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Women – as depicted in the first decade of the Inter-war Series of *Korunk* Magazine from Cluj-Napoca

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The aim of this paper is to show the interest regarding the woman in the first decade of the first series of the Korunk magazine from Cluj-Napoca, her hypostasis and also her reception. The inter-war movements regarding the women are years of pioneering, when women struggled for political, social, economic, educational rights. These battles are fought by women and sometimes by the men who stood beside them, and they can be depicted in this journal in different types of discourses, such as the artistic one, juridical, administrative etc. The representation of women illustrated in the articles has only a sample value, because the vastness of the information regarding this subject is more suitable for a book, than for an article.

Key-words: feminism, women representation, inter-war, *Korunk*

1. Introduction

The differences between women and men can be traced back to the moment when humans first acted as conscious beings or – as the Christian view points out, from the moment of committing the First Sin resulting in the expulsion of mankind from Paradise. Women are looked upon as the weaker gender, while men find themselves in privileged positions at the peak of the hierarchy – as gender equality is still a relatively new conception.

The role of women in society did not go through massive changes from the Antiquity until the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century because the number of women who were considered to be "officially" equal in rank with men was few. Their duty in this period was to tend to the matters of their families and to do the daily chores of the household, which took up most of their time. Besides their domestic duties, they had to obey, sometimes blindly, the will of male relatives such as their father, brother or husband. Depending on their background, women were expected – from a cultural point of view – to practice to

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perfection many forms of arts such as dancing, music, knitting, the art of conversation, fashion and knowledge of "appropriate" literature.

2. Historical background

The first major movements for changing the social status of women took place in the nineteenth century, increasing in scope in the first half of the twentieth century. These changes can be attributed to historical-political and socio-economic events that influenced the areas of education, healthcare, religion, arts, etc.

The twentieth century has a unique contradictory mark consisting of worldwide conflicts, but also struggle for evolution. The outbreak of the two World Wars – 1914-1916 and 1939-1945 – and the extremist manifestations between the First and the Second World War (global depression, unemployment, political separations, the Russian revolution and communism, Pan-Arabism, totalitarianism, the cult of personality, censorship, violence, terror, fascism, Nazism), all influenced the flow of change concerning the status of women.

2.1. Improvements and drawbacks in the status of women

The situation of women throughout the first part of the twentieth century was becoming favourable by the day, thanks to the access to education, the increasing number and the diversification of jobs due to the emergence of brand new industries. Women could freely fill in positions such as officials, medical assistants, teachers, etc.

Of course, there have always been obstacles preventing the development of women's condition. Amidst the rage of the First World War women took up the jobs of men who had gone to defend their countries. When the men came home, the role of women was re-marginalized, as they were forced to work in the households or be paid much more poorly as opposed to the men having the same professions. Likewise, women from around Europe who were to be married had to quit their daily jobs (The Marriage Bar) a restriction created in the nineteenth century and cancelled at the beginning of the fourth decade of the twentieth century – despite the law being annulled according to the 1919 Act in Great Britain. In some countries, such as Ireland, this law was enforced until the seventh decade of the twentieth century, because of the increasing rate of unemployment. The same situation occurred with social insurances, as a married woman did not get the same benefits as a man or as a single woman (Daune-Richard Anne-Marie 2004, 72). A step towards reforming the status of women was the act of 1919 – becoming part of the law on the 23rd of December 1919 – forbidding the disqualification of candidates on the basis of gender (Sex Disqualification Removal Act) in Great Britain, despite its only covering three domains: public service, jurisdiction and universities.

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2.2. The Position of Women in Inter-war Romania

Besides having access to education, obtaining a qualification or the possibility of securing a job other than the usual chores around the house, women have assembled in associations and unions militating for a right to vote and for a right to be involved in political affairs or any functions that require a sense of responsibility such as the right for abortion, etc. We must note that in Romania the right for women to vote was granted through the Romanian Constitution in 1923, as for the Parliament in 1938.

The Constitution of 1923 published in *Monitorul Oficial [the Official Gazette]* no. 282 / 29 March 1923, *Second Title: About the rights of Romanians*, Art. 6. states: "Special laws, voted by a majority of two thirds, will determine the conditions under which women could utilize political rights. Civil rights of women will be considered on the basis of gender equality."[2], also Art. 108. of *Chapter Five: About the county- and communal institutions*, states the following: "Members of county councils and of communal councils are to be elected by the citizens of Romania through a general, equal, direct, secret, and obligatory vote, with a representation of the minorities, as stipulated by the law. These could also include, in agreement with of law, members of justice and recruited members. Mature women can apply to be selected among recruited members." *Chapter Two: About the King and his Ministers* is also an interesting article, especially the section *About the King*, in which Art. 77 states: "The constitutional power of the King has a direct and legitimate descending nature of His Majesty Carol the First of Hohenzollern Sigmaringen, from man-to-man through the order of primogeniture, with the perpetual exclusion of women and their descendants."

