CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Programme: Media & Area Studies (MARS)

Coordinating Institutes: ICSJ & IMS, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

The 8th of March: Gendered Memories of the International Women's Day in the Czech Republic

Master's Thesis

Praha 2025 Michael Sidor

Author of the Thesis: Michael Sidor

Study programme: Media Studies and Area Studies

Supervisor: Doc. Maria Alina Asavei

Year of the defence: 2025

Declaration

- I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
- I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
- I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on 7/27/2025 Michael Sidor

Abstract

This thesis explores how International Women's Day (IWD) has been experienced, remembered, and re-shaped by two generational groups of Czech women. Those who lived through the communist regime (Group 1), and those born and raised in the post 1989 democratic world (Group 2). With the use of a qualitative methodology which is rooted in comparative historical analysis, the study aims to draw on semi-structured interviews and apply both thematic and discourse analysis to examine how meanings attached to IWD have evolved across time.

The findings revealed that while the symbolic framework of IWD still remains intact, its ideological, emotional, and social meanings have shifted/transformed significantly. Group 1, was embedded within institutional and ideological structures, experienced primarily as a state propagated and induced ritual with limited room for personal or political consciousness. While feminist discourse or activism was largely absent, the regime's claim that gender equality had already been achieved. In contrast, Group 2 participants had encountered IWD in an open-minded media environment, which is shaped by consumerism, irony and fragmented feminist consciousness.

In its core, this research provides insight into the fields of memory studies, gender analysis, and post socialist cultural discourse. Illustrating how collective rituals and memories are reinterpreted through generational memory, influences of media and evolving ideologies. It focuses to highlight the continuous nature of resistance, identity, and tradition within the Czech context.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank my supervisor Doc. Maria Alina Asavei for this topic and as well my course lecturer Jan Miessler for guiding and advising throughout the length of this research. The research could not have been completed without their help and guidance for such an interesting and uncommon subject. Doc. Maria Alina Asavei with her expertise in social sciences of memory and guidance in the history of communism throughout and feminism. As well Jan Miessler for teaching his class about how to write a research document and construct it into a thesis research.

Table of Contents

1.Introduction

International Women's Day or (IWD) for short, has an interesting yet complex background of its existence. First appearing in the US in 1909 on the 28th of Feb, as a part of a labour movement campaign for women organised by the Socialist Party of America. The mission was to create a surge in the political parties power by associating themselves with the needs of the people and the equality and support of the women, which was an on-going societal issue in the US. After the Russian revolution of 1917, IWD was made a national holiday on March 8th and was subsequently celebrated and supported by the socialist movement and other communist countries. The 8th of March in the Czech Republic has a more complex and multifaceted history that has been developing over a long period of time. First established as a political event during the Soviet occupation of the Czech Republic, its significance had evolved through various political and societal elements. This study seeks to shed light on how Czech women remember the official communist celebrations of IWD, exploring the intersections of memory, gender, and political history.

The modern celebration of International Women's Day is a global event that is not limited anymore to the socialist parties agendas. Today the celebration focuses on the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women around the world. It is also seen as a call to action from both genders to recognize the parity of both women and men. The origin of the date 8th of March as the day of celebration has a rooted context that dates to the mid 19th century. 8th of March 1857 marks the beginning of the creation of IWD, where female

textile workers in New York City marched in protest of unfair working conditions and unequal rights. The same had happened again on March 8, 1908, when women workers marched through New York City to protest child labor and demanding women's suffrage. Socialist and communist movements in the early 20th century had a key play in the creation of the international holiday. A German Marxist theorist by the name Clara Zetkin, which was also an advocate for women's rights, had proposed the establishment of an international womens day. This idea had come to life in Copenhagen 1910 at the International Socialist Women's Conference, which was aimed at promoting equal rights, including suffrage for women. Her proposal was embraced by socialist movements worldwide, and the first IWD was celebrated in 1911. During the early years of the Soviet Union, IWD became an official holiday, which emphasised the women's roles in building socialism and nurturing it in the family. The IWD celebration was used as almost a tool like aspect, where highlighted contributions of women to the communist cause promoted the ideals of gender equality within the socialist framework. In Czechoslovakia, IWD was a significant event under communist rule, marked by state-sponsored activities that sought to reinforce socialist gender norms and highlight women's contributions to society.

During the communist occupational era in Czechoslovakia, IWD was employed as a tool for state propaganda. Its aim was to reinforce socialist ideals and gender norms within Czechoslovakia. As a holiday, it was supported as a state-sponsored event and featured rituals, whose role was to highlight women's contributions to the socialist society. To support and make the female populous be part of the system on another level. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the immediate political transformation in the Czech Republic have significantly altered the public perception and celebration of IWD.

2.Problem Statement

The official celebrations of IWD in the Czech Republic, which are held annually on March the 8th, have left a complex legacy.

The celebrations were state-sponsored events by the socialist government that aimed to promote socialist ideas and gender norms. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union

and the immediate political transformation of Czechoslovakia, IWD had been significantly altered by the public's perception and celebration of IWD. Even with extensive research on the political and historical elements of IWD, there is a notable gap in understanding how Czech women of different generations remember and interpret IWD. This study focuses on exploring these gendered memories and their impact on contemporary gender society and political views in the Czech Republic.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to explore how Czech women from different generations recall the official communist celebrations of International Women's Day (IWD). By examining these memories, the study aims to analyse the role they play in shaping contemporary gender identities and political attitudes in the post-communist Czech Republic. Additionally, the research seeks to examine how the significance and perception of IWD have evolved since the fall of communism. Through this exploration, the study will contribute to the existing body of literature on gendered memory and the politics of memory, with a specific focus on the Czech context.

Research Questions

This research addresses several key questions. First, it seeks to understand how different generations of Czech women recall the IWD celebrations during the communist era, focusing on the details and emotional significance of their memories. Second, the study investigates the role these memories play in shaping the women's current understanding of gender and political dynamics, particularly in the context of post-communist transformations. Third, the research aims to identify how the significance of IWD has changed since the collapse of communism in the Czech Republic. The study also explores the common themes and notable differences in the recollections of women from different age groups, seeking to uncover generational variations in their experiences of IWD. Finally, the research examines how these memories reflect broader societal changes and the evolution of gender roles in the Czech Republic over time.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for several reasons. It offers a deeper historical understanding of the IWD celebrations in the Czech Republic during the communist era, shedding light on the political and cultural functions of these events under state socialism. By focusing on gendered memories, the research highlights how collective memories of IWD are shaped by gender dynamics, revealing the ways in which these memories contribute to contemporary gender identities and political attitudes within society. Furthermore, this study addresses an existing gap in the literature concerning the politics of memory and gendered memory in post-communist contexts, particularly in the Czech Republic. In terms of methodology, the research contributes to the field through its use of qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews and critical discourse analysis. These methods allow for a comprehensive examination of personal and collective memories, enriching our understanding of how these memories are formed and how they function within a society in transition. The practical implications of this study are important for current discussions on gender equality. By analysing how historical events like IWD shape present societal norms and attitudes, the findings can inform ongoing efforts to address gender issues in the Czech Republic.

3.Literature Review

With the study focusing on the topic of memory, particularly gendered memory and the attention to the post-communist contexts of political memory and perceptions.
Further the literature review will examine the key concepts and theories relevant to this study, focusing on gendered memory, the politics of memory, and the historical and contemporary significance of IWD in the Czech Republic.

The chosen literature will be analysed with a Thematic analysis. A thematic analysis focuses on the concept of grouping key patterns such as ideas, topics, and events. The key groupings that will be categorised for the literature review will examine the three key areas of gendered memories of International Women's Day (IWD) in the Czech Republic: (1) theories of gendered memory, (2) the politics of memory in post-communist societies, and (3) the

historical and contemporary evolution of IWD as a state-sponsored and personal memory event. This structured thematic approach will ensure coherence in the review and will prevent divergence from the study's core focus. The intersection of collective memory, gender, and political power offers a rich analytical framework for examining how individuals and communities recall state propagated events such as International Women's Day (IWD).

Literature on Gendered Memory and Feminism

Gendered memory as an academic subject explores how memories are shaped, constructed, and transmitted through the lens of gender. A core contribution to Gendered studies comes from Luisa Passerini who argues that memory is not just an individual act but is deeply rooted in social and cultural structures related to gender. Luisa, as a historian, had a background in the specialisation of field human history. Her most important and extensive contributions came in her scholarly works surrounding memory, oral history, and gendered memory. With 24 published books surrounding her findings and work, she is not only a verified source of information but also a person who specialises in the world of memory and gender. Within the chosen work Gender and Memory from Luisa Passerini for the literature review ref, the findings help to create a view from a third person perspective on the area of memory studies though the impact of digitalization within the European context. Particularly the book dives deeper into relations of gender memory and cultural memory practices that are impacted by the use of digital media. What the book grants to the reader is how gendered memories are transmitted, retained, and formed with the help of new technologies. At the time of the writing of this book, social media had only begun to have a start in society, but implications through technology allowed new ways of forming these genders memories. The cultural practices can be described as rituals and societal norms that also change with the adaption of new technology, for instance the representation of gender on TV and the cultural practices evolving through transmitting these views. But these are not only the views of Luisa, but these are also her own experiences as a feminist. Thus, her authentic view as a scholar helps this research to use nor only a verified source of information but also her experiences. Her guide on the modern perceptions of gender and cultural events helps shed light on a turning point where gender stereotypes are born and transmitted with modern digitalisation (Passerini, 2003). A modern-day view of gender and cultural events give great

insight into where a turning point has emerged, where digitalization helped push creating stereotypes and their societal values.

But before the era of digitalization and the movement of Western influence into EU post Communism, there were gender values taken from Communism that still had influence in post-Soviet countries. This comes from a study by Anna Temkina and Elena Zdravomyslova on Gender theory studies in Post-Soviet Society: Western Frames and Cultural Differences which will be included in this grouping of literature as it dives into Gender identities of Post-Soviet Russia. Her study examines the development and challenges of gender studies in post-Soviet Russia, where the influence of the Western feminist ideology clashed with the old Soviet Ideologies of Gender. It introduces the reader to key gender concepts like feminism and women's subjectivity in the early 1990s. While exploring the growth of gender studies as an academic study in Russia. The authors highlight the growing tension between the 2 key frameworks, that of the Western feminist and the cultural and social conditions in Russia that are of unique background (Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2003). A tug was between which key frame of gender identity and theory will reign dominant. Post-Soviet countries had already the “working mother” ideology carved into their memory, a gendered memory of the values of the mother being an important icon to the family and to the country. With the introduction of Western feminism ideology in the school, gender studies had begun to emerge in post-Soviet countries that prompted the creation of more educational and research centres around gender memory, which were also heavily funded by Western foundations. It should be noted that there were 2 ideologies of gender that were a key debate for studies post Communism, that of the Feminist Ideology and the Social Protectionism as ref finds in her research, both focusing on different roles of women in society. Feminism empowering women, opening the table to discrimination and equality. While Social Protectionism is more rooted in the Soviet traditional mindset of the female gender and their role in their society. ref creates an environment of studies where both frameworks theories are valued as gender research and not biassed on one framework. What T&Z tries to accomplish is to open the table to discussion on gender memory theories, as there are not any correct frameworks, but rather developed and new proposed frameworks meant to transform gender memory and identity (Temkina & Zdravomyslova, 2003). Studies in the realm of gender memory and identity can prove to be quite tricky as there is always discourse between the ideology of gender and the values of gender. Where one would propose a certain norm of those values while the other retains their past gender values and memory. Proposing new gender values

tends to create discourse between groups, as many are afraid to lose their already constructed memories and values. This discourse can be seen between the Western Feminism and Social Protectionism, as to which framework will lay a dominant force in the cultural movement. ref helps the reader to be more aware of the social constructs and discourse that were occurring in post-Soviet countries, which guides this research into a clearer structure of understanding the future qualitative participants and preferred asked questions. With the reasoning to understand the past events and social norms and frameworks that were put into place post communism, there still need to be a dwelling place into the gender memory and values during the rule of communism in occupied countries. As to what role did the Marxist theories play with women and their social structure in the communist party. There is a crucial part in history where the Marxist ideology was about the people and how to utilise them as much as possible, regardless of the gender, everyone had a role in the party.

Marx on Gender and the Family by Brown has to offer a lot of Karl Marx's writings, where the focus of his future plans and ideas intersect with issues of gender and family (Brown, 2006). In short Brown focuses on discussing the many thoughts and ideas of Marx ideology of the family. The roles of women in the communist family and how capitalism can shape gender relations. Criticising Marx due to the lack of thought behind developing the gender theory but argues that Marx provides fruitful insight into gender oppression under the control of capitalist government. Though she points out that there is not a fully developed theory of gender, there is still an analysis of labour, exploitation, and alienation that provides valuable tools for understanding gender oppression under capitalism (Brown, 2006).

This part of the literature review helps the research to build on key theories surrounding gendered memory in the context of history and the past that the idea of female gender and their values to society were built on during the reign of communism. It enlightens the researchers through a gendered lens, understanding the constructs of female gender and the transmission of these gender lenses and memories. Taken literature helps to also assess the past and the most present of transmission of these gendered memories and cultural practices as well as gendered theories. Its importance is to help distinguish the changing characteristics of the gendered theory, while ascending from the present day to the first values of family under the reign of Marx and the beginning of communism. From the present day, Luisa Passerini's work helps the research on understanding the present-day transformation of gender with the help of digital media and cultural practices in the European field of her work.

It might not be something that can be used in the study of participants, but it can be reflected as a mirror to modern day values of gender that can be constructed into questions surrounding modern day IWD and its perception in society. Anna Temkina and Elena Zdravomyslova's study of gender identities in post-Soviet Russia where the ideologies of female gender clashed between the modern Western feminist and the Soviet gender norms that were incubated in the memory. This type of research is a perfect example of post-Soviet values of gender and the role of the women in the family, but also the clashes that had risen after the fall of communism. A discourse in the realm of ideology is of great importance as it helps to point out how political events, culture and history affect gendered memories. Increasing the overall understanding of creating qualitative. that can help understand IWD after the reign of Communism and the conflicting factors changing gendered memories, which can be of great use for coding the answers with a past understanding.

This literature review discusses key theories on gendered memory, exploring how memories are constructed and transmitted through a gendered lens. It highlights Luisa Passerini's contribution to gendered memory, focusing on how digital media transforms cultural memory practices. The review also examines Anna Temkina and Elena Zdravomyslova's study of gender identities in post-Soviet Russia, where Western feminist ideologies clashed with Soviet gender norms. Additionally, A. Brown touches on Karl Marx's limited but insightful theories on gender and family roles, with a critique of his approach to gender oppression under capitalism. The family roles from Karl Marx’s theories help to point out the beginning of the view of gender in the workers party and the creation of some of the first ideologies of this time. With this understanding, the research can pace back to view answers from the audience of an older generation to see their point of view from an older generation.

Literature on Memory, Rituals, and Holidays

The literature grouping of Political memory in post-communist societies takes into consideration the historical and political factors of memory in the country's history. As the Czech Republic emerged post-communist reign, it had to still deal with the legacy of the past. Political memory counts as a supporting factor to the study and literature review. Gendered theories take the study through change and transmission of gendered frameworks, but political memory assists with the support of the framework by being a guiding reference of important events that also had an impact on the way gender identity is established and passed

on. By reviewing works from Václav Havel, the research will be able to highlight key themes such as the clashes between old communist ideologies and emerging democratic frameworks, the role of gendered memory, and the impact of cultural practices on shaping national identities. With the goal to map out how memory influences social and political transitions in post-communist societies.

The Power of the Powerless is one of Václav Havel's most influential works written in 1978. Vaclav Havel especially focused on the critiques of life under totalitarian rule, with regards to the rule of communism in Czechoslovakia (Havel, 1978). He is criticising the oppressive systems that maintain control of the people through lies and argues that real power lies in individual resistance through “living in truth,” challenging the system’s artificiality.

Incorporating Václav Havel's The Power of the Powerless into the literature review can enrich the research discussion on gendered memory and the politics of memory in post-communist societies. Havel's concept of “living in truth” is a powerful metaphor for individual resistance against totalitarian regimes, which directly relates to how gender identities and memories are shaped and contested in these contexts (Havel, 1978).

