

# The Poverty of the Matriarchal Ornament and the Gleam of the Civilised Woman

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### **The Poverty of the Matriarchal Ornament and the Gleam of the Civilised Woman**

Growing efforts within post-independence Czechoslovakia to exclude arts and crafts from modern design, which put the emphasis on machine production, also impacted on traditional female artistic activity. The latter was from this point on perceived as antithetical, or even an obstacle, to technological progress: just like other forms of handicrafts, it was rejected as a regressive force on the way to an industrialised and standardised lifestyle. This idea also became, particularly at the start of the 1920s, a leitmotif of modern aesthetics, which conceived itself as supremely anti-ornamental and, in the fields of housing, design, and architecture, as freed from the accretions of art and craft. Usefulness, standardisation, and purity of form were supposed to triumph over what the proponents of modernist progress asserted to be time-consuming, uneconomic, and, last but not least, unhealthy handicrafts and decorativism.<sup>2</sup>

Though, of course, it was not only women who upheld the handmade tradition and craft production, the conflict between modernism and decorativism was popularly portrayed in terms of sexual difference: on the one side, patriarchal moderation and uniformity cast as a progressive force, and on the other, matriarchal excess and ornateness cast as a reactionary one.<sup>3</sup> 'In today's era, when everywhere and in everything the desire is growing for simplicity and usefulness, there are, unfortunately, those, predominantly women, who adorn every object, whether produced by themselves or by others, in a laborious and wasteful manner', wrote the journalist Hana Cejnarová, commenting on the frenzied demand for unhealthy and uneconomic female handmade products during the mid-1920s.<sup>4</sup>

Yet while most representatives of the Czech avant-garde a priori rejected handicraft methods for the products of the modern lifestyle, less radical intellectuals called for the reform of craft and for its adaptation to the demands of the new era. Again it was female art education that found itself at the centre of contemporary discussions about the future of craft and handmade production. Josef Novák, in *Náš směr (Our Direction)*, a drawing and arts and crafts review, which had first appeared in 1910 and became a significant platform for issues of art education, formulated the most fundamental requirements for female handmade production in modern society along the lines of 'usefulness or reliable and efficient service, truthfulness or agreement between the material and its treatment, and the harmony or accordance of forms with their environment'.<sup>5</sup> He also declared one goal of the modern craft revival movement to be the elevation of women's handmade products 'from mere time-consuming hobby to the thoughtful, dedicated and responsible service of modern needs, and thus to the attainment of higher artistic qualities'.<sup>6</sup>

### Against Ornamental Non-Culture

A key role in these intense debates about efficiency and the modern lifestyle was undoubtedly played by the concept of the ornament; the disciples of Functionalist ideas declared open war on it and its existence was considered a brake on the development of humanity. As is attested by the words of Adolf Loos, the guru behind such ideas, the battle against ornament was also a battle against a proverbial 'eternal femininity'. Loos's proclamatory 1908 essay 'Ornament and Crime', while already known in Czech circles from the time of its original appearance, was only published in Czech in 1922, and, significantly, at a time when anti-ornamentalism was becoming an incantation of the emerging Devětsil generation and the proponents of Constructivism and Functionalism.<sup>7</sup> Loos's view of the ornament, as a manifestation of mental and social degeneration that had to be eradicated, had not lost its capacity to provoke even fourteen years after its original publication.

After a certain time, 'Ornament and Crime' was also published in *Náš směr*, which at the same time, in connection with Loos's text, announced a poll devoted to the ornament; the results were gradually published throughout 1924 and 1925. While the poll focussed primarily on the role of the ornament in aesthetic and artistic education, it also set its respondents more general questions concerning the role of the ornament in modern culture and society. Although the editors tried to formulate the poll's questions in a neutral manner, these questions nonetheless expressed their condemnation of the ornament as an anachronism: 'Should the ornament, as a manifestation of non-culture, be eradicated from life in general and from schools in particular?', the authors asked suggestively.

Among the poll's respondents was Adolf Loos himself. In his responses, he basically repeated those same opinions concerning the criminality and economic untenability of the ornament that he had first made public before the turn of the century.<sup>8</sup> His rhetoric was still just as combative and as expressive. By Loos's judgement, the modern person, as a 'person with modern nerves', inevitably hates the ornament, insofar as that person grasps that decorating with ornaments means a squandering of work, energy, time, and money, returning humanity to the level of savages and primitives. Loos perceived ornamentalism as part of an apparatus of power, a sadistic instrument that serves to commit violence against people, who are forced to work unnecessarily. Above all, however, he linked the pathological symptoms of the ornament to erotic instincts, which, according to him, manifest themselves most distinctly in women and which represent the antithesis of modernity as the manifestation of asceticism and the victory of the spirit over the body:

The utilitarian object lives on thanks to the durability of its material, and its modern value consists precisely in its solidity. When I abuse a utilitarian object by turning it into an ornament, I shorten its existence by consigning it to the early death of all fashion. Such murders committed against the material can only be caused by the whims and ambitions of woman—for the ornament in the service of woman will live forever. Objects of daily use, like fabric or wallpaper, whose durability is limited, remain in the service of fashion and thus become ornamental. Moreover, modern luxury gave priority to the durability and preciousness of the material over irrelevant embellishments. From an aesthetic standpoint the ornament thus barely comes under consideration. In the last analysis woman's ornament comes from the savages, it has erotic significance.<sup>9</sup>

In the 1920s, these ideas strongly influenced not only the views on artistic education espoused by the professional draughtspeople, whose platform was *Náš směr*, but also the woman question and the particular form it took. More specifically, many intellectuals connected the emancipation of the female sex and the establishment of a harmonious relationship between the sexes with the idea of the emancipation of women from decorativism and ornamentalism, as tokens of spiritual reaction, cheap superficiality, and erotic vulgarity. 'He who wishes to see a woman who is truly as free, as emancipated and as self-dependent as a man would surely not approve of her destroying her deeper sense of all that is truthful, honest and purposeful in the superficial decoration of every object', wrote the art educationalist Stanislav Matějček in his book *Visual Aesthetics and*

*Our Schools* (*Výtvarná estetika a naše škola*, 1927).<sup>10</sup> As with Loos, Matějček began with the assumption that women's cultivation of the ornament sprang from the female nature: it was proof of women's 'disquiet and weakness, their romanticism and sentimentality', and was instinctive in character.<sup>11</sup> The battle against decorativeness thus in a certain sense became a battle against nature: it was over this very nature, over the manifestations of its unrestrained and instinctual character, that modern culture had to triumph.

