Routledge research in gender and politics

The Politics of Gender Culture under State Socialism

An expropriated voice

Edited by Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová

Contents

Figures

1 Expropriated voice

Transformations of gender culture under state socialism; Czech society, 1948–89[1]

Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová

Gender culture under state socialism (in the case of Czechoslovakia 1948–89) has lost none of its topicality despite that period's sliding further into the past, indeed it may even have gained some: the generation of men and women with no first-hand experience of those times has now reached maturity, and many doubtless believe that they are shaping their lives in a new age, including its gender dimension, in a new way, different from the past. However, some do appreciate that here, as in other regards, there is something like a local cultural legacy, whether seen as a direct consequence of the forty years of gender politics of the communist government, or as the resumption of an indeterminate cultural tradition with roots in the remoter past.[2]

Immediately after the 1989 revolution, there was a rash of works dealing with the legacy of state socialism as it affected the position of women in society. These works were mostly driven by an urge to draw international comparisons after the fall of the Iron Curtain, and so to formulate the specifics of the female experience and of policies relating to women within the socialist system. Typical of these early reflections were some fairly generalized theses about 'women in Central and Eastern Europe' and 'under state socialism' as homogeneous concepts, broadly typified by the remarkable discrepancy between the claims that communist regimes had merely exploited women without liberating them and that post-socialist women were in a better position, or were stronger, than women in the West (e.g. Corrin 1992; Deacon 1992; *Hypatia* 1993; Funk and Mueller 1993; Einhorn 1993).[3] Following in the wake of these works came studies of gender relations in post-socialist countries as part of the political and social transformations taking place on a broader scale worldwide (Moghadam 1993; Waylen 1994; Kaplan *et al.* 1997).[4] Since the end of the 1990s, works on the social standing of women in Central and Eastern Europe have looked back on communist gender policies and the socialist experience chiefly to provide an historical backdrop against which to foreground the current transformation of gender relations, their object not, then, being any systematic examination of gender in the state-socialist era (Gál and Kligman 2000; Einhorn and Sever 2003; Kay 2007; Kraft 2008).[5]

Since the 1990s, the numbers of theoretical and historical studies dealing with gender culture in the period of state socialism rather than with the status of

women has been steadily rising. To date, there have been few works that sought to grapple theoretically with individual aspects of the gender culture of state socialism and its transformation since 1989, though there were already some in the early years following the fall of communist regimes in East Central Europe (Watson 1993; Molyneux 1994; Sieg 1995), and again in the new millennium (Ferree 2001; Goven 2002; Fodor 2002; Oates-Indruchová 2003; Brandes 2007; Havelková 2009). In recent years, there has been a burgeoning of historical works. Their focus has been primarily on the changes of approach to women's emancipation in communist policies and on cultural discourses of gender. Works in the former vein evidence the complexity of gender culture in the period of state socialism by the simple fact of their sometimes contrary conclusions: on the one hand they record the shift from the 1950s disruption of the traditional gender order to the return to traditional roles from the 1960s on (Harsch 2007; Fidelis 2010), while another view exposes a largely unaltered conception of the gender order in certain areas (as in, for example, Asztalos Morell's 1999 study of the gender aspects of Hungarian agriculture) and the unequivocal opposition of communist power to any autonomous women's movement from the very outset, since the late 1940s (Nečasová 2011). Works examining cultural discourses of gender have mostly dealt with representations in cultural commodities and the products of propaganda (Evans 2000; Bren 2010), but also with the broader political contexts of opposition to communist power (Penn 2005) or everyday life (Penn and Massino 2009).

The last decade has seen the appearance of a number of books concerned directly with Czech society from the gender perspective and wholly or in part for the period of state socialism, but it is in itself symptomatic that they appeared only in English, whether inside the Czech Republic (Oates-Indruchová 2002; Hašková and Uhde 2009), or beyond its frontiers (Saxonberg 2003; True 2003; Feinberg 2006; Sokolová 2008; Bren 2010). This is, then, a continuation of the odd situation in the 1990s, when many of us engaged in intense debate on the gender specifics of Czech society arising out of the era that had passed; however, it took place practically away from Czech scholarly debates, and consequently, its content, or even that it took place, is little known even within the local feminist community.[6] Most post-1989 gender-oriented publishing in Czech has been about the current situation or the transition that preceded it (e.g. Hašková *et al.* 2007), although many do contain implicit reflections of the period of state socialism (Havelková 1992, 1995b; Chřibková *et al.* 1999).[7] Since 2000, that is, following a break of sorts, there have been more studies on gender culture under state socialism (e.g. Šmausová 2011 [2006]; Havelková 2007; Jechová 2008, 2009).[8]

The present volume – the output of a three-year team project – aims at an innovative perspective in its theoretical and methodological approach, and also in its maximally differentiated approach to 'gender and socialism'. In terms of historical continuities and discontinuities, the project's focal point is the state-socialist period in its own right, not as the backdrop to interpreting the period of transition. This has made it possible not only to place greater emphasis on continuities and discontinuities with pre-communist history, but also to trace the inner discontinuities of the state-socialist era from a gender viewpoint.

The first consideration is to stress the concept of gender order and so overcome the tendency to reduce gender to the usual question of 'the position of women under socialism'. The position of women is only ever a subsidiary manifestation of the given gender order, which our investigations have studied at its basic levels of analysis – the symbolic, institutional and personal. However, we have called the object of our research *gender culture*. Although our research was founded on the assumed existence of a gender order and has operated with gender as the key term in the analysis, it is not presently possible to examine and document it in its systematic entirety. The studies collected in this volume each focus on a selected area, which allowed us to investigate only specific practices and symbolic manifestations. We call these together 'gender culture' in the anthropological sense of a wide-ranging social practice.

The second consideration, our differentiated approach, also goes with the gender-based perspective that assumes that a tissue of gender-based organization is present in every part and at all levels of the life of a society, and also that the thoughts and actions of all members of a given community, irrespective of sex, participate actively in shaping it, whether in sustaining and reproducing it or continuously modifying and so transforming it. The project sought to apply the differentiation in two ways: first, foregrounding plurality and the broad spectrum of 'subjects' or 'actors' involved in co-defining gender culture, and second, identifying the various phases of gender politics in the era of state socialism. This approach seeks to get away from the still prevailing binary reduction of the actors involved in the 'regime' (as actant) on the one hand, and on the other, the 'people' (or, as applicable, women) as the object being acted on; but it also seeks to turn aside from the no less dominant idea – where gender culture is concerned – of the state-socialist era as a monolith undifferentiated through time. It would be proper to record here that other works of history have appeared in recent years that have equally sought to break down the old binary approach, also called the 'totalitarian' model,[9] though in them the gender aspect is practically absent.

Multidisciplinary composition of the research team has enabled us to illustrate the diversity of gender cultural practice in different areas of society, depending, amongst other things, on the positioning of the actors in relation to 'power' and 'society' at a given time and what space they had for negotiating with power. The chapters in the volume review the gender-relevant legislation produced by the ideologically non-homogeneous legal community (Barbara Havelková) and expose the brutally instrumental treatment of women's organizations by the agents of communist power (Denisa Nečasová) at one end of the scale, continue to the ambivalent theorizing and practice of sexologists (Věra Sokolová) and the authors and choreographers of the Spartakiade mass performances (Petr Roubal); the array of actors continues with canonical literary figures (Jan Matonoha) and the most widely read works of literature (Libora Oates-Indruchová), film-makers and film critics (Petra Hanáková and Kateřina

Kolářová) and individual women (Kateřina Zábrodská). The object of this differentiated approach was not of course merely to create a mosaic, but to arrive at a synergy. Apart from the expected (1) varying degree of agency in the various spheres and (2) the undoubtedly significant differences in the gender composition of the actors in each sphere, what also clearly transpires from one study to the next is that (3) the gender culture of the state-socialist age was moulded by clashes between the direct action by communist power with various forms of negotiation and resistance; (4) the fact that in many respects we are talking about an 'unfinished project' is not down to communist power alone, but often also to the very actors who stood in opposition to it; (5) in the majority of areas actors can be found with their own pro-women or feminist agendas.

It must be emphasized that this approach neither trivializes nor denies the all-embracing framework of power and ideology. On the contrary: it has made it possible to identify with far greater precision the specific nature of particular restrictions along with the strategies employed to circumvent them, negotiate round them and break through them.[10] The present approach contributes to the diversification of perspectives on gender culture of state socialism advanced, particularly, in the recent volume edited by Shana Penn and Jill Massino (2009), which looked at the everyday negotiations by women, or in the more specifically focused work of Małgorzata Fidelis (2010). These publications drew attention to women's agency, thus shifting the perspective from the emphasis on the regime to the women. The present volume aims at an investigation of a plurality of actors co-creating the gender culture of state socialism.

Besides dismantling the blinkered 'regime versus women' viewpoint, the present project has aimed to dismantle the customary conception of the state-socialist era as undifferentiated through time with respect to gender, and has had the additional objective of outlining a periodization of the age with particular reference to the specific areas examined in the individual studies – in terms, for instance, of developments in gender-relevant legislation or changes in the ideological content of Spartakiade compositions. It has transpired that (1) different spheres have their own specific turning points; (2) right across the chapters the important fact emerges that the usual stereotypical image of gender politics under socialism only applies to the situation in the 1950s, indeed really just the first half of that decade. The dramatic and relatively early changes that state policies underwent in later decades have broadly failed to reach common knowledge. One might cite the telling example of the stereotypical view of mothers snatched from their babies and driven back to work, so at variance with the actual (and internationally unique) evolution of maternity leave, which from the 1960s on was constantly extended until it became the longest in the world. (3) Periodization of the Czech state-socialist age in gender terms may change nothing to the basic division into Stalinism, de-Stalinization, thaw, Prague Spring and Normalization (i.e. 1969–89), but it does suggest that the various stages may be assessed in other ways than by the usual political, non-gendered approach. By way of example, take the body of evidence that the 1960s, rightly considered the freest in ordinary political terms, actually brought new limitations

to women's freedom with such phenomena as the objectivization of the female body. (4) In terms of comparison with the West, this volume also illustrates some asynchronous development between the two: with the modernization of gender-relevant legislation beginning here almost 20 years earlier than in the West, so too the backlash (against the policy of emancipation), which for the United States Susan Faludi dates to the 1980s (Faludi 1991), began in the late 1960s.

The crosswise linkages among the chapters has led to a revision of certain theories or theses that have made regular appearances in previous literature on this or that topic. To put it at its strongest, certain 'myths', more precisely stereotypes, need to be refuted: not that they are totally untrue, but their constant repetition as only partial truths rendered certain things invisible, notably the very complexity of the case, thereby inhibiting other possible interpretations. Two claims in particular strike us as most obviously 'canonized': one on the plane of gender as a social category, the other concerning gender as a symbolic category. The former is the thesis of the 'top-down imposition of emancipation', the latter that of 'feminism as an import from the West'. In this Introduction we suggest corrections to both claims, at the same time generating a different conceptual grasp on a modified theory of gender culture in the age of state socialism.

Gender as a social category: the myth of the top-down imposition of emancipation

The range of works that dealt with gender issues under state socialism even before that system came to an end may come as a surprise. They have to be mentioned for the simple reason that even in contemporary feminist-oriented literature the cliché has taken hold that there was no gender-relevant research under socialism, though accessible sources disprove that claim.[11] Home-grown works from the period were primarily examinations of how the social status of women was evolving in terms of employment, education or women's standing within the family; theoretically they were framed by the concept of social roles, and in terms of methodology there was a clear predominance of quantitative studies. The literature being published at the same time abroad was concerned more, and critically, with official social policy and ideology and their impact on the status of women. However, even this type of literature took as the basic actor the vaguely defined 'regime' or 'power elites', with women as the object of their actions. What we do not find here is any approach to gender in the sense of tracing how sundry social actors were involved in the construction, reproduction and naturalization, but also modification, of gender culture patterns, or to how gender polarity is used by different actors in its function of natural symbols and thus instrumentalized in various cultural, social and political contexts.

Despite the difference in their analytical approach from today's gender research, each of the chapters in this book takes this earlier body of works into consideration; what follows here is an overview of those works that have a bearing on gender as a social category, though, broadly speaking, they deal

almost exclusively with the position of women. Besides numerous papers and research reports that appeared primarily in the journals *Demografie* (Demography) and *Sociologický časopis* (Sociological Review) a number of books were also published. Below, we list those whose very title indicates the focus on women; the list would be much longer if we included works about the family. Chronologically, the publications on women are: Brejchová *et al.* 1962; Radvanová *et al.* 1971; Matulová and Jarošová 1976; Jirková 1982; Možný 1983; Hájková 1983; Šolcová 1984; Bauerová and Bártová 1987; Bauerová 1988; not to be forgotten are also such items as Libuše Háková's chapter in a groundbreaking collective volume on the social structure of socialist society (Háková 1966).

All these works deal both with how the position of women at work changed over time, foregrounding de facto all the problems with which sociology is concerned today, such as horizontal and vertical segregation or unequal pay, and with their family role and the problem of harmonizing the two roles. As for the position of the woman within the family, particularly noteworthy is the contradiction that is to be found in almost all these works, namely the conservation and reinforcement of the idea that women's primary responsibility is the raising of children alongside the unexpected attention to the question of the internal democratization of the family. It has to be said that in their assessments and proposed solutions the positions of the authors – and let it be noted how far and away women dominate in this field of research – are by no means at one, and that would seem attributable primarily to the very nature of the case, that is ongoing transformations of the social status of women. These works seek causal connections, evaluate statistical data and opinion polls, and look for explanations for any new phenomena. Even here, though, political changes have also left their mark: while in the 1960s discrimination against women and the problems brought in with new policies came ever more openly to the fore (notable in Háková 1966), publications from the period of Normalization (1969–89) essentially make light of the problems and are more by way of an apologia for socialist policies vis-à-vis women (e.g. Bauerová and Bártová 1987).[12] Academia's potential for social criticism was also blunted by the radical weakening of the State Population Commission in that period (Havelková 2013). The findings of specialists were duly incorporated in compendia intended for the general public. Symptomatically, only women were of any interest: see *Encyklopedie moderní ženy* (*Encyclopaedia of the Modern Woman*; Klabouch 1964 and *Encyklopedie* 1966) or *Encyklopedie mladé ženy* (*Encyclopaedia of the Young Woman*; *Encyklopedie* 1978). Omission of the subject of men is typical of this output. Now and again the views of men are noted, but are not a topic of gender-relevant enquiry. One exception to this is a work by Ivo Možný (1983). It contains chapters such as 'The man in the family of an employed woman' and generally handles the dynamics of gender relations within the family in ways quite close to the modern sociology of gender.

The second type of publications includes those where there are no grounds for suspecting limitations imposed by censorship or self-censorship. These are foreign publications with either a broader Central and Eastern European focus and containing, *inter alia*, chapters on the position of women in Czechoslovakia (e.g. Connor 1979; Wolchik and Meyer 1985; Moore Jr. 1987), or publications dealing specially with Czechoslovakia, whose authors had either emigrated (such as, Köhler-Wagnerová 1974 and Heitlinger 1979) or had been resident in the country for some time as aliens before returning to their home countries (most noteworthy here is Hilda Scott 1974). Yet Alena Köhler-Wagnerová's assessment of socialist policy as related to women also reads relatively positively compared to her experience of West Germany. Alena Heitlinger is more critical and pays more attention to the poor enforceability of rights. Hilda Scott considers conditions of women's emancipation in Czechoslovakia to be fairly good by international standards, though she does also go into the 'disillusionment' that came in the wake of the initial expectations and points up the factors that slowed the emancipation project down, including tendencies to 'go into reverse'.[13]

It cannot be said that either factually or in the identification of the basic problems of the status of women the home-grown output differed in any significant way from uncensored works, although it undoubtedly differs in the measure and nature of any criticism, and it has to be noted that the second type of writings mentioned is written from feminist positions, while works from inside Czechoslovakia sought to be an alternative to the feminist approach and generally disassociated themselves from it. One fundamental finding is, however, that in neither type of works arising during the state-socialist period is the politics of emancipation per se seen as a problem, something imposed upon women inorganically from above; on the contrary, any criticism is directed more at the failure to bring the emancipation project to fruition (Scott) or at the unfree backdrop (Heitlinger). Only with post-revolutionary hindsight does the inclusive conception of 'the top-down imposition of emancipation' come to the fore, and that now needs subjecting to new critical debate.[14]

The narrative of policies imposed on women from above reflects the fact that the communist authorities had literally annihilated the earlier women's movement and, with that, any chance for women to articulate their demands themselves, as it were 'from below'. As Denisa Nečasová demonstrates herein and in an earlier monograph, not even the women's organization newly set up under the aegis of the state was treated by the state as a partner in the shaping of gender policies, but merely as an instrument by which to promote its own political aims among women, and it explicitly did not want this organization to act from a position of advancing women's interests (Nečasová 2011). There is also no doubt that at the same time policies aimed at women and what in today's terminology could be broadly called the gender agenda began to be managed by the state. Nonetheless we find this concept theoretically imprecise and misleading for two reasons: first, it conceals the fact that management of this agenda was delegated on a major scale to experts, by which it became largely *decentralized*. What then matters here is that decisions and recommendations emanating from specialist circles cannot now be described as 'central', given that the position they took was more that of 'intermediary position providing a link between state-led ideology and policy making on the one hand, and shop-floor experiences on the

other', as Ildikó Asztalos Morell has put it (Asztalos Morell 2007: 42). Hana Havelková (2013) shows that the Czech situation is also covered by Asztalos Morell's thesis that those experts did not entirely yield to political rhetoric, since they came onto the scene at a time when 'power was increasingly concentrated in the hands of the technocratic elites' and ideological rhetoric was open to question and revision (Asztalos Morell 2007: 43). A major part of our case is that the community of specialists was a mediator between political goals and people's everyday experience. Hana Havelková showed in her recent work that even such a state-run body as the State Population Commission was no mere executor of state directives, but a relatively autonomous actor that systematically followed, assessed and influenced actual gender policies and, in the circumstances prevailing, partly supplied the missing, silenced voice of women via the latter's views as researched in the course of its investigations (Havelková 2013). This is further eloquently evidenced in this volume in Věra Sokolová's chapter on the impact of Czech sexology.

The second reason concerns the actual content of the agenda in question: the concept of emancipation imposed from above also suggests an assumption that the given measures were brought in in defiance of local traditions and under the influence of the Soviet model and so was alien to 'Czech women'. However, it is easy to prove that communist policy vis-à-vis women reflected, above all in legislation, ideas and demands arising not only from Marxist, but also from liberal first-wave feminisms, and that for a time the policy even matched the demands of Marxist and liberal second-wave feminisms.[15] Below we offer evidence of how the ideas involved chimed with the local feminist tradition, and particularly Věra Sokolová's chapter herein demonstrates the continuity of the gender-equality line of the pre-state-socialist tradition into the ideas and people involved in the actions of specialist communities under state socialism.

For the act described, when the women's movement was destroyed, only to be taken over as part of the agenda of the state, we suggest replacing the expression 'imposed emancipation' by the term *expropriation*.[16] We believe that the latter term better captures the situation where the state took the women's movement's agenda from it with the object of managing it itself – and supposedly better. 'Expropriation' is used expressly to denote an operation analogous to the economic expropriation by which the communist powers stripped property from its owners, convinced that they would manage it better through central planning and with the aid of science.[17]

We deem the term '(top-down) emancipation' also misleading. The changes in legislation affecting women, introduced at the start of the state-socialist era, can undoubtedly be described as modernizing (see Barbara Havelková's chapter herein), this thanks, among other things, to the aforementioned erstwhile egalitarian (modernizing) policy enunciated both with the women's movement and in specialist circles. The term 'modernization' (of the social status of women) is accordingly thought more appropriate. Furthermore, as Denisa Nečasová demonstrates in the present volume, the upper echelons of communist power were not interested in women's emancipation and themselves saw to its gradual displacement from policy documents of women's organizations.

There are other assumptions connected with 'imposition' that can be refuted as counterfactual. It has been customary to cite the driving of women into work on the basis of a legal obligation to work, or the concept of an equality based on making traditionally masculine jobs available to women and suppressing the 'natural' feminine role of, especially, motherhood. In reality, however, the legal duty to work outside the home was never applied to women in full, as Barbara Havelková shows in this volume, and this is also borne out by statistics that show that the difference in female employment rates between the 1930s and 1950s was in no way dramatic and that the rise during the socialist period was relatively gradual (Šprincová 2013). Of support in maternity something has been said already. It may be true that the attention paid to its protection practically from the mid-1950s was originally driven by the drop in the birth rate, later on so-called deprivation theories played their part; these led to a fundamental counterbalancing of the policy of women's employment by pro-motherhood and pro-family policies. But then, as Joanna Goven (2002) and others have pointed out, support for families with the traditional arrangement of gender roles was never abandoned even in Stalinist times; all that was 'revolutionary' was the political rhetoric. Another level of the case against the term 'imposition' is the matter of whether and to what extent women themselves exploited the new conditions as an opportunity, or how far they identified with, say, the egalitarian ideology. This private level is represented herein by Kateřina Zábrodská's chapter, which makes use of interviews with women conducted in the first half of the 1990s and in which the author shows that women were more troubled by the failure to bring the emancipation project to its proper conclusion.[18]

Gender as a symbolic category: the myth that feminist and gender approaches were an import from the West

A direct consequence of the expropriation of the feminist agenda from the women's movement by the Communist Party was that the odd flashes of scholarly or even public discussion of gender issues were rendered invisible and feminist discourse became submerged way down in cultural consciousness. In this regard, communist power was so successful in terms of cultural hegemony that although academic discussion of feminist issues opened up very shortly after the change of regime, the myth survives right down to today – often sustained by feminist researchers as well – that feminism and gender studies were imported from the West.[19] The speed with which gender-based and feminist approaches entered academic – and in part also public – debate in this country on the one hand speaks of the relevance of feminist concepts and categories to the establishment of a local feminist and gender agenda, and on the other it permits us to infer a pre-existing domestic 'mycelium': a kind of awareness of the relevant issues and an academic readiness at the theoretical level. Thus in this part we shall attempt at least to outline the evolution of Czech feminist thinking and associated work with the analytical category of gender in its symbolic dimension.

As mentioned above, Czech research into the social status of women, which went on throughout basically the entire socialist period, became 'invisible' to specialist circles after November 1989, given that the very existence of a gender-relevant approach failed to register, and in consequence even today any gender-oriented approach to representations – gender in its symbolic dimension – features, even in academic discourse, as something extraneous, 'outlandish'. And yet there is something of a tradition of feminist thinking and of a gender-oriented work with representations in the Czech environment traceable through the whole of the twentieth century. The various chapters in this volume are a contribution to this 'discovery' process.

The Czech feminist tradition reaches back to the first half of the nineteenth century, when, in addition to moves towards improvements in the legal status of women and in education for women (Horská 1999; Neudorflová 1999), the problem of gender penetrated the public awareness chiefly via literature – a trend that only grew as the National Revival took off and a link was established with the nationalist movement (for much more detail see primarily Malečková 2002). Unlike the fairly general awareness of feminist or pro-women strivings in the nineteenth century, the consciously gender-oriented work in the cultural arena during the First Czechoslovak Republic remains far less well known. The existence of a feminist awareness in the inter-war period has been documented through research, though that which has been published does not yet permit us to draw any final conclusions on gender culture as a whole.

There have been several articles on the women's movement in the First Republic (e.g. Garver 1985; Nolte 1993; Feinberg 2007), and to date two major books (Burešová 2001; Feinberg 2006). While Burešová's study uses archival finds to document the fairly broad range of activities of women's associations and the advanced state of organization of the women's movement, she also notes the territorially limited reach of the majority of those associations (confined mostly to Prague and a few other Czech towns, with very little outreach to Slovakia) and the fact that the movement was driven by relatively small numbers of women. If Burešová approaches women's emancipation from below, that is, from women doing the organizing, Melissa Feinberg investigates the issue from above, from the role of the state. Her study also draws on original archival research, but in her case on legislative and policy documents and discussions. She records the downturn in the commitment to emancipation that had been expressed in the first Czechoslovak constitution of 1920, which did give men and women equal rights as citizens, however by the end of the inter-war period the leaders of the young republic were placing rather more emphasis on the interests of the nation and society than on the rights of the individual.

Although very different in their conclusions (Burešová concludes that only the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia by Nazi Germany on the eve of the Second World War interrupted the bold plans of women's associations further to coordinate and expand their activities), the two studies permit the inference that unlike the English and American women's movements, in which the high visibility of feminist issues in public debate before the First World War was followed by a period of anti-feminism in the inter-war period (for a useful overview see Pugh 2000 [1992]), the woman question remained alive and very much present in public discussion in Czechoslovakia.

As in the period before the First World War, so too in the inter-war years there was a certain culture of gender thinking in the intellectual arena. Women's organizations continued to publish their periodicals, moreover Prague publishing houses did not seem to shun even fairly gender-radical texts: *Orlando* was, next to *Flush*, the only text by Virginia Woolf translated into Czech before the Second World War (Woolf 1929, 1938), the translation coming out a mere one year after its appearance in English; and the Czech translation of Radclyffe Hall's 1928 lesbian classic, *The Well of Loneliness*, came out in 1931 and was reprinted at least twice before the outbreak of war (Hall 1928 [1931]).[20] This text, as Věra Sokolová's oral-history study in this volume shows, was of paramount importance to the shaping of lesbian identities even into the period of Normalization. Much more original research in a variety of areas that would include, for example, literature, print media and academic discourse, will be required before a comprehensive assessment of the state of feminist/gender culture in the Czech lands between the wars can be arrived at. As of now, at least the moderate conclusion can be drawn that gender as an issue did have an audience during the First Czechoslovak Republic, not just in the political sphere, but also in the cultural, and that that audience survived the Second World War.

It may, then, be inferred that, in the treatment of gender in its 1950s representations, a time that saw a radical attempt to deconstruct the petit-bourgeois model of gender order, as the period has been described by Hana Havelková (Havelková 2007), ideological pressure on the emancipatory character of representations comingled with the persisting feminist and gender-sensitive thinking of the times that preceded the communist takeover. Jan Matonoha's chapter herein provides evidence of balance in the representation of gender in certain novels of the 1950s, but no such signs in the exile and alternative literature of later years. And Petr Roubal's analysis of representations of the human body points on the one hand to a connection to work on gender stretching from the (pre-socialist) Sokol *Slet*s to the (socialist) Spartakiades, and on the other hand to the creation of a model of 'instrumental gender' that abstracted the binarity of the female and male body of the Sokol model from the world of unchanging family values in which that model was anchored (p. 143). This remodelling, symptomatic of Spartakiade choreography and Socialist Realism in general, was anchored 'in the new regime's social engineering, which plans and re-draws the new society using categories that were created arbitrarily' (ibid.).

If research interest in feminist thought in the inter-war period has been far slighter than interest in nineteenth-century manifestations, the 1950s and 1960s are an almost absolute blank that the chapters in this book are more or less the first to begin to fill in.[21] Thus for the study of continuities there is very little material available. Nevertheless, even here, we may judge there to have been a degree of continuity leading up to the reforming 1960s, whether from the gender-culture studies contained herein, or from the more general evolution of

culture. To take the example of book publishing: it is apparent that radical political turning points in the history of Czechoslovakia are consistently matched by tendencies towards picking up on the previous stage of development that had been interrupted by the political situation. *The Well of Loneliness*, as previously mentioned, is a typical example of a more general trend: the novel was translated between the wars (the National Library catalogue gives 1930 as the date of the first translation), a relatively short time after the appearance of the English original (1928), and subsequently the same translation was ready to be printed after the war, but before the communist putsch (1948), then again during the period of relative ideological relaxation in the late 1960s (1969), and then not until after the changes in November 1989 (1992 and 2002 – still in that original translation, though no longer with the original Toyen cover). We will find the same publishing history with countless other books.[22] There is no novelty in the finding that in other spheres of social and cultural life, too, the 1960s saw a return to issues squeezed out of public debate after 1948. For our purposes, of relevance here is the plurality of ideas on gender arrangements that had been quashed in the 1950s – at least in the cultural sphere – in favour of the monolithic ideology of emancipation promoted by the ruling communists. Hana Havelková has previously drawn attention to the debate that broke out in *Literární noviny* on the occasion of the publication of selections from Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex* (Beauvoirová 1966) in 1967 (Havelková 2009).[23] In the present volume Petr Roubal and Petra Hanáková offer evidence of active work with gender in the design of the Spartakiades (Roubal) and in the cinema (Hanáková) of the 1960s. Roubal demonstrates both a return to the Sokol conception of gender (and the comeback of Sokol personnel) in the choreography of the Spartakiade mass gymnastic performances and a return of counter-emancipation voices to professional discourse on sport and physical education. For her part, Hanáková looks at the work of film-makers Věra Chytilová and Ester Krumbachová through the prism of women's writing, at the same time providing a sensitive analysis of the contemporaneous deconstruction of gender stereotypes and the re-appropriation of symbolic, feminine coded spaces – incidentally, a creative approach very similar to the feminist questioning that arose in the run-up to second-wave Feminism in Anglo-American culture at the same time.

The occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact in August 1968 and the onset of Normalization a year later again interrupted gender-relevant debate within the culture sphere, just as it had been taking off. This was in part due to the emigration of key participants, male and female, in part to censorship achieved by the imposition of publishing bans on particular individuals and in part to changes in culture policy. The entire period of Normalization (1969–89) is marked by an ideological return to a conservative conception of gender relations (Havelková 2007), analysed in detail in a number of studies herein (most significantly, in chapters by Barbara Havelková and Roubal). Barbara Havelková traces the conservative turn in legal discourse to the state's effort to remedy the mainly economic and demographic difficulties of late state socialism – by instrumentalizing gender roles. Roubal relates the representations of gender in all three

of the Normalization Spartakiades to wider strivings of the normalizing regime to find the lowest common denominator between the wishes of the political leadership and – in this case – the gymnasts and the spectators, to find a 'consensual ritual' (Roubal 2006: 87; in this volume 150). Among foreign researchers, Paulina Bren is particularly notable for her attention to the gender dimension in Czech culture of the period of Normalization, finding the petit-bourgeois model of the family extrapolated onto the socialist state in the television serials of Jaroslav Dietl (Bren 2010).

The reassertion of the petit-bourgeois model in state policy had the side effect of a stronger reassertion of patriarchal discourse, which feminists had begun to dismantle back in the First Czechoslovak Republic and which in the early days of socialism had been pushed into a 'residual' position chiefly through the rhetoric of emancipation (Oates-Indruchová 2002, 47–59).[24] In the matter of representations of gender, this meant a regression in representing gender differences – as well as, in cultural and social practice, differences in psychology and status – towards their biologization, as if they arose from the biological difference and so were down to nature. Because biologization has always been the legitimizing principle behind the petit-bourgeois model, any discourse shaped on that basis effectively suppresses or silences any critical perspectives on gender. 'Gender silence' is discussed herein by Jan Matonoha, taking the example of the recent Czech literary canon. The texts in question – works by Bohumil Hrabal, Milan Kundera, Arnošt Lustig and Josef Škvorecký written between the mid-1960s and the 1980s – were, when they appeared, among those works that state-socialist culture marginalized, or they were written in exile. All make wide use of representations of gender, though invariably in terms of (patriarchal) gender stereotypes within the tenets of the petit-bourgeois model. With his systematic analysis of the empirical evidence Matonoha has, then, confirmed the previously anecdotal thesis that Czech alternative culture was, in gender terms, entirely mainstream.[25]

Residual patriarchal discourse is found to have reached the level of hegemony by Kateřina Kolářová in her study of Věra Chytilová's late-1980s canonical film about AIDS, *Kopytem sem, kopytem tam* (*A Tainted Horseplay*). This nonconformist film-maker – even gender-nonconformist in the 1960s – in a film whose central metaphor is of social decay as an infection, mobilizes gender stereotypes without a hint of irony. It is as if the focus on a social problem with a political relevance interpellatively silenced any critical approach to gender, an area suppressed and undiscussed in the environment of period discourse. Paradoxically – and for today's audience surely uncomfortably – gender hegemony was created and sustained by official and alternative culture alike.

Nonetheless, by the time of Normalization, gender discourse in Czech society was overall an amalgam of residual patriarchal discourse and the partially absorbed effects of the ideological authoritative discourse of early socialism, which lay the ground for the emergence of a whole range of gender discourses (Oates-Indruchová 2002). For unorthodox gender elements kept surfacing, for instance in the form of limited expert discourses (Oates-Indruchová 2003),

though these were only ever quite disparate and unsystematic. Also alternative discourses were in circulation during Normalization, and these may be surmised to be a continuation of the pluralist, public-sphere discussions of gender that had been silenced. In this volume, especially Petra Hanáková, Kateřina Zábrodská and Libora Oates-Indruchová encountered such discourses in the research for their studies. All the materials with which they worked – films made by women in the 1960s (Hanáková), oral-history interviews on the status of women conducted in 1994–5 (Zábrodská), and popular works of literature from the period of *perestroika* (Oates-Indruchová) – were found by all three authors to contain discourse structures similar to those described by Western feminisms, though in an environment in which any public or even academic discussion of gender was absent. Hanáková and Zábrodská have chosen to call this phenomenon 'latent feminism', Oates-Indruchová preferring 'proto-feminism'. Only further research will reveal which – if either – of these terms will become established as the more productive for future studies of gender culture in Czech – or East Central European – societies under state socialism.

This brief outline of how feminist and gender-relevant thinking evolved in the Czech milieu from the nineteenth century up to the fall of the communist regime will have thrown a quite different light on what researchers with feminist leanings achieved in the 1990s. Their drawing on the conceptual apparatuses of Western feminisms they had only recently discovered will be seen as an exploration of a coherent theoretical framework to go with issues that they had already broached. It would of course be wrong to think in terms of the mechanical application – so 'importation' – of Western concepts and ideas to the Czech environment. On the contrary, the break in the native tradition of feminist thought and its effective erasure from the collective memory by hegemonizing communist historiography may be seen, from the point of view of the development of gender studies, as in some sense an advantage. Czech women researchers, who generally came to theories of feminism and gender via English, American or German sources and began working with gender in, let's say, the first two years after the regime change, may have had some awareness of the nineteenth-century Czech women's movement (or if not that, of the part played by culturally active women in the national movement), but only slowly did they discover odd snippets about activities associated with emancipation during the First Czechoslovak Republic, and had no inkling at all about the 1960s picking up on the interrupted discussions.[26] The point being that communist historiography had few qualms about co-opting the nineteenth-century women's movement into discourse on the National Revival, thereby maintaining the visibility of individual women, if not the movement, while systematically allowing no room for the communists' own moves towards emancipation to be seen as having any link to the inter-war women's movement (for more on this see Nečasová 2011 and in this volume). The 1960s revival of the gender debate then met with the same fate as befell other lines of thought that departed from the uniformity of Normalization – squeezed out of public and academic discourse by a variety of contrivances.

Women academics whose research interests turned to gender issues after November 1989 thus found themselves, in contrast to those in other social sciences and the humanities, in a unique position: unless they happened to be historians of the nineteenth century, they had no springboard within their discipline nor any 'obligation' to rediscover their antecedents, but the field was wide open for them to reflect the situation in their own time. And since the only theories available for getting a grasp of issues of gender were Western (Anglo-American, German or French), their early essays were a getting to grips with these theories. Unlike other areas of the humanities and social sciences, which all began by latching on to local discussions cut short by the internal political shockwaves of 1968 or earlier, and only began to find out about the paradigmatic changes in their disciplines in the West that commenced around 1968, home-grown academic feminism was quick to join the mainstream(s) of international theoretical discussions, and Czech women were soon – from the mid-1990s – publishing successfully in the leading journals in the field and with major international publishing houses (e.g. Havelková 1993a, 1993b, 1996; Šiklová 1993a, 1993b; Šmejkalová-Strickland 1994, 1995; Malečková 1996). It was rare indeed, in both the Czech and the wider Central and Eastern European context, for authors who had published little or nothing abroad to make such a breakthrough onto the international stage: discussion of the relevance of Western feminist theorizing to the post-socialist context was, in terms of the numbers of scholars contributing and texts published, probably at its most productive on Czecho(slovak) territory. The texts cited above have often been quoted as evidence of a rejection of feminism by Czech women. That conclusion is misleading: none of the writers in question rejects feminism; they merely explain why it is rejected by Czech women generally, thereby developing in effect a gender theory for post-socialist conditions.[27] Thus the content of these texts does not really support the notion that feminism was imported into the Czech cultural environment in the sense that the Western feminist agenda was simply taken over; what is in evidence, however, is the Czech authors' critical reservations about the conceptual apparatus and content of Western feminism (and shortly after, feminisms) and the development of a home-grown feminist and gender-relevant agenda.[28]

Conclusions

In this collection, we look at the transformation of gender culture under state socialism on the example of Czech society, but in the context of gender research on East Central Europe from two aspects of the analytical category 'gender': gender as a social category and gender as a symbolic category. The studies collected in the first part of the book (chapters by B. Havelková, Nečasová, Zábrodská and Sokolová) document on both archival materials and personal testimonies the 'expropriation' of the inter-war and immediate post-war feminist and gender-reflective agenda by the Communist Party and the instrumentalization of emancipation for its own ideological purposes on the one hand, and either residual or emergent 'bottom-up' pro-women and pro-feminist agendas produced by a

variety of actors at the institutional and personal levels of the gender order on the other. The contributions in the second part of the book (Roubal, Matonoha, Oates-Indruchová, Hanáková, Kolářová) complement these findings with investigations of smaller actors (i.e. not the big centres of communist power) at symbolic and institutional levels of the gender order. They, too, find the continuous clashes between the emancipatory or gender-reflective discourses and practices and a traditionalist or hierarchical perspective on gender relations. Moreover, the authors of several of these chapters find in representations what the authors in the first part of the book find concerning the social aspect of gender: the similar periodization of ideas about the gender order – from a short-lived attempt at a dismantling of the traditional gender order in the 1950s, through a reflection on gender roles in the 1960s (of which part was both a critical reflection on gender and a re-emergence of anti-emancipatory discourses), to a return to a conservative gender discourse in the 1970s and 1980s, at least in institutions and canonical representations.

Nevertheless, even during this last period, marked by a strong push by the regime's institutions toward a re-traditionalization of gender roles through its policies (despite the simultaneous steady improvement in women's status in education, marketplace or in their access to reproductive rights), pro-women, pro-feminist and alternative gender agendas continued to thrive mainly in 'non-canonical' places: expert and alternative communities, popular culture and by way of individual negotiating strategies, although an articulated feminist discourse did not emerge during state socialism. The research toward this book covered only a selective cross section of locations and actors to be able to draw a complete picture of the exact process and mechanism of the co-creation of gender culture of state socialism by the various actors. Still, all the studies collected here point to one tendency: as the State's social engineering efforts of the early years toward modernization and, particularly, its challenges to the traditional gender order waned from the 1960s onwards and were replaced by re-traditionalization, the emancipatory articulations moved from the level of policy-making (the highest institutional level of gender order) to locations at the symbolic and personal levels. At the same time, however, the State's change of attitude toward the gender order resonated with the traditionalist gender discourse of (now-canonical) dissident/alternative actors, so that at the moment of the communist regime's demise these two large actors, who stood in opposition to each other in other areas of politics, concurred on gender politics.

Translation: David Short

Note on translations from foreign languages: Unless we have identified a published English translation of works originally written in another language, all the translations in this volume were made by the authors themselves or by the translator of the chapter.

Notes

1 Hana Havelková would like to thank the Czech Science Foundation (GAČR), which financially supported her, as the leader of the project Nr. 403/09/1502 'Transformation of Gender Culture in Czech Society, 1948–89', as well as the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University in Prague, who administered the grant. Libora Oates-Indruchová would additionally like to acknowledge the institutional support of the Department of Sociology, Palacký University in Olomouc.

2 The editors' experience as teachers has revealed a growing interest among students of both sexes in matters of cultural inheritance in this area. They have some perception that this culture influences their thoughts and actions, though they lack the capacity to pinpoint what the actual signs are. The same trend may be observed in international research: from the rising numbers of presentations at annual conferences on Central- and East-European area studies (BASEES, ASEEES) to themed conferences (e.g.: the Exploratory Seminar on 'Gender, Sex and Socialism: Transatlantic Dialogues', Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, October 2012; Ethics of Oral History and Memory Studies: The Soviet Past in the Post-Soviet Present, Gender Studies Centre, Vilnius University, September 2012; or Gender and Politics under Communism: New Perspectives on Central and Eastern Europe, Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile, Bucharest, May 2012).

3 Even quite recently, the contrast between communist 'pastoral power' and simultaneous progress towards emancipation in the socialist context has been studied by such as Ghodsee (2004) and Šmausová 2011 (2006).

4 In this context it is worth mentioning *Promissory Notes: Women in the transition to socialism*, a work that appeared literally on the eve of the fall of the communist regimes and examined the position of women in various regimes labelled 'socialist' wherever they were in the world (Kruks *et al.* 1989).

5 For the sake of completeness we should add that there has been a dearth of international comparative projects arising from an East–East dialogue, and where they have emerged they have had a more specialized focus (for example, Jalušić and Antić Gabor 2001 is a collection of analyses of politics as a gender space; similarly Lukić *et al.* 2006).

6 For more on the significance of these works, of which there are several dozen in all – too many to embrace here, see below under 'Gender as a symbolic category'. In recent times, Ivan Vodochodský has undertaken an analysis of the discourse of Czech post-revolutionary statements about gender under socialism, thus affording the Czech readership some access to them (2007). The discussions that took place within Czech feminism are treated also by Blanka Nyklová (2013); abroad by Argent (2008).

7 In the interest of completeness it should be added that in terms of historical memory new sources have also become available, if only in the form of transcribed, though not yet analysed, materials from the international 'Women's Memory' project (for the published material see Frýdlová 1998, 2006). An exception is the analysis of the interviews in the Slovak part of the project (Kiczková *et al.* 2006).

We distinguish between 'transition' and 'transformation': by 'transition' we mean the period of political and economic changes that followed the demise of the communist power in 1989 and that is sometimes considered as completed with the accession to the European Union (in the case of the Czech Republic in 2004) and sometimes still ongoing; while by 'transformation' we mean a much less clearly temporally defined cultural changes (in this case, of gender culture).

8 Gender topics related to the period of socialism continue to attract the interest of students as subjects for undergraduate and masters extended essays and dissertations.

9 In it, to quote Michal Pullmann, the wicked 'regime' stands on one side with oppressed 'society' on the other (Pullmann 2011: 15).

10 This work traces the (co-)responsibility of actors who had the power to influence gender discourse and gender politics in the period of state socialism, though it cannot diagnose their actual influence on the thoughts and actions of men and women: as cultural studies have taught us, the reception of ideas is invariably active and individually selective.

11 Given that the term 'gender' or any Czech equivalent to it was never used, it may not be possible to speak of 'gender research' as we might today, but a broad research agenda did exist very much akin to that pursued by today's gender sociology, notably the position of women in the home or the workplace, or unequal opportunities in education.

12 A detailed analysis of the handling of these problems in the sociological output from the 1960s to the end of the state-socialist era was conducted by Veronika Šprincová (2013).

13 Relative progress in comparison with West Germany at the end of the 1960s on the one hand and the consequences of 'going into reverse' registered in post-November Czechoslovakia on the other are reported first-hand also by Šmausová (2011 [2006]).

14 It figures in both academic papers (e.g. Šiklová 1993a) and in works of non-fiction (Kosatík 1993).

15 This claim follows from Hana Havelková detailed analysis of contemporary policy documents (Havelková 2013).

16 The term was first introduced by Hana Havelková in a paper from 2009 (Havelková 2009).

17 The Czechoslovak Union of Women functioned as an actor making direct appeals to the representatives of state power only in the period 1967–70 (for further details see Čákiová 2005).

18 The importance of the women's gainful employment for their own emancipation is also the subject of other studies (Köhler-Wagnerová 1974; Šmausová 2011 [2006]; Musilová 2008). A measure of identification with egalitarian values in the sphere of gender is also attested by opinion polls conducted during the state-socialist period (see Šprincová 2013). The interviews analysed by Zábrodská were conducted between 1994 and 1995 within the framework of the international research project 'Democratisation, Social and Political Change and Women's Movements' by Hana Havelková and Libora (Oates-)Indruchová; at the time they were merely archived, but never used in any published research.

19 The first academic feminist treatises to appear post-November '89 came as early as 1991 (Šmejkalová 1991). The first university course to use feminist theories – on English women writers – was taught by Soňa Nováková at the Department of English and American Studies at the Arts Faculty of Charles University in Prague in 1991–2; then came courses in feminist literary theory and criticism given by Libora (Oates-)Indruchová at the same department, and introductory gender studies courses taught by Jiřina Šmejkalová(-Strickland) at the Charles University Faculty of Social Sciences in 1992–3 (data from the personal papers of L. Oates-Indruchová). Still the most distinctive gender-oriented NGO, Gender studies o.p.s., was founded by sociologist and former dissident Jiřina Šiklová as the Gender Studies Centre (GSC) in 1991. It is logical that all three of the lecturers on these courses, having no access to literature or courses at home, did their training in gender studies and feminist theory abroad, and the activities of the GSC would not have been possible in the early days without foreign financial support. In the matter of this influence of 'the West', however, the story of gender studies is no different from those of many other social science disciplines, theoretical and methodological, or areas of social life.

20 The novel was republished in 1948, 1969, 1992 and 2002. Roar Lishaugen and Jan Seidl have conducted significant research on the wealth of homoerotic literature in the Czech contexts in the inter-war period. See, e.g. their article on the creative community around the 1930s journal *Hlas: list sexuální menšiny* [*The Voice: a review of a sexual minority*] (Lishaugen and Seidl 2011). For details on homosexual subculture in the inter-war period, see also (Seidl *et al.* 2012).

21 Thus the situation is quite different from the area we have covered under 'gender as a social category', where it was shown that research into the social status of women continued practically without a break in socialist Czechoslovakia, that it was of interest to foreign researchers, and that contemporary gender research in history also takes due account of it.

22 This thesis on the evolution of book publishing arises from Libora Oates-Indruchová's work on scholarly editions of, primarily, translations of literary theory and criticism.

23 A detailed account of the reception of Simone de Beauvoir in Czechoslovakia is provided by the historian Dana Musilová (Musilová 2007).

24 The concept of 'the residual', together with 'the dominant' and 'the emergent', was introduced by Raymond Williams in relation to cultural discourses (Williams 1977: 122–3).

25 Frequently cited in this context is Václav Havel's comment that in Czechoslovakia 'feminism seems simply "dada"' (Havel 2012 [1985]); Jiřina Šiklová, who was then actively involved in illegally importing books from abroad, has remarked on the total absence among dissidents of any awareness of feminist debate (Šiklová 1999: 133); the non-reflection of gender relations and an even rejectionist position with regard to any reflections of gender was found by Martina Hynková in her analysis of existing, oral-history interviews with women dissidents (Hynková 2009).

26 They wasted no time in supplying these information gaps themselves, besides working on feminist and gender theory (Hendrychová 1992; Horská and Pešková 1992; Havelková 1995a).

27 Regarding the purpose of those texts, it has to be said that not one of them was based on empirical research – at the time there were neither the means nor the capacities for such a 'luxury'; they are more like essays, reflecting not the lived reality of Czech women (or men) underpinned by research, but the contemporary media discourse that adopted a radically hostile or sensationalist stance against feminism (significantly not feminisms) in the early 1990s.

28 For an earlier version of the argument about post-November debates on gender theory see Oates-Indruchová 2011.

References

Argent, Angela (2008) 'Hatching feminisms: Czech feminist aspirations in the 1990', *Gender & History*, 20, 1: 86–104.

Asztalos Morell, Ildikó (1999) *Emancipation's Dead-end Roads?: studies in the formation and development of the Hungarian model for agriculture and gender (1956–1989)*, *Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis–Studia Sociologica Upsaliensia*, 46, Uppsala: Uppsala University.

Asztalos Morell, Ildikó (2007) 'How to combine motherhood and wage labour: Hungarian expert perspectives during the 1960s', in Rebecca Kay (ed.) *Gender, Equality and Difference During and After State Socialism*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bauerová, Jaroslava (1988) *Postavení ženy v rodině, práci a ve veřejném životě socialistické společnosti* [*The Status of Women in Family, Work and Public Life in a Socialist Society*], Prague: Ústřední výbor českého svazu žen.

Bauerová, Jaroslava and Eva Bártová (1987) *Proměny ženy v rodině, práci a ve veřejném životě* [*Transformations of Women in Family, Work and Public Life*], Prague: Svoboda.

Beauvoir, Simone de (1949) *Le deuxième sexe*; trans. Josef Kostohryz and Hana Uhlířová (1966) Simone Beauvoirová, *Druhé pohlaví*, Prague: Orbis.

Brandes, Holger (2007) 'Hegemonic masculinities in East and West Germany (German Democratic Republic and Federal Republic of Germany)', *Men & Masculinities*, 10, 2: 178–96.

Brejchová, Jiřina, Božena Holečková and Vlasta Košnarová (1962) *Postavení žen v ČSSR* [*The Status of Women in the CSSR*], Prague: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury.

Bren, Paulina (2010) *The Greengrocer and His TV: the culture of communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Burešová, Jana (2001) *Proměny společenského postavení žen v první polovině 20. století* [*The Changes in the Social Position of Women in the First Half of the 20th Century*], Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého.

Čákiová, Julie (2005) 'Československý svaz žen a jeho úloha v letech 1967–1970' [Czechoslovak Women's Union and its role between 1967–1970], unpublished MA dissertation, Prague: Faculty of Humanities, Charles University.

Chřibková, Marie, Josef Chuchma and Eva Klimentová (eds) (1999) *Feminismus devadesátých let českýma očima* [*Feminism of the 1990s through Czech Eyes*], Prague: Marie Chřibková.

Connor, Walter D. (1979) *Socialism, Politics, and Equality: hierarchy and change in Eastern Europe and the USSR*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Corrin, Chris (ed.) (1992) *Superwoman and the Double Burden: women's experience of change in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, London: Scarlet.

Deacon, Bob (ed.) (1992) *The New Eastern Europe: social policy past, present and future*, London: Sage.

Einhorn, Barbara (1993) *Cinderella Goes to Market: citizenship, gender and women's movements in East Central Europe*, London: Verso.

Einhorn, Barbara and Charlotte Sever (2003) 'Gender and civil society in Central and Eastern Europe', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 5, 2: 163–90.

Encyklopedie mladé ženy (1978) Prague: Avicenum.

Encyklopedie moderní ženy (1966) Prague: Svoboda.

Evans, Harriet (2000) 'Fashioning identities, consuming passions: public images of women in China', *New Formations*, 40: 113–27.

Faludi, Susan (1991) *Backlash: the undeclared war against American women*, New York: Crown.

Feinberg, Melissa (2006) *Elusive Equality: gender, citizenship and the limits of democracy in Czechoslovakia 1918–1950*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Feinberg, Melissa (2007) 'The New Woman question: gender, nation and citizenship in the First Czechoslovak Republic', in Mark Cornwall and R. J. W. Evans (eds) *Czechoslovakia in a Nationalist and Fascist Europe 1918–1948*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ferree, Myra Marx (2001) 'Patriarchies and feminisms: the two women's movements of post-unification Germany', in Laurel Richardson, Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier (eds) *Feminist Frontiers*, 5: 511–19, Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Fidelis, Małgorzata (2010) *Women, Communism, and Industrialization in Postwar Poland*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fodor, Eva (2002) Smiling women and fighting men: the gender of the communist subject in state socialist Hungary, *Gender & Society*, 16, 2: 240–63.

Frýdlová, Pavla (ed.) (1998) *Všechny naše včerejšky: Paměť žen* [*All Our Yesterdays: women's memory*], 2 vols, Prague: Nadace Gender Studies.

Frýdlová, Pavla (ed.) (2006) *Ženská vydrží víc než člověk: Dvacáté století v životních příbězích deseti žen* [*A Woman Can Take More than a Human: the 20th century in the life-stories of ten women*], Prague: Lidové noviny and Gender studies.

Funk, Nanette and Magda Mueller (eds) (1993) *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: reflections from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*. London: Routledge.

Gál, Susan and Gail Kligman (2000) *The Politics of Gender after Socialism: a comparative-historical essay*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Garver, Bruce M. (1985) 'Women in the First Czechoslovak Republic', in Alfred G. Meyer and Sharon L. Wolchik (eds) *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Ghodsee, Kristen (2004) 'Feminism-by-design: emerging capitalisms, cultural feminism, and women's nongovernmental organizations in postsocialist Eastern Europe', *Signs*, 29, 3: 727–53.

Goven, Joanna (2002) 'Gender and modernism in a Stalinist state, *Social Politics*, 9, 1: 3–28.

Hájková, Eva (1983) *Žena a ekonomika* [*Women and the Economy*], Prague: Horizont.

Háková, Libuše (1966) 'Žena ve struktuře socialistické společnosti' [Women in the structure of a socialist society], in Pavel Machonin (ed.) *Sociální struktura socialistické společnosti*, Prague: Svoboda.

Hall, Radclyffe (1928) *The Well of Loneliness*; trans. Vladimír Vendyš (1931) *Studna osamění: Připsáno našim třem já*, Prague: Symposion and Rudolf Škeřík.

Harsch, Donna (2007) *Revenge of the Domestic: women, the family and communism in the German Democratic Republic*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hašková, Hana and Zuzana Uhde (eds) 2009 *Women and Social Citizenship in Czech Society: continuity and change*, Prague: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Hašková, Hana, Alena Křížková and Marcela Linková (eds) (2007) *Mnohohlasem: Vyjednávání ženských prostorů po roce 1989* [*Polyphony: negotiating women's spaces after 1989*], Prague: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Havel, Václav (January 2012 [1985]) *Anatomy of a Reticence*; trans. Erazim Kohák, Kancelář Václava Havla and Barrandov Studio Multimedia/Mayma. Online. Available: www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=6&id=2&setln=2&setln=2 (accessed 16 May 2013).

Havelková, Hana (1993a) 'A few prefeminist thoughts', in Nanette Funk and Magda Mueller (eds), *Gender Politics and Post-Communism*, New York: Routledge.

Havelková, Hana (1993b) '"Patriarchy" in Czech society', *Hypatia*, 8, 4: 89–96.

