

Ana Cardoso de Matos, Irina Gouzévitch and Marta C. Lourenço, ed., *Expositions Universelles, Musées Techniques et Société Industrielle – World Exhibitions, Technical Museums and Industrial Society*. Lisboa: Edições Colibri, 2011. 222 pp. ISBN: 978-989-689-056-8

by Inês Gomes\*

*World Exhibitions, Technical Museums and Industrial Society*, edited by Ana Cardoso de Matos, Irina Gouzévitch and Marta C. Lourenço, offers a picture of the relationship between world fairs, technical museums and international congresses centered on their interaction and interdependency, a widely discussed topic in the historiography of science and technology. Grown out of a workshop that took place in 2008, the book's relevance and interest relies on the variety of case studies, including episodes from peripheral countries, like Portugal and Spain, seldom dealt in the international literature. Through a dialogue with other contributions to this topic, the chapters emphasize the importance of Universal Exhibitions as places of visits, encounters, exchanges and communication, where information about science and technology circulated and cooperation was developed.

*World Exhibitions, Technical Museums and Industrial Society* is organized in three parts: i) Technical Museums and Universal Exhibitions: Bands, Interactions and Temporalities; ii) Universal Exhibitions: Actors and Spaces; and iii) Universal Exhibitions: Sites of Memory, Sites of Leisure. Within this framework, the authors of the eight chapters, written in English and in French, focus on particular events.

As to the first part, in line with current historiographical debates in which the history of collections are gaining importance within the history of science, authors explore the role universal exhibitions played in the development of museums of different sorts—from education to art—and the way in which they contributed to enhance national pride. In fact, the national character of museums in Europe was defined through mutual observation, comparison and appropriations in an international perspective. Although the creation of technical museums was a general phenomenon in this period, it followed different paths, and was led by diverse forces, and offered a variety of organizational structures in European countries. In this process the interest of particular personalities was crucial, as well as their journeys to foreign countries. In the chapters written by Ana Cardoso de Matos, Helena Souto, Irina Gouzévitch and Dmitri

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Gouzévitch, the creation of the Industrial Museum and the Museum of Ornamental Arts in Lisbon, for instance, and the establishment of the Royal Cabinet of Machines in Madrid are presented as examples highlighting these dynamics of modernization and construction of industrial societies. The latter also emphasizes the continuity with previous centuries.

As to the second part, *Universal Exhibitions: Actors and Spaces*, two major topics are dealt with. The first chapter by Miriam R. Levin discusses what the author calls the 'museification' of Paris, i.e., the development and modernization of the city that directly derived from the needs driven by the world exhibitions. The other chapters by Antoni Roca-Rosell, Guillermo Lusa-Monforte, Jesús Sánchez-Miñana and Claudine Fontanon are devoted to the fruitful relationships established between experts during the exhibitions. On the one hand, scientists and engineers played a crucial role in planning and organizing Exhibitions at the same time that Exhibitions provided the opportunity to demonstrate their professional consolidation. On the other, meetings organized in parallel with exhibitions were important in the exchange and circulation of knowledge and also in the emergence of scientific disciplines.

Finally, the third part of the book addresses the educational role of Exhibitions, as well as their importance in the development of new technology. Taina Syrjämaa and Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère explore the emergence of industrial societies and its publics, both expert and amateur. 'Edutainment', education coupled with entertainment, was the best way to shape visitors' perception of progress and public good. At the same time, photography appeared as an important means to advertise Exhibitions, as well as national industrial power; for this reason they gained a new scope and depth in this period.

*World Exhibitions, Technical Museums and Industrial Society* is an interesting contribution to the historiography of science and technology. Although the topic has been object of various investigations, all the case studies help the reader to make a better assessment of the nature of the complex and intricate symbiosis between museums, exhibitions and meetings, during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, in Europe. Although chapters are short in details, the book contains valuable new material for further exploration. It is excellent in stimulating further research.