Amidst the dominant voices of these proponents of biological determinism, the contrasting opinion expressed by Jaromíra Mulačová remained somewhat exceptional. In an expansive essay covering the historical development of the jewel in human cultural history, Mulačová underlined the jewel's social and cultural contingency:

In one era after another, whole generations of women have been injected with many characteristics that may be termed moral diseases, and from which woman is only now beginning to free herself, in the period of her social and moral emancipation. One such moral disease, the one for which women are most reproached, is vanity and preoccupation with dress ... If, abandoning all biases, we trace the presence of these characteristics in terms of a line through history, we notice that the line reaches its highest point in those periods when woman assumes the role of slave towards man ... As soon as women's cultural and social standing rises, this line, representing their vain whims and fancies, starts to fall. Woman's spiritual and social ascent is strikingly reflected in the shifts in her taste and fondness for exterior effects.<sup>12</sup>

The debate about the ornament was thus inseparably fused with the woman question, and, as revealed by the poll in *Náš směr*, whose participants included significant personalities of artistic life, it was likewise fused with the issue of women's education in the fine arts.<sup>13</sup> The establishment of the right kind of artistic training in girls' schools was meant to contribute positively to the refinement of the female sex and at the same time to serve towards the elevation of taste in general, the progress of civilisation, and the democratisation of society:

It is work that has meaning, not decoration. Today work is honoured, and people triumph with work as they once did with finery and adornments. Is not the idle metropolitan peacock simply a laughing stock these days? At what levels of society are she and her appearance still certain to triumph? Do we not have greater respect for the woman worker than for the female clotheshorse who never works? ... Do we not clearly see two worlds here, a new one and a dying one?<sup>14</sup>

Art education in the middle and national schools became—as Bohumil Markalous, the foremost Czech aesthetician and expert in modern taste, asserted—a significant factor in the 'artistic construction of the entire state', and women played a particularly important role in this process.<sup>15</sup> As future teachers of art education, as mothers passing on the principles of taste to new generations, and, last but not least, as builders of the home, women were held responsible for the development of society and the culture of the new state in general. Although the male and female protagonists of modern artistic education advocated rationalisation and promoted liberation from 'idylism and lyricism' and from 'all that is finicky and trifling', women were still consigned here to the activities of 'domestic science' and handicrafts, envisaged rather as educated dilettantes within the domestic sphere than as professional artists.<sup>16</sup> Yet women's importance to the process of raising the quality of lifestyle was not in any way reduced because of that.

Women were to be 'reeducated' according to a Functionalist model of simplicity and functionality; their artistic work had to be adapted to its requirements, as did their very lives. Drawing teacher Marie Dohnalová, in the *Náš směr* poll, held up 'purity, ... fluent and simple elegance of line, neatness and beauty without any decorative tendency', as well as 'forms determined by function', as the aim of contemporary artistic schooling for girls, and hereby referred, correctly enough, to the way many girls' schools cast their students' drawing and artistic formation into the 'sweet but deceitful dream' of the ornament.<sup>17</sup> Dohnalová's contribution to the poll drew on her own pedagogical experiences to argue strongly against

the idea of an inborn decorative instinct in children, and especially in girls, and also against the separation made in schools between boys' and girls' drawing training. She optimistically proclaimed the following consequences of eradicating ornamental superficiality from art education:

The benefits of teaching modern drawing methods lie in the joyful stimulus they offer towards work, but we hope there will be other benefits too. We hope that our drawing methods will one day appear as a powerful educational factor in both deepening and bringing to the surface the spiritual life of the future woman, in the values that her purified soul, rid of its naive ideas, is able to draw from its secret depths and place in the beneficial service of life, which, through her recognition of the beauty in functionality, she is always able, in whatever calling, to purposefully shape according to clear ideas of Good, Beauty, Truth and Humanity.<sup>18</sup>

The conception of art as the expression and the bearer of truth and goodness, reflecting the basic principles of Platonist aesthetics, linked questions of aesthetics, utility, and ethics. The formal asceticism of Constructivism and Functionalism thus became not only a dictate about artistic form (which was supposed to follow function), but also a moral imperative. Ornamentalism, as a kind of gilded surface masking the real essence of things, was a deception, a trick, a falsehood. In Markalous's words, it 'always tempts people, in social terms, to commit evil, it represents substitution by a lie, and nothing can possibly be created with it, except in the sense of exclusive, individually produced, and thus aristocratic or plutocratic and antisocial artworks'.<sup>19</sup>

Not only did the decorative function of art have to fall in the battle against the ornament, but so did individual handcrafting. Markalous's call for collectively and socially produced works of art aimed towards a standardised, machine-made aesthetic, such as was espoused by the Czech interwar avant-garde and in which there was no place for female handicraft products. Instead of individual creative acts for private (domestic) uses, what was advocated was work produced by the collective and intended for the collective. 'The modern person', wrote Stanislav Matějček, 'does not have time for, and cannot lose a single moment in, the devising of ornaments, for his duty is to work for the whole, for humanity—he is a collective being. He knows that he needs calm and strength—the ornament is disquiet and weakness, romanticism, sentimentality'.<sup>20</sup>

Through the second half of the 1920s, Matějček's reformist ideas played a key role in the field of aesthetic and artistic education. Matějček summarised his ideas in the book *Visual Aesthetics and Our Schools*, published at the expense of the Art Department of the Educational Union in Plzeň (Výtvarný odbor Osvětového svazu v Plzni).<sup>21</sup> In expounding his philosophy of 'desuperficialising', his term for the process of aesthetic and formal reductionism prescribed by the slogan 'form follows function', Matějček referred not only to Loos, but also to the German architect Bruno Taut and his book *The New Dwelling: Woman as Creator (Nové bydlení: Žena jako tvůrce)*.<sup>22</sup> Taut's principles of functionalised housekeeping, of a home governed by order, harmony, and a model cleanliness based on modern standards of hygiene, informed Matějček's principles of female education. In a chapter devoted to girls' drawing he wrote:

