals with the Romanian contributions to the Paris Universal Expositions of 1889 and 1900 – being seen as a backward or “exotic” was experienced as problematic by the country’s own political and cultural elites. Since the exhibition of 1889 commemorated the French Revolution, the kingdom of Romania – like the other European monarchies – refused to send in an official participation. Nonetheless, there was a substantial Romanian contribution organized by a private committee, which was largely ignored by the French press. Their only favourite was the traditional wooden restaurant, where waitresses in folk costumes served traditional food while Gypsy musicians provided typical melodies. The Romanian musicians were appreciated as being more “authentic” and more “exotic” than the Hungarian Gypsies who had been so successful at earlier universal exhibitions. The latter had gone on to give concerts in Paris and elsewhere in Western Europe and their melodies had become well known. Against this background, the Roma musicians from Romania, introducing the pan flute to a Western audience, were appreciated because of their new and different sound. In 1900, Romania built an official pavilion in a characteristic national style, following the instructions of the French organization. However, the decision of the French architect in charge of the project to mix elements of various well-known monumental buildings was criticized as an artificial fantasy. How could a foreigner capture the true soul of the country?

In chapter 6 Claire Hendren examines the role of French art at the World's Colombian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle in 1909 and at the Panama Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco in 1915. In all three major American international exhibitions French art was put on display both by France itself – in their national pavilion – and by the American organizers – mostly in a Fine Arts Department or in a gallery with privately owned international master pieces. In all three world fairs the official French representation was dominated by the mainstream Société des Artistes Français and the moderately progressive Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts. As a result, more innovative artists who operated outside of these official associations – such as the impressionists, post-impressionists and the fauves – were largely absent or underrepresented. The American art sections, on the other hand, focused more on these vanguard movements, especially the Barbizon school and the impressionists, maybe also because landscape painting was more appreciated in the United States. As this detailed case study shows, the self-image of a country did not always coincide with and was influenced by the way a country was represented by others.

The impact of world fairs on Japan's national self-image is analysed by Taka Oshikiri in chapter 7, in which she focuses on the rise of tea as a marker of Japanese national identity. International exhibitions were a crucial platform for the Meiji regime's efforts to modernize the country and enhance its international prestige. Japan had to adapt to the format of the world fairs, which included a historicist interpretation of the past and the separation between fine and applied arts – the country even had to invent a word for the Western concept of art. Over the course of successive participations, the tea ceremony would be canonized as a typical marker of authentic Japanese tradition, but it was largely absent from the first world fairs in which Japan participated. In Vienna in 1873 precious objects that were used in tea ceremonies figured in the agricultural and metal industry sections. However, when in the context of the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900 a historicist overview of Japanese national art was published, the highly stylized tea ceremony, including the green tea that it used, received a prominent place in its early modern development. It was a clear sign of the country's high level of civilization. The government's efforts to stimulate the export of Japanese green tea at world fairs – which had been substantial in earlier decades – were largely abandoned at the beginning of the twentieth century as Japan became a more highly industrialized country and, as part of its expansionism acquired the (black-tea) plantations of Formosa.

Robert Rydell in chapter 8 sees American world fairs through the lens of the fascinating role of one individual: the celebrated impresario Sol Bloom. The son of poor Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, he made a fortune in show business and real estate. As a young man he visited the 1889 Universal Exposition in Paris. Impressed by the belly dancers of the Algerian village, he resolved to take their performance on tour to America, where it also became one of the highlights of the Midway Plaisance of the World's Colombian Exposition in Chicago. Indeed, Bloom became the manager of the entire Midway Plaisance, where a dozen ethnographic villages were lined up with other spectacular attractions, a formula that would be copied at other international exhibitions. As a result he understood that immersive amusements featuring stereotypical displays of countries and colonies could be highly profitable. Later on in his career, now as a Congressman, he was also involved in attracting foreign countries to the 1939 New York World of Tomorrow Fair, which was explicitly meant to restore confidence in the nation's future. Bloom, an American patriot, saw the role of great international exhibitions as national rallying occasions. In Chicago he took the initiative to celebrate a Salute to the Flag on Columbus Day at all public schools in the United States; four decades later he succeeded in linking the New York World's Fair to the bicentennial of George Washington's birth.

Thus, in Bloom's manifold activities on behalf of American world fairs, nationalism, internationalism and show business went hand in hand.

Chapter 9, by Sven Schuster, deals with the case of Colombia. Because of financial difficulties and political instability, Colombia only participated in two international expositions: the Chicago one thematizing the fourth centenary of the discovery of America (1892-3) and the Ibero-American Exhibition (Seville, 1929). Like other peripheral states, the government wanted to use these occasions to show the country's advancements on the "road to civilization". Although the authorities clearly privileged the Hispanic legacy of the country, the most striking exhibits in these expositions were related to its indigenous past. The focus of the 1892 American Historical Exposition in Madrid was on the pre-Colombian remains; as a consequence Colombia decided to send the recently discovered Quimbaya Treasure, even donating many of its best pieces to the host country. The rest of the treasure was transported to Chicago and formed the main exhibit in the Colombian pavilion at the World's Colombian Exposition of 1893. Whereas the pavilion in Chicago was built in an Italian Renaissance style by a French architect, the national neo-baroque building in Seville, designed by a Spanish architect, received an *indigenista* façade by Rómulo Rozo, a Colombian sculptor who made his career in Paris with designs inspired by the country's pre-Hispanic past. Thus, like Mexico and Peru, Colombia began to put a growing emphasis on its pre-Columbian heritage, although this did not yet imply the full recognition of the rights of the country's indigenous communities.

