

International Exhibitions / Temporary structures and presentation of national contexts

The 1867 exhibition held in Paris marked a change in the structure of the International Exhibitions. The number of nations that now participated made it necessary to change the way the spaces were organised, not just to vary how the products were presented, but primarily to allow each country to represent their own cultural context as authentically and freely as possible. Distributed according to planned layouts and, significantly, according to the specific political and colonial situation at the time, various national pavilions were placed in strategic positions in relation to the emerging architecture of the host nation. While host countries tended to construct buildings and other structures, which were designed to remain after the exhibition and intended to project the cutting edge of technology, the “Eastern district” # which included the pavilions of Egypt and the Ottoman Empire as well as Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia along with all the other countries considered at the time to belong to the “Arab world” # formed the most picturesque and popular area at all the International Exhibitions.



Working Number: IT2 065
Name: Façade of the Foreign Sections in Palace of the Champ de Mars [Paris Exhibition, 1878]
Holding Museum: National Central Library
Date: 1878
Materials: -
Curator Justification: -

At the exhibition held in Paris in 1878 the Champ de Mars Palace was set among other façades within the “foreign” section. This forced and unnatural union of different styles, which was used in order to create an architectural “pastiche”, is typical of the International Exhibitions. Façades set along a linear path was a peculiarity of the so-called “Rue des Nations”.



Working Number: IT2 055
Name: Algerian Pavilion in the Trocadéro Park [Paris Exhibition, 1878]
Holding Museum: National Central Library
Date: 1878
Materials: -
Curator Justification: -

The “Algerian” pavilion of 1878 reflected the colonial policy of France. The main entrance copied the portal of the ‘Ubbad Mosque of Sidi Bumadyan, near Tlemcen, richly adorned with enamelled majolica and arabesque decorations; the decoration of the minaret resembled that of Mansoura Mosque.



Working Number: IT2 053
Name: Cairo in Milan. Exhibition 1906
Holding Museum: Central Institute for Cataloguing and Documentation (ICCD)
Date: 1906
Materials: -
Curator Justification: -

Sometimes in these picture postcards, produced to document the exhibits minus the crowds of visitors, the “Cairo Street” is animated by the presence of “character types” who stand “proudly” outside their designated areas.



Working Number: UK 153
Name: Produits L'Algerie. Algerian products at the Paris Universal Exhibition, 1855
Holding Museum: Victoria and Albert Museum
Date: 1855
Materials: Albumen print
Curator Justification: The first exhibition held in Paris in 1855 was France's reaction to the first Great Exhibition held in London in 1851. This photo shows the interior of the Palais des Industries (built in stone, glass and cast iron and characterised by a very long aisle) within which the Algerian section's objects are depicted in a somewhat disordered state.



Working Number: AT 017
Name: Photograph of the copy of the fountain of Ahmed III
Holding Museum: MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art
Date: c. 1873
Materials: Photography
Curator Justification: At the exhibition held in Vienna in 1873, the Ottoman Empire was represented by a "Turkish" quarter posed, like the Egyptian one, in front of the main hall. In the main pavilion was a re-creation of the Fountain of Sultan Ahmed III, built in 1728, in front of the Topkap# Palace in Istanbul.
