

ZSUZSA HETÉNYI

**MONUMENTS MARKING HISTORICAL DERAILMENTS, 1937:  
MUKHINA'S SCULPTURE WORKER AND KOLKHOZ WOMAN AND  
THE NAVAL MONUMENT AT THE HORTHY BRIDGE IN BUDAPEST<sup>1</sup>**

The first version of this article was prompted by events and exhibitions commemorating the centenary of the Russian Revolution of 1917 “under Western eyes,” namely in London. These commemorations painted a surprisingly positive picture of early Soviet revolutionary art, paying little attention to the difference between avant-garde and socialist-realist art. The monumental works of the latter were received strikingly positively by the 21<sup>st</sup>-century public on these occasions. What made me want to carry on with the topic of the exhibitions (1917, 1937 and 2017) was a contradiction not without some parallels in our day: a peaceful demonstration of economic power and readiness for collaboration existing alongside and being undermined by rivalry between militarizing states with local wars in the background, all in the context of an increasingly tense international situation. The first part of my article seeks to explain the reasons behind the enthusiastic reception of the Soviet pavilion in Paris in 1937. The second part explores the antecedents to the works presented in the Soviet pavilion of the World Fair and the International Exhibition of Arts and Techniques Applied to Modern Life in Paris in 1937, those of artists Aleksandr Deyneka and Vera Mukhina, especially the symbolic layers and fate of Mukhina's sculpture *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman*. The final part discusses striking similarities between Mukhina's monument and the Naval Monument at the Horthy Bridge in Budapest which were erected in the same year, in 1937, both in terms of aesthetic form and of their fate. This part of the article reflects on the historical background of the Hungarian monument, which referred to a falsified glorious view of World War 1 in the context of forced nationalism in a country poised on the threshold of World War 2.

*Keywords: 1937 Paris World Exhibition, Russian avant-garde, Centenary of the Russian Revolution, Vera Mukhina, Horthy, Naval Monument*

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1 *Citation: ZSUZSA HETÉNYI, “Monuments Marking Historical Derailments, 1937: Mukhina's Sculpture Worker and Kolkhoz Woman and the Naval Monument at the Horthy Bridge in Budapest”, RussianStudiesHu 6, no. 2 (2024): 241–255. DOI: 10.38210/RUSTUDH.2024.6.g.1*

According to a BBC Four art documentary screened on 7 November 2017, the Soviet avant-garde was more original and powerful than any other anywhere else in the world. How did the astonishingly vibrant Soviet culture and cultural studies of the 1920s become the source of almost every artistic discipline and research field today? How is it possible that a dictatorship in the making can give birth to such art? Did the sudden freedom of the 1920s, the hope of a new world amid misery inspire exceptional artists? Was it the abundance of suffering that caused talent to burst forth? Were there many new consumers of culture who had just learned to read and write? Or did the outburst happen because making and consuming culture was made cheap and accessible? Was the novelty of the multinational state or the abolition of the power of the church a shackle in any sense? These questions were not asked in the documentary.

Britain commemorated the anniversary of the Russian Revolution with several TV documentaries, books and exhibitions. Stephen Kotkin's biography of Stalin (*Stalin: Waiting for Hitler, 1922–1941*), published for the centenary day in October, was considered a sensation. In the thousand plus pages of his book, the Princeton University historian outlines the “human face” of the leader, and he also lists his hobbies: Stalin loved going to the opera, gardening and collecting watches. (While a British or French reader might flick through this with a frown, there is no Hungarian reader who would not think at this point of the watch-collecting Soviet front-line soldiers).<sup>2</sup>

It must be admitted that, due to their lack of historical knowledge, the new generation does not judge the art of the early Soviet period by what it was foreshadowing, by what was to come. For example, Valentina Sidlina, the Russian-born curator, said at the opening of the Tate Modern's centenary exhibition of 2017 that in the Soviet Union women were given jobs and paid equally to men as a matter of course, whereas today we must fight for these things. Considering this, it is no wonder that she arranged the posters shouting the political slogans of the post-revolutionary years in three rows as an iconostasis. When Kazimir Malevich hung his painting *The Black Square* like an icon in the corner of his exhibition, he not only desacralized the icon as such and deprived its traditional position of the

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2 The European Parliament paid tribute to the millions of victims of the Red Dictatorship after assessments and reassessments according to party preferences. The Hungarian museums and cultural world remained silent except for a few small articles and conferences. Nobody was more silent than the official forums of the Russian state -- they did not know where or how to conceptualize their predecessor state.

divine aura attached to it (as indicated also by the obliquity of the square); he also exalted the new avant-garde art by placing it in a formerly sacred place.

