

This thesis examines the relationship between architecture and feminism in the first half of the 20th century in Czechoslovakia. It opens by defining the dynamics of Czechoslovak feminism and architecture with regard to the theory of social movements. This text primarily focuses on the program, objectives and the modus operandi of the liberal branch of feminism, represented mainly by the non-partisan organization Ženská národní rada (Women's National Council). Members of this Council believed they could actively participate in shaping of the government policy on the social standing of women and maintained a close relationship of their organization to the state polity. We view this belief and this relationship as a model valid for a wide range of other women's organizations in that period. We consider these links the most important factor in determining the feminist organizations' relation to the movement of modern architecture. We follow the interaction of architecture and feminism in three chapters. The common denominator is the position of these two movements to modernization processes that were taking place in the nation state, in particular to the advent of the theories of scientific management. This main topic also determines the time frame of the text, beginning with formulating of social ethos in the programs of Czechoslovak feminism in the first decade of the 20th century and ending with a period between 1945 and 1948, a time only recently 'discovered' by art history, when the post-war explosion of modernization processes is accompanied by remarkable voices of skepticism coming from both feminists and certain avant-garde architects. In the first chapter we introduce the process of rationalization of individual Czechoslovak households. We understand this process as an intersection of efforts of the women's movement, engineers, and architects-functionalists to define the place of men and women within the national economy.