In my opinion it is wrong that drawing in girls' schools has to be of the decorative kind. The enlightened woman must surely call for liberation here too ... We do not want to see our women seduced into Richelieu embroidery, the perforation of costly material, the cutting apart of cloth and the wasting of time and money, and even their health, in the production of ornaments. He who wishes to see a woman who is truly as free, as emancipated and as self-dependent as a man would surely not approve of her destroying her deeper sense of all that is truthful, honest and purposeful in the superficial adornment of every object ... A sensitive eye, a bright brain, orderliness, model cleanliness and hygiene in everything that she touches and which passes through her hands, taste and delicacy and love for work—let these things adorn the woman of this century!<sup>23</sup>



Fig. 11.1.  
Jan Vaněk and  
Zdeněk Rossmann  
(eds.),  
*Civilised Woman*  
(*Civilisovaná žena*,  
1929). Catalogue.  
The Moravian  
Gallery, Brno.  
© Pavel Rossmann

### The Mass Ornament of the New Womanhood

The campaign against the ornament, which accompanied Czech art theory and criticism for the whole latter half of the 1920s, may have blatantly linked an undesirable decorativeness with women and womanhood, but it also had its emancipatory aspect. Loos, Markalous, Matějček, along with other opponents of superficial decoration, trinkets, and personal curios, saw the death of the ornament as enabling the birth of the free woman: a rational, modern, and civilised woman who ‘successfully collaborates with us men on progress and human work’.<sup>24</sup> However, for the male champions of these opinions it was predominantly a matter of creating a woman who was standardised and ‘functionalised’. According to the promoters of Functionalist ideas, the precondition for the civilising of the female sex was, first and foremost, the transformation of female taste: besides the elimination of the ornament from girls’ art education, this involved a radical reform of female clothing and habitation, areas in which—in the words of Bruno Taut—woman exists ‘as creator’. Overcoming the slavery of ornament, fashion, and household would help achieve the desired cultivation of the female sex, but also a more economical means of living.





Fig. 11.2.  
Zdeněk Rossmann,  
view into the  
exhibition  
*Civilised Woman*  
(*Civilizovaná žena*,  
1929–1930).  
Black-and-white  
photograph,  
20.5 x 16 cm.  
Moravian Gallery,  
Brno. © Pavel  
Rossmann

In Jan Vaněk's book *The Civilised Woman: How Should a Cultured Woman Dress* (*Civilizovaná žena: Jak se má kultivovaná žena oblékat*), a manifesto-style volume published to accompany the holding of an eponymous exhibition in Brno at the turn of 1929 and 1930, the author accused fashion designers of abusing the inertia of female thought (Figs. 11.1 and 11.2). In place of so-called 'Parisian fashions', he called for a unitary and fixed style of dress for both men and women, and specifically advised practical and genteel trouser wear: 'As artists, adhering to rules of economy and functionality, we protest against the wastage of material, the impracticality, the lack of hygiene of modern female dress. As sociologists, we don't want to see Paris, with its fashionable get-ups, reducing our women to trollops, and we dare hope to see women's clothing democratised in the same way men's clothing has been'.<sup>25</sup> A woman's level of culture was measured by her degree of adaptation to the dictates of Functionalist style rather than by her degree of education or her actual professional and creative work.<sup>26</sup> The external traits of modernised femininity—appearance, style, media image—thus successfully overshadowed the professional and creative emancipation of womankind. Despite the androgynous aspects of current fashion trends, which were supposed to raise women to the same level as men and to 'the heights of the modern era', and despite the obsession of contemporary magazines and film production with the most diverse variations on

the theme of female independence, in reality the 'civilised woman' remained a formulaic mask of modernity: instead of an active and autonomous modern being she was an object of male ideology and a commodity.<sup>27</sup>

Ethical questions certainly also fed into the issue of women's lifestyles, since—as Milena Jesenská had written several years earlier—style is not only an expression of aesthetics and personality, but also of morality.<sup>28</sup> Yet it seems that, in the case of the battle for the civilised woman, form triumphed over function and that the outer attributes of civilisation and culture came to hold sway over the inner ones.<sup>29</sup>

Though the work of the 'new woman' was not neglected in debates about modern aesthetics, taste, and lifestyle, the predominant concern, paradoxically, was with modernised work in the home, which the leaders of the reform efforts presented as a means of attaining female autonomy. No matter whether the 'new woman' was dressed in a trouser suit, her supreme role remained to take care of her household and family. As Matějček tellingly wrote: 'Love for children, for profound humanity, for the dwelling that we might wish for her sanctuary—let all this have greater value for her than the ever so arduous and unnecessary embroidering of curtains!'<sup>30</sup>

Women's relationship to the household as a place of creative activity was affirmed in yet another publication connected to the exhibition *Civilised Woman*, initiated and edited by Jan Vaněk, again, and Zdeněk Rossmann. This publication, entitled *Woman at Home (Žena doma)*, focussed mainly on the streamlining and rationalisation of domestic activity, the achievement of which would wipe out any remaining prejudices about the perfection of older forms of life, domestic life in particular. The opinion was repeated here that Functionalist simplicity and usefulness are important means for the modernisation and cultivation of the female sex. Even Milena Jesenská could not avoid this contradictory fusion of the civilised woman and the nurturer of home and family. On the one hand she looked up to the civilised woman, as 'a woman with firm muscles and precise mental self-discipline, a critical and thoughtful person ... turning old conventions upside down, creating new values, spiritual ones'.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand she celebrated the humble female soul who realised herself through the management of her household: 'The main thing is the soul of a woman, the expression of her personality, her skill, the soft, quiet gift of being able to create within this world comprised of a few walls'.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, the civilised woman, as an icon of modernity and emancipation and the incarnation of Functionalist principles of habitation and dress, had an opposing face: the face of a woman turning her gaze back to home and household. It is here that she was supposed to realise her inborn aesthetic sensitivities and artistic talents, here that she could be a real artist. The obsession with the new woman moreover prevented the more fundamental discussion of the question of 'new' manhood. Olga Stránská-Absolonová expressed her feelings about this discrepancy at the outset of the 1920s: 'We must not aspire to doing the same things as men, not least because today's man is hardly a shining example of a human being. Just as we want a new woman, so we also want a new man'.<sup>33</sup>

During the campaign against ornamentation, decorativism, and handicrafts as relics of the past, women working in the applied arts inevitably found themselves in an unenviable situation. Not only did they face attacks on the female artistic tradition, which was associated with decorative art, but they were also meant to surrender any possibility of ever reaching the position of autonomous creators; they were instead supposed to merge back into the anonymous collective, only this time within the realm of mass production. Had they wanted to unite with the adherents of modern life and become truly emancipated women, they would have had to come to terms with the aesthetic demands of the new womanhood: that is, to be not only creators of modern goods freed from all the accretions of history and decorativism, but also to be the consumers and wearers of these mass-produced goods. In other words, the new, non-ornamental woman, in accommodating these demands, paradoxically had to turn herself into a mass ornament.<sup>34</sup> Unsurprisingly, then, in regard to questions of the ornament and the potential of applied and decorative art, women proved to be far less strictly orthodox than their male counterparts. They criticised many of the premises of Functionalism as an expression of militancy, as an undesirable attack on human individuality and



as blind iconoclasm, and they correctly pointed out the contradictions and inconsistencies among the movement's more orthodox proponents. But above all they sought to defend the potential of the female artistic tradition and of handicrafts for contemporary culture and to disturb the boundary between high and low art, which to a large extent had been defined on the basis of gender difference, of division of labour, and thus of separate spheres of activity.