In post-communist societies, where memory politics are often contested, Havel's insights on the manipulation of ideology and societal norms offer a lens to examine how gendered memories evolve. For instance, the struggle between traditional gender roles, as enforced by communist ideologies, and the push for more egalitarian, feminist ideas can be viewed through the concept of "living in truth." This concept also highlights how individuals and groups, particularly women, resist or conform to the dominant narratives of their time, shaping how gendered experiences and memories are constructed and transmitted (Havel, 1978).

By focusing on the dynamics between individual memory and collective ideology, Havel’s essay provides a foundational framework for analysing how women in post-communist societies navigate the politics of memory, using their personal experiences and actions to challenge or uphold the prevailing power structures. This ties seamlessly into the broader discourse on how gender identity is remembered and reconstructed in post-communist societies.

As seen from the works of Vaclav Havel under the totalitarian rule of communism, the party was focused on creating false beliefs in the system and conformity of the nation's mindset. The political regime was a process to reconstruct the mindsets of its citizens, to imbed into their memory the power of the rule and their position in communist regime (Havel, 1978).

An interesting parallel can be drawn with Václav Havel's concept of "living in truth" and A. Brown's discussion on how Marx viewed gender as a tool for utilisation in shaping societal roles. The parallel find of this being how Marx had an instrumental approach to gender roles, disregarding their identities for the emphasis of labour and production, where Vaclav Havel contests the view of personal integrity and the resistance to the ideological oppression by the reign of communism. These frameworks from A.Brown and Vaclav Havel show how gender and memory can be oppressed and manipulated to fit the political system. The parallel also provides an enriching discourse particularly to women, who resist or conform to these ideologies, shaping and transforming memories and identities.

Another Czech author to include into this literature that can help explore the themes of memory manipulation under totalitarian regimes comes from Milan Kundera (Kundera, 1984). Milan Kundera was a play-writer and an essayist, but his most notable period during his life came when he became a prominent voice that spoke against the communist regime in Czechoslovakia. Him as an author for the literature review grouping will support the factor of being a scholar's work that dives directly into the political memory during the occupational period, such as Vaclav Havel, the importance of having Czechslovakian authors during the regime will help strengthen the overall framework as well as being a building block foundation for the study in the realm of political memory tied to IWD.

His work The Book of Laughter and Forgetting, focuses on exploring the themes of memory manipulation during the oppressive totalitarian regimes, which as well parallels with Vaclav Havels work as he also discussed the ideological oppression and manipulation of identity (Kundera, 1984). His combination of personal and collective memory work helps to provide a degree of comprehension of how memory is constructed and deconstructed in a post-communist context. Kunderas perception of personal memory under totalitarian regimes depicts them as a fragmented part of history. He highlights further that resisting opposing narratives where public memory and collective memory experience the struggle preserve the authentic routes of memories against the totalitarian state that focuses on erasing them (Kundera, 1984). This also intersects with the realm of Gendered memory, where taking an

example of IWD is the re-writing of women's roles in society and their narrative. This echoes the bigger issue of gendered memory studies where traditional roles are reshaped and transmitted. The significance of political memory from Milan Kundera work helps to link gendered memory. How political memory can influence gendered memory, which is an important supporting factor to this study's literature.

Literature on Post-Socialist Societies and IWD in the Czech Context

In this section of the literature review, the focus of understanding the historical and contemporary evolution of International Women will review 2 female scholars that will aid the research in understanding how these events are a state-sponsored event and a personal memory. The study will explore how IWD has been shaped and controlled by political events and regimes. More specifically in a socialist environment and how IWD was altered over time to serve the ideological purpose of the regime. As the past literature groupings scholars work have given this research already the basic and advanced understandings of political and gendered memory, there is still a hole of knowledge that needs to be researched and reviewed to help give a circular understanding of IWD. As well as this part of the research is a female orientated event around IWD, the need to gain literature and review literature from female scholars is of importance to the study to keep authenticity of gendered study. Thus, for this literature review, the study will incorporate 2 scholars which have written scholarly articles about IWD regarding IWD during communist regime and post-communist regime.

Temma Kaplan was a distinguished historian from the United States whose work primarily focused on social movements, history of labour and gender studies. She is most known for her studies on International Women's Day (IWD) and its origins in socialist environments (Kaplan, 1985). The research that Kaplan's work provides, helps to shed light on how IWD was used as a tool and platform for political activism. She emphasised women's labour rights and the equality within the framework of socialist ideology. Her 1985 article in *Feminist Studies* On the socialist Origins of International Women's Day, is a key resource to the study that helps to explore intersecting feminism and socialism (Kaplan, 1985). Her work highlights how IWD initially served as a day for advocating women's roles in the workforce, particularly in Eastern Europe during the Soviet Union. The socialist origins of IWD will be instrumental in understanding how this day was co-opted by communist regimes to promote women's rights, while also reinforcing state ideologies. Kaplan's work argues and challenges

the myth that IWD began. Kaplan discovers that IWD became an institutionalised communist holiday in 1922, when Lenin and other socialist leaders adopted it as part of their broader political ideology project (Kaplan, 1985). This ideology as well spread to other socialist government countries at the time such as China, Spain. Where it became an ideological and political tool to promote the state's vision of gender equality and labour. However, promoting this vision as an ideology also stripped the more radical feminist origins. Kaplan notes that IWD was not initially about women's broader rights but was tied to women's roles as workers. She instead points out that IWD was a deliberate political orchestration by the socialist parties, which was being utilised by the communist regimes to promote their vision of women's identity and role within the socialist ideology turning it into a communist holiday.

Kaplan's work gives to the research important insights that are crucial for understanding how IWD evolved over time. Where IWD was shifting from a state-sponsored holiday to a day that also carries personal significance for women. The duality of IWD as both a state-controlled and personal event, ties directly into this study of gendered memory in post-communist societies, where cultural practices are layered with personal and political ideologies.

After World War II, IWD continued to be celebrated significantly in communist countries. But Kaplan notes that in the 1960s and 1970s, Western Feminists began to revive and alter the holiday. Where it was infusing the new meaning focused on women's rights, rather than solely on labour (Kaplan, 1985). Kristen Ghodsee's *"Why Women Have Better Sex Under Socialism"* offers the research a provocative exploration of how socialist policies around IWD in the Soviet Union improved women's social and economic conditions (Ghodsee, 2018). Which as Kristen describes leads to greeted gender equality. One of Kristen's argument points in the book focuses on describing the benefits that women had gotten from the IWD ideology under socialism (Ghodsee, 2018). The state-sponsored policies during IWD not only served as a public reminder of women's contributions to the workforce, but also reinforced personal and intimate empowerment. Where economic independence and social support were provided by the state to women, such as free healthcare, childcare, and labour protections (Ghodsee, 2018). These initiatives helped free women from their economic dependence often found in capitalist systems, which in turn positively impacted their personal lives. This is an important note to be held for the study that can help triangulate the gendered memories and political memories when interviewing the studies review groups. The study

needs to have a knowledgeable background in IWD to support the claims of the reviewed participants or argue against them in the final steps of coding the research findings.

Kaplans book provides the historical and sociological analysis that's needed to understand how socialist governments focus on women's participation in the workforce and the alleviation of economic pressures through the help of the IWD. She further critiques capitalism for reinforcing gender imbalances in society and their maintained roles (Ghodsee, 2018). To this research, her work offers a valuable on International Women's Day, that can help support the study in coding from the research groups as a supporting platform of information or argumentative points.

Theoretical Lens on Memory and Gender

To interpret the generational memories of International Women's Day (IWD) within the Czech context, this research extracts theoretical concepts from memory studies, gender theory, and comparative historical analysis. All together, these frameworks provide an evaluative lens to analyze how state ideologies, cultural rituals, and personal conscious interact and shape over time.

To understand better about memory practices of the post-communist generation dwells from the kye concept of Marianne Hirsch's (2012) notion of *postmemory*. It refers to the postmemory relationship that the later generation bear the experiences of those who came before them. These are experiences that they cannot directly recall, but instead inherit them through cultural sharing, family stories and celebrations, and media. It's a useful framework that can help analyse how younger Czech women can relate to IWD not through lived experience of socialism, but through symbolic and emotional coherence. In all, postmemory offers the researcher a way to understand how political and gendered portrayals are reproduced or rejected across generations, even if there is no direct experience towards that event.

Additionally this research is illuminated by Svetlana Boym's (2001) influential significance between the restorative and reflective nostalgia of the human mind. The concept of restorative nostalgia aims to reconstruct the lost structures and traditions, while still reflecting the nostalgia that dwells in doubt, irony, and critical separation. This pair allows for a refined

reading of how participants do remember IWD, whether it being a valued social cultural tradition, an outdated political ritual, or a commercialised system. Boym's lenses are particularly relevant for this study and as well for interpreting how the participants from both generational groups express emotional detachment or critique toward the celebration.

These honed in memories are further positioned within the gendered framework. Scholars such as Gal and Kligman (2000) have also emphasized on how the socialist regime had claimed to have resolved gender inequality within women and men. Depoliticizing the feminist discourse and achieving a muted female society that believes they have achieved the ultimate goal. This research supports Gal and Kligman's argument, showing how Group 1 participants often lacked feminist vocabulary or ideology, while Group 2 participants had already engaged with feminist critique, yet inconsistently. As both a social role and political category, gender becomes a central part to understanding how memory and identity are shaped through systematic events like IWD.

Also to be noted is that this research actively engages in the politics of memory, particularly in post-authoritarian and post-communist narratives. As Jan-Werner Müller (2002) argues in his work, memory is never neutral, but it is a structured element of institutions and regimes that promote specific ideologies while silencing others that speak up. In the context of socialist regimes Czechoslovakia, the state that had ritualized IWD not only to celebrate the women's roles in the family and workers party, but also to embed loyalty to the regime through symbolic gestures and collective performance. Politics of remembrance have become particularly significant in the post-1989 period, where the meaning of IWD was no longer shaped by state ideology and propagation, but it was instead commercialized by consumer rituals, and emerging feminist critiques. Thus, IWD had become a contested memory site between generational identity and political transitioning.

Ultimately, this research is guided by Comparative Historical Analysis (CHA), as it is developed by theorists like Barrington Moore (1966) and Theda Skocpol (1979). CHA allows the researcher to trace the continuity of change across political regimes and gender narratives, while offering tools for analyzing how macro-level transformations influence the individual narratives and rituals. IWD can function as a comparative case through which wider

ideological shifts and transformations partake from collectivism to consumerism, from institutionalized feminism to performative activism.

Together, these theoretical lenses and frameworks enable the research for a multidimensional exploration of how memory, gender, and ideology intersect across generations. While also highlighting how rituals like IWD function as both carriers of cultural transformation and contested spaces of interpretation.

4.Methodology

For the chosen research design, it has been identified that a Historical-comparative study will fit the study due to the overall links that are found between historical change and personal recollection of the past and present.

To understand the chosen methodology for this research, it is important to understand everything the research includes. As already described in the research question, the following purpose of this research is to explore how Czech women from different generations recall the official communist celebrations of International Women's Day (IWD). It entails recalling the real-life events tied to communism and IWD and the cultural rituals that were state sponsored into IWD, as well as the personal perception and experience of these events over time. With the nature of this research in mind, the focus points are put on historical events and human perception of these events over time as well as to the present perceptions from younger generations. Entailing a more historical comparative context for the research especially since the research examines how Czech women recall International Women's Day (IWD) during the communist era compared to today, in a post-communist context. These can also be understood as historical patterns, such as IWD that was celebrated in the past and still to this day celebrated almost worldwide. Patterns throughout human history are common events that tend to repeat itself or change over time. The research focuses on that change, to analyse the patterns and identify the change over time. IWD could further be described as having transformed over a period. Winfried Gebhardt describes holidays as a mechanism that helps to structure societal values and cultural trends. A very important note in Holidays and the construction of collective identity: A sociological perspective (2000) is the mention of another author Winfried Gebhardt (2000), who describes holidays as of a global nature which can be further described as a process of eventisation. This can also be taken back to the

Soviet Union and their way of featuring events and propaganda to populous. As a trend, IWD has focused on the female participation in the Party and their role in the Soviet Union, but it has developed over time to have a different meaning in modern society. Modern society has taken a new meaning of this trend, but there are different memories and cultural narratives that are important to analyse from its previous existence and meaning Gebhardt (2000).

CHA DESIGN

A comparative study of the historical nature of women's day will be present amongst the methodology as well as being the main narrative for the research design. The motivation to choose such a method of the research design was chosen due to the many factors that research fulfils in terms of historical comparison. Much of the research text till now, have already hinted at a comparative study between 2 generations. As described in the previous chapter, the research design has quite the emphasis on the research question which is more of a focus pillar for comparative research. The comparative research methodology not only considers the research question, but also the overall motive of the study itself. Analysing historical patterns of IWD, the past events that have influenced IWD and what are the memories that are different over a period of time. It is by itself a clear definition of a Comparative Historical analysis**.**

The Comparative Historical Analysis design will focus on core elements within the study, such as: comparisons, patterns, events, parallel motives, historical events, and the past and present as described**.** These core elements follow the research pillars and can be viewed as the guiding points to the research, or the anhoring points that can also be a part of the future research gathering from test groups. CHA is not only a research design, but it is also a method that can be used for this research study. As having points to follow and use will also make this study have a more authentic and approved approach. As the research for such a subject has to focus on the past and the present and can be easily at times forgotten to focus on certain points of the study. Thus, using them as guideline points will help the researcher to not stray away from the study itself, as it should always focus on key points to deliver an authentic and centred study around a topic. These guidelines serve as a waypoint for the researcher to guide his study in the correct format, but also it acts as a boundary between the current goal of the research and what else could be explored or discovered. It's also important

to know where the CHA Design came from, who were its creators and its supporters for its existence. Its history of the CHA design plays an important role to the methodology of the study, as it would be interesting to see if there are changing patterns, motives, events, or comparative motives.

Starting from the earliest of its creation, Alexis de Tocqueville (1835/2000) and his work "De la Démocratie en Amérique" (1835, 1840) can be considered one of the earliest examples of comparative historical analysis. In his work he focused on examining democracy and its institutional impacts across countries, such as the US and its Democracy, compared to that of French Democracy. Alexis in his time had experienced the French revolution of 1848, which had fragmented his family and his perception of France. Later in his life he traveled to the US with intentions of settling there but found himself to be more interested in the different world and views of Democracy. This is where first of the comparisons of society and democracy arrive and are a motivation to his work "De la Démocratie en Amérique". The work followed comparing French Democracy with that of the United States, but as his work shows, he was more concerned with that of French Democracy. He feared that understanding the Democracy within the US would prove to be even above all knowledge, knowing it would be difficult to comprehend with that of French Democracy. As the 2 are based on their own founding agendas and motives. However, his motive serves as a comparison point of view, where the researcher can gain an understanding of how previous scholars had compared the patterns and events between historical events.

By incorporating and bridging insights from economics, political science, and anthropology which had given even a deeper dive into his work. It was not the only extension Moor's used, but also the use of employing typologies or Weberian methods to help simplify the complex phenomena. The Weberian method is an analytical framework created by Max Weber, which focuses on social action, rationality and understanding society. Moor's methodological work has set to be a benchmark for CHA design, prompting scholars like Theda Skocpol (1979) (States and Social Revolutions) and Charles Tilly (Coercion, Capital, and European States) to use the CHA methodology for their research as well as enhancing the method overall.

Comparing these 2 scholars helps to build an understanding of how CHA has advanced over the years and the topics that wanted to be researched. Early works of scholars had revealed that they had struggled within the CHA design at its first. What is important to know is that

CHA focuses on information and knowledge base data that is available and not censored. Taking an example from Alexis' work which had conducted his research in the 19th century. His work was limited by the availability of information at his time as well as ways of getting the information and data he needed. As he compares America and France in his work, he feels that he is not able to understand the vast history or majority of the American Culture and even that of France, only the present and a bit of history as he knows it. However, it shows that such research was more down to finding the limitations and what needs to be discovered before it can be used as research data. Compared to the modern-day world, where data is available 24/7, verified, uncensored and free to use. With such a vast amount of information available today, it is no wonder how fast CHA research design can be utilized and advanced in the realm of scholarly work.

