



# A Taste of Progress: Food at International and World Exhibitions in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

*Nelleke Teughels, Peter Scholliers*

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World exhibitions have been widely acknowledged as important sources for understanding the development of the modern consumer and urbanized society, yet whilst the function and purpose of architecture at these major events has been well-studied, the place of food has received very little attention. Food played a crucial part in the lived experience of the exhibitions: for visitors, who could acquaint themselves with the latest food innovations, exotic cuisines and “traditional” dishes; for officials attending lavish banquets; for the manufacturers who displayed their new culinary products; and for scientists who met to discuss the latest technologies in food hygiene. Food stood as a powerful semiotic device for communicating and maintaining conceptions of identity, history, traditions and progress, of inclusion and exclusion, making it a valuable tool for researching the construction of national or corporate sentiments. Combining recent developments in food studies and the history of major international exhibitions, this volume provides a refreshing alternative view of these international and intercultural spectacles.

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