Havelková, Hana (1995a) 'Die liberale Geschichte der Frauenfrage in den Tschechischen Ländern', in Hana Havelková (ed.) *Gibt es ein mitteleuropäisches Ehe- und Familenmodell?*, Prague: Theaterinstitut Prag and Österreichisches Kulturinstitut Prag and Gender-Studies-Stiftung.

Havelková, Hana (1996) 'Abstract citizenship?: women and power in the Czech Republic', *Social Politics*, 3, 3: 243–60.

Havelková, Hana (2007) 'Náměty k diskusi o českém genderovém kontextu' [Suggestions for discussion on the Czech gender context], in Blanka Knotková-Čapková (ed.) *Ročenka Katedry genderových studií FHS UK v Praze 2005–2006*, Prague: Katedra genderových studií FHS UK v Praze.

Havelková, Hana (2009) 'Dreifache Enteignung und eine unterbrochene Chance: Der "Prager Frühling" und die Frauen- und Geschlechterdiskussion in der Tschechoslowakei', *L'Homme: Europäische Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft*, 20, 2: 31–49.

Havelková, Hana (2013) '(De)centralizovaná genderová politika: role Státní populační komise' [(De)centralized gender policy: the role of the State Population Commission], in Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová (eds) *Proměny genderové kultury české společnosti 1948–1989*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Havelková, Hana (ed.) (1992) *Lidská práva, ženy a společnost* [*Human Rights, Women and Society*], Prague: Evropské středisko pro výchovu k lidským právům.

Havelková, Hana (ed.) (1995b) *Gibt es ein mitteleuropäisches Ehe- und Familienmodell?*, Prague: Theaterinstitut Prag and Österreichisches Kulturinstitut Prag and Gender-Studies-Stiftung.

Heitlinger, Alena (1979) *Women and State Socialism: sex inequality in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia*, London: Macmillan.

Hendrychová, Soňa (1992) 'Z historie ženského hnutí v Československu [From the history of the women's movement in Czechoslovakia]', in Hana Havelková (ed.) *Lidská práva, ženy a společnost*, Prague: Evropské středisko UNESCO.

Horská, Pavla (1999) *Naše prababičky feministky* [*Our Great-Grandmothers, the Feminists*], Prague: Lidové noviny.

Horská, Pavla and Jaroslava Pešková (1992) 'Rozhovor mezi filosofkou a historičkou o ženské otázce v Čechách' [A debate between a philosopher and an historian on the women's question in Bohemia], *Filosofický časopis*, 40, 5: 757–68.

Hynková, Martina (2009) '"Tiché hrdinky" Charty 77: genderovanost českého disentu' ["The silent heroines" of Charter 77: gender in the Czech dissent], unpublished MA dissertation, Brno: Department of Sociology, Masaryk University.

Hypatia (1993) Special Cluster on Easter European Feminism, 8, 4.

Jalušić, Vlasta and Milica Antić Gabor (2001) *Women – Politics – Equal Opportunities: prospects for gender equality politics in Central and Eastern Europe*, Ljubljana: Mirovni institut.

Jechová, Květa (2008) 'Cesta k emancipaci: Postavení ženy v české společnosti 20. století. Pokus o vymezení problému' [The road to emancipation: the status of women in Czech society. Toward the definition of the issue], in Oldřich Tůma and Tomáš Vilímek (eds) *Pět studií k dějinám české společnosti*, Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

Jechová, Květa (2009) 'Matky a děti, chtěné i nechtěné: Mateřství v reálném socialismu' [Mothers and children, wanted and unwanted: motherhood under state socialism], in Oldřich Tůma and Tomáš Vilímek (eds) *Opozice a společnost po roce 1958*, Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

Jirková, Marie (1982) *Vzdělání a emancipace ženy* [*Education and Women's Emancipation*], Prague: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství.

Kaplan, Cora, Debra Keates and Joan W. Scott (eds) (1997) *Transitions, Environments, Translations: feminism in international politics*, New York: Routledge.

Kay, Rebecca (ed.) (2007) *Gender, Equality and Difference During and After State Socialism*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kiczková, Zuzana, Barbora Kachničová, Antónia Furjelová, Jana Tesáková and Marta Botíková (2006) *Pamäť žien: O skúsenosti sebautvárania v biografických rozhovoroch* [*Women's Memory: on the experience of the formation of the Self in biographical interviews*], Bratislava: Iris.

Klabouch, Jiří (1964) *Encyklopedie moderní ženy*, Prague: NPL.

Kosatík, Pavel (1993) *Osm žen z Hradu* [*Eight Women from the Castle*], Prague: Mladá fronta.

Köhler-Wagnerová, Alena (1974) *Die Frau im Sozialismus: Beispiel ČSSR*, Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe Verlag.

Kraft, Claudia (ed.) (2008) *Geschlechterbeziehungen in Ostmitteleuropa nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg: Soziale Praxis und Konstruktionen von Geschlechterbildern*, Munich: Oldenburg.

Kruks, Sonia, Rayna Rapp and Marilyn B. Young (eds) (1989) *Promissory Notes: women in the transition to socialism*, New York: Monthly Review.

Lishaugen, Roar and Jan Seidl (2011) 'Generace *Hlasu*: Česká meziválečná homoerotická literatura a její tvůrci' [The generation of *Hlas*: Czech inter-war homoerotic literature and its authors], in Martin C. Putna (ed.) *Homosexualita v dějinách české kultury*, Prague: Academia.

Lukić, Jasmina, Joanna Regulska and Darja Zaviršek (eds) (2006) *Women and Citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Malečková, Jitka (1996) 'Gender, nation and scholarship: reflections on Gender/Women's Studies in the Czech Republic', in Mary Maynard and June Purvis (eds) *New Frontiers in Women's Studies: knowledge, identity and nationalism*, London: Taylor & Francis.

Malečková, Jitka (2002) *Úrodná půda: žena ve službách národa* [*Fertile Soil: women in the service of the nation*], Prague: ISV.

Matulová, Nina [Jiřina Šiklová] and Helena Jarošová (1976) *Žena v dnešní rodině* [*Woman in Contemporary Family*], Prague: Mladá fronta.

Moghadam, Valentine M. (ed.) (1993) *Democratic Reform and the Position of Women in Transitional Economies*, Oxford: Clarendon.

Molyneux, Maxine (1994) 'The "Woman Question" in the age of communism's collapse', in Mary Evans (ed.) *The Woman Question*, London: Sage.

Moore, B. Jr. (1987) *Authority and Inequality under Capitalism and Socialism*, Oxford: Clarendon.

Možný, Ivo (1983) *Rodina vysokoškolsky vzdělaných manželů* [*The Family of University-Educated Parents*], Brno: UJEP.

Musilová, Dana (2007) *Na okraj jedné návštěvy: Simone de Beauvoir v Československu* [*In the Margins of a Visit: Simone de Beauvoir in Czechoslovakia*], Ústí nad Orlicí: Oftis a Historický ústav Filozofické fakulty Univerzity Hradec Králové.

Musilová, Dana (2008) 'Der Einfluss bezahlter Arbeit auf weibliche Identitätsbildungsprozesse in der Tschechoslowakei der Nachkriegszeit', in Claudia Kraft (ed.) *Geschlechterbeziehungen in Ostmitteleuropa nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Munich: Oldenburg.

Nečasová, Denisa (2011) *Buduj vlast – posílíš mír! Ženské hnutí v českých zemích 1945–1955* [*Build Up Your Country, and Strengthen Peace!: women's movement in the Czech Lands, 1945–1955*], Brno: Matice moravská.

Neudorflová, Marie L. (1999) *České ženy v 19. století: úsilí a sny, úspěchy i zklamání na cestě k emancipaci* [*Czech Women in the 19th Century: efforts and dreams, successes and disappointments on the road to emancipation*], Prague: Janua.

Nolte, Claire E. (1993) '"Every Czech a Sokol!": feminism and nationalism in the Czech Sokol movement', *Austrian History Yearbook* 24: 79–100.

Nyklová, Blanka (2013) 'Krajinou současného českého feminismu' [Landscape of contemporary Czech feminism], *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum*, 14, 1: 52–63.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2002) *Discourses of Gender in Pre- and Post-1989 Czech Culture*, Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2003) 'The ideology of the genderless sporting body: reflections on the Czech state-socialist concept of physical culture', in Naomi Segal, Roger Cook and Lib Taylor (eds) *Indeterminate Bodies*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2011) 'Tak pěkně od začátku: o vztahu sociologie a kategorie gender' [Back to the beginning: on the relationship between sociology and the category of gender], in Libora Oates-Indruchová (ed.) *Tvrdošíjnost myšlenky: od feministické kriminologie k teorii genderu*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Penn, Shana (2005) *Solidarity's Secret: the women who defeated communism in Poland*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Penn, Shana and Jill Massino (eds) (2009) *Gender Politics and Everyday Life in State Socialist Eastern and Central Europe*, New York: Palgrave.

Pugh, Martin (2000 [1992]) *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain, 1914–1999*, 2nd edn, New York: St. Martin's Press.

Pullmann, Michal (2011) *Konec experimentu: Přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu* [*The End of an Experiment:* perestroika *and the fall of communism in Czechoslovakia*], Prague: Scriptorium.

Radvanová, Senta, Marie Kalenská, Vojtěch Stícha and Igor Tomeš (1971) *Žena a právo*, [*Woman and the Law*], Prague: Orbis.

Roubal, Petr (2006) '"Dnes na Strahově promluví masy": Proměna symboliky československých spartakiád 1955–1990' ['The masses will speak out at Strahov today': the transformation of the symbolicism of the Czech Spartakiades 1955–1990], *Kuděj*, 8: 79–89.

Saxonberg, Steven (2003) *Czech Republic Before the New Millenium: politics, parties and gender*, Boulder, Col.: East European Monographs.

Scott, Hilda (1974) *Does Socialism Liberate Women? Experiences from Eastern Europe*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Seidl, Jan, Jan Wintr and Lukáš Nozar (2012) *Od žaláře k oltáři: Emancipace homosexuality v českých zemích od roku 1867 do současnosti* [*From Prison to the Altar: emancipation of homosexuality in the Czech Lands from 1867 to the present*], Brno: Host.

Sieg, Katrin (1995) 'Sex, subjectivity, and socialism: feminist discourses in East Germany', in Ellen E. Berry (ed.) *Postcommunism and the Body Politics*, New York: New York University Press.

Šiklová, Jiřina (1993a) 'Are women in Central and Eastern Europe conservative?', in Nanette Funk and Magda Mueller (eds) *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: reflections from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, New York: Routledge.

Šiklová, Jiřina (1993b) 'Backlash', *Social Research*, 60, 4: 737–49.

Šiklová, Jiřina (1999) 'Únava z vysvětlování' [Fatigue from having to explain], in Marie Chřibková, Josef Chuchma and Eva Klimentová (eds) *Feminismus devadesátých let českýma očima*, Prague: Marie Chřibková.

Šmausová, Gerlinda (2011 [2006]) 'Emancipace, socialismus a feminismus' [Emancipation, socialism and feminism], in Libora Oates-Indruchová (ed.) *Tvrdošíjnost myšlenky: Od feministické kriminologie k teorii genderu*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Šmejkalová, Jiřina (1991) 'Co je feminismus: kam s ní/m?' [What is feminism: what to do about her/him?], 5 parts, *Tvar* 2, 37–41.

Šmejkalová-Strickland, Jiřina (1994) 'Do Czech women need feminism?: perspectives of feminist theories and practices in Czechoslovakia', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 17, 2–3: 277–82.

Šmejkalová-Strickland, Jiřina (1995) 'Revival?: Gender Studies in the "Other" Europa', *Signs*, 20, 4: 1000–6.

Sokolová, Věra (2008) *Cultural Politics of Ethnicity: discourses on Roma in communist Czechoslovakia*, Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag.

Šolcová, Marie (1984) *Postavení ženy v socialistické společnosti* [*The Status of Women in a Socialist Society*], Prague: Horizont.

Šprincová, Veronika (2013) 'Genderové tázání v sociologické literatuře v éře státního socialismu' [Gender inquiry in state-socialist sociological literature], in Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová (eds) *Proměny genderové kultury české společnosti 1948–1989*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

True, Jacqui (2003) *Gender, globalization and postsocialism: the Czech Republic after communism*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Vodochodský, Ivan (2007) '*Superženy' a 'velké děti': konceptualizace postavení mužů v rámci genderového řádu státního socialismu* ['Superwomen' and 'Big Children': conceptualization of position of men within gender order of state socialism], *Pražské sociálně vědní studie–Sociologická řada*, Prague: Univerzita Karlova, Fakulta sociálních věd. Online. Available: http://publication.fsv.cuni.cz/publication.php?id=4306 (accessed 6 July 2013).

Watson, Peggy (1993) 'The rise of masculinism in Eastern Europe', *New Left Review*, 198: 71–82.

Waylen, Georgina (1994) 'Women and democratization: conceptualizing gender relations in transition politics', *World Politics*, 46, 3: 327–54.

Williams, Raymond (1977) *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wolchik, Sharon L. and Alfred G. Meyer (eds) (1985) *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Woolf, Virginia (1928) *Orlando: a biography*; trans. Staša Jílovská (1929) *Orlando: imaginární životopis*, Prague: Symposion and Rudolf Škeřík.

Woolf, Virginia (1933) *Flush: a biography*; trans. Božena Šimková (1938) *Flush: životopis pejska Alžběty Barrettové-Browningové*, Prague: Jan Laichter.

2 The three stages of gender in law[1]

Barbara Havelková

Much has been written about gender in Czechoslovak state-socialist society, culture and policies (see for example Scott 1974; Köhler-Wagnerová 1974; Heitlinger 1979; Wolchik and Meyer 1985; H. Havelková 1993, 1999; LaFont 2001; Vodochodský 2007), but relatively little on gender in law. This chapter offers one such analysis – it examines how gender was regulated in law and understood and constructed by the legal community.[2] It examines legislation, judgements, explanatory memoranda to bills, and academic legal scholarship.[3] For reasons of space, I primarily assess what was identified as comprising the 'woman question' by the state; namely, family (understood exclusively heteronormatively) and paid work (Radvanová *et al.* 1971; Bauerová and Bártová 1987).[4] This results in two limitations. First, the official silence surrounding issues ignored by state policy, such as gender-based violence or LGBT rights (B. Havelková 2009a: 195–7; B. Havelková 2010a: 23), is not remedied in this chapter. Second, beyond areas obviously affecting women or gender relations, law is androcentric and many seemingly neutral legal institutions, such as self-defence in criminal law[5] or the law of property,[6] contain a strong male or patriarchal bias. An analysis of how this bias changed in a 'classless' society would be an interesting and important endeavour, but it goes beyond the scope of this chapter.

In this chapter, I offer a diachronic analysis of the period, and argue that the period of state socialism was not homogeneous, but that the original equalizing zeal of the Stalinist period of the 1950s started to be challenged during the political thaw of the 1960s and became hollowed during the Normalization of the 1970s and 1980s. I refer to these three different stages of gender equality as (1) Equalization (1948–62); (2) Reflection (1963–8); and (3) The era of the family (1969–89). The existing social science literature usually discerns two periods: (1) an emancipatory, equalizing, revolutionary and activist stage of the late 1940s and 1950s; and (2) a family-oriented, conservative and stability-centred one in the 1970s and 1980s (Scott 1974: 1; Vodochodský 2007: 38; Wagnerová 2011: 15). I argue that, based on my analysis of the legal developments and legal policy debate, the period of political thaw in the 1960s needs to be assessed separately (a similarly nuanced periodization has been offered by Wolchik 1981b; Hašková and Uhde 2009; and Roubal in this volume). The emergent pluralism of this time brought challenges from women (organized and individual) of the

official narratives of 'equality achieved' but it also brought challenges from experts to the concept and policy of equality of the sexes and opened debates about the policy's economic (in)efficiency. The period of the 1960s must thus be assessed more critically from the gender perspective than it so far has been from the point of view of general political history.

My observations of a regression in the modernization of women's status and equality during the state-socialist period, as well as the problematic pluralism of the 1960s, both allow for a more nuanced analysis of the continuities and discontinuities between state socialism and post-1989 transition.[7] The legal framework inherited in transition came from the so-called Normalization (1969–89) – it actively supported and entrenched difference between the sexes, especially in the family. A woman was no longer the worker and active citizen of the 1950s; she was the wife who cared for her marriage and the mother who cared for her family. When claiming, in the 1990s, that gender equality needed no further attention as it had been addressed and achieved under state socialism, Czechs did not realize that what was in fact inherited was pro-family and pro-motherhood, but not necessarily pro-gender-equality policies. At the same time, what became the scarecrow in the 1990s was the earlier model of equality, exemplified by a female tractor driver of the 1950s. The transition-period rhetoric against 'state feminism' and forcible equality of the sexes thus distanced itself from policies that had not been current for about three decades. The 1960s also played a particular role in transition. The period of political thawing and pluralism prepared the ground for the liberalism of transition. The challenges to the efficiency of women's work, full equality and collective childcare as well as the narrative of freedom and choice that became prominent in transition, were in some cases a reoccurrence, in some cases a continuation, of the debates that led to the Prague Spring of 1968 (B. Havelková 2013).

Equalization (1948–62)

Before the communists came to power in 1948, the situation of Czech women was marked by two tendencies: gradual equalization and an increase of protection in labour relations (B. Havelková 2009a: 187). These tendencies corresponded to the campaigns of first-wave feminist activism and the socialist movement respectively. After 1948, both equalization and the guarantee of special (protective) rights were enhanced. The 'equal rights of the sexes' were enshrined in the Constitution[8] and vigorously applied by the Stalinist courts (Kühn 2005: 35–7). The period of the late 1940s and 1950s was characterized by an emphasis on women's access to the public sphere of work, education and politics. This was the period when the East did overtake the West in terms of an equalization of the legal status of men and women (especially family law), and in eliminating some legal restrictions on women's lives (legalization of abortion and liberalization of divorce). The relative backwardness of the West was noted by many female Prague Spring émigrés (Wagnerová 2011).

Equality in the family

The 1948 Constitution put 'marriage, family and motherhood [...] under the protection of the state'.[9] The new Act on Family Law of 1949 modernized family relationships and brought about de jure equality between husband and wife. The reform caught the imagination of the legal community – in the first few years of state socialism, it was one of the most discussed topics of legal scholarship in the two studied periodicals, Právník and Socialistická zákonnost.

The new Act abandoned the legal institution of 'head of household' (hlava rodiny) that stipulated that the husband led the household, decided the place of residence, and was owed help and obedience of his instructions by his wife.[10] The previously separate roles of husbands (to see to the financial support and maintenance of the children) and wives (to care for their physical well-being and health) were eliminated[11] – the new Act stipulated equality of spouses in the marriage. 'Domestic chastisement' was no longer permitted by criminal law.[12] The new Act also abolished a previously existing right of annulment for a husband who found out his wife was already pregnant upon marriage.[13]

The spouses also became equal in relation to their children[14] – the provision on 'paternal power' (moc otcovská), which gave the father the sole right to decide over his children's choice of occupation and property, was abolished.[15] This was thus a shift away not only from patriarchy in the sense of gender power of men over women, but also a termination of the power of paterfamilias, in the Roman Law sense, over his family (for the distinction of these two meanings of patriarchy, see for example Lerner 1986: 239).

Economic relationships between the spouses were also equalized. The default option of communal property of the spouses did not exist under the pre-communist regime.[16] If not otherwise contracted, the property was retained individually; in case of doubt, it was presumed the husband was the owner.[17] Similarly, unless challenged by the wife, it was presumed that the wife gave the husband rights of management of her property.[18] The new Act on Family Law created in 1949 a statutory community of marital property (zákonné společenství majetkové),[19] which made all acquired property co-owned by both spouses, and the management of this property belonged to both spouses equally.[20]

The state also put great emphasis on child maintenance, both during and after marriage.[21] The constitutional equalization of 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' children[22] was accompanied by obligations on fathers towards children of unmarried mothers.[23] The enforceability of child maintenance after divorce was improved through the docking of wages by the socialist employer.[24] A system of state involvement in cases of non-payments of child support was instituted in 1948.[25] All of these measures had an important gender dimension, as custody of children tended to be awarded to the mother and the high costs of child-rearing and insufficient financial support for childcare after divorce were a common cause of destitution for divorcees.

Divorce laws were gradually liberalized. Admittedly, the pre-1948 General Civil Code in its last valid version did not distinguish between men and

women in access to divorce, but divorce was very limited in cases lacking the consent of both parties. The new Act broadened access to divorce, even though the spouse who caused the breakdown could not be granted divorce without the consent of the other spouse (who was not at fault).[26] The requirement of proof of fault was alleviated in 1955[27] and finally abolished by the new Act on Family in 1963.[28]

It is worth noting that the communist government was not the first to propose such changes. A reform of family law (and the Civil Code more generally) had been debated but never passed during the entire period of the First Czechoslovak Republic (1919–38). A version of a family statute was drafted by non-communist lawyers and politicians (Feinberg 2006: 41–72). Unlike during the First Republic, when, as Feinberg noted, '[w]omen might have [had] an equal say in the voting booth, but inside their homes they remained subject to their husband's authority' (Feinberg 2006: 99, 128), the communist government was committed to formal equality in the family. The notion of equality went so far, that the maintenance of a divorced spouse, a provision that traditionally protects economically inactive wives from economic decline after divorce, was abolished. This development, founded on the presumption of full employment of women and their economic independence, however, outstripped the actual development of women's status and the provision was reintroduced in 1963 in a gender-neutral form.[29]

New family?

Conceptually, many of these provisions can be seen as a part of a revolutionary programme of the weakening of the family. Dana Hamplová, a historian writing during transition, observes that in the 1950s this was an explicit aim found in propaganda as well as in practical policies (Hamplová 2010). She notes that '[t]he family is dangerous to revolutions, not only because it competes [with the revolution] for loyalty, but also because within it, existing values and norms are perpetuated and passed on' (ibid.: 2).

This analysis is correct when one looks at the legal provisions, but might be too strong when legal academic commentary is taken into account. Although law made the dissolution of families easier and the outright discrimination toward children of unwed parents was abolished, legal scholarship contained a strong marital normativity – children of unmarried mothers were still considered a social evil (and a capitalist hangover) (Patschová 1953: 15), marriages were lauded as a sure sign of 'good economic and political circumstances' (ibid.: 18) and the courts were instructed to prevent 'impetuous and frivolous divorces' (ibid.: 18).

What did happen during the Stalinist period, however, was an increase in the public involvement of state and law in the family. Many issues previously considered a private matter became a public concern. The state became involved both by enacting legislation that ran contrary to some traditional practices – with relation to the roles of the spouses in the family or the right to divorce. But it

also assumed an active role through its institutions. For example, the child support obligation of fathers towards their children was considered 'an obligation of an individual toward society' (ibid.: 21) and its enforcement was fully in the hands of society – the state as employer docked the liable parent's wages.[30] The non-payment of alimony was a criminal offence.[31] The public *prokurátor* (procurator) was then given competence to initiate proceedings in matters of paternity ex officio to establish who was liable for child support (Glos and Kafka 1953).[32] The fact that the state had no qualms about interfering in issues previously considered private was positive during the early Stalinist period from the gender perspective when the aims of the interference were still gender-progressive. As I discuss below, however, the state gradually abandoned its revolutionary zeal, and other issues, often in conflict with gender equality, gained importance.

Reproduction – protecting the health of women

In the international context, a noteworthy feature of the Eastern push for equality of the sexes was the early and broad legalization of abortion. State-socialist Czechoslovakia legalized abortion in 1957 by adopting the Act on the Artificial Interruption of Pregnancy.[33] The use of the term 'interruption of pregnancy' itself was significant – it centred on pregnancy, and whether the woman would continue or interrupt it, and not the fetus, and whether it would stay or be aborted.

The Act stipulated that abortions could be performed for health as well as other important reasons. The latter included the age of the woman, number of children, loss of husband or his invalidity, breakdown of the family, the fact that the responsibility for financial support of the family or the child fell on the woman, difficulties connected to pregnancy of an unmarried woman, and circumstances that indicated that the pregnancy was caused by rape or another crime.[34] The permission of an abortion committee was required. Criminal liability of the woman was abolished.[35] The legislation was part of a broader policy in state-socialist countries (Scott 1974: 104) and was very progressive for its time. Unlike later pro-choice policy shifts in the West, however, the concern was arguably not to guarantee women's individual reproductive autonomy but public health. In the words of the state-socialist legislator, the Act was adopted: 'In order to further care for a healthy development of the family, endangered by damage caused to health and life of women by interruptions done by unconscientious persons outside of health establishments.'[36]

Moreover, the availability of abortion was not accompanied by full availability of contraceptives (Scott 1974: 150–3) – abortion came to be seen as the main way to prevent unwanted pregnancies (Heitlinger 1985; Jechová 2009), which further problematizes abortion as a right. Men were in no way legally involved in the process of reproductive control; the responsibility was solely the women's.

Aside from formal equality in law, the other two parts of Engels's three-pronged plan to address the 'woman question' were to bring women into the sphere of paid labour and to liberate them from 'household drudgery'. It is to work and care-related welfare that I now turn.

Work and welfare

Equal access to paid work for women – a right or an obligation?

Women's access to the labour market, education and politics were the main achievements of the 1950s (for a comparison with the West, see Wolchik 1979). In terms of access to paid labour, the 1948 Constitution guaranteed a right to work,[37] but it also stipulated an obligation to work.[38] The policy had an important ideological foundation – Marxism-Leninism disdained parasitism of the proper-tied classes and considered work essential for the creation of socialism and the socialist human being (B. Havelková 2009b: 494–9). But there was also the important practical reason of economic necessity – the mobilization was needed to fill post-war shortages of labour supply in agriculture and industry.[39] When the drive to equalize family law is read in this light, it can be interpreted as mainly instrumental to the liberation of the female workforce. Indeed, a 1953 legal article entitled '*Tři roky boje za novou rodinu*' (Three years of our fight for a new family) stated:

> The mobilizing character of our new family law consists in it helping to destroy capitalist anachronisms in thinking as far as old ideas and opinions are concerned, and *actively helps to develop a productive labour force*, with its new understanding of today's woman's tasks in society and *the necessity of her reinsertion into socially important work*.
>
> (Patschová 1953: 15, emphasis added)

The obligation to work was explicitly specified in some statutes,[40] and was enforced through a web of administrative obligations and administrative and criminal offences. For example, the provision on 'parasitism' criminalized 'making a living unfairly and avoiding honest work',[41] and was used against prostitutes, among others (B. Havelková 2010b). The 'obligation to work', however, was never absolute, and different groups of women were either exempt (pregnant women) or were lower on the list of groups to be 'mobilized' (married women).[42]

The right to work was considered positive by state-socialist commentators (Bauerová and Bártová 1987: 188), and would also be seen as positive from a perspective of Western middle-class women who, during this same period, had to fight for access to education, work and public life. Working women, whether working-class women who had historically always worked out of necessity (Fredman 1997: 101–3, 105–6), or most Czechoslovak women who were in 1950s made to work (overwhelmingly full-time), ended up seeing things

differently. Indeed when the right to work, and in the case of state-socialist Czechoslovakia the expectation and even the legal obligation to work, was not accompanied by a change in the division of household labour and childcare, it led to a triple burden for women. By the early 1960s, women were calling for the option to stay home with their children, a discussion I return to below. Finally, while the 1948 Constitution guaranteed equal access to all occupations[43] as well as fair[44] pay[45] and proclamations on equality were scattered throughout the legal system, women were concentrated in low-paying industries and positions, and a considerable gender wage gap persisted during the entire period of state socialism (Šprincová 2013).

Protective provisions and welfare

Alongside equalizing measures, new protective provisions were enacted in labour law. Individual protective measures (especially in the area of health and safety) were being adopted throughout the 1950s. Maternity leave of 18 weeks was introduced in 1950.[46] A welfare provision for birth (*porodné*) and financial help for maternity for up to 18 weeks (*peněžitá pomoc v mateřství*) were enacted in 1948.[47] Legislation on sickness insurance guaranteed women full free medical and birthing care, whether in hospitals or at home and provided free layettes.[48] Social security legislation further benefited women; periods of childcare by women were counted toward pension benefits as equivalent to periods of employment.[49]

Attention was also paid to the socialization of childcare and housework. The number of crèches and kindergartens rose from a total of 2,500 in 1936 to 67,000 in 1967 (Scott 1974: 92; also Kučera 2001: 11; Šprincová 2013). Many laundries and cafeterias in schools and in the workplace were created and a specialized co-operative chain offering household services, called Osvobozená domácnost (The Liberated Household), was established (Scott 1974: 94n.).

In the socialization of childcare and housework, the state was trying to make good on its promise of liberating women from 'household drudgery'. The measures, however, were never comprehensive enough, and, more importantly, without a change in the role of men in the family, the triple burden of women was not truly eliminated. As I discuss below, from the 1960s onwards, the emphasis on bringing childcare and housework into the public sphere was replaced by supporting the woman to stay at home.

Reflection (1963–1968)

In the 1960s, the budding political pluralism meant that the formerly (relatively) unified official front on 'equal rights of men and women' became diversified. On the one hand, women's organizations brought challenges to official narratives of 'equality achieved' (Heitlinger 1979: 65–76). For Scott, this was a period of 'awakening' (Scott 1974; see also Nečasová in this volume). A 1968 statement by the Czechoslovak Union of Women[50] documents the discontent with existing policies:

[W]e are expressing our dissatisfaction with the fact that now, as in the past, the state and the party bodies do not take into account the complex and difficult situation in which Czechoslovak women are living [...]. It is no longer possible to contemplate in silence discrimination against women in the matter of financial reward, particularly in the shifts towards the lower limits of wage categories and in the current tax system. The condition of women is further aggravated by the low standard of services and trade. Only a few women occupy leading positions, even in such obviously feminized sectors as the educational system, health service, textile and food industries, from factories to ministries.

(Published in *Vlasta*, 17, 1968; cited in Heitlinger 1979: 70)

On the other hand, the political thaw and more open policy debates brought challenges to the goal of sex equality itself. Although the 1960 Constitution contained even greater guarantees of equality of the sexes,[51] it ushered in a period when these rights were challenged and the emphasis on emancipation of women faded.[52]

Economists challenged the efficiency of gender equality policies, especially of women's work and of collective childcare.[53] The challenges to women's work were connected to claims of 'over-employment' (Scott 1974: 126–33). As post-war reconstruction came to an end, the economy's need of labour supply lowered and productivity dropped. The female workforce – which was instrumentally pulled into paid labour at the time of need – was now being pushed out. Moreover, it was pointed out that collective childcare was expensive and that lower-earning women's contribution did not cover it (Scott 1974: 126–33; Heitlinger 1979: 18). The state started to realize in the 1960s that it was too costly for the public budget to pay for childcare and housework services, when women did it for free.

These arguments against collective childcare were supported by psychologists, who stressed the importance of individual care (Hamplová 2010: 3) and argued that children raised collectively might suffer from deprivation (Langmeier and Matějček 1963; for a discussion, see Kučera 2001; Jechová 2008; Saxonberg et al. 2012). Finally, the period was marked by a fear of a population crisis (Radvanová 1969: 509). Overworked women were less and less keen to have many children and the birth rate considerably declined at the end of the 1950s (Scott 1974: 104). In expert debates as well as public opinion (Jechová 2008), this led to a resurfacing of the notion of natural division of labour between men and women (ibid.), support for traditional individual child-raising in the family, and an emphasis on motherhood. The fight against the 'population crisis' included restrictions of the previously liberal abortion laws, as well as the introduction of generous maternity provisions. The fight against over-employment arguably encompassed a ban of certain types of work for all women, which – although apparently pro-women – pushed some women out of work. I discuss these developments in turn.

Family – between equality and tradition

The question of family was revisited in the run-up to the adoption of the new Act on Family in 1963. The importance of marriage and family was re-emphasized, in contrast to the Marxist expectation that the importance would lessen after the abolition of capitalism. A 1962 legal article, for example, stated that the 'questions of marriage and family as well as child-raising are continually at the centre of attention of socialist society' (Schiller 1962: 168).

The state was not consistent, however. Competing and contradictory policies and provisions coexisted in the family policy from 1960s onwards (on contradictions in state-socialist policies, see also Gál and Kligman 2000: 5). Equalizing and liberalizing projects continued alongside measures that strengthened the traditional traits in the institution of family. Two examples are discussed in more detail: (1) divorce – the abandonment of fault-testing liberalized marriage while the introduction of obligatory court reconciliation of spouses filing for divorce strengthened it; and (2) roles within the family – formally, the roles were further gender-neutralized, but the mother grew as the figure responsible for marriage, child-raising and home-making.

First, as far as divorce is concerned, the state rejected the notion of the economic purpose of marriage and of it being a 'providing mechanism for a married woman' (Schiller and Flégl 1961: 181; Číhal 1962: 601). Thus, establishing fault, which was previously used to determine property settlements and alimony (Schiller and Flégl 1961) and was a moral incentive for wives to lead impeccable lives and not file for divorce if they wanted to be economically secure, was no longer necessary. The testing of fault by the court in divorce proceedings was eliminated in 1963.[54] This arguably weakened marriage as it made divorces more accessible to spouses.

On the other hand, it was important to keep families together for the purposes of child-raising. The family, as imagined and reformed by the state in the 1950s, no longer had a religious or an economic purpose, as it did pre-1948. Instead, it had an important 'social function [...] of creating a favourable environment for the raising of children' (ibid.: 180) and was 'a tool to form the character of our youth' (Schiller 1962: 168). The 1963 Code of Civil Procedure thus introduced obligatory attempts by courts to reconcile spouses who applied for divorce (*řízení o smíření manželů*).[55] This made divorce proceedings more lengthy and onerous.[56]

Second, as far as roles in the family were concerned, throughout the state-socialist period, there was a strong express emphasis on the 'democratic family'. The importance of equality of the spouses continued to be affirmed (Schiller and Flégl 1961: 177–8). This guaranteed women formal equality with men, but had also some negative consequences for women – the presumption of equality of women meant that post-divorce alimony[57] was limited to circumstances of qualified need and limited to five years after divorce (Černohubý 1964).

But again, these ideas about new democratic socialist family and the formal legal equalization of roles of the spouses coexisted with other legal provisions that cemented the gender roles of spouses as 'fathers' and 'mothers'. All provisions

regarding care of children – from maternity leave to connected benefits – were available only to women as I discuss below. Men remained the 'breadwinners', for example for the purposes of discount on income tax for minor children.[58] I argue that these provisions portray more accurately the (lack of) aspirations of the state to reform the family than the formal legal equality expressed in the Act on Family.

The double burden

Thus, despite formal legal equality, women retained their traditional child-rearing and home-making duties. The practical consequence of full-time paid work (Šiklová 1993: 75; H. Havelková 1999: 78) and the continued responsibility for children and home led to a triple[59] burden on women (Wolchik 1985: 40). A Czechoslovak survey from the beginning of the 1960s showed that a woman with two children spent daily, on average, nine hours at work and commuting, five-and-a-half hours shopping and taking care of the home, an hour-and-a-half on children, one hour and 40 minutes on herself, and six hours sleeping. Her husband had four hours a day more free time than her (Scott 1974: 106; for a comparison among Central and Eastern European countries (CEE) and of CEE with the West, see Wolchik 1981a: 463). Firestone's observation about Russia, that 'the roles of women were enlarged rather than redefined' (Firestone 1971: 248), applies here as well.

This led to calls for greater protection and help for mothers and emphasis on family and motherhood. As I said above, these calls came from experts who denounced the ineffectiveness of women's labour, censured women for 'deprivation' caused by collective care, and raised the alarm about the 'population crisis'. But these demands came from women as well. In 1968, the Czechoslovak Union of Women called for the option to stay home with their children (Action Program of the Czechoslovak Union of Women of 17th June 1968; cited in Radvanová 1969: 509). The 'new system of direction' (nová soustava řízení), brought a liberal programme for the economy (and society) that supplied a narrative of choice. Radvanová, a female legal scholar specializing in the position of women, criticized the previous (Equalization) period as being too directive with the principle of equality of sexes when it 'coerced many, especially young mothers, into hasty return to their job':

> A mechanical understanding of the equal standing of a woman in society has become antiquated. It came to the fore that even this idea [of equal rights] was a certain expression of administrative manipulation with a person, an a priori limitation of choice, where society – even for its own benefit – should enable such choice.
>
> (Radvanová 1969: 509, emphasis added)

Ironically, while the state's push for equality became interpreted as pressure on women to work, the emphasis on freedom created the opposite pressure on women to stay home as mothers. While the idea of giving women more choice

was laudable, the practice was culturally conservative. The late 1960s saw the introduction of many gender-specific pro-maternity provisions in the area of labour law and social policy that targeted women and cemented their role as mothers and housewives.

Two important things were missing from this policy. First, men were completely left out of the picture, i.e. they were workers and never carers. Second, women were asked to be both, workers and carers. In the 1950s the expectation was that they would be both at the same time. From the 1960s onwards, they were to be sometimes primarily workers (before having children or when the children were grown), sometimes primarily carers (while on maternity leave). What was not strived for was a redefinition of men's role in the family or a true reconciliation of professional and private life, which would ideally encompass both men and women.

Reproduction in the times of the 'population crisis'

The Act on the Artificial Interruption of Pregnancy and the ordinances implementing it were amended often during the period of state socialism.[60] Several pro-population changes happened in the 1960s, which limited the accessibility of abortion. A 1961 ordinance included the possibility of inviting the responsible man (the would-be father) or the parents of minor girls, thus inhibiting the freedom and limiting the privacy of the woman's request.[61] It also allowed the abortion committees to recommend to 'women (especially unwed mothers)' to give birth and then temporarily place their child in institutional state care, until they could take care of the child themselves,[62] thus arguably valuing the existence of life over both, reproductive autonomy of the woman and the quality of life of the woman and child. In 1962, the obligation to appear before an abortion committee in the place of permanent residence was stipulated. This arguably increased the anxiety connected with abortion as women might have feared that the abortion might become locally known and made women's accounts of their circumstances more easily verifiable.[63] It also had the effect of limiting the number of abortions for one woman, as women previously often 'shopped' around different districts to circumvent the cap of one abortion in six months.[64] After a period of free abortion, payments for abortions were reinstated in 1963[65] and increased again in 1964.[66] Gradually, the number of medical personnel on the interruption committee decreased and political and bureaucratic membership increased,[67] including members of the 'district population committee'.[68]

The latter change is an explicit reminder that the 'population-crisis' motivated many of these changes (Scott 1974: 104–7, 138–64; see also Dudová 2009). A 1965 law journal article asks 'to what extent is the possibility of legal interruption of pregnancy reconcilable with our current pro-natality population policy of our state?' (Prokopec 1965: 41). Some years later, this concern became legally expressed, when the opening provision of an implementing ordinance explicitly mentioned both, the health of the woman and the population growth, as important considerations.[69] The availability of contraception did not improve in this period.[70]

A turn from equality in paid work to care

It is a great challenge for law to choose when to treat men and women the same, and when to treat them differently. Women are the same as men in their humanity and their potential, and with regards to these qualities, should be treated equally. But women are also different. Those who become mothers face disadvantage, both for the vulnerability connected to the physical aspects of pregnancy, birth and early motherhood, but also due to the vulnerabilities attached to the interdependent relationship between them and their children. Moreover, all women, whether mothers or not, face material and symbolic disadvantage connected to the gender-hierarchical organization of patriarchal societies.

I mentioned above that legal guarantees of equality between the sexes were widespread – they were enshrined in both state-socialist constitutions and the new Labour Code of 1965 that proclaimed equal 'rights' for men and women as one of its basic principles.[71] However, as I argue elsewhere (B. Havelková 2013), what appeared to be 'rights' under state socialism were mere policy pronouncements (see also Markovits 1977–8; Markovits 1981–2; Markovits 1985–6), practically unenforceable, and the apparent equality 'rights' never contained an actual antidiscrimination guarantee. Moreover, from the 1960s onwards, the law increasingly concentrated on treating women differently and on the protection and support of their motherhood.

Protecting motherhood

The problem with regulating motherhood is that not all women are mothers and carers[72] and not all carers are inevitably women. The (descriptive) observation that most carers are women should thus not translate into a (prescriptive) framework that facilitates and cements motherhood but does not enable parenthood or other forms of childcare. Moreover, the protection should not go beyond what is necessary. When it does, it can – instead of protecting vulnerability and enabling reconciliation of work and family life – turn women into unviable workers and entrench traditional gender roles. I argue that the state-socialist law, since the 1960s, often got the balance wrong – it overprotected women, which hurt their position in the labour market, and kept men out of childcare, which contributed to a cementing of traditional gender roles in the family.

The new Labour Code dedicated a special chapter to the 'Working conditions of women and minors'.[73] It urged employers to create employment opportunities for women,[74] and tasked 'national committees' (národní výbory) with creation and upkeep of crèches, kindergartens and other childcare facilities.[75] It contained positive guarantees for pregnant women and mothers,[76] such as breastfeeding breaks,[77] preferential treatment with regards to overtime and working time in general,[78] prohibition of work-related travel,[79] and protection from dismissal.[80] Maternity leave of 18 weeks, which was introduced in 1950, was lengthened several times in the 1960s, up to 26 weeks in 1968.[81] Also introduced in 1968 was 'additional maternity leave' of one year,[82] lengthened to two years in 1969.[83]

These (labour law) provisions were accompanied by social security measures. 'Financial help in motherhood' (peněžitá pomoc v mateřství) was paid out during maternity leave.[84] A 'motherhood supplement' was paid out during the additional leave (mateřský příspěvek).[85] A one-off 'birth support' payment was also given.[86] Motherhood was reflected in the pension system – periods of childcare by women were counted toward pension benefits, and mothers were granted earlier retirement, based on the number of children.[87] Families were also entitled to 'child-raising supplements' (přídavky na děti).[88]

These measures were valuable in recognizing the social value of childbirth and care. Some contemporary Czech authors even suggested that social security payments should be regarded as 'remuneration for caring work' (Radvanová et al. 1971: 223) or that it should at least be considered a 'socially important activity' (Mazanec 1975: 350) and financially supported according to need. Their progressiveness is also highlighted in international comparison – what was achieved in the 1960s in Czechoslovakia was still a struggle for women in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s (Fredman 1997: 203–5), it was only achieved at EU level in the 1990s,[89] and is yet to be guaranteed in the US.[90]

Nonetheless, two aspects detract somewhat from this positive evaluation. First, these measures were adopted 'in the interest of improving the population development',[91] as was often explicitly mentioned in the statutes. Thus, although presented as pro-women, they had at their basis the collective interest in increasing the rate of childbirth. Second, for the entirety of the state-socialist period, they only allowed mothers and not fathers to be carers, and consequently cemented the women's roles as mothers and carers in the family.

Bans on work for women

Another set of ostensibly protective but ultimately limiting measures were bans on work for women. The new Labour Code introduced a prohibition of night work[92] as well as a prohibition of certain types of work for all women.[93] The delegated legislation protected women from different kinds of physical, biological and chemical agents, processes and working conditions.[94] Scott, writing in 1974, argued that while officially aiming at the protection of the weak female worker, these provisions in practice banned women from the best paid jobs in heavy industry. She pointed to three paradoxes of this legislation. First, it was enacted only in 1965 when working conditions finally started to improve. Women who, for their entire lives, worked in unsatisfactory conditions suddenly found themselves without work. Second, where a female workforce was necessary for the smooth running of factories or services (such as in the health sector), branch exceptions were passed – women thus could continue working in objectionable conditions if the state-socialist economy required it. Third, analyses of female health in 1960s showed that the greatest problems facing women overall (such as migraines and neuroses) were caused by fatigue and sleep deprivation resulting from their triple burden and not from working conditions (Scott 1974: 19–23).

'Freedom'

The political thawing and pluralism in the 1960s brought with it some freedom-related developments. On the one hand, increased freedom of speech brought the opening of hitherto unmentioned (and possibly unmentionable) topics such as prostitution[95] or pornography.[96] On the other, the emerging notion of freedom had some paradoxical consequences for women and gender equality. First, the narrative of freedom and choice was used to 'enable' women to stay home longer with children, which – while alleviating their triple burden – was a step back for their equality both in the labour market (they became seen as the less reliable workers) as well as in the family (they now had the official hallmark of childcarers and home-makers). Second, the increased freedom of movement brought reports from the West about striptease, prostitution and pornography. Possibly as a reaction to the 'de-eroticization' (Macura 1992 cited in H. Havelková 1999) in the 1950s, those who experienced open and available sexuality abroad were deemed 'lucky', and for its lack of 'striptease bars', Czechoslovakia was considered to be in a 'stone age', suffering from a 'backwardness of many years' (Vaníček 1969: 69). Both these constructions – that women should have the 'choice' to be mothers and that access to sex and sexual production is equal to 'progress' (Vaníček 1969: 68) – reappear strongly during transition, with regard to prostitution amplified to mean a right of access to it for men (B. Havelková 2010b: 97).

The era of the family (1969–89)

The period of Normalization, which followed the 1968 Soviet-led military invasion of Czechoslovakia, has been characterized as 'a combination of material rewards and coercion' (Wolchik 1991: 37). It was also a period of resignation and stagnation in terms of the state-socialist aspiration about social change in the area of equality of the sexes. The old emancipatory rhetoric, as well as the legal gains of 1950s, largely persisted, but alongside it a gender-conservative regulation and understanding gained more and more ground. While policies in the 1950s saw women as citizens and workers, the 1970s and 1980s equated them with motherhood and family (observed in other CEE countries by Asztalos Morell 2007; Vinokurova 2007).

I noted above that the East was ahead of the West at the end of 1950s or even the 1960s. But by the end of 1980s, the East had noticeably fallen behind (Wagnerová 2011: 18–19). The West experienced modernization and emancipation from the 1960s onwards, mostly thanks to the rise of the 'second wave' of the feminist movement. The bottom-up character of this development was important – gender inequality was fought against by activists and it was debated in the open in the pluralist and liberal democratic societies in the West. The understanding and consequent rejection of gender inequality became to a considerable extent internalized in the Western societies. The East missed this development. While in terms of material provisions for women the East was still comparable

to the West in 1989, it was in terms of a challenge to patriarchy and a shift in cultural paradigm in which it fell behind.

In the following, I discuss the re-traditionalization of the law and legal discourse on family; present the wide-ranging pro-population policies, which had women at their centre; and assess the developments in the area of reproduction, including the policy of sterilization of Roma women.

A retreat into the private sphere

The strengthening of the family, both in terms of official policy and as a reaction of the population to the discredited regime's public space, defined the period of Normalization. For Ivan Vodochodský, the metamorphoses of the public and private spheres were essential to the understanding of the 'real socialism' of the 1970s and 1980s, with the private sphere becoming 'the main shelter from the traps of the outside world and a place where real feelings and opinions could be vented' (Vodochodský 2007: 38). Family became the locus of freedom, moral and civic education, and creativity (H. Havelková 1993: 92). It also – due to the dysfunctions of the economy – became a place where material shortages were compensated for (ibid.). Its function as an economic unit was not negligible, despite the earlier proclamations that under state socialism it would not need to be. The family adopted an almost 'pre-capitalist role' (Hana Havelková even uses the word 'feudal'; H. Havelková 1999: 77) as a site where basic goods were produced (H. Havelková 1993: 92; Hamplová 2010: 6; Šprincová 2013).

While this economic reality might have provided good practical reasons for couples not to split, the law and the legal community reinforced it by adopting an uncompromising marital normativism – couples should marry and stay together.

The 'wrongly understood emancipation'

The 1971 book Žena a právo (Woman and the Law) observed that 'the legal status [of co-habiting unmarried partners] is entirely deliberately not regulated in our law' (Radvanová et al. 1971: 76) in order to make such an arrangement undesirable. 'The breakdown of marriage' was described as an unambiguously 'socially negative phenomenon' (ibid.: 80). The aim – carried over from the 1960s – of preventing marriage breakdowns gained new momentum with the establishment of marriage counselling centres.[97] These were statutorily tasked with collaborating with courts.[98] Courts often referred couples seeking divorce for counselling first (Novák 1979; Capponi and Novák 1981). The guidelines and legal academic articles on marriage counselling set marriage as the absolute norm. Moreover, it was the task and responsibility of women to hold marriages together. Under the label 'wrongly understood emancipation' (Novák 1979: 229), equality between the sexes was de facto recanted:

According to our experience, many women interpret emancipation as a mechanical half-and-half division of housework and do not see the necessity

to help each other and come up with a form of collaboration and organization of the running of the household such as to have it *running in an undisturbed, smooth way*. We cannot do without specialization, the use of *natural abilities of each spouse to certain tasks*, nor without respect for the fact that one partner [man] has more work and out-of-work obligations. With mechanical half-and-half division, one partner [man] feels overburdened, *unjustly nagged*, which leads to reactions of protest and to conflicts.

(Novák 1979: 229, emphasis added)

Thus, while the formal equality of spouses guaranteed in family law remained the same, the understanding and interpretation of marriage among the legal community became openly based on a traditional understanding of the gender roles and considered the woman responsible for marital harmony. The condemnation of women who wanted equal sharing of household duties is a long way away from the Marxist and early state-socialist promise of de facto equality and the liberation from household drudgery.

When discussing the 1950s, I mentioned the positive aspects of the public involvement in the family – the strengthening of equality between the spouses and the state's involvement in securing child support, among others. During Normalization, the state's interference, no longer driven by the aim of 'equality between the sexes' but by ensuring the rearing of children in 'unbroken' families, became gender-conservative. This is where the problematic nature of the legal principle of 'collective good' comes to the fore. As many of the guarantees were not aimed at enhancing individuals' (women's) autonomy, but rather at furthering collective interests or increasing the state's control over matters in the collective interest, their outcomes were not in the hands of those they were ostensibly protecting – women. The nature of the public involvement was thus double-edged. On the one hand, the state could – and often did – further women's status by regulating and interfering in areas traditionally controlled by men.[99] On the other, the state was primarily interested in what it identified as collective interest and not in the will and choices of individuals. As a result, it often did not give women meaningful choices and even used them instrumentally.

Reproduction – assuring the 'quantity' and 'quality' of the population

Notwithstanding calls for greater privacy for women, for simplification and speeding up of the committee process,[100] the abolition of abortion committees, which made abortion more accessible, only happened in 1986.[101] This has to be acknowledged and as a fully fledged liberalization of abortion. It did not mean, however, that the state relinquished its role as the guardian of health, social progress and population growth during the 1970s and 1980s. Part of its plan to improve the 'quality' (Sokolová 2005: 82) of the population included the policy of sterilization of women from 'socially weak' backgrounds (Veřejný ochránce

práv 2004: 69). While the 1972 Sterilization guideline[102] was not ethno-specific, it led in practice to forced[103] sterilizations, especially of Roma women (Veřejný ochránce práv 2004; Sokolová 2005: 7, 80–1). A monetary incentive was enacted in 1973[104] and remained in place until the Velvet Revolution.[105] The number of sterilizations culminated at the very end of the communist era (Pellar and Andrš 1989 cited in Veřejný ochránce práv 2004). Shockingly, this policy continued in transition and well into the first decade of the new millennium.[106]

I believe that this disregard for Roma women's reproductive rights must be borne in mind when assessing the reproductive policy of state-socialist Czechoslovakia in general. Certainly during Normalization, the reproductive policy was strongly instrumental. Both abortions as well as sterilizations were methods of central planning of parenthood and of the quantity and quality of the population. In the context of Czechoslovakia during the period of Normalization, it is difficult to see them as 'rights' of women. Rather, they were instruments for higher state policies on health, population growth and assimilation of ethnic groups.

Pro-population policies

Measures targeting population growth[107] that started in the 1960s were enhanced during Normalization. Indeed by the mid-1970s, the 'Czechoslovak population policy [...] became, according to some Western demographers, "the best, most comprehensive pro-natalist population policy in the developed world"' (Sokolová 2005: 81; citing Besemeres 1980: 263). Heitlinger notes that by the late 1970s,

[T]he Czechoslovak government was spending almost 4 per cent of its annual budget for direct cash benefits (family allowances, birth grants, paid maternity leaves, and allowances) and an additional 7 per cent on services and subsidies in kind (subsidized day care, kindergartens, school meals, afterschool care, children's goods, tax and rent reductions based on number of children). These levels exceeded comparable expenditures in any other major developed country.

(Heitlinger 1993: 98)

The maternity benefit was extended from one year in 1970 to two years in 1971, and up to three in 1988 if the woman was caring for older children at the same time. Maternity leave in labour law was adjusted accordingly.[108] Families with children were preferred in the granting of 'newly-weds loans' that were meant to help with the purchase of a flat or a house.[109] Pro-natality pricing and tax policies were also implemented (Kučera 2001: 5). Labour and social security protection and support for motherhood was boosted – for example, the motherhood supplement created in 1968[110] was augmented in 1971[111] and 'child-raising supplements' (*přídavky na děti*) gradually increased.[112]

These provisions, although generous, were gender-conservative. They were available only to mothers and not fathers and thus worked with the assumption

that mothers were the (indispensable) caring parent – men and fathers continued to be absent. Moreover, it was the individual care in the home that was supported – the 1950s emphasis on collective childcare was challenged in the 1960s and slowly abandoned in the 1970s and the 1980s. The norm became the family, and the mother for rearing of small children (similarly Hamplová 2010: 4).

Conclusions

This chapter showed that the state-socialist state did a lot for women. Compared to the West, the law facilitated women's access to the public sphere of work both earlier and more proactively (especially during the Equalization period in the 1950s); and was more generous and comprehensive in its support for mothers (especially in the later Era of the family in 1970s and 1980s). However, the legal provisions and especially their understanding among the legal community were gender-conservative – women's role as wives was to hold marriages together, and women's role as mothers made them the exclusive carers for children in the home, while men were absent. This coexistence of 'public equality and private difference' is one important key to understanding gender equality in law under state socialism, but I have argued in this chapter that the situation was more complex. First, it changed over time – it emphasized 'first equality, then difference'. Second, while de jure equality was guaranteed not only in the public but also in the private sphere, the problem was arguably the easy acceptance of de facto inequality between men and women and of discrimination of women, seen as justified by the natural difference between the two sexes. In this sense, we can speak of 'relative de jure equality combined with de facto inequality and discrimination'. This was, finally, enabled by the fact that many apparent legal guarantees of individual rights (such as the 'right' to interruption of pregnancy) were limited by the corrective of 'collective interest' (such as concerns for population growth). And legal proclamations (of the right to equality) lacked real teeth (as the right not to be discriminated was missing). The legal rights to sex equality were thus largely a mere mirage.