Utilizing the CHA design

This study employs the use of the Comparative Historical Analysis (CHA) approach to examine how Czech women from 2 different generations recall the events of International Women's Day (IWD) during and after communism. The CHA method is a suited framework to explore how historical events can be remembered differently across all transformational ideologies and political narratives. It also allows the researcher to trace the long-term transformations of symbolic rituals and state narratives.

The research focuses on 2 distinct generational groups within Czech Republic: Group 1, which are women who had lived under the reign of the communist regime, and Group 2 who are women who came of age after 1989 (post-communism). This grouping design enables the researcher to have a comparative view of memory and gender identity constructed under 2 different socio-political systems. By centering them on lived memories versus the inherited narratives, which the study captures on how IWD is interpreted in broader historical changes.

The data which was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus groups, had allowed the participants to reflect on their past experiences and inherited understandings of IWD. A total of 20 women (10 per group) were interviewed for this research. A purposive sampling method was used to ensure the diversity in background while still maintaining the generational relevance within the studies key borders. This format alone had encouraged

many interesting reflective responses and as well had facilitated conversational depth into the deeper memories of the participants.

For analysis of the gathered research data, a thematic analysis was conducted following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. Codes were generated by observation and grouped into larger themes such as including: State-Controlled Memory, Emotional Framing, and Symbolic Gestures. Comparative and discourse lenses had also been applied to interpret the differences in language, ideology, and resistance towards IWD. This mixed an interpretive strategy strengthening the cross-generational insights.

4.1 Data Gathering Methods

The data gathering framework focuses on the methods of gathering data that can help the research compare historical analysis throughout certain timeframes. As previously stated, the framework of Comparative Historical Analysis heavily relies on qualitative research. This is already a supporting pillar to the gathering method that will be used as it not only helps to outline the method but also why it is a supported method for the methodological study. As previously mentioned, there was also a thought of using quantitative data gathering methods and analysis, however it was discarded as not being as effective for the study as intended. Qualitative data gathering methods have also been observed before choosing the correct one that fits the limitations of the study as well as the overall arching goal to achieve. The limitations of the study can be described as time strains on the study that could be conducted for a very long period as well as researching a lot of media that could spiral the research of its course. Thus, the focus of the data gathering method is to utilize the elements of the human mind and the historical events that have taken place throughout the events of communism and post communism. The human mind is a library of emotions and memories that are not depicted in media of any kind, that's what makes a qualitative data gathering method important for a human depth research work of this kind. As a scholarly work of this kind, the focus is put on 2 elements, the mind and the events that have taken place throughout history. Because of documented events and literature surrounding these events, it creates an easier way to gather already existing data. However, the data that is not yet applicable or accessible are the gendered and political memories surrounding these events that have unfolded. Such

data is not possible to be used a second time, rather a reference. The data that is collected is data that is specifically tied to a scholarly work that is as original as its qualitative data that has been researched. As the research revolves around the mind and the memory of individuals, there is no need to add quantitative data to further extend the research that may not yield the research value necessary for such a topic as such. Quantitative data gathering aims to distinguish patterns, averages, and make future predictions based on percent. It also tests casual relationships between 2 elements or more to help identify relationships and causes. Because its scientifically routed method of gathering data that may find it hard to work with the human mind and the words that come out of it. The qualitative work will focus on extracting the depth of gendered memories and the political experiences of those individuals. With the help of methods that can uncover the layers of emotions, subjective memories, and perception of the human mindset.

The qualitative work will focus on extracting meaning, depth, and nuanced understanding from the memories and lived experiences of individuals. Through methods such as in-depth interviews, document analysis, and oral histories, the research aims to uncover the layers of emotion, perception, and subjective memory that are often overlooked in quantitative approaches. This aligns with the study's aim to explore how gendered and political memories shape and are shaped by the historical contexts of communism and post-communism. By emphasizing the unique and irreplaceable value of human perspectives, this qualitative approach allows the research to delve into the complexities of memory, identity, and historical interpretation in a way that quantitative data simply cannot replicate."

The data gathering structure consists of 2 timeline events that are important factors for the research as they are directly linked to the overall structure. This is also what will be the basis of the analysis, where the data received in these 2 timelines will be coded and analyzed. Timelines can be described as events that have passed or have happened in history that end or start a period of events:

Planning the Qualitative Data Gathering

Using qualitative methods, the research will focus on gathering data from women of specific generations who have experienced both communism and post-communism in

Czechoslovakia. These participants will be selected based on their alignment with defined parameters to ensure the data reflects generational perspectives on International Women's Day (IWD).

The data gathering structure consists of 2 timeline events that are important factors for the research as they are directly linked to the overall structure. This is also what will be the basis of the analysis, where the data received in these 2. Timelines can be described as events that have passed or have happened in history that end or start a period of events.

The data gathering will divide the historical timeline into two key periods:

1. **During Communism:** Participants in this group will have lived under the communist regime in Czechoslovakia, experiencing IWD within the context of the state's ideological framework and cultural practices.
2. **Post-Communism:** Participants in this group will have experienced IWD in the post-communist era, when ideologies and cultural perceptions around the day evolved significantly.

Tying the Timelines

The historical timelines of the data gathering patterns do help to create a transparent view of the research gathering. Not only that but it also works to help to identify the responses for the initial research question more optimized. If there were no timelines, this could span the research to be uncontrolled and yield data that could have no proper use or meaning for the research. These timelines serve as a placement in the data gathering guidelines to help divide certain eras and data for these periods of times. Also, as this needs to support the research question development into timeline phases.

The questions that these timelines will help to answer are:

- How do the participants' memories of IWD, compare celebrations during communism to their experiences and perceptions of IWD in the post-communist era?

- How do the different participant generations of Czech women recall and interpret IWD celebrations under communism? And how do these memories influence their perceptions of gender and politics in post-communist Czech society?

Ethical Considerations:

To ensure the ethical integrity of the study, data will only be collected from participants aged 18 and older who provide verbal informed consent. This age criterion ensures the research focuses on individuals who fully experienced IWD as adults, as younger participants might fall under the scope of Children's Day celebrations. Moreover, involving minors would necessitate additional ethical approvals and could complicate the research process.

Data Gathering Structure:

The structure of the data gathering process revolves around the two historical timelines, which are directly linked to the research's central focus. The interviews and collected narratives will be coded and analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and contrasts between the two periods. By examining how women's memories and experiences differ across these timelines, the research will capture the evolution of gendered and political memory in relation to IWD. Memories are divided into 2 elements that will be a focus point of gathering data. As already known, there is the political memory and gendered memory that are studying points of the research. Thus, the data gathering will focus on harnessing both these memories from the personal group interviews. The questions that will be structured for the personal interviews shall contain the narrative of post communism and the era of communism in Czechoslovakia to ensure that the research keeps according to the borderlines and not to deviate with the information it shall receive from participants. Below this paragraph will be a following section of segments of the Data Structure to give a clear clarification to the research methodology within Data Gathering. The researcher hopes to also understand the emotional value behind the test group samples, what this helps to accomplish is to give the data more significant value. Given the focus of gendered and political memories on IWD, there are bound to be emotions that are remembered and still sought after. It can be a turning point for some test subjects that can offer a deeper view on that event and timeline. Emotions are tied to collective memory, the identity of a human being and their affiliation to political

narrative as well in this case. Unlike structural analysis, insights into the emotional responses such as how the individuals resisted political narratives, how the memory is shaped by the live experiences, how the memories created a mobilization of emotions. The emotional side of the data gathering tends to focus on examples such as: "How did you feel when IWD was celebrated during communism vs. today?". Such add on questions will not be many as we do not want to overly confuse the test subject with emotions, but rather a small sentence or a word of how they felt. This way the qualitative data can be tagged together with the emotional statements to give a deeper background into the qualitative answers that can be supported by these emotions. Its value added, helps the researcher to uncover emotional legacies left behind from political transformations. This can provide a deeper understanding of subjective historical experiences within the research narrative helping to give information and data to political memory.

One thing should be mentioned, as the research revolves around Czech women, the data gathering shall be conducted in Czech language to make sure the participants under the questions clearly and are able to answer in the native language. The researcher is aware of the translation and for the sake of this study has described the following question in English. It should be noted that the participants' answers will be translated for the sake of data analysis in English.

Timing of Data Gathering:

As the research is currently being developed, IWD is closing soon on Sat, Mar 8, 2025. This marks an upcoming date that would be highly useful for the research to be used as an advantage to gain information that might prove more personally connected to political memory or gendered memory. This advantage can be considered as reliving the events of the past and present, unlocking certain new memories that have been buried deep or have been forgotten. These core memories can be unlocked by questioning the test group the day after the event or even on the event, however due events such as these being very well celebrated, the timing of the test group might not have time for questioning on the day of the event. Thus, the timing would be better to hold this test group post IWD, however still in the same week to have those unlocked memories still in the zone of discovery. Fresh memories that are unblocked are not only the human element that will be discovered, but also the emotions that have been deeply settled in the mind of the test subject that will have a deeper impact on the qualitative research that has been gathered. There is a fear that if the test subject will not be

interviewed within the timeframe, the loss of fresh memories and emotions might occur that could harm the research.

Gathering of Test groups:

Selection of the test group is a crucial and critical component of the research methodology. Not only are the variables of testing but it also ensures that the collected data from the test group accurately reflects the generational perspective of IWD during and after communism in Czechoslovakia. It will follow qualitative purposeful sampling which will allow the research to select participants based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research questions posed to them.

Participant Criteria

To ensure a meaningful comparison of political and gendered memory, participants will be selected based on the following criteria:

1. **Generational Experience**
    - Women who experienced IWD celebrations during the communist rule in Czechoslovakia.
    - Women who experienced IWD in post-communist era, this helps to review the change in ideological and cultural perceptions of the event.
2. **Age Requirement**
    - Participants must be **18 years or older**, due to ethical reasons and that the participant has experienced the IWD event.
3. **Geographical Scope**
    - Participants will primarily be drawn from the Czech Republic, Prague. This is due to the nature and limitations of this study from the side of the researcher.
4. **Diversity of Perspectives**
    - The test groups will be sure to include women from various socio-economic backgrounds, professions, and political affiliations to capture a broad spectrum of events

Recruitment Strategy

The recruitment of participants will follow an approach of the following. This will help to ensure data can be represented in diversified ways.

- **Personal Networks & Referrals**: Participants will be chosen through a network of women close to the researchers' study. These participants are foremost chosen from a close network of female workers close to the researcher in the Czech Republic who fit all the necessary criteria for the test samples. Younger participants or those that are of a post-communist context, will be recruited from Charles Universities around Prague.
- **Snowball Sampling**: Given the nature of this study, it should be easy to have a snowball effect on participants once the message gets out to other women about their experience with the researchers' study.

Sampling Group & Size

An aim is to recruit a maximum of 20 participants, which will be evenly distributed the generational groups:

- 10 women from the Communist Era Group
- 10 women from the Post-Communist Era Group

This sample size ensures sufficient depth for a qualitative insight while being manageable for in depth analysis.

Ethical Considerations

- **Anonymity & Confidentiality**: Participants' identities will be anonymized to protect their privacy, particularly given the political nature of the research.
- **Sensitivity to Emotional Topics**: Since discussions may evoke strong emotions, interviews and focus groups will be conducted with ethical sensitivity, allowing participants to opt out of any topics they find distressing.

By structuring the test groups in this manner, the research ensures a comprehensive examination of gendered and political memory surrounding IWD, while maintaining methodological rigor and ethical integrity.

Structure of Test Groups

To facilitate structured data collection, the test groups will be divided as follows:

1. **Communist Era Group (10)**
    - Women who lived through the communist period and celebrated IWD under the state's ideological framework.
    - Discussions will focus on how IWD was framed by state propaganda, personal experiences of participation, and any emotional or political significance attached to the event.
2. **Post-Communist Era Group (10)**
    - Women who experienced IWD in the post-communist period, reflecting changes in political narratives and public perception of the celebration.
    - Discussions will explore how the meaning and relevance of IWD evolved, as well as its role in shaping contemporary gender discourse.

By structuring the test groups in this manner, the research ensures a comprehensive examination of gendered and political memory surrounding IWD, while maintaining methodological rigor and ethical integrity.

4.2 Data Analysis Approach

For the data analysis, the research will utilise a qualitative data analysis framework, which will help to examine how gendered and political memory are shaped through International Women's Day in communist and post-communist Czechoslovakia.

The analysis shall focus on the following three key leads: thematic analysis, comparative analysis, and discourse analysis.

Which are widely used methods in Comparative Historical Analysis (CHA) and memory studies. These approaches will allow for a structured yet interpretative examination of historical transformations in memory, political identity, and gendered experiences.

4.2.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was conceptualized by Braun and Clarke (2006). A method that is widely used in qualitative methods of data analysis, which helps the researcher to identify, analyse, and report patterns or themes within data. A thematic analysis allows the research for a structured yet flexible approach to interpreting how individuals reconstruct and express their memories (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Why This Method?

A thematic analysis is used when identifying patterns and recurring themes within data, to be exact qualitative data. Memory isn't only a reflection of the past, but also a process of dynamic and influential forces, when in this case counts as social and political powers that have made an impact on one's memory. With this method, the researcher will be able to capture how individuals reconstruct their past experiences and interpret them with IWD.

Building a more authentic and supportive view of the thematic analysis method, a few examples of past thematic analysis scholar works will be mentioned below and explained in terms of how the analysis helped their work.

Applications of thematic analysis in scholar works:

- In the works of Katherin Verdery (1999) who focused on the study of post-socialist memory. A Thematic analysis was successfully applied to her work on gender and memory studies. The method helped to analyze how individuals reinterpret their experiences under communism (Verdery, 1999).
- Another scholarly work that incorporates thematic analysis comes from the works of Kimberly J. Morgan (2006) where the use of thematic analysis takes place to explore and analyze how welfare states in France and Germany institutionalized gender roles. This also parallels how state propagated events and celebrations such as IWD have shaped gender identities and memories in Czechoslovakia (Morgan, 2006).

How the analysis will work:

1. **Coding Process:**
    - Transcripts of interviews and focus groups will be systematically coded to extract key themes.

- Open coding will first be applied to allow themes to emerge naturally, followed by axial coding to categorize them into broader analytical categories.

2. **Key Themes Expected to Emerge:**
    - **State-Controlled Memory:** How the communist regime framed IWD as a political tool.
    - **Personal vs. Collective Memory:** Tensions between individual recollections and official narratives.
    - **Emotional Engagement:** Feelings of nostalgia, resistance, or detachment toward IWD.
    - **Post-Communist Shifts:** How perceptions of IWD changed after 1989.

4.2.2 Comparative Analysis

Why This Method?

Comparative analysis is key to understanding historical events that have led to transformations. Since this research examines IWD across different time periods, a comparative approach should help highlight the evolution of gender and political memory,as well as ideology.

Precedents in Research:

- Theda Skocpol (1979)'s (1979) work has focused on revolutions with the use of comparative analysis. This method helped her to examine how political structures shape societal change, which is relevant to the current research in terms of understanding shifts in gendered and political memory between different political regimes (Skocpol, 1979).
- Grzegorz Ekiert & Kubik (2014) (2003) another scholar has also applied the comparative method to help analyze how post-communist countries divided their democratic transitions. This also aligns with this research's focus on political transformations in memory (Ekiert & Kubik, 2014).

How It Works in This Study:

1. **Intergenerational Comparisons:**

    - Comparing perceptual views of IWD among women who lived under communism vs. those born after 1989 to highlight shifts in political and emotional engagement.
2. **Political Framing:**
    - Examine how the Czechoslovakian communist state used IWD for ideological purposes vs. how post communist Czech society celebrates it today.
3. **Cultural & Social Shifts:**
    - Analyze how gender roles, feminism, and political identity influenced the celebration and memory of IWD in different historical contexts.

4.2.3 Discourse Analysis

Why This Method?
Discourse analysis helps examine how language and official narratives shape memory. Since political regimes control historical narratives, this method will allow for a critical examination of how the framing of IWD has evolved across different political systems.

The Discourse Analysis helps the researcher to examine how languages and social narratives can shape the mind and memory. Where Political memory controls historical narratives of the people, it also allows the researcher to examine the framing of IWD and how it has evolved over time.