### Art and Life

In a contribution for the magazine *Přítomnost* (*The Present*) titled 'The Ornament and Life', the translator Božena Králíková-Stránská responded to lectures given in Brno by three leading modern architects: Le Corbusier, Amédée Ozenfant, and Adolf Loos. She commented wittily on the paradox of Ozenfant in particular railing against the ornament and decoration, when he was himself both the architect and the owner of a fashion salon:

How is it that this staunch enemy of the ornament can sustain this hysterical female abstraction—fashion—through his own work and ideas, and likewise permit fashion to sustain him? And judging by his conférencier's tuxedo, the neckline of his waistcoat against the brilliant white of his stiff shirt front, his faultless manner of wearing his tiny necktie, ... judging by this elegant exterior of Mr. Ozenfant, I doubt that his workshops are producing clothes *à la* Silénka in Těsnohlídek's delightful novel *Green Willow* (*Vrba zelená*).<sup>35</sup>

Králíková-Stránská herself took a firm stance against decorative trinkets in this text, and, just like the three architectural gurus, interpreted the question of the ornament as a social and economic question. Nonetheless, in her ironic gloss on Ozenfant's speech she revealed the double faces of several promoters of aesthetic asceticism. The battle against the ornament was, to wit, not only an economic question and not only a question of women, but also a question of social class, and Functionalist aesthetics should, among other things, contribute to the overcoming of social differences: 'modern culture does not tear down the prosperity of one class, but builds the prosperity of all'.<sup>36</sup> Králíková-Stránská thus touched on an issue that remained somewhat obscured within the passionate anti-ornamentalist discussions. While the critique of the ornament and of decoration in general in the proclamatory statements and texts of Loos and his followers mainly made reference to folk ornamentality and the decorative objects of folk art, which 'were made by the hands of simple country women, aware of their moral duty: to beautify and ennoble their life, their family and their whole society', or to the often derivative ornaments of urban middle-class households, the world of luxury connected with the higher social classes seemed to go overlooked.<sup>37</sup> But as Králíková-Stránská pointed out, there were preferable strategies to robbing people of a little piece of poetry, especially when that piece was economically harmless. It was more important, rather, to concentrate on the ornaments of the privileged elite, where the 'brilliant, luxurious fur, the costly but perishable fabric, susceptible to the whims of fashion', means 'dead, unproductive capital' and 'a dubious investment, bad for the individual, bad for the whole society'.<sup>38</sup> However, this critique of the aristocratic background of anti-ornamentalism, as preached by the authorities of modern lifestyle and architecture, did not lead in Králíková-Stránská's case to an orthodox commitment to aesthetic purism or to the vision of a uniform modernity, such as occurred with, say, several representatives of Devětsil and the Levá fronta (Left Front). On the contrary, she described the strategy of total annihilation of the ornament as a destructive and iconoclastic approach, one whose widespread application would not only not help raise the living standards of the working class, but would also involve sacrificing a large part of human cultural heritage, including the cultural production of women. Indeed, the ornament of the past, she wrote, was:

an element much more deeply rooted in the world of women than in the world of men. History and the discoveries of archaeologists give compelling attestation of this. If it was a woman's property, it was an ornament: her comb, clothing, furniture, tableware, tablecloth or flower vase. The young Slovácko lass, expressing a joyful mood, would paint birds and flowers over her porch, on jugs, and would embroider a decoration on every piece of linen or clothing.<sup>39</sup>

In place of the Loosian destructive method, she proposed what she saw as a constructive one. Her goal was not just the reform of lifestyle and fashion, but also the improved organisation of work,

the introduction of economy measures into production and above all raising the quality of mass produced-goods. The values of rationality, order, and availability, guiding the production of high-quality useful goods for all levels of society, should act as a remedy against the hysteria that was, for Králíková-Stránská, a side effect of the faddishness, extravagance, and sense of disproportion that were specific to the upper classes.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, individual artistic work should be retained, though not as a tool for the creation of luxuries, but rather as a means of enabling real art—that is, work that was individual and unrepeatable—to influence the everyday world in which we live. As against the extreme approach to the modernisation of life—which took the form of a rigorous application of mass machine production to the creation of lifestyle and environment—this method represented an attempt to break down the boundaries between art and life, as well as between art and production. This was a vision in which the artist's particular style could go on to influence lifestyle, even by means of factory-made products. Králíková-Stránská wrote of Loos's lecture that:

he damns the easy chair, that most comfortable of resting spots; he does not consider how to make the easy chair cheaper, or how to extend its production so that even the labourer, coming back from work, could have one in his home. To take Loos's arguments to heart would mean covering one's furniture in grain alcohol and setting fire to it, then burning the carpets, the pictures, the window frames—and finally the whole house. The essential message of his lecture was: artists—get your hands off everything surrounding us in this world. I therefore believe that the final word on these issues of far-reaching importance has not yet been said.<sup>41</sup>

Thus it was not just a matter of the ornament, but also of an attempt to found a relationship between handcrafting and technology (in a continuation of concerns pursued earlier by Karel Čapek). Among the Devětsil avant-garde support intensified for the death of handmade production, to be replaced by factory production and a uniform machine-made aesthetic.<sup>42</sup> There were nonetheless voices elsewhere that advocated the harmonisation and collaboration between both forms of activity. In the second half of the 1920s these calls for the reconciliation of handmade, artistic work and mechanised, machine work would play a substantial part in the discussions about the role of women in modern art and lifestyle: a justifiable position given the potential significance of design work for mass production. When Stanislav Matějček recommended innovations for girls' artistic education, he emphasised not only the elimination of the ornament but also 'a sense for the machine'. Machines and technology were perceived as male categories symbolising the progress of the modern century; 'the woman of this century must not step around them ... with a contemptuous sneer and naïve incomprehension. A mutual understanding will hereby be born between man and woman: men will come to understand women's work, and women will understand men's work'.<sup>43</sup>