Notes

1 An extended version of this text was defended as a chapter of my doctoral thesis in B. Havelková 2013.
2 Legislators, judges and legal scholars.
3 From generalist legal journals *Právník* and *Socialistická zákonnost*.
4 It could be argued that the concern was more broadly with women's access to the public sphere. I do not discuss politics here, however; partly for reasons of space, partly because women's political participation was not regulated by law (but ensured by party quota).
5 The legal concept of self-defence is in many legal systems constructed to reflect the skirmishes and fights of men (between equally strong parties), but is unsuitable to capture situations women find themselves in. Courts have for example trouble applying it in cases of domestic violence when a woman who – after years of domestic abuse and suffering from 'battered wife syndrome' – kills her aggressor.

6 An important strand of Western feminist jurisprudence analyses the way that legal regulation of private property affected women. It has been for example argued that many general and basic tenets of criminal law are determined by the fact that it evolved to protect private property – an offence affecting men more often – and much less certain types of harms affecting women (domestic violence, sexual violence). This gives rise to questions about how this has played out in a socialist society without private property, whether this bias disappeared, and whether it was merely replaced by a concern for state/socialist property.
7 'Transition' is the term commonly used in literature, in preference to 'transformation', which is more frequent in Czech common usage but has a more close-ended meaning (Weiner 2007). However, even the term 'transition' has been criticized as 'assum[ing] evolutionary progress', 'continu[ing] the Cold War morality tale' and 'homogenizing capitalism' (Gál and Kligman 2000: 10). I use the term 'transition' to describe a process of a shift *away* from state socialism, but indeterminate with regards to the final aim (other than democracy and the rule of law).
8 Sec. 1 (2) of 1948 Constitution.
9 Sec. 10 (1) of 1948 Constitution.
10 Sec. 91 and 92 Imperial Decree No 946/1811 Coll., General Civil Code.
11 Sec. 141 Imperial Decree No 946/1811 Coll., General Civil Code.
12 Act No 117/1852 Imperial Criminal Code as valid in 1950 counted with chastisement of spouse and children and only addressed excesses.
13 Previously Sec. 58 of 946/1811.
14 Sec. 15, 16 and 55 Act No 265/1949 Coll.
15 Sec. 147 946/1811, in its last valid version.
16 Sec. 1233 946/1811; according to it, a communal property could be established contractually.
17 Sec. 1237 o946/1811.
18 Sec. 1238 o946/1811.
19 Sec. 22 265/1949; this was a dispositive provision – the spouses could contract otherwise.
20 Sec. 23 265/1949.
21 Sec. 72 265/1949.
22 Sec. 11 (2) 1948 Constitution. Previously, their position was not equal, but limited maintenance obligations of the father existed. Sec. 155–71 of 946/1811.
23 Sec. 76 265/1949.
24 Sec. 532 Act No 142/1950 Coll. The mechanism was gradually modified to be more effective. So for example in 1955, the Statutory measure No 57/1955 Coll. increased obligatory communications between the court and the employer, and made an executive title for docking of child alimony applicable to all future employers. See also Gemrich 1955.
25 Act No 57/1948 Coll.
26 Sec. 30 (2) 265/1949.
27 The new provision allowed for divorce without mutual consent if spouses were not cohabiting for a period of time. Sec. 30 (4) 265/1949 as amended by Act No 61/1955 Coll.
28 Act No 94/1963 Coll.
29 Sec. 92 94/1963.
30 Nominally, the employers were 'socialist organizations'. But due to high levels of central planning, the freedom and discretion to make managerial decisions of these units was very low.
31 Sec. 210 Act No 86/1950 Coll. and Sec. 213 Act No 140/1961 Coll.
32 The 'procurator' was a specific state-socialist institution, which combined the functions of public prosecution in criminal law with extensive powers of oversight over the 'legality' of activities of public institutions, from central ministries and regional

bodies, to courts (in criminal, as well as civil and administrative jurisdictions) and 'institutions which limit personal freedom' such as prisons.

33 Act No 68/1957 Coll.
34 Sec. 2 (2) of Ordinance No 249/1957 of the Ministry of Health, implementing the Act on the Artificial Interruption of Pregnancy.
35 Former Sec. 218 Act No 86/1950 Coll., Criminal Code. A criminal provision, however, punished the performance of abortions done outside the scope of the Act.
36 Sec. 1 68/1957.
37 Art. III (3), Sec. 26 1948 Constitution.
38 Art. III (1), Sec. 26 1948 Constitution.
39 The obligation to work started before the communist takeover – it existed during the German occupation in the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia and was re-established after the war by the Presidential Decree 88/1945 Coll. It was only abolished in 1958 (Act No 70/1958 Coll.).
40 88/1945; Government ordinance No 40/1953 Coll.
41 The provision was inserted into criminal law in 1956 by Act No 63/1956 Coll. Similar offences existed in administrative law: offence of work avoidance in Sec.72 88/1950; Sec.19 (c) Act No 38/1961 Coll., on Local People's Courts; Act No 58/1965 Coll.; Sec. 10 Act No 150/1969 Coll.
42 For example 88/1945 stipulated that, if urgently necessary in public interest, men aged 16–45 and women aged 18–45 could be allocated to work. Some groups, however, were exempt (among them soldiers, students and pregnant women), and a triage was set (unmarried before married persons etc).
43 Sec. 1(2) 1948 Constitution.
44 Equal pay for men and women was stipulated already by Ordinance No 74/1945 Coll. However, it only stipulated equal wage for equal work, not for work of equal value.
45 Sec. 27(4) 1948 Constitution.
46 Sec. 13 of Act No 66/1950 Coll.
47 Sec. 44 of Act No 99/1948 Coll., on National Insurance.
48 Sec. 32 of Act No 99/1948 Coll.
49 Sec. 6 of Act No 55/1956 Coll., on Social Security.
50 The CUW was a new women's organization created in 1967. Previously, a centralized and CP-dependent Central Committee of Women existed (Heitlinger 1979: 68–9).
51 Art. 27 of 1960 Constitution.
52 According to Šimáčková, however, this fact was not restricted to equality of the sexes – each Czechoslovak socialist constitution 'opened a period which contradicted it, or rather headed somewhere else than the adopted and proclaimed constitution indicated' (Šimáčková 2009: 124).
53 These debates did not appear in the legal periodicals but elsewhere. For an analysis, see Jechová 2008.
54 94/1963.
55 Act No 99/1963 Coll. See also Černý 1965; Radimský 1965.
56 The problems of the obligatory court reconciliation were noted by legal scholars relatively quickly after its adoption (Schiller 1965; Másilko 1968: 683).
57 Post-divorce alimony was made available again in 1963. Sec. 92 94/1963.
58 Act No 76/1952 Coll., and especially Sec. 16 Ordinance of the Ministry of Finance No 24/1967 Coll.
59 If one counts paid work, childcare and housework separately.
60 Between 1957 and the year 1980, nine ordinances or their amendments were passed.
61 Sec. 6 (1) Ordinance of the Ministry of Health No 104/1961 Coll.
62 Sec. 6 (2) Ordinance of the Ministry of Health No 104/1961 Coll.
63 Notwithstanding the confidentiality obligations included in the Ordinances.
64 According to the demographer Fialová, as interviewed by and cited in Dudová 2009: 30.

65 Sec. 11 Ordinance of the Ministry of Health No 126/1962 Coll.
66 Sec. 11 Ordinance of the Ministry of Health No 126/1962 Coll. as amended by Ordinance of the Ministry of Health No 95/1964 Coll.
67 In both Ordinance 104/1961 and Ordinance 126/1962.
68 Sec. 2 (b) Ordinance 126/1962.
69 Sec. 1 Ordinance of the Ministry of Health No 71/1973 Coll.
70 For example, Scott notes that a Czechoslovak pill started to be produced in 1965, but the production was disrupted in 1969, so that the little success brought about by the availability of an oral contraceptive in shifting away from abortion as a primary tool of birth control form was set back again (Scott 1974, 150–3).
71 Art. VII. Act No 65/1965 Coll.
72 In the biological and social senses respectively.
73 Sec. 149–69 65/1965.
74 Sec. 149 (1) 65/1965.
75 Sec. 149 (2) 65/1965.
76 The rights for pregnant women and mothers were available based on the age of the child; to single parents, protection was available for longer.
77 Sec. 161 65/1965.
78 Sec. 156 65/1965.
79 The prohibition was absolute for mothers of children up to one year of age; up to eight years, the consent of the working mother was required. Sec. 154 65/1965.
80 Sec. 155 65/1965.
81 Sec. 1 Act No 88/1968 Coll.
82 Sec. 1 Act No 88/1968 Coll.
83 Act No 153/1969 Coll.
84 Sec. 2 (b) 88/1968.
85 Act No 154/1969 Coll.
86 Sec. 13 88/1968.
87 Sec. 11 Act No 101/1964 Coll.
88 Sec. 14 ff. 88/1968.
89 Council Directive 92/85/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding, O.J. L 348, 28/11/1992, pp. 1–8.
90 The US protects the parents from losing their job for a period of 24 weeks, but there is no statutorily guaranteed paid parental leave (Ray et al. 2008).
91 Sec. 1 Act No 154/1969 Coll.
92 Sec. 152 65/1965.
93 Sec. 150 (2) 65/1965.
94 Government Resolution No 32/1967 Coll.
95 The legal debates about prostitution appeared in the 1960s (B. Havelková 2010b: 66–76).
96 Discussions of pornography or striptease did not reach the legal periodicals but made their way into other publications. Several chapters of the book Sex – Láska? Manželství? Rodina? Děti? (Sex – Love? Marriage? Family? Children?, Svoboda 1969) were dedicated to these issues. See for example 'Noční motýl sexu letí republikou' (The night shadow of sex spreads through the republic) (Vaníček 1969).
97 Originally founded in 1969 (Haderka 1976), they were later elevated to the position of a social service (Sec. 2 and 80 (3) and (4) Act No 121/1975 Coll.).
98 Sec. 79 Ordinance No 130/1975 Coll.
99 This resonates with many writers' descriptions of the state as 'paternalistic', understood by Kenney as the 'replacement of traditional forms of paternalist authority by a similar authority embodied in the state' (see Kenney 1999: 405 and the references therein).
100 The lengthy process prevented the use of new, less intrusive technologies, such as early pregnancy 'mini-interruptions' (Dudová 2009).

101   Act No 66/1986 Coll.
102   Guideline of the Ministry of Health of the CSR No 1/1972 Bulletin reg. in issue 5/1972 Coll.
103   The term 'forced' is used even though some situations are better described as lack of circumstances allowing for informed consent with the procedure.
104   Internal act of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CSR from 1973, act no IV/1-8750-13.9.1973/7; later regulated by various social security instruments (Veřejný ochránce práv 2004: 30).
105   Sec. 35 Ordinance of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Health and Social Affairs No 152/1988 Coll.
106   The Czech courts eventually started to compensate the victims (Veřejný ochránce práv 2004).
107   Many statutes stated so explicitly. For example Sec. 1 Act No 107/1971 Coll.
108   From two to three years by Act No 188/1988 Coll.
109   Act No 14/1973 Coll.
110   Act No 154/1969 Coll.
111   Act No 107/1971 Coll.
112   Act No 99/1972 Coll.

References

Asztalos Morell, Ildikó (2007) 'How to combine motherhood and wage labour: Hungarian expert perspectives during the 1960s', in Rebecca Kay (ed.) *Gender, Equality and Difference During and After State Socialism*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bauerová, Jaroslava and Eva Bártová (1987) *Proměny ženy v rodině, práci a ve veřejném životě* [*Transformations of women in the family, work and public life*], Prague: Nakladatelství Svoboda.

Besemeres, John (1980) *Socialist Population Policy: the political implications of demographic trends in the USSR and Eastern Europe*, White Planes, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Capponi, Věra and Tomáš Novák (1981) 'Spolupráce manželských a předmanželských poraden se soudy v Jihomoravském kraji v prevenci rozvodovosti' [The collaboration of courts and marriage counselling centres in preventing divorces in Southern Moravia], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 229–32.

Černohubý, Milan (1964) 'Příspěvek na výživu rozvedeného manžela' [Payments to support a divorced spouse], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 38–40.

Černý, Miroslav (1965) 'Řízení o smíření manželů' [Proceedings toward the reconciliation of spouses], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 49–51.

Číhal, Zdeněk (1962) 'O přípravách nového zákona o rodině' [Report on the preparations of the Act on Family], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 597–602.

Dudová, Radka (2009) 'Interrupce v socialistickém Československu z foucaultovské perspektivy' [Abortion in state-socialist Czechoslovakia from a Foucauldian perspective], *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum*, 10, 1: 25–36.

Feinberg, Melissa (2006) *Elusive Equality: gender, citizenship, and the limits of democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918–1950*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Firestone, Shulamith (1971) *The Dialectic of Sex: the case for feminist revolution*, London: Bantam Books.

Fredman, Sandra (1997) *Women and the Law*, Oxford: Clarendon.

Gál, Susan and Gail Kligman (2000) *The Politics of Gender after Socialism: a comparative-historical essay*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gemrich, Jan (1955) 'Nová úprava vymáhání pohledávek na úhradu osobních potřeb

nezletilých dětí' [New provisions on execution of outstanding receivables for allowance needs of minors], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 605–13.

Glos, Josef and Arnošt Kafka (1953) 'Prokurátorská žaloba o popření otcovství' [The procurator's competence to initiate proceedings to refute fatherhood], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 92–6.

Haderka, Jiří (1976) 'Manželské poradny – jako partner soudů v úsilí za vytvoření a zachování trvalých manželských svazků' [Marriage counselling centres – the courts' partner in an effort to create and preserve durable marriages], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 294–300.

Hamplová, Dana (2010) Stručné poznámky o ideových přístupech k rodině v období socialismu [Brief observations on ideological approaches to family under state socialism], *Cahier du CEFRES*. Online. Available: www.cefres.cz/IMG/pdf/hamplova_ 2001_ideove_pristupy_rodina_socialismus.pdf (accessed 24 June 2013).

Hašková, Hana and Zuzana Uhde (eds) (2009) *Women and Social Citizenship in Czech Society: continuity and change*, Prague: Sociologický ústav AV ČR.

Havelková, Barbara (2009a) 'Genderová rovnost v období socialismu' [Gender equality under state socialism], in Michal Bobek, Pavel Molek and Vojtěch Šimíček (eds) *Komunistické právo v Československu: Kapitoly z dějin bezpráví.* [*Communist Law in Czechoslovakia: chapters from the history of unlawfulness*], Brno: Mezinárodní politologický ústav Masarykovy univerzity.

Havelková, Barbara (2009b) 'Pracovní právo' [Labour Law], in Michal Bobek, Pavel Molek and Vojtěch. Šimíček (eds) *Komunistické právo v Československu: Kapitoly z dějin bezpráví*, Brno: Mezinárodní politologický ústav Masarykovy univerzity.

Havelková, Barbara (2010a) 'European gender equality under and after state socialism: legal treatment of prostitution in the Czech Republic', MSt thesis, University of Oxford. Online. Available: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_ id=2056291 (accessed 24 June 2013).

Havelková, Barbara (2010b) 'The legal notion of gender equality in the Czech Republic', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 33, 1: 21–9.

Havelková, Barbara (2013) 'Gender equality under and after state socialism: the example of the Czech Republic', unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford: University of Oxford.

Havelková, Hana (1993) '"Patriarchy" in Czech Society', *Hypatia*, 8, 4: 89–96.

Havelková, Hana (1999) 'Women in and after a "classless" society', in Christine Zmroczek and Pat Mahony (eds) *Women and Social Class: international feminist perspectives*, London: Taylor & Francis and UCL.

Heitlinger, Alena (1979) *Women and State Socialism: sex inequality in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia*, London: Macmillan.

Heitlinger, Alena (1985) 'Passage to motherhood: personal and social "management" of reproduction in Czechoslovakia in the 1980s', in Sharon L. Wolchik and Alfred G. Meyer (eds) *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Heitlinger, Alena (1993) 'The impact of the transition from communism on the status of women in the Czech and Slovak Republics', Nanette Funk and Magda Mueller (eds) *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: reflections from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, New York: Routledge.

Jechová, Květa (2008) 'Cesta k emancipaci: Postavení ženy v české společnosti 20. století. Pokus o vymezení problému' [The road to emancipation: the status of women in Czech society. Toward the definition of the issue], in Oldřich Tůma and Tomáš Vilímek (eds) *Pět studií k dějinám české společnosti*, Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

echová, Květa (2009) 'Matky a děti, chtěné i nechtěné: Mateřství v reálném socialismu' [Mothers and children, wanted and unwanted: motherhood under state socialism], in Oldřich Tůma, and Tomáš Vilímek (eds) *Opozice a společnost po roce 1958*, Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

.enney, Padraic (1999) 'The gender of resistance in communist Poland', *The American Historical Review*, 104, 2: 399–425.

.öhler-Wagnerová, Alena (1974) *Die Frau im Sozialismus: Beispiel ČSSR*, Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe Verlag.

.učera, Milan (2001) 'Rodinná politika a její demografické důsledky v socialistickém Československu' [Family policy and its demographic consequences in state-socialist Czechoslovakia]. Online. Available: www.cefres.cz/IMG/pdf/kucera_2001_rodinna_politika_demografie_cssr.pdf (accessed 24 June 2013).

.ühn, Zdeněk (2005) *Aplikace práva soudcem v éře středoevropského komunismu a transformace* [The judicial application of law during Central European Communism and Transformation], Prague: C. H. Beck.

.aFont, Suzanne (2001) 'One step forward, two steps back: women in the post-communist states, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 34, 2: 203–20.

.angmeier, Josef and Zdeněk Matějček (1963) *Psychická deprivace v dětství* [Psychological deprivation in childhood], Prague: SZdN.

.erner, Gerda (1986) *The Creation of Patriarchy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

.acura, Vladimír (1992) *Šťastný věk: Symboly, emblémy a mýty 1948–89* [The Happy Age: symbols, emblems and myths 1948–89], Prague: Pražská imaginace.

.arkovits, Inga (1977–8) 'Socialist vs. bourgeois rights; an East-West German comparison', *University of Chicago Law Review*, 45: 612–36.

.arkovits, Inga (1981–2) 'Law or order: constitutionalism and legality in Eastern Europe', *Stanford Law Review* 34: 513–613.

.arkovits, Inga (1985–6) 'Pursuing one's rights under socialism', *Stanford Law Review*, 38: 689–761.

.ásilko, Vilém (1968) 'Rozvod dohodou u bezdětných manželů' [Consensual divorce between childless spouses], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 680–4.

.azanec Josef (1975) 'Význam péče ženy o dítě v důchodovém zabezpečení' [The importance of child-care in pension security] *Socialistická zákonnost*, 348–56.

.ovák, Karel (1979) 'Ze zkušeností manželské a předmanželské poradny v Jičíně' [Experiences from a marriage counselling centre in Jičín], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 226–30.

atschová, Zdeňka (1953) 'Tři roky boje za novou rodinu' [Three years of our fight for a new family], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 14–22.

ellar, R. and Z. Andrš (1989) 'Zpráva o výzkumu problematiky sexuální sterilizace Romů v Československu' [Report on the examination in the problematics of sexual sterilization of Romanis in Czechoslovakia], unpublished report.

rokopec, Jiří (1965) 'K některým aspektům umělého přerušení těhotenství' [On certain aspects of artificial interruption of pregnancy] *Socialistická zákonnost*, 41–6.

.adimský, Jaroslav (1965) 'Zkušenosti s řízením o smíření manželů' [Experiences with the proceedings toward the reconciliation of spouses], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 24–6.

.advanová, Senta (1969) 'Zamyšlení nad připravovaným zákonem o poskytování příspěvku matkám malých dětí' [A thought on the proposed act on contribution payments to mothers of small children], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 508–12.

.advanová, Senta, Marie Kalenská, Vojtěch Štícha and Igor Tomeš (1971) *Žena a právo* [Woman and the Law], Prague: Orbis.

Ray, Rebecca, Janet C. Gornick and John Schmitt (2008) *Parental Leave Policies in 21 Countries: assessing generosity and gender equality*, Washington, DC: Center for Economic and Policy Research.

Saxonberg, Steven, Hana Hašková and Jiří Mudrák (2012) *The Development of Czech Childcare Policies*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Schiller, Milan (1962) 'K návrhu osnovy zákona o právu rodinném' [On the proposal of the Act on Family Law], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 168–76.

Schiller, Milan (1965) 'Řízení o smíření manželů' [Proceedings toward reconciliation of spouses], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 24–7.

Schiller, Milan and Vladimír Flégl (1961) 'Několik poznámek k zákonu o právu rodinném' [Several comments on the Act on Family Law], *Socialistická zákonnost*, 177–82.

Scott, Hilda (1974) *Does Socialism Liberate Women? Experiences from Eastern Europe*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Šiklová, Jiřina (1993) 'Are women in Central and Eastern Europe conservative?', in Nanette Funk and Magda Mueller (eds) *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: reflections from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, New York: Routledge.

Šimáčková, Kateřina (2009) 'Fiktivní nebo reálná ústava' [Fictitious or real constitution], in Michal Bobek, Pavel Molek and Vojtěch Šimíček (eds) *Komunistické právo v Československu: Kapitoly z dějin bezpráví*, Brno: Mezinárodní politologický ústav Masarykovy univerzity.

Sokolová, Věra (2005) 'Planned parenthood behind the Curtain: population policy and sterilization of Romani women in communist Czechoslovakia, 1972–1989', *The Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 23, 1: 79–98.

Šprincová, Veronika (2013) 'Postavení žen v Československu v období let 1948–1989 v dobových sociologických výzkumech a datech' [The position of women in Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1989 in contemporary sociological research and data], in Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová (eds) *Proměny genderové kultury české společnosti 1948–1989*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Svoboda, Ladislav (ed.) (1969) *Sex – Láska? Manželství? Rodina? Děti?* [Sex – Love? Marriage? Family? Children?], Prague: Polygrafia.

Vaníček, Bořivoj (1969) 'Noční motýl sexu letí republikou' [The night shadow of sex spreads through the republic], in Ladislav Svoboda (ed.) *Sex – Láska? Manželství? Rodina? Děti?*, Prague: Polygrafia.

Veřejný ochránce práv [Czech Ombudsman] (2004) 'Závěrečné stanovisko veřejného ochránce práv ve věci sterilizací prováděných v rozporu s právem a návrhy opatření k nápravě' [Final report on illegal sterilizations and proposals for remedy], No: 3099/2004/VOP/PM. Online. Available: www.romea.cz/dokumenty/sterilizace.doc (accessed 1 September 2013).

Vinokurova, Natalia (2007) 'Reprivatising women's lives: from Khrushchev to Brezhnev', in Rebecca Kay (ed.) *Gender, Equality and Difference During and after State Socialism*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Vodochodský, Ivan (2007) 'Patriarchát na socialistický způsob: k genderovému řádu státního socialismu' [Socialist-wise patriarchy: on gender order of state socialism], *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum* 8, 2: 34–42.

Wagnerová, Alena (2011) 'Laudatio: Linda Šmausová – žena – člověk – vědkyně – přítelkyně: curiculum velice osobní' [Laudation: Linda Šmausová – woman – human – scholar – friend: a very personal curriculum vitae], in Libora Oates-Indruchová (ed.) *Tvrdošíjnost myšlenky: Od feministické kriminologie k teorii genderu*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Weiner, Elaine (2007) *Market Dreams: gender, class, and capitalism in the Czech Republic*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1979) 'The status of women in a socialist order: Czechoslovakia, 1948–1978', *Slavic Review*, 38: 583–602.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1981a) 'Ideology and Equality', *Comparative Political Studies*, 13, 4: 445–76.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1981b) 'Elite strategy toward women in Czechoslovakia: liberation of mobilization?', *Studies in Comparative Communism* 14, 2–3: 123–42.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1985) 'The precommunist legacy, economic development, social transformation, and women's roles in Eastern Europe', in Sharon L. Wolchik and Alfred G. Meyer (eds) *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1991) *Czechoslovakia in Transition: politics, economics and society*, London: Pinter.

Wolchik, Sharon and Alfred Meyer (eds) (1985) *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

3   Women's organizations in the Czech lands, 1948–89

An historical perspective

Denisa Nečasová

In this summary study looking at a relatively long and varied period (1948–89),[1] I focus on issues important for determining the status of women's organizations under state socialism. Although the term 'women's movement' is difficult to apply to the communist period under review here – because women's organizations in this period did not reflect the concept of a purely voluntary association of women aimed at implementing feminist ideas in practice – the mere existence of any women's organization at that time reflects a need to address women's issues. Also, specific steps undertaken at the time – be they isolated events or long-term efforts at influencing gender discourses – did influence society and shape its character to some extent.

I will document that the main pillars determining the existence of women's organizations and shaping their goals and activities were the ideology and political objectives of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CCP). Only on this foundation could any gender-related agenda – which in some sense continued the pre-1948 tradition of the women's movement – be built. The main issues, however, took on a quite different form, which can be understood using the concept of expropriation (Havelková 2009, 2013). Another aim of this paper is to outline the historical transformation of the four successive women's organizations, including their restructuring, demise or renewal during the period under review. Finally, this study discusses the reductionist Czech historical interpretation of women's organizations as mere 'cogs' within the regime.

The current state of research

Within the Central European context, research has focused more on women's status under state-socialist society than on the issue of women's organizations. Women's movements between 1948 and 1989 have been considered above all in Germany (Shaffer 1981; Harsch 2007), Russia (Ashwin 2000; Ilič *et al.* 2004) and most recently also Bulgaria (Ghodsee 2012).[2] A comparative view on several countries is presented in Wolchik and Meyer (1985) and Saurer *et al.* (2006). Women in Czechoslovakia, including the role of women's organizations, have been a subject of several studies by foreign researchers before 1989 (most notably Scott 1974 on the 1950s and 1960s; Heitlinger 1979 on the 1950s–70s;

and Wolchik 1979, 1981; also Barbara W. Jancar 1978, which focuses on the influence of communist ideology on women's lives in the Eastern Bloc, China and Cuba, includes several paragraphs on Czechoslovakia. In the Czech Republic, the subject of women's organizations under state socialism has been addressed by researchers only in the last decade (Čákiová 2005; Jechová 2008; Nečasová 2011).

This study provides a more detailed description of the fundamental links between women's organizations and the Communist Party leadership. It is unique in that it draws on archives of women's organizations and of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CCP), and on newspapers and magazines from that era, including *Vlasta* – a magazine published by women's organizations.[3]

Under the direction of the party

In the period under review (1948–89), the 100-year tradition of informal associations, clubs and large women's organizations was dramatically transformed. The relationship between the four successive women's organizations and the Party during 1948–89 can be described as subservient, since all these organizations were directly controlled by the Central Committee. Their actual powers were extremely limited, and the vast majority of basic documents were subject to approval at the highest levels of the communist hierarchy. The Party determined the organizations' basic objectives and decided who could hold leading positions. Generally speaking there was a low level of interest on the part of the Party leadership to engage in any dialogue with women's organizations. One exception is the brief era of the second Czechoslovak Women's Union, when – thanks to the democratic processes within society – the organization was given a more independent standing and the Party leadership was more open to dialogue. On the other hand, the prevailing relationship between the Party leadership and women's organizations should not be understood as a unilateral exercise of power. Although current research findings do not allow us to analyse the extent of these organizations' practical activities, in particular on the local level, the sorry state of women's committees in 1952–67 shows the limits of the Party's universal, 'total' influence.[4] The Party's top-down pressure is also relativized by the concept of democratic centralism, which formed a basic framework for the actions of the Party and women's organizations, and which was in fact enshrined in law.

The Party's direct management of women's organizations was thus institutionally based. For most of the period under review, women's organizations were subject directly to the Party's central women's commission (in later years, the Central Committee's department for mass organizations), whose main tasks included supervising the organizations, initiating their working agendas and establishing their ideological direction.[5] The commission also acted as the main intermediary between the women's organizations, top Party institutions and other mass organizations involved at least partially in what was then called

'work among women'. The central women's commission, which was established only shortly after the Party's founding in 1921,[6] oversaw the activities of all women's commissions established over time at all levels of the Party hierarchy (Heitlinger 1979: 53). The communist women's movement was thus organized and ideologically shaped within the Party, which significantly influenced the Party's overall approach to those women's organizations that had been founded on a liberal feminist basis. After February 1948, these liberal organizations represented a new and foreign element for the Party. The Party was not entirely sure how to deal with them, and was not about to give them much authority.

The women's commission and the department for mass women's organizations did not enjoy a particularly prestigious status within the Party. Commission members frequently filed internal complaints about their own low level of authority, a lack of information and the Party leadership's prevailing lack of interest: 'All events were approved and predefined for us in advance [...]. The situation is such that comrades are removed from their positions without the relevant Union institutions being informed'.[7] These practices were probably most visibly felt during the transformation of women's organizations; they were less commonly applied when working with other mass organizations:

> It is absolutely unacceptable how we learn about the Party's work among women. We have consistently requested to be informed as to the instructions the Party gives women. We were told that it is not our concern, but a matter of Party institutions.[8]

Like the entire Central Committee apparatus, the women's commission suffered from extensive bureaucratization, which had a negative effect on the functioning of women's organizations.[9] One specific example is the delay in approving the organizations' working schedules, thus partially paralysing their activities and exposing them even more to Party pressure.

The subservient status of women's organizations vis-à-vis the Central Committee was also enshrined in law. The 1951 Act on Volunteer Organizations formally confirmed existing practice and used the principle of democratic centralism to ensure that at the highest instance all organizations were subject to the Central Committee, and that their activities, staffing and the composition of committees at all organizational levels was decided upon by Party institutions (Janák 1992: 90).[10] However, the concept of democratic centralism also contained an element that renders the apparently one-way pressure problematic, because it combines the centralism with formal elements of democracy such as collective decision-making and 'self-governance' in some of the organization's decision-making bodies. Within such a legal framework, women's organizations and other social organizations might thus appear to be relatively autonomous entities, but in reality the democratic element was eliminated from the management of these organizations. According to Jiří Kabele, democratic centralism represented a non-transparent form of control over organizations (Kabele 2005: 499). This situation is also revealed by the non-systemic and non-structured

nature of the archival materials of the various Central Committee departments and of the relevant women's organizations. As a result, it is impossible to trace any clear, direct decision-making lines in detail. Kabele also claims, however, that democratic centralism blurred the dividing line between controlling and controlled, since 'the immediate object of control was the group of functionaries of the controlled institutions and organizations, who almost entirely consisted of Party members' (ibid.). In the case of women's organizations, Anežka Hodinová-Spurná the president and Julie Prokopová the vice president of the Council of Women and later of the Czechoslovak Women's Union and the Czechoslovak Women's Committee, as well as the majority of their colleagues, were members of the Party and were active on the Party's central women's commission. Depending on the context, both women thus acted either as members of their women's organization or as representatives of the Central Committee. This kind of personnel interrelationship shows the impossibility of taking a simplistic view of the relationship between the Party and women's organizations as one of controlling versus controlled.

In spite of their subservient position, in the eyes of the public, women's organizations were meant to operate with a certain level of autonomy. Only in this way could the Party present them as volunteer organizations that fulfilled the needs of this particular section of the populace, or use them as needed to confirm that the 'broad masses' supported Party policy and the building of socialism. Although the period press does not disguise the fact that the organizations' priorities included meeting Party and government directives, the organizations' activities, the 'choice' of leading representatives, and the like were presented as independent affairs of the particular women's organization.[11]

Before seizing power in February 1948, there existed multiple layers of barriers between communist women and the members of the middle-class associations that represented the strong tradition of the women's movement. One telling example of the chasm between the classes is a speech given at a nation-wide conference of communist women in 1945:

> Let us not speak of those affluent ladies who, for lack of any better or more useful employment, establish all manner of charitable clubs and institutions and satisfy their vainglory by organizing tea parties and balls whose proceeds are intended for the support of poor orphans, while all along the main thing is that their gowns be seen and their names be heard.[12]

This antipathy found full expression after February 1948. The prior activities of the women's movement were presented as intellectual, bourgeois or reactionary activities that left no room for working women and that were not associated with the greater population.[13] The Communist Party viewed the country's relatively rich civil society as a dangerous area of autonomous and uncontrolled activities, which resulted in abolishing or forcefully merging the diverse range of clubs into several mass organizations that would represent certain interests and focuses.[14] The women's organizations were to be transformed into entities of an entirely different character – both formally as well as ideologically.[15]

Of course, not even the relationship between leading representatives of the Party and the organizations newly formed after February 1948 was entirely unambiguous. The Party's officially declared line was that women's organizations and their activities were both necessary and meaningful.[16] The basic argument in favour of these organizations was the vision of the public engagement of all classes of women, with the aim of more easily indoctrinating women outside the Party with communist ideals. But although the concepts of equality and emancipation appeared incomparably less often than concepts related to political education, they remained one pillar of the proclaimed activities of women's organizations.

There existed, however, a certain discrepancy between official declarations and the 'real' state of affairs. A study of internal documents reveals a prevailing criticism of women's organizations at the higher levels of the Party apparatus – it can also be occasionally found in a careful reading of public speeches. Over most of the period under review, the Party did not show any willingness to invest any significant amount of time, energy or finances into women's organizations, preferring other areas instead. This trend was most radically felt in 1952–67, when there were no mass women's organizations, and Czechoslovakia was home to dysfunctional and isolated women's committees scattered throughout various municipalities, where they had been artificially attached to the local national committees (the communist-era version of town councils). We can find several explanations for the Party leadership's sceptical attitude towards women's organizations. First of all, there were the prevailing prejudices towards women as a social group. It is not unusual to find stereotyped comments by Party representatives at the lower and higher levels regarding women's inferiority.[17] As reflected in this 1954 report from the Olomouc region: 'Although our comrades claim to understand the importance of this area, their actions are not in accord. Sometimes, they even betray that their unconscious is still dominated by the relics of bourgeois ideas regarding their superiority towards women.'[18] Women were not considered the main bearers of the desired changes, nor were they seen as a progressive segment of society. Another widely held opinion was that it made no sense to take a different approach to men and women since 'there is no communism in our skirts and trousers'.[19] On the other hand, women were regarded as a specific social group that needed to be addressed in a specific manner. The Party's inconsistent and problematic relationship to women's organizations continued throughout the entire period under review.

Changes in the existence and structure of women's organizations

The problematic nature of the Party's relationship to women's organizations was reflected primarily in their existence (or non-existence) itself. There was no stable mass women's organization active for the entire 1948–89 period. We encounter four successive organizations – the Council of Women, the Czechoslovak Women's Union, the Czechoslovak Women's Committee, and the

revived Czechoslovak Women's Union. These were active for varying lengths of time ranging from fewer than two years to a period of 22 years. Each of these women's organizations had its own specific features in terms of formal structure and ideological objectives, but they also had many things in common.

During the post-war period, the Council of Czechoslovak Women, headed by Milada Horáková, was active starting in June 1945. The Council acted as an umbrella organization for various women's associations and coordinated these associations' activities in various areas.[20] In 1948, the Communist Party gained control of the Council and other organizations via the National Front action committees. The aim of these ad hoc institutions was to 'purge' the organization by expelling all members who did not approve of the February putsch. The committees abolished most women's associations and adapted the Czechoslovak Women's Council to the new circumstances, using it as the basis for a new mass women's organization, the Council of Women, which was active from 1948 to 1950. Paradoxically, forced directives thus managed to accomplish a long-term goal of the Czech women's movement – to bring together women from various classes of society within one single organization.

The Council of Women was officially based on individual (around 70,000 people) and collective membership. Women from other mass organizations (such as unions, youth groups and agricultural associations) were automatically made collective members of the Council of Women as well. Often these women were not even aware of their membership of the Council of Women, and the great majority never took part in the Council's activities. Thanks to these collective members, the Council of Women was a truly enormous organization, with more than two and a half million members. The communists proudly presented this figure as proof of women's approval of the new social order.[21] In this regard, the Council of Women focused on recruiting new members, and consequently also on increasing the number of its local branches, which was directly related to the Council's proclaimed need to influence as broad a spectrum of women as possible, in particular those who were not politically engaged.[22]

An important change, typical for all other organizations during the period under review, was the Council's reclassification as a state institution, which had an impact on the way it was financed. Its predecessors had been financed by membership dues, donations, public funding and the proceeds of events organized under their purview.[23] By comparison, the Council was funded primarily by the Ministry of Information. The financing from the state budget was one decisive factor in determining the state character (as opposed to independent) of these women's organizations. This state character was further reinforced by the Council's direct involvement in the National Front.[24]

The Council of Women operated in this form for only two years. Its transformation into a different form was based on a decision by the Central Committee of the CCP. Internal reports contain several reasons for this step. First of all, they emphasize the fact that the Council's organizational form prevented its full development, meaning the acquisition of a greater number of members from among the ranks of non-organized women. The Party itself claimed partial

responsibility for this state of affairs, seeing its error in a too general declaration of the Council's objectives and in the fact that it failed to provide sufficient support, real and symbolic: 'the Party did not clearly express that it was interested in the development of this organization'.[25] Another problem was seen in there being too much continuity with the pre-1948 women's organization, with the Council having adopted several of its predecessor's elements such as formal structure and statutes. All of the organization's objectives remained unchanged and were 'merely' presented in a different order. It is telling that the first objective of the pre-1948 organization (women's equality) was moved to last place.[26] The dividing line between the liberal pre-1948 organization and the Council of Women was not as distinct as the Party leadership had wanted it to be. This view is aptly reflected in a report from the Central Committee's women's commission: 'the purges have affected individuals; the methods remain'.[27]

These deficiencies were supposed to be resolved by a new women's organization with greater support from the Party.[28] And so in late March/early April 1950, the Council of Women was merged with the main women's organization in Slovakia, Živena-Union of Slovak Women. The addition of the Slovak element and the symbolic break with the pre-1948 'bourgeois' tradition was reflected in a new name – the Czechoslovak Women's Union, which existed from 1950–2. During this period, the requirement that the membership's main support come from the working class was felt more strongly as well.[29]

The Union differed from the Council of Women in three basic ways. First of all, its fusion with a Slovak partner meant that it was active throughout the entire country. Second, there were the new organizational rules, a kind of binding policy declaration containing many more practical and ideological needs of communist policy – women's equality and emancipation had been explicitly left out of the organization's objectives.[30] The closest the Union came was with the declared attempt to 'nurture women's political and cultural development, and to ensure their participation in public economic and political life'.[31] The third important change was the focus of the Union's actual activities, such as organizing women for voluntary work.

The Union did not last long. The main criticism leading to its demise was de facto very similar to the arguments for transforming the Council of Women two years earlier. The Party was dissatisfied with the size of the membership base and the level of engagement on the part of women who were not Party members. Party leaders also voiced new and quite explicit criticism regarding the point of having an independent women's organization: 'As an organization for defending women's interests, the Czechoslovak Women's Union was essentially a relic from a capitalist society in which individual segments of the population who felt their interests threatened defended themselves in so-called interest groups.'[32] This claim was often supported by the argument that the 'new era' of the socialist society guaranteed women's rights by law, and that there was thus no need to continue to fight for them in any specific manner.[33] Another factor was the social climate of the time, which increasingly followed patterns in the Soviet Union –

where there was no large independent women's organization, but only women's commissions attached to local governmental authorities.[34] Leading representatives of the Union rejected and fought against the Central Committee's proposal to dissolve the women's organization. They came up with their own proposal for dealing with the problematic issues,[35] and fiercely promoted it at a meeting of the Central Committee's women's commission: 'The women's union and the Party's department of women laid into each other as to whether to keep a mass organization or not'.[36]

Unlike the transformation of preceding and subsequent organizations, the Union's dissolution was prepared in secrecy – not only as regarded the public, but within the organization as well. The secrecy went so far that in February 1952, shortly before its dissolution, the Union planned regional conferences around the country, which were presented as being very important.[37] After its official dissolution, this approach would influence the process of creating another women's organization.

The transformation in 1952 represented a radical split with the past that, especially in terms of the organization's formal nature, removed the great majority of common features that maintained some semblance of continuity with preceding periods. It also differed from the previous restructuring in its duration, continuing without any fundamental adjustments for all of 15 years.[38] The new organizational structure was officially made public at a meeting of the staff on 20 April 1952, where it was presented as a transition to a higher form of work and as proof of the advances made by Czechoslovak women and by the 'new' society in general.[39]

In line with the Soviet model, the Union was fully dissolved and replaced with a small central organization that would represent Czechoslovak women at home and abroad, plus local women's committees scattered around the various regions.[40] Thus the Czechoslovak Women's Committee and small women's committees attached to the local national committees were founded, a completely new system, one that would exist from 1952 to 1967. The Committee had only 80 representatives, the great majority of whom had been part of the Union's leadership.[41] Its main task was to represent women internationally and to organize events for women as a whole, meaning primarily recruiting activities and the celebration of important holidays.[42]

The women's committees were isolated entities attached to the local national committees, not officially linked in any way; there was no common network that even remotely resembled a loosely structured independent organization. There were two reasons for their artificial incorporation into the local national committees. First, the idea was that the women's committees would contribute to running the national committees by making up for staffing shortages.[43] Another reason was the broad focus of these state administrative bodies, meaning that the women could be 'used' in a variety of local areas, 'a helping hand for transferring tasks onto the populace'.[44] As advisory bodies with limited authority, the activities of the women's committees were subject to approval by the local national committee leadership.

Not just anyone could become a member of a women's committee; she first had to be nominated by the National Front action committee or by the local national committee itself. The women's committees were expected to consist of 8–12 members, depending on the size of the municipality and on local conditions. They were headed by a president.[45] The status of the women's committees within the local national committees was often quite problematic. They had consciously not been designed to be permanent units, and their members' 'mandates' expired after one year, after which they had to be re-elected by the general public at meetings called especially for this purpose. In theory, this approach was supposed to constantly provide the women's committees with new ideas for work, but what it really did was highlight their fragile structure and their sporadic or nearly non-existent activities.[46] In fact, most municipalities possessed no women's committees at all; they only gradually began to be established after massive pressure on the part of the Party's leadership.

There are several reasons for this state of paralysis. One problem was the attempt to implant the Soviet model that had zero tradition in this country. The second, more important problem was ignoring the needs of the women and the municipalities themselves. Other obstacles resulted from enduring gender stereotypes: 'it has been necessary to overcome the conservatism of the local functionaries, who dismissed the women's committees with references to the old saying about women being long on hair and short on reason'.[47] At the constitutive meeting of the women's committee in the town of Tereziny Dary, the men claimed that women belonged in the barn and not at meetings.[48] Similar indignation was expressed by several residents of the town of Rochov, where a group of men gathered in front of the national committee building 'shouting that they had always managed town affairs on their own, and that they didn't need any women to help them now, either'.[49] Another reason was the local national committee's excessive workload; they saw the women's committees as one more task on top of it all. In addition, the women's committees' working assignments, their objectives and their actual manner of functioning were described in vague decrees, meaning that both the local national committees and the members of the women's committees were unsure as to how to proceed.[50]

At first glance, the idea of including women in the public sphere via the local national committees may appear as a revolutionary move in terms of transforming attitudes towards gender roles. However, these women's committees lacked sufficient authority among leading Party representatives, the local national committees and even among women themselves. Reports from the municipal level show that women, too, continued to hold traditional opinions of gender roles in society. There are frequent references to women's lack of interest, their husbands' disapproval arising from fears of them neglecting their domestic duties, and the critical stance of the town's other residents.[51] In some towns the locals thought that the women's committees were a special tactic or extraordinary measure required by serious circumstances. These were thought to be a new war during which the men would leave for the front, or perhaps the imminent fall of the communist regime, which was replacing 'its people' with women out of a

sense of self-preservation. In the town of Klokotín 'people were convinced that the end [of the regime] was near, the communists are fleeing, and that's why they are putting the women in there'.[52]

The period from 1952 to 1967 represents an absolutely unique era: except for the 80-member Czechoslovak Women's Committee, there existed no large women's organization in all of Czechoslovakia. The women's committees cannot be understood as 'branch offices' or as the local divisions of a greater whole. Their official tasks rarely addressed the questions of women's equality and emancipation. Even more than the Czechoslovak Women's Union, they were expected to engage primarily in building the new socialist state and contributed little to changing gender roles.

The creation of a new organization that would return to the organizational form of 1950–2 was intended to fundamentally change this state of affairs.[53] During preparations for the (re)constitution of the Czechoslovak Women's Union, which would be active from 1967 until 1989, several reasons were uttered. In official proclamations, the aim was to put an end to the state of 'work among women', which by its very nature prevented any personal initiative on the part of women (Čákiová 2005: 31). At the thirteenth Congress of the CCP in 1966, where the request for a new women's organization was first officially presented, there was much talk of the need to 'awaken the creative activities of women, and to create the general conditions for them to become effectively engaged in state administration and to fruitfully apply their skills in all areas' (Svoreňová-Királyová 1968: 128).[54] We also encounter criticism of the Party itself, which was accused of overlooking the growing disproportion between women's increased engagement in the workplace and their increased skills on the one hand, and their limited opportunities in life on the other (ibid.). In her critical assessment of the previous years, Helena Leflerová, the former president of the Czechoslovak Women's Committee and the future president of the reconstituted Czechoslovak Women's Union, describes the basic problem in that the rights of women were officially enshrined in socialist society but that women had limited opportunities for exercising these rights. This contradiction grew too large for the Committee to handle (Scott 1974: 114). The need to 'reinforce the organizational structure of the foundations of the women's movement' was intended to fundamentally change this situation.[55]

An independent organization would provide the necessary institutional and symbolic support for, in a sense, rehabilitating the activities of the 'women's movement' while at the same time enabling its further development in the spirit of communist ideology and policy. In this relation, President Antonín Novotný talked in his speech on the occasion of International Women's Day of a deepening of socialist democracy, adding that the main mission of the new Union would be 'to increase women's engagement in managing state and social affairs and their direct engagement in addressing the question of women's status in our socialist society' (Novotný cited in Čákiová 2005: 31). Of course, these changes were made possible by the liberalized official discourse of the late 1960s. The 'emulation' of Soviet models gave way to renewed ideas of a specific national

path towards socialism. This era also saw the expansion of the entire 'civic' sector, including the revival of some organizations that had been dissolved after February 1948, and the creation of new organizations as well (Ratajová and Rataj 2000).

Although plans for the Union's creation had been presented to the Party leadership some time earlier, it was officially founded in July 1967 in Prague.[56] In many regards the Union, especially its Czech part, followed in the footsteps of its eponymous predecessor from 1950–2. Both organizations were active throughout the entire country (including Slovakia), and both shared essentially the same organizational structure.[57] The organization received the green light for founding as many local branches as possible and for engaging the local populace as much as possible in cooperation with the national committees, which were seen as the Union's 'natural' and main ally at the local level.[58] Another revived concept was that of individual membership and mass recruiting events. In early 1969, the Union had around 300,000 members (True 2003: 43) and in 1980 the total number was given as one million (Slušná 1988: 105). The focus on the individual was the result of the problems associated with collective membership, which had proven to be merely formal (Bartoš 2007).

A more significant change involved the organization's official area of activity and its objectives. Although the statutes gave prominent support to fulfilling Party and government decrees, this time they clearly articulated what at the time were called 'women's issues'.[59] One example listed by the Union was women's insufficient level of representation in leadership positions and in public life in general. With its founding, women as a social group were given a more important symbolic position within state institutions, although their real influence was still limited.[60] However, the relative freedom for promoting these changes offered by the Prague Spring did not last long, and was significantly limited by the onset of Normalization.

The Union ceased all activities in April 1990. Less than a month earlier, the Czech Women's Union had declared its independence and had begun to break free from its past; it continues to be active in the Czech Republic to this day.[61]

A well-hidden equality

In the proclaimed objectives and general philosophical foundation of the women's organizations, we find, seamlessly intertwined, some elements of the traditional demands of the women's movement, but more elements from the ideological foundations of the Party. As Jacqui True describes it: 'After 1948, Czechoslovakia's gender regime shaped and was shaped by both official communist ideology and policy, and by pre-existing (pre-communist) gender divisions and cultural norms' (True 2003: 30).

Three factors appear fundamental to an interpretation of the objectives and working activities of women's organizations. First, the declared objectives and activities were allocated varying degrees of importance both chronologically speaking and depending on the specific context in which they were presented. A

related limiting factor was that the seemingly neutral or woman-friendly tone of the proclaimed objectives could conceal a different meaning, and that these proclamations were merely a means to a different end. And last but not least, our image of women's organizations as relatively 'autonomous' comes from purely internal documents and from reports intended for the public.

Although the proclaimed objectives and actual activities of the various women's organizations underwent numerous transformations during the more than 40-year period under review, there are many commonalities. A kind of general framework was provided by the Party's Marxist–Leninist ideology, which was presented as 'the only true scientific view of society and social phenomena' (Boldyrev 1952: 3). Another building block was the Party's view that gender-neutral society-wide issues needed to be addressed or at least given priority. These included the struggle for peace, increasing employment, and political 'awareness'; women's issues formed a separate and less important sphere. As a result, the 'statutes' of all organizations emphasized activities related to 'political education'.

The concept of political education involved ideological activities explaining basic communist values and priorities and aimed at engaging women en masse into the building of a socialist Czechoslovakia.[62] The wide range of activities included (in the 1950s) celebrations of Stalin and Gottwald, yet it also covered issues such as women's employment and job training, or preschools and nurseries. Those elements characteristic of the Party's political culture are thus seamlessly merged with the traditional issues of the women's movement.

In women's organizations' proclaimed objectives, the demand for gender equality usually appears in one form or another. The issue appeared only fleetingly in the years following the February putsch, and disappeared almost entirely in the women's committees during most of the 1950s and 1960s. If we do come across it in a key document of one of the era's women's organizations, it is never in a leading position. From an ideological viewpoint, the issue of gender equality was not entirely unproblematic. On the one hand, leading Party representatives and the women's organizations themselves frequently stated that gender equality was achieved through the transition to a new social order after February 1948; on the other, the putsch was interpreted as the beginning of the road to socialism, whose shining accomplishments everyone would have to wait for. This latter interpretation appeared more frequently over time, until it began to dominate in the late 1960s. During the communist era, the word 'equality' (like many others) often concealed a wide range of meanings. One lovely example can be found in a speech given by Prime Minister Antonín Zápotocký in 1949:

Working women declare openly that they consider women's equality to be more than an empty phrase. They want to control their lives and the future of their children themselves. And in order to do so, they first of all join the workforce, guided by their endeavour to improve working methods and thus increase productivity in the factories and on the fields.

(Zápotocký cited in Hillová 1949: 53)

Again, the concept of equality is understood as a mixture of political awareness and socialist working zeal. The above quote also highlights another interesting fact that is characteristic for the entire period under review. All key documents of the studied women's organizations were addressed directly to the organizations' members and, by extension, to all of the country's women – not as an appeal or a call to action, but in the sense of a target group that formed the means for fulfilling the stated objectives. Women were not primarily the subjects, but rather the objects of the organizations' activities.[63]

Let us return to the terminology used by women's organizations in 1948–89. Except for 'equality', these organizations did not generally make much use of other terms associated with the women's movement. Their statutes never mentioned women's emancipation as a desired objective to be achieved. The concept of emancipation does occasionally appear in official statements issued by the women's organizations and the Party. Nevertheless, it returned to the limelight only in the 1970s and 1980s.[64] It is also interesting to track the frequency of the term 'women's movement'. By the early 1950s, it had been almost completely removed from the official vocabulary, and replaced by the more general and ambiguous term 'work among women'. This term does, however, more accurately capture the nature of activities of women's organizations. If the opposite were true, a more suitable phrase would have been 'work for women'.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the phrase 'women's movement' typically appeared in relation to the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) and the various objectives of the 'international' women's movement.[65] Domestically, the most commonly used phrase during this period was 'women's organization' or, more generally, 'women's issues'. 'Feminism' was a wholly unacceptable term, since state-socialist discourse associated it with 'bourgeois' movements, First Republic ideas and the 'capitalist' countries of Western Europe or the United States. As late as 1988, a publication dedicated to the status of women in socialist society confirms this view:

Today, the neo-feminist movement follows in the footsteps of the bourgeois and petit bourgeois movement, which came together within the feminist movement [...] it has been particularly influential in those countries in which communist parties have had only very limited possibilities for significantly determining the direction of the women's movement.

(Slušná 1988: 19)

Gender-related agenda

The central issue during the period under review was the question of women's employment. From the end of the Second World War until the early 1960s, the Czechoslovak economy suffered from a constant labour shortage, in particular in heavy industry.[66] Women as a social group were perceived as a 'reserve' source of labour that had not really been taken advantage of. Women's organizations during this period organized labour recruitment drives among potential female

employees. They put together a detailed and extensive list of campaign methods, the great majority of which involved pressure via daily newspapers, magazines and radio. Campaign plans called for the radio waves to broadcast regular reports, and the print media was expected to tell the story of specific working women, including how much they earned. Public meetings, lectures and targeted recruitment drives also played a role. For instance, in March 1951 a group of female tractor drivers from Ostrava came to the town of Klimkovice to sing the praises of their profession.[67] In 1950, the Women's Services recruitment centre was established in order to offer advice or direct employment recommendations to women who were looking for work. Working together primarily with the regional national committees, these centres also gathered information regarding companies' needs and job openings, vacancies at nurseries and day-care centres, factory canteens, and the number of unemployed women in a particular region.[68] Female job-seekers were shown the benefits of entering the workforce: personal development, good wages and an appeal to their sense for 'the good of the whole' – meaning the development of the socialist economy and of society in general. Starting in the late 1960s, the question of women's employment took on more subtle forms. One reason was the high level of women's employment (47.2 per cent), which ranked Czechoslovakia in third place in the world in terms of female employment.[69] The subject of equal wages and equal qualifications did not begin to appear more frequently until the late 1960s, and would go on to be one of the main issues related to women's employment for the next two decades.[70] Another burning issue during the final two decades of communist rule was the question of finding an appropriate balance between women's employment and their role as mothers.[71] During the same period, the feminization of certain economic sectors began to be considered a problem.