Precedents in Research:

- Rogers Brubaker (1996)'s work on nationalism and identity (1996), which has used discourse analysis to show how states construct collective memory through political sentiments within the populism (Brubaker, 1996).
- Katherine Verdery (1999)'s (1991) analysis of state-controlled discourse in socialist regimes, which revealed how propaganda can shape historical narratives and identity. Which is a key concern for this study's interest in IWD narratives (Verdery, 1991).

Final Justification for These Methods

By combining thematic analysis, comparative analysis, and discourse analysis, this research provides a comprehensive, multidimensional approach to studying gendered memory in post-communist societies. Each method plays a distinct role:

- Thematic analysis identifies key subjective experiences and emotional responses to IWD.
- Comparative analysis contextualizes these memories within historical and political transformations.
- Discourse analysis reveals how official narratives shape and challenge collective memory.

This methodological approach ensures that the research not only captures lived experiences but also examines how they are structured by broader political and ideological forces.

Conclusion

This methodology has been carefully structured to ensure a rigorous, ethical, and comprehensive approach to studying the intersection of political and gendered memory in the context of International Women's Day in post-communist societies. By employing qualitative research methods, purposeful sampling, and a multi-layered data analysis approach, this study aims to uncover how historical narratives and lived experiences shape contemporary perceptions of IWD.

The combination of triangulation, thematic and discourse analysis, and reflexivity ensures that findings are both valid and reliable, while ethical considerations remain at the forefront of participant engagement. The next chapter will present the findings derived from these methodological frameworks, offering a deeper insight into the evolving nature of political and gendered memory.

4.Data gathering questions and purpose

1. Interview Questions

Group 1: Women Who Experienced Communism

These participants lived through the Communist era and witnessed state-controlled narratives of IWD. Their responses will help analyze how memory, emotions, and politics shaped their experiences.

Section 1: Personal Experience of IWD

1. Can you describe your earliest memories of International Women's Day?
2. How was IWD celebrated in your family, workplace, or community?
3. Did your perception of IWD change over time? If so, how?

Section 2: Political and Social Framing of IWD

4. Do you recall how the Communist government or media portrayed IWD?
5. Did you feel that IWD was a genuine celebration or a state-imposed event?
6. How did the way IWD was celebrated change after 1989?

Section 3: Emotional and Gendered Memory

7. What emotions do you associate with IWD during the Communist period?
8. Did you ever feel pressure to celebrate IWD in a certain way?
9. How did IWD influence perceptions of women's roles in society during Communism?

Group 2: Women Who Only Experienced Post-Communism

These participants have only known IWD in a democratic and market-driven society. Their responses will highlight how memory and perception of IWD have changed without direct Communist-era influence.

Section 1: Personal Experience of IWD

1. Can you describe your first memory of International Women's Day?
2. How was IWD celebrated in your family, workplace, or community?
3. What does IWD mean to you today?

Section 2: Political and Social Framing of IWD

4. How do you think IWD is portrayed in modern Czech society and media?
5. Have you ever heard about how IWD was celebrated under Communism? If so, what are your impressions?
6. Do you think IWD today carries political meaning, or is it more of a commercial/social event?

Section 3: Emotional and Gendered Memory

7. What emotions do you associate with IWD? good point
8. Have you ever felt pressure to celebrate IWD in a certain way?
9. How do you think IWD influences discussions about women's roles today?

---

2. **Justification of the Interview Structure**

This section of the Interview data gathering will explain the methods and justification of the questions that have been selected. With the purpose of constructing a more scholarly based work and authentic existence.

- **Comparing the Generational Perspective**s: Having 2 generational perspectives within the research is a critical measure needed to be defined. The purpose of the research dwells deeply into the 2 generations within the study. To understand the different perceptions, cultural events, experiences, and unlocked memories that are important to understand IWD during and post communism. Without the generational divide, the research could experience a multitude of issues. Such as information not being coded correctly, being bound together and not organized that could harm the overall researched data of this work. Thus, having a structured, organized and divided questionnaire method is of utmost importance. This also overall strengthens the comparative analysis that has been chosen for the study that will also be its supporting claim for this method.
- **Thematic Focus**: The questions are also subdivided into 4 categories: personal experience, political memory, emotional memory, and comparisons of events. These

sub-categories from the questionnaire serve a unique purpose, to harness information that can be linked, interpreted across generations, compared, and generate interesting finds of IWD. Another reason is that their purpose is also to help answer the research question and help build a deeper understanding of certain memories and perceptions of IWD. Also, a thematic approach in qualitative data demands a more open focus of interpreting certain themes of the study that can be coded from bigger props of data.

- **Qualitative Depth**: With an open-ended questionnaire, the research can dive into the nuanced understanding of gender and political memory. Qualitative questions allow the researcher to dive deep into their world from only their sentences. Such a construct allows the research to gather meaningful data that is also interpreted openly and can challenge other statements from just the same question. Which can lead to finding anomalies or interesting variables from just one person. The research requires a depth over of the event since memories can hold a lot of information that can be unlocked at the right moment, triggering a vast amount of information to be given

5. Analysis of Gathered data

With the successful gathering of responses from both test subject groups, it's time to progress into the analysis of this data to gain a deeper understanding of certain connections and discourses from these groups. With this step forward, the researcher hopes to uncover patterns that can be linked or events that are unique in their own nature. The groups have proved to yield interesting results that the researcher had not first expected, which only adds more intrigue to the study. The diversity and depth in their opinions, memories, feelings and political memories. It's important that the researcher must have a neutral and critical lens when approaching the findings.

The responses of the participants have revealed also quite the unique features that have enriched parts of the research and granted the needed value of this study. Some participants have taken their due time to answer quite long answers, which adds not only depth of information, but a memorable story that can be told as data. With this positioning in the research, the researcher hopes to come to certain connections of parity and highlight the differences either between the age groups or same group data. As well depending on factors such as their generational period, personal experience, and cultural background. These similar

differences will be explored as well to shed the light on the broader social discourses and social identity.

Ultimately, the goal of this analysis is not only to interpret the data in light of the original research questions but also to remain open to the new paths and perspectives the participants themselves have offered. Which also gives runway for future studies as well to use the participants testimonies for future developments.

The structure of the research analysis is therefore primarily focusing on the themes emerging from the harvested data, such as the perceptions, emotional experiences, cultural events, the role of media in shaping the event and its overall awareness in history. With this structure, the researcher can better understand how the participants (women) have been perceived and have been shaped during these events, as well regarding the narratives of gendered and political memory.

Guidance within the analysis shall be given to the (CHA) Comparative Historical Analysis framework as stated in the methodology. The goal of the CHA is to guide the analysis of both respondents' groups gathered data into a selective process. This process will utilize the three correlated approaches: comparative analysis, discourse analysis and thematic analysis. Which are widely used within Comparative Historical Analysis and act as the decoding bridge from qualitative memory studies to cohort and engaging useful data.

The researcher will be using the following analysis to help him decode the data based on a key element of interest:

- **Thematic analysis** - recurring patterns, emotions, and symbolic meanings across the responses.

- **Comparative analysis** - how experiences and perceptions change or align based on historical context.

- **Discourse analysis** - insights into how memory, identity, and ideology are constructed.

With these methods, the researcher seeks to interpret the data with not only in relation to its original research questions, but also to remain open to emergent perspectives and themes offered by the participants themselves.

From this point further, the researcher will be presenting the responders data and placing them into a structured thematic analysis for decoding. The researcher will also present a translated appendix of the written responses from the test groups, which will act as the official translated responses. This ensures that not only the academic research is intact, but also ensures the readers translation of the data.

1. Group Analysis: Women Who Experienced Only Post-Communism

Introduction to Group 2

Group 2 is structured data that only features the results of International Women's Day (IWD) in a post-communist context. Consisting of women who had grown up in a post-communist society and have experienced IWD in a democratic setting. What makes this group interesting is that they don't have rooted first - hand experiences of a state organized celebration, which was typical for the communist era. Their significance to the study lies in their positioning in the historic timeline, which makes them completely untouched from the official IWD timeline which was created during communism. This is why Group 2 is crucial to the study as they are lenses through which change, and transformation of gendered and possibly political memory can be witnessed within a post-socialist context.

These participants were rather shaped by the portrayal of modern media and inherited memory. Which gives the data a distinct new playing field of how media has also advanced over a period in relation to the International Women's Day Holiday. Media will also be an important part of the findings to see what the gendered lenses perceived from the media. Is it indeed a big change in the type of media that has evolved, but the message is always delivered the same way?

Demographic Profile

Majority of the gathered responses from Group 2 fall within the range of 20 to 25 years. With the most common 23 years of age and 25. The participants had also been selected at places where young people get together and discuss topics and narratives together, thus the Charles University was a perfect fit. Location did not play a big role in the research as the most important factor was to find local Czech participants for the study. But, due to the research being conducted at Charles University, there has also been a reflection in the participants' way of understanding and answering the survey questions. They are an education orientated demographic that is exposed daily to modern digital media and feminist discourses with a Western influence. The university acts as an amplifier of discourse and self -aware thinking of the topic, which breeds more interesting responses such as the survey has. Thus, their experiences and memory of the event has situated itself in an important dimension that breeds discourse and a connected environment on such discussions.

Important notes:

- **Age Range:** The Respondents were mostly in their early 20s, with ages generally consisting of 20 to 25.

- **Cultural Stance:** The Responders reflect a generation that is influenced by external factors of both post-socialist values and worldwide feminist movements. Which were often mediated through channels such as education and digital media.

- **Location:** Location of the respondents has also been an important keystone in the survey responses, as it gave more educated and diverse insights into the discourse of the topic.
- **Subject Education**: Another important insight that must be taken is the education on the topic from the side of the respondents. With a higher education, the respondents not only have an internal view of Internal Women's Day, but also can critique the event.

5.2.1 Thematic Analysis of Group 2

In this section, the researcher will focus on thematic analysis which means focusing on recurring themes, patterns, and narratives from the participants' responses. Thus, the research has also a clear guidance of what to identify and focus on to not get lost in the amount of qualitative data. Also, it should be understood that the researcher is finding recurring patterns, themes and narratives across the board, which means that not every response could also be the recurring theme but it by itself is a unique anomaly.

To help identify the chosen analysis, the researcher will use 5 central elements that have appeared across the set of participant data. These 5 elements are based on the methodology that has been used for this study that helped create the analysis methods and are key in capturing the qualitative framework needed. Those elements serve as the anchor points to Comparative Historical Analysis, delivering the necessary lens to interpret the responders' data. Which has been a playground of recurring themes, narratives, and patterns in the participants' responses. The researcher chose 5 elements (listed themes that were found to be the most precise in the acknowledgement of the Thematic analysis) which will give the necessary data to construct an application of it in the conclusion.

The themes have not been fixed beforehand but have rather appeared through a step by step coding process shaped by both theoretical background and leading patterns. With each chosen theme reflecting a unique layer of the respondents' experience with (IWD) International Women's Day in a post-communist context.

Chosen 5 themes of the Thematic Analysis:

1. **Commercialization and Symbolism**
   How the participants interpret common IWD gestures such as flowers, gifts, and social media posts, whether as meaningful acts or as empty rituals tied to capitalist or gendered performance. This acts as also another interesting point of how the holiday is changing

2. **Inherited vs. Personal Memory**
   The tension between what participants recall from familial or cultural narratives and their own lived experiences of the day. This theme is essential in capturing how

memory is transferred or reinterpreted across generations.

3. **Critique or Acceptance of IWD**
   How respondents frame their engagement with IWD or whether they critique it as an outdated tradition,or appreciate it, or activism.

4. **Media Representation and Influence**
   How platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and online news outlets shape the symbolic and emotional dimensions of IWD. This theme highlights the contemporary shift from physical to digital commemorative spaces.

5. **Feminist Awareness and Gendered Discourse**
   The extent to which participants frame IWD within larger feminist, gender-equality, or social justice discourses, reflecting the evolving cultural literacy on gender politics in a post-socialist society.

With the focus of the analysis through these five lenses, the researcher aims to uncover the complex environment and multiple meanings of the International Women's Day for this group. It will also help the research to understand how these meanings may show a broader transformation in gendered and political memory within post-communist Czech society.

Theme analysis:

Theme 1: Commercialization and Symbolic Gestures on IWD

- Thematic Analysis:

With the theme of commercialization and symbolic gestures in IWD, there has been some interesting thought and view through the gendered lenses. A small portion of the respondents (3) had a negative view of the holiday being celebrated in modern times, while the others (7) had a neutral good view of the event. Within the respondents' answers there was the sight of Commercialization and Symbolic Gestures that had affected both parts of the groups. The negative spectrum (3) had seen that IWD had changed from their first memories of the event

that had a more positive effect on them. Such memories of happiness and intrigue celebrating the event with their mothers has been overshadowed by their later experiences in life where digital marketing stepped foot into their line of sight. While the rest (7) have not registered these events as important or something that could defy that IWD has changed for the worst, but have rather seen that it has developed as an event worldwide to support the feminist movements surrounding it and the adaptation of men into their lenses. What's very interesting is that this group of participants were all introduced to IWD through either traditional channel such as TV or Radio, or passed down through their parents (in [1] case it was the father who introduced her to this holiday without the mother as her first memory). It seems that the participants have had a unique blend of their first memories of the event and developing involvement in their lives over the years that has a different effect on them. In terms of the Symbolic Gestures, that has also become a very interesting view through the lenses of this study due to how participants had seen it celebrated around them and directly with them. The symbolic gestures were intriguing as (9) respondents have all given in their responses that this event has been celebrated in their home or outing and all have received a flower as a sort of symbolism to this event from their fathers, brothers, or schoolmates. While (1) has stated that they were not much influenced by it and their environment, however they have been influenced by a feminist movement at university and protested on the day of IWD each year. It's quite an anomaly as it shows that the women who were not affected by their environment or parents and close people have developed a different view of its symbolic gesture through the means of joining movements and interacting on the event through forms of protest. One interesting response that should be shared to the symbolic gesture, comes in the form of the event being seen as an upgrade from another event. One respondent stated, *"It feels more like a Valentine's Day 2.0. Flowers and kind words, but nothing really changes."* (ENG translation). Which just shows that it does also have potential to become a symbolic gesture of IWD potentially transforming into a more culturally powerful holiday.

Theme 2: Inherited vs. Personal Memory

- Thematic analysis

With the introduction of the first theme, already a small part of the Inherited memory has been answered which can also be added here as well. However, there is much more to the Inherited memory from many more questions that have been introduced to the participants.

As already known, much of their first memories were inherited from their parents, schoolmates, and traditional communication channels, but their personal memory has developed over the course of the experience with the event. That's why in the survey there were 2 questions which discussed their first memories of IWD, while the second question discussed how it was celebrated around them in their workplace, family, and environment. This showed to be an interesting leap forward from their inherited memory as it had parts now of their personal memory, due to it not being their first introduction. Most of the research questions tend to dive into the personal memory of the respondents, where they have their own personal memory of IWD. It is also important to note that the questions do also challenge them on speaking about the change of IWD in their society and how they interpret it and what memories do they have of it recently. But another question asked if they have noticed if IWD has changed over the course of their experience and its interpretation of it, diving deeper into their personal memory of this event. A question was asked "How did you celebrate IWD in your family or local environment" a touch on Personal memory from the previous theme. The personal memory of all participants had indicated that they were in fact all somehow linked to this event by memory except (1) who described that they only celebrated Mother's day. (9) of those participants have already their personal memories tied to the activities of celebration and symbolic gestures such as receiving gifts or a flower. Though what can be interestingly found is that these memories of these events have indicated that there is also a sort of collective memory of these events with the circle of people they associate with. It would be as if they were not the instigators of any of these events, celebrations or giving a flower to their moms or sisters, it came from the side of the male collective memory. This may not be an anomaly of the study, but rather an interesting finding that personal memory can be triggered by the collective memory of their surrounding elements and opposite gender. Further down the line, what has become an interesting factor of inherited and personal memory comes from the next question: *"Have your views in IWD changed through time?"*. This might seem to be off the memory topic, but there are signs of IWD becoming inherited in the memory of the respondents. Summarizing (5) respondents, who have all described that IWD is changing, and it is not what their first memories of it were. However, this can be also attributed to the fact that some of the participants do have different developed lenses that have developed with time over discourse topics surrounding IWD. In short, the (5) respondents have stated that their interest in IWD has decreased due to certain influences of changing their inherited and personal memory of IWD. They described their consciousness about marketing tactics which are used on this day to increase revenue

share through discounts. This could be a sign of the memory they have of IWD changing and not in the positive light they have hoped for, creating a new memory in their mind of what they don't like about it, which is every year reinforced due to what they perceive the most.