The subtitle of the Tate's exhibition, "The Revolution of Visual Culture 1905–1955," used the word "revolution" somewhat disingenuously, not daring to say that the exhibition was also about art associated with political revolution and overlooking the fact that there was a revolution in art taking place all over the world. This subtitle also implied a wider scope than was the case; many visitors may have been disappointed not to see any reflection of the wealth of paintings from the time. (The choice of the time frame of 1905–1955 was not explained either).

At the centenary of the Russian Revolution of 1917, Western reception of Soviet history and art seemed to be surprisingly idealistic. For a long time, Western intellectuals wanted to believe in the feasibility of the utopia planned for one-sixth of the world. Enthusiasm for the truly exceptional Soviet art of the twenties can be seen as part of this. For example, following the disillusionment of the 1950s and the shock of 1956, and after the "Thaw" partially lifted the silencing and censorship suffered by the Soviet avant-garde, Hungarian intellectuals in the 1960s projected their remaining hope onto the art of the 1920s (before Stalin). These leftist intellectuals wanted to think that this wonderful era, in which the masses clasped hands with the elite art of the avant-garde, somehow justified seeing "existing" socialism as progressive, since the influence of the Soviet avant-garde had proved undeniably universal. The flaws of this seductive theory were revealed again in the 100<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebrations.

As for the Western, and especially the English communist movement, it was boosted by their willingness to forget several historical junctures: the Soviets' cunning power grab after World War 2, the period of the Cold War in the 1950s and the subsequent enforcement of this control through the invasion of Hungary in 1956 and of Prague in 1968.<sup>3</sup> After the collapse of the Soviet regime not only did the general failure of the idea of Communism become apparent, but details of the operations of the totalitarian dictatorship also came to light retrospectively. The Soviet experiment was indeed unique of its kind, but communism has remained an unattained

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3 The period from 1946 to 1955 and its generation became the subject of the novel "The Golden Notebook" (1962) by Doris Lessing. She was awarded the Nobel prize in 2007, only 10 years before the centenary, not long before 2017, therefore, for her descriptions and recollections, including her doubts.

goal, while real communists could easily end up in prisons and camps. The utopian principles of a paradise on earth were not realized, equality was replaced by a system of state privileges instead of common property, by murderous collectivization and the destruction of the economy instead of collective labor, by censorship instead of culture, by a demagogic, one-party totalitarian system instead of politics, by a militarized education system and censorship instead of dissemination of knowledge. None of these controversies was addressed in the English centennial commemorations nor presented from the perspective of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It was because the period preceding it had remained mostly hidden from Western eyes that the Soviet art of the 1920s appeared for a long time to be an explosive phenomenon. While the birth of the avant-garde in Russia<sup>4</sup> is linked to a social cataclysm, it was not a product of the 1917 revolution, but of the transformations that followed the 1905 revolution. The change reflected in the so-called Russian Silver Age (approx. 1890s-1917) was based on a definitive turn towards European aesthetic values. By the time late-symbolist art had developed in Russia along with the avant-garde in the 1910s, it had reached the level of European art and become an organic part of it. The lack of this context provided by the centennial exhibition extended not only to the period after the 1920s but also to the pre-1920s. The Soviet art of the 1920s not only originated earlier, but it also emerged in a European context and not in isolation. (Not to mention the fact that it was multinational; it was as much Ukrainian, Jewish, Baltic, etc., as it was Russian.)