Women's employment was closely associated with the question of facilities for preschool-aged children. Women's organizations worked to convince the Party leadership to provide as much funding as possible for the establishment of nurseries and preschools. Their activities included the search for buildings that could house facilities for preschool-aged children, as well as negotiations with the relevant institutions. Roughly until the mid-1950s, women's organizations also worked to change the public's ambiguous opinions of such facilities. They tried to convince mothers that entrusting their children to the care of strangers would not reflect poorly on them or negatively impact their offspring. Particular emphasis was placed on the advantages of the collective experience ('a most important educational factor') for the individual's development, the amount of time spent playing games, the teachers' direct and more intensive attention, or the elimination of injuries in the kitchen. These arguments are concisely summarized in an article in *Vlasta* entitled 'Your child, too, shall go to preschool': 'Believe us when we say that he will fare better at preschool than at home with an eternally harried mother. He will grow more naturally and faster than at your apron strings'.[72] This rhetoric is abandoned in the 1960s, and the main authorities for assessing facilities for preschool children become scientific experts – doctors, psychologists and the like.[73] Children's attendance of preschools and

nurseries is now assessed in a different light, with a loving home considered at least equally important for the child's auspicious development (Hašková 2008).

Calls for (female) expertise can also be heard from within the revived Czechoslovak Women's Union, where a scientific approach to gender issues was expected to help women's emancipation:

> We call on all women who have attained a high level of education and have the opportunity to scientifically study women's issues within the broader context – scientists and experts from the fields of philosophy, economics, law, education, healthcare, sociology, culture, and other disciplines – to put their knowledge to the service of a great task of humanity: women's liberation.
>
> (Pecka *et al.* 1995: 257)

Another traditional topic of the women's movement is the question of women's involvement in politics. Women's organizations during the communist era focused on this issue as well, although in a somewhat modified form. There are only rare calls for women's direct engagement in top state or Communist Party institutions. What we find instead is the ever-present emphasis on the need for women to show a constant interest in political affairs. The readers of *Vlasta* could thus read: 'Only if we succeed in rousing even that woman who still believes that her lace doilies are more important than our joint efforts for peace [...] can we foil the evil intentions of those planning the next war!'.[74] Domestically, this meant building socialism; on the international level, this meant intense cooperation with the unambiguously pro-communist WIDF. In practice, most of these activities involved voluntary and unpaid work. In 1951 the members of the Union's regional Liberec office 'fought for world peace [...] against the ruthless American imperialists' by spending 300 hours building a local cowshed.[75] This example shows the paradoxical meaning of the phrase 'struggle for peace' and highlights the era's ambivalent nature, with activities officially presented as 'pro-peace' serving to strengthen society's militarism and only helping to worsen international relations during the Cold War.

This using women as a social group in order to promote communist objectives can also be seen in relation to parliamentary elections. Through the women's organizations, women were exhorted to go to elections and to declare their approval of the single candidate list. There is no criticism of the low number of women on the list or in top Party or government positions; True writes that '[w]omen were typically excluded from the managerial and bureaucratic networks of Communist Party exploiters, which were equivalent to old boys clubs' (True 2003: 32). To one extent or another, all women's organizations in 1948–89 also reflect attitudes towards important political events. The Czechoslovak Women's Union publicly denounced the defendants during the show trials of the 1950s, Milada Horáková included.[76] In 1968, on the other hand, the organization pushed for a critical approach to communism.[77] During the Prague Spring, the Union criticized the lack of women's equality within

society in the 'Zpráva o situaci ve společenských organizacích' (Report on the situation in social organizations), arguing that 'there is a growing discrepancy between what is guaranteed by our constitution and laws and the possibilities for exercising these rights in real life' (cited in Pecka et al. 1995: 33). The criticism was also aimed at the Party itself, which failed to provide the conditions necessary for equality (ibid.: 257).[78] After the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968, the Union did not immediately succumb to the pressures of Normalization. In November 1968, it sent a letter to the Central Committee expressing its concerns that the Central Committee would return to taking a directive approach towards society in general and the Union in particular. In early 1969, the Central Committee decided that the ongoing reform currents within the Union were an example of 'right-wing opportunism'. Soon thereafter, the organization saw a partial change in leadership (Čákiová 2005: 76).

Another topic is the manner in which International Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated and interpreted.[79] The celebration of women and their contribution to society were pushed into the background and turned upside down. Instead of giving thanks to women, women were expected to give thanks to and help socialist society and the Communist Party:

> International Women's Day will take place fully under the banner of the growing struggle for peace [...] it will be an opportunity to again appreciate the successes of our socialist work and the peace-loving efforts by millions of people around the world.
>
> (Vaníčková 1952)

In line with this logic, IWD was accompanied by labour recruitment drives and the signing of work-related pledges: in 1951 women in Czechoslovakia celebrated 'their day' by putting in more than one million hours of work on communist labour brigades in industry and more than a million and a half hours in agriculture.[80] In this regard, the Party continued steadfastly to approach IWD in the traditional manner developed during the inter-war period, when IWD was an opportunity for protesting unemployment and the economic depression. According to Heitlinger, at the time IWD fulfilled the same function as May Day (Heitlinger 1979: 54). By participating, women demonstrated their unity and, most importantly, their support of socialism and its objectives, thus helping to reinforce the existing regime.[81]

Conclusion

The frequent restructuring of the four successive women's organizations that existed in Czechoslovakia in the period 1948–89 testifies to their unsteady and problematic status within society. The reasons for these institutional changes can be found primarily in the attitudes of the Central Committee of the CCP. Nevertheless, the revival of the Czechoslovak Women's Union in 1967 shows that, despite their poor institutional support, both the women's movement and gender issues continued to be of importance within society.

A central question regarding women's organizations during the period under review is their relationship to the Central Committee. They were connected both institutionally and in terms of personnel. It is thus impossible to identify a clear dividing line between the Central Committee's activities and the leadership of the women's organizations. Research into the Party's influence is still in its beginnings, and thus offers no conclusions as to the nature of the Party's relationship to other entities within society. What is more, the study of women's organizations has not looked into the question of their real activities on the local level.

During the period under review, women's organizations varied in the degree to which they included gender issues within their official objectives and actual activities. Nevertheless, these took a different form than during prior stages of the women's movement. As the main agents in the areas of 'work among women' or the 'women's movement', women's organizations became in many regards tools for promoting communist ideals and the Party's needs within society. The concept of expropriation (Havelková 2009, 2013) can be applied here in relation to women's status within state socialism. The concept of expropriation describes the Party's forced adoption and use, in 1948, of the women's organizations and, more importantly, of the main objectives of the women's movement for its own objectives. If, for instance, we look at the main focus of the work of women's organizations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – employment – we find that the core of this issue is 'expropriated'. Yet issues such as improving women's status in society, women's equality and emancipation were always secondary or not mentioned at all.

Much of the contemporary Czech historical discourse has interpreted women's organizations, like other interest groups during the communist era, as mere 'cogs' within the regime. This view gives one-sided preference to the practical implementation of party ideology and sees women's organizations as automatic, obedient executors of tasks assigned by the Central Committee. Although the organizational structure, proclaimed objectives and actual activities can be used to support this interpretation, I consider it to be reductionist, for it ignores several important aspects. First of all, at least in two important instances women's organizations did not behave as obedient executors of orders 'from above'. In 1951, representatives from the Czechoslovak Women's Union went against the Central Committee's internal recommendations to dissolve this organization and created their own plan for improving the criticized points. During negotiations on this subject, the Union's representatives engaged in open ideological conflict with members of the Central Committee's women's commission. Another instance of an attempt at a relatively independent existence is associated with the Prague Spring. At the time, the leading representatives of the revived Czechoslovak Women's Union criticized the Party for its insufficient support, issued an action plan and supported the 'Two Thousand Words', a manifesto issued by scientists and intellectuals in support of the Prague Spring reforms. The one-sided interpretation of women's organizations as mere cogs of the Party is also weakened by the fact that there still existed elements of

continuity with previous stages of the women's movement. The limits of a one-sided interpretation are further highlighted by the current research, which shows us that in some areas the organizations' activities helped change women's status and gender roles even though the majority of their activities were aimed primarily at promoting party ideology within society.

Translation: Stephan von Pohl

Notes

1 Although this study looks at the entire era of communist rule in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1989, the central focus of this chapter is the period immediately following the February 1948 putsch (i.e. the 1950s), which represents the author's dominant area of interest. These facts are reflected within several of the conclusions contained herein, as well as in the study's general structure.

2 Andrea Petö has covered the immediate post-war period in Hungary (Petö 2000). Similarly, Melissa Feinberg discussed the women's movement in Czechoslovakia between 1945 and 1950 in the context of the early Cold-War politics (Feinberg 2012).

3 *Vlasta* first appeared in 1947, and was eventually published by all the women's organizations that existed in 1948–89. Each of these women's organizations had its own press department, which was responsible for publishing this magazine. The magazine's importance as a source is underscored by its overall circulation (c.630,000 until 1967 and even more afterwards). I examined all issues from the years 1948–55 and 1967–8.

4 In particular for the Normalization era, the question arises as to whether the local branches of the Czechoslovak Women's Union performed their planned and approved activities merely as a formality, while the main focus or at least a part of their activities was exercised in altered form.

5 For a more detailed look at this issue, see Karel Kaplan (1993a).

6 In 1936, the structure of the women's commissions was in place and working successfully. They were far more numerous and better organized than, for instance, in the Social Democratic Party.

7 Meeting minutes, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 109 [Central Committee of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – women's commission, unit 109], Národní archiv Praha [National Archives Prague, NAP].

8 Ibid.

9 The problem of the Central Committee's oversized apparatus and bureaucratism was criticized as early as the beginning of the 1950s, as documented in the wealth of archival materials from the individual organizations' activities.

10 The Act culminated and legally enshrined the post-1948 tendency to centralize and unify the previously broad spectrum of clubs and associations. The old 'clubs' were replaced by 'volunteer organizations', meaning a single monopolistic union for a certain area of social activities.

11 By period press I mean official newspapers and magazines such as *Rudé právo*, the Communist Party's daily, and *Vlasta*.

12 Party National Women's Conference, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 43, NAP.

13 As early as at meetings of the Party's women's commissions on 26 February 1948, it was variously suggested that, in connection with the transformation of the Council of Czechoslovak Women, 'this is an excellent opportunity to liquidate various dubious women's clubs and associations'. Meeting minutes of women's commissions, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 1, NAP. The Party associated the adjectives 'bourgeois' and 'outmoded' with the tradition of civil society as a whole.

14 Before February 1948, there were 45,113 clubs and interest groups in the Czech lands. By 1967, these had been gradually reduced to a mere 650 (Kaplan 2002: 336).

15 Meeting minutes, holdings of ÚV KSČ – organizační sekretariát [Central Committee of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia – administrative secretariat, unit 55], NAP.

16 During 1952–67, when there was no large women's organization, the range of official statements was somewhat more diverse.

17 Report on the activities of the Central Women's Commission for the Central Committee secretariat, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 5, NAP.

18 General report from the Olomouc region, 1954, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 195, NAP.

19 Minutes of meeting of regional representatives for work among women, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 111, NAP.

20 The Council of Czechoslovak Women was the direct successor to the most important liberally oriented inter-war women's organization, the Women's National Council, which had been headed by Františka Plamínková.

21 One example is the documents for the Women's International Democratic Federation. Report for the WIDF, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty [Central Action Committee of National Front, box 67], NAP.

22 The priority given to these efforts is confirmed by the founding of more than 50 new local councils over fewer than 4 months. Branch offices of the Council of Women continued to grow: according to internal data, there were 250 in November 1948 and as many as 364 less than half a year later. However, not in all cases were these branches engaged in regular activities. Meeting minutes of the Party central women's commission, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 2/2, NAP.

23 Statues of the Council of Czechoslovak Women, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 67, NAP.

24 The integration of interest groups into the National Front had been planned since its formation in 1945. That same year saw the founding of the National Front of Women, which brought together women from all four political parties active in the Czech lands. Because of internal disputes, however, the National Front of Women ceased its activities at the beginning of 1947. Mass organizations were not made members of the National Front until after February 1948. The 1951 Act on Volunteer Organizations, which regulates the status of such organizations, expressly named several organizations including the Czechoslovak Women's Union. For more see Ratajová and Rataj (2000).

25 Proposal for creating a nationwide organization of Czechoslovak women, holdings of ÚV KSČ – Marie Švermová, organizační oddělení, unit 78, NAP.

26 The last of the statutes' four points described the aim of introducing equality in practice and of permanently guaranteeing equality via the constitution.

27 Minutes from a meeting of the Party's central women's commission, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 2, NAP.

28 It can be documented by the grandiose nature of the merger meeting, including the presence of state and Party representatives; the daily press described the Union's founding as an important event, giving it a considerable amount of attention.

29 Although I have not come across any document showing the professional structure of the Union's membership base, based on the members of its central committee I may infer that the call for a greater involvement of working-class women was not successfully met. Of the 15-member committee, only two women could be said to come from this part of the population: the maternity ward laundress Anna Krátká and the shock-worker forewoman Eliška Svobodová. The absolute majority of the other board members were active as members of parliament or as 'professional' functionaries of various other organizations. Personnel composition of the Czechoslovak Women's Union, holdings of ÚV KSČ – oddělení masových organizací, unit15/2, NAP.

30 As a result of legislative changes, organizations were no longer governed by statutes but by organizational rules.

31 Draft organizational rules for the Czechoslovak Women's Union, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 64, NAP.

32 'Ruling on new forms of mass political work among women'. *Organisační zpravodaj* 7–8, 1952: 3.

33 Meeting documents, holdings of ÚV KSČ – oddělení masových organizací, unit 14, NAP.

34 The model was the Soviet Union's Antifascist Committee of Soviet Women and local women's committees operating on the same principle as the future organizational structure. Documents for a meeting of the Central Committee's political secretariat, holdings of ÚV KSČ – oddělení masových organizací, unit 15/2, NAP.

35 This plan envisioned a massive membership recruitment drive, the targeted reorganization of administrative bodies, and increased Party interest in the Union.

36 Meeting minutes, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 109, NAP.

37 Regional conference of the Czechoslovak Women's Union (1952) *Organisační zpravodaj* 2: 9.

38 This durability was not primarily the result of the newly formed entities' successful functioning, but rather reflected the long-term plans of the era's Party leadership.

39 Speeches given at the 20 April meeting announcing the Union's dissolution included arguments that there was no need for a large independent women's organization because women's rights were no longer being suppressed and they were sufficiently involved in building the new state. 'Ruling on new forms of mass political work among women'. *Organisační zpravodaj* 7–8, 1952: 5.

40 Meeting documents, holdings of ÚV KSČ – oddělení masových organizací, unit 14, NAP.

41 The most important representatives of both organizations included Anežka Hodinová-Spurná, Anna Šlechtová and Julie Prokopová. Composition of the Czechoslovak Women's Committee, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 152, NAP.

42 One particularly well-developed form of international cooperation with other women's organizations from the Eastern Bloc was via the Women's International Democratic Federation founded in 1945 in Paris.

43 In reality, women were not particularly expected to be regular members of national committees. Nevertheless, the incorporation of the women's committees was intended to increase these bodies' productivity by increasing their working potential. According to Karel Kaplan, nobody was particularly interested in joining the national committees: 'There was a clear and visible unwillingness on the part of citizens to become members of the national committees, and if they somehow succumbed to the pressure, then they at least refused any official positions and avoided meetings' (Kaplan 2002: 226).

44 Activities and tasks of the women's committees, Praha 1954, p. 26, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 69, NAP.

45 In actuality, most women's committees consisted of three to five members, a little more in large localities. Report on the state of constituting the Women's Committees, on the activities of the 'Women's Committees' and related experiences, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 68, NAP.

46 'Úvaha nad plánem výboru žen' [Some thoughts on the plan for the women's committee], *Vlasta*, 1954, 50: 10.

47 Report on the course of elections to the local national committees' women's committees, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 68, NAP.

48 According to the official report, the only woman present was the speaker of a local national committee. Report on the course of constituting the local national committees' women's committees, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 68, NAP.

49 Regional reports on the founding of the local national committees' women's committees, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 190/2, NAP.

50 Report on the course of constituting the local national committees' women's committees, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 68, NAP.

51 Report on the course of elections to the local national committees' women's committees, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 68, NAP.

52 Report on the course of constituting the local national committees' women's committees in the individual regions, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 177, NAP.

53 'Co chcete vědět o Československém svazu žen' [What you need to know about the Czechoslovak Women's Union], *Vlasta*, 1967, 6: 2.

54 The proposal was officially presented by the members of the Czechoslovak Women's Committee, but in all likelihood this subject was discussed by the Central Committee prior to the congress. Only archival research will be able to answer the fundamental question as to who actually initiated this proposal.

55 'Od Výboru čs. žen k Československému svazu žen' [From the Czechoslovak Women's Committee to the Czechoslovak Women's Union], *Vlasta*, 1967, 23: 2.

56 As early as 1965, the Czechoslovak Women's Committee presented a document for the planned thirteenth Party Congress containing the demand for a better organizational foundation (Heitlinger 1979: 68).

57 The organization's countrywide scope was altered with Czechoslovakia's federalization in 1969. In January of that year, the Czechoslovak Women's Union was split into a Czech Women's Union and a Slovak Women's Union. In February 1969, a coordinating body called the Czechoslovak Council of Women was formed from the boards of these two national unions. In 1974 the organizational structure was shifted back to the countrywide level and the Czechoslovak Women's Union revived. This unified organization managed affairs on a centralized basis and limited the authority of the 'national' councils, for the existence of the two Unions was formally preserved. The now superfluous Czechoslovak Council of Women was dissolved. These changes went hand in hand with the process of Normalization and the trend of greater top-down and direct control (Čákiová 2005: 61–77).

58 This time around, however, their main activities were to be determined by an independent women's organization, and subordination to the national committees was criticized.

59 This point was a standard part of all important declarations of their objectives made by various organizations, not only in the 1960s but throughout the entire period of communist rule.

60 According to Heitlinger, the Union could present its proposals to various central institutions, but in practice neither the Party nor the government or other organizations took much notice of them (Heitlinger 1979: 67–70).

61 For more on the nature and activities of the Czech Women's Union, see its present homepage www.csz.cz.

62 Directive for work among women, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 67, NAP.

63 This is not the first time that we encounter this concept within the Czech women's movement. Especially in the nineteenth century, women were expected to 'sacrifice themselves' for the good of the nation, raise their educational level in order to better raise their children to be proud of their nationality, and the like. During the First Czechoslovak Republic, their main task was to help build the Czechoslovak state. I thank Hana Havelková for calling my attention to these contexts. For more see Malečková (2002) and Havelková (2007).

64 'Emancipace ženy v dnešním slova smyslu je úplnou degradací ženství' [Women's emancipation in today's meaning of the word is a complete degradation of womanhood], *Vlasta*, 1968, 22: 15.

65 Francisca de Haan has been researching the activities of the WIDF in the context of the Cold War (de Haan 2010).

66 In relation to the preference given heavy industry after February 1948, there was a greater demand for professions engaged in this sector. Over the course of five years (i.e. until 1953), the total number of blue-collar workers increased by 330,000, including 70,000 women who were previously active in the household. The total share of women in industry in 1948 was 27.5 per cent; nine years later it was 35.8 per cent and in 1967 it reached 42 per cent (Kaplan 1993b: 9).

67 Report to district and regional committees of the Czechoslovak Women's Union, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 69, NAP.

68 Plan for integrating women into work, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen, unit 69, NAP.

69 In 1969 more than 80 per cent of women of productive age (15–55) were employed. First place in women's employment was held by the USSR; the GDR was in second place (Scott 1974: 84).

70 'Dopis vládě' [A letter to the government], *Vlasta*, 18, 1968: 2.

71 'Nesmíme promarnit příležitost. Musíme důsledně jednat v zájmu žen.' [We must not miss this opportunity. We must act consistently in the interest of women], *Vlasta*, 1968, 19: 12.

72 'I na vaše dítě, maminko, čeká mateřská škola!' [Your child, too, shall go to preschool!], *Vlasta*, 1953, 16: 10.

73 'Lékaři o jeslích' [Doctors talk about preschool], *Vlasta*, 1967, 8: 3.

74 'Den solidarity' [Day of solidarity], *Vlasta*, 1949, 11: 9.

75 *Vlasta*, 1951, 5: 7.

76 The Union sent an indignant letter to the state court in Prague demanding harsh punishment, and also organized public lectures where Milada Horáková was called an irredeemable class enemy. Notes on lectures regarding the trial of Horáková and co., holdings of Miroslava Grimmichová, unit 34, NAP.

77 'Komuniké ze zasedání předsednictva ÚV Čs. Svazu žen' [A report from the meeting of the board of the central committee of the Czechoslovak Women's Union], *Vlasta*, 1968, 10: 2.

78 In June 1968, the Czechoslovak Women's Union issued an action plan criticizing the existing state of affairs and containing a proposal for changes.

79 Preparations for the promotion of the celebration of holidays and important anniversaries – besides IWD, this included certain holidays added to the calendar by the Party, such as the Great October Revolution and May Day – formed a significant portion of the activities of all the women's organizations studied here.

80 Report on the activities of the Czechoslovak Women's Union in 1951, p. 2, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty, box 68, NAP.

81 Sociologist Radim Marada reaches the same conclusion for the Normalization era: 'The regime continued to derive its legitimacy from citizens' public participation in political life – at least formal participation, in most cases purely symbolic, but always loyal and, if necessary, compulsory' (Marada 2003: 11). This state of affairs was first diagnosed by Václav Havel in his now famous essay 'The Power of the Powerless' (Havel 1991).

References

Ashwin, Sarah (ed.) (2000) *Gender, State and society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, London: Routledge.

Bartoš, Jiří (2007) *Ženy a Český svaz žen: 707–1897–1967–1969–1989–1992–2007*, Prague: Český svaz žen.

Boldyrev, Nikolaj Ivanovič (1952) *O morálním profilu sovětského člověka*, Prague: Svět sovětů.

Čákiová, Julie (2005) *Československý svaz žen a jeho úloha v letech 1967–1970*, unpublished MA dissertation, Prague: Charles University.

de Haan, Francisca (2010) 'Continuing Cold War paradigms in the Western historiography of transnational women's organisations: the case of the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF)', *Women's History Review* 19, 4: 547–73.

Feinberg, Melissa (2012) 'Battling for peace: the transformation of the women's movement in Cold War Czechoslovakia and Eastern Europe', in Joanna Regulska and Bonnie G. Smith (eds) *Women and Gender in Postwar Europe: from Cold War to European Union*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Ghodsee, Kristen (2012) 'Rethinking state socialist mass women's organizations: the Committee of the Bulgarian Women's Movement and the United Nations Decade for Women, 1975–1985', *Journal of Women's History*, 24, 4: 49–73.

Harsch, Donna (2007) *Revenge of the Domestic: women, the family and communism in the German Democratic Republic*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hašková, Hana (2008) 'Doma, v jeslích nebo ve školce?'. Online. Available: www.genderonline.cz/uploads/c86f17b2dba27f8958beda4239ab73025b9b0cd4_doma-v-jeslich-nebo-ve-skolce.pdf (accessed 11 July 2013).

Havel, Václav (1978) 'Moc bezmocných'; trans. Paul Wilson (1991) 'The Power of the Powerless', in Václav Havel and Paul Wilson (eds) *Open Letters: selected writings: 1965–1990*, New York: Vintage.

Havelková, Hana (2007) 'Konec idyly? Možné konceptualizace postavení žen v moderní české historii', in Jana Cviková, Jana Juráňová and Ľubica Kobová (eds) *Histórie žien: Aspekty písania a čítania*, Bratislava: Aspekt.

Havelková, Hana (2009) 'Dreifache Enteignung und eine unterbrochene Chance: Der "Prager Frühling" und die Frauen- und Geschlechterdiskussion in der Tschechoslowakei', *L'Homme: Europäische Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft*, 20, 2: 31–49.

Havelková, Hana (2013) '(De)centralizovaná genderová politika: role Státní populační komise', in Hana Havelková and Libora Oates-Indruchová (eds) *Proměny genderové kultury české společnosti 1948–1989*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Heitlinger, Alena (1979) *Women and state socialism: sex inequality in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia*, London: Macmillan.

Hillová, Olga (ed.) (1949) *Buduj vlast – posílíš mír: Z první celostátní konference údernic ze závodů a vzorných zemědělek 19. a 20. března 1949*, Prague: Ministerstvo informací a osvěty.

Ilič, Melanie, Susan E. Reid and Lynne Attwood (eds) (2004) *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Janák, Jan (1992) 'Spolky v českých zemích do roku 1951', in *Politické strany a spolky na jižní Moravě*, Brno: Okresní archiv Břeclav.

Jancar, Barbara (1978) *Women under Communism*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Jechová, Květa (2008) 'Cesta k emancipaci: Postavení ženy v české společnosti 20. století. Pokus o vymezení problému', in Oldřich Tůma and Tomáš Vilímek (eds) *Pět studií k dějinám české společnosti*, Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

Kabele, Jiří (2005) *Z kapitalismu do socialismu a zpět: Teoretické vyšetřování přerodů Československa a České republiky*, Prague: Karolinum.

Kaplan, Karel (1993a) *Aparát ÚV Party v letech 1948–1968: Studie a dokumenty*, Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

Kaplan, Karel (1993b) *Sociální souvislosti krizí komunistického režimu*, Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

Kaplan, Karel (2002) *Kořeny československé reformy 1968, IV*, Brno: Doplněk.

Malečková, Jitka (2002) *Úrodná půda: žena ve službách národa*, Prague: ISV.

Marada, Radim (2003) *Kultura protestu a politizace každodennosti*, Brno: CDK.

Národní archiv Praha [National Archives Prague], holdings of Miroslava Grimmichová.

Národní archiv Praha, holdings of Ústřední akční výbor Národní fronty [Central Action Committee of National Front].

Národní archiv Praha, holdings of ÚV KSČ – komise žen [Central Committee of CPC – Women's Commission].

Národní archiv Praha, holdings of ÚV KSČ – Marie Švermová, organizační oddělení [Central Committee of CPC – Marie Švermová, Administrative Department].

Národní archiv Praha, holdings of ÚV KSČ – oddělení masových organizací [Central Committee of CPC – Department of Mass Organizations].

Národní archiv Praha, holdings of ÚV KSČ – organizační sekretariát [Central Committee of CPC – Administrative Secretariat].

Nečasová, Denisa (2011) *Buduj vlast – posílíš mír! Ženské hnutí v českých zemích 1945–1955*, Brno: Matice moravská.

Organisační zpravodaj Československého svazu žen, 1952.

Pecka, Jindřich, Josef Belda and Jiří Hoppe (eds) (1995) *Občanská společnost 1967–1970: Emancipační hnutí uvnitř Národní fronty*, Brno: Doplněk.

Petö, Andrea (2000) 'Women's associations in Hungary: mobilization and demobilization, 1945–1951', in Claire Duchen and Irene Bandhauer-Schöffmann (eds) *When the War Was over: women, war and peace in Europe, 1940–1956*, London: Leicester University Press.

Ratajová, Jana and Tomáš Rataj (2000) 'Podoby a proměny spolkového života v Praze v letech 1918–1990', *Documenta Pragensia XVIII*, Prague: Archiv hlavního města Prahy.

Saurer, Edith, Margareth Lanzinger and Elizabeth Frysak (eds) (2006) *Women's Movement Network and Debates in Post-Communist Countries in the 19th and 20th Century*, Vienna: Böhlau Verlag.

Scott, Hilda (1974) *Does Socialism Liberate Women? Experiences from Eastern Europe*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Shaffer, Harry G. (1981) *Women in the two Germanies: a comparative study of a socialist and a non-socialist society*, New York: Pergamon.

Slušná, Nataša (1988) *Postavení ženy ve společnosti: K problematice postavení ženy v socialistické společnosti*, Prague: Charles University.

Svoreňová-Királyová, Blanka (1968) *Žena 20. století ve světě práce*, Prague: Práce.

True, Jacqui (2003) *Gender, Globalization and Post Socialism: the Czech Republic after communism*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Vaníčková, Slávka (1952) 'Připravujeme mohutné oslavy Mezinárodního dne žen!' [We are organizing massive celebrations of International Women's Day!], *Organisační zpravodaj*, 4: 1.

Vlasta, 1948–55, 1967–68.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1979) 'The status of women in a socialist order: Czechoslovakia, 1948–1978, *Slavic Review*, 38, 4: 583–602.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1981) 'Elite strategy toward women in Czechoslovakia: liberation or mobilization?, *Studies in Comparative Communism*, 14, 2–3: 123–42.

Wolchik, Sharon and Alfred G. Meyer (eds) (1985) *Women, State and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Zápotocký, Antonín (1949) 'Projev předsedy vlády Antonína Zápotockého na Celostátní konferenci údernic a vzorných zemědělek dne 20. března 1949 v Praze v Lucerně' [Speech by Prime Minister Antonín Zápotocký at the Nationwide Conference of shock workers and model agricultural women on 20 March 1949 in Prague's Lucerna Hall], in *Buduj vlast – posíliš mír: Z první celostátní konference údernic ze závodů a vzorných zemědělek 19. a 20. března 1949*, Prague: Ministerstvo informací a osvěty.

4 State approaches to homosexuality and non-heterosexual lives in Czechoslovakia during state socialism

Věra Sokolová

The Czechoslovak state-socialist regime, despite its brutality in many areas of life, surprisingly never enacted a hateful or seditious campaign against homosexuality and non-heterosexual people.[1] State-socialist-era laws on sexuality were not only more lenient in comparison to previous imperial, inter-war and Nazi legislation but the institutional discourse of sexuality provided a more emancipated context for non-heterosexual sexuality than in many Western states (D'Emilio and Freedman 1988; Green and West 1997; Rupp 2001; Kuhar and Takács 2007). That does not mean that homosexuality was accepted with open arms; there certainly was public contempt for homosexuality in state-socialist Czechoslovakia but such popular attitudes pre-dated the state-socialist regime's accession to power and cannot be interpreted as a 'communist invention'. The one-party state did not support diversity and found all identities that challenged state-socialist ideology as suspect. In this sense, the repressive apparatus did not care or target homosexuals or transsexuals in any different ways than, for example, hippies, rockers or believers (Seidl *et al.* 2012).

The regulation of sexuality in state-socialist Czechoslovakia also has to be placed in the context of the effort of the Communist Party to maintain the monopoly on power it gained in 1948 and its repression of private ownership and individual rights. Historically rooted homophobic sentiments of mainstream society blended together with the systematic destruction of freedoms and individuality, affecting all people regardless of their sexual orientation. The regime was not an omnipotent power, but a conglomerate of many discourses and practices that applied repression or leniency in diverse ways. In the context of state approach to (homo)sexuality, those discourses and practices were applied by countless teachers, doctors, censors and others who had the discursive power to interpret the laws and directives from above and apply them in ways they deemed appropriate in the given context. As this research revealed, these historical agents played a fundamental role in shaping the choices, life strategies and everyday experiences of non-heterosexual people in Czechoslovakia during the state-socialist period.

Moreover, non-heterosexual people in Czechoslovakia had a powerful, albeit unexpected, ally: Czechoslovak sexology and sexologists, who played an

important, and mainly positive, role in the process of decriminalizing homosexuality in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Procházka 1997; Hromada 2000). Scholars examining Czechoslovak sexology have emphasized only the negative aspects of the sexological discourse, which defined homosexuality as a perversion and disease (Lišková 2012; Řídký 2013). Contrary to this view, this chapter argues that Czechoslovak sexologists were not only purveyors of a heteronormative discourse but also actively challenged the picture of homosexual subjects as (only) deviant and sick. They did so in quite subtle ways, making it difficult to decode whether they were proponents or critics of the heteronormative system. As trustworthy, legitimate experts of the state they defined and disseminated normative 'truths' about sexuality. Comprehensive research of all sexological writings on homosexuality, transsexuality and intersexuality from 1947–89 (recorded in the database Bibliographia medica Čechoslovaca (BMČ) at the National Medical Library in Prague), together with oral histories discussed in this chapter, indicate that from the mid-1970s sexological offices also became sites of non-heterosexual self-discovery and community.

This chapter examines the ways in which state institutions and approaches towards homosexuality intersected with the lives and experiences of people who identified themselves (mainly retroactively) as gays, lesbians or transsexuals. I show that gender and sexuality worked as tools of regulation and control and how non-heterosexual people responded to this pressure. Such persons were unable to have a legal community, were discriminated against in many areas of their private and public lives and at times were subjected to random acts of violence, surveillance and political harassment (Fanel 2000; Procházka *et al.* 2003; Nedbálková 2007). At the same time, biographical narratives also reveal a large degree of autonomy and agency of individual non-heterosexual people in the face of these hardships. People, who at the time had no means to officially identify themselves as gay, lesbian or transgender, nonetheless narrated fascinating evidence of living out such identities – not only with fear and stress, but also with dignity, invention, cunning and passion.

Scholarship and oral history of East European sexuality

While some Soviet Bloc countries between 1945 and 1989 had strong anti-homosexual legislation (Romania, USSR), in most of these countries anti-homosexual laws became increasingly progressive over time. The GDR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary gradually decriminalized homosexuality in its entirety. Historians of sexuality in post-war Eastern Europe have emphasized the importance of medical discourse in shaping state policies and popular attitudes. Soviet sexologists and psychiatrists kept negative, gender-essentialist and homophobic approaches to sexuality, making the Soviet legislative and medical apparatus one of the most repressive in Europe (Essig 1999; Healey 2001). Bulgarian psychiatrists and sexologists, who claimed in the 1950s that homosexuality was a dangerous perversion, later played an important role in its decriminalization in Bulgaria in 1968 (Pisankaneva 2005). Similar processes

were at work in East Germany and Czechoslovakia (Kenawi 1995; Procházka 1997). But the logical 'absence of a commercial homosexual subculture' paralysed any ability to create substantial alternative spaces that were common in the West (Jörgens 2007). In other words, for general ideological reasons, state-socialist societies were unable to translate legislative advantages into the real-life advantages of more visibility or the development of subcultures and vibrant communal spaces for gays and lesbians.

Historical scholarship on non-heterosexuality during state socialism is quite limited. There was only one book about homosexuality in Eastern Europe published during the Cold War (Hauer *et al.* 1986). Samirah Kenawi and Dara Bryant argued that, unlike in other state-socialist countries, in the GDR it was predominantly lesbian women, not gay men, who through the recognition of their double discrimination as women and as lesbians led the movement towards increasing the visibility of non-heterosexual identities (Kenawi 1995; Bryant 2009). Jürgen Lemke (1991) documented the diversity of gay experiences based on interviews with 14 East German gay men in the 1980s. Similarly, in his analysis of gay life in state-socialist Czechoslovakia, Jiří Fanel (2000) applied the term 'gay' in the most narrow sense, presenting a strictly male point of view. The paucity of literature from this era is surprising when one considers the volume of scholarship devoted to non-heterosexual sexuality in the region both before and after state socialism (Stulhofer and Sandfort 2005; Putna and Bartlová 2011; Fejes and Balogh 2013).

Despite the pioneering work of historian Miroslav Vaněk and his team (2004, 2009), the path-breaking project The Memory of Women (Frýdlová 1998, 2006; Danielová *et al.* 2001; Kiczková *et al.* 2006), and two small oral histories involving strictly gay men (Miřácký 2009; Schindler 2013), there has not been a single project or study that would broadly focus on non-heterosexual people in Czechoslovakia and their experiences of state socialism. Such oral histories are important because these narratives provide an 'authenticity of experience' that would otherwise stay hidden, forgotten and irretrievable (Scott 1991). Such memories are also important for understanding social discrimination and homophobia, as well as subversions, which cannot be read from official documents (Sokolová 2008). This is because there are inevitable discrepancies between official laws and attitudes and the actual ways in which people lived their lives. Sometimes, biographical narratives reveal strikingly unexpected insights, such as when Eva talked about her growing up:

> When I was 11 [in 1963] I was visited by Jesus. It was the most significant moment in my life. During communism I always felt more discriminated for my religion than sexuality. Sex was fun and my relationships were awesome but being religious was very fragile and intimate. [...] When I was a teenager, I regularly went up in the attic, stripped myself half naked and whipped my back bloody for being a lesbian. [...] I never discussed it with my parents or family but I knew very clearly that I like women and it was not compatible with my belief in God.
>
> (Eva, born in 1952)[2]

Eva tormented herself to self-mutilation and self-hatred not due to persecution or discrimination from the 'state', but due to the incompatibility of her religious and sexual identities. The authoritarian political regime in her life of course played an important role. But it is not insignificant that those pressures manifested themselves quite differently than one might expect in a story of a 'lesbian' woman from Czechoslovakia during state socialism. Restrictions can take many forms. The lack of open public debate about either religion or sexuality meant that everyone had to struggle with these challenges in very individual ways. Eva was not afraid to engage in public sex with women or attend same-sex parties with people who were clearly watched by the Secret Police, but until the fall of the state-socialist regime she would not dare to be openly religious.

Lastly, oral histories also help break down and challenge the false perception of unity and homogeneity of both state power and 'homosexual' identity and lives during state socialism. The ongoing non-heterosexual oral history project, on which this chapter draws, contains 16 several-hour-long biographical interviews with non-heterosexual people, who lived most of their lives in state-socialist Czechoslovakia. Given the dominant attention paid in scholarship to the experiences of gay men, the project intentionally focuses on female narrators (though men are not excluded). The oldest narrator was born in 1928, the youngest in 1952 and altogether the stories cover over 40 hours of taped narratives. The respondents are diverse; some were members of the Communist Party, others were dissidents. While most were atheist, some were passionate Christians. Some female respondents had long-term monogamous relationships, while others enjoyed anonymous sex in public toilets. All of the narrators were married at some point of their lives (some to 'heterosexuals', some to other 'homosexuals') or had at least one long-term relationship with another married man or a woman. In other words, 'homosexuals' during the state-socialist era certainly did not form any homogenous or easily identifiable group. Contrary to the common historical interpretations that we somehow 'know' what it meant to be a 'lesbian' or 'gay' then, non-heterosexual people lived diverse lives and experienced state socialism in many different and often quite contradictory ways.

Czech sexology: heteronormative arm of the state or the first gay club?

By the late 1950s, sexology was already an established, legitimate science in Czechoslovakia. The Czech Sexological Institute in Prague was founded in 1921 and directed for 40 years by the renowned sexologist Professor Josef Hynie (1934–74). Unlike similar institutions in Berlin or Vienna, the Sexological Institute combined several important dimensions – research, pedagogical, curative and therapeutic – and developed a strong international reputation in the field throughout the state-socialist period (Nedoma 1953; Charvát 1970; Raboch 1970). Hynie was a life-long supporter of a medical rather than a criminal approach to sexual deviance, promoted accessible and open sexual education, and urged for responsible sexual and marital relationships. In addition to mandatory Soviet authors, his

publications contained long lists of 'Western' scholars (Hynie 1940, 1950, 1967, 1969, 1970, 1974, 1976). He built around him a team of similarly minded colleagues, who shared his values, attended international conferences, published in Western journals and integrated medical and sociological approaches into sexology (Weiss *et al.* 2010).

This context largely explains the dual role Czechoslovak sexology played in promoting heteronormativity and traditional family on the one hand, while also supporting emancipation of homosexuality and attending to questions of transsexuality and intersexuality on the other. Since the 1950s, new sexological clinics and centres opened in all regions of Czechoslovakia, which had the goal of promoting heteronormative sexuality and curing its 'deviant' aspects. In the 1950s, under the leadership of Kurt Freund, the Institute conducted a study of 222 homosexual men to examine the influence of then practised methods of aversive therapy, electric shock therapy, inhaling CO_2, application of Metrazol and other procedures to cure homosexuality. Sexologists expressed optimism about the effectiveness of the aversive method, arguing that the 'approach, which we chose, has therapeutic effects and in some cases of this deviance provides a tool for its adaptation' (Freund and Smec 1953: 147). In 1957, however, Freund admitted that the results of the aversive therapy treatment were 'less than satisfactory and there is no reason not to believe their [the patients'] claim that the cure did not have any effect' (Freund 1957b: 50). Based on these findings, he then embarked with his team on a systematic effort to decriminalize homosexuality. Many sexological articles from that period thus represent a hybrid of medical and sociological arguments in favour of the decriminalization of homosexuality (Nedoma 1953; Freund 1957a, 1957b, 1958; Freund and Nedoma 1959; Freund and Pinkava 1959; Roubíček 1961).

One of the participants in Freund's study, Ota Tasinato, disclosed in a 1994 interview that in the clinic, 'there was a room with four beds [where the patients-subjects stayed during the study] but our spies immediately saw through it and turned it into a meeting point' (Seidl *et al.* 2012: 290). Tasinato's testimony is important because it suggests that at least some men could have participated in Freund's study not in order to 'cure' or 'change' their homosexuality (as Freund claimed) but to the contrary, to meet other homosexual men. It presents a significant reversal of meaning and moment of subversion of state authority, when the expert endeavour itself, examining presumably ignorant and helpless subjects, is used by the 'objects' of the study for their own means.

Freund's effort peaked in May 1960 at a legal-psychiatric seminar in Hradec Králové, when sexologists initiated a round-table discussion among sexologists, lawyers and members of the state police (!) about the potential novelization of the criminal code (Freund 1962: 248). The debate resulted in a proposal to abolish the §241/1 of the criminal code criminalizing homosexual encounters between consenting adults. The criminal law was amended in 1961, and Czechoslovakia became one of the first countries in the world to decriminalize homosexuality (Procházka 1997; Hromada 2000).

Complementing his belief that homosexuality was incurable, Freund also maintained that by relinquishing all forms of persecution, we 'could perhaps

help them to develop erotic relations better compatible with the surrounding society than when the hostile attitude of heterosexual people and criminal sanctions force them into the same position with chronic criminal asocial psychopaths' (Freund 1962: 247). Other sexologists similarly argued that 'if our therapeutic possibilities to do away with the deviation will not be effective, we will consider psychotherapy aimed at strengthening of the homosexual consciousness, the removal of the feelings of exclusiveness, guilt and inferiority' (Bouchal and Bártová 1964: 100–1). We can thus interpret these statements as first explicit expressions of commitment and support of Czechoslovak sexologists to homosexual people, that if they come to sexological clinics instead of 'cure' they will find 'care'. They will not be subjected to humiliating curing procedures but rather they will find understanding and real therapeutic help aimed at their feelings of exclusion. Based on these approaches, Bártová started the first 'socio-therapeutic group for homosexuals' in Brno in 1976 (Bártová and Škoda 1977; Bártová 1979).

Freund's conclusion that homosexuality is incurable had, besides the decriminalization effort, also other consequences. On the one hand, sexologists throughout state socialism repeated the official position that 'Czechoslovak sexological school has always understood and understands homosexuality as a sexual deviance – that is a defect of medical substance, not caused by the bearer' (Brzek 1987; also Nedoma 1962; Zvěřina 1981; Hubálek 1988). At the same time, the fact that homosexuality cannot be cured gradually eroded this 'deviation' definition by arguments by the same sexologists that homosexuals are 'people like anyone else', that homosexuality and heterosexual marriage are compatible and about the 'natural ability of homosexual men to be good fathers of their children' (Bártová and Škoda 1977; Brzek 1979, 1981; Procházka 1987). In 1973, sexologist Pavel Zemek published in the popular weekly *Mladý svět* his groundbreaking article 'Žijí mezi námi' (They live among us) in which the definition of homosexuality as a disease was for the first and only time rejected in an officially published text in socialist Czechoslovakia. Zemek argued that homosexuality is a 'variation of human sexuality in otherwise healthy individuals' and strongly criticized any attempts to cure it. He also directly pointed out that 'the main problem of homosexuals is not their orientation, but the intolerant attitudes of mainstream society' (Zemek 1973). Needless to say, his text references only male homosexuality and the photograph accompanying the article sported five men's trousers (focused on their crotches) in a row. The article caused a small revolution among non-heterosexuals and *Mladý svět* even faced the threat of being closed down, as the Soviet embassy protested the tolerant and encouraging tone of this particular article (Procházka 1997; Hromada 2000). This context and the publication of the text certainly indicate that censorship during the Normalization period was also far from uniform.

The emancipatory dimension of Czechoslovak sexology can also be observed in two stories from the mid-1980s. Doctor Procházka recalled an incident from 1987, when several Secret Police (StB) agents came to the Institute in search of compromising data on the homosexual patients: 'We all knew that Tonda Brzek

[one of the doctors] had a lot of information of religious substance and other information from his patients in his desk.' The director of the Institute actively protected personal and sensitive data of their patients by hiding the key to the main door and then 'put a fake huge drama on, yelling at all of us for losing the key while we all knew it's in his pocket. The StB did not want to cause any more commotion and so they rather left' (interview with Ivo Procházka, 12 March 2011).

In 1986, the doctors succeeded in publishing an article by East German sexologist Professor Erwin Günther, who argued that

> [H]omosexuality is a natural variation in a very broad spectrum of sexual experience and behaviour. Homosexuals have the same rights. They are entitled the same sexual harmony, love and respect. [...] If a homosexual suffers from any disorder or problem those are most commonly related to conflicts with heterosexual majority, especially those intolerant citizens, who want to push their style of thinking on others.
>
> (Günther 1986)

According to Günther, the most important task for 'a socialist society is to secure equal life for the homosexual minority' (ibid.). Doctor Procházka pointed out that such an article could never be published by itself and it was necessary to 'sandwich it' (interview with Ivo Procházka, 12 March 2011). Brzek thus wrote two articles in order to get Günther's arguments in. One introduced Günther's text, the other one then criticized it. In the first article Brzek assured the readers that 'this deviation is called homosexuality' but also added that the only proper attitude in a 'socialist' country is 'the acceptance of such individuals as fully valued and equal fellow citizens' (Brzek 1986). In his second article, which followed Günther's text, Brzek distanced himself from Günther:

> Contrary to some of our colleagues abroad, Czech sexologists do not consider homosexuality a fully normal and equal variety of human sexual behaviour. Such an extreme view, officially held by experts in the GDR, was explained in the December issue [of Zdraví] by Dr Günther. This view is also included in the last statistical classification of the USA (DSM III), which completely removed homosexuality from the list of medical diseases and defects.
>
> (Brzek 1987)

Using the 'sandwich strategy', Brzek repeated again Günther's exact arguments, reminded readers where to find them and added the attitude of American colleagues, including information about the removal of homosexuality from the list of diseases. Brzek thus skilfully applied the argumentative strategy of superficial loyalty and subversive content, which was, moreover, confirmed by Procházka as intentional.

As already mentioned, during the Normalization era and in the context of an absent civil society, some sexological offices started to transform into basically

officially sanctioned gay clubs. Their goals were 'valuable self-acceptance of homosexuals as worthy individuals' (Bártová 1979: 93). By the mid-1980s 90 per cent of homosexual men who voluntarily came to the Sexological Institute openly stated that they came there to discuss their identity, coming out and perhaps also to meet a new partner (Hubálek 1988: 187). Moreover, women and men, who participated in the therapeutic groups for many years, transformed from patients into partners, even in the eyes of the doctors themselves. As Ivo Procházka argued in an interview:

> Tonda [Brzek] never told any of them to stop coming. I think that it was pleasant for his ego that they kept coming, it was a somewhat narcissistic matter. [...] They [the patients] went there for example for ten years and still they were working on their coming out. Well, it's clear that they moved far beyond that. Some of them actually became co-therapists and Tonda really relied on their opinion and experience. In group therapy it's extremely useful when someone has the distance and experience that he or she can share with the others. It's very helpful for the doctor.
>
> (Interview with Ivo Procházka, 12 March 2011)

Clearly, it was not a simple one-way street between the power of the medical experts and their helpless patients but rather quite a complex mutual relationship of assistance, respect and community. Despite its heteronormative pressures in other areas, Czechoslovak sexology also importantly contributed to the consolidation and argumentative competencies of the gay and lesbian community after 1989.

Gender stereotypes in Czechoslovak sexology

Deep-seated gender stereotypes informed most of the sexological writings throughout the state-socialist period. Essentialist arguments were commonplace in these writings, asserting that 'very often [homosexual] boys play with dolls, enjoy domestic housework, like dressing in mother's or sister's dresses, and dislike aggressive sports. [Homosexual] girls, on the other hand, enjoy aggressive sports, crafts, and rogue behaviour' (Brzek 1979). Parents contributed to these predispositions through

> [D]efficiencies in social environment of the child, such as absence of correct parental male and female examples, excessive harshness or pampering, or unclear visions of parents into what life role (in terms of gender role) they actually want to raise their child.
>
> (Ibid.)

Other sexologists argued that even though behaviour 'appropriate for opposite sex' in children 'points to a defect in sexual role [...] parents cannot be blamed for that' (Zvěřina 1981). Through such arguments Czechoslovak sexology

defined and maintained heteronormative pressures of 'correct' and uniform gender behaviour for all members of society.

As sexological discourse was not uniform, some sexologists ventured beyond expected gender stereotypes. In 1976, a research team from Opava argued that 'the biological differences between the sexes are relatively insignificant and [...] the "male" and "female" are in the end only erotically conditioned ideals, which are subordinated to historical and individual changes' (Brauerová *et al.* 1976: 20–1). But most sexological texts, however emancipatory and liberal, presupposed stable and oppositional male and female bodies. Even though Czech sexologists often complained that 'not enough has been researched about female homosexuality' and that there is 'a lack of knowledge about homosexuality in women' (Čížková-Písařovicová 1976: 261), their own analyses reflected a lack of reflection towards gender stereotypes.

Without examining female homosexuality, Czech sexologists distinguished between 'virile' or 'masculine' and 'feminine' homosexualities. The 'virile' or 'masculine' homosexual male was someone who 'feels like a man but towards other men projects the same feelings as normal men to women'. 'Feminine' homosexuality, on the other hand, was manifested by 'deviation in other spheres' than purely sexual attraction. Such homosexuals 'behave and dress in effeminate ways, and for some the entire female role would be appropriate. It seems that there is a number of fluid, gradual passing stages between homosexuality and transsexuality' (Brzek 1979). In emphasizing the range of behaviours between homosexuality and transsexuality, readers would be able to infer that the same logic applies to the relationship between heterosexuality and homosexuality.

Gender-biased views of sexuality, however, not always had only negative consequences for non-heterosexual people. For women, who preferred same-sex relationships, for example, it meant more freedom to live out their sexuality without the scrutinized attention of both medical professionals and the police. Moreover, it was not just the attention of the 'state organs' but parental interest as well. The detailed case studies contained in the articles of sexologists indicated that parents brought almost exclusively young boys to sexological offices for diagnosis or cure (Freund and Srnec 1953; Freund 1962; Bártová 1979; Topiař *et al.* 1986).

However, it would be incorrect to conclude from this that female sexuality was not discussed in Czechoslovak sexology. First, female transsexuality was at the forefront of sexological attention, as women had much easier access to sex-change surgery than men (Kluzák 1968; Hynie and Šípová 1975; Šípová 1976). Second, sexuality was a very important component of ideological attempts of the party to remain in power by collectivizing private and intimate matters and strengthening socialist morality. Indeed, the beginning of the Normalization period (1969–89) witnessed a major increase, both in terms of the number of publications and the size of print runs, of literature about sexuality, intimacy and interpersonal relations (Plzák 1970a, 1970b; Pondělíček and Pondělíčková-Mašlová 1971, 1977; Hynie 1976). These publications included not only original works of Czechoslovak sexologists heavily referenced by

'Western' scholarship but also direct translations of American, British, Canadian or French authors (for example Masters and Johnson 1970; Kolle 1970; Van de Velde 1972 [1930]). The aura of liberal and open sexuality discussed in a 'communal way' in the official press worked to support the illusion of personal freedom, openness and control over one's private affairs and helped to build a 'collective amnesia' about 1968 (Bren 2010). The arguments, disseminated and 'supervised from above' by renowned sexologists, presented an image of sexual freedom, personal power, collective responsibility and adherence to gender stereotypes, which together helped maintain political stability in the late state socialism.

Marital adaptation therapy: homosexuality and marriage

According to their own testimonies, many 'gays' and 'lesbians' lived during the state-socialist period in heterosexual marriages. It is much less known, however, that sexologists, at least in Czechoslovakia, were actively urging them to do so. Marriage of non-heterosexual people before 1989 is most often interpreted as a consequence of discrimination of homosexuals during state socialism, when they did not have other choices than to live alone or in a hidden relationship, which was best camouflaged by marriage. If they desired to become parents, other routes than through heterosexual marriage did not exist. Alternative interpretations point out that many non-heterosexual men and women entered marriages without the knowledge of their own homosexuality, which was not easy to discover in the repressive conditions (Brzek and Pondělíčková-Mašlová 1992; Talandová 1997, Fanel 2000; Janošová 2000). All narrators interviewed in this project recalled that they were either married themselves or they had before 1989 at least one long-term relationship with a married man or a woman. They were not, however, passive or unknowing victims of the system forced to suppress their identity.

Czechoslovak sexologists played a key role in legitimating the compatibility of homosexuality and marriage, which in turn was used by 'gay' men and 'lesbian' women as a tool to reach what they wanted or needed. Despite the notions of passivity, narrators revealed stories demonstrating their autonomy, knowledge of their homosexuality, and motivations and strategies in entering into marriage:

> I got married because my husband needed to be married in order to get a visa to travel to West Germany so that he could emigrate. He was gay and I knew about the plan all along since I myself was terribly in love with one beautiful woman, unfortunately married one, with a little daughter. So it made a lot of sense for both of us. [...] After his emigration, I would get his apartment. I really needed the apartment so that my girlfriend with her little daughter could move in together with me. [...] So in July 1967 we married and already in September he left. [...] We helped each other, it was normal.
>
> (Miriam, born in 1945)

Miriam and her husband got married purely for mutual benefit and with a full knowledge of their sexual identity. They were not ignorant of their sexual and emotional needs and, obviously, this was not at all the purpose of their marriage. They were not pressured into this marriage because they were 'homosexual' but because of the housing and visa policies in Czechoslovakia during the state-socialist period. Miriam's marriage to her gay friend thus cannot be perceived as a desperate act of succumbing to heteronormative pressures or homophobia but rather as a rational response to the restrictions all people faced in state socialism.