The Constitution of 1938 published in *Monitorul Oficial [the Official Gazette]* no. 48 / 27 February 1938, still excludes female heirs or their posterity, but improves the political plan in *Chapter Two: About National Representation-First Section: About the Gathering of Deputies*, in Art. 61. which states: "The electoral law will determine the districts and settle - according to the rules aforementioned: the conditions of becoming a voting citizen (men and women alike), the incapacities-, backslidings-, incompatibilities-, of the procedure of voting and a guarantee in freedom of vote, and also the precise number of members."; and the *Second Section: About the Senate*, in which Art. 63. states: "The Senate is composed of Senators named by the King, of Senators of justice and of Senators chosen through an obligatory, secret election, and an uninominal vote of corporal members established across the State, in number and condition, for eligible voters (men and

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women alike), which will be determined in accordance with the electoral law. The proportion of Senators named by the King and the ones chosen by the nation must be balanced."

2.3. Small steps in changing the status of women

These accomplishments can be credited to feminist movements with different stages. The first stage consists of fighting for equality (in a legal manner), the second stage is represented by the demand for equal salaries, and the strife for women to be accepted in jobs considered exclusively viable for men. Among the pioneers of these manifestations are Maria Montessori, who was rejected the first time she applied for a place at the Medical College and required the intervention of the Pope, but also many years of studying until she was accepted in 1896; or Sarmiza Bilcescu-Alimănişteanu from Romania, who was the first woman from Europe to obtain a degree in law in Paris (1887) and a doctor's degree two years later (1889) etc. The third stage is illustrated by the importance of differences between women. By the end of the twentieth century the objective of these movements was considered to be fulfilled (from a legal point of view), the term "post-feminism" was born, though there are still visible shortcomings flaws in women's rights around the globe even in the twenty-first century.

2.4. Turning point in the position of women

The turning point which brings great changes is the one between the two World Wars. Along the transformations presented before, there needs to be mentioned the realm of fashion –clothing and haircut –, the freedom of practicing all kinds of sports, the liberty of bathing in the sun on a beach, etc. The forms through which these manifestations have raised awareness are varied: organizations, some politicians, or a part of the press have all made a contribution.

The struggle via press, of the feminists or their associates and unions, is represented by a number of manifestations and proclamations, and by the establishment of some journals exclusively meant for the female audiences, like: *Acţiunea feministă [Feminist Action]* (Pachuta, Livezeanu 2007, 243), *Anuarul Uniunii femeilor române din România Mare [The Directory of the Romanian Women's Union from Great Romania]*, *Cuvântul femeilor [The Word of Women]*, *Dreptate femeii [Justice for Women]*, *Drepturile femeii [The Rights of Women]* (Pachuta, Livezeanu 2007, 244), *Femeea muncitoare [The Working Woman]*, *Tribuna femeii [The Tribune of Women]*, *Femeia de mâine [The Woman of Tomorrow]* (Pachuta and Livezeanu 2007, 245) etc.

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3. Modern perspectives of *Korunk*

The press has multiple points of view, as does every individual. The journal named *Korunk [Our Time]* was established in February 1926 by Dienes László in Cluj-Napoca, a literary critic and editor of the journal until 1931. In January 1929 Gaál Gábor becomes his co-editor. The monthly journal aims to keep up with the ever-changing troublesome events between the two World Wars. In its early editions (1926-1940), the journal includes articles about culture, education, sociology, economics, politics, etc.

Dienes László writes in the *Introduction*: „The way people of our time are thinking is full of flaws. What is the flaw? A question without answer. A question to which we cannot give a convincing answer. And these days we are surrounded by such unsolvable problems. The whole world has become problematic […] the basis of our economics, the way of simply earning our daily bread, […] the basic forms of our social life, […] the way we express our spiritual and intellectual opinions, […] science, […] art, […] religion, […] life in itself, of which only the belief and credibility described by these problems give a meaning, and an essence satisfying enough" (KOR 6).

The objective of the journal, mentioned in the same *Introduction*, is to show people that the base of a new European culture cannot be created without solving the problems, using the major findings of the era that is about to end. This way, he considers that the journal has to contain articles describing life from every possible angle and gain the attention of the reader. This is why article will include different opinions and visions, sometimes even contradicting one another. The aim is to create, a "European soul" that will establish a new European culture (KOR 6).

3.1. Women in *Korunk*

The authors of this journal, preoccupied with the situation of women between the two World Wars, are men and women, generally Hungarians from Romania and other countries. Style varies as well, because along the literary genre of writing, women appear in journalistic, administrative and juridical papers too. Geographically, the journal deals with the women from urban and rural areas, eastern and western regions, as well as the American, Asian and African continents. The perception upon women changes from emancipated to subordinate ones, from housewives to employed women, etc.