### **The Humanisation of the Machine**

Changes in the content of hand-made production within the modern era were something stressed by leading Czech feminist Lola Hanousková in a piece devoted to the arts and crafts section at the exhibition *Woman and Art (Žena a umění)*, held in Prague's Radiotrň hall in 1927 and organised by the National Women's Council (Ženská národní rada).<sup>44</sup> 'Women's so-called handicraft work has long ceased to consist of making impractical trifles (embroidered slippers, suspenders, etc., crocheting, metres and metres of the same lace pattern, endless quantities of shawls and pairs of knitted stockings)', she wrote. 'Today's woman has left a large part of this mind-numbing labour to the machine and now devotes her energies and free time to the production of goods—things that are not only adornments for herself and her family hearth, but are also of practical use'.<sup>45</sup>

As 'women's' work, artistic efforts in the realm of housing and interior design continued to be seen as activities supplementary to architecture and furniture design, fields completely dominated by men, but gradually they stopped being considered antithetical to practicality, functionality, or purpose. Female journalists as well as female artists themselves—creators of modern, austere textile and ceramic designs—advocated not the elimination of individual creative work from production, but rather a greater investment of invention, originality, and individuality into modern design, as a means towards the 'humanisation' of purist and Functionalist aesthetics.

In her writings on applied art, textile designer Jaroslava Vondráčková emphasised the necessity of rehabilitating the authorial gesture, so as to balance the often cold and severe standardised aesthetic espoused by the foremost representatives of the Devětsil avant-garde. But for Vondráčková this was not just about formal and stylistic gestures but also about material and structural questions, which she saw as an important counterpoint to the ascetically smooth surfaces propounded by Functionalism. She emphasised ‘getting inside the materials emotionally’ and the need to free human perception from the dictates of uniformity and standardisation, extending it to the whole of reality and into ‘an immediate relationship with things’.<sup>46</sup> These stresses can be seen not only as significant efforts towards the re-evaluation of some of Functionalism’s more extreme postulates, but also as an important call for the emancipation of female artistic work and for the strengthening of the role of art in modern lifestyle in general.<sup>47</sup>

Similar ideas were heard at the time from other female writers, including for instance the translator and journalist Staša Jílovská. In an issue of *Věstník Kruhu výtvarných umělkyně* (*The Bulletin of the Circle of Women Fine Artists*) from 1924, this author appealed to female artists active in the field of interior design to work more with colour, which in its immediacy and directness could replace the obsolete ornament. Yet she put her main emphasis on the value of an art that she fundamentally distinguished from domestic handicrafts:

There are other arts besides painting, sculpture and music, arts that women have embraced and found satisfaction in: the petty arts of textiles, interior design and artistic home furnishings. There is enormous scope here for the artistically sensitive and talented woman. That this area is well-suited to her is attested by the many creations of both local and foreign female artists ... In today’s era, as we slowly come to restrict ourselves to the simplest furniture and to the parts of that furniture that are the most necessary, our dwellings would feel very bare and unhomey without these artistic supplements. The more we limit ourselves in the quantity and appearance of the furniture, the more welcome is the variety of materials and patterns with which we add to our homes, and the greater is the need for care in selecting them. And who is more qualified to help us in this selection, to contribute her experiences and her arts, than a woman trained in this field, who can now demonstrate the results of her work, her artistic talents, her good taste?<sup>48</sup>

Like the majority of her female contemporaries, Jílovská did not question the idea that there was a bond between women and the art of interior design. Purposeful, function-driven art thus continued to be marked by the traditional division of labour that separated the public sphere, in which men carried out their immense responsibilities, from the private sphere, where women applied themselves in producing their ‘artistic supplements’. ‘Of course, under modern trends, working men ... aim at a grander scale, at more lavish applications of their abilities, as in the case of architecture etc., and thus time simply does not allow them to work in a concentrated, systematic way on specialised textile products or to explore the possibilities of textile technology. Thus it mainly falls on women to apply their capabilities in this field’. Thus wrote Vondráčková in an attempt to explain the absence of men in the textile industry.<sup>49</sup> Two years or so later, Jaroslava Klenková, a painter and the author of a chapter on professional work for women in the arts in *The Book of Women’s Jobs* (*Kniha ženských zaměstnání*), alerted her readers to the women’s studio at the special architecture school of Prague’s School of Applied Arts (Uměleckoprůmyslová škola). But her emphasis was precisely on the practical value of the studio’s training ‘for work in interior and furniture design, areas in which a talented woman could particularly excel, given that she is better acquainted with the household needs of women than any man is’.<sup>50</sup> However, in regard to those graduates of the special courses who chose to pursue a career in ‘practically applied art’, rather than following the path of the independent artist, Klenková was more sceptical. She pointed out, correctly, the limited opportunities that industrial plants (glassworks, ceramics and textile plants, mural painting companies, and such like) offered to women wanting to make practical use of their artistic education. ‘The field is extensive enough, and yet despite this the prospects for women are poor. Since it is predominantly comprised of private firms, one cannot speak with certainty about the salary or promotion prospects. Both are generally dependent on the proficiency of the artist and the proficiency of the firm as a whole’.<sup>51</sup>

Despite the stigma of old-fashioned aestheticism that, in the 1920s, tarred the School of Applied Arts and the art industry in general, the oft-abused concept of craft turned out to have some life still left in it. Indeed, during the interwar years the art industry became the scene of a productive dialogue between high and low art, monumental and chamber works, and, to invoke Karel Čapek, the plastic and the picturesque, and this was also thanks to women's efforts. Craft gradually broke free of its mannered eccentricities. The lowbrow, the small-scale, the picturesque lost their stamp of backward-looking, self-sufficient decorativeness and frippery. Craft and applied art took an ever-greater role in practical life and were employed in architectural projects. Last but not least, women slowly began to undertake spatially-oriented design work, overcoming the traditional assumption that women are lacking in three-dimensional imagination. 'The art industry of today serves life alone, acting to beautify the surroundings of all those who long for art, and so we see a realisation of the principles that Ruskin declared more than half a century ago', wrote the ethnographer Drahomíra Stránská in 1935, evaluating women's work in the art industry.<sup>52</sup>