For many non-heterosexuals, marriage functioned not only as a convenient tool for achieving personal goals, but also as camouflage. In Dana's narrative, marriage helped achieve good relations with her mother and increased her social status:

> I knew that I am into girls since I was about 17 or so. [...] Still, I started to date men and even got married. I thought about it and then decided, why not? [...] Two years after we got married we got divorced but my parents were happy because I was divorced and not single. My mom always said that no one cares whether the marriage lasts but being single is what gets you into people's talks. I think that she most cared about her own reputation because she suspected I am into women so I pleased her and all was fine.
>
> (Dana, born in 1938)

Even for heterosexuals, marriage increased social status, and as an essential constitutive element of the family, was highly regarded by communist ideology. As a privileged form of union it was a foundation of the heteronormative order, which gave one prestige, maturity, weight and refuge – a concept frequently mentioned in connection with the state-socialist family (Einhorn 1993; Hamplová 2010). Moreover, for women, it had the additional benefit of finally becoming *women*. Unlike men, who qualified to the title 'sir' or 'Mr' (*pan*) by simply becoming adult, women were addressed as 'miss' (*slečna*) until they got married. Only then, regardless of their age or level of education or professional position, they 'earned' the 'right' to be addressed as 'Mrs' (*paní*). In this sense, Dana's mother was right, regardless of one's sexual orientation or gender identity, her daughter was better off divorced than single.

Czechoslovak sexologists also promoted their view that marriage is the best social institution for all, regardless of sexual orientation. Sexological texts presumed that marriage was evidence of a healthy sexual relationship between man and woman. Freund suggested already in 1962 that homosexuality and marriage were compatible (Freund 1962: 246). The so-called marital adaptation consisted of controlled and coached marriage by a team of sexologists and matrimoniologists, who monitored the process. Strikingly, this approach was promoted by Czechoslovak sexologists as the best therapeutic strategy for 'successful socialization of homosexuals' from the late 1950s to the late 1980s (Freund and Pinkava 1961; Bouchal and Bártová 1964; Brzek 1979, 1981 and 1986; Procházka 1987; Brzek and Hubálek 1988). While in the 1960s and 1970s the

method was discussed only in specialized medical journals, in 1981 Brzek described this method in the popular medical journal *Zdraví*, arguing that it makes perfect sense that homosexuals enter heterosexual marriages. He explained four main rules that should be observed for a 'successful [heterosexual] marriage of homosexual persons' (Brzek 1981).

First, Brzek pointed out that homosexuality is incurable and thus 'it is not possible to raise any objections to the plan of many homosexuals not to marry'. Despite that, he pragmatically stated, 'many indisputably homosexual people aspire for marriage for rational reasons', among which he listed 'loneliness in old age' and 'the desire for one's own progeny'. He also argued that 'the society of the "normal" makes the life of homosexuals difficult and often even unbearable', which leads 'more sensitive individuals to escape discrimination by entering marriages'. Last, but not least, he argued that 'probably because of the presence of some female characteristics in their personalities, [homosexual men] often have a stronger need and better predisposition to take care of their own children than heterosexual, "normal" men' (ibid.). Without using the term 'homophobia', Brzek recognized and directed the blame for the difficult lives of gays and lesbians at the behaviour and atmosphere created by the majority society.

Brzek's explanation of the rules for a successful 'homosexual' marriage is even more striking than his recognition of the right of homosexuals to raise children. First, the homosexual person 'must realize that even in marriage his or her homosexual orientation will persist. [...] It is even advisable to leave the environment, where a person can easily get seduced, such as bigger towns.' Second, he or she must find such a person of the opposing sex who will be 'at least humanly pleasant to be around and with whom personal contact is not completely abhorrent'. Third, Brzek advises that it is important to first make sure of one's ability to enact mutual sexual intercourse:

> For a homosexual woman this is certainly technically easier but even she can gradually become disgusted by sex with a man. Of course, for a homosexual woman a more appropriate husband is a man with low need of sexual intercourse. [...] It is, however, surprising how often homosexual men have no problems having sex with women, which is true even for very effeminate men.
>
> (Brzek 1981)

And fourth, Brzek recommends that because such marriages are not free of risks,

> [T]he other person should be informed about this situation [the partner's homosexuality] still before the marriage. [...] However, if the fact of homosexuality was not communicated early enough before the marriage, then *during the marriage the homosexual person must never admit it anymore.* Such information could not only destroy the marriage, it could also be abused by the other party.
>
> (Ibid.; emphasis added)

Brzek also warns that whatever the marital situation of any given homosexual person is, 'nothing should be undertaken without constant and systematic consultations with a specialist, a sexologist, with whom it is advisable to stay in regular touch even in the course of successfully functioning marriage' (ibid.). Czechoslovak sexologists thus placed themselves in the roles of irreplaceable arbiters of human happiness. Important for the given historical context is the openness and genuineness with which a medical expert promotes on the pages of an undoubtedly censored popular journal double lives and creating false façades – for both men and women – as part of legitimate and acceptable life strategies.

Proper gender as camouflage for improper sexuality

I will begin this section with a personal story. When working in the archives, purely accidentally I discovered a full-page, black-and-white photograph of Kamila, one of the narrators in my project and an outspoken member of the current LGBT movement. However, she was featured in the popular weekly not as a lesbian, but ironically as the winner of the Prague regional round of the nationwide TV competition *Správná dívka* (*The Perfect Girl*).

The aim of the popular event, which was broadcast for 12 Saturdays in a row at prime time on state TV, was to introduce ten selected young women from each region of Czechoslovakia to compete in a variety of disciplines, such as speed typing on a typewriter, cooking, singing, sewing, applying make-up, but also ring throwing, balancing an egg on a spoon or building a tent on the stage. The contestants were judged not only by a panel of then-famous celebrities but also by TV viewers who watched the show at home and either called or sent letters to the TV station with their desired winners. Shows of this kind were actually quite popular on Czechoslovak TV during the Normalization period as they provided a sense of national community and 'collective amnesia' about the uncomfortable past, attempting to entertain the public into forgetting the current political situation (Bren 2010).

Because Kamila had already narrated to me (in her own words) her 'entire lesbian life under communism' without ever mentioning this event, I set another interview with her to ask her about this peculiar competition. 'Wow, you found that? I totally forgot all about it!' she laughed when I mentioned running across her photograph. I asked her why she decided to participate in it:

> Of course to hide! [She laughs heartily]. Anything with a stupid title like this was a perfect opportunity to disguise that I'm into girls. At that time [early 1970s] I already knew for a long time who I was and so any chance to demonstrate that I'm normal, I thought to myself, hurry up, that's great, again you'll have an alibi. [...] At work [the City Hall in Prague] they were pressuring me to join the [Communist] Party all the time, so I was looking for any excuses I could find, my sport, taking care of my mom, whatever. [...] The guys at work had fun with it and I had peace and quiet for a while.
>
> (Kamila, born in 1948)

What is clear from Kamila's testimony is that participating in a show like this was a conscious and active camouflaging strategy. At work, no one knew about Kamila's sexual orientation. As she explained, 'any woman with an ambition to become a perfect girl would automatically pass as heterosexual'. Her sexual orientation or gender identity would not even be put in question.

As with other areas of social reality and engagement in public space, the state cared much less about inner beliefs of people than about the manifestations of their loyalty to the status quo, be it the rule of the Communist Party or heteronormative gender order. As Czechoslovak sexologists stressed on numerous occasions, it was not the homosexual disposition that was important but how one worked with it. Given the constraints of prescriptive heterosexuality, Czechoslovak sexologists encouraged non-heterosexuals to pick within this framework whatever they found best suitable for their particular state of mind and being, as long as this 'choice' was compatible and compliant with the status quo.

It should also be noted that Kamila used the competition for another camouflage as well, to divert attention and lessen the pressures to join the Communist Party. These pressures might also be the reason why Kamila pushed the whole competition out of her memory in the first interview. In the second interview she talked, with apparent joy, about the fact that for two years she had been somewhat of a celebrity in the public space. The ease with which Kamila blended together the two distinctly different dimensions of the camouflaging motivation for the competition suggests that living a 'double life' was a part of her everyday routine that many other people in her work, albeit for different reasons, might have shared as well.

The willingness to publically display expected stereotypical gender characteristics and behaviour was part of the everyday repertoire of all the narrators. Constraints formed by gender stereotypes undoubtedly bothered many people regardless of their sexual orientation and gender identity. For the narrators, however, it seems clear that removing any potential doubts about their sexual orientation or gender identity was directly tied to the correct performance of male or female gender roles corresponding with their physical body:

> At work we had a dress code, all women had to wear skirts or dresses. I hated skirts, dresses even more, but at least it helped me pass [as a heterosexual]. [...] I was also lucky that my Austrian [lesbian lover] was a seamstress and so I always looked like from a fashion magazine. All the other women at work envied me and who would dare to question my sexuality when I looked the best of them all!
>
> (Kamila)

Many female narrators felt that performing a feminine gender identity was advantageous for their effort to hide their sexual orientation. The testimonies also revealed that, at least presumed, predominant understanding of homosexuality was strictly gender based, i.e. 'butch' (homosexual) women and 'effeminate' (homosexual) men. Since in public discourse homosexuality was not discussed

and admitted as a visible presence in the society, it logically created a presumption that one would see 'it' and recognize 'it' when confronted with 'it'. Sexual orientation was constructed as simultaneously invisible and yet outwardly visible and recognizable, hence such emphasis of many narrators on 'correct' clothing:

> At work I always wore a skirt. Not because I would have to but it was simply easier. Even though I worked at the drawing board (*u rýsovacího prkna*) among all men, no one there suspected anything because I was always very well dressed.
>
> (Miriam)

> Secretaries during communism were just an inventory for fucking. [...] In my work, I was a coquette *non plus ultra*. Rather I had a reputation of a whore than to have anyone know that I am into girls. [...] And it worked.
>
> (Kamila)

These reflections reveal not only the importance of adopting a proper dress code to hide one's sexual orientation, but also the degree to which assumptions about gender and sexual identity were based on superficial visual markers. In a social environment that unquestionably equates dress codes and sexual identity, it is also much easier to hide transgressive identities. Since the gender and sexual discourse during state socialism lacked the ability to both name and go beyond the obvious normative expectations, it became relatively easy for non-heterosexual women to mask their identities behind those expectations, preventing any further scrutiny.

Challenging myths about female sexuality

Some Czech historians and sexologists have suggested that in the context of state socialism it was very difficult for women to meet partners of the same sex (Pondělíček and Pondělíčková-Mašlová 1971; Brzek and Hubálek 1988; Brzek and Pondělíčková-Mašlová 1992; Fanel 2000). For many of my female narrators, however, finding other women interested in women was not a problem:

> When I was 16 [in 1964] I was in Austria with the Czechoslovak national junior table tennis team and at our last dinner, the coach of the Austrian team came into the dining room with the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. I stopped eating, our eyes met and it was like lightning. She was 16 years older than me but we spent together 12 wonderful years. [...] It was never a problem to see each other. Through the sport, I always got a visa to go [abroad] and she could also travel to Czechoslovakia. [...] And to hide my Austrian [lover] also was not a big problem, everything was happening under the code word 'sport'.
>
> (Kamila)

Traditionally, as some historians pointed out, male sexuality has been connected with sex and female sexuality with love and feelings (Smith-Rosenberg 1975; Faderman 1998[1981]; Rupp 2001). Since information about 'homosexual men' was more available than information about 'homosexual women', subsequently male sexuality was interpreted as more open, active, visible, numerous and thus also as more significant that female sexuality (Katz 1990; Chauncey Jr. 1994). Such myths were dispelled by recent queer and feminist studies, which showed that women as well have historically enjoyed free and public sex (Faderman 1998; Halberstam 1998; Rupp 2001). Some of my narrators also shared such experiences from state-socialist Czechoslovakia. Their memories challenged sexological stereotypes and showed how important it is for historical interpretations *what* questions we ask and *who* has the chance to answer them:

> In Karel's salon in Vinohrady there was a nice terrace and on nice days everyone was walking around naked. Women, men, everyone. If you wanted to have sex, you could simply do so.
>
> (Ludmila, born in 1946)

> I love sex. Okay? It's fun, relaxing and in a relationship it tends to get a bit boring. [...] With strange girls you could do whatever you wanted. It depended, of course, what kind of sex you wanted and how one wanted to do it but it was no problem to find other girls who would be into it as well. Outside or in the toilets.
>
> (Eva)

> My favourite place was Špejchar. There was a nice, big outdoor beer garden with long wooden tables at the corner of Letná. It wasn't anything fancy but in the back there were public toilets and I loved to go there with girls, to have sex, of course. [...] I would buy them sausage and beer and then we would have sex. Or, on other occasions, they would host me.
>
> (Tamara, born in 1950)

Eva's and Tamara's memories of female public sex are not frequent in the narratives and certainly one should not generalize them. On the other hand, they should not be ignored either. Just as previous 'Western' research showed, my narrators also confirmed that in the 'East' sex was as well an activity that offered non-committal relaxation and fun and was not necessarily connected to monogamous and long-term relationships:

> We lived only for sex, it was something that completely devoured me. We didn't care at all who saw us. It was nice to be outside in the open. And to tell the truth, people didn't care much even if they saw us. After all, everyone was under the watchful eye of the police, that was just reality, it didn't matter if you were gay or not.
>
> (Eva)

Despite the restrictive context of criminalized 'public indignity' of same-sex sexual encounters during the socialist era, which were punishable by prison, some people were not deterred by it. While most historians interpret the presence of anti-homosexual legislation as automatic evidence of lack of public sexual behaviour, Eva's and Tamara's experience indicate that not all non-heterosexual people were scared by police attention and accepted it as a part of the 'normality' of an authoritarian state.

Personal ads – reading between the lines

Historians do not agree on whether it was possible to place same-sex ads in state-socialist media. Without citing reliable evidence, Pavliná Janošová and Fanel assert that because of censorship it was not possible to place same-sex ads in papers because 'editors-in-chief and their deputies faced punishment for doing so' (Janošová 2000: 48; also Fanel 2000). Jan Seidl also claimed that 'in Prague this [placing same-sex ads] was not possible' (Seidl *et al.* 2012: 311). Women's narratives collected in this oral history project, as well as official correspondence between publishing houses and state institutions, however, suggest otherwise. According to all female narrators, personal ads in selected media were one of the most important and common ways to meet other women. In their recollections, daily or weekly periodicals *Lidová demokracie, Ahoj na sobotu, Svobodné slovo, Vlasta, Mladá fronta* and *Mladý svět* had been accepting same-sex ads in their personal classifieds sections since the late 1960s. Procházka supports this information, arguing that 'of course there were never any "He Looks for Him" and "She Looks for Her" sections but during the 1960s and 1970s selected newspapers accepted such ads into the section "Miscellaneous" [*Různé*]' (Procházka 1997).

Throughout state socialism the state applied varying degrees of censorship and control over its media. Immediately after 1948, Communists prohibited *all* personal ads, which were seen as hangovers of bourgeois society. This ban was lifted only in 1964, most likely because Stalinist emphasis on heavy industry and sex segregation in certain professions gradually made searching for life partners in some regions of the country unreasonably difficult for young people (Staněk 1977; Hoffmannová 1985). Before 1989, there was only one written central command not to publish same-sex ads issued in 1985 by the Czech Office for Press and Information (*ČÚTI*). This prohibition was explained as a security issue connected to a Prague murder case (Seidl *et al.* 2012; Sokolová 2013). Otherwise, the situation was more nuanced. Periodicals that accepted same-sex ads were well known among non-heterosexual people. Moreover, they did so not in an explicitly open form and even in those magazines success in placing such ads often depended on personal attitudes of editors of the given media towards homosexuality.

Even though censorship is one of the most important dimensions of state control it was also individualized and depended on how individual actors applied it (Kaplan 1994; Oates-Indruchová 2008). While some people remembered that their ad 'was nowhere accepted and I also never got a proper explanation from anyone why it was so, not even when I personally came to the editor's office'

(Seidl *et al.* 2012: 311), other narrators remembered that placing a same-sex ad was not a problem. Heda claimed that 'in the 1960s I regularly read *Mladý svět* because it was full of such ads. I always found some and sometimes even answered' (Heda, born in 1928). Ludmila agreed, 'I never read much but one exception was *Mladý svět*. [...] The personal ads section was the first thing I read, looking for something interesting. You could always tell when it was "our" ad' (Ludmila). Often, such ads appeared among heterosexual personal ads, commonly disguised as ads looking for friendship, hiking in nature and theatre visits. It is telling, as Ludmila remembers, that non-heterosexual people could recognize their ads without causing any suspicion. It often depended on the creativity of those who placed the ads:

> The most common way was 'teaching language'. You understand? 'I will teach female friend a tongue' (*jazyk*) [laughing].[3] The way such ads were written you always knew that it is 'ours.' Teaching 'tongue'. German, not English, that was already suspicious, but the GDR was ok so German was totally fine. I don't know anyone who would have problems with such an ad. [...] And then also 'holidays together.' It was another favourite.
>
> (Kamila)

> Oh, yeah, ads. Of course I did that. 'I'm looking for a female friend to enjoy cultural experiences together'. That was usually what I used and also looked for. I met two of my long-term girlfriends this way.
>
> (Olina, born in 1946)

While men complained about their inability to place same-sex ads (Miřácký 2009; Seidl *et al.* 2012; Schindler 2013), women simply went around by subverting the meaning of other phrases and formulations, commonly used in 'regular' heterosexual ads. Clearly, the ads of these women were and were not 'same-sex'. While many of these ads escaped editors' attention, we cannot conclude that the editors never suspected the real meaning of such ads. As there is no evidence, we should always leave open the possibility that the editors knew as well and could read between the lines of those ads but decided to publish them, particularly when ads used more obvious coded language: 'All ads had a "sign" at the end. Very common one in our ads was "Sign: Well of Loneliness". Even for gay ads' (Standa, born in 1937):

> Mentioning the *Well of Loneliness* was frequent. It could be a sign [at the end] or somehow worked into the text of the ad. But you know these ads were quite short so you had to think it through carefully. [...] So I always enjoyed looking for how other girls went about it.
>
> (Zuzana, born in 1935)

Mentioning of the *Well of Loneliness*, an acclaimed 1928 novel by Radclyffe Hall (published in Czech in 1931 and 1969), as one of the code words in same-sex ads

is significant because many female narrators mentioned this book as an important reference point while searching for their non-heterosexual identity (Sokolová 2013). The lesbian classic thus functioned on several different levels, in both individual and collective senses; as a real story, a narrative of non-heterosexual growing up and sexual maturing, as well as code language in meeting spaces. From the narratives we also get a sense that the knowledge of the hidden ads created a collectively shared same-sex consciousness among 'lesbian' women. They did not necessarily answer the ads, but as Zuzana, Heda and Ludmila recalled, they read them with the desire to share in some larger virtual community. It was important, comforting and formative to know that there were other women as well, who loved and desired other women.

Non-heterosexual family constellations

Earlier we saw that from a sexological point of view the marriage of homosexuals and transsexuals, when open and consented by their (presumably heterosexual) partners, was considered a hopeful method for 'adjusting' homosexuals and transsexuals to responsible and normative socialist behaviour. As sexologists explained, the point was not to 'cure' homosexuals or transsexuals of their 'sexual disorders' but rather through their responsibility towards their husbands and wives, family and children to make them monogamous, responsible, proper and orderly citizens. If transsexual and homosexual individuals agreed to outwardly follow the rules of a heterosexual family, they were encouraged by the state to do so and no one really cared much what kinds of gender and sexual identities they took on in the privacy of their homes. Both sexologists and the non-heterosexual people themselves agreed on outward heteronormative performances and agreed not to disclose and discuss the inner workings of such relationships (Brzek and Šípová 1979; Myšková and Mocek 1980; Šípová 1980). Even sexologists themselves conceded, however, that 'marriage of two homosexual persons is a wholly different matter' (Brzek 1981).

Since most of the narrators in this oral history project were married during the state-socialist period, I inquired also into their family constellations. I found that whether it was in the 1950s or 1980s, whether the narrators were getting married or divorced, whether they lived with or without children, they always acted with the full knowledge of their non-heterosexual identity, as well as with a clear motive and strategy:

I got married to a mathematician in 1952 to make my mom happy. He was completely madly in love with me so I said, ok, why not because we had a lot in common. We didn't have any sexual contacts before the marriage and when we tried to sleep together on our wedding night, it ended up in a fiasco. He was trying on me some heterosexual mating rituals but it just seemed terribly funny to me so I kept laughing and laughing. [...] Nonetheless, we had a fine marriage for a few years, my mom was really happy about it.

(Heda)

Heda divorced her husband in 1954 and from then on lived in 'lesbian' relationships with other women until her death in 2012, at the age of 83. Clearly, already when marrying her husband, she was quite sure that she was not heterosexual. During the interview, Heda identified herself quite openly as a 'lesbian' but also argued that she had felt much more 'transsexual' than anything else, since early childhood. Heda's choice to get married had a very clear purpose and strategy, 'to make mom happy'. More than hiding herself, Heda through the marriage protected her mother by sparing her questions from her neighbours and friends.

The public discourse on gender and sexuality during the state-socialist period lacked the ability to both name and go beyond the normative expectations. It then became relatively easy, especially for women, to mask their actually lived lives and identities behind those expectations, preventing any further scrutiny. This is further demonstrated in Kamila's recollection of her life together with her girlfriend and 'their' son (as Kamila called him) in the early 1980s:

We never had any problems, either with our neighbours or our families. Problems started when Luke went to school and he apparently kept enthusiastically talking about me. He also talked about his father, who regularly took him every other weekend. [...] So one day the director of the school called us in to explain the situation. My girlfriend got all upset and defensive but I told her, just calm down, what can they do? And so we went. The director said that Luke is talking about me and they don't understand what's going on, that it's confusing and asked us who I was. So I said that I am just a friend, living with them and helping since the father is around only on the weekends and asked in turn whether there is anything wrong with that. The boy is well fed, well dressed, has good academic performance, is happy, so is there any problem, I asked? And of course she said that no, of course there is no problem. What else could she say? It was unimaginable [during state socialism] that anyone would ask directly if we were lesbians. Impossible! I was not afraid of this question a single bit. Who would dare to ask? And in what words? [...] But of course they sent the child welfare office at us. They [social services] came several times, checked the usual stuff, if Luke had his own room, if the place was clean, if we had enough food in the fridge and off they went. They came maybe four times and it was over. After that, no one bothered us anymore.

(Kamila)

At least in some cases, it evidently was possible to live a 'lesbian' relationship in one household before 1989, even with a small child. Kamila's story exhibits an interesting mixture of openness and deceit. On the one hand, it was obvious to the family, neighbours and the school that the two women lived together on an everyday basis and that they raised the child together. They apparently went outside together as a family or spent vacations together as a family. In other words, it was the two women and the child that formed and represented the family unit, while the father stood aside from the family, taking his son only for

every other weekend. Contrary to the commonplace view that it was 'impossible' for 'gays and lesbians' to live the ways they desired during the previous regime, we have evidence that at least in some cases it was possible. Moreover, the narrators remember it without bitterness or sense of persecution.

Kamila's story also shows that the state, formally represented here by the school and the welfare office, either did not have the leverage or perhaps the interest to actually change anything in Kamila's and her girlfriend's particular situation. While we do not know if the school or welfare office believed that the two women were just friends or suspected they also had a sexual relationship, this is of no relevance, as the societal taboo about homosexuality worked in the women's favour. Divorce was common during state socialism and the spectrum of post-divorce situations diverse (Hamplová 2010; Dudová 2012). Some women (especially those with very young children) went back to their parents, many women stayed alone, while others found new men. Apparently, finding a female friend to help after a divorce was acceptable, too.

To conclude this section, let us return to Miriam's story. After the emigration of her husband to West Germany, Miriam did get his apartment but her happiness did not last long. The husband of Miriam's girlfriend found out about their relationship and 'filed for divorce. He argued that his wife cheated on him with another woman and asked for the custody of his daughter' (Miriam). In the end, however, it was Miriam's girlfriend who got the child because 'she was defended by one of our best divorce attorneys of the time, the ex-wife of the famous psychiatrist doctor Plzák, who vigorously and shrewdly defended my girlfriend, arguing that a small child belongs with the mother' (Miriam).

In both Kamila's and Miriam's cases the state authorities ruled in favour of the non-heterosexual women. In both cases, the lifestyles or identities of the women were considered only a secondary concern, not the primary point for investigation, demonstrating the complexity and ambiguity of the state approach to homosexuality. Moreover, gender stereotypes, which informed sexological discourse and helped maintain heteronormative social order in state-socialist Czechoslovakia, sometimes in the end, paradoxically, supported non-heterosexual people.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to provide a glimpse into the history of non-heterosexual sexuality during state socialism in Czechoslovakia by examining the intersection of the institutional framework of sexological attitudes towards homosexuality with individual experiences of non-heterosexual identity. The findings can be summarized in two main points.

First, Czechoslovak sexology played multiple roles. The analysis of sexological discourse revealed that sexologists were not simply a heteronormative arm of the communist power, but their attitudes towards homosexuality were rich and diverse. Throughout the socialist period, Czechoslovak sexology fulfilled its role of 'expert voice', while also articulating arguments that can be viewed as emancipatory. It

was at the vanguard of state efforts to decriminalize homosexuality, and, in several cases, sexologists actively challenged the views of the Ministry of the Interior. Through their 'clubs', sexologists helped create environment and conditions that were important not only for individual non-heterosexual lives but for the emerging Czechoslovak gay and lesbian community. Socialist sexology rested on deep-seated gender stereotypes, which privileged male sexuality over female, and gay positions over lesbian ones. Precisely because of the authoritative voice of sexology, this framework had far-reaching consequences for the gay and lesbian movement after 1989 and for the public and academic discourse on gender and sexuality in general.

Second, the tools of oral history provided key insights into the lives of non-heterosexual people during state socialism about which we still know very little. By shifting the focus of attention, as well as by asking new questions, the project inevitably opened new ways of looking at mainstream historical narratives of both the history of Czechoslovakia and the history of (homo)sexuality during the state-socialist period. The narratives challenged the myths of passive female sexuality and the presumed homogeneity of homosexual identity and experience. The recollections revealed a large degree of autonomy and agency in non-heterosexual lives, and by providing a small window into the past invited further exploration. The pervasiveness of heteronormative imperatives and pressures showed how crucial the analysis of non-heterosexual sexuality is for meaningful examination of gender culture during the state-socialist period. Likewise, the deeply ingrained gender stereotypes contained in both sexological discourse and the biographical narratives confirmed how important gender analysis is for Czech history of the recent past.

Notes

1 In this chapter, I use several different terms, such as 'non-heterosexual', 'homosexual', 'lesbian', 'gay', and 'queer'. The terminology is strictly historical. Medical discourse during state socialism used only the term 'homosexual'; the terms 'gay' and 'lesbian' appeared only after 1989. Occasionally, narrators apply these terms to their identities retroactively and when they do so the citations keep that terminological choice. However, most narrators resorted to a variety of terms used in the past, such as 'being into girls/boys' or 'being our person' (*našinec, náš člověk*), or simply avoided any naming. Due to the absence of gay and lesbian terminology and clear self-naming during state socialism, I use the term 'non-heterosexual'. When discussing efforts to create non-heterosexual communal spaces and cultural contexts in the face of surveillance and censorship, I use the term 'queer' as it best reflects the broadness of the term '*teplý*' or '*teplá komunita*'.
2 All names are pseudonyms.
3 In Czech, '*jazyk*' means both a 'language' and a 'tongue'.

References

Bártová, Dagmar (1979) 'Skupinová psychoterapie pacientů s poruchami psychosexuální identifikace' [Group therapy with psycho-sexual identification disorder patients], *Moravskoslezský referátový sborník*, 11: 92–4.

Bártová, Dagmar and Vlastimil Škoda (1977) 'Příspěvek k psychiatrickým aspektům homosexuality' [A contribution to psychiatric aspects of homosexuality], Časopis lékařů českých, 116, 33: 1029–30.

Bouchal, Milan and Dagmar Bártová (1964) 'The attitude of homosexuals after the change in the Criminal Code', Activitas nervosa superior, 6, 1: 100–1.

Brauerová, Eva, Viera Satková and Antonín Topiař (1976) 'K otázce transvestitických projevů v dětském věku' [On transvestite manifestations in childhood], Československá pediatrie, 31, 1: 20–1.

Bren, Paulina (2010) The Greengrocer and His TV: the culture of communism after the 1968 Prague Spring, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bryant, Dara (2009) 'Queering the antifascist state: Ravensbrück as a site of lesbian resistance', in Matthew Philpotts and Sabine Rolle (eds) Edinburgh German Yearbook, Volume 3: Contested Legacies: Constructions of Cultural Heritage in the GDR, Rochester, NY: Camden House.

Brzek, Antonín (1979) 'Muž nebo žena?' [A man or a woman?], Zdraví, 27, 2: 18.

Brzek, Antonín (1981) 'Manželství a homosexualita' [Marriage and homosexuality], Zdraví, 29, 7: 18.

Brzek, Antonín (1986) 'Láska k témuž pohlaví' [Same-sex love], Zdraví, 34, 5: 19.

Brzek, Antonín (1987) 'Ještě o homosexualitě' [Still on the subject of homosexuality], Zdraví, 35, 8: 19.

Brzek, Antonín and Slavomil Hubálek (1988) 'Homosexuals in Eastern Europe: mental health and psychotherapy issues', Journal of Homosexuality, 15, 1–2: 153–62.

Brzek, Antonín and Jaroslava Pondělíčková-Mašlová (1992) Třetí pohlaví [The third sex], Prague: Scientia medica.

Brzek, Antonín and Iva Šípová (1979) 'Dnešní možnost změny pohlaví u transsexualismu' [Sex-change options in cases of transsexuality today], Praktický lékař, 59, 19–20: 752–6.

Charvát, Josef (1970) 'Josef Hynie, zakladatel československé sexuologie' [Josef Hynie, the founder of Czechoslovak sexology], Časopis lékařů českých, 109, 26: 631.

Chauncey, George Jr. (1994) Gay New York: gender, urban culture, and the making of the gay male world, 1890–1940, New York: Basic Books.

Čížková-Písařovicová, Jiřina (1976) 'Několik poznámek k homosexualitě u dorostu' [Remarks on homosexuality in adolescents], Praktický lékař, 56, 7: 260–2.

Danielová, Helena, Dana Zajoncová and Jana Haragaľová (eds) (2001) Paměti romských žen: Kořeny I [Memories of Roma women: roots I], Brno: Muzeum romské kultury.

D'Emilio, John and Estelle B. Freedman (1988) Intimate Matters: a history of sexuality in America, New York: Harper and Row.

Dudová, Radka (2012) Interrupce v České republice: Zápas o ženská těla [Abortion in the Czech Republic: a struggle for women's bodies], Prague: Sociologický ústav.

Einhorn, Barbara (1993) Cinderella Goes to Market: citizenship, gender and women's movements in East Central Europe, London: Verso.

Essig, Laurie (1999) Queer in Russia: a story of sex, self and the other, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Faderman, Lillian (1981; with new Introduction 1998) Surpassing the Love of Men: romantic friendship and love between women from the Renaissance to the present, London: HarperCollins.

Fanel, Jiří (2000) Gay historie, Prague: Dauphin.

Fejes, Nárcisz and Andrea P. Balogh (eds) (2013) Queer Visibility in Post-socialist Cultures, London: Intellect Books.

Freund, Kurt (1957a) 'Diagnostika homosexuality u mužů' [Diagnostics of homosexuality in men], Československá psychiatrie, 53: 382–94.

Freund, Kurt (1957b) Problémy psychiatrie v praxi a ve výzkumu [Psychiatric issues in clinical practice and in research], Prague: Státní zdravotnické nakladatelství.

Freund, Kurt (1958) 'Tři úvahy o práci psychopatologa' [Three considerations on the work of a psychopathologist], Československá psychiatrie, 54: 177–83.

Freund, Kurt (1962) Homosexualita u muže [Homosexuality in men], Prague: Avicenum.

Freund, Kurt and Karel Nedoma (1959) 'Otázka příčetnosti a nápravných opatření u sexuálních delikventů' [The issues of accountability and corrective measures in sexual delinquents], Československá psychiatrie, 55: 264–9.

Freund, Kurt and Václav Pinkava (1959) 'K otázce souvislosti mezi homosexualitou a nepřítomností rodičů' [On the relation between homosexuality and parental absence], Československá psychiatrie, 55: 334–6.

Freund, Kurt and Václav Pinkava (1961) 'Homosexuality in man and its association with parental relationships', Review of Czechoslovak Medicine 7, 1: 32–40.

Freund, Kurt and Jan Srnec (1953) 'K otázce mužské homosexuality: Analysa změn sexuální appetence během pokusné léčby podmiňováním' [On male homosexuality: an analysis of sexual appetency changes during experimental treatment through conditioning], Sborník lékařský, 55: 125–64.

Frýdlová, Pavla (ed.) (1998) Všechny naše včerejšky: Paměť žen [All Our Yesterdays: women's memory], 2 vols, Prague: Nadace Gender Studies.

Frýdlová, Pavla (ed.) (2006) Ženská vydrží víc než člověk [A Woman Can Take More than a Human: the 20th century in the life-stories of ten women], Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny and Gender Studies.

Green, Richard and Donald James West (eds) (1997) Sociolegal Control of Homosexuality: a multi-nation comparison, New York: Plenum Press.

Günther, Erwin (1986) 'Homosexualita a společnost' [Homosexuality and society], Zdraví, 34, 12: 19.

Hall, Radclyffe (1928) The Well of Loneliness; trans. Vladimír Vendyš (1931) Studna osamění: Připsáno našim třem já, Prague: Symposion and Rudolf Škeřík.

Hamplová, Dana (2010) 'Stručné poznámky o ideových přístupech k rodině v období socialismu' [Brief notes on family philosophy during socialism], in Antoine Mares and Pavla Horská (eds) Cahiers du CeFReS No 22, Česko-francouzský dialog o dějinách evropské rodiny, Prague: CeFReS.

Halberstam, Judith (1998) Female Masculinity, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Hauer, Gudrun, Doris Hauberger, Helga Pankratz and Hans Vonk (1986) Rosa Liebe unterm roten Stern: zur Lage der Lesben und Schwulen in Osteuropa, Vienna: HOSI Wien und Christiane Gemballa Verlag.

Healey, Dan (2001) Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia: the regulation of sexual and gender dissent, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hoffmannová, Jana (1985) 'Seznamovací inzeráty mladých lidí' [Dating advertisements of young people], Naše řeč, 68: 113–24.

Hromada, Jiří (2000) Zakladatelé: Cesta za rovnoprávností českých gayů a lesbiček [The Founders: the road to equality of Czech gays and lesbians]. Online. Available: http://gay.iniciativa.cz/www/index.php?page=clanek&id=266 (accessed 11 July 2008).

Hubálek, Slavomil (1988) 'Skupinová psychoterapie homosexuálních pacientů' [Group therapy of homosexual patients], Praktický lékař, 68, 5: 187–8.

Hynie, Josef (1940) Úvod do lékařské sexuologie [Introduction to medical sexology], Prague: Josef Svoboda.

Hynie, Josef (1950) 'Několik poznámek k podstatě a therapii homosexuality' [Notes on the nature and therapy of homosexuality], *Neurologie a psychiatrie československá*, 13: 327.

Hynie, Josef (1967) *Lékařská sexuologie* [*Medical Sexology*], Prague: Charles University.

Hynie, Josef (1969) 'Principy sexuálního chování a sexuální morálky' [Principles of sexual behaviour and sexual morals], *Časopis lékařů českých*, 108, 19: 553–6.

Hynie, Josef (1970) *Sexuológia pre každého* [*Everyman's Sexology*], Bratislava: Osvěta.

Hynie, Josef (1974) *Základy sexuologie* [*Introduction to Sexology*], Prague: Charles University.

Hynie, Josef (1976) *Dospíváte v muže* [*You Are Maturing into a Man*], Prague: Avicenum.

Hynie, Josef and Iva Šípová (1975) 'Transsexuálky' [Female transsexuals], *Československá psychiatrie*, 71, 1: 48–52.

Janošová, Pavlína (2000) *Homosexualita v názorech současné společnosti* [*Attitudes to Homosexuality in Contemporary Society*], Prague: Karolinum.

Jörgens, Frédéric (2007) '"East" Berlin: lesbian and gay narratives on everyday life, social acceptance, and past and present', in Roman Kuhar and Judit Takács (eds) *Beyond the Pink Curtain: everyday life of LGBT people in Eastern Europe*, Ljubljana: Mirovni Inštitut.

Kaplan, Karel (1994) *O cenzuře v Československu v letech 1945–1956* [*Censorship in Czechoslovakia, 1945–1956*], Prague: Ústav soudobých dějin.

Katz, Jonathan (1990) 'The invention of heterosexuality', *Socialist Review*, 20: 6–30.

Kenawi, Samirah (1995) *Frauengruppen in der DDR der 80er Jahren: eine Dokumentation*, Berlin: GrauZone.

Kiczková, Zuzana, Barbora Kachničová, Antónia Furjelová, Jana Tesáková and Marta Botíková (2006) *Pamäť žien: O skúsenosti sebautvárania v biografických rozhovoroch* [*Women's Memory: on the experience of the formation of the Self in biographical interviews*], Bratislava: Iris.

Kluzák, Richard (1968) 'Chirurgická transformace pohlaví u ženského transsexualismu' [Surgical transformation of sex in cases of female transsexuality], *Rozhledy v chirurgii*, 47, 4: 253–61.

Kolle, Oswalt (1968) *Das Wunder der Liebe*; trans. Břetislav Mencák (1970) *Kouzlo lásky*, Prague: Avicenum.

Kuhar, Roman and Judit Takács (eds) (2007) *Beyond the Pink Curtain: everyday life of LGBT people in Eastern Europe*, Ljubljana: Mirovni Inštitut.

Lemke, Jürgen (1991) *Gay Voices from East Germany*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.

Lišková, Kateřina (2012) 'Perverzní sex a normální gender: Normalizační sexuologie promlouvá o sexu a gender', *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum*, 13, 2: 40–9.

Masters, William and Virginia Johnson (1966) *Human Sexual Response*; trans. Milan Lašťovka (1970) *Lidská sexuální aktivita*, Prague: Horizont.

Miřácký, Radek (2009) 'Proces coming-outu u homosexuálních mužů v Československu před rokem 1989' [The coming-out process in homosexual men in Czechoslovakia before 1989], unpublished BA dissertation, Prague: Charles University.

Myšková, Jana and Martin Mocek (1980) 'K osobnostem partnerů transsexuálů' [On the personalities of partners of transsexuals], *Praktický lékař*, 60, 15–16: 548–50.

Nedbálková, Kateřina (2007) 'The changing space of the gay and lesbian community in the Czech Republic', in Roman Kuhar and Judit Takács (eds) *Beyond the Pink Curtain: everyday life of LGBT people in Eastern Europe*, Ljubljana: Mirovni Inštitut.

Nedoma, Karel (1953) 'Nový trestní zákon a trestné činy lidí s odchylnými sexuálními tendencemi' [The new Criminal Code and crimes of people with deviating sexual tendencies], *Praktický lékař*, 33, 14: 316–19.

Nedoma, Karel (1962) 'Homosexuální prostituce u mladistvých' [Homosexual prostitution of minors], *Československý psychiatr*, 58, 5: 312–14.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2008) 'The limits of thought?: regulatory framework of social sciences and humanities in Czechoslovakia (1968–1989)', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 60, 10: 1767–82.

Pisankaneva, Monika (2005) 'The forbidden fruit: sexuality in communist Bulgaria', *E-magazine LiterNet*, 68, 7: 1–10.

Plzák, Miroslav (1970a) *Manželské judo* [*Conjugal Judo*], Prague: Avicenum.

Plzák, Miroslav (1970b) *Taktika a strategie v lásce* [*Tactics and Strategies in Love*], Prague: Mladá fronta.

Pondělíček, Ivo and Jaroslava Pondělíčková-Mašlová (1971) *Lidská sexualita jako projev přirozenosti a kultury* [*Human Sexuality as a Natural and Cultural Expression*], Prague: Avicenum.

Pondělíček, Ivo and Jaroslava Pondělíčková-Mašlová (1977) *Sexuální zrání mladého muže* [*Sexual Maturation of a Young Male*], Prague: Avicenum.

Procházka, Ivo (1987) 'Hovoříme o zdravém manželství: Část VIII: Žijí mezi námi' [Talking about a healthy marriage: Part VIII: They live among us], *Svobodné slovo*, 9 August: 4.

Procházka, Ivo (1997) 'Czech and Slovak Republics', in Donald James West and Richard Green (eds) *Sociolegal Control of Homosexuality: a multi-nation comparison*, New York: Plenum Press.

Procházka, Ivo, David Janík and Jiří Hromada (2003) *Společenská diskriminace lesbických žen, gay mužů a bisexuálů v ČR* [*Social Discrimination of Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals in the Czech Republic*], Prague: Gay iniciativa.

Putna, Martin and Milena Bartlová (eds) (2011) *Homosexualita v dějinách české kultury* [*Homosexuality in Czech Cultural History*], Prague: Academia.

Raboch, Jan (1970) 'K sedmdesátinám prof. MUDr. Josefa Hynieho, DrSc.' [In honour of the 70th birthday of Prof. MUDr. Josef Hynie, DrSc.], *Časopis lékařů českých*, 109, 26: 632.

Řídký, Josef (2013) 'Neexistuje dobře přizpůsobený a šťastný homosexuál: Pozice homosexuality v českých populárně sexuologických příručkách 30.–90. let 20. století' [There is no such thing as a well-adjusted and happy homosexual: the position of homosexuality in Czech popular sexological manuals from the 1930s to the 1990s], in Pavel Himl, Jan Seidl and Franz Schindler (eds) *'Miluji tvory svého pohlaví': Homosexualita v dějinách a společnosti českých zemí*, Prague: Argo.

Roubíček, Jiří (1961) 'Ze života Čs. psychiatrické společnosti: Zpráva o odborné činnosti, sjezdech a pracovních schůzích v roce 1960' [From the history of the Czechoslovak Psychiatric Association: a report on professional activities, conferences and meetings in 1960], *Československá psychiatrie*, 57: 133–9.

Rupp, Leila (2001) *A Desired Past: a short history of same-sex sexuality in America*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schindler, Franz (2013) 'Život gayů za socialismu' [Lives of gays under state socialism] in Pavel Himl, Jan Seidl and Franz Schindler (eds) *'Miluji tvory svého pohlaví': Homosexualita v dějinách a společnosti českých zemí*, Prague: Argo.

Scott, Joan Wallach (1991) 'The Evidence of Experience', *Critical Inquiry*, 17, 4: 773–97.

Seidl, Jan, Jan Wintr and Lukáš Nozar (2012) *Od žaláře k oltáři: Emancipace homosexu-ality v českých zemích od roku 1867 do současnosti* [*From Prison to the Altar: emanci-pation of homosexuality in the Czech Lands from 1867 to the Present*], Brno: Host.

Šípová, Iva (1976) 'Rodinné prostředí u intersexuálních lidí' [Family environment of intersexual people], *Československá pediatrie*, 31, 11: 629–31.

Šípová, Iva (1980) 'Interpersonální vztahy transsexuálních žen' [Interpersonal relations of transsexual women], *Časopis lékařů českých* 119, 17–18: 509–11.

Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll (1975) 'The female world of love and ritual: relations between women in nineteenth-century America', *Signs*, 1, 1: 1–29.

Sokolová, Věra (2008) *Cultural Politics of Ethnicity: discourses on Roma in communist Czechoslovakia*, Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag.

Sokolová, Věra (2013) 'State approaches to homosexuality: sexological discourse and non-heterosexual lives in socialist Czechoslovakia, 1948–1989', unpublished habilita-tion thesis, Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice.

Staněk, Josef (1977) *Zn: 'Jen upřímně a vážně': Hierarchie hodnot v seznamovacím inzerátu* [*Sign: 'Only Sincerely and Seriously': the hierarchy of values in dating adver-stisements*], Prague: Mladá fronta.

Stulhofer, Aleksandar and Theo Sandfort (eds) (2005) *Sexuality and Gender in Postcom-munist Eastern Europe and Russia*, New York: Haworth Press.

Talandová, Jaroslava (1997) *Sociální postavení lesbických žen a alternativní modely v kontextu heterosexuální společnosti* [*The Status of Lesbians and Alternative Models in the Context of Heterosexual Society*], Prague: L-klub.

Topiař, Antonín, M. Vilč and E. Gladr (1986) 'Homosexuální agresivní počínání v alko-holovém opojení' [Homosexual aggressive behaviour under the influence of alcohol], *Protialkoholický obzor*, 21, 2: 73–5.

Van de Velde, Theodor Hendrik (1926) *Het volkomen huwelijk: Een studie omtrent zijn physiologie en zijn techniek*; trans. from German trans. *Die vollkommene Ehe: eine Studie über ihre Physiologie und Technik*, Ludvík Hošek (1972) (1st Czech edn 1930) *Dokonalé manželství: Studie o jeho fyziologii a technice*, Prague: Avicenum.

Vaněk, Miroslav (2004) *Orální historie ve výzkumu soudobých dějin* [*Oral History in Contemporary History Research*], Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny.

Vaněk, Miroslav (2009) *Obyčejní lidé* [*Ordinary People*]. Prague: Academia.

Weiss, Petr, Slavoj Brichcín, Blanka Čepická *et al.* (2010) *Sexuologie*, Prague: Grada.

Zemek, Pavel (1973) 'Žijí mezi námi' [They live among us], *Mladý svět*, 15, 4: 20.

Zvěřina, Jaroslav (1981) 'Homosexuální chování v dětství a dospělosti' [Homosexual behaviour in childhood and adulthood], *Zdraví*, 29, 9: 18.

5 Between femininity and feminism

Negotiating the identity of a 'Czech socialist woman' in women's accounts of state socialism

Kateřina Zábrodská

The existing research examining gender roles and the status of Czech women under state socialism has tended to focus on several particular issues. These include the pseudo-emancipation and the double (or triple) burden of women in a state-socialist society (Heitlinger 1996; LaFont 2001; Šmausová 2011 [2006]), conflicts between the continuation of patriarchal structures and the proclaimed equality of women and men (Heitlinger 1979, 1996; Havelková 1999; Oates-Indruchová 2005; Nečasová 2011), and shifts in state gender ideology at differ-ent stages of communist rule (LaFont 2001; Šiklová 2008). This research has brought attention to three main roles prescribed by the state as normative for women: that of worker, of politically conscious citizen and of mother (Nečasová 2011). The research on these issues has almost exclusively come from sociology, history and anthropology, disciplines that approached women's roles under state socialism either in terms of various sociopolitical factors, such as the gendered aspects of social policies, or in terms of gender representations in textual data, namely narrative fiction, political speeches and Communist Party documents (see, e.g. Oates-Indruchová 2000, 2005, 2006; Nečasová 2011).

Discursive psychology, on the other hand, did not participate in these exciting debates. Perhaps as a consequence, far less attention has been paid to a detailed analysis grounded in women's *own* accounts of their identity under state social-ism. Studies that did discuss issues of women's identity have either been sup-ported only by anecdotal evidence, often strongly influenced by the researcher's personal experience (see, e.g. Wagnerová 1995; Šiklová 1997; Šmausová 2011), or have presented unanalysed accounts of women's biographies (Frýdlová 1998). Indeed, little research based on a detailed analysis of Czech women's actual talk and its role in constructing women's identities under state socialism has been carried out to date.[1]

The present chapter aims to address this void by providing an analysis of dis-cursive strategies through which the identity of a 'Czech socialist woman' was constructed in interviews with women who had lived most of their lives in a state-socialist society. The data for this analysis were taken from archival inter-views with 20 women conducted for the project 'Democratisation, Social and Political Change and Women's Movements' carried out in 1994–5. I also draw on interviews published in two volumes of biographical interviews with Czech

women titled *Všechny naše včerejšky* (*All Our Yesterdays*, Frýdlová 1998). Since no independent research interviews on gender issues were carried out during the state-socialist period, retrospective biographical interviews provide a unique opportunity to examine the ways in which women made sense of their identity while under state socialism, as reflected upon after the regime's demise.

A distinctive feature of gender regimes under state socialism was that, as an aspect of identity, gender was manipulated by the state, with 'the communist party holding monopoly over the politics of gender construction' (Johnson and Robinson 2007: 7). Yet, as numerous researchers have pointed out, the state's gender ideology was far from unified. One of the frequently discussed contradictions existed between the demand for equality between men and women, and deep-rooted beliefs in their innate sexual differences. These contradictory views were held simultaneously (LaFont 2001; Ferber and Raabe 2003). Moreover, the everyday reality of gender relations in many respects differed considerably from the official gender ideology (Wagnerová 2009). In addition, alongside the Communist Party and the power elites, there were also other actors who played a vital role in the construction of gender discourses and policies, including writers, social scientists and other representatives of Czech intelligentsia (Havelková 2010). The clashes between contradicting discourses produced by these different actors and institutions have so far been examined only in abstract terms rather than in terms of their impact on the identities of actual women. The question thus arises how these and other contradictions inherent to lives in a state-socialist society played out in women's identities. How did women themselves negotiate these contradictions and with what consequences?

To address this question, the chapter draws on the conceptual framework of *critical discursive psychology* (CDP). CDP offers a discursive approach to the study of identity that combines post-structuralist discourse analysis and a more fine-grained analysis of language use (Wetherell 1998, 2003; Wetherell and Edley 1999; see also Zábrodská 2010). CDP examines strategies of identity construction and their relations to the wider ideological context of society (Edley 2001). In contrast to more general observations about women's identity, this methodological approach provides a nuanced analysis of patterns of sense-making made available to women in particular socio-historical contexts. As I argue in this chapter, the reliance of previous research on mostly anecdotal evidence contributed to the construction of a number of overgeneralized claims on the lives of Czech women in a state-socialist society. This chapter's analytical focus on varied interpretative resources used by the women in their actual talk allows for a critical examination of these generalizing claims and for their problematization. It demonstrates that these claims do not stand up to the complexities and contradictions of women's identities as they were reflected in women's own accounts.

The analysis problematizes in particular the widely accepted claim of solidarity and harmony between Czech women and men under state socialism. This claim has been endorsed by a number of Czech gender researchers, such as Alena Wagnerová (1995, 2009) Jiřina Šiklová (1997) or Gerlinda Šmausová

(2011), and has been used to account for the lack of relevance of 'Western feminism' to Czech women both before and after 1989. In contrast with this claim, the analysis offered here reveals a strong awareness of gender issues manifested in the women's accounts as well as the women's desire to challenge the inequalities between men and women in heterosexual relationships and in the workplace. As I show in this chapter, even though the interviewed women distanced themselves from feminism, they nevertheless engaged with a range of gender issues that corresponded to the subjects regularly addressed by feminism, including a critique of male sexism, gender stereotypes, discrimination and male abuse of power. Rather than interpreting the women's abjection of feminism as evidence of its irrelevance to Czech women, I argue that the examined accounts demonstrated the women's needs to address a wide range of gender issues, albeit without the conceptual framework of feminism.

Discursive construction of identity

The chapter stems from the tradition of the discursive study of gender and identity (Wetherell and Edley 1999; Edley 2001; Litosseliti and Sunderland 2002; Reynolds and Wetherell 2003; Sunderland 2004; Speer 2005; Benwell and Stokoe 2006), which examines 'the complex and often subtle ways in which gender identities are represented, constructed and contested through language' (Litosseliti and Sunderland 2002: 1). It approaches identity as a socially constructed category that is constituted through discursive practices (Davies and Harré 2001; Benwell and Stokoe 2006). As CDP shows, identity is produced and performed through a continual negotiation of interpretative resources, storylines and subject positions that are made available to social actors through language and wider cultural codes (Edley 2001). The process of identity construction also includes a flexible use of categorization devices that are used to build contrasts between different social actors (such as contrasts between 'Czech women' and 'Czech men' or between 'Czech women' and 'Western women'). In this sense, identity refers to a social location in which the self is defined by virtue of its identification with a particular group (Benwell and Stokoe 2006) and simultaneously by virtue of its dis-identification with another group.

The construction of identity through the processes of (dis)identification is closely linked to the dependence of identity on the notion of difference, brought to attention particularly by post-structuralism. As post-structuralist authors argue, identity is constituted through difference, that is, through a series of identifications with, and against, other social actors (Hall 1996; Gannon and Davies 2007; Garcia and Hardy 2007). The notions of 'others' and 'ourselves' are mutually constitutive; ' "we" use the Other to define ourselves: "we" understand ourselves in relation to what "we" are not' (Wilkinson and Kitzinger 1996: 8). Thus, one of the possible approaches to the study of the discursive construction of identity is to examine how the identity of a particular social subject is produced through differentiation from, or identification with, other social subjects. This approach proved vital for the analysis. This was because the interviewed women

did not primarily define themselves directly but provided rich descriptions of different 'Others', in opposition to whom they constructed their own identity. The 'Others' who figured most prominently in the women's accounts were Czech men.[2] The analysis of women's identity that I present in this chapter is therefore based on an examination of the discursive strategies through which the women differentiated themselves from, or identified with, Czech men.

More specifically, I draw on two key concepts of critical discursive psychology: *interpretative repertoires* and *subject positions*. The concept of interpretative repertoires is similar to the notion of discourse. Discourse, however, is a contested term with multiple meanings (Litosseliti and Sunderland 2002; Mills 2004), definitions of which range from language-in-use to social practice. By contrast, the concept of interpretative repertoires refers primarily to the language used in social interaction (Edley 2001). Interpretative repertoires are part of an historically and culturally specific common sense that enables social actors to co-construct and share social understandings (ibid.). They are 'relatively coherent ways of talking about objects and events in the world' and they 'offer a range of linguistic resources that can be drawn upon and utilized in the course of everyday social interaction' (Edley 2001: 198). Drawing on this concept, I examine interpretative repertoires that were available to the interviewed women under state socialism to construct their identity in relation to Czech men.