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3.2. Types of women depicted in *Korunk*

1) Among the most discussed problems are feminist movements, which symbolize the type of the pioneer and the leader. Inside the ***leader-woman*** category there are different subclasses. These women have the characteristics of a commanding, influential individual, willing to organize groups and build up networks. This category consists of women famous in the art of science, as well as housewives who became founders of sects. Its opposite could be the ***sacrifice-woman***.

1.1 For the *science woman* type, a great example is Marie Curie – working in the fields of science, being twice rejected from becoming a member of the French Academy in 1926 (she applied for the first time in 1911). The author of the article describes the situation genuinely and shows us that Curie's membership was refused by retrograde academics, the only reason being her gender – because her scientific legacy is, without doubt, of great significance. The author points out that becoming the first female-academic would have been an outstanding honour to Curie, far greater than for a man, because the achievement of a position for the first time is always hard, and the first female-academic surely must make a bigger effort than a male to be accepted. Thus Curie's request was rejected, despite having in her favour 15 votes, including that of Bergson or the mathematician Painleve. The great number of votes she got mark the progress made by feminist manifestations (KOR 24).

1.2 No one doubts that her example inspired others. Currie is the archetype of the *female-pioneer* in the world of academics. The same is true for Helene Stöcker, of whom Dienes László in his article writes, that ingratitude is part of human evolutional dialectics and we have a habit of forgetting the ones who served as pioneers in their respective fields of work (KOR 10). Helene Stöcker is one of these pioneers fighting for the cause of feminism, wherein her philosophical concept named "New ethics" stood out for the rights of illegitimate children, for the legalization of abortion and for the necessity of sexual education, this way creating a stronger bond between men and women, reaching the state of political and social equality of both sexes.

1.3 There are some negative examples as well in this category. The *ignorant leader-woman*, who possesses a certain degree of intelligence combined with a lack of culture and education, can be looked upon as a real-time threat. This type of woman wants to reach her goals through any means necessary, using violence as a potential tool. Such was the case of the French housewife, Mrs. Messnin, who returning from Lourdes argued that the statue of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, began to weep in her arms. The citizens of Bordeaux, as well as others started to rejoice seeing the said "wonder", and gathered around the housewife, who became the spokeswoman of the "Weeping Mary", thus forming her sect. This sect built a chapel for the statue of Mary, until the Church secretly found a way to scientifically prove that the tears were no more than water from the city's sewage system. It appears that the statue was placed below a leaking water conduct. With the moving

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of the statue, tears ceased to continue, thus the mystery was revealed. The woman did not want to admit her fault – though she was fined –, but travelled to Milan from where she returned with another "wonder statue" resembling the "Bambino di Milano". Problems got worse when clergymen who voted against the acceptance of "Mary's Tears" to be considered a godly deed, were beaten by Mrs. Messnin's female disciples. It is interesting that by using religion as a weapon, this woman attracted a great number of female followers, mainly from the middles (where she also belonged), and convinced them to step up violently against others, ultimately resulting in their imprisonment (KOR 7).

1.4 The *legend-woman* type of the female-leader appears in a degraded version. It is a form of chaos-reality, probably born out of war-caused horrors. We know these caused parallel realities, for better or worse, to come up with utopian architecture. These utopian architectures are manifestations of the literary way of speech, in the form of novels. Fábry Zoltán presents us three of these utopias: two German ones and a French one, written by Josef Wickler, Arnold Ulitz, and Pierre Mac Orlan respectively. This latter one describes a female leader created deliberately, a woman of the type of Jeanne d'Arc followed by the red army wearing the print of her face on their scapular unclear. In fact she is a Jewish woman from Germany who escapes to Russia as a refugee. Clown, Falstaff, Baba and Hamlet are the Soviet leaders who place her in the role of a modern Jeanne d'Arc. The moment she reacts in a contradictory fashion, not expected by these leaders, they make sure that her actions are to be hidden from the eyes of the soldiers. The way Clown presents her to his guests is illustrated by his metaphorical words: "Behold an aristocrat, a whore, a nun, sister, mother of all. Our relative. Orphan. Bride or wife. Choose!" (KOR 17). These words have a "magical" connotation. Even if we consider the army as a whole, it is still made of individuals, each having their own expectations. Thus, to be able to dominate all of them, she gives everyone the possibility to choose the most suitable type of woman. Her true nature before her transformation into a legendary figure (even if it is a degraded one) is revealed only after her death, when Elsa is seen in her unstained youth, in the poverty and simplicity of her life.