Theme 3: Critique or Acceptance of IWD

- **Theme analysis:**

A critical view on IWD was asked to the participants to get their perception of the change that IWD is going through. The researcher wanted to understand further down the line, since freedom of speech is a basic pillar of Czech modern society, critique can now be opened to anybody to participate in. What makes this interesting is that during communism in Czechoslovakia, criticism was silenced and prosecuted. This gives rise to viewing critique, dissecting it, understanding what is now accepted from the younger female audience and what can be taken from this for future study. What is also important to know is that these participants in Group 2 are very well influenced by digital media as well as consuming it daily. Thus, the researcher asked the question that could widen his lenses in what they perceive not only around them during IWD, but also digitally. The question was “Jak je podle vás MDŽ zobrazován v současné české společnosti a médiích?” (How is your view of IWD represented in local Czech communities and in media), where (7) of the participants had some in-depth responses compared to (3) which were almost one worded answer. Even though the (3) responses were only positive remarks on the event, they do not give the required data for this theme. (5) of the 7 detailed responses have seen the rise of IWD on their social media platforms. This marks a 50% rate of young women engaging with IWD on social media or it engages with them. But what shines out is that all these respondents have a different critique and acceptance of IWD through their gendered lenses. Within the (5) respondents, (2) have stated critique upon this event during the month of the event, where the most prominent factor was the commercial use of the holiday. As critiquing that the holiday has begun to turn into a marketing event that gives discounts and sales to women for women's day. This has been taken already in the previous theme as an important find wishing memory of the event relatively. But here it shows that the younger generation tends to lose the meaning of women, as if they were lost between what the event symbolizes to them. As one respondent states “nelibi se mi jak je v mediich casto vyobrayovan. Jde casto jen o slevy na damske produkty a o pokus prodat co nejvice kvetin, ale ten skutecny smysl tam zanika”.

Which reinforces the idea that the true meaning of IWD is diminishing into a tool for marketing and is changing the gendered memory of the event. This is something that has not been detected in the other responses and serves as quite the important find of a gem in terms of the respondent's response. Within the other responses an important factor had been found in terms of activist responses and views on the type of media they are engaging with, as they view that much of the current media, they see does not portray the importance of IWD. (3) out of the 7 responses have had an activist approach to what they are seeing on digital media and experiencing around them IRL. This comes as something unexpected to the researcher, which could suggest that the participants with a high concentration of activism could be influenced by their knowledge and location surrounding IWD. The level of activism can be corresponded to also the location and the level of knowledge the respondents have about IWD. Where the location has been several Charles Universities and the knowledge they have gained from their studies which has given them a more open mind topic towards IWD. (2) of the respondents have described that they are engaging in content on social media during this month that discusses the issues of equality between men and women. Which could be seen as accepting the holiday as feminist event that empowers women and creates discourse around the role of equality. An important find comes from the the second respondent of the (2) activists, who stated "Všímám si ale i toho, že v Praze k MDŽ různé kolektivy organizují právě přednášky a protesty, čeho si moc vážím. Asi teda záleží, v jaké bublině se člověk nachází a jaká média konzumuje."/"I also notice that in Prague, various collectives organize lectures and protests for IWD, which I really appreciate. So I guess it depends on what bubble you're in and what media you consume.". This is an important note that many young women who participate in activist movements also might have their own bubble or agenda to achieve and not activists might have the aligned collective memory. But this is a showcase that younger generations are as well accepting these new movements and critiquing the current culture experience of IWD.

Theme 4: Media Representation and Influence

- **Theme analysis:**

With the previous theme exploring the role of media and digital media, this theme will dive deeper into the influence of digital media and what can be seen through the gendered lenses. The phase of digital media is very important in today's world, especially between the younger

generation, and as well as its prowess in power of influencing people's minds and narratives. The researcher asked a few questions in relation to digital media that could help expand the gendered lens into IWD using digital media. Taken from previous data, the respondents have engaged with some sort of digital media content during the month of IWD and all have unique responses. (4) have registered that they were more predominantly influenced by online methods of marketing via digital media during the month of IWD. With (1) respondent stating “Věkem ho akorát možná začínám brát míň seriózně, jelikož mi přijde, že ho hodně korporací využívá jen jako marketingový tah bez toho, aby jim na právech žen skutečně záleželo.”/“With age, I might be starting to take it less seriously, because it seems to me that many corporations just use it as a marketing ploy without genuinely caring about women’s rights.”

This is an important statement as it shows how the respondent can be conscious about these marketing tactics and be influenced to take IWD less seriously. Corporations do always have a play in some event around the world and tend to spoil the cultural holiday or event by making it a marketing tactic that commercialises what was supposed to be a unique cultural experience. This might just be one unique response, but it speaks to a thousand minds of people who are more conscious about the digital media they consume. Another supporting respondent stated “nelibi se mi jak je v mediich casto vyobrayovan. Jde casto jen o slevy na damske produkty a o pokus prodat co nejvice kvetin, ale ten skutecny smysl tam zanika”, which is a direct view of the previous response. They both have stated that they do not like how IWD is as a marketing tool rather than a cultural event. But this isn't the only influence that digital media poses during this month, there is a recognizable amount of respondents being influenced to take part in activist activities. “V mainstreamovych mediich je MDX podle me zobrazovan spis jen okrajove, pristupuji k tomu konzervativne. Nejaka niche media jako napriklad Alarm prinasi vice temat souvisejicich s MDZ.”/“In mainstream media, I think IWD is portrayed rather marginally; they approach it conservatively. Some niche outlets, like Alarm, bring up more topics related to IWD.” a response that shared an interesting insight into how the digital is seen. Where this respondent stated that it was only represented as touching the surface where she is more conservative towards the topic. However, she had found more engaging content on other social platforms that fitted her need to discover more related conservative topics towards IWM. This could be a sign that the respondents do also tend to find the source of information that fits their narrative. This could be a sign that the inherited memory of IWD is still persistent within the respondents’ memory. Their inherited

memory is protecting their current conscious mind from the surrounding digital environment that tries to influence their mind for a new meaning of IWD. A notion of inherited memory is also the driving point for the respondents to protect their memories and resurface them once they engage with the new media. The influence of today's digital media is powerful, but inherited and personal memory can be the guard to the mind which lets in certain approved influence. This could be why the respondents have the tendency to report the influence that is trying to pierce their mind but is protected by their inherited and personal memory of IWD.

Theme 5: Feminist Awareness and Gendered Discourse

- **Theme analysis:**

A unique element that has already taken form in some of the respondents' answers has truly intrigued the researchers' quest to understand the feminist awareness and gendered discourse. This emerged as a nuanced theme alongside the respondents, which reflected the levels of consciousness about gender discourse and Feminist awareness. It should be noted that the respondents perceive IWD as the celebration of women's achievements and status in society and a reminder of the issues of equality. While some have perceived it as irrelevant to modern society and a relic of the past as a political tool.

But a recurring theme in the responses came in the form of symbolic, traditional events such as celebrations (such as receiving flowers). As stated previously some participants have already criticised the commercialization of IWD as well as its activist activities that do not promote the true meaning behind IWD.

Respondents were tasked with a question that delves into discussion of how IWD creates discourse around the women's role, which has become an interesting discourse of responses. (3) of the respondents have as stated in the previous theme, had an activist approach, fighting for women's rights, creating awareness around the topic. But these 3 have also provided an insight into how they see IWD represented around them. They perceive IWD as a holiday that might not be equal in the way they imagined, from buying flowers, to empowering women only on this day etc. (1) respondent gave this answer about the discourse "Negativně. Proč by přece ženy měly mít svátek a muži ne? Což uznávám, taky bych raději rovná práva než květiny."/ "Negatively. Why should women have a holiday and men not? Which, I admit, I'd

also prefer equal rights over flowers.”pointing out to an interesting anomaly in the respondent study, as she thinks the discourse is negative, why isn't there a holiday that support both equality of men and women. It is an anomaly due to the factor that it is the only one out of all (9) respondents who had a negative discourse around IWD. On the other hand, “Mám pocit, že je to pozitivní a že se mluví o reálném ženství”/“I feel that it’s positive and that it brings attention to real womanhood.”, a respondent states the complete opposite. The (9) respondents had a more positive response to the discourse around IWD and women's role, with some critiques but not a negative view on the holiday.

There is a divergence within the exposure of the feminist ideas, as some participants engage in feminist activist roles, some do not tie feminism towards it and maintain a more apolitical neutral stance towards this. But there is bound to also be an anomaly which does not support this event at all within the role of women in society, that it has only a negative impact. (1) Respondent stated “Dostava se vetsi prostor tematum, ktera ale ruzni aktiviste za zenska prava vlastne resi porad.”/ “More space is being given to topics that, in fact, activists for women's rights have been addressing all along.”, where she criticized the activists who are constantly trying to solve a problem. Which is an interesting find as it does not critique the event itself, but critiques the themes being discussed in activist groups which take the role to great lengths. This can be understood as the discourse of IWD that reflects on all groups. This widens the gender lens for the researcher, as it showcases that maybe this holiday has no concrete meaning as a cultural holiday.

5.2.2 Discourse Analysis of Group 2

In this section, the analysis shall take the route of applied Discourse Analysis. Which will help examine how language can reflect and shape social realities, ideologies, and power dynamics within the IWD context. As the final part of the analysis, the Discourse analysis will offer a deeper look into the meaning of construction. More specifically where gender, identity and authority mix in a post-communist Czech context. Further this section will be missing the link that will glue together the Thematic and Comparative body.

The Discourse Analysis will follow the same pattern themes to be identified, but which aligns with the methodology itself, which will ensure that there is coherence within the study analysis. Instead of comparative and thematic content, more rhetorical content themes will be featured throughout the analysis. Themes that were already previously analyzed will ensure

that the Discourse analysis can follow the same route of themes, but which are adjusted to gathering data in the rhetorical aspect. Such as linguistic choices, narrative structures, implied power relations, and cultural framing within participants' responses. This will deeply influence the Comparative Historical Analysis and will help recognize the language that is actively being used around IWD. As the researcher explores how participants engage in rhetorical communication such as memory, commercialization, critique, feminism, and feminism, it will help uncover the symbolic meaning of them all.

The analysis is guided by five interrelated dimensions that serve as interpretive tools:

- **Language and Tone:** How word choices, emotional registers, and stylistic nuances communicate underlying attitudes or affective positions.

- **Underlying Ideologies:** The value systems and worldviews are often implicit and do structure how participants frame gender roles, feminism, or social norms.

- **Power Dynamics:** How authority, subordination, and agency are constructed or resisted through discourse, especially in relation to gendered expectations.

- **Repetition, Metaphors, and Emotional Framing:** Recurring narrative devices that signal emphasis, normalize certain meanings, or emotionally charge the conversation.

Together, these lenses allow for a deeper view into the participant narratives, revealing how the post-socialist Czech environment continues to shape the gendered discourse of IWD. Not only how women remember or critique, but in how they express, frame, and negotiate those views.

Theme analysis:

Theme 1: Language and Tone

Language and tone are almost like emotions that can speak about a subject without using direct impact. But also the choices of words can communicate the attitudes of the respondents, where even a common word may be an important answer to note down. It is also

important to know that the respondents have text-based responses. Thus, the analysis of the participants' responses can still express textually their emotions, passivity and framing linguistically IWD. While still acknowledging that tone is not limited to spoken language but can equally be potent in showcasing and signalling distance, irony, warmth, discomfort, or resistance. Approaching the first question of the form has quite the important recognition for language and tone which can be found in the participants response. “Can you tell us about your First memory of IWD” has (9) responses which have given a warm reply to their first memory, usually evolving their mom as the primary source of their warmth or their first “wow” moment at school designing stuff for their parents. With a choice of words that can only be described as authentic, unique, and loving. “Svátek mé mamky - Gabriela”/“My mum’s holiday – Gabriela” is an answer that felt close to home, as it shows that the (1) of the respondents has tied their warm and loving tone to their mother. Even their used language is straightforward and is a reminder of the power of the mother figure in the family and her influence on the memory of their child. The tone of their replies indicates that their first memories were surprising and unique to them with a few examples from (3) respondents: “Poprvé jsem ho zaregistrovala když mi mohlo být cca 8-10 let a pamatuji si,že jsem ho viděla v seriálu Vyprávěj.”/“I first noticed it when I was around 8–10 years old, and I remember seeing it in the TV series *Vyprávěj*.”. “Moje maminka dostala kytici, bonboniéru a sla na veceri s tatou.”/“První vzpomnínka na mdž, kterou si vybavím je slavnostní předávání kytek učitelkám na základní škole.”, “Asi nic konkretniho, jen ze tata kupoval mame vzdy kvetiny”/“Probably nothing specific, just that dad always bought flowers for mum.”, “První vzpomnínka na mdž, kterou si vybavím je slavnostní předávání kytek učitelkám na základní škole.”/“The first memory of IWD that comes to mind is the ceremonial handing out of flowers to female teachers at primary school.”. This is a clear sign that their tone was also not only surprised, but welcoming of this holiday and being accepted among them from a young age. And within the language, there are a few key words such as “mom” “flower” and “school”, which shows to the researcher that these have symbolic meaning to the respondents as their key memories. Looking at the opposite of warmth and excitement, comes from the other questions “How has your view on IWD changed over time” where an interesting turn of events has happened. (7) respondents have depicted a change in tone and language that has brought the interest of the researcher. Their language had shifted from a warmer use of words to an activistic approach and critique of the event in modern day society in some instances “ano, drive to pro me bylo jen o davani kvetin, ale vice jsem to neresila. Ted je to pro me spise svatek o zenskych pravech a podpore rovnopravnosti”/“Yeah, in the past it was just

about giving flowers, I didn't really think much more about it. Now I see it more as a holiday focused on women's rights and supporting equality.", "V podstatě ani ne - vždy jsem ho vnímala jako svátek pro ženy symbolicky významný, ale jinak jsem ho v osobním životě moc neřešila. Věkem ho akorát možná začínám brát míň seriózně, jelikož mi přijde, že ho hodně korporací využívá jen jako marketingový tah bez toho, aby jim na právech žen skutečně záleželo."/"Not really, I've always seen it as a symbolically important holiday for women, but I never paid much attention to it in my personal life. As I get older, I maybe take it a bit less seriously, because it seems like a lot of corporations use it as a marketing tool without genuinely caring about women's rights.". Where the most prominent was the word of "womens rights" and "equality" with the few uses of "marketing tactics". This shows that there is an underlying difference between the past and the current present between the symbolic use of words. Their tone in text had also become more discomfort and wanting change in the system, that this isn't what they grew up with.

Theme 2: Underlying Ideologies

- **Theme analysis:**

The underlying ideologies have already been touched on the surface in the previous theme analysis. Where it was discussed that there are many perceived ideologies around IWD (feminism, activism, neutral agenda). This theme analysis will dive deeper into these themes to understand the discourse level of these agendas. With the respondents being of age and already engaging in such topics in their local environments will yield interesting data for this part of the thematic analysis. Throughout the questionnaire, respondents have already stipulated the many importance of IWD being represented the way it should be. Within the responses it can be understood that there is underlying ideology of women's rights and their equality being affirmed in society. But there are also other ideologies from the respondents that promote neutralism and conservatism. The conservatism ideology from the respondents aims to stay on the path of their memory and the events that they grew up with, while not creating an agenda on IWD. But what is more interesting is (1) responses: "Dostava se vetsi prostor tematum, ktera ale ruzni aktiviste za zenska prava vlastne resi porad."/"More space is being given to topics that various women's rights activists have actually been addressing all along.", which actually critiques the other Feminist ideology. Thus, it can be recorded that there are 3 ideologies at play during IWD. This type of Discourse is important to understand

between the respondents as it shows that IWD has important symbolic meaning to all groups, it shows that it is valued and cared about and that it needs to be protected. However, each ideological lens reflects a different perception and interpretation of IWD's meaning, revealing core tensions in how IWD is understood, remembered, and valued across generational lines.