The concept of 'subject positions' (Wetherell and Edley 1999) or 'positioning' (Davies and Harré 2001; Davies 2008) is linked to the concept of interpretative repertoires. While providing linguistic resources to construct specific versions of events and actions, interpretative repertoires simultaneously construct versions of identities or selves that can be conceptualized as subject positions:

> A subject position incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that use that repertoire. Once having taken up a particular position as one's own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, story lines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned.
>
> (Davies and Harré 2001: 262)

The concept of subject position reflects the ways in which different discourses and cultural practices produce different positions for subjects to take up, thus making visible the plural and situated character of identity. As CDP has extensively documented, identity is contextually salient, with social actors making salient different subject positions in different social and discursive contexts. Similar to other gender identities (see, e.g. Wetherell and Edley 1999; Reynolds and Wetherell 2003), the identity of a 'Czech socialist woman' therefore should not be expected to be unified or stable. Rather, it can be assumed that such an identity consists of multiple interpretative resources and subject positions employed differently in different contexts. For example, as the following

analysis documents, the interviewed women positioned themselves as wielding power over men in some contexts, whereas in other contexts they portrayed themselves as fundamentally lacking power. In some contexts, they declared sameness between women and men, whereas elsewhere they insisted on their radical difference. In contrast to more global analyses that tended to portray women's identity under state socialism in rather static and unitary terms, CDP makes visible the plural character of women's identities as they were constructed through the diverse interpretative resources and subject positions available to women in this context.

Materials and procedures

The materials for this analysis were generated between 1994 and 1995 from tape-recorded and transcribed interviews conducted with 20 women for the project 'Democratisation, Social and Political Change and Women's Movements' by the editors of this book (Havelková and Oates-Indruchová).[3] The interviewed women were a highly diverse group in terms of age, education, occupational and social background, marital status and other social categories. They ranged in age from 29 to 72. Some had a university degree, others had only elementary education. Some lived in the Czech capital of Prague, while others lived in regional towns and villages. Despite this diversity, the opinions expressed by the interviewed women were remarkably similar. This can be perhaps attributed to 'the limited personal agency for citizens under state socialism to negotiate gender' (Johnson and Robinson 2007: 8) and the consequently restricted 'social imaging of gender' (ibid.: 9), which continued to have its effects after the demise of the state-socialist regime.[4]

Lasting on average about 90 minutes each, the interviews followed an identical structure while also leaving space for improvisation (Šmejkalová et al., n.d.). In the first part of the interview the women were asked to describe their biographical history with attention paid to gender relations. The women discussed the lives of their parents and grandparents, then moved on to talk about their childhood, youth, heterosexual relationships, education and occupational history, and finally the situation in which they found themselves at the time of the interviews. The second part of the interviews sought to clarify the women's views on a number of gender-relevant issues, such as the status and position of women in Czech society (both before and after 1989), attitudes towards abortion, homosexuality, feminism and the political representation of women. (For the purposes of the present analysis, questions specifically addressing the post-1989 period were not included.)

Based on the theoretical approach to identity discussed above, the aim of the analysis presented here was to identify the interpretative repertoires that the interviewed women used to construct their identity in relation to Czech men. The analytical procedures followed the methodological principles of discursive psychology (Potter and Wetherell 1987; Potter 2003). The first steps of the analysis involved repeated readings of the transcribed interviews and coding of sequences in which the interviewed women defined their identity in relation to

Czech men. The repeated reading and coding resulted in the identification of four recurrently used interpretative resources on which the women drew to construct their identity, and that form the basis of the following analysis. To label the repertoires, I used *in vivo* codes to reflect the main content of each repertoire. For example, I named the first repertoire 'Men are No Heroes'. This title, a quotation from one of the women, reflects the main topic of the repertoire, namely an absence of heroism, morality and competence in Czech men. A similar procedure was used in relation to other repertoires.

Given the fact that the interviews were carried out in the period of transformation, one might argue that the identities analysed in this chapter were not specific to state socialism but reflected the new post-1989 era. Yet, it would be a mistake to assume that such a political milestone instantly and radically transformed gender discourses and practices constitutive of women's identities. When asked about the significance of 1989, the majority of the women said that nothing significant had changed in terms of gender relations or in their lives *as women* (in contrast to their lives *as citizens*). In other words, the political milestone of 1989 did not necessarily incite an immediate change in the ways in which Czech women understood and performed themselves as gendered beings. Rather, the interviews suggested that gender discourses and ideologies that had shaped women's lives under state socialism continued to do so for years after 1989.[5] As I show throughout the analysis, some of the interpretative resources employed by the women were explicitly linked to state socialism – to its ideologies and social conditions. Others seemed to be more universal and may well be employed by today's generation of Czech women.[6] In this sense, the identity analysed in this chapter does not strictly refer to that of a 'Czech socialist woman' as opposed to the identity of a 'Czech post-socialist woman', as if these were two ontologically different beings or as if there was any clear-cut boundary between the two. Rather, the chapter examines women's identity constituted through discourses available to women under state socialism that nevertheless continued to constitute women's identities long after the regime's demise.

Czech men as the 'others'

In what follows, I introduce four interpretative repertoires on which the interviewed women drew to construct their identities in relation to Czech men:

The 'Men are No Heroes' repertoire
The 'Equality is Impossible' repertoire
The 'Lost Chivalry' repertoire
The 'Loyal Masculinity' repertoire

The 'Men are No Heroes' repertoire

The ironic expression 'Men are No Heroes' refers to a widely used repertoire that implied that men were indeed anything but heroes. This repertoire associated men

with a multitude of highly negative attributes emphasizing their moral weakness, insignificance, incapacity and lack of intelligence. Men were portrayed as generally contemptible individuals, more specifically as 'cowards', 'little hurt Joes' and 'incompetent and irresponsible idiots'. They were described as 'lazy as bugs', as well as suffering from 'inferiority complexes', 'incapacity' and 'stupidity'. The relationship of Czech women towards Czech men was characterized by 'detachment', 'contempt', 'disdain' or, in more positive cases, by 'amusement'. This repertoire was typically employed in the women's descriptions of men as husbands and sexual partners, that is, in the context of family and heterosexual relationships.

Extract 1

> Unfortunately, I think that women here [in CR] look at men somehow with disdain. And this is not even women's fault, men brought this on themselves. I once looked up to men because they had a higher IQ, they were more educated or cleverer [than me], I don't know. But after all my life experience men fell somewhere far down. And this is a terrible feeling when you begin to look down on a bloke with subtle detachment and amusement and you're thinking: 'Well, what now then?' And then you find out that men are these little hurt Joes...

(Dana, born in 1944)[7]

Extract 2

> Overall I think that women here [in CR] stand higher than men. A woman with a child, whether she likes it or not, she learns something and doesn't go nuts. Whereas a man, the average Czech man, or even a village man [...], well, it's even worse in the case of the village man. He spends his whole day sitting on a tractor, then goes to a pub, empties five beers with five snifters, or however they call it, and goes nuts. Look at our village population: it's a bunch of idiotic blokes. And among them are very clever women who learn with their children, on whom everything depends. And they all work.

(Denisa, born in 1941)

This first repertoire is notable for its explicit disrespect of men and for the recognizable habitualness of this deprecatory representation. Among the many negative characteristics attributed to men within this repertoire, lack of achievement and moral weakness were most prominent. These characteristics were visible, for instance, in Extract 2, in which men were portrayed as incompetent and unintelligent. In both extracts, men were also defined as morally weak, more specifically as irresponsible and immature. In Extract 1, Dana described men as clever and educated, yet commented upon the irrelevance of these qualities when compared with men's overall lack of character. The moral asymmetry between women and men was further apparent in the frequent use of expressions that positioned women 'above' men (e.g. 'women look down at men', 'men fell far

down', 'women stand higher than men') as well as in the negative attributes associated with men as a social group (e.g. 'He was a coward like every man').

So how was the marked moral asymmetry between women and men accounted for by the interviewed women? As the extracts above show, the women explained the asymmetry by the absence of 'real responsibilities' in men and by men's self-centeredness. In Extract 2, for instance, Dana portrayed men as having no other responsibilities than insignificant, puerile jobs ('sitting on a tractor') and their own entertainment ('drinking in a pub'). By contrast, women had an important mission to fulfil, namely to take care of their children and to work. Women were the ones 'on whom everything depends'. Dana, in Extract 1, made a similar point when she described men as 'little hurt Joes' and continued her account by comparing men to little boys wasting their time in petty battles and worrying about their little egos. In Western democracies, achievement and moral strength have long represented the defining features of traditional, 'heroic' masculinity (Connell 1995; Wetherell and Edley 1999). In contrast, the Czech man was constructed as profoundly lacking in both masculinity and heroism. Indeed, he was portrayed as an anti-hero; as a pitiful figure who pursued only his own petty interests and who was easily outperformed and manipulated by women, as the next extract shows.

Extract 3

> In many families, I'd say, men are generally looked at with contempt. [...]
> Women skillfully manipulate their husbands, depending on how good each
> of them is at being a diplomat. In the end, the husband will do what the
> woman wants, so this is how the matriarchy manifests itself in this.
>
> (Anna, born in 1922)

The 'Men are No Heroes' repertoire corresponds to one of the well-researched aspects of gender relations under state socialism, namely to the representation of women as superior in terms of their strength and vigour. It corresponds to the commentaries that describe Czech men as 'big children' (Vodochodský 2007) and Czech women as 'brave victims' (Gál and Kligman 2000) or as 'super-women' (Vodochodský 2007). The repertoire further rehearses the binary between women as bearers of moral integrity and men as failing to stand up to moral standards that has been explored in some major pieces of narrative fiction reflecting the late period of state socialism (Oates-Indruchová 2003).

The loss of men's status under state socialism has been explained, among other things, by the paternalistic state that superseded men's previously held roles (particularly their role as main breadwinners), thus depriving them of key aspects of traditional masculinity (Wagnerová 1995; Havelková 1999). As Wagnerová (1995) explains, due to the nationalization of private property and the low wages that made women's incomes indispensable for the family's economic survival, men's power and status (traditionally linked to their roles as bread-winners and property owners) significantly diminished. At the same time, the

radical redistribution of property lessened economic differences between men and women and undermined what had been the normative character of masculine attributes and behaviour (Wagnerová 1995). The loss of value of traditional masculine roles seemed to be reflected in the interviewed women's negative perceptions of men as lacking responsibility and, in consequence, as incompetent and inferior.

An alternative explanation of the diminished value of masculinity can be found in Libora Oates-Indruchová's analyses of narrative fiction (2006, 2012), in which she introduces the notion of the 'the void of acceptable masculinity' under state socialism (Oates-Indruchová 2006: 434). As she argues, the void was caused by the domination of state ideology over the representation of men as defenders of socialism, which contributed to the loss of the reputation of masculinity. Men were not free to choose their identity, but were forced into uniformity by identification with the labour force, socialist citizenship, and with their mission as 'soldiers and defenders of the country' (Oates-Indruchová 2006: 429). In fact, the 'Men are No Heroes' repertoire represented the reverse of the masculinity promoted by state-socialist ideology. Instead of the official representation of masculinity 'conceived in terms of work, discipline, and work initiative' (Oates-Indruchová 2006: 429), this repertoire associated masculinity with incompetency, egoism and aversion to work or to taking on any initiative.

The 'Equality is Impossible' repertoire

'Equality is Impossible' was a repertoire that portrayed women as desiring equality with men but failing to achieve it. The repertoire included descriptions of women's capacities and longings for equal relationships that had nevertheless proved to be impossible to achieve. The failure was attributed to men's character, namely to men's denigrating attitudes towards women and their preference for domination over equality, as illustrated in the following extracts.

Extract 4

> I think that women's relationship towards men is not healthy here [in CR]
> because a healthy relationship is an entirely equal relationship. I mean if I
> don't like something about a man, or if he doesn't like something about me,
> we must be able to talk about it with each other. But this unfortunately
> doesn't happen here [in CR] because most men have this attitude toward
> women: 'They're only women.'
>
> (Dana, born in 1944)

Extract 5

> My partner has this feeling that I'm just a woman, so what more would I
> want? And this is an agonizing barrier I've been constantly fighting with.
> [...] I wish I had an entirely equal partner, a partner with equal rights, with

whom I wouldn't need to make gimmickry just to go to the cinema. I wish I had a partner with whom I could talk quite frankly about my problems, and from whom I'd expect the same. A partner with whom I could solve my problems without throwing dishes, or similar rubbish, with whom I wouldn't need to play tricks with sexual blackmail. I really resent these tricks, they are such rubbish. But I've found that men let us [women] play these games on them with a feeling of a victory. Regrettably, equality in the household is something I've absolutely failed to achieve. I must admit, he is the winner.

(Sara, born in 1965)

In these extracts, the interviewed women contrasted their preference for openness, reciprocity and authenticity with the reality of gender relations defined by the exact opposite: by fighting, pretence, power struggles and generally by an unbridgeable difference between men and women. This repertoire typically included a short narrative beginning with the women's past efforts to achieve equality in relationships with men. Nevertheless, as they gained more experience with men they recognized the unviability of their efforts. The narrative concluded with the women's acceptance of the fact that equality in gender relationships was a mission that was indeed impossible. In contrast to the 'Men are No Heroes' repertoire, the 'Equality is Impossible' repertoire sharply inverted men and women's status. Men were not positioned here as incompetent dummies but as powerful figures capable of securing their domination over women. The repertoire portrayed men as forcing women to use 'tricks', 'pretence' and 'gimmickry' just to accomplish everyday tasks, despite women's disgust with such behaviour. Far from praising their own position as 'clever manipulators', as in the first repertoire, the women expressed their resentment over the manipulative tricks they were forced to employ as a part of their 'women's role'.

Notably, within this repertoire, gender relations were constructed through the metaphor of 'war' (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). References to war or struggle were prominent in many of the accounts: women engaged in 'constant fighting' and 'enormous struggles', they encountered 'agonizing barriers', fought 'enormous obstacles' and 'failed' in their efforts to achieve more equality. The relations between women and men were described in terms of 'winning/losing', and the men, although being 'smashed' by women's claims for equality, finally won the game. This sense of struggle was also visible in the following extract, which emerged in the context of a discussion of gender relations in the workplace.

Extract 6

I think that women are terribly undervalued here [in CR]; if a woman sets a goal for herself, she meets with enormous obstacles, with enormous problems. Men often underestimate women. When a woman decides something, it's definitely not easy for her. Men treat her as if she was in [an] inferior position. They don't trust her, they diminish her, they make things complicated for her.

So I think that if she wants to achieve something in this society, it costs her an enormous effort and enormous struggles. I think it'll take some time before it changes.

(Simona, born in 1963)

This way of constructing gender relations poses a serious challenge to the common description of the relations between Czech men and women (both before and after 1989) as unusually harmonious compared to Western standards. The popular 'theory of one enemy' (Šiklová 1997, 2008) suggested that throughout Czech history, relationships between men and women have been defined by cohesion rather than by conflict because men and women were united by their fight against the same enemy, such as the state-socialist regime. Patriarchal discourse was more difficult to challenge as it was less of an enemy than socialist ideology (Oates-Indruchová 2002). Šiklová (1997: 267), for example, claims that 'relationships at workplaces between men and women were good, without rivalry and competition'.

The legacy of 'gender harmony' has been repeatedly used to explain the rejection of feminism by Czech women after 1989 (see Wagnerová 1995; Šiklová 1997; Šmausová 2011). Yet, this theory clearly contrasts with the explicit critique of discrimination and sexist behaviour by Czech men articulated in the examined extracts. The interviewed women were far from identifying with men or describing their relationships as 'good' or 'without rivalry and competition'. On the contrary, they reflected upon and strongly contested their unequal position in both heterosexual relationships and workplaces. As I discuss in more detail below, the 'Equality is Impossible' repertoire shows that the theory of solidarity between the genders under state socialism, as Havelková (1999: 77) has claimed, 'should be regarded, from the cultural point of view, as a myth'.

The 'Lost Chivalry' repertoire

The 'Lost Chivalry' repertoire portrayed gender relations as deteriorating due to a loss of chivalry in men, which was attributed to the state-socialist project of women's emancipation. Within this repertoire the women articulated their desire to accentuate the gender differences wiped away by state socialism and to occupy 'the position of a woman' again. The repertoire usually emerged in response to a question about the relationship between Czech men and Czech women.

Extract 7

Chivalry has been lost here [in CR]. Since everything had to be the same, men's and women's characteristics began to intertwine. Whereas I think that the most beautiful thing about it [the relationship between men and women] is to appreciate the fact that I'm completely different from him [a man]. That this is the basic: to retain what makes me a woman.

(Denisa, born in 1941)

Extract 8

Men have absorbed too much of these emancipation strands which claimed that a woman doesn't need any help, that she can take care of herself, arrange her own living, finances, that she'll do everything by herself. I've got used to it but I'd be glad if I didn't have to. It'd be good if someone took this off me, if women had more time for their position as a woman.

(Jitka, born in 1938)

Extract 9

I think that there always should be a distance [between men and women], that a man should be courteous to a woman, even if he thinks that they are equals. That this is his role. But on the other hand, when women have equal rights, men think that they don't need to be gallant anymore. So a man doesn't hold the door for a woman, he doesn't help her to put on her coat. Gallantry shouldn't get lost, but it does with equality.

(Anna, born in 1922)

Within this repertoire Czech men were portrayed as compliant with the negative influences of the state-socialist ideology of women's emancipation. As the extracts show, men were said to misuse state ideology for their own benefits, namely to absolve themselves from any responsibilities and to shift these responsibilities onto women. Against this negative portrait of Czech men, the women posited the ideal of a chivalrous man who respects women and their difference. Chivalry, however, was portrayed as an act that requires the recognition of women's specificity, and was therefore described as contradictory to gender equality. This was explicitly expressed by Anna in Extract 9: 'Gallantry shouldn't get lost, but it does with equality'. Emancipation was also viewed as distinctly detrimental to women since it brought about men's indifference toward women, including the men's lack of participation in everyday household chores. As Extract 8 showed, instead of improving women's lives, women's emancipation was experienced as an increasing absence of support for women and an additional burden (see also Šmausová 2011).

The paradoxical nature of state-socialist emancipation has been repeatedly discussed by Czech gender researchers, many of whom also pointed to its beneficial impact on Czech women's social and economic status (Havelková 1999; Wagnerová 2009). On the other hand, Havelková (1999) has observed that state-socialist emancipation can hardly be considered emancipation because of its fundamental suppression of women's individual autonomy. What the examined accounts showed is that, for the interviewed women, the refusal of state-socialist emancipation was linked not only to the double burden and 'ideological manipulation' (Šmausová 2011) by the state, but also to the women's profound fears of losing their femininity. In other words, emancipation was viewed as a force that neutralized gender differences and was responsible for women's inability to

maintain their femininity. In this context, men's chivalry acquired a crucial significance because it made visible the women's specificity *as women*. Opening the door for women or helping them to put on a coat were portrayed as highly significant acts that reconstructed women's 'natural dignity' and 'women's value' that had been lost under state socialism.

Together with mourning the disappearance of chivalrous men, this repertoire articulated the ideal of a 'natural', dignified femininity that had vanished together with a chivalrous masculinity. In the extract below, Denisa expressed a sentiment widely shared by the interviewed women, namely a nostalgia for bygone times in which women were still 'real women'.

Extract 10

It's a terrible mistake that so called flirting has been lost. A woman who can flirt with grace always stays within the limits. She says: 'You shall do only what I allow you'. That's what women have lost here [in CR]. Worn out women carrying heavy shopping bags, children waiting at home, with a bloke who's never learned to help, who's never washed dishes in his life. This is the normal prototype of our [Czech] family. What can a woman find in this for herself?

(Denisa, born in 1941)

Oates-Indruchová (2012 and in this volume) suggests that the imagery of bourgeois femininity, together with its nostalgic connotations, can be conceptualized as a residual discourse from the pre-state-socialist era. Instead of vanishing under state socialism, this discourse was transformed into a resistant discourse that opposed the state's authoritative project of emancipation. Indeed, Denisa seemed to be drawing on the pre-state-socialist discourse of a 'bourgeois' woman that idealized traditional gender roles. Her account revived the romanticizing imagery of a graceful woman of the pre-state-socialist era who could 'flirt with grace' and set boundaries on men's desires. Such a figure functioned as a source of identification against the 'masculine', 'coarse', and 'worn out' socialist woman. Importantly, however, the women's desires to occupy the position of 'real woman' did not necessarily mean a desire to return to traditional gender arrangements, in which men's and women's roles were strictly separated. Rather, such a position implied a desire for men's greater involvement in women's everyday life as well as for women's autonomy (see Extracts 8 and 10). As I discuss below, the desire to promote gender differences implied a desire for more equal relationships between women and men, rather than a return to the traditional roles of housewives and breadwinners.

The 'Loyal Masculinity' repertoire

'Loyal Masculinity' was the only identified repertoire that employed a positive representation of men and masculinity. This repertoire regularly emerged in

women's descriptions of relationships among women or in response to the question of whether there should be more solidarity among women. In these specific contexts, women were portrayed as lacking solidarity in some fundamental way.

Extract 11

> I'd say there is rather rivalry among women. I've never felt any solidarity from a woman. To be honest, whenever I felt bad, men were the ones who helped me. Friends of masculine gender. With one or two exceptions, whenever I got into some troubles either at work, or at home, men were the ones who helped me.
>
> (Sara, born in 1965)

Extract 12

> I've always wished, whenever I chose my colleagues or whenever I had my say in their selection, my biggest wish was to have men as colleagues, quite categorically. [...] Men are not gossipmongers, they are not petty, they are not quarrelsome, they are fun to work with, and they do not bring their personal problems to work, as women do. Male colleagues are appealing to me in these respects. When women are together, it very often brings the opposite. It brings quarrels, petty envies, gossips, exaggeration of petty problems.
>
> (Jitka, born in 1938)

In these extracts, relationships among women were described as marked by rivalry and an absence of solidarity. For instance, in Extract 12, Jitka drew an unflattering portrait of women as petty and envious colleagues. In other examples of this repertoire, women were referred to as 'hens', with the most common attributes ascribed to them being 'envy', 'jealousy' and 'rivalry'. By contrast, men were characterized as sympathetic, generous and loyal companions. Sara, in Extract 11, described men as real friends who were willing to help when needed. This repertoire rehearsed the stereotypical, sexist binaries that associated women with boredom, treachery, envy, and men with wit, loyalty and generosity. These binaries were constructed in essentialist terms as embedded in women's and men's natures, particularly in their 'genes'.[8]

The 'Loyal Masculinity' repertoire was used by the women to justify their lack of support for gender equality in workplaces and in politics. More specifically, the repertoire was employed to warrant the women's refusal to support women's equal participation in the political arena. Sara, for example, drew on the image of a 'henhouse' to describe women's political gatherings. She labelled women's style of communication as a 'terrible natter' and thus by implication as dull, annoying and irrelevant. As Extract 12 shows, the repertoire was further used to undermine the ideal of equal opportunities by associating women with highly negative characteristics that justified a preference for men

in the workplace. The 'Loyal Masculinity' repertoire was used to justify the women's lack of support for other women as well as their distance from women as a social group. By employing this repertoire, the women uncritically reproduced sexist discourse and enacted the stigmatization and exclusion of women that they themselves criticized in other contexts.

Empowering, or injuring identities? Dilemmas of femininity and feminism

The four repertoires represented the recurrent interpretative resources that the interviewed women employed to make sense of gender relations as formed under state socialism and to simultaneously construct their own identity. The majority of the women drew on all four repertoires. This is not surprising. As CDP has documented, social actors regularly draw on multiple patterns of sense-making that they employ differently to achieve different communicative acts at different points in a social interaction (Wetherell and Edley 1999; Reynolds and Wetherell 2003). It was thus not uncommon for the women to critique gender stereotypes at one point in the interview and to reconfirm the validity of those stereotypes at another point. Sara, for example, when asked about her views on Czech men expressed indignation at their denigration of women through the widespread denotation of women as 'hens'. Later in the interview, however, she herself described women as 'hens' and used this description to delegitimize efforts to increase women's political representation.

So what are the implications of this analysis? How can we explain the women's simultaneous use of these diverse interpretative resources? In the remaining part of this chapter, I propose four interrelated propositions concerning the implications of the analysis for the women's subjectivity and their relationship with feminism.

First, I suggest that the subject positions taken up by the interviewed women can be best understood in terms of the women's search for *empowering identities* within the limits set by the discourses and practices available in a state-socialist society. The women employed the four interpretative resources to articulate empowering identities for themselves, that is, identities that provided them with a sense of agency and power by accentuating their value and specificity as women and their irreplaceable role in society. The construction of these highly positive identities can be documented by examples from each of the four interpretative repertoires. By employing the 'Men are No Heroes' repertoire, the women took up the positions of competent, responsible and morally superior social actors who had an irreplaceable role in the society. Through the 'Lost Chivalry' repertoire, the women expressed their desire for a women-centred world, in which women's specificity and central role in society would be recognized and respected. The 'Equality is Impossible' repertoire also positioned women positively – as striving for a better, more equal society, despite the obstacles posed by men's sexism. Finally, by drawing on the 'Loyal Masculinity' repertoire, the women constructed a positive identity for themselves through

dis-identification with other women who were represented as inferior to men. Through this repertoire, the interviewed women allied with men and with the power that men represented in a particular context.

From the perspective of a critical gender analysis, and this is the second proposition, the subject positions taken up by the women can be at the same time viewed as conventional, reductive and potentially disadvantaging. More specifically, these subject positions can be described as ideological interpellations that ultimately undermined women's autonomy and power, that is, as *injuring* (Matonoha 2010, and in this volume) rather than empowering identities. Injuring identities – positive interpellations with negative effects – are idealized, seductive models of women's subjectivity that interpellate women by offering them certain forms of viability and recognition (related, for example, to women's self-sacrifice or to women's erotic power). Yet, despite their seemingly positive character, these identities are ultimately disadvantageous because they subvert women's agency and reproduce stereotypical, patriarchal discursive patterns (ibid.).

The subject positions produced by the four interpretative repertoires thus provided women with a strong sense of self-respect and even superiority; however, they did so by means that were highly problematic and that potentially reproduced and consolidated patriarchal discourses and practices. This was most visible in the case of the 'Loyal Masculinity' repertoire, which interpellated women to accentuate their own self-worth by reproducing sexist images of other women and by discrediting women's collective identity. Through identifying with this repertoire, the women undermined both their own position as women and the legitimacy of political efforts to improve women's status in Czech society. The 'Men are No Heroes' repertoire was another example of an *injuring* discursive interpellation that offered self-respect to women and at the same time undermined women by linking their self-worth to the capacity to bear the double burden and by celebrating the strategies of the weak, such as the covert manipulation of husbands. The same is true of the 'Lost Chivalry' repertoire that – through an idealization of chivalry and bourgeois femininity – made invisible that the respect paid to the bourgeois woman was conditioned by her subjection to male authority. By contrast, the 'Equality is Impossible' repertoire provided discursive resources allowing the women to explicitly challenge gender inequality. Yet, it also undermined the women's positions by attributing men's sexism to their nature and thus constructing any efforts to challenge the status quo as bound to fail.

This brings us to my third proposition, namely, that the appropriation of injuring identities by the women must be considered in relation to the absence of a viable feminist discourse and debate in Czech state-socialist society. More specifically, I would argue that the women's appropriation of the injuring identities illustrates the negative effects of the absence of feminist discourse on how gender issues could be understood and addressed. The analysis demonstrates the women's desires to improve their position in the society by engaging with a range of gender issues regularly addressed by feminism: issues of power asymmetry in

heterosexual relationships, discrimination in the workplace, lack of respect for women, the continuation of the women's double burden and the unequal gender distribution of work. Yet, in the absence of a viable feminist discourse, the women attempted to address these issues through identifications with subject positions that were potentially counter-productive and injuring; these subject positions drew them back to biologism and essentialism, and to conventional women's roles based on a 'natural' or 'genetically encoded' capacity for caring and mothering.

The link between the absence of feminist discourse and the appropriation of injuring identities can be documented by an example from the 'Lost Chivalry' repertoire. By drawing on this repertoire, the women expressed their desire to enhance gender differences and to accentuate the femininity lost due to the state-socialist ideology of women's emancipation. The women's desire for femininity, however, should not be interpreted as a wish to return to traditional women's roles as housewives. On the contrary, the examined extracts drew attention to the women's beliefs that the accentuation of their femininity would result in more equal relationships with men. The women assumed that if they reclaimed their femininity, men would become considerate towards them and consequently share more responsibility for the women's everyday duties, including household chores. By employing this interpretative repertoire, the women sought to address the problems of the unequal distribution of work and the lack of respect for women. In the absence of feminist discourse, though, their solution to these problems was regressive and potentially counterproductive; it relied on the reproduction of gender differences and a return to 'women's roles', which more likely increased gender inequality.

Therefore, and this is the fourth and final proposition, I suggest that the repertoires provide evidence of the vital relevance of 'Western feminism' for the problems faced by Czech women, despite the fact that this relevance remained unrecognized and unarticulated. Alena Heitlinger (1996) has identified a number of reasons why 'Western feminism' did not resonate with Czech women after 1989, including their mistrust of emancipatory ideas, the impaired reputation of concepts such as 'women's emancipation', and an uncritical acceptance of 'the stereotype of feminists as men-haters' (ibid.: 81). What the interviews make clear is that Czech women above all lacked a conceptual apparatus that would allow them to link feminism to their own lives. Indeed, the women never made the link between feminism and the gender-related problems that they encountered on a daily basis and of which they were well aware. When asked about their views on feminism, the women portrayed feminism as an inherently Western phenomenon linked exclusively to Western 'extremism' and to the lives of Western women. In addition, Western women as representatives of feminism were also positioned negatively, as lacking 'real life experience' and thus not in a position to give advice to Czech women. Western women were typically described as spending life in superficial pleasures and consequently as idle, spoilt and self-centred. By contrast, state socialism was portrayed as having positive effects on Czech women in terms of their strength, competence and

resourcefulness.[9] Western women therefore did not represent a desirable model to be followed. In most contexts, they functioned as the negative 'Other' against whom the interviewed women defined their own positive qualities born of the hardships of state socialism (see also Šmausová 2011). Thus, the association of feminism exclusively with the West, the lack of knowledge of feminism, and the negative stereotypes of Western women hindered the women's capacity to relate feminism to their own lives.

Concluding thoughts: on women's identities and their construction in expert discourse

This chapter has explored the constructions of women's identity manifested in the women's retrospective accounts of their experience of femininity and masculinity in a state-socialist society. By examining the four diverse interpretative resources employed by the women to construct their identity, the analysis made visible the plural and situated character of women's identities formed under state socialism. Above all, the analysis showed that the dominant representation of Czech women under state socialism that portrayed Czech women as 'strong women rather than victims' (Heitlinger 1996: 77) or 'the better one in the relationship of the two sexes' (Šiklová 1997: 270) does not fully capture the complexity of women's identity in a state socialist society. The identity of a 'Czech socialist woman' included other, so far neglected aspects, namely the unfulfilled desire for gender equality, the fear of losing femininity, and the women's identification with sexist discourse.

The analysis also problematized the popular thesis that suggests that relationships between women and men under state socialism are defined by cohesion, harmony and solidarity rather than antagonism (Šiklová 2008; Šmausová 2011). Although the idea of gender solidarity under state socialism has been widely accepted and may correspond to the narratives of *some* women, the present analysis did not support this thesis. In arguing for this thesis, Šmausová (2011), for example, suggests that the resistance to the state's official emancipatory rhetoric was one of the causes of the alliance between Czech men and women. Yet, the accounts examined in this chapter showed that the women perceived men not as allies in a joint resistance to state ideology but rather as compliant with the ideology and using it for their own benefit. In this respect, the analysis presented here corresponds more strongly with the commentary provided by Ivo Možný (1990) who has argued that Czech women were aware of the discrimination against them and attributed this discrimination to structural patriarchy as well as to patriarchy within the family.[10]

Instead of harmony, gender relations as depicted in the women's accounts were defined by disillusionment, conflicts and a marked lack of respect between men and women. For example, the 'Equality is Impossible' repertoire reflected the women's frustration with both the unviability of equal partnerships and the men's attempts to dominate. As this repertoire was most commonly used by the younger women, it might be argued that it was not typical of Czech women

under state socialism.[11] Nevertheless, the repertoires that were explicitly linked to state socialism also did not reflect harmony between genders, but revealed the women's frustration at their loss of status under state socialism or their general contempt for men. In addition, the thesis on gender harmony is difficult to reconcile with the widespread experience of abuse (including sexual and domestic violence) reported by the interviewed women.[12] Overall, the analysis indicates that the thesis on gender solidarity among Czech women and men made invisible their numerous gender conflicts and power struggles and, in this way, presented an overly idealized picture of the gender order under state socialism.

This opens up a question about the role of expert discourse on gender relations in state-socialist society, disseminated by prominent Czech gender researchers such as Šiklová or Wagnerová after 1989, and the ways in which this discourse constructed what counted as the 'correct' knowledge about gender in state socialism. The role of these Czech researchers was particularly marked in the 1990s during the 'East–West feminism' debate, in which they translated the experience of Czech women to Western audiences, often in an attempt to explain the widespread refusal of feminism by Czech women (Vodochodský 2007). To support their explanations, however, these researchers only rarely used systematic research of other women's accounts (Oates-Indruchová 2005). Instead, they often relied on their own personal experiences to formulate hypotheses that aimed to speak for *all* Czech women, as if Czech women were a homogenous group with identical experiences. For instance, both Wagnerová and Šmausová drew heavily on their experiences of emigrating to West Germany where they felt less emancipated as women (Šmausová 2011: 199–202; Wagnerová 2011: 15) than in state-socialist Czechoslovakia. However, the incongruences between women's own accounts and the accounts of gender researchers identified in this chapter illustrate the limits of generalizing one's experience in order to speak for other women.

There is another reason why the thesis on gender solidarity did not necessarily correspond to the accounts examined in this chapter. This is the fact that this thesis was formulated almost exclusively through economic and political explanations. Wagnerová (1995, 2009), for example, relies on the economic aspects of state socialism to argue for the solidarity of Czech women and men under state socialism. According to Wagnerová, because of the egalitarianism of state-socialist society, the minimization of differences in salaries, and the property owned by both women and men, '[i]t is obvious that women had no reason to feel oppressed by men. The state of the society and the governance created rather a sense of solidarity between them' (Wagnerová 1995: 82). In contrast to Wagnerová's account, the present analysis makes clear that on a more interpersonal level, many of the sources of inequality between men and women prevailed. Notwithstanding the growing economic egalitarianism, women still had to face inequality in everyday interactions, ranging from marginalization, sexism and discrimination to psychological or sexual violence. As Havelková (1999: 77) remarks, '[s]exist anti-women jokes never ceased to be liked by men'. This interpersonal, less visible level of inequality has for the most part been ignored by researchers adopting the gender solidarity thesis.

Another issue that may launch a wider discussion relates to the debate on the relevance of 'Western feminism' to Czech women after the demise of state socialism. On one hand, authors adopting the gender solidarity thesis attributed a certain legitimacy to the state-socialist form of emancipation and emphasized its positive impact on Czech women (Wagnerová 2009; Šmausová 2011). At the same time they seemed to be critical of feminism (conceptualized by them as a Western import, see Šmausová 2011) and of its applicability to the problems of Czech women. Other authors, on the other hand, resisted the conceptualization of feminism as a Western import and stressed the long tradition of feminist thought and activism in Czech civil society (Věšínová-Kalivodová 2005; Havelková 2010). Havelková (2010) has also observed that elements of feminist critique emerged repeatedly even in the state-socialist era and uses this argument to propose that there was a certain latent or unarticulated form of feminist consciousness among Czech women.

Consistent with this latter position, and in regard to the problems of Czech women, I have tried to demonstrate that feminism was relevant by: (1) showing that on the interpersonal level the women struggled with the same issues of discrimination and inequality as are regularly addressed by 'Western feminism'; (2) making links between the absence of a viable feminist discourse and the appropriation of injuring identities by the interviewed women. I argued that in the absence of feminism, the women addressed gender issues by identifying with subject positions that were potentially injuring as well as counterproductive to their aspirations for equality and recognition. This opens up a question whether the theories of the 1990s – while providing a useful translation of the specificity of Czech gender patterns to Western audiences – also made invisible those aspects of gender relations that corresponded to Western gender regimes. Did these theories present an idealized picture of gender relations under state socialism and, consequently, underestimate the potential relevance of 'Western' feminism to Czech women in the transformation period?

Given the relatively small number of accounts analysed in this chapter, the analysis presented here is too limited to formulate any conclusive statements on women's identities in a state-socialist society. Nonetheless, despite these limitations, the analysis clearly indicates a need to re-examine women's (and men's) self-perceptions under state socialism. The almost 25 years since the demise of state socialism provides a sufficient distance to allow for more critical, nuanced and empirically based research. In addition, the analysis presented here suggests a need to begin to examine the role of Czech gender researchers in constructing gender sensibility and gender knowledge in the post-1989 period. In this period, these researchers used their own experiences to speak on behalf of Czech women to both Western and Czech audiences. The researchers' personal experiences – both highly relevant and partial – came to define what was considered to be the truth about gender under state socialism. The impact of this knowledge-production on the perception of gender relations and the position of feminism in Czech society remains to be properly addressed.

Notes

1 An exception in the Slovak context is the project entitled *Pamäť žien: O skúsenosti sebautvárania v biografických rozhovoroch* [*Women's Memory: on the experience of the formation of the Self in biographical interviews*] (Kiczková *et al.* 2006). Kiczková and her colleagues used oral history to examine a number of important aspects of women's lives in state-socialist Slovakia, including the issues of women's identities and self-perceptions. Their analysis nevertheless differs significantly from the discursive approach presented in this chapter.

2 The interviewed women also constructed their identity through dis-identification with 'Western women' and 'Western feminism'. Because of space limits, however, I discuss these two 'Others' only briefly in the second part of the chapter.

3 The interview extracts were translated into English by Kateřina Zábrodská.

4 For a discussion on the homogenization of women's lives under state socialism, see Havelková (1999).

5 This hypothesis can also be supported by the interviews published in the two volumes of *Všechny naše včerejšky: Paměť žen* [*All Our Yesterdays: women's memory*] (Frýdlová 1998). When asked if anything had changed in their lives after 1989, many of the interviewed women said that nothing significant had changed in their personal lives, and, if so, the changes were not related to their role as women, but to the political regime (e.g. study opportunities for their children, free expression of religious faith) or economic position (e.g. increasing fear of poverty).

6 Many of the quotations presented in this chapter use present tense rather than past tense. This does not mean, however, that the interviewed women limited the validity of their claims to the post-1989 period. Instead, they presented gender relations as universal, as not specifically linked to any historical period. The women's accounts were mostly grounded in an essentialist discourse that constructed gender relations as given and unchangeable, notwithstanding the changes in the political system. As I show in my analysis of gender identity discourses among young Czech women and men (Zábrodská 2009), gender essentialism is still commonly employed to make sense of gender relations. Yet, in contrast to women living under state socialism, the analysis suggests that the current generation of young Czechs draws predominantly on the notion of gender as a product of socialization and accentuates the individual's right to resist normative gender expectations (see Zábrodská 2009).

7 All names are pseudonyms.

8 The recourse to genetic explanations was widespread among the interviewed women. One of them, for example, even attributed to women 'a genetically encoded envy of clothes'.

9 In this respect, the women seemed to identify strongly with the state-socialist ideology that claimed that Czech socialist women were far superior to women living in capitalist societies.

10 For an extended discussion of this issue, see Vodochodský (2008).

11 Yet, the biographical interviews published in *All Our Yesterdays* (Frýdlová 1998) support the argument that some women clearly recognized and explicitly criticized the lack of equality between women and men in a state-socialist society. For example, when asked about gender equality under state socialism, one of the women interviewed in the book commented: 'I really disliked the fact that women's value or her status as an equal partner in the workplace did not correspond to how it was publicly presented [...] I felt this was an injustice to women' (Frýdlová 1998: 163). Another woman participating in the research described how she had felt discriminated against at work. She concluded her account by saying emphatically: 'There had never been equality. My life proves it' (ibid.: 123).

12 Eight of the 20 interviewed women referred to having personal experience with some form of sexual abuse.

References

Benwell, Bethan and Elizabeth Stokoe (2006) *Discourse and Identity*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Connell, Robert William (1995) *Masculinities*, St Leonards: Allen & Unwin.

Davies, Bronwyn (2008) 'Re-thinking "behaviour" in terms of positioning and the ethics of responsibility', in Anne M. Phelan and Jennifer Sumsio (eds) *Critical Readings in Teacher Education: provoking absences*, Netherlands: Sense.

Davies, Bronwyn and Rom Harré (2001) 'Positioning: the discursive production of selves', in Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Taylor and Simeon Yates (eds) *Discourse Theory and Practice: a reader*, London: Sage and Open University.

Edley, Nigel (2001) 'Analysing masculinity: interpretative repertoires, ideological dilemmas and subject positions', in Margaret Wetherell, Stephanie Taylor and Simeon Yates (eds) *Discourse as Data: a guide for analysis*, London: Sage and Open University.

Ferber, Marianne A. and Phyllis Hutton Raabe (2003) 'Women in the Czech Republic: feminism, Czech style', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 16, 3: 407–30.

Frýdlová, Pavla (ed.) (1998) *Všechny naše včerejšky: Paměť žen* [*All Our Yesterdays: women's memory*], 2 vols, Prague: Nadace Gender Studies.

Gannon, Susanne and Bronwyn Davies (2007) 'Postmodern, poststructural, and critical theories', in Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber (ed.) *Handbook of Feminist Research: theory and praxis*, Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Garcia, Primo and Cynthia Hardy (2007) 'Positioning, similarity and difference: narratives of individual and organizational identities in an Australian university', *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 23: 263–383.

Gál, Susan and Gail Kligman (2000) *Reproducing Gender: politics, publics, and everyday life after socialism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hall, Stuart (1996) 'Introduction: Who needs "identity"?', in Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (eds) *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London: Sage.

Havelková, Hana (1999) 'Women in and after a "classless" society', in Christine Zmroczek and Pat Mahony (eds) *Women and Social Class: international feminist perspectives*, London: Taylor & Francis and UCL.

Havelková, Hana (2010) 'Expropriated, replaced, alienated, latent: feminist thought in state socialism', paper presented at the conference Intimate Internationalism: Women Transforming the Political in Postwar Europe, Potsdam, October 2010.

Heitlinger, Alena (1979) *Women and State Socialism: sex inequality in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia*, London: Macmillan.

Heitlinger, Alena (1996) 'Framing feminism in post-communist Czech Republic', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 29, 1: 77–93.

Johnson, Janet Elise and Jean C. Robinson (2007) *Living Gender after Communism*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.

Kiczková, Zuzana, Barbora Kachničová, Antónia Furjelová, Jana Tesáková and Marta Botíková (2006) *Pamäť žien: O skúsenosti sebautvárania v biografických rozhovoroch* [*Women's Memory: on the experience of the formation of the Self in biographical interviews*], Bratislava: Iris.

LaFont, Suzanne (2001) 'One step forward, two steps back: women in the post-communist states', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 34: 203–20.

Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson (1980) *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Litosseliti, Lia and Jane Sunderland (2002) *Gender Identity and Discourse Analysis*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Matonoha, Jan (2010) 'Identita: obyvatelná, zraňující, prázdná. Identita jako aporie v "reflexi" literárních textů' [Identity: an inhabitable, an injuring, an empty one. Identity as an aporia in the 'reflection' of literary texts], in Kateřina Zábrodská and Ivo Čermák (eds) *Kvalitativní přístupy a metody ve vědách o člověku*, Brno: Psychologický ústav AV ČR.

Mills, Sara (1997; [2004]) *Discourse*, 2nd edn, London: Routledge.

Možný, Ivo (1990) *Moderní rodina: mýty a skutečnost* [*The Modern Family: myths and reality*], Brno: Blok.

Nečasová, Denisa (2011) *Buduj vlast – posíliš mír! Ženské hnutí v českých zemích 1945–1955* [*Build Up Your Country, and Strengthen Peace!: women's movement in the Czech Lands, 1945–1955*], Brno: Matice moravská.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2000) 'Male bodies resisting the west and the past: body and masculinity in advertising in the Czech Republic', *East Central Europe*, 27: 21–36.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2002) *Discourses of Gender in Pre- and Post-1989 Czech Culture*, Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2003) 'Ženská identita Terezy Boučkové' [Women's identity of Tereza Boučková], in Alena Vodáková and Olga Vodáková (eds) *Rod ženský*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2005) 'From Raisa to Hillary: gender discourse in political speeches and selected news coverage of the perestroika and early transition years', in Jiřina van Leeuwen-Turnovcová and Nicole Richter (eds) 'Mediale Welten in Tschechien nach 1989: Genderprojektionen und Codes des Plebejismus', Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2006) 'The void of acceptable masculinity during Czech state socialism: the case of Radek John's *Memento*', *Men and Masculinities*, 8, 4: 428–50.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2012) 'The Beauty and the Loser: cultural representations of gender in late state socialism', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 37, 2: 357–83.

Potter, Jonathan (2003) 'Discourse analysis and discursive psychology', in Paul M. Camic, Jean E. Rhodes and Lucy Yardley (eds) *Qualitative Research in Psychology: expanding perspectives in methodology and design*, Washington DC: APA.

Potter, Jonathan and Margaret Wetherell (1987) *Discourse and Social Psychology: beyond attitudes and behaviour*, London: Sage.

Reynolds, Jill and Margaret Wetherell (2003) 'The discursive climate of singleness: the consequence for women's negotiation of a single identity', *Feminism & Psychology*, 13: 489–510.

Šiklová, Jiřina (1997) 'Feminism and the roots of apathy in the Czech Republic', *Social Research*, 64, 2: 258–81.

Šiklová, Jiřina (2008) 'Zpětný pohled na život žen v období socialismu v Československu' [A retrospective view on women's lives in socialist Czechoslovakia], unpublished manuscript.

Šmausová, Gerlinda (2011 [2006]) 'Emancipace, socialismus a feminismus' [Emancipation, socialism and feminism], in Libora Oates-Indruchová (ed.) *Tvrdošíjnost myšlenky: Od feministické kriminologie k teorii genderu*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Šmejkalová, Jiřina, Marie Čermáková, Hana Havelková and Libora Indruchová (n.d.) 'Democratization, Social and Political Change and Women's Movements', Final Report – Czech Republic, British Research Council Award Ref. No. R 000 23 4258. Unpublished report.

Speer, Susan A. (2005) *Gender Talk: feminism, discourse and conversation analysis*, London: Routledge.

Sunderland, Jane (2004) *Gendered Discourses*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Věšínová-Kalivodová, Eva (2005) 'Czech society in-between the waves', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 12: 421–35.

Vodochodský, Ivan (2007) *'Superženy' a 'velké děti': konceptualizace postavení mužů v rámci genderového řádu státního socialismu* ['Superwomen' and 'Big Children': conceptualisation of position of men within gender order of state socialism], *Pražské sociálně vědní studie–Sociologická řada*, Prague: Charles University, Fakulta sociálních věd. Online. Available: http://publication.fsv.cuni.cz/publication.php?id=4306 (accessed 24 June 2013).

Vodochodský, Ivan (2008) 'Patriarchát na socialistický způsob: k genderovému řádu státního socialismu' [Socialist-wise patriarchy: on gender order of state socialism], *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum*. Online. Available: www.genderonline.cz/cs/issue/8-rocnik-8-cislo-2-2007/91 (accessed 24 June 2013).

Wagnerová, Alena (1995) 'Emancipace a vlastnictví' [Emancipation and ownership], *Czech Sociological Review*, 31: 77–84.

Wagnerová, Alena (2009) 'Co přinesl a nepřinesl českým ženám socialistický model rovnoprávnosti–aneb nejen jesle a traktoristky' [What the socialist model of equality did, or did not bring to Czech women, or; not only kindergartens and female tractor drivers], in Linda Sokačová (ed.) *Gender a demokracie 1989–2009* [*Gender and Democracy 1989–2009*], Prague: Gender Studies.

Wagnerová, Alena (2011) 'Laudatio: Linda Šmausová – žena – člověk – vědkyně – přítelkyně: curiculum velice osobní' [Laudation: Linda Šmausová – woman – human – scholar – friend: a very personal curriculum vitae], in Libora Oates-Indruchová (ed.) *Tvrdošíjnost myšlenky: Od feministické kriminologie k teorii genderu*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Wetherell, Margaret (1998) 'Positioning and interpretative repertoires: conversation analysis and post-structuralism in dialogue', *Discourse & Society*, 9, 3: 387–412.

Wetherell, Margaret (2003) 'Racism and the analysis of cultural resources in interviews', in Harry van den Berg, Margaret Wetherell and Hanneke Houtkoop-Steenstra (eds) *Analyzing Race Talk: multidisciplinary approaches to the interview*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wetherell, Margaret and Nigel Edley (1999) 'Negotiating hegemonic masculinity: imaginary positions and psycho-discursive practices', *Feminism & Psychology*, 9, 3: 335–56.

Wilkinson, Sue and Celia Kitzinger (1996) 'Theorizing representing the Other', in Sue Wilkinson and Celia Kitzinger (eds) *Representing the Other: a feminism & psychology reader*, London: Sage.

Zábrodská, Kateřina (2009) *Variace na gender: Poststrukturalismus, diskurzivní analýza a genderová identita* [*Variations on the theme of gender: poststructuralism, discourse analysis and gender identity*], Prague: Academia.

Zábrodská, Kateřina (2010) 'Diskurzivní analýza v soudobé sociální psychologii: teorie, koncepty a aplikace' [Discourse analysis in contemporary social psychology: theories, concepts, and applications], *Czechoslovak Psychology*, 54: 249–62.

Part II

Gender as a symbolic category

6 The body of the nation

The Czechoslovak Spartakiades from a gender perspective[1]

Petr Roubal

The human body is the most potent political symbol. Paradoxically, the power of its symbolism, as Mary Douglas showed, is in its seemingly apolitical nature, its rootedness in the world of unchanging natural phenomena, as well as in its symmetry and duality (Douglas 1978: 115; Mangan 1999: 11). While the symbolism of the human body has been endlessly explored from all possible angles, the symbolism of a multitude of bodies still presents a major challenge. From a gender perspective, this is especially true because individuals in the crowd lose not only their individuality, but also their bodies and, with them, their gender markers. The matter is further complicated by the fact that the organized crowd, as a genderless geometrical formation, is often used to portray the single 'body' of a nation (Arnold *et al.* 1998; Rainey 1998; Bredekamp 2003; Roubal 2003; Goltermann 2004). This chapter looks at the evolution of one figuration of human collectivity, the mass gymnastic performances that became a key genre of political representation in Central Europe from the 1860s until the fall of communism.

Due to the specific historical circumstances in which nationalism was conceived and practised in Central Europe in the nineteenth century, in particular the absence of a unified national state, there emerged a specific genre of imagining the national community through the synchronized movements of thousands of (male) bodies. The common movements of the gymnasts symbolized the unity of will and the living force of the nation in the historical situation when other forms of representations were neither available nor permitted. This was particularly true for the German gymnastic *Turner* movement whose style of exercising and festivities, called *Turnfests*, became a model copied first by the Czechs, who then inspired other nations of Eastern Europe (Roubal 2006a: 92–5). The Czech version of Turners was called *Sokol* (Falcon) and became a crucial part of the national emancipation movement presenting itself in gymnastic festivities called *Slety* (*Slet* in singular; a gathering of birds in English) that attracted dozens of thousands of active participants and spectators. These *Slets* established themselves as a genre of representing the national community, which then was eagerly embraced also by the communist regimes after the Second World War, because the uniform movement of thousands of gymnasts resonated with a number of Marxist ideological tenets, in particular the stress on collective rather

than individual action. In other Eastern Bloc countries the mass gymnastic displays were usually a part of a larger event, such as May Day parades, but in Czechoslovakia they became the sole focus of the country's ideologically most important ritual, the *spartakiáda* (henceforth I will use the anglicized term 'the Spartakiade').[2]

This chapter will discuss the Czechoslovak Spartakiades from a gender perspective, considering the role of gender in attempts to represent the socialist nation through synchronized physical exercises. Through a focus on expert discourse, media representations and actual performances at the stadium, the text will examine the changes that this visual representation underwent vis-à-vis gender. It will first consider the gender model of the Sokol *Slets* that emerged as a response to the emancipatory efforts of leading female trainers and how this model was radically transformed during the early years of communist rule, especially for the 1955 Czechoslovak Spartakiade. It will then discuss the gradual return to the original Sokol model during the 1960s and, finally, it will consider the shift to traditional family values in the two last decades of Czechoslovak communism after the Soviet-led invasion in 1968.

Emancipation through segregation: pre-communist mass gymnastics

The ambition of the Sokol movement, founded in 1862 by the art historian and social Darwinist Miroslav Tyrš, was to create a concrete, physical example of an ideal national community with the accompanying desire to remodel the entire society along its lines. This was captured in the well-known slogan of the movement 'Every Czech a Sokol'. Synchronized movement of several hundred male bodies became a metaphor for a unified, (morally and ethnically) pure and virile national community. The absence of the female body in this context is not only evidence of patriarchal order, but also a formative element of the narrative of these displays. The maleness of these displays was constantly stressed and reinforced by a number of elements: the men displayed themselves in half-naked virile poses, the movements were rigid, and, at least in the case of the Prague German competitor of the Sokol, the term 'male' featured in the name of the movement – *Prager Männer Turnverein*. The male body denoted strength, stability, moral and physical purity. By implication, the female body, absent from this discourse, connoted opposite qualities. In other words, the female body was cast as the 'other', its role was to embody all the ills and worries of nineteenth-century nationalism – instability, fluidity, impurity, weakness and promiscuity – and to enable the male body to symbolize the opposite. To put it simply, the nineteenth-century politics of gymnastics was about how and which bodies should represent the national community.

As Claire E. Nolte (1993) showed, women were barred from the movement for the entire nineteenth century, their role was limited to auxiliary duties such as fund-raising campaigns or assistance during club festivities. Tyrš, in a rare reference to women in an 1865 speech, said:

[W]e come to you, fair ladies and maidens. [...] You through your quiet, yet powerful, influence rule the hearts of men. [...] It is a misfortune for the nation if the men's struggle is not valued by their women. Support us in our struggle.

(Tyrš 1894: 29; quoted in Nolte 1993: 84)

From the very beginning of the Sokol movement, this attitude was met with resistance from female figures close to the national movement. They used various strategies to disrupt the dominant discourse. For example, Sofie Podlipská, an early feminist and writer committed to the cause of the national movement, employed the traditional role of women as educators and homemakers as an argument *for* the participation of women in the Sokol movement because, in those roles, women had to take care of the proper physical education of their daughters (Nolte 1993: 86). For long the participation of women in physical exercise was seen by the male Sokol leadership as harmful to their reputation and health, and a threat to the movement's integrity. It was felt that the participation of women in the public displays would question the self-assumed role of the Sokol as a 'national army'.