Everything that surrounds the human being should be endowed with an elegant form, freed of excessive embellishment but flawlessly executed from perfect material. Whether it be a factory-made product or a product made by hand, it should always be realised in a tasteful manner; mass-produced products are of course made according to different principles than handmade ones, which allow for more decoration and individuality. The long-enduring conflict between art and mechanical factory production has thus found its resolution, in this very initiative of providing specific designs for factory products, and specific designs for handmade products. Women artists participate more commonly in the second kind of work, but they apply themselves actively and fully to it, and thus have proved able to carve out a new path in several areas.<sup>53</sup>

In Stránská's writing too, then, the emphasis falls on the need for the humanisation of the modern person's living environment. The principle of functionality was interpreted not only in utilitarian terms, but also in a psychological sense. In her view modern aesthetics and craft should serve people's practical needs and at the same time evoke in them an emotional response. An artist could attain this response through 'an investment of feeling in technology' and 'a sense for the usefulness of things': qualities, Stránská writes, that enable women to surpass their male colleagues in several artistic fields.<sup>54</sup>

Stránská presented that investment of feeling as a specifically female capacity, a view that bears the trace of the notion of male and female psyches as a duality of reason and emotion. But this also shows how the concept of applied art as spiritual work comes back into play in the 1920s, serving now as a counterpoint to the narrowly 'technicist' dictate or to a Functionalist aesthetic cleansed of all psychology.

The male and female proponents of spiritual but usable goods were nonetheless linked to the orthodox Functionalists by a shared vision of progress in the structure and organisation of society. But while the second group saw the route to achieving this in the embrace of manufacturing production and standardised forms, the first sought to connect art with life by means of a dialogue between matter and spirit.

