

This work aims to demonstrate differences in national memory of Communism in the Czech Republic and Poland. It looks into the principles surrounding the practice of collective memory and then uses this to create a working methodology for the study of it in these two nations. In evaluating memory in these countries it relies upon the “Three Pillars” of past events, cultural output and popular opinion and stresses the interconnected nature of these academic areas. A further emphasis is placed upon the role of belief in shaping personal and group self-identity. The overall conclusions stress that both of the national memory of these countries has been shaped by their history, culture and popular opinion, and that this has created a divide between the Polish and Czech views of events during the Communist period. The divide is seen as characterised by particular “Czech” and “Polish” viewpoints which are the product of discourse on previous aspects of what it means to belong to these respective groups. National memory in essence builds upon itself, and will continue to do so. Future perceptions of what it means to be Czech or Polish will be shaped by this latest chapter in national memory.