Theme 3: Power Dynamics

- **Theme analysis:**

Power Dynamics are an important construct towards the theme of IWD. Power dynamics shift and change based on environmental and local influences. It can be a hard lens to see through, but the Power Dynamics of IWD focus on the shifting of power between the groups, which can be also mentioned from the previous theme. The feminists' responses speak of a power dynamic that they believe IWD should stand for, equal rights for women and men. They possess a sort of stigma that IWD should be more about giving flowers and valuing their role in the family. The power dynamic shifts towards pushing an agenda, that there needs to be more done during IWD, as well as pulling more women to join this movement. But it is also important to understand that not all women see it that way, as there are also some which have a different power dynamic from the feminist movements. The neutral power dynamic of some respondents focuses on celebrating the event and enjoying it as it is. It might not be a powerful movement, but it's a movement that has a neutral stance and does not wish to have a tied agenda. But this doesn't mean that they wish to be subordinate or lower themselves, as they perceive this holiday in a completely different power dynamic. This is a natural phenomenon in society where power dynamics and discourse will always clash with one another to secure the height of the agenda. But in terms of this research, it's important to understand why these power dynamics are shifting across groups. One of the reasons why it can be seen that 2 groups are experiencing such power shifts is due to their inherited and personal memory of IWD. Not all women have experienced IWD the way they have imagined or at all, while there are as well women who have experienced the positive light of IWD. Which gives birth to certain power struggles and desires to be achieved within a group of same minded thinkers, which could be the activists. While on the opposite side, the other groups could be giving power to keeping the tradition alive and powerful within their local society. These groups have the most potent power dynamics in the respondent responses and are the most relevant to the current state of IWD.

2. Group Analysis: Women Who Experienced communism

Introduction to Group 1

Group 1 is composed of women who have lived under the Czechoslovak socialist regime. Which have also been the first to experience International Women's Day (IWD) or as it was originally called "MDZ" under a state-controlled framework. Unlike the younger group (Group2), these participants have been directly exposed to the raw version of MDZ/IWD which has been state governed and used as a tool to control its populace. Their responses offer a unique insight and lens into the symbolic nature of MDZ/IWD as well as the political dimension that had interacted with this group.

Group 1 value offers a historical view through time to understand where the regime and celebration of women was used as a tool for ideological purposes. They are not only a lens through rift in time, but as well as understanding their perception of current MDZ/IWD can offer compelling comparative analysis within the Groups (Group 1 and 2). Their memories have been shaped and guided, giving their personal memory already predetermined emotions and narratives. These are critical insights into the socialist regime as well as understanding their gender roles in society as well as their practices that have been a part of their everyday life during this period.

Most importantly Group 2 serves as an anchor point of this study to understand the historical background of MDZ/IWD and the discourse of their realities compared to the modern-day Group 1. It offers the contrast needed for this research to behold sentimental value of the past and the present on such a topic such as MDZ/IWD. Memory, ideology, purpose, identity, cultural practices, from another generation.

Demographic Profile

The majority of the gathered responses from Group 1 fall within the range of 50 to early 70 years old. With the most common around the 70 year old margin. The selection of the participants was involved via the close circle of the researcher's family, which gave truly

deep responses over the telephone and in person. Location did not play a big role in the research as the most important factor was to find local Czech participants for the study.

Important notes:

- **Age Range:** The Respondents were mostly in their early late 50s to their early 70s.

- **Cultural Stance:** The Responders reflect a generation that is influenced by historical regimes and state propagated events. They have experienced the beginning of the event first-hand and know its core values that it stood for.
- **Location:** Respondents are located around the Czech Republic in all sections of commerce and culture.
- Subject Education: Their education about MDZ/IWD was propagated by state media and taught to them via traditional media. They also do try to understand the current meaning of MDZ/IWD locally

5.3.1 Thematic Analysis of Group 1

In this section, the researcher will focus on thematic analysis which means focusing on recurring themes, patterns, and narratives from the participants' responses of Group 1. Thus, the research has also a clear guidance of what to identify and focus on to not get lost in the amount of qualitative data. Also, it should be understood that the researcher is finding recurring patterns, themes and narratives across the board, which means that not every response could also be the recurring theme but it by itself is a unique anomaly.

To help identify the chosen analysis, the researcher will use 5 central elements that have appeared across the set of participant data. These 5 elements are based on the methodology that has been used for this study that helped create the analysis methods and are key in capturing the qualitative framework needed. Those elements serve as the anchor points to Comparative Historical Analysis, delivering the necessary lens to interpret the responders data.. Which has been a playground of recurring themes, narratives and patterns in the participants' responses. The researcher chose 5 elements (listed themes that were found to be the most precise in the acknowledgement of the Thematic analysis) which will give the necessary data to construct an application of it in the conclusion.

The themes have not been fixed beforehand, but have rather appeared through a step by step coding process shaped by both theoretical background and leading patterns. With each chosen theme reflecting a unique layer of the respondents' experience with MDZ/IWD.

Chosen 5 themes of the Thematic Analysis:

1. **Commercialization and Symbolism**
   For Group 1, the emphasis includes the state-led symbolic practices and rituals such as (flowers, orchestrated ceremonies and rituals) before transitioning in 1989. Highlighting the symbolic gestures shifted from ideological to capitalist framing over time.

2. **Inherited vs. Personal Memory**
   In terms of Group 1, memories such as communist-era celebrations firsthand may also reflect on how their daughters now see MDZ/IWD. This theme captures memory continuity and ripples.

3. **Critique or Acceptance of MDZ/IWD**
   Some participants accepted MDZ/IWD as a normalized ritual under socialism, but others would critique its political manipulation as a tool for the people. A duality that aligns and shows shifts in meaning over time.

4. **Media Representation and Influence**
   For Group 1, the focus may shift from traditional propaganda (posters, TV broadcasts) during socialism to digital media post-1989. It creates a compelling before/after contrast in commemorative narratives.

5. **Feminist Awareness and Gendered Discourse**
   Group 1 might be more varied in this topic embracing or disregarding the topic of feminism where as well gendered discourse could partake. This theme lets the researcher observe **how gender discourse matured or remained latent** across eras.

Theme analysis:

Theme 1: Commercialization and Symbolic Gestures on MDZ/IWD

- Thematic Analysis:

The very first steps of MDZ/IWD are born here, where (9) of the participants remember their first memory of MDZ/IWD and its celebration. Almost all respondents have their unique first memory, where the symbol of celebration was the mother of the family and their female collective. (9) of the respondents indicate that their memories always involved the celebration of the event or preparing a symbol of gesture towards their female collective. Either as children preparing gifts for their mothers with flowers, or them being indoctrinated into "compulsory" celebrations. The symbolism of the socialist MDZ/IWD from the respondents comes in the form of many. But the most common thread that has been taken from the (9) respondents was the collective celebrations in the workplace, families and local environments. Those first memories also helped to indicate what gave that memory the power to be still remembered to this day. The ritual practices were one of those symbolic gestures that were a powerful memory as well to the respondents. (6) respondents had indicated that they celebrated MDZ/IWD in their workplace and it usually involved the symbolic gesture of flowers and alcohol. It was also a day when no one really worked at work but it was compulsory to celebrate the event and get to be a collective together. (3) respondents from those (6) also indicated that there were also celebrations after work in local "Cultural Houses" where they would dance and at times have competitions on the best female worker in the village. But what also is truly interesting is that only (2) from the (10) participants remember that their family or children were also involved in the celebration of this event. This comes also as (1) statement: "v rodině ne, pouze květina. v práci chlebíčky, oslava - možnost vypnout na pracovišti"/"In the family, no—just a flower. At work, there were open-faced sandwiches, a celebration, and a chance to relax at the workplace." . It is clearly not the ritual practice that has been the most symbolic to the families, but more a cultural event. What can be taken from this seems to be that the state given event was truly taken as a celebration from work and was compulsory to celebrate with collective events that strengthened the communities alike. As seen, one of the biggest and most prominent rituals that are remembered are the celebrations on the day of MDZ/IWD in workplaces, cultural houses and homes.

Inherited vs. Personal Memory

In terms of group , memories such as communist-era celebrations first-hand may also reflect on how their daughters now see MDZ/IWD. This theme captures memory continuity and ripples as well some of the first memories that could be of MDZ/IWD. To understand, the majority of the participants had experienced MDZ/IWD the first time and have the fondest memories of it. Inherited memory in this group cannot be easily allocated because not many of the respondents have had to inherit from someone. However (3) have an inherited memory of the event where they described that they were creating presents for the mothers in school for MDZ/IWD. This suggests that there is a small inherited presence of memory among the respondents. The rest (7) only depict their first memories as celebratory events that were not inherited from the past but rather as personal memories created by them. It shows that MDZ/IWD was in its first infant stages and its first inherited memories were more of a tool used by the state to propagate its celebration. Inheritance of these memories was not passed down; it was engraved by the state from an early age in schools and for the older generation at cultural events to strengthen the people's mind share of the working party. The personal memory is also importantly triggered by emotions that can create strong and vivid memories that can be unlocked over time. (7) respondents have described that the event has been a positive memory for them and a part of their life. Interestingly one respondent gave it as something they could not wait for after Christmas and how big of a celebration it “Celkem pozitivní, za komunistů se slavilo MDZ ve velkém stylu, tak jsme se měli po Vánocích na co těšit.”/“Quite positive – under communism, IWD was celebrated in a big way, so we had something to look forward to after Christmas.”. The (7) respondents also stated something important about this event, that it had to be celebrated as a compulsory event by the state “Organizovaná oslava, ale spíš pozitivní”/“An organized celebration, but rather a positive one.”. Being a state- run event, there are also those who saw through the event and have a different scope of memorable emotions to this event. (3) respondents have described that these events did not breed fond memories and were not the memory they had expected to have of something surrounding the role of women in MDZ/IWD. (1) from the 3 respondents described “Negativne, zadne pozitivne emocie. Vynucena udalost, meli se oslavovat zeny, ale nakonec nejvice oslavovali chlapi alkoholem.”/“Negative, no positive emotions. A forced event – it was supposed to be about celebrating women, but in the end, it was mostly men celebrating with alcohol.”. Where she states quite clearly that this was compulsory and the

most who celebrated this event were the drunk men. Thus, there is a vivid diversity of emotions that aren't only positive. With an interesting coincidence, (3) respondents also stated that they felt forced to celebrate MDZ/IWD and had to “enjoy it”. This might be an anomaly or parallel finding, but it is interesting to discover that there was also a feeling of “forced” to celebrate. Their personal memories fall on their emotions that create a ripple effect in their memories that still to this day make them remember MDZ/IWD in their own emotional tangle.

Critique or Acceptance of MDZ/IWD

Some participants accepted MDZ/IWD as a normalized ritual under socialism, but others would critique its political manipulation as a tool for the people. A duality that aligns and shows shifts in meaning over time. There is already truth to this from the previous analyzed theme, as the researcher has already taken their emotions with a pinch of critique and acceptance. (7) participants had already stated that they have fond memories of MDZ/IWD, but it was not about acceptance. There could be not one found response that indicated that it was widely accepted, but one anomaly stated “Byla jsem rada, že jednou za rok si na nás někdo vzpomenul.”/“I was glad that at least once a year, someone remembered us.”, which was the only indication to the researcher that it was the acceptance of the MDZ/IWD in a way that someone was happy that someone remembered them at least once a year, which is quite depressing at the same time. This was an anomaly because the respondents that were participating in the research had not quoted anything in terms of “acceptance” or a normalized ritual. In the opposite light of things, rest of the (9) respondents had a critique to the event as already registered, that this event was state sponsored and had to be celebrated by the female party. It was impossible to not celebrate it as one respondent stated “V praci to bylo povinne, museli jsme podepisovat dochazkovou listinu, ze jsme se ucastnili oslavy. Manyel mi prinesl kytku a deti mi nakreslili obrazek.”/“At work it was mandatory, we had to sign an attendance sheet to confirm we took part in the celebration. My husband brought me flowers and the children drew me a picture.”. This by itself shows what lengths the celebration had to be controlled for women to participate. Another important find is that the women also had to participate in ritually celebrating these events that seemed to be too much as many respondents’ state. Most Importantly these had to be done in public or the workplace as seen from all the respondents’ responses from their location of celebration. No one has stated that it would be a family celebration of sorts. This has not been one of the critics, but it can be a hidden memory ready to be unlocked. The event by itself, the core meaning of

MDZ/IWD in this time, had a different acceptance and critique compared to its post 1989 meaning. (7) respondents critiqued that MDZ/IWD had no meaning to them, that there was no clear understanding of it and its meaning to celebrate. (1) Respondent stated interestingly "Oslavy a oceňování bylo nesmyslné, oceněné ženy musely být v komunistické straně ."/"The celebrations and awards were pointless; the women who were honored had to be members of the Communist Party." showcased to the researcher that the whole of MDZ/IWD celebrations were stupid and that it was only something for the communists to use on the people. It feels that there has been a critique hidden deep in the respondents' mind that has been opened with this research. The rest (3) saw MDZ/IWD as a holiday like Childrens day as one respondent states "Běžný svátek, jako třeba den dětí, nic nepřirozeného"/"A regular holiday, like Children's Day nothing out of the ordinary.", a small but fine holiday for children, also with no meaning to it. But the key point here is that there is critique of the event and MDZ/IWD itself between the older group of respondents. And there is almost no recognition of acceptance in a strong manner between the responses given to the researcher.

Media Representation and Influence

The representation of media and its influence on MDZ/ IWD has been an interesting topic to cover. During communism, everything was controlled by the state and promoted with as much media as possible. Either with the goal to control the minds of people or to install fear in others, MDZ/IWD being a state controlled event has already had a lot of influence by itself. Media representation from Group 2 has not yielded any results from their provided data from the era of communism. This can be because many of the participants have had an already conscious mindset surrounding the type of media they consume from the communist state. What is a signifier of this potential conscious mind that Group 1 has might be lying in plain sight as their previous form of critiques to the event. Respondents had already stated that they knew it was a controlled state event that had to be celebrated, thus the media had also been most likely not very well represented to them. Their memory had not taken part in creating a memory of the media represented to them as their mind was already fighting a political memory with the state system. However, the interesting change of media representation came in post-communist 1989. Where the respondents had seemed to have unlocked a new memory in terms of the representation and purposes of MDZ/IWD after communism in the media. (7) respondents have stated that after 1989, MDZ/IWD had

changed from its state tone to a more western tone where the (7) respondents state that it had moved to a more commercialized event. As taken from one respondent “Ano, komercni. V prodejnach jsou slevy na MDZ, ale uz se to neslavi, je to pripominka toho, ze zeny bojovali za rovnopravnost.”/“Yes, commercial. There are discounts in stores for IWD, but it’s no longer truly celebrated—it’s more a reminder that women once fought for equality.”. This is a perfect outline of what could be described as the current media influence on Group 1 and as well their memory of the original meaning of ‚MDZ/IWD. The (3) respondents have not stated anything regarding it being commercialised but that it has lost its charm and is just another small holiday to them. Thus, it seems that the influence has also dramatically decreased post communism in terms of state driven events, propaganda, and cultural gatherings. As already discussed previously, the influence of these events during communism was massive. It was effective in the workplace, ritual events, and even cultural gatherings. However as seen from the responses, today there is no such thing as it was during communism.

Feminist Awareness and Gendered Discourse

Feminist language was largely absent in the narratives of older women. There was no identity with feminism, and some even expressed rejection of the term. Their discourse and language lacked the terms like gender equality, patriarchy, or women’s rights, which were common things in Group 2. This reflects how the communist regime and ideology had absorbed gender discourse. As one participant put it, “Spíš státem vynucenou událost, protože žena za socialismu stejně musela všechno”/“More of a state-imposed event, because under socialism, a woman had to do everything anyway.”, which highlights the expectation for women to participate without hesitation.

This reflects the idea and perception that the communist regime and ideology had “solved” the question by integrating women into the workforce, leaving no time, or thought for conscious feminist discourse.