Malevich's *Black Square* of 1913 coincided with the emergence of Futurism. Literature and the arts developed in parallel as did the theory behind formalism. El Lissitzky's art of 1927 was admired by the audience of the centenary exhibitions, but his methods and his visual language grew out of his work with the prominent figures of the German Bauhaus in Weimar. He had studied in Darmstadt from 1909 and traveled with his eyes wide open throughout Europe until the outbreak of the First World War. El Lissitzky's first book illustrations, for a Jewish text of the Passover song "Had Gadya", were also created as early as 1917. (These were analyzed by Viktor Shklovsky, one of the founders of formal literary theory and structuralism). If Boris Kustodiyev's bitter 1905 newspaper cartoon were

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4 I write not Russian avant-garde but the avant-garde in Russia (in the Russian Empire) to underline that those representatives of the artistic movement of the avant-garde belonged to different nationalities and only worked on the territory of the Russian Empire.

to be placed alongside his famous painting of 1919-1920 in any analytical exhibition, comparison of the two images would cause a sensation. In the former (“Invasion”) a giant skeleton with bloody arms and legs is trampling a deserted and ruined city under a cloud of blood with a black crowd behind it under red flags. In the latter (*Bol’shevik*), a powerful gloomy muzhik waving a surreally endless red flag leads the crowd over the snowy, sunny, clean city beyond a church with a peaceful factory chimney in the background. Long before 1917, the bloody or utopian new world, the raw (or mystical) abstract, and the empty (or metaphysical) cosmos were linked in Russian art and thought.

Future avant-garde artists regularly visited Europe, mainly Munich, Berlin and Paris on professional trips, and their years of residence in the West embedded them in the currents of the pre-war time. These artists were influenced by all genres of Expressionism, Surrealism, Cubism, Bauhaus, Dadaism and their theories. Chagall returned home after years in Paris (1910–1914) but only for eight years.<sup>5</sup> The Russian Futurists also had a personal relationship with Marinetti. Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, who lived in Paris in the 1920s, combined the imagery of the Bauhaus and Symbolist Expressionism with the perspective of Byzantine icons (his distinctive color scheme harmonizes the colors of the blue-white-and-red Russian flag). Kandinsky had already written his color theory in Germany, where he emigrated in 1923. The avant-garde in Russia was well acquainted with its fellow phenomena and artists from outside Europe such as the Mexican monumentalist Diego Rivera and others.

So, the ground for the Soviet 1920s was well prepared by the symbolist art of the turn of the century and the early avant-garde of the 1910s in the Russian Empire, but authors and whole oeuvres of that time were for a long time closed off from the world by Soviet censorship, thus irreparably breaking cultural continuity. This was inexorably followed by censorship of creation and its persistent destruction as well as the banning of works. Entire oeuvres were erased and cut out of the overall picture, and these gaps remained unfilled until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Their creators were also wiped out, as were whole groups of people, nationalities, and generations. This process of avant-garde art would be continued by inertia for a while during the early 1920s but was ended by the end of the decade with the declaration of the Stalinist cult of personality.

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5 Later he left for France (1923–1941), returning there after 7 years in the US (1941–1948). Categorizing him under any national label would be hard.

In the political arena, the misconception that Leninist socialism would have been different from Stalinist socialism was also part of the range of views that justified the new socialist system. This beautiful idea is undermined not only by the unpredictability of the hypothetical past but also by hard facts: to mention just one, in 1923 Lenin signed a party resolution on the construction of labor camps for enemies of the regime. It followed directly from this strategy of suppressing enemies that only loyal art would bear fruit, and that only state commissions would provide financial and existential subsistence and security. Very soon, from 1925 onwards, party resolutions and the centralization of cultural life confirmed this. Commissioned art is itself socialist realist, a regulated canon that fulfills the wishes of the social “order”, the proletarian need.

The image of an internal and external enemy was an indispensable condition for the discipline needed to industrialize the country, and industrialization was needed to arm the country in preparation for the new Soviet imperial war, initially aiming at World Revolution. The development of a visual combat culture began during the Civil War around 1920. As the David King collection on display at the Tate Modern in London in 2017 eloquently illustrated, all it took was to serve up a single photograph, such as an armed woman with different captions, and the image declaring the equality of the sexes in society became the iconic image of the Great Patriotic War, the mobilizing Motherland Mother (Rodina-Mat’). Compared to the powerful figure of the Leader, the additional value of the image of the Mother and the concept of the militant Woman (one that at the same time was to be defended) activated the soldiers’ emotions. The 20<sup>th</sup> century has taught us that facts are always dubious and can be manipulated, that anyone can be erased from a photograph, that a document can be forged and destroyed, and that the historical past is constantly being overwritten.

