

came a common addition to the exhibitions and were often purveyed by traders of émigré origin.

Because of the lack of presence of large industries in the Czechoslovak pavilion in 1933, the display was ultimately orientated towards the promotion of tourism to Czechoslovakia, and this included advertising not only Karlovy Vary as the home of glassmaking, china and the spa industry, but also destinations like the mountain ranges of the Slovak Tatras and the historic sites of Prague. The Czechoslovak pavilion in Chicago was therefore conceived to be a condensation of the country's most recognizable features with which foreign audiences as well as the Czech and Slovak diaspora in the USA could identify.

Colonial company: *Brussels 1935*

Marketing countries as tourist destinations at world's fairs developed gradually during the interwar period. The Universal and International Exposition (Exposition Universelle et Internationale) that took place in Brussels in 1935 combined the commercial aspects of tourism with the justification of colonialism [fig. 13]. Following the model of the French Colonial Exposition of 1931, the Belgian equivalent lasted between April 27 and November 6, 1935, and fo-



Fig.13. View of the The Universal and International Exposition in Brussels, 1935, postcard.

cused on transportation and colonization with the upbeat motto “Peace among the Races.”⁷⁸ Though Czechoslovakia was free of direct colonial involvement, it nevertheless fostered close trade relationships with colonial powers as well as their colonies. Some of the contacts had been inherited from the Habsburg monarchy and some were established during the interwar period. Czechoslovakia therefore took part among the largest colonial powers of the time which included the host country, France, and the United Kingdom. Italy and France constructed several pavilions (sixteen in Italy’s case), showcasing their colonies and the different cultural, social and administrative features of the respective countries. A total of twenty-five national pavilions comprised of Austria, Hungary and Poland, for example, that by this time were under dictatorial regimes.

Regarding the architecture of the world’s fairs, many pavilions (Sweden, Austria, and Turkey included) embraced modernism, while others followed a more monumental expression with inspiration taken from classicism. This would be the case of the United Kingdom and some of the French pavilions.⁷⁹ The colonial section, dominated by the Belgian Congo, presented a mixture of regionalism and exoticism in its buildings. Many other structures came out as hybrid in their form, blending various historical references: for example, the Grand Palais resembled a ziggurat, while the massive Catholic Life pavilion with its three domes and six obelisks formed an intersection between a Byzantine church and a mosque.⁸⁰

Within the colonial context of the Exposition, an important role was played by tourism which was promoted across the grounds, including advertising. This included, for example, African countries like Congo, Egypt or European states like Austria as potential tourist destinations using large photomontages and dioramas. Czechoslovakia also put emphasis on tourism and was presented as the “land full of historical and natural wonders, of production, cultural and social progress and a country that treats its minorities fairly.”⁸¹ These ideas would be epitomized in sculptures and photographs of various sites and vistas, images of folk festivals in Slovakia and Sokol assemblies, products of vocational schools, promotion of industries, as well as various works of art.

78 *Official Guide and Plan of the Brussels International Exhibition 1935* (Brussels: Fack-Roussel, 1935). The Brussels mayor, Adolfe Max, was one of the key men behind the organization, with Count Adrien van der Burch the General Commissioner and the architect Joseph Van Neck in charge of the site.

79 Johan Lagae, “Brussels 1935,” in *Encyclopedia of World’s Fairs and Expositions*, eds. Findling and Pelle, 278.

80 Lagae, “Brussels 1935,” 279.

81 “Čsl. účast na světové výstavě v Bruselu 1935,” *Ministr obchodu pro předsednictvo ministerské rady*, August 30, 1934, *Výstavy v Belgii*, no. 944, file 115, D6983/34, APRO.



Fig.14. The Czechoslovak pavilion in Brussels, 1935.

The Czechoslovak pavilion, overseen—once again—by the exhibition commissioner Turnovský, was in the vicinity of Luxemburg, Italy, Poland, Hungary, and Sweden, opening on May 15, 1935. It was designed by the architect and designer Antonín Heythum (1901–1954) and built by the engineer Sirotek whose construction was made mostly of wood combined with glass [fig. 14]. The oblong-shaped building also included a courtyard with a fountain and a stream. The interior was lit by skylights and mirrors.⁸² The large entrance hall contained presentations of various ministries, including the Ministry of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones displaying stamps, and the Ministry of the Public Works showing radium mining, bridge models, and artworks.⁸³ Apart from Štursa's sculpture of Masaryk and a large panorama of the High Tatra mountains, an airplane suspended from the ceiling dominated the room. The subsequent spaces presented the visitors with Czechoslovak agriculture and industries which emphasized glass and ceramics production.⁸⁴

82 Komora, *Hospodářské výstavy*, 224.

83 *Official Guide and Plan*, unpag.

84 Č., "Československo na světové výstavě v Bruselu 1935," *Sklářské rozhledy* 12, no. 1 (1935): 12–13.