Although women were allowed to perform at *Slets* after 1901, it was only during the 1912 Pan-Slavic Sokol *Slet* that women were in charge of their own performances (that is, the design, training and execution of the performances of women were under the direction of women).[3] Their performance was to confirm the motto of Klemeňa Hanušová, Tyrš's pupil and the first Czech female trainer: *ženskost v díle ženském* (femininity in female endeavour). The guiding principle of the female performances was the 'otherness' of the female body and its movements. Thus the gymnasts' uniform was praised for 'enhancing the slenderness and gracefulness of the female figure and adding charm and delicacy to its movements' (Očenášek 1912: 135). Milada Malá, the later executive president of the female section of the Sokol movement, stressed, in her instructions for the 1912 Sokol *Slet* female performance, the essential difference between the performances of men and women:

While training and performing, the trainer as well as the gymnast should bear in mind, that these are movements for women, mostly of figural or dance character, ones that allow the grace and roundness of female movements to develop to their full extent. Neither strength, nor boldness or firmness that we admire so much in the performance of men – has a place here. This is not to say that a precision of movement and the correct execution of positions are not required.

(Očenášek 1912: 198)

It is telling that Malá, while stressing gender differences, insists that discipline must be maintained regardless of sex as it is discipline that constitutes the essence of the performance to which both male and female bodies were subject. The performance of women was noted by the international press present at the

event, particularly by some German sports journalists who, due to their political orientation, applauded this female emancipation in the Sokol movement and wrote that it should be imitated in the German context (social democratic *Arbeiter-Turnzeitung*). Others merely registered their surprise that '[t]here was calm and order, which one cannot usually expect where women are concerned' (nationalist *Deutschösterreichische Turnzeitung*) (quoted in Očenášek 1912: 389).

At the 1912 All-Slav Sokol *Slet*, a long-lasting model of female participation in mass gymnastic performances was established with the active involvement of female figures who fought for emancipation inside the gymnastic association. What emerged was an arrangement that I will call 'emancipation through segregation', which was the only arrangement that the male leadership and, even more strongly, the conservative section of the male rank and file were prepared to tolerate. The model was based on emphasizing the differences between the male and female body and its movements, reinforcing rather than weakening the patriarchal order symbolized by male bodies. Whereas before the First World War this may have been seen as a subversive strategy by the young women leaders of the gymnastic association to neutralize the men's objections, in the post-1918 era this became the model that was not only tolerated but supported by the male leadership of the Sokol.

The establishment of an independent Czechoslovakia in 1918 changed the meaning of the Sokol mass displays. They represented no longer the aspirations of one nationalist movement but the aspirations of the new democratic state. After the first post-war Sokol *Slet* in 1920, female gymnasts were accepted as full members of the movement and as an integral part of the political message that the Sokol movement was creating with bodies on the stadium field. The national community and its aspirations were expressed through the new gender model that prevailed until the last Sokol *Slet* in 1948. While the male members (and partly the army as well) were performing the traditional, drill-like gymnastics, the women were creating a distinctly different expression in rhythmic gymnastics with, in the words of the *náčelnice* (commander) Marie Provazníková, a 'continuous flow of soft, fluent and physiologically meaningful movements [...] that appeal to the aesthetic sense of the spectators through uniform, disciplined and rhythmic movements, rather than rigid poses' (Provazníková 1933: 26). This distinction could also be observed in the inter-war choreography of the mass gymnastic displays: the men were mostly performing in fixed positions on the ground, while the women had far more dynamic and elaborate displays that were not tied to one geometrically defined spot, and that boldly moved thousands of female gymnasts over the entire surface of the stadium (Provazníková 1948). Those two styles of gymnastics created one common narrative of strength and beauty.

The female body, in this semiotic construct, was to symbolize the link of the national community to its past and to Slavic unity, as well as to the spiritual and aesthetic aspirations of the nation. This is well captured by Eduard Bass, editor-in-chief of the influential daily *Lidové noviny*, in a text on the performance of teenage girls with maypoles at the 1938 *Slet*. Bass doubly essentializes these young women – according to gender and as members of an ethnic group (Slavs or Czechs):

Here came the Slavic women with their ancient symbols of budding, blossoming, living and loving [...]. They came solemnly and piously, as if they were priestesses in an ancient myth, and then they danced as if they forgot about the whole world, they danced with tenderness and whim, teasing and longing, desire and pleasure, they danced simply with their whole beings filled with melody speaking of love and seductive rhythm. Seeing how they do not exercise or perform but enjoy their ecstatic abandon, we searched our minds for nations, where such a magic miracle of harmony was possible [...] only within the borders of all Slavdom shines such womanhood filled with this divine lovingness and finding joy in the poetry of song and dance.

(Bass 1938)

The gender differences observed in the Sokol *Slets* were seen as stemming from the 'natural' distinction between the sexes according to their (re)productive functions, as Václav Pergl, a key Sokol official, put it when reflecting on the fact that the performances of teenage girls were applauded more than the performances of teenage boys at the 1938 Sokol *Slet*:

Until the end of the world, the girls will be more beautiful. At least here, among Slavs. It is determined already by the tasks nature prepared for them and that we, in the Sokol movement, have no intention to suppress artificially. Sokol will never raise our Czechoslovak girls to be Amazons, never! We want them to become healthy women and mothers, while we want our boys to become austere, manly men whom we purposefully raise for work and fight. Therefore it is customary to choose a gentler, more graceful and pleasing exercise for the girls and a good chunk of work for the boys, and there is little elegance in it.

(Pergl 1939: 125–6)

Such essentialization of gender and the limiting view of the potential of the female body did not, however, meet objections from female gymnastic officials and experts. On the contrary, the distinct nature of female gymnastics was a guarantee of their autonomy and self-governance. We have seen how at the beginning of the twentieth century female gymnasts managed successfully to challenge female exclusion from the movement by employing the strategy of emancipation through segregation. This strategy, as mentioned earlier, was based on emphasizing the differences between male and female bodies and movements, which on the one hand ensured the autonomy of the female Sokol trainers, but, on the other, reinforced rather than challenged the patriarchal order that the men's bodies symbolized. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, this model was further perfected into a comprehensive ritual in which male and female bodies played equally important roles in representing the national

community and its aspirations. Yet this symbolic equality was rooted in the traditional view of the 'natural' division between male and female roles.

Instrumental gender: Spartakiades and socialist realism

In 1948, shortly after the communist takeover, the Sokol movement staged its last *Slet*, which turned into a massive protest against the new political regime. A fear of the authorities' reaction drove many of the Sokol leadership into exile, among them Marie Provazníková, the leader of the women's section of the Sokol movement. The authorities indeed instigated a campaign against those in the movement who dared to disagree openly and initiated a process of radical Sovietization of Czechoslovak physical education, including the unification of all sport organizations into one state-controlled movement. In the period 1948–55, we see a temporal but radical shift from the existing tradition of popular gymnastics to the Soviet system of hierarchically organized achievement sport. Also, the regional structure of the Sokol movement was dismantled and the new system was organized according to the workplaces of the sportsmen and gymnasts, with most of the training being delegated to schools and trade unions. This radical shift in sport policy was not without its consequences in the gender sphere. On the ideological level, the Stakhanovite ideal of a sportsman as a record-breaker relegated women to the role of imitators of male sporting achievements that were measured in points, metres and kilograms. In the hierarchical world of achievement sport, there was little space for mass exercises of horizontal brotherhood and sisterhood. On the organizational level, the changes took away the autonomy of female gymnasts. There was no space for 'emancipation through segregation' in this new system, as any principle of autonomy – regardless of whether vis-à-vis men or the political regime – was seen as suspect. As a result, there was a dramatic decline in female gymnastic membership, which only fully recovered during the 1970s, and many of the gymnastic clubs ceased to exist (Novotná 2005: 84). Yet even after Stalin's death, when the mass gymnastics were again seen as a state priority, the previous gender model was not fully restored. This can be best observed at the 1955 Czechoslovak Spartakiade and its most famous display called *Nová směna nastupuje* (The New Shift is Taking Over) (see Figures 6.1 and 6.2).

'The New Shift is Taking Over' was a performance of the so-called *Pracovní zálohy* (Labour Reserves), a short-lived pedagogical experiment based on the Stalinist model, essentially a co-educative vocational school for 14- to 18-year-old students (see Figure 6.2). The performance was captured in a full-length documentary on the 1955 Spartakiade, directed by two key figures of Czechoslovak cinematography, Martin Frič and Ján Kádár (1955).[4] The camera depicts first the male students dressed in dark blue uniforms forming a number of squares on the exercise field. Then it shows an endless row of some 4,000 female students in white blouses, short skirts and yellow scarves. The women, accompanied by the music of Jaroslav Ježek, a prominent inter-war jazz composer, enter the squares formed by the men and these squares transform into circles surrounding the
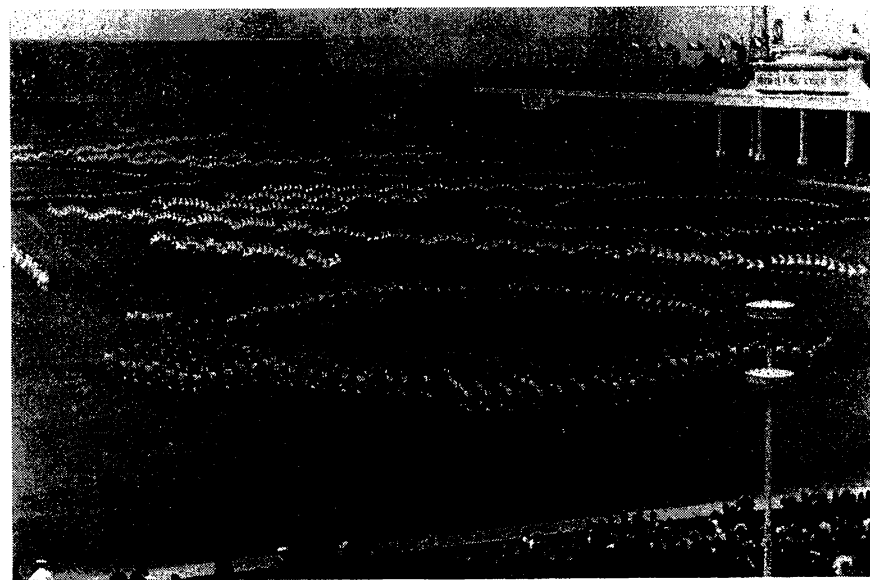
Figure 6.1 Performance of 'The New Shift is Taking Over' at the 1955 Czechoslovak Spartakiade, Prague, Strahov Stadium (the collection of the National Museum of the Czech Republic).

Figure 6.2 A rehearsal for the performance of Labour Unions at the 1955 Czechoslovak Spartakiade, Prague, Strahov Stadium (the collection of the National Museum of the Czech Republic).

women. Next, we see the transformation of the circles into cogwheels, which is accompanied by the departure of the female students from the cogwheels, to form straight lines between ten small and one large cogwheel. The camera swings between the lines of the women and the cogwheels of the men; and one by one the women perform knee bends to create waves in the lines, which the commentary claims represents cornfields, while the men start to dogtrot and thus 'turn' the cogwheels.[5] The film sequence ends with the final scene of the performance, in which both male and female students abandon their respective patterns and perform (separate) folk dances.

The performance was co-designed by Jožka Šaršeová, a prominent dancer and choreographer who came not from the Sokol movement but from left-wing inter-war modernist avant-garde circles (Šaršeová 1955, 1981). Her move from small scenes of the avant-garde into socialist realist mass display may have been influenced by her six-week stay in the Soviet Union in 1937, during which she was fascinated by the May Day parade in Red Square, especially the masses of galloping saddleless horses (Šaršeová 1981: 140–1). Her design of the performance of the Labour Reserves became the most successful display, not only of the 1955 Spartakiade, during which it was repeated five times, but of all the displays during the 1950s and 1960s. It received praise from many observers, among them Nikolay N. Romanov, the Chairman of *Vsesoiuznyi komitet po delam fizicheskoi kultury i sporta* (The All-Union Committee for Physical Culture and Sport Affairs of the USSR): 'It is possible to say, that nothing of this sort has ever been achieved in physical education' (Mucha 1956: 110). The meaning of the performance was explained in the press as a celebration of liberated labour, a representation of the future ruling working class and the anticipation of the perfect mechanical harmony of the future society. Pavel Kohout, a later prominent dissident writer and involuntary émigré, wrote about the performance in *Rudé právo*:

> Here, the fancy, the play of feathery and high-flown words, which emerge and die out as mayflies, ends. Instead new words flame in our hearts with eternal value [...]. Among them, 'working class'. What you see on the Strahov green field is the youth of the working class, the creative reserves of the state.[6]
>
> (Kohout 1955)

How does this performance – which was emblematic of many other performances of the 1955 Spartakiade – relate to the Sokol gender model? At first glance it would seem that very little had changed. Women and men perform separately, they are dressed in gender-specific colours (dark blue standing for hard work, the white symbolizing purity and innocence), the choreography assigns traditional roles to both genders, the women displaying their attachment to the world of nature and domesticity by representing work in the fields, while the men show their strength and progressive outlook in symbolizing industrial labour. Indeed, descriptions of the performance often resembled inter-war Sokol discourse. This

is how Marie Majerová, an inter-war communist writer and journalist, speaks about the female performances:

> Out of the depths of the Czech and Slovak land, Mánes-like curves, image after image in whirls of Indian clubs transform into waves of nymphs, tenderness of cradles, a dance of faeries. Your callisthenics resembled the smoothness of waves on a lake and lovable grace of a friendly embrace. You convinced us that gymnastics can make the human body beautiful.[7]
>
> (Majerová 1956: 8)

Then Majerová turns to the male gymnasts: 'Nothing unites men more than common work, common effort, common fight [...]. You, men, are builders and you will remain fighters for a long time [...]. Your strength will become power, if you endure' (ibid.). Majerová's traditional narrative, in which the women are objects of admiration and the men are active subjects of work and struggle, is even more striking if we take into account that her entire career as a writer and journalist was dedicated to the 'women's cause'.

Yet, the Sokol gender model clearly did not correspond to the social realities and ideological ambitions of the mid-1950s. The country was undergoing rapid industrialization in which traditional gender roles were eroding. On the ideological level, despite the Stalinist rediscovery of family values, there was little space for bucolic images of the traditional peasant and the domestic life of women. After all, the students of the Labour Reserves who performed in the 1955 Spartakiade were part of a large-scale mobilization of labour for industrial projects, in which a new working class was to be formed regardless of gender. It seems we are in fact dealing with a new gender model rooted in an entirely different overall narrative and understanding of the human body. We can call the new model 'instrumental gender'. It is not rooted in ingrained family values as it was under Sokol, but in the new regime's social engineering, which plans and redraws the new society using categories that were created arbitrarily. Gender just happens to be a convenient way to create a certain image of society, in the ultimate style of socialist realism – mosaics – in which individual parts have no meaning of their own and only the whole carries a message. The designers of the performances made use of the fact that the sexual differences between the male and the female body represent a stable binary opposition, which makes it possible to represent a social community as a unity composed of two equally large but radically different elements, as noted by anthropologists (Douglas 1978: 115; Synnott 1993: 228–35). The function of gender is thus, simply, to be different and to allow for the symbolic play within binary oppositions. It does not refer beyond itself to the 'natural' world of sex differences with its gendered hierarchy of values.

To a degree, the gender distinction is arbitrary. At least theoretically it would be possible, without disturbing the overall narrative of the Spartakiade, to swap the symbolic roles in the performance of the Labour Reserves described above. That is to say that the male students would represent the cornfields and the
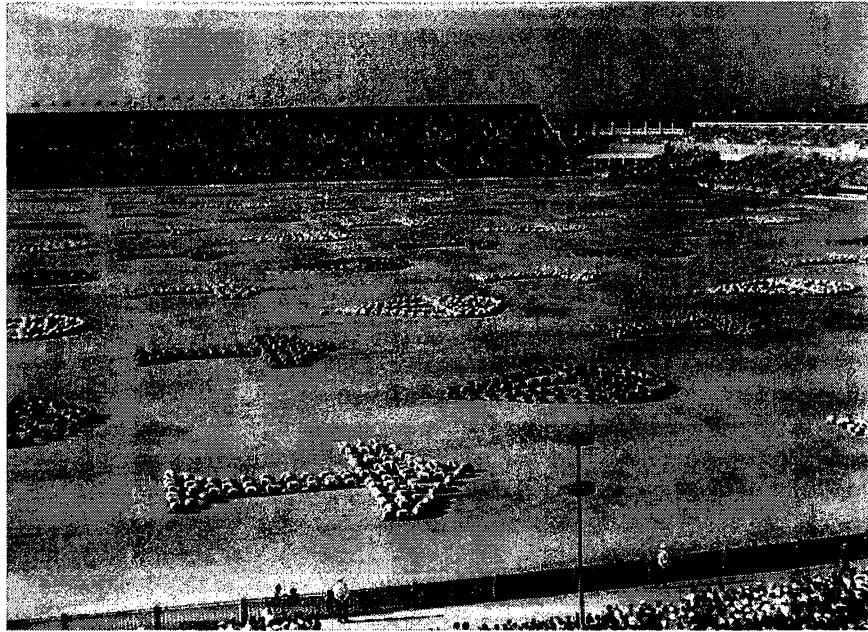
Figure 6.3 Performance of the Union for Cooperation with the Army at the 1960 Czecho-slovak Spartakiade, Prague, Strahov Stadium (the collection of the National Museum of the Czech Republic).

female apprentices the cogwheels of the industry. This is also indicated by the spatial composition of the performances: whereas the 'feminine' lines of corn were straight, the 'masculine' cogwheels were circles, which is the exact opposite of traditional understandings of gendered shapes in mass gymnastic performances. In fact, it is often impossible to discern in the documentary whether the bodies are male or female and the distinction was not always preserved by the organizers themselves. For instance, in a 1960 performance, both male and female members of Svazarm formed shapes of parachutes in complete disregard for gender differences (see Figure 6.3).[8] This was also true for a popular genre of using the human body for forming letters or symbols on the surface of the stadium or in the stands, which was particularly prominent in the East German gymnastic festivals, Turn- und Sportfeste, which took place at the Leipzig Central Stadium between 1956 and 1987 (Rodekamp 2002; Johnson 2008). We also find in socialist realism many instances of traditional gender images being used without sex distinction. For example, the statue Sbratření (Fraternization) by Karel Pokorný, a seminal sample of Czechoslovak socialist realism completed in 1947, demonstrates that the gender binary in the aesthetics of the style does not necessarily relate to the physical differences between the sexes (see Figure 6.4). In the symbolism of the statue it is the male figure of a

Figure 6.4 The 1947 statue Sbratření (Fraternization) by Karel Pokorný, Prague (author's photo).

Czechoslovak partisan who plays the feminine role in contrast to the masculine role of the Soviet soldier whom he embraces in a tender and submissive fashion. The same goes for the endlessly repeated images of Stalin and his 'younger brothers' – the leaders of the satellite countries such as Klement Gottwald, Matyás Rákosi or Bolesław Bierut – the former being bigger, stronger, more mature, looking straight ahead towards the bright future, the latter being weaker and in a more dependent position, looking admiringly at the former.

The treatment of gender seen in the performance of the Labour Reserves is part of the overall narrative of gymnastic displays typical for the 1950s and early 1960s in Czechoslovakia, but in other countries of the Eastern Bloc it was often the dominant mode until the very end of communism, as I showed elsewhere (Roubal 2003). We can label this narrative structure a 'factory model' of mass gymnastics, which is based on the metaphor of a machine, as opposed to the 'family model' of the later period that was based on the metaphor of an organism (see below). In the factory model, 'the people' is understood as a perfectly symmetrical unit; it is a community with distinct social and professional groups, each with specific tasks. The factory model is clearly visible in the structure of the mass displays, that is to say, in the symbolic division of labour between the individual groups of gymnasts that were used to represent particular professions. But it is also reflected in the very understanding of the human body, which is taken as a piece of machinery in the overall 'great socialist workshop of ours' ('Květiny bílé' 1995: 2). The body becomes a symbol, a bearer of a uniform, of guns, of specific tools; its movements are highly symbolic. The gymnasts are not, in fact, doing any physical exercises but they are performing symbolic movements representing various social activities such as working in the factory or field, expressing joy or even, paradoxically, engaging in a sport.

The arbitrary or instrumental use of gender markers in the 1955 Spartakiade is thus part of a grand but short-lived experiment, in which society was seen as a mechanical set of parts and the human body as a mechanism for displaying non-human symbols. This experiment ran contrary to the established tradition of representing the nation and understanding the human body, a tradition that soon reasserted itself.

The 1960s: tradition strikes back

With a closer look, the 1950s do not present a complete break with the tradition of the Sokol movement and its gender order. Throughout the decade there existed a growing undercurrent of expert discourse from the former Sokol činovník (officials). With the thaw and the establishment of the Czechoslovak Union of Physical Education and Sports in 1956, the former Sokols achieved a certain level of autonomy in the Svaz základní tělesné výchovy (ZTV; Basic Physical Education Section), which was essentially a sport-for-all framework. Starting in 1960, the ZTV was in charge of designing most of the mass gymnastic performances as it possessed the expertise of the former Sokol Slet organizers and designers. Spartakiades became a tool for the ZTV, that is, former Sokol

officials, to present their usefulness to the communist regime and to compete for favour with the competitive sport sections, which were more in line with the Soviet model of physical education. With each subsequent Spartakiade the influence of the former Sokols increased and gradually transformed the ritual from the factory model of the 1955 Spartakiade into the family model that will be described later. This was a result of the emancipation of the Sokol experts who ever more loudly criticized the 'formalism' of the 1950s, by which they meant the deviation from the tradition of the Sokol Slets, especially the use of explicit political symbolism that overshadowed the implicit symbolism of the human body (for instance Serbus et al. 1963: 114).

A backlash effect of the increased influence of the Sokol experts was a return to the Sokol approach to gender. With the active participation of leading female Sokol experts and organizers the model of emancipation through segregation was revived: the ZTV had two executive presidents (male náčelník and female náčelnice), Jaroslav Šterc and Eva Bémová, who were both involved in designing the 1938 and 1948 Sokol Slets. The organization of gymnastic training at all levels was strictly along separate gender lines, with full autonomy of the women's section. The journal that served the community of physical educational practitioners and organizers, Tělovýchovný pracovník (Physical Educational Worker), reflected the old strategy when in an article 'Hledáme cvičitelky' (In search of female trainers) it spoke about a mass gymnastic club where the training of women headed by a male trainer was an oddity that should be corrected (Hubka 1960: 673).

Together with the revival of the Sokol gendered organizational structure, there was also a return to the Sokol gender discourse that was rooted in a world of organic nationalism and conviction about the essentially natural differences of the two sexes. In her habilitation thesis, Jana Berdychová tried to base this rediscovered gender discourse in 'natural' developmental differences between male and female children. Jana Berdychová, who too took part in designing Sokol Slets, argued that children should exercise strictly separately according to their sex as by their nature boys and girls had different abilities and interests in the sphere of physical education. While boys should perform simple but physically demanding and dynamic exercises and devote energy also to sports, girls should perform dance-like movements with far more challenging choreography, because especially in puberty, they 'desire public display' (Berdychová 1960: 87). She continued: 'It is this age of puberty that creates quite specific preconditions for subtle expressions of emotions through movement and this charm of yet immature girls should be used by the authors of choreography and music' (ibid.).

The fact that her views were the norm rather than an exception can be demonstrated in the word-for-word transcripts of minutes from the Spartakiade Evaluation Committee. This committee had the task of selecting the best designs for the performances, discussing the 'shortcomings' with the authors and as a consequence establishing a canon for creating mass gymnastic performances. The Evaluation Committee, consisting predominantly of the organizers and designers of the Sokol Slets, such as Šterc or Bémová, consistently insisted on keeping the

genders well defined and separate. Thus they objected, for instance, to the 'use of dance elements' in the performance of schoolboys (aged 12 to 14) as inappropriate and 'more suited to girls'.[9] The biggest stir among the members of the Evaluation Committee was caused by the proposal for a performance entitled 'My Country is a Flowering Field'.[10] The proposal suggested a stick as an exercise tool for schoolgirls (aged 12 to 14) in their 1965 Spartakiade performance. Both the male and the female members of the committee stood in sharp disagreement against the authors of the performance. They argued against the use of the stick and said that 'corrections must be made that would give the performance a stronger art-gymnastic flavour and a more girl-like character'. The authors of the performance argued that the suggested replacement of the stick with a ribbon or a flower would spoil the whole performance, as the stick was linked to the character of the movement of the display. Whether motivated by pragmatism or forced by power, the authors eventually obeyed the decision of the chairman of the committee, Julius Chvalný – to 'throw the sticks out, rework the first section in order to make it more girl-like and not boy-like' – and the schoolgirls appeared at the Strahov Stadium exercising with ribbons and flowers.[11]

The two Spartakiades of the 1960s (in 1960 and 1965) demonstrated a gradual shift in the understanding of the human body. In contrast with the 1955 Spartakiade many of the socialist realist elements disappeared while the stress on the 'natural' human body was increasingly present. This is not yet the family model that we will see in the 1970s and 1980s, because the event as a whole lacks the clear narrative structure of the later period. The 1960 Spartakiade still featured several performances designed by former avant-garde choreographers, such as Jožka Šaršeová or Milča Majerová, which were much closer to a theatrical performance than a gymnastic exercise. For instance in Šaršeová's performance called Život vítězí nad smrtí (Life Defeating Death) nearly 30,000 women 'exercising' in long white dresses formed the shape of a globe some 200 metres in diameter, which changed colour as the women covered their heads with scarves: red (symbolizing 'conflagration of war') or blue (symbolizing 'international solidarity'). At the same event, however, alongside these performances that used the human body as a mere vessel for other symbols, there were also examples of completely different aesthetics and understandings of the human body. For instance, during the 1960 Spartakiade, soldiers in white shorts and suntanned to order – they became icons of the late-socialist Spartakiades – appeared for the first time and stunned the audience by forming seven-metre-tall human pyramids, using no mechanical support.[12] This style of performance that used the implicit symbolism of muscle, remained a permanent feature of all subsequent Spartakiades and formed an integral part of the later family model.

In the 1965 Spartakiade this shift was even more prominent, the socialist realist elements were all but gone and the avant-garde choreographers marginalized and replaced by younger choreographers with Sokol backgrounds. There was also a marked shift in the representation of the performances; the photos published in the official commemorative book were no longer focusing on bird's-eye views of the patterns formed by thousands of gymnasts but show

shots of individuals or small groups of gymnasts with the blurred masses in the background (Dobrovodský et al. 1966). This shift allowed the photographers (all men) to present a rather straightforward visual narrative of female beauty and male strength, and to further reinforce the already existing gender distinction between the performances.

The thaw and the Prague Spring brought contradictory impulses concerning gender in mass gymnastic displays. On the one hand the organizers and experts gained even more autonomy from political power, which was evident in the preparation of the eventually cancelled 1970 Spartakiade.[13] In 1968 the Sokol movement was formally revived under its original name and its traditions were openly incorporated into the narrative of Czech sports history and history as such (Šterc 1975). Yet at the same time, the very ideological foundations of the mass gymnastics were questioned and even ridiculed as a matter of the past to a far greater extent than had ever been possible before. This is nicely illustrated by a mini-survey among 12 top Czechoslovak celebrities about the 1965 Spartakiade conducted by the weekly Mladý svět (Young World). With the notable exception of Věra Čáslavská, the multiple Olympic gold medallist, and the only sportsperson among those interviewed, none of the celebrities showed enthusiasm for the Czechoslovak Spartakiades. The feeling of social superiority was clearly demonstrated in most of the answers. The actor Jan Tříska pitied the sweaty Spartakiade crowd: 'You know, I feel quite sorry for the gathered mass of people who cannot take a shower properly and have their meal and drink in peace' ('Dvanáct dostižených' 1965). The way the celebrities were questioned made it clear that it was unlikely that they would perform with the others. Most of them did not take the question seriously at all. While the singer Waldemar Matuška claimed that he would like to be an ice-cream seller at the Strahov Stadium as that would allow him to flirt with teenage female gymnasts, the jazzman Karel Velebný preferred to become a female gymnast himself because 'the world would be a much better place if I could just wear a lilac leotard shamelessly', but at the same time Velebný condemns the whole event, because as a supporter of the Slavia football team he would accept only a Slaviad or possibly a 'Pan-Slaviad'.[14] The claim of film director Miloš Forman that 'I want to be a beautiful, suntanned, muscular gymnast and I want my mark to be the closest to the main stand', was probably also not meant seriously as his other replies all dealt with the physical beauty of the young female gymnasts and the dangers the film industry presents to their virtue during the Czechoslovak Spartakiades (ibid.).

Even in the specialist press, we can perceive a marked shift against the existing preconceptions of gender. The journal Physical Educational Worker rarely addressed the question of female participation in sports as it implied that there was no problem to be solved (as opposed for example to the difficulties of sport policies in the countryside or in Slovakia, which were recurrent and pressing themes). Only the subject of the 'double burden' was repeatedly addressed and women trainers were often presented as heroines who surpass all the obstacles in their struggle to take care of the trainees (MJ 1960; Nuselský 1964). This was often contrasted with the lack of enthusiasm among some male trainers and

officials. Yet in 1968, the journal included an article entitled 'Druhé pohlaví v tělocvičně' (The Second Sex in the Gym) by a female medical doctor that could hardly have been published earlier. The author welcomes the end of an era in which the policy of employing women in male – and often harmful – occupations was mirrored in the field of physical education (Martinovská 1968: 164). She embarks on extensive documentation to show that women are not and cannot be equal to men in the field of sports. She defines the female body nearly exclusively in terms of its deficiencies in comparison with the male body; the only aspect in which the female body surpasses the male one is the amount of fat it contains. She concludes that the most suitable activities for women are those exercises that 'further develop the natural sense of rhythm and enhance physical charm and feminine expression' (ibid.: 165). This view ran counter to the principle of emancipation through segregation held by the Sokol female activists as it introduced a hierarchy into the distinctions between the male and female body. As such, this is an example of the conservative backlash that can be identified in many other areas of the Prague Spring cultural and political discourses.[15]

The 1960s witnessed a gradual revival of Sokol personnel and discourses after the drastic reversal of the 1950s. The former Sokol officials achieved a relatively high level of organizational autonomy, which included the autonomy of female trainers, organizers and experts along the lines of the Sokol model of emancipation through segregation. This relative freedom was reflected in the revival of the Sokol view of the human body and the 'natural' division of symbolic roles between the genders. Yet the former Sokol organizers were not the only previously marginalized group that now became progressively more vocal as the political thaw accelerated. Especially during the Prague Spring the very idea of mass gymnastics and the ideological foundation upon which it rested were openly questioned.

The family model of the Normalization era

The three Spartakiades of the Normalization era (1975, 1980, 1985) were characterized by a desperate attempt to find the lowest common denominator between the political leadership – which was, after the Soviet-led invasion, seeking new sources of legitimacy – gymnasts and spectators. This attempt created a particular form of a dialogue, in which the Spartakiade organizers tried to find an acceptable form of a consensual ritual (Roubal 2006b: 87) through a method of trial and error. Similar to other fields of Normalization-era culture, such as TV serials (Bren 2010), stability became one of the main messages of the Spartakiades. Not only did the Normalization-era Spartakiades resemble each other like peas in a pod, but at the root of their symbolism there lay constant reference to the unchanging world of nature. Nationalism became the other key theme of the Spartakiades, featured prominently across the displays but also in the overall narrative of the event. And finally, there was an explicit return to the Sokol tradition and a rejection of 'formalistic' experiments of the 1950s. Building upon the changes of the 1960s, gender became a tool of expressing stability, national grandeur and historical continuity.

The short propaganda film *Československá spartakiáda 1985* (*The 1985 Czechoslovak Spartakiade*) can be taken as a good example of the new model of mass gymnastic displays during the so-called Normalization period (1969–89) in Czechoslovakia, whose seeds we saw germinating during the 1960s (Střecha 1985). It opens with long shots of Prague's medieval architecture in the morning mist, then – following a sequence portraying the preparations for the performance – it shows the stadium filling up with spectators. As the first performance it presents the callisthenics of women who exercise to Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*, and with their long green skirts they form the shapes of moving lime leaves, a symbol of Czech nationhood, that converge towards the centre of the stadium. For a second, the camera dwells on the ageing president Husák who observes the performance with binoculars. Then it moves back to the gates of the stadium, through which a mass of running, suntanned soldiers, dressed only in snow-white shorts, pours into the stadium. There is no musical background; the entry of the soldiers into the stadium is accompanied only by their own roar of 'Hurrah!'. The other performances are portrayed in bird's-eye view clips, all linked by the recurring tune of Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*. A routine of parents (mostly mothers) with three- to six-year-old children performing rather uncoordinated movements features prominently in the film, as does the performance of 13,824 11- to 14-year-old girls called *Poupata* (Flower Buds), accompanied by the song of the same name by pop singer Michal David, which became a hit of the 1980s and later a symbol of the Normalization era as such.

The film has no commentary and – with the exception of the green linden leaves – features no explicit symbols or slogans: it has no need to display them, the 'natural' human body free of all previously used ornaments becomes itself a powerful symbol. The whole concept of gymnastic performances was redesigned in order to focus on the 'natural' symbolic potential of the human body. The metaphor of a smoothly running factory was replaced with the model of a happy family. Where we previously saw peasants, workers and soldiers, we see now beautiful women, strong men and happy children.[16] The structure of the whole event changed, too. The early Spartakiades consisted of a sequence of presentations of one sporting organization after another, spread over several days. In contrast, the Normalization Spartakiades were arranged into two coherent, approximately four-hour-long programmes that alternated over the duration of the festival. The changes were very much inspired, and explicitly so, by the inter-war Sokol *Slets*. The Czechoslovak Spartakiades shared with their forerunners a fiery nationalism, excluding not only foreign symbols (Soviet ones among them) but also 'foreign bodies' from the stadium, as only Czechoslovak gymnasts could perform at the stadium.[17] The internationalist spirit of the factory model of the Czechoslovak Spartakiades of the 1950s was replaced with a display of national grandeur. In contrast with the Sokols *Slets*, however, the Normalization Spartakiade did not represent the nation by means of gymnastic movement but represented the gymnasts as a direct manifestation of the spontaneous 'people' in what Rainey, speaking about representations of Mussolini, calls 'the politics of illusory immediacy' (Rainey 1998: 140).
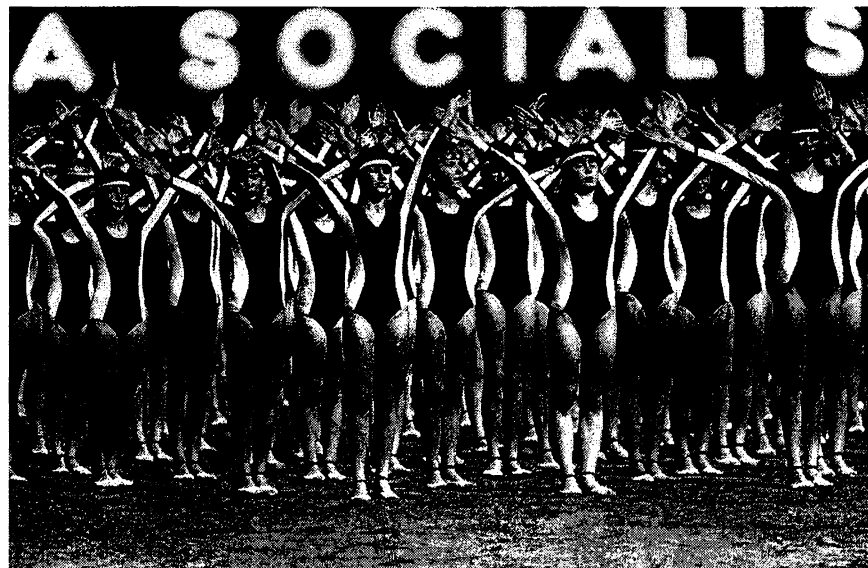
Figure 6.5 Performance of 'Rosebuds' at the 1985 Czechoslovak Spartakiade, Prague, Strahov Stadium (the collection of the National Museum of the Czech Republic).

Figure 6.6 Performance of the army at the 1980 Czechoslovak Spartakiade, Prague, Strahov Stadium (the collection of the National Museum of the Czech Republic).

The family mode of the Spartakiades of the Normalization era was based on a strict symbolic division of labour as the leader of the Sports Union, Julius Chvalný, exemplifies in his introduction to the official propaganda book on Spartakiades aimed at an international audience:

> The visitors expressed pride at the demonstration of physical fitness given by the sunburned [*sic*] soldiers in their snow-white shorts, whose performance showed the courage, strength and awareness of young citizens of a socialist state. They were captured by the charm of the women's exercises, the dancing of the young girls and they did not hide the emotion that brought tears of joy to their eyes when parents with their three- to six-year old children performed their exercise routine in the stadium.
>
> (Chvalný, 1980: 44)

This stress on the biological categories of sex and age testify both to the attempt to exploit as much as possible the 'natural' symbolic potential of the body and also to the growing conservatism of the regime (see Figures 6.5 and 6.6). The individual symbolic elements were contrasted with each other in the general narrative of the display. In order for such a structure to function properly, the signs had to be clearly defined. The designers went to great pains to ensure that no 'blurred genres' occurred. Different age and sex groups rarely performed together, and even when they did so, in the performances of vocational school students and university students, the men and women performed different movements synchronized only by the music; they were dressed differently and their bodies expressed different ideas.[18]

The symbolism of muscles was a part of the traditional repertoire of mass gymnastic displays. In late socialism, the way the male body represented the power and military virtues of the community departed from what I called the factory model of mass gymnastics and resembled more the symbolic strategies of the Sokols. In the corporeal aesthetics of the 1950s, it was not so much the human body that was displayed, but rather the specific categorization of particular bodies was used to deliver a symbolic message: for example, soldiers were a medium for the symbolism of uniforms and guns without any emphasis on their own physical bodies. Later on, in the family model of the displays, the outward appearance became important and the suntanned (on command as part of their Spartakiade preparation), nearly naked bodies of soldiers figured as the final proof that society was ready to defend itself. In this it strongly resembled the pre-war Sokol *Slets*, with certain added dynamism. Whereas the performances of the Sokols were mostly static, with the men slowly filling up the stadium and then exercising for the most part on the spot, the Czechoslovak Spartakiades, as well as, for example, the GDR *Turn- und Sportfeste*, included a dramatic entry of the soldiers running at top speed to fill the stadium in just 40 seconds and the performance itself included such dramatic features as jumps from tall human pyramids. We have seen how this genre of army display was already established in the 1960 Spartakiade, but in the Normalization era the

symbolism of muscles was subjected to the general semiotic construct of the whole set of displays and had to share the symbolic space with female beauty and the happiness of children to a far greater extent than had been the case earlier. In the programme of the Spartakiades the army displays always preceded or followed a display by women or teenage girls, which constitute the other ideological peak of the Spartakiades.

All gymnastic performances, due to their potential to express monumentality and harmony, were supposed to have an aesthetic value, which in turn was supposed to facilitate the transmission of the ideological message (Oates-Indruchová 2003: 59). An entire discourse of an aesthetics of mass gymnastics was developed in numerous academic studies and dissertations (Hohler 1966; Kostková 1960), which elaborated the aesthetic principles already outlined by the founder of the Sokol movement Miroslav Tyrš (Tyrš 1926). Nevertheless, it was the 'natural aesthetic quality of the female body' (Pinkava 1967: 670) that had the task of representing 'beauty' in the overall narrative of the family model. The following poem by a leading official poet Jan Pilař expresses well, despite its dubious form, the position of the female performances in the general semiotic construct:

Today I saw/A field of tulips/That gentle flowers/On the Strahov plane/The stems of arms/So sweet, so tender/Warm and soothing/Mother's embrace/ And this true friendship/Of women to each other/Suddenly made the Earth/ Sing with pure joy.

The charming tune/Of roses, poppies,/Sunflowers dancing/In the stadium/ Resound so deep/In the hearts of men watching/Making them whisper/True sincere words:/I promise to protect/I promise to take care/Of the flower of this country/Of the red Strahov rose![19]

(Pilař 1985)

The link with nature and its reproductive powers contrasted with the male world of struggle was evident not only in the post-factum rhetoric but also in the very design of the performances. The symbolism of the choreography depended on the pre-established interpretation of the physiological differences of the human body. In contrast with the rigid male bodies, movements of women were supposed to be graceful and fluid. Similarly, the geometrical forms created out of thousands of gymnasts were also filled with gendered meanings. The dominant male geometric expressions were straight lines, preferably penetrating the stadium at breathtaking speed. Most of the female performances were characterized by the round shapes of circles, curves and waves. During the Normalization period the women performed always to classical music – to Smetana, Janáček, Dvořák, in that order – to make explicit the link between nature, national history and the female body.

The shift towards the family model of the Czechoslovak Spartakiades did not mean a complete negation of the instrumental gender that we have seen previously. The performances and their representation illustrate what Libora Oates-Indruchová

observed, that is, that the state-socialist physical education focused on the ideal bodily function rather than an ideal shape (Oates-Indruchová 2003). Therefore the women were not beautiful because they had certain physical characteristics, but because they were 'our' women and future mothers. The beauty of their performances and their bodies did not belong to them, but was the common property of society, one of its characteristics. This was much less true for the design as well as representation of the performance of teenage girls, which contained subtle or not so subtle erotic subtexts. The eroticization of the performances can be seen clearly in the change of outfits of the teenage girls, who in the 1950s exercised in unappealing, 'practical' gym suits, only to appear later in carefully designed miniskirts. The press coverage of their performances frequently used diminutives, calling the teenage girls the 'darlings of Strahov', the photographers, often on the very borders of socialist morals, concentrated on one particularly attractive girl (rather than on the general choreography of the performance) suggesting that the organizers were willing to sacrifice the complicated concept of beauty for the eroticization of the performance.

In sharp contradiction to the official Marxist concept of the individual, his or her body, and society at large as all inherently improvable, the whole construct of the display led to a timeless construct of an eternal 'circle of happiness'. What was stressed was the 'biological' given of the body; its fixed sex and age characteristics were used to express the unchangeable nature of the communist polity. The struggle for the New Man was dead and buried. The revolutionary potential of the mass gymnastic display with its ability to eliminate the distinctions between individuals was replaced with a semiotic construct based on the hierarchical model of (patriarchal) family; the comradeship idiom was replaced by the kinship idiom.[20] The family model of the Czechoslovak Spartakiades with its emphasis on the symbolism of kinship ties and the 'natural' qualities of the human body represented a far more convincing and coherent ritual than the previous performances. In contrast with the factory model of the 1950s, the spectators and the gymnasts alike could identify with the display and 'read' it at will. This is confirmed by the opinion polls showing that the overwhelming majority of the gymnasts enjoyed their participation and were willing to take part in the next performance (Drdácká and Felcmanová 1986) and also by the fact that, although relatively expensive, the tickets for Spartakiades were hard to obtain. The regime, however, had to pay a rather high price for its search for the lowest common denominator as the display of 'natural' bodies could be interpreted not only *parallel* to the regime's wishes, but also *against* it.[21] The ideological vacuum the regime created enabled spectators to fill it with their own meanings, which was predominantly inspired by inter-war Sokol nationalism and its patriarchal view of gender relations. That this was the case we know from a wave of protest letters against the decision to cancel the 1990 Spartakiade in late 1989.[22] In these letters the trainers and gymnasts defend Spartakiades as a celebration of the Czech nation ignoring the complexities of the multinational state and denying any involvement of Marxist ideology. A gymnast who trained for the last Sokol *Slet* and subsequently at all the Spartakiades wrote: 'It never occurred to me that

the mass exercises would honour anything else than the healthy body of the trainees and of the whole nation'.[23] The letters, mostly written by women, also testify to the survival of the traditional Sokol view of gender relations, when they stress the 'natural' distinction between the male performances that give men 'a proper chunk of work' and the female performances that allow women to be admired by the audience.[24]

Conclusion

We have seen how in the nineteenth century the strategy of what I called emancipation through segregation was based on emphasizing differences in the female body and its movements, which ensured the autonomy of the female Sokol trainers but, at the same time, reinforced rather than challenged the patriarchal order symbolized by the men's bodies. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century this model was further perfected into a comprehensive ritual, in which male and female bodies played equally important roles, representing the national community and its aspirations.

When the Communist Party took power in February 1948 it was faced with this highly developed and established body culture, which, within a few months clashed with the Stalinist understanding of sports as a hierarchical, achievement-oriented, Stakhanovite activity. There was little space in Stalinist physical culture for gender equality, as sportswomen could not compete together with men in the narrowly defined achievement sport. Yet the communist leaders soon discovered the usefulness of the Sokol tradition that resonated with many of their ideological tenets, in particular, it helped to locate communism in the Czech historical narrative. In the field of gender, however, it took a while before the Sokol model was adopted. This is not to say that the communist experts in the field of physical education, many of whom had a prehistory of avant-garde choreography, negated the gender distinction; they merely understood it in very different terms. What emerged was something I called instrumental gender, that is, a strong emphasis on gender distinctions as constitutive elements of the narrative of mass gymnastic displays without, however, locating the gender distinction in the unchanging world of nature. Men and women were as separated in these displays as were workers and peasants. This essentially ideological approach clashed with the surviving undercurrents of expert views on the human body that were deeply influenced by the Sokol tradition. This expert discourse achieved a relatively high level of autonomy from the political power of the Communist Party and gradually, by the 1970s, managed to transform the communist ritual of the Spartakiades into a form strongly resembling the pre-communist Sokol *Slets*. This transformation could be described as a move from a ritual based on the metaphor of a factory towards one modelled on the traditional view of the family. What the Communist Party achieved with the help of the gymnastic experts was a popular sporting and political ritual that is still fondly remembered by its participants. What it lost was its emancipatory aspirations at least in the field of gender. The shift in the Spartakiades illustrates a more general trend in

the gender sphere from the radical deconstruction of the petit-bourgeois patriarchal order that took place in the 1950s towards its gradual return in subsequent decades (Havelková 2007). This, however, did not take the form of a direct patriarchal oppression of women by the political regime, but rather it was a process, in which the political regime empowered certain existing networks and expert discourses, a process in which female experts also took an active part.

Notes

1 This article is a part of a research project 'Sokol under communism: continuity and discontinuity in the post-war Czechoslovak physical education' funded by GAČR (GPP410/11/P779).
2 The Czechoslovak Spartakiades stand out from among all the other mass gymnastic displays due to the sheer scale of the events. Involving a total of more than one million gymnasts, they were organized hierarchically with local, district and regional rounds preceding the culminating event in Prague. The central event took place at the Strahov Stadium in Prague, the biggest stadium in the world, with an exercise field the size of nine standard football pitches.
3 This event was conceived as a multinational festival in which all the Slavic nations were to display their unity, yet conflicts between the gymnastic delegations demonstrated the failure of the project of 'synchronized Slavdom' (Roubal 2006a: 94).
4 Martin Frič was also the author of the most aesthetically powerful film representation of Czechoslovak mass gymnastics, the documentary on the tenth Sokol *Slet* in 1938 (Frič 1938). Ján Kádár was the co-director of the 1965 Oscar- winning *Obchod na korze* (*The Shop on Main Street*; Kádár and Klos 1965).
5 The Communist Party daily, *Rudé právo*, claimed, however, that these were transmission belts between the cogwheels ('Slavná přehlídka mládí' 1955).
6 The expression 'green field' is not Kohout's poetic licence but comments on the fact that the organizers of the 1955 Czechoslovak Spartakiade used 12 tons of green paint to dye the sand of the exercise field of the Strahov Stadium. The paint, however, was of poor quality and stained not only the sand but also the gymnasts (Kouřimský 1982: 21).
7 Josef Mánes (1820–71) was a painter famous for his historical and bucolic depictions.
8 *Svazarm* stands for The Union for Cooperation with the Army (Svaz pro spolupráci s armádou).
9 'Hodnocení skladeb 29/04/63' [Evaluation of performances 29 April 1963], holdings of III. Celostátní spartakiáda 1965 [The 1965 Spartakiade], Archiv České obce sokolské [AČOS – Archives of the Sokol Movement] Prague. The Sokol movement was revived in 1990 and preserves the most important part of the archive of the Spartakiade organizational body (*štáb*) with approximately 100 metres of unprocessed material ranging from photographs and designs of the performances to daily reports on the mood among the gymnasts. The materials cover the whole period of 1955–90, with ample evidence also on the cancelled 1990 Spartakiade.
10 'Hodnocení skladeb 29/04/63', holdings of III. Celostátní spartakiáda 1965, AČOS.
11 Ibid.
12 The absence of a mechanical structure supporting the gymnasts was an important distinction from the far more elaborate Soviet human pyramids on metal constructions. Nevertheless in many other aspects the performance clearly shows Soviet inspiration.
13 The event was cancelled out of fears of anti-regime protests by the new political leadership that took over after the Soviet-led occupation of August 1968.
14 This refers to the rivalry of the two main Prague football clubs: Sparta and Slavia. The word Spartakiade, however, was not derived from Greek Sparta, but from the Roman slave Spartacus.

15 See the chapters by Barbara Havelková on law and Jan Matonoha on Czech canonical literature in this volume.

16 The fact that the male element is represented by soldiers in this family triad would require further research into the factors that may have contributed to producing this representation.

17 Foreign gymnasts performed outside of the main ritual framework during the so-called *Večery družby* (Evenings of Friendship), an international high-level gymnastic festival organized in the years 1955–85.

18 The performances of the paramilitary organization *Svazarm* constitute the only exception as they did not contain any gender markers. They also employed large constructions as exercise tools evoking the aesthetics of the 1950s with its extra-bodily symbolism, an element ridiculed by the designers of the other performances. Interview with Vratislav Svatoň, author of many Normalization-era gymnastic performances, 10 April 2000.

19 Translated by Alexandra Roubalová.

20 For the term 'kinship idiom' see Meyer Fortes (1949), *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi*. For its critique, see David M. Schneider (1984), *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*. The kinship idiom resonated in the extra-gymnastic context too. Next to the well-known fatherly role of the leader and the brotherly role of the Soviet Union (the Soviet-led invasion in 1968 was labelled 'brotherly help of the friendly armies'), there was the motherly role of the Communist Party. The gymnastic displays were presented as a gift to the *rodná strana* (native party), suggesting consanguinity of the gymnast with the ruling institution.

21 The resistant potential of the body against the regime in its last years is explored by Libora Oates-Indruchová and by Kateřina Kolářová in this volume.

22 The AČOS archives preserve some 3,000 of these protest letters, representing dozens of thousands of gymnasts.

23 Letter by a trainer of the Lokomotiva Karlovy Vary gymnastic club to ÚV ČSTV, 22 December 1989, holdings Zrušení Spartakiády 1990 [Cancellation of the 1990 Spartakiade], AČOS.

24 Letter by Eva Janovcová to the Sport Editor of the Czechoslovak Television, 12 December 1989, holdings Zrušení Spartakiády 1990, AČOS.

References

Archiv České obce sokolské [AČOS – Archives of the Sokol Movement], Holdings III. Celostátní spartakiáda 1965 [The 1965 Spartakiade] and Zrušení Spartakiády 1990 [Cancellation of the 1990 Spartakiade].

Arnold, Sabine, Christian Fuhrmeister and Dietmar Schiller (eds) (1998) *Politische Inszenierung im 20. Jahrhundert: Zur Sinnlichkeit der Macht*, Vienna: Böhlau.

Bass, Eduard (1938) 'Sokolská mládež opakovala svůj triumf' [Sokol youth repeated its triumph], *Lidové noviny*. 30 June: 1–2.

Berdychová, Jana (1960) 'Funkce tělovýchovných skladeb pro hromadná vystoupení mládeže v systému socialistické tělesné výchovy' [The role of mass gymnastic performances in the system of socialist physical education], unpublished habilitation thesis, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Prague: Charles University.

Bredekamp, Horst (2003) *Thomas Hobbes Der Leviathan: Das Urbild des modernen Staates und seine Gegenbilder, 1651–2001*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

Bren, Paulina (2010) *The Greengrocer and His TV: the culture of communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Chvalný, Július (1980) *Czechoslovak Spartakiades*, Prague: Orbis.

Dobrovodský, Vladimír, Arnošt Lustig and Ota Pavel (eds) (1966) *III. celostátní spartakiáda* [*The 3rd All-State Spartakiade*], Prague: Státní tělovýchovné nakladatelství.

Douglas, Mary (1978) *Purity and Danger*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Drdácká, Božena and Vlastimila Felcmanová (1986) 'Tělesná kultura v hodnotové orientaci žen a mužů vystupujících v hromadných tělovýchovných skladbách Svazu ZRTV na Čs. spartakiádě 1985' [Physical culture in the value system of women and men performing in mass gymnastic displays of the Basic Physical Education Section (ZRTV) at the 1985 Czechoslovak Spartakiade], in *Sborník ze semináře FTVS UK Praha k problematice hromadných vystoupení Československé spartakiády*, Ostrava: Metasport.

'Dvanáct dostižených' (1965) *Mladý svět*, 26 July: 2.

Fortes, Meyer (1949) *The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi: the second part of an analysis of the social structure of a Trans-Volta tribe*, London and New York: Oxford University Press.

Frič, Martin (Director) (1938) *X. všesokolský slet* [*10th All-Sokol* Slet], Prague: Československá obec sokolská. Film.

Frič, Martin and Ján Kádár (Directors) (1955) *Spartakiáda*, Prague: Studio uměleckých hraných filmů. Film.

Goltermann, Svenja (2004) 'Exercise and perfection: embodying the nation in nineteenth-century Germany', *European Review of History*, 11: 333–46.

Havelková, Hana (2007) 'Náměty k diskusi o českém genderovém kontextu' [Suggestions for discussion on the Czech gender context], in Blanka Knotková-Čapková (ed.) *Ročenka Katedry genderových studií FHS UK v Praze 2005–2006*, Prague: Katedra genderových studií FHS UK v Praze.

Hohler, Vilém (1966) 'Základní estetické aspekty skladeb III. CS' [Key aesthetic features of the 1965 Spartakiade performances], *Teorie a praxe tělesné výchovy*, 14: 226–33.