The image of the enemy was as integral to Soviet propaganda poster art as that of pagan idols. British experts claim to have just discovered the similarities to ancient pagan stone figures in the images of the socialist realist Aleksandr Deyneka (this axiomatic idea was long ago included in textbooks of socialist times). The concept of socialist realism was invented by a revolutionary party functionary, Ivan Gronsky, in 1932 and sanctified by Gorky’s article of the same title. The Soviet pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exhibition of Arts and Technology embodied, with its monumental design, a classic example of this coded canon of style. Both the German and Soviet pavilions formed a similar “gate” on either side of the Eiffel Tower axis, and they “framed” the Eiffel Tower

with a sweeping vertical movement. The Soviet pavilion was adorned with Vera Mukhina's sculpture *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman* (well-known as an emblem of the Mosfilm company at the beginning of the Soviet films). The building's mainly empty walls were decorated with three giant canvases by Aleksandr Deyneka.

According to contemporary data, the Soviet pavilion was visited by twenty million people, all flocking to see the glory of the Soviet state.<sup>6</sup> Judging by the looks on their faces, the 21<sup>st</sup>-century visitors to the Red Star over Russia exhibition at the Tate Modern in London viewed Deyneka's three giant panoramic paintings with no less admiration, even though here they could only see the sketches measuring just a few meters long (1.25 x 2.00 m) because, after the World Exhibition, the original works were destroyed. The image of the Stakhanovists is stunning in the unreality of its socialist idealism: snow-white-suited, slimly airy, like basketball stars but with a scientist's forehead and immaculate hands, the figures, which would have been three meters tall in the original, march towards the viewer under a touchingly humid blue sky. In the background, stands the unrealized House of Soviets, a virtual ziggurat intended to be the tallest building in the world, including the gigantic, 25-meter statue of Lenin on top of it. This utopianized scene can now be seen as depressingly absurd rather than as future-shaping propaganda, and if it sends a message, it sends only one: the utterly theoretical, unearthly remoteness of the social ideal, an ideal that no human being can come close to.

Boris Iofan, the designer of both the never-realized House of Soviets and the diving-tower-shaped Soviet pavilion, deliberately chose the posture of the Greek goddess Nike of Samothraki from the Louvre as the model for the sculpture that adorns the building. The triumphal pose and the triumphal wings (carved by Vera Mukhina from a shawl slung at the waist) on the bank opposite the Eiffel Tower may have prompted associations in Parisians. They celebrated their national events, wars, and revolutions under the same symbol, as seen on the Arc de Triomphe, where above the Marseillaise scene Nike spreads her wings and points her sword, and, in general, the romantic pathos of Delacroix's style reappears.

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6 For a detailed description of the five halls and the installations organized around the themes of industrial achievement along with cultural events, see Anthony Swift's article quoting some contemporary sources. ANTHONY SWIFT, "The Soviet Union at the 20<sup>th</sup> -Century World's Fairs", *World History Connected* 13, no. 3 (Fall 2016): [https://worldhistoryconnected.press.uiillinois.edu/13.3/forum\\_01\\_swift.html](https://worldhistoryconnected.press.uiillinois.edu/13.3/forum_01_swift.html) (Accessed 28 May 2024)

The other Greek example Iofan based his design on was a double sculpture also using a 'wing' made of a piece of clothing, giving rise to a variety of associations. The same posture unified the statue of Tyrannicides Harmodios and Aristogeiton, male lovers who were defenders of Athenian democracy, and who assassinated Hippias, the tyrant of Athens.<sup>7</sup>

If the censors had read more Greek authors, Thucydides even, Mukhina would not have been able to realize Iofan's plans, and both would have quickly disappeared into the depths of the bans and camps. Vigilant defenders of the regime only spotted the outline of the face of Lev Trotsky (by then disgraced, and murdered in Mexico three years later) in the folds of the skirt of the Kolkhoz woman when the sculpture was already being shaped in the foundry. Yet it was precisely at the request of the censors that the skirts and all the clothes had been added to the sculptures: the originally naked figures were only covered by dynamic, fluttering drapery.