As previously stated, younger participants demonstrated greater familiarity with feminist terms such as gender roles or inequality. Which was often learned through global media and education. However, even in this group, the feminist framing of MDZ/IWD was limited. One argued that “je to spíše marketingová událost než politický svátek”/“It’s more of a marketing

event than a political holiday.", which indicated a shift away from feminist activism toward commercial symbolism.

The generational silence on feminism among older women contrasts with recognition among younger ones. This gap reveals how both communist erasure and post-1989 depoliticization have muted feminist discourse in Czech public life.

5.3.2 Discourse Analysis of Group 2

In this section, the analysis shall take the route of applied Discourse Analysis. Which will help examine how language can reflect and shape social realities, ideologies, and power dynamics within the MDZ/IWD context. As the final part of the analysis, the Discourse analysis will offer a deeper look into the meaning of Discourse construction. Examining how language had shaped their experiences and memories of MDZ/IWD, while rather than focusing on content alone, this section interprets rhetorical cues, emotional tone, linguistic structures, and ideological framing. To ensure methodological flow and coherence with the rest of the study, this analysis draws on the same themes identified in the Thematic and Comparative sections. But it will also apply them through rhetorical and linguistic interpretation.

The Discourse Analysis will follow the same pattern themes to be identified, but which aligns with the methodology itself, which will ensure that there is coherence within the study analysis. Instead of comparative and thematic content, more rhetorical content themes will be featured throughout the analysis. Themes that were already previously analyzed will ensure that the Discourse analysis can follow the same route of themes, but which are adjusted to gathering data in the rhetorical aspect. Such as linguistic choices, narrative structures, implied power relations, and cultural framing within participants' responses. This will deeply influence the Comparative Historical Analysis and will help recognize the language that is actively being used around MDZ/IWD. As the researcher explores how participants engage in rhetorical communication such as memory, commercialization, critique, feminism, and feminism, it will help uncover the symbolic meaning of them all.

The analysis is guided by five interrelated dimensions that serve as interpretive tools:

- **Language and Tone:** How word choices, emotional registers, and stylistic nuances communicate underlying attitudes or affective positions.

- **Underlying Ideologies:** The value systems and worldviews are often implicit and do structure how participants frame gender roles, feminism, or social norms.

- **Power Dynamics:** How authority, subordination, and agency are constructed or resisted through discourse, especially in relation to gendered expectations.

- **Repetition, Metaphors, and Emotional Framing:** Recurring narrative devices that signal emphasis, normalize certain meanings, or emotionally charge the conversation.

Language and Tone

The tone used by Group 1 participants is often seen as subdued or formal. Many described MDZ/IWD with sentences like *"běžný svátek"* (an ordinary holiday) or *"státem vynucená událost"* (a state-enforced event). This emotional notion was often conveyed through neutral or functionary word choices, which suggests passive participation rather than personal investment. The use of terms like *"povinnost"* (duty) and *"zvyk"* (habit) indicates that MDZ/IWD was seen more as a compulsory social ritual rather than a celebration. Other expressional words such as "formální akce", "všichni dostali karafiáty", or "jen květina a chlebíček" creates a sense of mechanical rituals or even near robotic rather than sincere recognition. In addition, with the use of minimalistic language, which further reinforces emotional detachment from society.

In some cases, irony or sarcasm could be taken from the responders' phrases, such as referring to the day as *"náš velký svátek"* (our great holiday) in a tone that hinted at conscious scepticism. This shows how tone served as a space for subtle critique under an otherwise conformist surface.

Underlying Ideologies

Group 1 discourse does reflect through the gendered lenses an internalization of socialist values, most particularly gender equality and how it had been "achieved" through women's

integration into the workforce. This led to a functional view of MDZ/IWD, where celebrating women's labor contributes rather than their physical rights. Phrases such as *"oslavovaly se pracovnice"* (working women were celebrated) reinforces the ideological framing of women as productive workers of the state, not individuals with political agenda or free rights.

Importantly, feminist language was completely absent. Participants rarely used the words and terms like "gender," "inequality," or "patriarchy." Instead, they presumed equality was already a part of the system, which is still an ideological legacy of the state's narrative.

Power Dynamics

For women in Group 1, power was experienced as a structural and pervasive force towards them. which was embedded in both the state policy and everyday life. Through their language, participants revealed how authority was enacted upon them and not only by the government ideology. But it was also through the workplace expectations, social appearance, and gendered roles. Responses such as *"musela jsem se přizpůsobit kolektivu"* (I had to adapt to the collective) and *"byla to povinnost, ne volba"* (it was a duty, not a choice) do capture the limited power available to women in MDZ/IWD celebrations. They were only a part of the system, not the narrative.

Power dynamics from the respondents were rarely described in detail, where instead they were witnessed in their tone and vocabulary of their responses. The normalization of control was present in their descriptions of MDZ/IWD as *"běžný svátek"* (an ordinary holiday) or *"státem vynucená událost"* (state-enforced event). This is a signal of how deeply state authority was internalized. One participant recalled:

> *„Ano, přizpůsobení se kolektivu a pracovním oslavám bylo samozřejmostí."*
> This reflects not only the expectation to participate, but also the loss of personal agency in how the day was experienced and interpreted.

Although only (3) participants directly challenged the authority of the event, some employed ironic language to express discontent and discomfort. They repeated the use of words or ritualistic descriptions (e.g., *"rudé karafiáty," "proslovy," "chlebíčky"*) which suggests resistance through emotional disengagement.

Furthermore, gendered power relations were often hidden behind collectivist rhetoric which could even collective memory. Women were celebrated as the working party or *"pracovnice"* (workers), not for their individualism or their rights, but for their function within the socialist system. Their role was designed and constructed through a state-defined ideology of productive and family value driven person. Which limited any discourse of feminist empowerment or critical agency.

Repetition, Metaphors, and Emotional Framing (Group 1)

The recurring narratives in Group 1 reveal how repetition and emotionally neutral language served to normalize and depoliticize MDZ/IWD. Certain words and symbols appeared consistently across the respondents' replies, which can reflect a ritualized and state structured view and identity of the holiday. Terms like *"rudé karafiáty"* (red carnations), *"povinnost"* (duty), *"chlebíčky"* (open sandwiches), and *"oslava v práci"* (workplace celebration) were repeated by at least (7) participants. This was a clear signaling of how the celebration was socially standardized.

This repetition emphasises conformity and reinforces MDZ/IWD's place as a civic duty and obligation rather than just a celebration of gender identity. (1) respondent stated:

> *„Každý rok to stejné – kytka, proslov, chlebíček."*
> These recollections reflect not just the event's experience, but also its emotional dampening, as everything was the same and always will be. The same repetition and emotional framing each year on the same event.
>
> With the emotions from the participants, their tone was repetitively distant or indifferent to the event. While (2) respondents expressed some sort of fondness to the event, the rest of the respondents' conveyed feelings and emotions of detachment, awkwardness, or silent critique. Descriptions from respondents such as *"vynucené," "neupřímné,"* or *"jen zvyk"* (forced, insincere, just a habit) do show how emotional framing was silenced or guarded.
>
> While the metaphoric language was notably absent. Participants did not describe or mention MDZ/IWD in a creative or symbolic way. It may be a revealing point

of view where language around MDZ/IWD was regulated or scripted during the era.

Group 1 normalises a version of MDZ/IWD that was performative and emotionally restricted. Repetition replaced reflection, emotional life under communism was shaped by official rituals.

5.4 Comparative Analysis Findings Group 1 & 2

This section focuses on the key findings from Group 1 and Group 2 to draw comparative findings across generational experiences of IWD. With previously established frameworks (Thematic & Discourse), it becomes ever clear that the meaning, framing, and emotional change of IWD have changed within the Czech context from the communist era to the post-1989 period or present.

The five comparative points of interest have emerged organically from both the Thematic and Discourse analysis. They were not chosen without thought to it, they have been choosing because they reflect core principles and ideas that have divergence and continuity across both generational groups.

These comparative points are:

1. Memory and Meaning Construction
2. Emotional and Symbolic Framing
3. Power, Agency, and Resistance
4. Feminist Language and Awareness
5. The Role of Media and Cultural Scripts

Each point encapsulates a different aspect of how IWD has been remembered, reinterpreted, or challenged over time. While anchored in the Comparative Historical Analysis framework, it helps to trace the shifting powers and contrasts of gendered identity, political culture, and societal values in post-communist Czech society. Together, these five lenses offer a

comprehensive view of how IWD functions. Together, these five comparative lenses offer a comprehensive view of IWD as both a site of memory and a social mirror.

1. Memory and Meaning Construction

Group 1 had majorly recalled IWD as a formal, state-propagated, and driven event associated with duty, work recognition, and collective community rituals. The memory of IWD was repetitive among the participants and emotionally neutral, with **7 out of 10 participants** using almost identical common language to describe such as the sequence of speeches, workplace ceremonies, and compulsory gestures such as handing out flowers or attending formal gatherings. Additionally, **3 participants** mentioned the feeling of **detachment or indifference** towards IWD, as they were reflecting how institutionalization can suppress individual emotional consciousness. Overall, the event was remembered as a **routine and orchestrated tradition**, where meaning was shaped not by personal values but by state-propagated and driven narratives.

In contrast, Group 2 showcased a fragmented and sometimes ironic relationship towards IWD. **6 out of 10 participants** expressed neutral to negative feelings about IWD's significance in modern day times. While the celebration of IWD continues, its meaning to them is less politically positioned and is more often described as a symbolic, commercial, or "empty" tradition. **4 participants** had thoughtfully critiqued its commercialization of IWD, describing it as a day *"used by companies as a branding tool"* or *"an upgraded Valentine's Day, but nothing really changes."* In terms of symbolic gestures, **8 out of 10 respondents** associated IWD as receiving flowers often at school or from male relatives. Which suggests that it is a ritualized but emotionally disconnected tradition to them. Despite this negative sentiment, **2 participants** reported that they have re-engaged with IWD through feminist activism or university organized events. Which points to a form of political re-framing within the participants' consciousness.

In both groups, IWD remains a core cultural marker, but its meaning and memory that it carries has transferred to a new meaning. From a state mandated and propagated performance in Group 1 to a consumer-centralized, emotionally varied tradition in Group 2. These findings

show that the symbolic skeleton of IWD persists, but its ideological content and personal meaning have been dramatically shifted and changed across generations.

2. Emotional and Symbolic Framing

In Group 1, the emotional resonance of the tone surrounding IWD was largely **r**estricted, restrained, passive, or neutral. Respondents tended to avoid subjective language, while relying instead on factual descriptions of their memories such as *"dostali jsme květinu,"* or *"ve škole jsme museli blahopřát učitelkám"* (we got flowers / we had to congratulate teachers). **6 out of 10 participants** gave responses that conveyed a sense of emotional distancing rather than genuine excitement or joy during IWD. For many respondents of Group 1, IWD appeared as a **duty given celebration**, reflecting the institutionalized and ceremonial nature of the communist-era public holidays. **3 participants** expressed minor detachment, noting that the event (IWD) felt as scripted rather than heartfelt. For example, (1) respondent stated, *"Bylo to povinné, všichni museli blahopřát, ale nic to pro mě neznamenalo."* (It was mandatory, everyone had to congratulate, but it didn't mean anything to me). These emotionally muted narratives reveal how the emotional register of IWD was shaped more by **collective formality than personal sentiment**.

In Group 2, emotional framing was more vivid, personal, and linguistically expressive. While IWD was still seen and experienced as a symbolic ritual, its emotional tone changed from a passive acceptance of IWD to an irony, critique, or disinterested emotional tone. **5 out of 10 participants** used explicitly negative emotional language such as *"trapné," "povrchní,"* and *"zastaralé"* (awkward, superficial, outdated) to describe how the holiday felt in the current context. One participant stated, *"Působí to spíš jako marketingový tah než upřímný svátek"* (It feels more like a marketing stunt than a sincere holiday). At the same time, **(2) participants** had shared a warm and nostalgic language when recalling early memories of receiving flowers from family members. Which had revealed that emotional engagement still persists among some participants, but where it is no longer as consistent or culturally reinforced by the majority. This suggests that a symbolic fatigue of IWD is taking place, whereas the traditional gestures like flowers have lost their depth of meaning and now function more as social expectations than sincere acts of celebration.

Within both groups, the emotional detachment of one's memory and feelings were evident, but as well as its origins had shifted its course. For Group 1, it stemmed from institutional

control and compulsory ritualism. For Group 2, it had emerged from the disillusionment and commercialization of IWD. In both groups the symbolic skeletal core of IWD remains, but its emotional resonance has weakened and has been reshaped. Which points to a generational transformation of IWD.

3. Power, Agency, and Resistance

In Group 1, the power that governed over its people had exercised its authority through a state ideology with compulsory social rituals and workplace expectations. Women of Group 1 were expected by the state to submit through a culture of collectivism and normative behavior. While Resistance did appear, it was subtly muted and indirect. **(3) participants** described that there was a feeling that their participation in IWD was felt and seen as“duty,” while other respondents described it as emotionally “checking out” during the event like as one stated (“přizpůsobení se kolektivu”). As if it was to become a part of the mindless group collective memory.

On the other face of the lens, Group 2 operates in a freer discursive environment due to the current diplomatic setting of the Czech Republic, yet their framework and structure are more ambiguous and unique. And to note that there is no centralized authority which directs or governs how IWD should be celebrated among the people. However, there are outward forces that create these normative expectations, such as have been identified as capitalist and cultural forces. These forces have taken the form of symbolic consumerism and the social pressure to participate in performative activism (feminism). In Group 2, an agenda was often expressed not through rebellion and mass protests but through disengagement. Several of the participants had critiqued its commercial nature of the holiday, specifically **5 out of 10 Group 2 participants** had mentioned commercialization explicitly. Where (**3) of the 5** had used an ironic or sarcastic tone (comparing IWD to “Valentine’s Day 2.0”). (**2) participants** had actively used IWD as their platform and tool for feminist critique, while referencing the terms such as *inequality* and *gender roles*. On the other hand, (**3) others** expressed indifference as choosing to “ignore it” or “not take it seriously anymore.”

While Group 2 is no longer under an ideological barrier, their shift from over-state-propagated expectations to subtle cultural fatigue suggests that apathy has become a form of passive resistance. In its contrast**, Group 1**’s (**3) participants** described emotional withdrawal or sarcasm (“just another flower and a speech”), while **4 others** used terms like

duty, *collective pressure*, or *mandatory attendance*. This highlighting a lack of individuality under the communist regime.

4. Feminist Language and Awareness

Within the 2 Groups, there has been a significant generational divide emerging in the use of formats such as awareness of feminist discourse. While in **Group 1**, feminist language was entirely non-existent. None of the participants used feminist terminology such as *"genderová nerovnost"* ("gender inequality") or *"patriarchát"* ("patriarchy"). This is in all reflects the socialist regime's ideology and that the idea of gender equality had already been achieved, thus rendering feminism undesirable.

(2) participants expressed their views as distancing themselves away from the idea of women needing special recognition. (1) respondent commented: *"Za socialismu se o rovnosti žen moc nemluvilo, protože jsme prostě musely všechno zvládat"* ("Under socialism, we didn't talk much about equality, we just had to handle everything"). Another respondent noted: *"Nepotřebovaly jsme feminismus, protože jsme pracovaly stejně jako muži"* ("We didn't need feminism because we worked just like men").

For Group 1, IWD was primarily a ritual that remembered the form of honoring women's labor. It was not remembered as a space that should question the structural power or advocate for the rights of women. The focus remained primarily towards one's duty and contribution to the party.

In contrast, **Group 2's** participants demonstrated a higher degree of feminist awareness. While not all were politically engaged in activists'' rituals, **4 out of 10 participants** used explicitly feminist language, referencing *"genderové role"* ("gender roles"), *"patriarchát"* ("patriarchy"), *"nerovnost"* ("inequality"), or *"reprezentace"* ("representation"). (1) participant had stated: *"MDŽ je podle mě o tom, že si připomínáme, že ženy pořád nemají stejná práva"* ("To me, IWD is about remembering that women still don't have equal rights").