1.5 The counterpoint of the aforementioned leader-woman is the type of the *sacrifice-woman*. This sacrifice can have multiple forms, ranging from a connotative meaning (for the country, family, conceptions, etc.) to a denotative one (human sacrifice of a cult, or conviction through decapitation). Connotative sacrifices can be found in many articles yet to be discussed; this category will be limited to two denotative examples. One article presents the story of a young woman, who became the victim of a cult named "Woodismus" and its priest Musca in New York. The Italian girl was walking down a street, when suddenly she got captured, was forced inside a house, stripped naked and laid on an altar. Luckily her desperate shrieks were heard, so someone called the police, who arrived just at the moment the priest was about to cut her throat. An interesting note is that in the sect there were not only

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men, but women as well (KOR 7). Another instance is of the four women sentenced to death in France. It was the year 1929, and the author mentions that such a capital punishment for women had not been applied for 40 years in the French country. The anti-feminists use the arms of feminists asking for…equality! For a law to erase gender differentiation. If men can be sentenced to death, why can't be women as well? The overwhelming opinion of the public is that they do not deserve pardon and they don't even think of this issue as a tool of offense against the application of capital punishment. The slogan doesn't say: no one must be decapitated; rather that women too must be decapitated. Some women even ask for lethal punishment (KOR 12).

2) A notable dichotomy is the ***employed-woman*** versus the ***unemployed-woman***. An article which merges the *employed woman* and the *idle woman* is the one presenting transcriptions of a debate between Bernard Shaw, E. K. Chesterton and Lady Rhondda, including both categories. Lady Rhondda is England's greatest businesswoman, the manager of a big editorial group, who writes for her own magazine, *Time and Tide*, a series of articles directed against women who do not work, declaring they are the enemies and the curse of civilisation. E. K. Chesterton defends idle women. The public debate between E. K. Chesterton and Lady Rhondda, moderated by Bernard Shaw, took place on the 27th of January 1927 in Kingsway-Hall in London. Bernard Shaw presents the context by saying that he must have got old because back in his days women used to have an occupation, housekeeping. Today, household chores are replaced by the hotel system; the issue with children is solved by birth control. The middle-class woman has time for many things, she may have cocktails, and she may dance Charleston in night clubs. Lady Rhondda shows that the fashion developed by idle women and forced upon working women is a problem. This type of fashion does not suit working women, who have no time to go to commercial centres and waste their time, as idle women do. E. K. Chesterton defends idle women, explaining that one does not need to be a clerk in order to be useful for the society. "One would think, by listening to the lady," he says, "that every occupation serves the goals of society." He considers that the possibility of these jobs does not mean freedom, but rather the ocean of servitude. It is a chaotic world: syndicated shops, standardised products, everything falls apart and you can only do what you want in the comfort of your home, being yourself. The world has turned upside down, it has become mercantile and one day it will be monopolistic. If he were to choose between an idle aristocrat and the businesswoman yearning for advertisements in the contemporary world, he would choose the former. He notes that he does not defend idleness, but rather the warmth of the home and household. Lady Rhondda answers that she is not against family, against raising children, but she shows that he contradicts himself. If the world is so horrible, why have so many children? She admits she loves business, because she considers everything else is a parasitic form compared to those that do not provide housing, meals and clothes. She accepts that civilisation is not perfect, but she does

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not wish women to hide, but rather, if they do not like it, to go out and destroy these parts. Bernard Shaw concludes that both sides have stated something that the other one had not said, that they preferred discussions about abstract worlds, ideals and that not just the idle woman is a danger, but the *idle man* in general (KOR 1).

2.1 The dream of an *employed female*, who has a chance to work where she wants, is still a sketch yet to be completed. Érsek Anna deals with a different aspect of this type of woman. People are against these women, according to the author of the article, because a woman working outside the household for a salary, willing or not, does not have enough free time to carry out her daily chores. The number of employed women is increasing rapidly and the issue, if household duties should be neglected because of this, appeared. Many share the opinion that as long as the base of society is represented by the families, women will have to serve as the ones keeping them together.

She considers the problem should not be approached from a social point of view, but from that of economy and technology. The problem is that most women use traditional appliances for cooking, cleaning and housekeeping, the same ones that their grandmothers used. In fact, most women are convinced that they are good housewives if they bring no innovation to these processes and that modern appliances are introduced by the "devil of idleness" to lead them to perdition. Her reasons are housewives' lack of education, lack of schools where the future housewife could learn necessary basic elements of physics, chemistry, hygiene or interior decoration. She shows women's aversion towards washing machines, which they do not trust, as they are convinced they can wash better by hand. She shows that these appliances are designed by engineers, just like automobiles, and we should trust they are useful. One example to follow would be Germany, which has an industrial committee for standards, and moreover, women's associations in Germany organised in Leipzig a Household Experimental Centre, which tested the practical and scientific side of household appliances and industrially-produced food, housewives should not worry when they buy a product. This Centre also gave advice to the industry for optimisation (KOR 14).

2.2 The *idle woman* is either attacked or defended. 2.2.1 She appears as a *plutocrat's wife*, presented indirectly through Upton Sinclair's novel. This type of woman has an entire horde of servants, but only has contact with three of them, is unfamiliar with the others' names and takes pride in her pets, of which she takes care of as if they were her children – and she even considers them as such. The dogs have their own personal assistant, paid with 100 dollars a month, their own servant, a kitchen where their food is cooked separately, a doctor, a dentist and they eat from gold plates, they have a cab driver and a butler. Most women in this circle become artificially sterile so that they would not face the inconveniences of motherhood and so that they would be able to take care of their dogs and cats, houses, servants and guests. All of these activities had a single purpose, that of overcoming all the other women. The men make money, and the idle women have nothing else to do but develop mad luxury. The

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woman whose extravagance destroys most values and human lives was the most famous and most celebrated one (KOR 4).