Standing on a 34-meter base, the 24-meter sculpture was taller than the 50-meter Arc de Triomphe in Paris. Cut into 65 separate pieces, it could be transported in 28 wagons.

The problem of Trotsky's face emerged again only in 1940, after the damaged statue had been repatriated. The worker-peasant pair was then demoted: it was placed on a lower pedestal only ten meters tall, in front of the gates of the VDNH, the exhibition of Soviet agricultural achievements. Mukhina was awarded the Stalin Prize in 1941 and survived Stalin by just half a year. The statue became the symbol of the Moscow Film Studio in 1947. It was restored in 2003 and returned to its location in 2009, on a pedestal raised to its original height.

When the Paris International Exposition opened in May 1937, reports on the Spanish Civil War and the arrests and purges in the Soviet Union were featured daily in the newspapers. Nevertheless, the Soviet pavilion at the Paris World Fair was enthusiastically received by the progressive intellectuals of the time, including Pablo Picasso, Frans Masereel, and Romain Rolland, who had visited the Soviet Union only two years earlier and who wrote in the visitors book: "At the International Fair on the banks

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7 After the establishment of democracy, Cleisthenes commissioned the sculptor Antenor to produce a bronze statue group of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. It was the first commission of its kind, and the very first statue to be paid for out of public funds. The sculptural pairing survived only in Roman marble copies. Their figures can be seen on a bas-relief on the Elgin throne. The two homosexual heroes were immortalized in Greek literature by Thucydides, Herodotus, and Callistratus, among others. The latter's ode survived in translations in Victorian England, including that of Edgar Allan Poe, 'Hymn to Aristogeiton and Harmodius' (1827).



of the Seine, two young Soviet giants raise sickles and hammers, and we hear from their chests a heroic anthem, calling the people to freedom and unity and leading them to victory.”<sup>8</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright, who met Iofan on several occasions, had been attending the First Congress of the Union of Soviet Architects in Moscow. He stopped off in Paris on his return journey to see the Exhibition. Wright said of the Iofan Pavilion: “I admire Iofan’s Paris building [it] is a master architect’s conception that walks away with the Paris Fair.”<sup>9</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright deemed the Soviet Pavilion to have been “the most successful and dramatic exhibition building at the Paris fair.”<sup>10</sup>

This contradiction is not without some parallels in our day and has some associations with the post-2022 period. An apparently peaceful demonstration of economic power and readiness for collaboration existed alongside and was being undermined by rivalry between militarizing states with local wars in the background, all in the context of an increasingly tense international situation. All this did not prevent naïve left-wing intellectuals from admiring the new Soviet power. However, this contradiction did not go unnoticed by some more sober spectators. As Anthony Swift summed up, in *La Revue de Paris*, Albert Flament found the gigantic sculpture of the worker and peasant that stood on top of the Soviet pavilion to be “totally out of proportion,” while Philippe Diolé condemned both the Soviet and German pavilions for making an architectural show of strength. Some publications criticized the profusion of scale-models, statistics, and photos and suggested that there should be more about how ordinary people lived. Most French critics were unimpressed with the socialist realist art, finding it conservative and old-fashioned. “Some visitors stated their opinions in comment books provided within the pavilion, although their remarks suggest that many had already formed their views of the Soviet Union before going to the pavilion. Some expressed their admiration for Soviet economic and social advances, others questioned the veracity of the presentation or complained that there were too many depictions of Stalin, but overall the positive comments outweighed the

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8 Софья Руднева, «Символы Веры», *Вокруг Света*, no. 8 (2009): <https://www.vokrugsveta.ru/vs/article/6760/> (Accessed March 18, 2024).

9 *Architectural Record*, September, 1937. Quoted by: DANILO UDOVICIKI-SELB, *The Elusive Faces of Modernity: The Invention of the Paris 1937 Exhibition And the Temps Nouveaux Pavilion* (Massachusetts: MIT, 1995). <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/4390442.pdf>. 2024.05.16. (Accessed 20 March, 2024).

10 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, “Architecture and Life in the USSR”, *Architectural Record* (October 1937): 61.

negative remarks.”<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, Swift does not pay any attention to the artistic design and decoration of the pavilion.