*Translated by Jonathan Owen*

- 1 Martina Pachmanová, *Zrození umělkyně z pěny limonády – Genderové kontexty české moderní teorie a kritiky umění* (Prague: Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (UMPRUM), 2013).
- 2 From this perspective, economic interests were defined in terms of the interests of society as a whole. What could seem uneconomic from the point of view of society as a whole was certainly not always uneconomic from the point of view of the individual. After the First World War handmade and craft work was very well-paid, which raised the living standard for many women and men active in these fields.
- 3 Here I am paraphrasing the term ‘patriarchal aesthetic’, which was used by Jacques Le Rider to describe Art Nouveau ornamentalism of Viennese provenance. Jacques Le Rider, *Modernity and Crises of Identity: Culture and Society in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), p. 112.
- 4 Hana Cejnarová, ‘Ženské ruční a domácí práce’, *Náš směr* 11 (1925–1926): p. 65. Surprisingly, however, the author did not link women’s decorativeness, their pursuit of crocheting, sewing, and embroidery, with their maternal role, but on the contrary saw these things as hindering the successful fulfilment of that role. She appealed thus to her readers: ‘Let us spare our health, our time, and thus also our money, let us buy things that are cheaper, machine-produced, functional and tasteful, let us devote this precious time to our families and not, for the sake of our outdated whims, deny our children their right to a mum!’ (p. 67).
- 5 Josef Novák, ‘Dnešní obroda ženských ručních prací’, *Náš směr* 6 (1919–1920): p. 231.
- 6 Novák, ‘Dnešní obroda ženských ručních prací’, p. 231. On the unfavourable impact of long-term handmade production on physical health, see: ‘Márinko, háčkuj!’, *Ženský obzor* 17/6–10 (1920): p. 215.
- 7 Adolf Loos, ‘Ornament a zločin’, trans. ‘V. N.’, *Tribuna* 4 (15 June 1922): pp. 3–4. On the relationship between femininity and the ornament see also: Julius Klínger, *Das Weib im modernen Ornament* (Leipzig: Baumgärtner, 1900).
- 8 ‘The lower the culture, the greater the presence of the ornament. The ornament is something that needs to be overcome’, wrote Loos in an 1898 essay on female fashion. ‘The Papuan and the criminal ornament their skin. The Indian covers his boat and his paddle with ornaments, as many as he can. But the motorcycle and the modern steam-liner are free of ornaments. An advancing culture removes ornamentation from one object after another. Men who wish to emphasise their relation to earlier epochs dress themselves to this day in gold, velvet and silk ... But we are stepping into a new, more significant era, in which it will not be through the workings of sensuality, but through an earned economic independence, that a woman will achieve equal status with a man. And then velvet and silk, flowers and ribbons, feathers and colours will lose their effectiveness. Thank God they are disappearing!’ Adolf Loos, ‘Dámská módo, ty strašná kapitolo kulturních dějin!’, *Neue Freie Presse* (21 August 1898). Czech edition: *Pestrý týden* (1928). Reprinted in: Adolf Loos, *Řeči do prázdna*, ed. Bohumil Markalous (Prague: Tichá Byzanc, 2001), p.100, 102.
- 9 Adolf Loos, ‘Anketa’, trans. V. Bauer and Z. Louda, *Náš směr* 11 (1924–1925), p. 51. Right from the beginning, Loos’s opinions on the ornament presented the traits of an aesthetic Darwinism. Loos was influenced by, among other things, the then-popular writings of the founder of anthropological criminology and defender of eugenics, Cesare Lombroso, who was the first to label the adornment of the body a sign of criminality. For Lombroso, tattoos and other bodily ‘ornaments’ that belong to the traditions of savages are, when present in civilised society, a proof of racial and moral degeneration. He focussed not only on male tattooing, but also on female ornamentation. In his treatise *Criminal Woman (La Donna Delinquente)* he drew a direct parallel between the ornament, woman, and criminality; female criminality, according to him, most frequently arises precisely from a desire for adornment, beautification and luxury, for ornaments of one’s own. See: Cesare Lombroso, *La Donna Delinquente* (Torino: Fratelli Bocca, 1903). An interesting parallel with these opinions can be found in German art theory: ‘A woman’s talent is good only for luxuriance, decorativeness and ornamentality; her taste is the child of instinctuality and is not critically organised. Given that [a woman] cannot independently develop a technique nor submit her artistic style to a decisive will, she remains nothing more ... than a wretched dilettante’. Karl Scheffler, *Die Frau und die Kunst: eine Studie* (Berlin: Bard, 1908), p. 20.
- 10 Stáňa (Stanislav) Matějček, *Výtvarná estetika a naše škola* (Plzeň: Výtvarný odbor Osvětového svazu v Plzni, 1927), p. 47. See also: Stanislav Matějček, ‘Ornament – sakrament’, *Náš směr* 10 (1923–1924): pp. 153–156.
- 11 Stanislav Matějček, ‘Anketa’, *Náš směr* 11, 1924–1925, p. 84. He related the ‘Hydra’ of ornamentalism to jungle savages, as well as to the moral weakness and frivolity of women: ‘Let the ornament, at most, retreat into bars and other such places where people want to have fun. Places where time and money and health are squandered ... There people can send themselves into a stupor looking at ‘ornaments’ in the movements of frivolous women as they dance their modern dances. There the ornament-entertainment will live and thrive, and the ornamentalist-creator can give vent to his unrestrained imagination in a stylised and spontaneous manner. But as for public life, the school and the family of the modern, progress-loving citizen—let the ornament not creep into these places’ (pp. 84–87).
- 12 Jaromíra Mulačová, ‘Šperky a ženy’, *Ženský obzor* 18/7 (1922): p. 97.
- 13 *Náš směr* was published in Brno between 1910 and 1926 as a platform for art education, craft industry, and hand production. This magazine was accompanied by a supplement called *Ornamenty (Ornaments)*, which served as a handicraft manual for women, presenting patterns for all kinds of decorations. ‘I believe’, Teréza Turnerová wrote enthusiastically in the pages of *Ženská revue (Women’s Review)*, ‘that no woman who ever looks through *Ornamenty* will then go back to handicraft works produced without any taste and lacking in artistic significance, when she knows that endless metres of formulaic work can be replaced by a single piece of tasteful work, inspired by an artistic spirit and giving witness to the artistic advancement of the understanding spirit’. Teréza Turnerová, ‘Umělecká výchova v oboru ženských ručních prací’, *Ženská revue* 9 (1913): pp. 105–106.
- 14 J. Hála, ‘Je zdobná tendence vrozená, či nikoliv?’, *Náš směr* 13/8–9 (1926–1927): p. 248.
- 15 Bohumil Markalous, ‘Anketa’, *Náš směr* 11 (1924–1925): p. 83 (the text of a lecture by B. Markalous at the meeting of the Association of Moravian Drawing Professors in Brno (Sdružení moravských profesorů kreslení v Brně), 11 September 1924). Bohumil Markalous was one of the most important promoters of Loos’s ideas, which he examined in the pages of the ambitious, though short-lived, modern housing journal *Bytová kultura (Housing Culture, 1924–1925)*, which was published by the Brno modern furniture producer, journalist and occasional architect and designer Jan Vaněk.
- 16 Markalous, ‘Anketa’, p. 83.
- 17 Marie Dohnalová, ‘Neodlišujme dívčího kreslení!’, ‘Anketa’, *Náš směr* 11 (1924–1925): pp. 13–14.
- 18 Dohnalová, ‘Neodlišujme dívčího kreslení!’, p. 14. When Olga Stránská-Absolonová advised female youth on how to attain the highest values of humanity, she drew on the same premises: ‘There is no beauty without good; it may not oppose it. It must grow from it. Beauty must inspire a love for life, for one’s fellow humans, for everything around us, and only thus does it become true. Beauty must be goodness, in order to be truth ... By harmonising beauty, truth and goodness in your being you will become a useful, balanced person and you will attain true, complete happiness in your life’. Olga Stránská-Absolonová, ‘K dívčí mládeži’ (1912), in Olga Stránská-Absolonová, *Za novou ženou* (Prague: B. Kočí, 1920), p. 154.
- 19 Quoted in Zdeněk Louda, ‘Proti ornamentu’, *Náš směr* 11 (12 February 1925): p. 72.
- 20 Matějček, ‘Anketa’, p.84.
- 21 Matějček, *Výtvarná estetika a naše škola*, p. 47.
- 22 Bruno Taut, *Nové bydlení: Žena jako tvůrce* (Prague: Orbis, 1926).
- 23 Matějček, *Výtvarná estetika a naše škola*, pp. 47–48.
- 24 Jan Vaněk and Zdeněk Rossmann (eds.), *Civilisovaná žena* (Brno: Jan Vaněk, 1929), p. 9.
- 25 Jan Vaněk, ‘Žena konečně civilisovaná’, in Vaněk and Rossmann (eds.), *Civilisovaná žena*, p. 11. On changes in women’s fashion adopting a boyish style, see: Milena Jesenská, ‘“Uličnické” šaty’, *Národní listy* 64 (27 March 1924): p. 5.
- 26 Discussions about the civilised woman—in contrast to the issue of the ornament—predominantly took place in male society; men themselves were supposed to show women the way towards the highest goals of modern civilisation. The exception here was Milena Jesenská. In the collection *Civilisovaná žena* she criticised the undesirable return to decorativeness in dress, which is a mark of ‘the upper crust’, a capitalist fashion for rich people, for the select few’, but also a mark of the cultural backwardness of primitive societies. There thus again appears—even from a woman writer—the Darwinian association between woman and savage, who represents a lower stage of human development.

'Clothes stop being dress and become an enticement. Glass pearls and coloured coral hang from the necks of civilised women as they do from the necks of black women. Woman is again a poor thing who has to be captured, not a free person who offers herself'. Milena Jesenská, 'Mají svobodnou vůli, ale šatů nemají', in Vaněk and Rossman (eds.), *Civilisovaná žena*, p. 33. See also: Milena Jesenská, 'Civilisovaná žena?', *Lidové noviny* 27 (1 December 1929): p. 20.

27 Jindřich Halabala, 'Rozhodnou ženy', *Žijeme* 1/1 (1931): p. 29. Jindřich Halabala's text, appearing in the newly founded journal of the Union of Czechoslovak Creative Work, concerned the relation between the woman consumer, or the woman who buys, and the modern household.

28 Milena Jesenská, 'Krásná žena', *Národní listy* 65 (1 October 1925): p. 6.

29 Milena Jesenská, 'Zvenčí a uvnitř', *Národní listy* 65 (1 October 1925): p. 6.

30 Matějček, *Výtvarná estetika a naše škola*, p. 48.

31 Milena Jesenská, 'Mají svobodnou vůli, ale šatů nemají', in Vaněk and Rossman (eds.), *Civilisovaná žena*, p. 32.

32 Milena Jesenská, 'O té ženské emancipaci několik poznámek velice zaostálých', *Národní listy* 63 (23 March 1923): p. 1.