However, the framing of the agenda was not the dominant agenda across the group. **(3) participants** had referenced an assortment of feminist ideas vaguely. For example, **(1) respondent** said: *"Pro mě je to spíš připomínka ženství než nějaký politický akt"* ("For me, it's more a reminder of femininity than a political act"). Another added: *"Je to hlavně o*

květinách, ale chápu, že pro některé je to o větších tématech" ("It's mostly about flowers, but I understand it's about bigger issues for some people").

Also, activists activities such as participating at campus organized feminists have been recorded among the respondents. As well as following activist content on social media, showing that feminist thought is emerging and taking power among young women. It appears most often channeled through education, digital platforms, and peer discourse rather than passed down through family or tradition.

---

5. The Role of Media and Cultural Scripts

In both generational groups, the media has played a powerful role in framing how International Women's Day was understood and remembered. Regardless of the tools at the time and present, the media has been mediating the power of the message and shifting thoughts and rituals across generations.

In Group 1, the media was heavily controlled and used as an ideological tool and a tool of propaganda. **(7) participants** of the Group 1 had recalled being exposed to official messaging through state television, school ceremonies, newspapers, and posters. The messaging that was shared and viewed by the participants had been seen as often glorifying the image of an "ideal socialist working woman." Participants would frequently employ terms like *"rudé karafiáty"* ("red carnations"), *"oslavy v kulturním domě"* ("celebrations in the cultural house"), and *"proslovy o pracovnicích"* ("speeches about female workers"). **(1) respondents** noted: *"Byly to hlavně řeči o tom, jak jsme pilné pracovnice. Všude byly plakáty, jak ženy budují socialismus"* ("It was mainly speeches about how we're hard-working women. There were posters everywhere about women building socialism").

These media messages from Group 1 had meant to reinforce the meaning of IWD as **a** collective civic obligation, not a personal or emotional event. (**4) participants** had further stated that they remembered specific school activities or workplace rituals that mirrored what they saw in the media. This demonstrates how integrated media and public celebration were under socialism in Czechoslovakia.

In Group 2, the media landscape is a highly advanced playing field of messaging especially in the digital world. A more decentralized and commercialized landscape. (**5) participants** had

specifically mentioned the role of modern-day media in shaping how they experience IWD today. Such as platforms like Instagram, Facebook, or online shops. (1) participant stated that: *"MDŽ na sociálních sítích? Samé kytky, slevy a hezké citáty"* ("IWD on social media? Just flowers, discounts, and pretty quotes"). Another (1) remarked: *"Všechno je to marketingový tah"* ("It's all just a marketing stunt") which was an event repeated by **(2) participants** using the phrase *"marketingový tah"* directly.

Despite the difference of the generational media deviation, both groups reveal a mediated experience of IWD. For Group 1, it was political propaganda. For Group 2, it is a digital influence shaped by aesthetics and consumption. But in both Groups, the media serves as the primary channel for scripting how women see themselves, their roles, and their worth in society.

Conclusion of the Comparative Analysis

Both groups have been summed up in key points that are featured below for an easier academic view of IWD. Below both Groups have also an attached category to summarise them on their key findings and topics.

Category	Group 1 (Communist Era)	Group 2 (Post-Communist Era)
Memory of IWD	Uniform, repetitive, tied to workplace rituals and duty	Fragmented, often perceived as empty or outdated
Emotional Tone	Neutral emotionally flat or resigned status	Ironic, dismissive, occasionally critical
Language & Discourse	Formal, scripted institutional phrasing	Informal, individualized, with occasional feminist vocabulary and irony

Power Dynamics	Enforcement via collectivism and social pressure	Greater conscious critique through withdrawal or irony
Feminist Awareness	Absent, belief that gender equality was solved	Emerging awareness
Media Representation	Ideological propaganda	Commercialized, symbolic media
Perception of IWD Today	Still tied to habit or nostalgia, but lacking deep meaning	Seen as symbolic or commercial, with unclear purpose

6. Coding Procedure of the Analysis

Coding has almost already taken place within the study in the previous analysis section that did dwell into the Comparative part of the analysis. Even though these were by itself comparisons of 2 cross generations, it still did act as part of the coding process with key themes and points of comparison.

Qualitative data analysis takes on a structured coding process that employs the use of organized participant responses. It is a crucial step forward to translating the raw data taken from the Group's findings into analytical findings which can be used for future academic needs. The coding process will take part through the lenses of Thematic, Comparative, and Discourse Analysis. As stated, coding was already applied to both test groups, but it will still be concluded together in the following points.

Coding Process:

All interviewee responses from both Groups were manually transcribed and systematically coded to extract key themes and analytical patterns. The coding process has followed a two-part structure that can be seen below”

1. Open Coding - The initial codes were applied to the coding process to help to identify: recurring ideas, emotions, motives throughout both groups. These were taken from the data itself, without imposing the pre-existing categories seen in previous analysis.

2. Axial Coding - This coding method relates to the codes that were grouped under a broader thematic categorization that helped reflect the central research questions and framework (the CHA or Comparative Historical Analysis). This allows the integration of codes into: Thematic lenses like "Memory Construction," "Symbolism," or "Feminist Discourse."

The following key themes were expected and had emerged within the coding process:

- State-Controlled Memory: How the communist regime framed IWD as a political tool.

- Personal vs. Collective Memory: Tensions between individual recollections and collective narratives and memory.

- **Emotional Engagement**: Feelings of nostalgia, resistance, or detachment toward IWD.

- **Post-Communist Shifts**: How perceptions of IWD changed after 1989.

- **Feminist Awareness and Media Framing**: How younger participants interpret IWD through the lens of modern discourse, activism, and digital culture.

7. Conclusion to Findings

This research thesis has focused on the presence of International Women's Day and its historical meaning. Bringing to light how IWD operates as a site of gendered memory, political legacy, and cultural transformation within the Czech context. This has been by itself a quite mind opening experience for the researcher as well. With this said, it has only been a pleasant and interesting experience to research this thesis.

The findings in this research have been taken from Both Groups (Group 1 & 2) where the comparative findings took on both the generational groups. With women who experienced

communism (Group 1) and those who came of age in post-communism (Group 2). Within these generational groups, five keys had themes emerged: memory construction, emotional framing, power and resistance, feminist awareness, and the role of media.

Across both groups, IWD has remained a continuous symbolic tradition, yet its meaning and narrative has shifted dramatically. For the women who celebrate this holiday, new changes and narratives have emerged, promoting a shift of ideologies and critique towards IWD.

For Group 1, IWD had been embedded within state ideology and propaganda of the communist rule, which was vastly experienced largely as a ritualized, compulsory event. Emotionally, it evoked a sense of detachment or resignation from personalized consciousness. And where resistance had surfaced, it was limited to subtle sarcasm or disengagement. Feminist discourse was completely absent, which was due to the regime promoting a vision of equality that rendered feminism ideologically redundant. While the media had been used as a propagandistic tool of the state. With a mission to enforce a collectivist narrative and idealise the “worker party woman”.

Group 2 in their contrast and vividness, navigates a more decentralized and ideologically open society. Their experience of IWD has been shaped and redefined by commercialization, fragmented memory and digital media discourse. While Group 2 is no longer controlled and coerced by a state ritual it still faces new arising pressures from societal factors. Such as the consumerist expectations and performative activism with the perception of the modern-day society. As well as Group 2 emotional responses which were varied, with some expressing irony or apathy, while others critiqued the capitalist coherence, and a smaller minority had re-engaged with IWD through feminist discourse. Most importantly the feminist language was still not dominant but was present, which points to a clear generational shift. On the side of the media, it continues to structure gender norms through branding, aesthetics, and online engagement rather than televised speeches.

Ultimately, this research has shown that while the skeletal structure of IWD remains intact, its ideological content, emotional weight, and political framing have been enirely transformed. The transition from state propagated rituals to market shaped celebrations reflects the broader shifts in Czech society. From a collectivist conformity to an individualistic ambivalence; from prescribed gender roles to negotiated feminist consciousness. In both these generations,

the core tension remains: IWD is simultaneously a day of recognition and a site of contested meaning. It is remembered, critiqued, forgotten, and reimagined while depending on one's position in history, ideology, and discourse.

This study not only highlights how memory and meaning evolve over time, but also affirms that even familiar social rituals like IWD do still remain a powerful mirror of social change.

8. Research thesis Conclusion

This research thesis, "The 8th of March: Gendered Memories of the International Women's Day in the Czech Republic*"* has set out to explore how International Women's Day (IWD) was experienced, remembered, and interpreted by two generationally unique groups of Czech women. Where Group 1 lived under the rule of the communist regime, while Group 2 came of age in the post-1989 democratic transition. Using a qualitative comparative historical analysis methodology which was built upon thematic and discourse analysis. This study has revealed that while the skeletal structure of IWD has remained intact, its ideological narrative, emotional meaning, and social shift have undergone significant transformation.

The findings show that during the communist era in Czechoslovakia, IWD was deeply rooted in the institutional structures and state propaganda which was often experienced more as a duty than a celebration. Feminism was also very much ideologically redundant, where it was seen by the regime as already a "resolved" theme. Where state-imposed gender equality initiatives would create the ultimate working party family. Collective participation was also prioritized over individual consciousness, which limited the space for a critical reflection. Whereas, the post-communist generation had navigated through IWD with a more fragmented and personalized gender lens. While it is no longer subjected to direct ideological enforcement, these women face other pressures such as being shaped by commercialization, digital aesthetics, and performative activism within the IWD context. However, in contrast, feminist awareness is more visible in this group, yet remains uncertain and inconsistent, and often shaped by education, social media, and informal discourse.

In all this research thesis contributes to the broader fields of memory studies, gender politics, and post-socialist cultural discourse. It also illustrates how a shared cultural tradition like IWD can carry such diverse meanings across generations to come, often shaped not only by lived experience but also by ideology, media, and personal memory. The study was built upon

the work of scholars such as Gal and Kligman, who argued that the collapse of communism created a void in gender politics, rendering feminism either depoliticized or commodified. While this research supports those claims, it also does suggest that a new local form of feminist consciousness is quietly emerging within the collective.

Of course, as all research, this research carries its own limitations. It's a small sample size and on a national scope it restricts broader generalization. The use of qualitative data gathering prioritizes depth over breadth, offering very rich subjective insight but lacking the longitudinal or ethnographic perspective. Future research on this subject or close alike could be built on this work by examining how younger generations (particularly Gen Z women) can relate to IWD in an era, where global feminism, digital platforms, and transnational activism are taking a bigger place in society. Comparative studies with other post-socialist countries such as Poland, Hungary, or Slovakia could also further enrich the understanding of shared and diverse narratives of gender memory across Central Europe.

On a researcher's personal note, conducting this research has been both academically thorough and deeply human. As someone living in post-communist Czech society, I have become more aware of how the Czech cultural rituals are shaped not only by tradition but by also layers of collective memory and political change. Speaking with the participants (women) from both generations has also challenged the researchers assumptions and deepened his understanding of how values are shaped and reshaped over time. In all, this thesis is not just only about International Women's Day, but it is also a reflection on the complex issues of remembering, interpreting, and transforming tradition in a society while still negotiating its past and predicting its future.

References

Boym, S. (2001). *The future of nostalgia*. Basic Books.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Brubaker, R. (1996). *Nationalism reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Český rozhlas Plus. (2018, March 8). *Mezinárodní den žen za socialismu: Budovatelky, matky i hospodyňky*. https://plus.rozhlas.cz/mezinarodni-den-zen-za-socialismu-budovatelky-matky-i-hospodynky-7781058

Deník. (2025, March 8). *MDŽ 2025: Mezinárodní den žen – proč se slaví 8. března?* https://www.denik.cz/z_domova/mdz-2025-mezinarodni-den-zen-proc-se-slavi-8-brezna.html

Drakulić, S. (2015). *A communist legacy: Gender and class under socialism*. https://slavenkadrakulic.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015-06-05-drakulic-en.pdf

Ekiert, G., & Kubik, J. (2014). *The Legacies of 1989: Myths and Realities of Civil Society*. Central European University Press.

Ekman, J., & Linde, J. (2005). Communist nostalgia and the consolidation of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics, 21*(3), 354–374. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523270500183562

Gebhardt, W. (Ed.). (2000). *Events. Soziologie des Außergewöhnlichen*. Leske + Budrich.

Generace20. (2021, March 8). *Mezinárodní den žen si za komunismu paradoxně více užívali muži. Dnes už ho slaví jen zlomek Čechů.* https://generace20.vosp.cz/mezinarodni-den-zen-si-za-komunismu-paradoxne-vice-uzivali-muzi-dnes-uz-ho-slavi-jen-zlomek-cechu/

Hagemann, V., & Howanitz, C. (2021). Bridging the gaps: The poetics of postmemory in the Czech graphic novel *Alois Nebel*. In D. Kolb & K. Pokorný (Eds.), *Postmemory, Memory and Cultural Memory in Post-Socialist Eastern Europe* (pp. 225–244). De Gruyter.

Hirsch, M. (2012). *The generation of postmemory: Writing and visual culture after the Holocaust*. Columbia University Press.

Hirsch, M., & Miller, N. K. (Eds.). (2011). *Rites of return: Diaspora poetics and the politics of memory*. Columbia University Press.

iROZHLAS. (n.d.). *Mezinárodní den žen včera a dnes*. https://www.irozhlas.cz/node/5917185

Kopeček, M. (2008). In search of "national memory": The politics of history, nostalgia and the historians' dispute in the Czech Republic. In M. Kopeček (Ed.), *Past in the making: Historical revisionism in Central Europe after 1989* (pp. 75–102). Central European University Press.

Moore, B. (1966). *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Beacon Press.

Morgan, K. J. (2006). *Working mothers and the welfare state: Religion and the politics of work-family policies in Western Europe and the United States*. Stanford University Press.

Pehe, V. (2020, November 17). Velvet Retro: Historian Veronika Pehe on Czech pop culture, antiheroes and collective memory. *Radio Prague International*. https://english.radio.cz/velvet-retro-historian-veronika-pehe-czech-pop-culture-antiheroes-collective-8681919

Proženy.cz. (2023, March 8). *MDŽ za socialismu: Rudé karafiáty, pionýři s básničkami, chlebíčky s vlašákem a chlapi namol.* https://www.prozeny.cz/clanek/zdravi-a-zivotni-styl-mdz-za-socialismu-rude-karafiaty-pionyri-s-basnickami-chlebicky-s-vlasakem-a-chlapi-namol-94088

Přikryl, J. (2023). *Historie MDŽ v Československu*. *Historia Aperta*, n49, 1–15. https://journals.uhk.cz/historia-aperta/article/download/n49_3/pdf

Přikryl, J. (2023). *Historie MDŽ v Československu*. *Historia Aperta*, n49, 1–15. https://web.archive.org/web/20240127101522id_/https://journals.uhk.cz/historia-aperta/article/download/n49_3/pdf

Radio Prague International. (2001, March 8). *International Women's Day forgotten in Czech Republic.* https://english.radio.cz/international-womens-day-forgotten-czech-republic-8045215

Radio Prague International. (2021, March 8). *Flowers aren't enough: Changing views on International Women's Day.* https://english.radio.cz/flowers-arent-enough-changing-views-international-womens-day-8711439

Rekšćić, V. (2015). Nostalgia for communism in the collective imaginations. *Revija za sociologiju, 45*(3), 217–238. https://doi.org/10.5613/rzs.45.3.2

Skocpol, T. (1979). *States and social revolutions: A comparative analysis of France, Russia and China*. Cambridge University Press.

Streete, G. (2001). Women's rights and remembrances: IWD in post-communist states. *Anthropology of East Europe Review, 19*(2), 5–11. https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/aeer/article/download/1284/1356

The Prime. (2023, March 7). *Leading women's views on International Women's Day.* https://theprime.cz/news/leases/leading-womens-views-on-international-womens-day/

Tilly, C. (1990). *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Tocqueville, A. de. (2000). *Democracy in America* (H. Mansfield & D. Winthrop, Eds. & Trans.). University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1835)

Verdery, K. (1991). *National ideology under socialism: Identity and cultural politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*. University of California Press.

Verdery, K. (1999). *The political lives of dead bodies: Reburial and postsocialist change*. Columbia University Press.

Weber, M. (1947). *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (T. Parsons, Trans.). Oxford University Press.

List of Appendices