In October 1937, a very similar monument was also erected and unveiled in Hungary. Its content was completely different, being nationalist and right-wing, but the Hungarian monument, too, was constructed with the propagandistic intention of marking a cult of a military-oriented national leader. In the end, however, it marked a historical derailment when a bridge in Budapest was named after Horthy in his lifetime (in keeping with the great leaders of the time), and because of Horthy’s past as vice-admiral at the end of WW1, a Navy Monument, taller than Mukhina’s statue, was placed at the end of the bridge.<sup>12</sup> There was no victory the Hungarian monument could celebrate after the defeat the country had suffered in WW1, nor was there an empire for it to glorify, and since Hungary had no sea, the absurdity of the symbol should have been obvious from the start.<sup>13</sup>

It is not known whether the monument unveiled in October 1937, too, was inspired by the Soviet design for Paris, which was already finished in the summer of 1936, but one thing is certain: besides its similar form, it also had a similar fate. The Navy Monument was featured on the poster of the 1938 Budapest International Fair and became its ‘logo’, almost as if the Hungarians were indicating to the Soviets where to place the statue’s

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11 SWIFT, “The Soviet Union at the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century World’s Fairs”.

12 At the northern side of the Buda end of today’s Petőfi Bridge in Budapest. Horthy began his career in the Austro-Hungarian Navy in 1896 and attained the rank of rear admiral by 1918. He participated in the Battle of the Strait of Otranto and ascended to the position of commander-in-chief of the Navy in the final year of World War I. Following mutinies, Emperor-King Charles appointed him as vice admiral and commander of the Fleet, dismissing the previous admiral.

13 On the same spot another monument was also planned, that of the son of Miklós Horthy, István (1904–1942), who was killed in a plane crash on the Russian front. This is noteworthy because there has been an urban legend since the time of its erection that the Liberation Monument (Freedom Statue) on Gellért Hill was originally erected in honor of István Horthy, like the other monument to István Horthy, planned on the bridge. Zsigmond Kisfaludy-Stróbl, the artist, designed a two-figure composition. In the front, on the pedestal, would have stood the 5-meter bronze statue of Horthy the Younger, and behind him, on top of the obelisk, the Genius of Flight would have thrown a wreath. On either side would have been a relief depicting István Horthy taking the oath of office as deputy governor and going into battle. The “flying monument” was to be erected at the Buda end of the Horthy Bridge, but this was later abandoned, and a new site was designated on the Tabán hillside. By the spring of 1944, the statue had been cast in bronze, but it was not erected due to the German occupation and the constant bombing. In addition, part of it was destroyed in the Buda Castle, where it was placed for preservation. See JÁNOS POTÓ, “Legenda és valóság egy emlékmű körül”, *História*, no. 6 (1982): 30–31.

‘brother’, ‘who’ was brought back from Paris only two years later to be placed in front of the entrance of the Moscow Exhibition of the Achievements of the National Economy, later the Agricultural Fair, which was opened in 1939.<sup>14</sup>

In front of the 22-meter reinforced concrete foundation (designed by architect László Miskolczi) on a projection in the shape of a ship’s bow, stood a pair of 7-meter statues, shoulder to shoulder, (made by István Szentgyörgyi): one of a navy bugler gazing into the distance at the command of the other, winged figure of the Genius of Attack, who was pointing forward. Both figures were in an attacking pose. A 30-meter scale model of the lighthouse at Rijeka (earlier Fiume), a port lost together with its sea and fleet, was placed on the pedestal but, given the projection jutting out in front of it, the height of the statues became part of the total height of 52 meters. Inside the memorial to war casualties, losses, and failures was hidden a museum, a ‘shrine’ to naval memorabilia. “On the mast is hoisted the silk command flag of the last great battleship of the Austro-Hungarian navy, the *Viribus Unitis*; the flag is in the possession of Governor Miklós Horthy, who made it available for the inauguration ceremony,” said a photographic report at the time.<sup>15</sup>

The opening speech given by former frigate captain Emil Norwalli Konek, in which he praised the leader in soaring, Stalinist terms, illustrates the prevailing view of history at the time. Here is an extract from the October 1937 speech.