2.2.2 Another representation is that of the *"correct bourgeois woman,"* who "loses her head" and forgets about her family – consisting of a fat husband and two teenage daughters –, about her duties; following a momentary urge she runs away with a much younger lover, whom she has barely met, after a three-hour long conversation. We are acquainted with this type in Stefan Zweig's short stories, which say that this is quite possible and that these women should actually do it. He mentions the following aspects as positive consequences: on the one hand, the woman contributes to the daughters' education by providing a negative example; on the other hand, she does good to the dancer with whom he husband probably has an affair. Consequently, he adds two more men to the misogynists' camp: the abandoned husband and the lover with whom she has run away. The theme is the momentary astonishment caused to the bourgeois society, which also makes her part of the category of the *shock-woman* (KOR 26).

3) *The* ***genius woman*** is a concept that appears under various names.

3.1 The *superior woman*, presented by the priest *Rudolf Hildebrand* after living in America. He believes in woman's intellectual superiority, that is, he expressly believes in gender equality, but concretely he believes in woman's superior value. He realised that in his parish in America discussions with men were useless and that he needed to address ladies in women's clubs or associations to handle certain matters, because in America men make money while women rule over it. He may decide how to make the money, but as regards higher things – like good or evil – he has to transfer the right of judgment to superior beings. He states that this is the public American conception. One should ask whether women are much more intelligent than men, and his answer is yes, because they are more open, they read more, they think more, they observe things much more carefully and they are better educated. Men's life is business, and women's life is based on business, but they have high goals nonetheless. He does not want to attribute to women a high intellect, but he says that, compared to men, they are considerably better (KOR 25).

3.2 A contrary version is that of *average woman*. There are also views, considered by the author of the article obsolete for that time (1926), according to which there were no genius women, there could be at most genial women. Dr. Paul Cohn gave a lecture about genius at the Psychology Association of Berlin, where he claimed that genius was nothing more than *the female nervous system* in a man's body and that the source of geniality is the male sexual function (KOR 3).

4) *The* ***artist woman*** is present under various representations – from writer to actress.

4.1 Besides generic articles, particular cases are discussed, such as that of the Romanian actress Maria Ventura, celebrated in Paris. The author of this article,

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waiting for a performance at the Bucharest National Theatre, shows that fame obliges. After the first scene, he notices that the *actress* is not among the category of those who conquer the critic at first sight, but throughout the five acts he finds that she is natural. In the 6th act, she was no longer "that brilliant actress" that he had come to consider, but rather Johanna herself, and the author considers she is worth the few hundreds kilometres he has travelled to hear and see her (KOR 5).

4.2 The *woman-writer* is another representation of the artist, and the man-reader tries to explain to her why he likes to read her works and what expectations he has of them: revealing secrets, mere confessions, something that "[…] remains hidden after the intoxication of the body's spell. […] I pay attention to differences and I expect unity, the unitary statement is: humaneness." In the same article, Fábry praises female writers of various nationalities, their epithets showing his admiration towards them (KOR 16).

4.3 If there is a woman artist (self-sufficient or not), we must also mention the ***woman-metaphor*** who is represented in relation to new arts. The avant-garde writer and painter Kassák Lajos presents the relationship of new art with the old one in the following way: a young woman in an office decorated with calculated severity would like to wear her great-grandmother's crinoline from the museum: "He who wants to wear today has to leave the dynamics of contemporary life" (KOR 21).

5) The women can be classified according to ***subordinate –superordinate*** dichotomy as well.

5.1 Inside the ***superordinate*** category there are different subclasses. 5.1.1 The *manipulator woman* has the power of making the others oblivious to her machinations, however visible they might be for those they who are not involved. She feels the need to plot, even when she should feel contented from every point of view. A pale form of this woman appears in the Chaplin's movie – the dancer Georgia, who uses him as an instrument to make the man courting her jealous. He takes it for granted, but Georgia and her female friends make fun of him. During a visit they pay to him they promise to come on New Year's Eve, but they forget about it and while he is carefully setting the table, they are having fun in a salon in the city. They come to him in a dream, to compensate for it, they are kind, they praise him, and they approach him with love. The spectator must feel the tragedy of his waiting. In fact, she remembers too late the promise she has made and she feels sorry about it. He leaves, he gets rich, they meet again and they will live happily (KOR 18). The image of the girl does not seem valid because it goes from one extreme to the other causing reserves throughout almost the entire movie. One type of manipulator also appears in Gene Kelly's book "Craig's Wife," where manipulation stems from the pure egotism of the bourgeois American woman, who lies, cheats and acts in accordance with her goals, thus becoming a typical character (Reményi 1927).