In the Czechoslovak pavilions, glass played an important role as it could be turned into both an export commodity (in 1935 glass export occupied second place behind iron ore) and a representative artefact.⁸⁵ Its application was versatile, from decorations and practical objects at home to its use in architecture and construction. This was prominent in Brussels too where the entrance to the pavilion led through a glass doorway of transparent and black mirror glass and was followed by an exhibition of decorative glass. As an experienced designer and architect, Heythum had already put together a national exhibition of glass two years earlier, on which he built some of his ideas for Brussels. Glass was shown in both exhibitions and the following international displays as a versatile material and an important export article of Czechoslovakia.

The dominant section of glass was accompanied by several larger objects and producers who were limited to the Baťa company, the ironworks Poldi, the mining and metallurgy company Báňská a hutní and three car companies Škoda, Tatra, and Aero.⁸⁶ The industrial section also included a sizeable showcase of spas in Czechoslovakia, textiles, and musical instruments.⁸⁷ Just like the pavilion in Chicago, a sales section appeared here where visitors could purchase for example toys, glass or leather goods and Slovak cheese.⁸⁸ The pavilion as a whole was considered successful and many Czechoslovak exhibits received a total of 23 Grand Prixes and 26 golden medals from the organizers.⁸⁹

Here too, the Czechoslovak participation was represented in more than one location. A separate modern art exhibition was shown in the General Hall of Arts under the direction of the art historian Antonín Matějček and the director of the press services of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Emil Purghart. The art section as a whole included artworks in different media and the Czechoslovak entry consisted of works by many authors who are today associated with classical modernism, like Emil Filla, Josef Čapek, Jan Zrzavý, sculptors Otto Gutfreund, Jan Štursa, architects Josef Gočár, Bohuslav Fuchs, Jaromír Krejcar, and

85 V. Svoboda, "Československý sklářský průmysl ve světě statistiky," *Sklářské rozhledy. Věstník sklářského ústavu v Hradci Králové* XII, no. 10 (1935): 153–154. Marta Filipová, "Czech Glass or Bohemian Crystal? The Nationality of Design in the Czech Context," in *Designing Worlds: National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization*, eds. Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees-Maffei (New York: Berghahn Books, 2016), 141–155.

86 Styblík, "Československo v Bruselu," *Večerní Lidové noviny* July 20, 1935, Newspaper Excerpts archive, MFA, Oh8.

87 "Čsl. pavilon na mezinárodní výstavě v Bruselu," *Národní listy* May 29, 1935, Newspaper Excerpts archive, MFA, Oh8.

88 Styblík, "Československo."

89 "Čs. Úspěch na výstavě v Bruselu," *Lidové noviny* June 29, 1935. Newspaper Excerpts archive, MFA, Oh8.

Pavel Janák.⁹⁰ They were predominantly of Czech origin and male; the only female artist was the sculptress Mary Duras while the non-Czechs of Czechoslovakia included a handful of Jewish, German and Slovak artists.

Art exhibitions at world's fairs provide an important insight into the way the government, by means of the curators and commissioners, tried to shape the presentation of the country as modern. The questions of modernity and its interpretation were another ongoing concern of the interwar period and its exhibitions. What kind of modernism should be included, who the authors should be and what subject matters best represented Czechoslovakia were issues that had a direct impact on the overall image of the state both externally and internally.

Flow of display: *Paris 1937*

The modernity of world's fairs can be often related to the canonical buildings or structures built on these occasions, whether they survived the exhibition or not. The Crystal Palace of the 1851 Great Exhibition was an impressive, half a kilometer long construction of glass and cast iron which was eventually destroyed by fire in 1936. The Eiffel tower became the "clou," in other words, the chief attraction, of the Parisian Exposition in 1889, while the modernist German pavilion by Mies van der Rohe is what is left of the Barcelona 1929 world's fair. The iconic juxtaposition between the Soviet and German pavilions was a key feature of the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne (The International Exposition of Art and Technology in Modern Life) in Paris in 1937, indicative of the political and ideological divisions in Europe [fig. 15].

Designed by Boris Iofan and Albert Speer respectively, the Soviet and German structures were built as responses to the modernity proclaimed by the exposition's title and arrived at a similar combination of historicism and modernism.⁹¹ Both structures symbolized the radicalizing atmosphere of the late 1930s visible in many other national pavilions.⁹² These divisions were also not the only ones

90 "Tchecoslovaquie," in *Exposition internationale d'Art moderne catalogue* (Dietrich and co, 1935), 244–254.

91 Danilo Udovički-Selb, "L'Exposition de 1937 n'aura pas lieu: the invention of the Paris International Expo and the Soviet and German pavilions," in *Architecture of Great Expositions 1937–1959: Messages of Peace, Images of War*, eds. Rika Devos, Alexander Ortenberg, and Vladimir Paperny (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2015), 32; Danilo Udovički-Selb, "Facing Hitler's Pavilion: The Use of Modernity in the Soviet Pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exhibition," *Journal of Contemporary History* 47, no. 1 (January 2012): 13–47; Karl Schlögel, *Moscow 1937* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013).

92 Apart from Udovički-Selb, e.g., Karen Fiss, *Grand Illusion: Third Reich, the Paris Exposition, and the Cultural Seduction of France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009) and Karen Fiss, "In Hit-