“It is with a special pride that the soul of the heroic dead of the Hungarian Navy may behold Your Excellency, the last fleet commander of the former glorious navy, the commander of the legendary *Novara*, the hero of Otranto, here on this sublime occasion as Hungary’s head of state and at the same time the first soldier of the country [who] stands,

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14 In 1939–1959: All-Union Agricultural Exhibition. In 1959–1992: Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy of the USSR (VDNKh USSR). In 1992–2014: All-Russian Exhibition Centre (VVTs). It is an exhibition complex in the Ostankino District of the North-Eastern Administrative District of Moscow, the largest exhibition center in the city.

15 “Tiszteletadás Horthy Miklósnak”, *Budapesti Hírlap* 57, no. 231 (October 12, 1937): 2. The fate of the former flagship *Viribus Unitis* could justly become another symbolic and absurd memento of confusion, defeat, and disunity. In the summer of 1918, Horthy led her into battle, but her companion, the *Szent István*, sank, so the attack was called off. At the end of the WW2, the losing side had to hand over the ship to the South Slav National Council in the port of Pula, and only four hundred South Slav sailors were allowed to remain on board. These were blown up that night with the ship when Italian divers attacked it with mines, not knowing that it no longer belonged to the monarchy.

confident of his purpose and with a firm grip on the helm with which he has already steered the ship of our poor, dismembered country through many hardships and dangers [...] towards a better, happier and greater Hungarian future.”<sup>16</sup>

As for the future, six months later, the first anti-Jewish legislation was passed in the Parliament; a year later, the first Vienna Award began the reattachment of the territories lost in the Treaty of Trianon, and less than two years later, WW2 broke out. Eight years later, in 1945, fleeing German troops blew up the Horthy Bridge, and the Naval Monument was seriously damaged. Fifteen years later, in 1952, during the renovation of the bridge, the ruins of the monument were demolished.

### Illustrations



Aleksandr Deyneka: *Stakhanovists*. Sketch for the 1937 mural. 126 x 200 cm, Perm Contemporary Art Museum. Perm Krai © ПЕРММ <https://permartmuseum.ru/exhibit/202> (Accessed 28 June, 2024)

16 “Tiszteletadás Horthy Miklósnak”, *Budapesti Hírlap* 57, no. 231 (October 12, 1937): 2. In Hungarian original: „Különleges büszkeség is hevíti keblünket afelett, hogy a magyar hadi tengerész hősihalottak lelke Főméltóságodat, a volt dicső haditengerészet utolsó flottaparancsnokát, a legendás hírű »Novara« parancsnokát, Otranto hőseit láthatja itt, ennél a magasztos ünnepénél, mint Magyarország államfőjét és egyúttal az ország első katonáját [... aki] szilárdan és cél biztosan tartja erős kezében a kormánykereket, amellyel szegény, megcsönkített hazánk hajóját máris átkormányozta sok viszontagságon és veszélyen keresztül [...] szebb, jobb és nagyobb magyar jövő felé.”



The Soviet pavilion with Vera Mukhina's sculpture *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman* at the Paris World Fair of 1937. Fortepan. Donor: Andor Gara. Photo ID: 285346. <https://fortepan.hu/hu/photos/?id=285346> (Accessed 28 March, 2024)



Vera Mukhina's *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman* at the Paris World Fair in 1937. Contemporary French postcard. <https://archipostcard.blogspot.com/2012/10/face-face-extreme.html> (Accessed 28 May, 2024)



Vera Mukhina's sculpture *Worker and Kolkhoz Woman* back in Moscow at the northern gates of the Exhibitions of the Achievements of the People's Economy, on a much lower pedestal.

[https://www.reddit.com/r/MarxistCulture/comments/151wd4g/worker\\_and\\_kolkhoz\\_woman\\_on\\_the\\_north\\_entrance\\_of/?rdt=36287](https://www.reddit.com/r/MarxistCulture/comments/151wd4g/worker_and_kolkhoz_woman_on_the_north_entrance_of/?rdt=36287) (Accessed 18 July 2024)



The Naval Monument with the Horthy Bridge, 1943  
Fortepan. Donor: István Divéky. Photo ID: 183843

<https://fortepan.hu/en/photos/?id=183843> (Accessed 28 March, 2024)



The Naval Monument in Budapest on a postcard.  
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