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5.1.2 The *female gender as a dominator* appears in the article about a novel of the Hungarian writer Karinthy Frigyes. Karinthy, the author, looks for the higher levels of life and hopes that the shape of the conscience we live in is nothing but a dark and narrow prison. From this prison new perspectives seem to open to listening to music, to seeing a flower or to looking at the ineffable mysterious beauty of a woman. In the depth of this conscience we can find the ego and, in Karinthy's view, according to Komlós, our thoughts and feelings do not represent the ego yet. This ego is the unique, ultimate reality that needs to be reached so that we could undress the foul pains of bad loves and various weaknesses. The task is, therefore, to redeem this ego and reach reality and freedom. Karinthy hopes to reach this goal by means of technology. He feels from the very beginning that the woman plays a part in this fight for freedom, and he defines this part of hers with difficulty. He sees at the beginning that women have no affinity for this superior world. The man's ego throbs when he is in love, while the woman's is motionless, because she is "deaf to any form of metaphysics," she is cowardly preoccupied with trifles, she sinks in them: she chatters about clothes, receipts and silk stockings. But the woman is still capable of putting the reins on him, she exploits him and destroys him with this very metaphysical thirst, while the man believes he will reach those superior worlds with her, but on the contrary, she sinks him, as well. The conclusion of the novel is that in the relationship between men and women the men dominate. She uses magic spells to promise a country to wakefulness, but she sinks men in an even deeper sleep (KOR 22). It is interesting to note that in the magazine, the manipulator / dominator woman generally appears in an indirect way, through fictional discourse.

5.2 The *subordinate gender* appears in relation with psychology, where Dr. Kahána Ernõ shows, in the introduction to his article, the importance of proving women's inferiority for some, like Weiningern, for instance. The author further presents the differences and similarities between Freud and Adler, explaining the influence of belonging to a certain gender on the soul of the developing child. He shows that the contemporary society is characterised by overestimating the male gender and underestimating the female one. It is inevitable for the child to become aware of this difference, even in a family where the parents love each other and the child will relate and apply these realities to him / herself. If the child grows up in a family where these differences serve as a model, the conclusion the child will draw will clearly be the fight for power against the other gender: if she is a girl, against the role of a woman, considered humiliating, against the man felt as a dominator, and if he is a boy, the fight for proving and asserting his masculinity, considered a "question of honour" (KOR 20).

6) The ***woman-politician*** versus the ***indoctrinated woman*** is also a pair that can be found in the various issues of the magazine.

6.1 We use *woman-politician* to refer to the women who have generally been pioneers in the fight for the emancipation of women: those who have fought for the

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right to vote, the right to political office, etc. As this subject has been dwelt upon in this paper, we prefer to highlight an article that presents the situation of women in politics: the article "Woman in politics" written by Érsek Anna. It is actually a statistics of Berlin votes (1930) where they counted women's votes separately and they made a statistical situation. Out of the 3,289,000 Berliners with the right to vote, 1,800,000 were women and 1,476,000 were men. Thus, in every hundred votes, 44.9 were men and 55.1 were women. That means the majority were women and if they organised themselves well, they could dominate in Berlin. But fewer women are interested in politics than men, which is why fewer of them vote. While 74% of the men exercise their right to vote, only 66.4% of the women do the same. From the point of view of division by parties, votes show that most female votes went to non-revolutionary right-wing parties. Fewer female votes as compared to male ones went to revolutionary right-wing or left-wing parties that represented fascism in Germany. This means that women are mostly against political revolution, whether they have right-wing or left-wing sympathies, and they are more conservative and clerical than men (KOR 15).

6.2 The *indoctrinated woman* appears in a rather comical anecdote, which is more illustrative for a citizen of the former Communist bloc. Speaking of fascism, Bolshevism, Communism etc., the author of the article narrates an episode that illustrates the indoctrination of the common woman, who truly believes in these precepts. A dressmaker who saw the rather small wardrobe of a poet, says the following: "Better times will come, ma'am. The end of the bourgeois republic will come soon, and my friends the Communists will take over the power… and you know, don't you, that in the Communist state every working woman will receive from the Soviets three hats, three dresses and three pairs of shoes. It is true that you are not a proletarian, so you are not entitled to them, but you write beautiful poems and my comrades will surely extend the privilege to you, too…" (KOR 19). But adhesion to the Communist doctrine also works for intellectual women, who truly believe in it and rush into the whirlwind of the political world to the point of becoming a multiple spy of Russian, Chinese and Indian Communists. It is the case of Agnes Smedley, the quoted feminist. She is the woman who does all this with dedication and sympathy, with trust in a better fate and who sees the humanitarian aspect of this doctrine, as revealed in the article (KOR 11).

7) There are also ***other types*** of women, not included in dichotomies, categories above.