33 Stránská-Absolonová, 'K dívčí mládeži', p. 137.

34 The concept of the 'mass ornament' originally comes from the 1927 essay of the same name by the German architect, sociologist, and essayist Siegfried Kracauer. Kracauer used it as a symbol of mass production and entertainment, which had taken hold of German culture during the Weimar era and whose power would later be utilised for propagandistic ends by Nazi aesthetics. Kracauer linked the mass ornament with mass production, the entertainment industry, and life in the metropolis, where the unified and disciplined movement of bodies (in labour activity) creates spectacular abstract images: mass ornaments. Siegfried Kracauer, *Ornament masy*, trans. Milan Váňa (Prague: Academia, 2008). On the relationship between femininity, mass production, and modern consumer society, see: Andreas Huyssen, 'Mass Culture as a Woman: Modernism's Other', in Tania Modleski (ed.), *Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 188–208.

35 Božena Králíková-Stránská, 'Ornament a život', *Přítomnost* 2 (5 February 1925): p. 54. The translator Božena Králíková-Stránská was the wife of Emil Králík, an architect and a professor at the Brno Technical University.

36 Králíková-Stránská, 'Ornament a život', p. 53. The fact that many proponents of Functionalism connected the new style not only with a cultivated, but also an affluent clientele is additionally affirmed by the opinions of Le Corbusier. In his key text 'L'Art Decoratif d'Aujourd'hui' (Paris: Editions Crès, 1925), concerning rationalisation and standardisation, he expressly wrote about formal purism as a feature of luxury objects.

37 Emil Pacovský, 'Žena v umění výtvarném', *Veraikon* 9 (1923): p. 121.

38 Králíková-Stránská, 'Ornament a život', p. 54. Although the most radical opponents of decorativism made an absolute demand of their call for the death of the ornament and did not take cultural, economic or regional distinctions into account, Králíková-Stránská helped infuse a less radical, but realistic, attitude into the *Náš směr* poll, an attitude that noted the cultural and social distinction between the city and the countryside as well as between industrial (mass) production and small-scale handmade (domestic) production. At the same time modernism generally established itself within the Czech context as a supremely urban concept, one that tended to swallow up the specificities of cultural and social life in the villages. For an analysis of the difference between rural and urban women and their relationship to female production, see: M. Tumlířová, 'Vliv domácích prací na život ženy', *Ženský obzor* 22/9–10 (1927): pp. 129–134.

39 Králíková-Stránská, 'Ornament a život', p. 54.

40 Hysteria, which according to Freud and Josef Breuer represented a somatisation of repressed sexuality, manifesting itself in a loss of self-control, and which they believed was only suffered by women, was, together with fetishism, a concept used to diagnose the 'sickness' of decorativism. While, for Freudian psychoanalysis, fetishism is not a disorder bound only to one sex, the representatives of modern architecture, housing, fashion, and lifestyle nonetheless generally connected it with women. Not by chance is the concept of 'civilisation', which found itself at the centre of debates about modern lifestyle, presented in Freud's writings as the antithesis of womanhood. Freud speaks explicitly about the antagonistic relationship between culture and women: 'The work of civilization has become more and more

men's business; it confronts them with ever more difficult tasks and compels them to carry out instinctual sublimations of which women are little capable'. (Sigmund Freud, 'Civilization and its Discontents', Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth, 1963), p.103). Female fetishism was presented as a fundamental impediment in the reform of housing by, for instance, Bruno Taut in the book cited above: *Nové bydlení: Žena jako tvůrce*.

41 Králíková-Stránská, 'Ornament a život', p. 54.

42 Karel Teige, 'Poetismus' (1924), in K. Teige, *Výbor z díla*, part 1 (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1966).

43 Matějček, *Výtvarná estetika a naše škola*, p. 48.

44 This exhibition, which according to National Women's Council statistics was seen by 8000 visitors, was one of the most significant actions in the effort towards female emancipation in art during Czechoslovakia's First Republic. While members of the Circle of Women Fine Artists played a substantial part in it, independent and unaffiliated women artists active in both the fine and applied arts also participated.

45 Lola Haňousková, 'Žena a umění' (Oddělení uměleckého průmyslu), *Ženská rada* 3 [yearbook of the National Women's Council (ŽNR)] (1927): p. 76.

46 Jaroslava Vondráčková, 'Bytová textilie', *Výtvarné snahy* 9/9 (1927–1928): p. 135.

47 It was in this period that the proponents of the factory aesthetic were demonstrating their radicalism by attacking art itself and calling for its liquidation. These iconoclastic demands, in which a similar rhetoric resounded as in the battle against the ornament, were usually accompanied by calls for the abandonment of individual authorship as a bourgeois relic and for the adoption of the collectivist principle of anonymity. And it was only in this same era that possibilities opened up for women, for the first time in history, to rise up from the nameless female mass and become autonomous professional artists. Understandably, then, the promotion of 'a style born from collective work', or the idea that 'the artist-professional is a mistake and to some extent an anomaly today' (Teige, 'Poetismus', p. 555), were either accepted with reservations or rejected entirely by women.

48 St. Jílovská, 'Žena umělkyně', *Věstník Kruhu výtvarných umělekyní* (April 1924): pp. 6–7.

49 Vondráčková, 'Bytová textilie', p. 136.

50 J. Klenková, 'Malířka a sochařka', in Juliana Lancová (ed.), *Knihy ženských zaměstnání* (Prague: Melantrich, 1929), p. 303.

51 Klenková, 'Malířka a sochařka', p. 301.

52 Drahomíra Stránská, 'Ženy a umělecký průmysl', in Anna Roškotová (ed.), *Sborník Kruhu výtvarných umělekyní* (Prague: Kruh výtvarných umělekyní, 1935), p. 68. Drahomíra Stránská was Olga Stránská-Absolonová's daughter. Between 1918 and 1924 she studied at the Faculty of Philosophy at Charles University in Prague and in 1932 she habilitated there in the field of Czechoslovak and Slavic ethnography. See: Dagmar Kulviaková, 'Příběh ženské emancipace v rodině Jindřicha Wankla' (BA thesis, Historical Institute, Faculty of Philosophy, Masaryk University in Brno, 2008).

53 Stránská, 'Ženy a umělecký průmysl', p. 68.

54 Stránská, 'Ženy a umělecký průmysl', p. 60.