A similar process can be detected in Mexico, which is the focus of Miriam Oesterreich's chapter. Although at the New York Building the World of Tomorrow World's Fair of 1939-40 replicas of historical buildings and traditional structures were not allowed, Mexico's display focused on folklore and indigenous art. The author situates the exhibits at the Mexican section within a broad transnational context, while showing that the identification of indigenous remains and folklore with Mexican national identity had older roots. During the second year of the world fair there was another major Mexican exhibition in the city. An ambitious overview of Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art could be seen at the Museum of Modern Art, which also emphasized the continuity and uniqueness of Mexican indigenous arts. The nineteenth century was even largely excluded from the overview because at that time Mexican fine arts were supposedly too heavily influenced by foreign, European art. However, the heavy nativist emphasis on the past did not mean that the Mexican contribution to the world fair was of out of line with its focus on international modernity. The display of folklore, indigenous arts and crafts and archaeological remains explicitly intended to attract motorized foreign tourists.

The topic of chapter 11, by Bartosz Dziwanowski-Stefańczyk, is the foreign policy objectives of the Polish participation between the World Wars: at the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris in 1925, the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1937 and the New York World Fair of 1939. As a newly independent country, Poland considered the exhibitions excellent opportunities to improve its diplomatic relations with its allies. As a result, Poland presented itself as a modern country, but also emphasized its long and honourable history and the uniqueness of its culture. This aim was pursued through an emphasis on typical folklore and vernacular art. The Foreign Office played a pro-active role in the organization of the Polish contribution to these international exhibitions. The awareness of Poland's difficult geopolitical situation rendered good relations with France and the United States highly important; Poland presented itself accordingly as an ancient bulwark of Western civilization.

In chapter 12 Christina Romlid provides a detailed reconstruction of the decision to include a social welfare section in the Swedish pavilion at the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1937. The Social Democrats had come to power in 1932 and were eager to show their progressive policies to an international audience, in the process establishing the country's reputation as a democratic alternative to both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Lessons learnt at the Brussels' World Fair of 1935 and the specific guidelines by the French organizers for the international exhibition of 1937 made it logical to provide a more general introduction to the country and its social and economic situation. However, since nobody had experience with organizing a social welfare section, this led to considerable debate within the Swedish organizing committee. There was disagreement on both the content and the form, but in the end the country came up with an innovative display with photomontages and mock-ups that provided a convincing image of a peaceful, happy and democratic society.

The last two chapters explicitly deal with the inter-national character of the world fairs by focusing on the active presence of two international organizations: the League of Nations and the European Community. Jonathan Voges's chapter is dedicated to the question how international cooperation was presented at the Paris Universal Exposition of 1937. In 1922 the League of Nations had created an International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, which succeeded in attracting prominent scientists and intellectuals such as Henri Bergson, Albert Einstein, Marie Curie and Johan Huizinga. Two years later France decided to provide the committee with a permanent International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation in the heart of Paris, which aimed to stimulate intellectual cooperation through for instance student exchange programs, bibliographical editions and textbook revisions. From the early planning stages of the 1937 Universal Exposition intellectual cooperation was defined as a prominent theme. France thus aimed to profile itself explicitly as an open and cosmopolitan country, clearly in response to the rising international tensions between Democracy, Fascism and Communism. At the exposition, the French Committee on Intellectual Cooperation received ten rooms in the Museum for Modern Art, dedicated, for instance, to faith, languages and literature, science, and education. The International Committee for Intellectual Co-operation, in turn, organized a series of nine conferences as part of a special Month of Intellectual Cooperation, thus portraying Paris explicitly as a bulwark of democratic internationalism.

The role of international cooperation would increase even further at the first major post-war international exhibition, the Brussels Expo 58, as is made clear in chapter 14 by Anastasia Remes. There was even a special section where the United Nations, the Benelux, the Organization for European Economic Co-operation, the Council of Europe and the European Coal and Steel Committee each had their own pavilion; this last one is discussed in detail. The goal of the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Committee was to raise European consciousness by showing visitors its main objectives and achievements. The exhibit focused on the illustrious men that had stood at the origins of the European Community, concrete benefits of increased work security and the promises of the Common Market which had just been institutionalized with the Treaty of Rome. The organizers did their best to attract a broad audience, providing an innovative audio tour in different languages and pedagogical material for schools. The main attraction was a 200-metre-long, fully equipped underground mine shaft where visitors were shown around by real miners from the six member countries. In order to promote European cooperation, new symbols were developed as well. A flag with six stars and an emblem were created, a hymn was written, while a first celebration of Europe Day was held on 9 May. Thus, the European Community profiled itself as an attractive alternative to the Soviet Union and the United States. With around six million visitors and a broad press coverage it was a resounding success, showing that even an international organization like the European

Community adopted many of the standardized elements for the representation of collective identities as developed by over a century of world fairs and international exhibitions.

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