7.1 The ***woman-body*** or the *body culture*. This complex of problems includes sport, dancing and any type of physical exercise that had been marginalised until that point. The greatest opponent of exercise is the Catholic Church, which stages attacks, sometimes even aggressive ones; for instance, Austrian bishops issued a

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circular which blamed the exercise in the body culture. The circular is based on the fact that the Christian body should be respected. It agrees to take care of the body, but the soul is above it and body culture should not become a cult of the body and hurt the soul. The ages characterised by the cult of the body are unilateral and they carry the signs of moral degeneration. Fundamentally, the Church wants the following: physical exercise should not be done together by people of different genders, the sportswear should not offend the limits of decency, no bathing suits should be used during exercises – which can under no circumstances be done without clothes – and girls should avoid form-fitting sportswear. Girls only have the right to exercise after the public has been excluded, girls and women do not have the right to participate in sports competitions and games. The same rules apply, more moderately, in the case of bathing and swimming. Girls and women do not have the right to participate in swimming competition. At the swimming pool, men and women should have separate places. And trips are forbidden, as well as enrolling in the so-called rhythmic dancing schools or practising modern dancing as long as they bring together men and women. It promotes the fight against the fashion that reveals more of the body (KOR 8). Locally, the body culture is promoted in practice, but also in her book published in Arad, by Éghy Ghyssa *Testkultúra [Body Culture]* (KOR 9).

A year later, K. Ritter Mária (1928) shows us that in America physical exercises have become necessary, and they are practiced in any New York family. The "ration" of exercise called the "daily dose" is dictated by the sound of the radio, which gives the signal for the beginning of exercise at 7 in the morning. Turning it into a sport for the masses is explicable – the author says – because until last century the only way to do physical exercises was dancing. Women's movements, as well as their clothes and behaviour, had been shackled, and women's bodies desperately needed freedom. She says freedom does not mean a transfer to the way of masculinisation; on the contrary, a free woman is much more feminine thanks to her suppleness and flexibility. She presents the modern culture of the female body as having a pyramidal shape, at whose base lie the basic, mass forms, accessible to everyone, and as you climb to the top, individualisation becomes stronger. She describes a type of basic gymnastics and its derived types: Mensendieck gymnastics, types of rhythmic gymnastics, Dalcroze, Bode and Labana – showing that exercise is necessary and it is based on women's anatomic and biologic particularities. She presents their characteristics, their effects, the target group they are addressed to, etc. In relation to these types of exercise she mentions a theme that remains fresh to this day, almost a hundred years later, which was rarely discussed in the media at the time: gaining weight – losing weight, explaining: "Each of us has to find their own amount of physical and intellectual work, respectively – last but not least – *a diet plan*." She concludes that Mensendieck exercises help health and the soul, and all of this helps motherhood (KOR 27).

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7.2 The ***modern woman sui generis*** is also present. The New York magazine "The Nation" started a series of articles entitled "The modern woman" which aims to analyse and present to the public, on psychoanalytical grounds, the biographies of the most appreciated American women. According to Krizsán Sándor, they do not have the desired effect, because the 17 feminists do not write with the necessary honesty for psychoanalytical diagnostic. They have spoken nicely of their education and upbringing, their fight for independence and emancipation, but they have neglected their sexual life. Thus, the diagnostics that Beatrice M. Hinkle, John B. Watson and Joseph Collins established based on these writings are fictional. A new initiative to this end was that of the magazine "New Masses," which was more successful. The first resume was that of an American woman settled in Europe[3]; it has the entire drama of the American fate: a family with 5 children, the father, an alcoholic and abusive miner, the mother, a laundress, the elder sister married at 15 years old and dead one year later in labour. At school she is a good student, her intellectual ambitions replace poverty, lack of love and ugliness. Besides, she is a girl! She hates her woman's fate. Her mother dies young and she promises, next to her coffin, that she will never marry, never love and never give birth to children. During the day she works, and during the evening she attends university courses. She has become a writer and is friends with the greatest European writers. She considers sexual life and marriage as women's enemy. She married at 19 years old, though she considered it a turpitude against her husband. She ran away soon afterwards, and he divorced, even though he was a man who contradicted her image of their tyrannical character. Her reason is that marriage meant sacrifice and abortions, because she had decided not to have children, so that they would not suffer the way she had. She had had affairs, with bouts of asceticism, interrupted by other affairs, because she needed human relations. She runs to Europe, but she has relationships there, too, because love does not care about geography. She marries again, because the new husband seemed to share her ideas regarding women's social and political status, but after the wedding he tortures her with questions related to her previous sexual life. Her conception of freedom tells her to leave him, but love keeps her trapped. She feels she has deviated from the road of woman's general fate – the slavery of love. The result is an illness that lasts several years. Free today, until the next relationship, she considers marriage an absolute institution, which does not respond to the needs of modern life. She considers it injustice not just towards women, but also towards men (KOR 23).

7.3 The ***woman-medium*** is also listed. One example would be the article written by Szántó Hugó, which presents the case of William Crooks, the famous physicist who, despite his pragmatism, was deceived by several women who considered themselves mediums – Kate Fox, Florence Cook and Anna Eva Fay – perhaps due to his brother's premature death. One of the explanations given by his

[3] Probably Agnes Smedley

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biographers or by those of the medium-girls was his near-sightedness, along with his strong desire to believe. Young Florence Cook managed to deceive him for years, claiming she could contact the ghost called Katie King – she was even believed to have had a relationship with Crooks. It is interesting that the author of the article, Szántó Hugó, tends to agree with her and prefers to believe that Katie King was a real ghost. His arguments are related to the power of the soul to detach from the body. Thus, there is the possibility that they could reincarnate under another shape – the ghost, says the author. He follows the path of philosophy and brings the argument of Gumppenberg, which says that individual human personality is just an illusion and that, in fact, individualities are tied by strong threads and in the depth of things, in the reality of reality, everything unites into One. Along with this case, he presents the cases of other women-mediums like Reyes de L., Alma L. (KOR 28). Dr. Elekes Miklós attacks Szántó Hugó and his articles, one of which we have presented above, saying that he accepts phenomena in a rather extreme manner and showing that the issue of the occult is regarded either with fanatical acceptance or with strong denial. He presents the problems related to scientific research of the occult – materialisation, levitation, telepathy etc. – citing examples such as that of the medium Eva C. (KOR 13).

7.4 The *prostitute type* appears in an article where the author considers that the relationship between bourgeoisie and proletariat is created by *prostitution*. This article presents the history of morality, introducing the book "Sittengeschichte des Proletariats." The author of the article shows that in each age, the moral is what is not considered immoral by the ruling class. Thus, what is considered immoral by the ruling class is moral for the proletariat and the other way round. So, at the same time, in the same place, the concept of morality has changed radically. The morality of the proletariat is closely related to prostitution, because the bourgeoisie/ruling class considers it immoral even though it supports prostitution institutionally. The journey begins in Ancient Rome, where slave masters did not only own their workforce, but their bodies, too, and slaves were also sexual instruments. Prostitution develops when the master gives in/borrows this body for money. The development of the peasant class in rural areas is an almost identical situation: everything belongs to landlords – the land, the peasant, his wife and his daughter, whom they married to whomever they wanted, *jus primae noctis*. Motherhood was appreciated only because they needed workforce. That was also why abortions were punished much more harshly than adultery or illegitimate children. Girls ran to the city, where many guilds banned marriage. This is how urban prostitution developed. The economic problems of proletarian girls made them prostitutes themselves. Thus, the "moral" relationship between the bourgeoisie and proletariat has so far expressed itself in prostitution, concludes the author of the article. The problem can only be solved by the proletariat, because the ruling class only takes care of their own homes and its own daughters (KOR 2).

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7.5 The ***teenager-woman*** is a product of the war which has granted, as we have shown, certain "benefits" to women. Among its disadvantages we count the gained "freedom" of doing whatever we please with our bodies, even though we are destroying it. The novel *Uri kamaszok [Teenagers of good station]* written by the female writer Balla Böske from Arad tries to present this type of woman; according to the author of the article, this type is the one that cannot find her way in the goalless muddle in the first years after the First World War. She experiences the pubertal emotions of the perpetual teenager, she has discovered all the secrets before marriage and she has already got sick of them. Her body incapable of giving birth, and even if she does, her child is considered a burden that ruins her life. It is a rather negative image, which I believe has taken shape in the minds of conservative people, and their truth is based on centuries of prohibitions. The writer takes a blaming stance, people in the public life in Arad can be recognised in her novel, and the author of the article considers the book has a good theme, that it is "a good book, but a weak novel." He reproaches her that she does not convey a complete image of this type of woman and that she does not refer to all the aspects and references to this type of woman, to the full perspective that covers far and wide these few years of fashion, before it becomes a style or it enters the greyness of habitude and indifference. The initiative should be appreciated, because the literature of Arad has not dealt with this aspect so far, and the location – Arad – and its local colour connect us to the West (KOR 29).

4. Conclusions

The problem of women in the interwar period is much more complex in reality. The present article aims to be only a journey into this world, into the world of women in general, more particularly in the inter-war period, and also within the magazine *Korunk [Our Time]*. The very first series of the magazine (1926-1940) showed a broad view, with multiple perspectives, striving to present the problems discussed from several points of view and leaving room for antithetic views. The image of women in *Korunk* is very complex, arising from the various types of discourses – journalistic, legal, epistolary, administrative, fictional etc., which sketch the several types of women in a controversial period of pioneering, when the fight for equality was carried on all fronts and where each camp had its own defendants and detractors, both among women and men. Thus, the present paper aims only to present "samples" of the first decade in the existence of the magazine, in order to give us an idea of the woman of that age and her reception in a local and universal context.

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