Hubka, Pavel (1960) 'Hledáme cvičitelky' [In search of female trainers], *Tělovýchovný pracovník*, 4: 673.

Johnson, Molly Wilkinson (2008) *Training Socialist Citizens: sports and the state in East Germany*, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers.

Kádár, Ján and Elmar Klos (Directors) (1965) *Obchod na korze* [*The Shop on Main Street*], Prague: Barrandov Film Studio. Film.

Kohout, Pavel (1955) 'Chvála tvořivých záloh' [Praise of the creative reserves], *Rudé právo*, 30 June: 1.

Kostková, Jarmila (1960) 'Spartakiáda – umělecký prožitek statisíců' [Spartakiade – aesthetic experience for hundreds of thousands], *Estetická výchova* 2, 3: 58–9.

Kouřimský, Gustav (1982) *Spartakiádní Areál Strahov*, Prague: Olympia.

'Květiny bílé po cestě....' [White flowers on the road...] (1955) *Rudé právo*, 3 July: 2.

Majerová, Marie (1956) 'Chvála spartakiády' [In praise of Spartakiade], in Vilém Mucha (ed.) *První celostátní spartakiáda*, Prague: Státní tělovýchovné nakladatelství.

Mangan, James A. (1999) 'The potent image and the permanent Prometheus', in James A. Mangan (ed.) *Shaping the Superman: fascist body as political icon – Aryan fascism*, London: Frank Cass.

Martinovská, Alena (1968) 'Druhé pohlaví v tělocvičně' [The second sex in the gym], *Tělovýchovný pracovník*, 12: 164–5.

MJ (1960) 'Mezi námi děvčaty' [A girl thing], *Tělovýchovný pracovník*, 4: 564–5.

Mucha, Vilém (1956) *První celostátní spartakiáda* [*1st All-State Spartakiade*], Prague: Státní tělovýchovné nakladatelství.

Nolte, Claire E. (1993) '"Every Czech a Sokol!": feminism and nationalism in the Czech Sokol movement', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 24: 79–100.

Novotná, Viléma (2005) 'Ženské složky v ZRTV' [Women's sections of the ZRTV], in Jarmila Kostková (ed.) *Svaz základní a rekreační tělesné výchovy*, Prague: Česká asociace Sport pro všechny.

Nuselský, Míra (1964) 'Ženy vedou!' [Women are leading the way], *Tělovýchovný pracovník*, 8: 588–9.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2003) 'The ideology of the genderless sporting body: reflections on the Czech state-socialist concept of physical culture', in Naomi Segal, Roger Cook and Lib Taylor (eds) *In/determinate Bodies*, London: Macmillan.

Očenášek, Augustin (ed.) (1912) *Památník sletu slovanského Sokolstva roku 1912 v Praze* [*A tribute to the 1912 All-Slav Sokol slet in Prague*], Prague: Česká obec sokolská.

Pergl, Václav (1939) 'Prvý den dorostu 26. VI.' [The first day of the adolescent youth performance, 26 June], in Rudolf Procházka (ed.) *Památník X. všesokolského sletu v Praze 1938*, Prague: Československá obec sokolská.

Pilař, Jan (1985) 'Ženám na Strahově' [To women at the Strahov Stadium], in Otakar Mohyla and Karel Procházka (eds) *Verše ze Strahova*, Prague: Olympia.

Pinkava, Jindřich (1967) 'Estetika a sport', *Teorie a praxe tělesné výchovy*, 15: 667–71.

Provazníková, Marie (1933) 'Ženský tělocvik sokolský za Tyrše a dnes' [Women's Sokol physical education under Tyrš and now], in Rudolf Procházka (ed.) *Památník IX. sletu všesokolského pořádaného na oslavu stých narozenin Dr. Miroslava Tyrše za účasti svazu Slovanské Sokolstvo*, Prague: Československá obec sokolská.

Provazníková, Marie (1948) 'Vývoj sletových společných cvičení žen' [Development of women's mass performances], in *Deset sletů: Přednášky z mimořádné vzdělávací školy Československé obce sokolské o první desítce všesokolských sletů ve dnech 17. a 18. ledna 1948*, Prague: Nakladatelství Československé obce sokolské.

Rainey, Lawrence S. (1998) 'Taking Dictation: collage poetics, pathology, and politics', *Modernism/modernity*, 5: 123–53.

Rodekamp, Volker (ed.) (2002) *Sport: Schau. Deutsche Turnfeste 1860–2002*, Leipzig: Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig.

Roubal, Petr (2003) 'Politics of gymnastics: mass gymnastic displays under communism in Central and Eastern Europe', *Body and Society*, 9: 1–25.

Roubal, Petr (2006a) 'A didactic project transformed into the celebration of a ritual: Czechoslovak Spartakiads 1955–1990', *Journal of Modern European History*, 4: 90–113.

Roubal, Petr (2006b) '"Dnes na Strahově promluví masy": Proměna symboliky československých spartakiád 1955–1990' ['The masses will speak out at Strahov today': the transformation of the symbolicism of the Czech Spartakiades 1955–1990], *Kuděj*, 8: 79–89.

Šaršeová, Jožka (1955) 'Nová kapitola' [A new chapter], *Literární noviny*, 4, 28: 3.

Šaršeová, Jožka (1981) 'Tak to jsem já...' [Here I am...], Prague: Mladá fronta.

Schneider, David M. (1984) *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Serbus, Ladislav, Bohumil Kos and Jaroslav Mihule (1963) *Historický vývoj a základy teorie tělovýchovných vystoupení v ČSSR* [*Historical development and key principles of the theory of physical education performances in Czechoslovakia*], Prague: SPN.

'Slavná přehlídka mládí a krásy pokračuje' [The glorious parade of youth and beauty goes on] (1955) *Rudé právo*, 25 June: 2.

Šterc, Jaroslav (1975) *Československé spartakiády: Nejmasovější projev naší tělesné výchovy* [*Czechoslovak Spartakiades: the most popular feature of our physical education*], Prague: Olympia.

Střecha, Jiří (Director) (1985) *Československá spartakiáda 1985*, Prague: Krátký film. Film.

Synnott, Anthony (1993) *The Body Social: symbolism, self and society*, London and New York: Routledge.

Tyrš, Miroslav (1894) 'Řeč o veřejném cvičení Sokola pražského dne 26. března 1865' [The speech on public performance of Prague Sokol of 26 March 1865], in Josef E. Scheiner (ed.) *Úvahy a řeči Dr. Miroslava Tyrše*, Prague: Nákladem tělocvičné jednoty Sokol.

Tyrš, Miroslav (1926) *Tělocvik v ohledu esthetickém* [*The aesthetics of physical education*], Prague: Karel Novák.

7 Dispositives of silence

Gender, feminism and Czech literature between 1948 and 1989

Jan Matonoha

Introduction: feminist and gender agendas in Czech literary reception post-1989

Following the events of 1989, Western feminism was taken by surprise by the rejection of the idea of gender emancipation in Eastern Europe, including the circles (e.g. the dissent) where sensitivity towards various forms of oppression and inequality were to be expected (see, for instance, Einhorn 1993; Funk and Mueller 1993; Wolchik 1992, 1994). In regard to this situation, the following two facts motivated this study: (1) the extent to which the cultural community was characterized by a distinctive unwillingness or inability to reflect upon gender as an aspect of social relations and cultural background following 1989;[1] (2) during the examined period (1948–89), the topic of gender appeared in various articulations; yet, with small exceptions, it was not formulated from feminist positions; on the contrary it was subsumed into higher discursive formations and ideological frameworks and thus – in the words of Hana Havelková (2007) – it was expropriated.[2]

The aim of this study is to contribute towards the illumination of the genealogy of those mechanisms that contributed to the almost visceral rejection of feminism and the constitution of the existing silence on the topic of gender. This objective will be reached by means of examining a select corpus of canonical literary texts. However, I use the concept of silence in this study to designate a broader range of phenomena and not merely the lack of interest in the given topic or the absence of a widespread debate addressing these issues. I also use this concept to designate the selfsame structural conditions of invisibility and rejection that grew from a strong dis-identification with the examined topic, which was viewed as something uncomfortable and borderline embarrassing. Many model values and features of gender culture were communicated by channels that enjoyed a great prestige, and they were endowed with a strong symbolic interpellation capital (for instance, literary fiction from the dissident circles or literature published in exile); thus they were not perceived as introducing ideology, pressure or conformity to the dominant official (and to a large extent discredited) culture. Due to the contraposition against the dominant policy and suppression generated by the government, the values disseminated by dissident

literature and literature published in exile achieved a position of hegemony in the sense proposed by Gramsci (Gramsci 1971 [1935]; see also Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Torfing 1999). The impact of this tendency can be traced deep into the 1990s and beyond.[3] This study strives to elucidate particularly the factors that constitute the complicity of the subject in the hegemony of silence with the use of instruments that are less visible and less often thematized. I would like to append the above-described examination of the silence on the issue of gender with an analysis of literary texts that provide a dimension of discursive and interpellative formation of potentially affective – yet at the same time injuring – attachments and identifications that constituted forms of gender culture, which were in many regards regressive and in effect (jointly) prepared the ground for the rejection of feminism and constitution of gender blind spots in Czech society before 1989 and beyond.[4]

In regard to the theoretical background, this study examines literary texts as specific places that provide opportunities for certain interpellations (appeals, summons, incitements, temptations) of the subject that allow the subject to assume and accept a specific type of subjectivity and identity. The theoretical instruments employed in this study draw on the feminist approaches that perceive culture as a reservoir of social meanings and categories, as a discursive space that offers frameworks for experiences that can only be grasped via cultural and social categories (Scott 1992). Through this prism, literary texts are shown as a discursive space of establishment, circulation, sharing and negotiation of socially recognizable and acceptable values and identities (Belsey 1985); on the other hand, such texts are shown as actors who form the discursive terrain and meaningful and conceptual dominants that are valid for the whole society. Therefore, I consider literature as one of the types of discursive domains of distribution of cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1993), as a space of cultural constitution of identities and interpellations of the reading subject (Fetterley 1978; Althusser 1984 [1970]; Belsey 1985; Culler 1991 [1982]). In effect, I perceive literary texts as an integral part of broader discursive processes of constitution of the subject, formative processes, and technologies of the Self (Foucault 1995 [1975], 1998 [1976]), negotiation and stabilization of coherent and clearly readable subjectivity within the network of a multitude of interpellations. My methodology is based on feminist deconstructive reading (Johnson 1980) and resistant reading (reading against the grain) as introduced by Judith Fetterley (1978). By the same token, it is my intention to further extend this method of interpretation and demonstrate the internal complications that are posed to resistant reading by mechanisms of affective injuring interpellations and identifications (Brown 1995; Butler 1997) and their roles in the dispositives of silence (see below).

With respect to the chosen methodology, it needs to be noted that in connection with the changes in gender culture, I am not addressing cohorts of women authors and authors but 'generations' of texts, i.e. I am addressing the literary and discursive production and analysis of the literary field. This approach allows for an examination of the interpellation potential of texts and their involvement

in the discursive emergence of silence. The criterion for the selection of the texts was their 'canonicity' (from the 1950s until present day) – and the interpellation potential arising therefrom – which was supported by the weight of symbolic capital that was enjoyed (and still is) by the anti-canonical and 'dissident' (or at least 'avant-garde', anti-normative) texts of that period.[5] The texts selected in this study represent two criteria: time and place; together, they introduce a cross section of the whole examined period: texts from all four decades and all forms or types of publishing methods – including authors living in exile (published by 68 Publishers in Toronto), samizdat literature (series Petlice, Expedice), literature associated with the alternative scene (published by Unijazz), and authors representing the official literary production.

The silence on the issues of gender and feminism (not only their rejection but also trivialization, disinterestedness or merely superficial interest) after 1989 can be examined on three different levels: general social level, cultural and literary level, and to a certain degree also the level of expert literary criticism. Here I will discuss briefly silence on the issues of gender on the latter two levels: cases of unwillingness of literary figures to expose feminism in a public debate as well as the resistance towards gendered approaches in expert literary discourse.

As early as the mid-1980s, Václav Havel responded to a question posed by Italian feminists – after consulting his female dissident colleagues (they remained anonymous) who emphatically rejected the feminist agenda – that feminism was Dada (Havel 1992 [1985]). In the early 1990s, Josef Škvorecký trivialized the topics of sexual harassment and politically correct speech in a series of articles published in a prestigious Czech periodical (Škvorecký 1992a, 1992b). Due to the high measure of the symbolic capital and aura of prominent dissident and exiled figures, which both mentioned authors enjoyed, we can assume that their voiced opinions transcended the original scope of influence and contributed towards further delegitimization of feminism. Therefore, it is not too surprising that Eva (Kalivodová) Věšínová stated in a literary periodical *Iniciály* in 1992 that

> [I]n case feminism by chance becomes a topic of discussion somewhere in the Czech Republic, the common reaction includes sneers and trivializing jokes that often betray utter ignorance of the subject. Participants in the discussion who are more inclined to remain unbiased show at least a sign of doubt, distrust, and suspicion.[6]
>
> (Věšínová 1992: 1)

The situation in the field of literary theory is slightly better than the situation in the debate that encompasses the whole society and literary production. However, regardless of isolated voices that are familiar with feminism,[7] we can reach the conclusion that the Czech literary and theoretical discourse expressing opinions on the issue of women and literature (and only on the issue of women and literature, not so much on the issue of gender or feminism – e.g. Moldanová 1996; Nebeský and Pavera 2006; Bečková and Kupcová 2007) is rather naive and

reductive when it comes to its methodology and conception. It is quite telling that voices that demonstrate at least a minimum ability to address the issue more thoroughly from a feminist or gender-oriented perspective in the Czech context come from abroad (Iggersová 1996; Kirss 1998; Shore 1998; Ambros 2001, 2002; Pynsent 2001, 2004, 2008; Sedláčková-Gibbs 2002; Hron 2003; Lishaugen 2003, 2006; Chitnis 2005; Sokol 2005; Thomas 2005, 2007; Królak 2006; Filipowicz 2007; Filipowicz *et al.* 2008).[8]

Dispositives of silence: discursive emergence of silence and injuring identities

I aim to contribute towards the above-mentioned socio-historical explanations of silencing and invisibility of gender-related issues by applying the concept I call – with reference to Foucault's notion (1995 [1975]) – the 'dispositives of silence', the amalgamation of discourse, interpellations, and affective investments and identifications. In this section, I will first examine the functioning of the discursive mechanism that renders gender invisible, which I consider an even more pressing issue than the issue of gender oppression because silence not only fails to support the possibility of extrication from the unequal position, but it also primarily conceals the issue and eliminates the necessity and opportunity for reflection. Second, I will follow the specific combination of discursive practices, affective investments and paradoxical injuring identification that ultimately become entwined and constitute the phenomenon of the 'dispositives of silence'.

Silence has become the subject of a wide spectrum of disciplines including linguistics, communications theory and modern literature (especially in the works of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter). The approaches represented in the collection *Discourse and Silencing* (Thiesmeyer 2003) are close to the approach in this study; however, the collection foregrounds institutional, procedural or conventional silencing mechanisms and strategies (i.e. a micro- and macro-level of production), while my concern is with textual discursive practice. Sue Curry Jansen (1991) draws on Foucauldian notions; yet as much as she examines subtle and less conspicuous processes, she pays attention to a more traditional practical institutional sphere of surveillance and censorship (education, law, legislation, publishing practices). Similarly, Beate Müller (2004) notes that the Foucauldian notion of discourse in connection with censorship and silencing is not fully appropriate for application to the specific historic situation in Eastern Europe where the 'more traditional' institutionalized forms of censorship need to be observed in particular. The book *Silence: the currency of power* (Achino-Loeb 2006) examines the role of silence in the constitution of socially acceptable 'natural' meanings and identities by means of bestowing selective voices and by allowing participation in the discourse that is typically omitting the voices of the minorities (ethnic, gender). For the most part, this book interprets silencing as an absence of discourse (acts of omission, exclusion from the discourse). In his study *Organising Silence* (Clair 1998), Robin Clair also notes the multitude of strategies used to take away the voice of minorities, and he

examines the possibilities of implementing the voices of minorities into the majority discourse. The interesting aspect of his reasoning is his deconstruction of the simple dichotomy of the 'oppressor' and the 'victim' of silencing (which is also my approach) in relation to Gramsci's notion of hegemony. The difference between the notion presented by Clair and the notion presented here lies in that although Clair emphasizes that even marginal and oppressed groups often employ silencing practices, he is primarily interested in those situations where the 'culprit' of silencing is a minority that is not solidary with another minority, and enforces its own agenda at the expense of other groups or is directly attempting to define its identity against other minorities. The sacrifice of such a silencing is usually some feature of intersectional identities – for instance, when national or ethnic emancipation takes place, it often happens at the price of silencing a different identity's level (gender, sexual, etc.).[9] The parallel with this study lies in that the dissident community permitted a certain level of over-looking and microphysics of violence with respect to another 'marginal' community on another level, i.e. gender, within the framework of its efforts to resist the dominant group (state political power). However, I am particularly interested in the extent to which members of this 'marginal community' can contribute towards the articulation of gender-oriented questions when they are negatively impacted by the silence; or, as the case may be, how they are interpellated as subjects against their own interests and contribute, via their affective investments, towards the solidification of the dispositives of silence operating to their disadvantage. Both Wendy Brown (1998) and Judith Butler (1998) express their views on the issue of silencing. They find the notion of censorship too reductionist and they prefer the notion of omnipresent and constant social regulation of language and knowledge that is inherently built into any constitution of meaning. In this study, I would like to build on their theories and bring together discursive emergence of silence with affective, wounding attachments (Brown 1995) and injuring identities (Butler 1997), i.e. the paradoxical passionate adherence to the very concepts that are in fact (obscurely) hurtful, but their injuring nature remains unseen and unreflected upon,[10] as 'dispositives of silence'.

I would also like to distinguish the notion of hegemony from injuring identifications. Butler (1997, 1998) and Brown (1995) deal with the concept of hegemony only partially and marginally; nevertheless, we can identify certain aspects in their conceptions that differentiate hegemony from injuring attachments. According to Gramsci (Gramsci 1971 [1935]), hegemony strives to strategically secure its establishment; the actors who are affected by it – albeit they participate in the internalization of hegemonic values – are subjects under its influence. In contrast, affective attachments and subjectivity as subjection (Butler 1997) are not carried by their own strategic agenda and objectives; they are created from the bottom up: they are being carried by the subjects who create them via their active identifications and whose 'subjection' is volitive, even constituting their own self-perception and self-esteem. Thus, readers of the literary texts examined herein are being interpellated to constitute their solidarity with

resistant discourses of the dissent on the grounds of identification with its symbolic capital and set of values and, concurrently, on the grounds of volitional, marginalizing and unreflected patriarchal notion of gender roles.

I chose the Foucauldian notion of the 'dispositive' (Foucault 1995 [1975]) to allow for conceptual understanding of displacement and silencing of gender in public and literary debates. Foucault emphasized the complex intertwining of the discursive, the material, the corporeal and – we may add – the affective, i.e. the intertwining that I consider as crucial for the discursive emergence of silence. Within the framework presented in this study, such elements of the dispositives of silence are represented by the textual strategies of literary texts that allocate the (non)agency to the female subject on the one hand and erase gender (and any possibility of gender reflection) by subsuming it to superordinate frameworks on the other. I define the 'material', 'bodily', or rather 'embodied', and affective components as the injuring interpellation potential of literary texts and their (expected) reception and reader response (the processes of internalization and identification). I will now proceed to elucidate the two components of dispositives of silence – the discursive and the affective.

We can distinguish various types of discursive mechanisms of the emergence of silence; this study addresses two concrete types: the erasure of gender (or the possibility of gender reflection) via its subsumption into superordinate frameworks on the one hand and the mechanisms or modalities of dis-agency of the female subject on the other hand. Examples of subsumption into superordinate frameworks, which are mentioned below, include chronotopes or topoi, such as the Second World War, national resistance movements, holocaust, existential positions in liminal situations, or contemporary political ideology or, on the contrary, ethos of the fight of the dissent against such an ideology. The issue of gender plays an essential role in all these themes and topoi; nevertheless, due to its subsumption into these superordinate frameworks, which are traditionally valorized as significant or tragic phenomena, it disappears as 'irrelevant' and becomes 'merely' their building block. A multitude of mechanisms of reification, sexualization, displacement of agency with the help of topoi of transcendence and orientalizing otherness, and mechanisms of searching for values and self-respect via recognition in the eyes of men serve as examples of dis-agency of the female subject.

The affective component of the dispositives of silence, i.e. injuring identities, comprises the process of reception of injuring interpellations that results in a potential reception and internalization of injuring attachments and identifications by the reader that, in turn, forms the injuring identities that continue to synergically sustain the logic of discursive emergence of silence with which they create the dispositives of silence within the whole complex of the discursive and the affective. The nature of this study does not aim to provide empirical proofs that the readers are receiving the texts in this way; on the contrary, the indirect sign testifying to the functioning of this mechanism is the extent to which feminism became a rejected, undesirable, invisible and silenced topic in both the society and literature. I will discuss both components further on literary examples in the next section.

Let us take a closer look at the complex functioning of the dispositives of silence. Generally speaking, to read a text means to be interpellated by it; to understand its code implicitly means to accept the perspective presented by the text, albeit temporarily (Fetterley 1978), notwithstanding the fact that the final interpretative conclusions may vary during the act of reading. My intention is to reverse this point of view to a certain degree or, as the case may be, to extend it: the reading subjects not only find themselves in disadvantageous positions, with which they identify, while being forcefully manipulated by the text (by its discursive strategies and hidden presuppositions). The reading subjects are not only tempted to identify with that which is primarily disadvantageous but also with that which is tempting, prestigious and satisfying; and, paradoxically, only appears to be injuring at a second glance. At the same time, such positions, which are disadvantageous and unequal from the perspective of gender, are disguised by an offer of socially accepted and rewarded subject positions to the reader. These satisfying and tempting – yet eventually injuring and inhibiting – positions allow the subjects to presumably view the claims and critiques of feminism 'rationally' and 'with detachment' as some type of an ideological and fundamentalist subsidiarity.

The interpellative impact of the texts analysed in this study is intensified, because the positions that the female subjects were interpellated to assume are carried by the ethos of the dissent and counteraction against the contemporary political norm. In this context, they did not appear as traditional or stereotypical positions: they became repurposed and assumed nonconformist, heroic and almost martyr-like positions filled with existential drive resisting the perceived socialist emancipation project. Therefore, the interpellating images (motherhood, partnership, resistance to the political regime, or supposedly subversive glorification of sexuality) and the discursive spaces where they took place had a stronger potential than the usual value attributes (physical beauty or social status, personal and social success or personal prestige) presented by the mainstream and mass culture.[11] We can add that the identity models of women as co-sufferers, aides, consolers, couriers, technical workers, lovers, wives or mothers can be found not only in literary texts but also in the practical lives of those living in dissent (noted, for instance, by Hrabik-Samal 1996).[12]

Moreover, samizdat literature and literature published in exile produced texts that did not motivate (implicit, subconscious) distancing or at least the kind of reflection that typically appeared in connection with mass pop-culture texts and classic texts canonized by the establishment. On the contrary, these texts – written and received in liminal sociopolitical spaces – assumed almost quasi-sacral nature (cf. Hron 2003: 83), and they were perceived as the core of new – and from the perspective of the political regime, subversive – values that can be trusted and that are worthy of being the subject of active efforts even at the cost of high sacrifice. The 'positive' yet, in effect, injuring, inhibiting and rejecting nature of the traditional gender binaries of female identity was thus also endowed with significant symbolic capital of the contemporary 'avant-garde', oppositional and anti-canonical status of samizdat and dissident literature and culture. Gender

solidarity within the framework of political resistance towards a common enemy also plays a significant role in the mechanism of injuring interpellations and identifications. In turn, all these aspects render the situation of these literary texts different from the usual interpellations by mass culture; therefore, they require a different repertoire of conceptual tools – such as the concepts of wounding attachments and injuring identities that I am applying in this study.

In the last part of this chapter, I will present examples from contemporary canonical literary texts that are the most effective in empowering the dispositives of silence. I will focus on positive yet injuring interpellative models of identities that deprive the female subject of agency and displace the issue of gender. First, I will address the issue of reification of female identity and dis-agency via injuring recognition; before addressing two extraordinarily strong and frequent interpellating categories in detail: the ideal or idealized woman and the silent woman.

Injuring interpellations of literary texts

Women as objects and projections: self-conception through injuring recognition

The reduction of women to objects, which are observed or used by male subjects, is a conspicuous feature of Czech prose. By the same token, this classic feminist critical topos (man in the position of a subject, woman reduced to the position of an object) is further internally structured in Czech prose. Generally speaking, the following model is more or less repeated: at first glance – objectification, reification, fetishization, trivialization; on a second plane – proving that the male character is misunderstood, reduction of the female character, and the uncovering of his existential dependence on a loving female character; however, it is the next, higher, plane that uncovers the real, unreflected patriarchal and androcentric groundwork of the whole epistemological and ethical complex. Therefore, the model does not only include banal sexism and scopophilia (although they are plentiful) but also, on the second plane, paradoxically flattering and therefore even more treacherous identities (see details further below); the gender-oriented dichotomy of the subject–object organization is betrayed by the narrative creation of the fictional world and the development of the storyline. This model is very frequent in the works of many (then anti-canonical, today canonical and highly regarded) authors (for instance, Václav Havel, Bohumil Hrabal, Milan Kundera, Arnošt Lustig, Josef Škvorecký, Ludvík Vaculík); nonetheless, with respect to the logic of injuring identities, I will mention a more interesting and more specific case, i.e. a situation where such a reification is criticized in the first plane of a literary text; albeit, paradoxically, only to be later replaced with a different type of injuring dependence and loss of autonomy of the female subject.

Such a critical reflection of the problem of reification of the female subject, i.e. its reduction to a mere object fulfilling male desires (sexual, possessive and epistemic, as well as the desire for a prestigious and representative social

attribute) can be found in the novel *Medúza* (*Medusa*, 1973) by Jarmila Louko-tková; this novel was a part of the official literary production and circulation during the times of Normalization.[13] Loukotková sees the women of the time and social situation as being constantly on display for the controlling male gaze. As a result, women become objects not only in the sense of to-be-looked-at-ness but also in the sense of complete reification – reduction to an object that can be manipulated. Loukotková's prose portrays women as persons whose existence takes place almost exclusively under the supervision of a male partner, including the supervision of their private life, sexual life and financial matters. Such a pos-sessive control, which borders on subliminal domestic violence (manifesting at least by verbal violence, threats and restriction of personal freedom) is combined with sexism – not sexism in the sense of the rather more refined and subtle sexism that can be found in the prose of Škvorecký or Hrabal (see below) but the sexism that reduces women in a quite straightforward and utilitarian way to their physicality. All these manifestations are typical of two male characters – young, effective, highly ambitious and socially adaptable engineers who both see women not as partners but as inventory of their own materialistic lives.

It is paradoxical that it is the official literature (and not samizdat literature or literature published in exile) that brings critical literary representations and reflections of such social phenomena. Nevertheless, Loukotková's prose cannot be interpreted as unproblematic by any means. Upon abandoning the relation-ships with both young engineers (which is accompanied by their threats and insults), the protagonist enters into relationships with older men, artists and designers. They appear to be much more sympathetic, they are open-minded and tolerant, and they use these features in their relationship to the main prot-agonist; they allow her freedom in the relationship. However, Alena Zachová notes in her interpretation that the manner in which the main protagonist uncriti-cally admires these men 'betrays an inner lack of freedom because she is awaiting recognition once again' (Zachová 2008: 143). Yet again, the woman is caught in the trap of dependency on male opinion and evaluation; this time, the trap is even more insidious because it is based on a subtle and more effective mechanism of affective attachments, which leads to deeply somatized injuring identities, and not strictly on explicitly oppressive control. Therefore, while the exhibition of control and possessiveness on the part of the men is identified in the prose, the attitude of dependence on recognition and praise, i.e. the mechanism of affective attachments and injuring identities, remains without any critical reflection.

Problematic nature of positive interpellations: identification models and injuring attachments

So far, this study has implied that the texts from the sphere of dissident literature (samizdat literature, literature published in exile) are of particular importance when it comes to the impact of gender interpellations; it is highly difficult to resist their interpellations due to the following two reasons. First, from the per-spective of gender, the positive idealizing representations of women that offer

positive identification models at first glance are, in fact, the most problematic – not the negative and depreciative representations. Second, their interpellative power, which is significantly different from other methods used by (pop) culture to construe conventional identity models, lies in their significant symbolic capital that also leads to identifications that are the more injuring the more deep, sym-bolic and existentially grounded they are. This part of my study will attempt to outline the problems connected with these positive and tempting yet injuring interpellations.

It was Judith Fetterley (1978) who pointed out in her classic work that nar-rative strategies (i.e. techniques such as focalization or narrative perspective) are becoming a very tempting interpellative tool, which female readers unknowingly follow and eventually accept during the act of reading. As a result of these strat-egies, readers find themselves in the grip of the developing fable and the twists of fate of the male protagonist, and they unknowingly identify with his position and perspective, which, however, carries negative conceptions of women or their reification that are concealed within the framework of traditional reading. Fetter-ley notes that it is almost a rule that canonical texts use a male perspective, whereas the events that are taking place in the portrayed fictional world can be viewed through the female perspective. However, this does not fully apply to the prose examined in this study. On the contrary, the texts of the selected novels often use a female perspective as an important focalizing narrative perspective.

Contrary to the more usual focus directed solely at purely negative and dis-criminating representations of women, this study detects a somewhat paradoxi-cal and contra-intuitive model that interpellates women to assume disadvantageous positions (from the perspective of the possibility of their own agency, self-realization and autonomy) with the use of positive identity models that are offered in a tempting mode for women to identify with them (this mode is always implied by a specific legitimizing ethos endowed with symbolic capital that is rather different from, for instance, the nature of consumer literature and mass culture as such). The general pattern being that the subject is interpellated by being offered a flattering, tempting and seductive identity model that appears to be positive and that invites the subject to attach itself to it and use it as a cor-nerstone of its 'positive' self-perception. However, the acceptance and internali-zation of such an identity model and identification with it generates an identity that is, from many perspectives, disadvantageous and limiting for the subject itself, albeit it is not obvious due to the logic of the injuring attachments. I will demonstrate this mechanism on several texts (from a variety of areas and time periods, including official texts, samizdat literature and literature published in exile).

With respect to the agency bestowed on female characters, the prose of Bohumil Hrabal offers the reading subject symptomatically ambivalent planes. For instance, the spouse of Miloš Hrma, Máša, and his lover, Viktoria Freie, who are both characters from the novel *Ostře sledované vlaky* (*Closely Observed Trains*, 2005 [1965]), are depicted as thoroughly positive and likeable characters (moreover, Viktoria Freie is endowed with symbolic capital due to the fact that

she – herself a German – takes part in the anti-nationalist resistance movement). Nevertheless, the price these characters pay is that they are endowed with almost no agency in the portrayed fictional world and in the development of the story or, as the case may be, they are endowed with agency in a very narrowly defined space – symptomatically, in the sphere of sexuality. Thus both Máša and Viktoria Freie are depicted in an entirely positive manner; nonetheless, they are both depicted as sexual partners (which is highly paradoxical from the perspective of an un/portrayed agency, especially in the case of Viktoria Freie who is a member of the secret resistance group). The logic of injuring identities is further reinforced by the fact that the depictions of sexuality were becoming a certain symptom of the avant-garde and subversion against the backdrop of the conservative canon of literary production of the period.

Another example is the following concern: Hrabal's prose (rather surprisingly and not obviously, within the given historical context) positively mobilizes certain issues of ethnicity that, in turn, generate gender blind spots (or blind spots of intersectionality, i.e. the perception of identity as an overlapping or mosaic of categories including gender, ethnicity and social categories). From the 1950s to the 1970s Hrabal's works were populated with Romany characters that, at first glance, appear very positive.[14] It is symptomatic that the Romany women are particularly portrayed in the cordial, flattering, petit-bourgeois and majority-value subverting light as free and distinct individuals who are not bound by the rigid bourgeois conventions. However, the inevitable drawback of the tempting and (at the time) subversive representation of female characters is that, from the gender perspective, they are portrayed with the use of the stereotypical image of sexual objects.

The novel *Zbabělci* (*The Cowards*, 1972 [1958]) by Josef Škvorecký can serve as another example. To a certain degree, female protagonists are at the centre of attention, and they are the hidden initiators of action, a distinctive topic of the book; the historical details become more visible against the backdrop of the importance of these figures. In this sense, this motif is used instrumentally to emphasize the effects of the storytelling about 'the large history' (unmasked in the novel as a small history of human baseness, stereotypes, prejudice, self-deception, cowardly cruelty and historical injustice). By the same token, this motif is strategically used to portray the insignificance of the large history in comparison with the lived, everyday experience of the human life. The true core of the novel is constituted by 'gals' and jazz, i.e. a tempting concoction of two taboos of the period: sexuality and 'Western', prohibited, and thus even more fashionable, music. The same topic is also central to Škvorecký's text *Prima sezóna* (*The Swell Season*, 1982 [1975]). In his novels, such as *The Cowards* and *The Swell Season*, the female characters are constituted by receiving attention within the framework of amusingly (avant-garde at the time) portrayed erotic relationships that bestow a double yet highly problematic 'recognition' on them. On the one hand, they receive the 'compliment' of sexual attractiveness and on the other hand – in a more sophisticated way, and thus more 'treacherously' – due to the fact that they are portrayed as always having the upper hand in sexual

exchanges (not only as the objects of the unattainable and thus of a 'more precious' desire but also due to the fact that they are represented as more mature and wise), and they cast an ironic light on the narrator and male characters. The male protagonist, in spite of his presumed artfulness regarding the plotting of his plan to seduce as many girls as possible, becomes a passive victim ironically observed by the female figures. For instance, the hero Danny Smiřický is unaware of the fact that Marie, whom he is trying to seduce, knows very well of his parallel and vain attempts to succeed with Irena – as a matter of fact, the two women are not competing with each other; on the contrary, they are solidary. Another short story allows the reader to follow the Weber twins, Marie's cousins, who use their resemblance to play with Danny, the central protagonist and narrator of the short story collection, as a cat would play with a mouse. The storyline thus imparts a certain level of agency to the female characters; however, on a global scale, their agency is delimited (or limited) by the selfsame reifying and scopophilic narrative framework, i.e. the storyline of the sexual conquering of a female body that is being 'legitimized' by this alibi of female agency. Thanks to this mechanism (the alibi of a presumed female supremacy), the point of many obviously sexist scenes, which would otherwise have a lingering aftertaste of scopophilic sexism,[15] is dulled. Moreover, the context of the puritanism of the Normalization period resulted in the following situation: the domestic audience could (perhaps in accordance with the author's intention) perceive the stories – which originated in exile, yet they were addressed to the Czech context – as clothed with the aura of playful openness that not only 'justified' the to-be-looked-at-ness of the female body but also provided it with an aura of a particular 'subversive' attractiveness.

Seen through this prism, female characters receive certain recognition; nevertheless, the unreflected underside of this recognition is the fact that women who appear in the narrative are present only within the framework of erotic relationships as potential objects of male desire, and they are never present as autonomously acting characters possessing their own innermost world and actively asserting themselves in the world in other ways than via the sphere of male erotic desire. Therefore, the works of (counter-)canonical authors, such as Josef Škvorecký, include the mechanism of a 'recognizing' yet injuring inclusion under another and broader topic; this inclusion is even more effective due to the fact that the broader topic is essentially indisputable and can be evaluated as positive. It is still true that the female subjects are, in fact, excluded from public male projects; however, it is not so easy to say that it is possible to deconstruct these projects (e.g. subversive exposure of the mundane, banal, unheroic and often ambivalent aspects of attempts at resistance during the end of the Second World War), in the way they are narrated and constituted. On the contrary, everything points to the fact that they deserve a legitimate recognition for literary subversion of the collective myths of the given time period (for instance, the myth of an unproblematic heroic Czechoslovak resistance or unmasking of the narrow-mindedness of Czech crimes at the end of the war). In addition, the texts do so by means of a type of literary portrayal that is not pathetic in the first

instance; they carry out the 'unmasking' as if by accident and with the use of subtle and very successful and – given the context – progressive literary methods. Therefore, we are faced with a principle of inclusion of gendered meaning within a broader, more consequential, ethical and more fundamental topic that is served by a 'lower' gender topic. Nonetheless, it is within this unreflected and subordinated role of gender that the stereotypical and patriarchal types of interpellations, which lead towards reification of the female subject, are generated. In this respect, the following applies – in essence, to all canonical authors of the dissent, samizdat or proscribed literature of the given period: the better the treatment of the 'broader' and superior topic, which is endowed with symbolic capital, the worse is the impact on the functioning of gender relations and identities; and in turn, the more effective and 'treacherous' is the interpellative gender work carried out by the narrative.

In addition to the discussed cases of a paramount, attractive and positive plan that is inviting readers to identify with it, although it leads to problematic and injuring identities from the perspective of gender, we can find cases that are further complicated. In such cases, the positive plan presents not only identities or storylines that are conventionally considered attractive yet are criticized from a feminist perspective regarding the distribution of agency (a beautiful mother, an inspiring mistress, an idealized and silent victim); it is also, as I shall try to demonstrate further, presenting identities that can be evaluated as positive even within the framework of the approaches examining gender equality and emancipation.

Through the prism of the diachronic dynamics of the development of gender culture, it is symptomatic that interesting gender-related motifs are found in the genre of social realism novels of the 1950s (which were more progressive, when it comes to gender, than for instance literary texts of the dissent written in the 1970s). The storyline of the novel *Občan Brych* (*Citizen Brych*, 1955) by Jan Otčenášek is intriguing from the perspective of the portrayal of the autonomy of women's decision-making, personal growth and individual agency; it represents a certain polemical deviation from the norm of socialist realism novels that typically portray an unambiguous and politically exemplary protagonist. The male character of Brych enriches the storyline of the novel – regardless of the eventual unambiguous impression – with an unprecedented topic of a partially estranged intellectual who is invaded by doubt regarding the development and legitimacy of the new political representation. The novel addresses the dilemmas of the female protagonist (Irena) who is resolved to become emancipated; she aims to liberate herself from the network of social, intellectual and gender-defined dependencies. *Citizen Brych* offers a storyline that is unusual: the story of a woman who

> [T]ransforms from a financially and emotionally dependent woman incapable of being in charge of her own life into a person who wills and can provide for herself, take care of her child, and choose a partner for herself rather than have somebody else choose him for her – she decides to leave

her husband and re-enter into a relationship with Brych, only this time it is based on new principles.

> (Królak 2006: 114)

At the same time, the remarkable topic and storyline of the emancipation of Irena allow us to use our critical apparatus to point out two symptomatic phenomena. First, the act of emancipation is partially disguised, recoded or expropriated by the superior level of Irena's political and ideological awakening. More importantly, her emancipation is not taking place in an autonomous manner; it is symptomatic that it is 'infallibly' taking place within the framework of a relationship with a man, as Joanna Królak (Królak 2006: 114) points out: on the one hand, there is the relationship to Brych (as Irena's lover) and on the other hand, and more importantly, there is her relationship to her brother who is a politically conscious communist and provides 'guidance' to his sister. Therefore, autonomous female agency is once again missing, and women are traditionally defined (paradoxically also in their emancipation and self-examination) via their men or their relationships with men, i.e. via a strongly patriarchal, paternalistic and patronizing manner.[16] From the perspective of gender, this novel gives the impression that the search for autonomy, agency and emancipation is acceptable, so long as it takes place within the framework of the 'superior' and sanctioned code that is appointed by men (in this novel, it is the party line of communist politics). Therefore, it is becoming apparent that even texts that appear to include a 'pro-feminist' (or, as the case may be, proto-feminist or rather pseudo-feminist) dimension at first glance show evidence of highly ambivalent – and thus more injuring in their interpellative capacity – identity models.

The silent woman and the ideal/idealized woman

As I have already implied, through the prism of interpellative potential, the character categories of the idealized woman and the silent woman are paradoxically the most treacherous in Czech prose when it comes to gender. These categories are not necessarily problematic from the perspective of representation per se; rather, they are problematic from the perspective of the unseen gender ambivalence, which is hidden under a thick, positive and strong interpellative layer. Both of these ideals (the silent and the ideal/idealized woman) are also used by Bronislava Volková (1997). However, Volková approaches the category of the silent woman simply as one of the examples of reductive gender stereotypes. In this study, I am extending her interpretation by including the paradoxical mechanism of injuring interpellations, identifications and affective attachments, which I am approaching as one of the constitutive elements of the dispositives of silence. By the same token, the mechanism of injuring interpellations is particularly closely connected with these two interconnected identity categories.

The character of Lucie portrayed in Milan Kundera's novel *Žert* (*The Joke*, 1992 [1967]) can serve as the first example of an idealized silent woman. The novel uses the character of Lucie to deal with Kundera's favourite topic – how

easy it is to deeply misunderstand another person close to us (and, in the last instance, to oneself). Gradually, the reader learns from the complex narrative structure of the novel that Lucie – the only person to whom the main protagonist of the novel Ludvík (supposedly) develops an authentic attachment and who is excluded from the novel's game of miscommunication and mutual misinterpretations – does not want to and cannot communicate with Ludvík sexually; not because she is immature, naive or selfish but because of a prior trauma (a gang rape). The text interestingly touches upon the topic of fragility and indirectness of communication: Lucie is unable to communicate her loving feelings towards Ludvík and can manifest them neither with words nor with her (sexually victimized) body; her feelings towards Ludvík are paradoxically all the more deep, the more superficially and with a total lack of understanding Ludvík perceives them.

Consequently, the character of Lucie allows us to catch a glimpse of her privileged position of silence that frees her from the otherwise unavoidable fate of constant miscommunication (with others and with herself). Lucie's silence represents an almost mystical comforting space, an empty sign to which the protagonist of the novel, Ludvík, as well as the readers, may develop an attachment as an attachment to a place that is endowed with the promise of comfort and rest. However, it is precisely this silence, this empty sign, this empty space, that indicates that in Kundera's world there cannot exist any unconditionally autonomous women. The character of Lucie is praised as a positive figure free from the tragic logic of never-ending miscommunication, but it is so at the expense of losing her voice.[17] Naturally, it is symptomatic that such a well-thought-out idealized identity of the silent woman, which is precisely the type of subjectivity that not only leaves the man in control and 'is not in the way' of his activities and preference but also directly enables him to project his unarticulated desires and preferences on the silent screen, is functioning as an ideal.

In her examination of the works of Bohumil Hrabal, Volková (1997) points out the character of Maryša, portrayed in the novel _Postřižiny_ (_Cutting it Short_, Hrabal 2012 [1974]), set in the 1920s, as a strong female protagonist. She perceives the depiction of this complex female character as an example that is going against the grain of the tradition of schematic female characters in Czech prose. However, we cannot accept her conclusion without reservations. It is certainly true that the main female protagonist of _Cutting it Short_ (partly based on Hrabal's mother) is portrayed as a strong and autonomous figure whose nature, which is distinguished by a peculiar mixture of an unorthodox lyrical vision and robust life force, noticeably opposes the normative patriarchal notions of female roles and models of behaviour. However, at the same time, as is typical for Hrabal's prose, this fascinating, extraordinary and captivating character and the manner of its portrayal betray hidden moments that furtively introduce very traditional patriarchal values, such as female beauty, obedience to one's husband, and the submissive role of a woman as an aid, a consoler and some kind of a life muse, albeit playfully staged, to be accepted by the reader. Eventually, even this female character slides into the preconceived gender patterns when she allows

her husband to perform his conventionally superior patriarchal role. The textual mechanism that interpellates the readers in this direction is, however, not straightforward. The whole novel, narrated in the first person from the perspective of the central female protagonist (Maryša), is constructed on the inversion of gender stereotypes: the man, Francin, although he is the director of the brewery, is portrayed as rather passive and insecure; Maryša, on the other hand, exudes healthy self-confidence and is a living example for her husband. She surpasses his vitality without trying to do so. At the same time, both characters – as a result of the inversion of stereotypes and other contributing factors – have a very positive effect on the readers. However, the inversion of gender roles eventually aims to be overturned back to the traditional order where both male and female characters assume their roles. Maryša – an independent, active and emancipated woman – thus willingly gives herself to her (rather insecure) husband Francin so that he can publicly perform her corporal punishment in front of the citizens of Nymburk for her fashion eccentricity (and loss of her feminine attribute), i.e. the cutting of her long blonde hair. Thereby, he can perform his patriarchal role and restore his masculine identity. Nevertheless, the problem is not primarily the violent and sexist nature of the scene.[18] Such interpretations would be focusing on the obvious yet false target, which is masking a more important and treacherous interpellation mechanism. Within the context of the narration – whose poetics are celebrating rather the colourfulness, independence and stubbornness of the heroine's world – the eye-catching sexism and self-confirming masculinity of the given scene in combination with a grotesquely estranging and archaic language seem to give an impression of reflected playfulness and irony. The treacherous mechanism of the interpretation – and thus also interpellation – signal that is being sent by this retroactive inversion of gender roles (the passive Francin is 'finally' provoked to 'take action') lies in the fact that via the realization of the performativity of stereotypical gender roles, the legitimization of the traditional gender patterns is completed. It is as if the text were inciting us: we all know about the game of traditional gender roles; its 'innocent' artificiality suits us; it is, therefore, not necessary to defy it, criticize it, and address it as a broader social topic (not even in those cases when we must or chose to play this game on the edge of violence and humiliation). This situation further contributes both to the mechanism of inhibiting injuring identities and the dispositives of silence.

To a certain extent, the key character of _Příliš hlučná samota_ (_Too Loud a Solitude_, Hrabal 2008 [1977]) – a Romany girl who died in Auschwitz and who was the only person in the life of the main protagonist, Haňťa, with whom he was able to share deep and harmonic feelings without the necessity of expressing them with words – also falls within the category of the silent woman whose subjectivity holds a narcissistic mirror to the creation of male self-perception. The key thematic thread of the novel, albeit inconspicuous, is the fact that Haňťa paradoxically cannot remember the name of this woman in his retrospective narration although he reminisces about her as if she were, in a certain sense, the most important person in his life. He only recalls her name in the moment of his

dreamed suicide, as if he were enlightened. This forgotten name, symbol, or a cipher of an authentic relationship to oneself as if it were a relationship to another, constitutes the strong motif of the novel, albeit it is not highlighted in the narration ostentatiously. Nevertheless, there is a hidden problem: the female character enters into the narration in a crucial manner, yet it is under the condition that she remains silent, and her function is instrumental, serving to develop the storyline and illuminate the psyche of the protagonist. We do not learn anything about the individual experience of the silent female character; she appears only in the position of a silent, impenetrable – and thus fascinating – subject or rather object that is not in charge of its own agency.

The female characters portrayed as attractive, albeit ultimately reductive, in the writings of Arnošt Lustig can be included in the category of the idealized woman; there are several reasons why their mechanisms of affective attachments, injuring identities and interpellation potential are particularly strong. First, they are linked to a strong and unquestionable cultural capital of the topic of the holocaust (or the Shoah), or rather the problem of traumas and the still enduring horrific primary experience with the event. Second, his prose (at least his early prose and the first versions) is first-rate when it comes to the lyrical – yet not pathetic – sober, restrained and concentrated style; it is only the focus on the protagonists, who appear unheroic at first glance and who are at the other side of the power spectrum (often children, seniors, women), and the attention to minor everyday details that synecdochically reveal the horrific context. Third, his prose offers a convincing, artfully portrayed and attractive identification model for the female subject, i.e. the image of attractively depicted characters of mysterious and mistreated women who are in peril. However, the downside of such a representation is the fact that it is largely identical to stereotyping cultural representation of womanhood (beauty, fragility) on the one hand; and the fact that these female characters lack any autonomy and agency since they are defined via a sexualizing and scopophilic masculine perspective with the use of their sexualized physicality and their victimized position on the other hand.

To a certain degree, this applies, for instance, to the character of the Polish Jewish woman in the novella *Modlitba pro Kateřinu Horovitzovou* (*A Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova*, 1974 [1964]). Volková (1997) interprets the character of Katerina Horovitzova as a type of an idealized woman who is, however, coded in accordance with the male paradigm (as a woman who fights actively and violently). I consider this a relevant observation. Nonetheless, we can add that it is quite contradictory that the text offers a gender-specific arrangement that does not disrupt the rather traditional and patriarchal gender coding of masculinity and femininity in the least. First, it is in the following regard: in the text, we encounter a classic relational model analysed by Susan Brownmiller (1975), i.e. the model of a (younger) woman who is protected from men (here, Nazi soldiers and officers) by other men, in this case by one older man who is rich (Holá 2010). However, this motif is later transposed (heroically and self-destructively), and it is the young woman and not the experienced man who takes action in the end; nevertheless, in my opinion this development paradoxically leads to increasingly problematic

gender implications. Petra Holá (2010) underscores the following motif: the Jewish prisoners experience the feelings of pride and satisfaction regarding the beauty of the young Katerina and regarding the fact that her body is irresistible to the gaze of the Nazi officers – in spite of their racial contempt (they cannot avert their eyes from her). The reified and sexualized female body is used as a mediator for the repeated (albeit temporary and transient) gaining of self-respect for the humiliated victims, the prisoners. Another crucial motif addressed by Holá is the crux of the novel, when Katerina Horovitzova in defiance of her humiliation (she is asked to remove her clothes in front of the Nazi officers) grabs the gun of one of the guards and aims it at him (immediately upon killing the soldier, she is killed by the other guards) rather than passively waiting for her humiliating death. Holá claims that the fact that Katerina Horovitzová, whose whole fate, identity and the actual act of resistance are conditioned by her beautiful body, seems to disappear during this charged moment (Holá 2010: 144). Holá interprets the story of Kateřina Horovitzová in the context of the archetypes of Judith and Salomé, where female beauty is used as an instrument for actions (ibid.: 149). From the perspective of gender, I see the whole thematic complex and its bond to the main character in a more sceptical light. It is obvious that this emotionally charged motif – the motif of a heroic and self-sacrificing (or heroically self-destructive) revenge taken by a humiliated woman on her aggressors – carries with itself a significant symbolic capital; nonetheless, the emotional interpellations endowed with this symbolic capital are highly problematic from the feminist perspective. The reification of the female body, the traditional myth of beauty and female to-be-looked-at-ness are legitimized, elevated, almost sanctified within the framework of the subsumption under the superior narrative framework – in this case, the story of the holocaust and heroic resistance. Via this mechanism, the interpellative calls for identification acquire their appellative and affective aims and, from the perspective of quality, lead towards significantly gender-specific stereotypical results – with the help of the emotional image of heroic resistance, they legitimize and solidify female identity as an identity grounded in the myth of beauty and to-be-looked-at-ness. With regards to the attractiveness and nobleness of the presented gender models and situations, the plot of *A Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova* becomes a typical example of injuring interpellations.

The above examined examples address not only the issue of idealization and silence of individual female characters in literary texts but also the fact that this type of representation interpellates the reading subject to perceive the position of silence as the privileged and positive position (honourable position extricated from the inevitable trap of miscommunication, misinterpretation, banality and pettiness). By the same token, this ideal disguises the fact that such a type of identification naturally takes place at the expense of agency.

Conclusion: silence as an index

The analysis of the literary texts showed that their discursive practice significantly contributes to the gendered disciplining of individual subjects and results in

situations where the readers are led to assume, without any reflection, a position complicit in highly stereotypical values of the patriarchal order and, in addition, perceive the identity gendered in such a manner as completely natural, satisfying and of superior value – and even as enriching and 'progressive'. At the same time, this disadvantaged position is masked by the fact that prestigious discourses employ it in order to offer their readers socially valorized positions. In effect, this study attempted to expose the ways in which the selected subversive literary texts of the period, which are canonical today, may have used their strong interpellative and symbolic capital to contribute towards the creation of blind spots and the dispositive of silence on the issues of gender. I aimed to offer an analysis of possible injuring yet constitutive identifications in order to provide a detailed examination of the paradoxical role of current canonical literature (prior to 1989, my examples ranged from anti-canonical literature, samizdat literature and literature published in exile to officially published literature) in the construction of gender identity inscribed in the patriarchal order. I focused on critical interpretation of the portrayals of gender relations presented by the literary texts, whose conceptualizations interpellated subjects to assume certain positions, which are favourable for the patriarchy, in such ways as to ensure that their positioning is not perceived as depriving but instead as satisfying the need for individual subjectivity (dignity, self-respect, progressivity or subversiveness). On the grounds of the textual analysis, we can conclude that a sizeable part of the highly acclaimed literary works of the examined period contributed (due to the fact that they were counter-canonical and 'avant-garde') to the processes of delegitimization of reflections on the issues of gender in Czechoslovakia after 1989. I consider the issue of inconspicuous and subliminal 'infiltration' or planting of patriarchal values that are offered to the receptiveness and awareness of Czech readership via representations that appear, at first glance, to be positive in many respects, as the crucial phenomenon of the examined literary works. This paradoxical mechanism allowed literary texts to take part in the mosaic of causes that contributed towards the stigmatization of gender issues and their invisibility in public discussion in the Czech environment until the end of the twentieth century.

The paradoxical aspect of the dispositives of silence and blind spots of gender reflection is that they also refer to the oversimplified and uncritical concept of democracy; particularly in the discourses of literature published in exile and in dissident literature that supported the ethics of civil society, apolitical politics, culture of self-reflectiveness, and 'normalcy' of a cheerful ghetto and a parallel polis of the dissent. Nevertheless, the silence on the issue of gender, structural incapability or impossibility of reflection of one's own socially and power-wise situated position represents not only one of the many research issues; it became the index (symptom) of a broader deficient understanding of democracy (democracy overlooking and not addressing the multitude of inequalities related to gender, fair and emancipated society, ethnicity and other aspects) in the discourses of the dissent prior to the revolution of 1989 and in Czech post-revolutionary society in general.

Translation: Dagmar Pegues

Notes

1 Mirek Vodrážka stated that: 'In the course of two totalitarian regimes, the "woman question" was suppressed in such a fundamental way that its absence is generally considered as desirable; moreover, its continual deprecation is considered as manifestation of a developed [...] civil and political consciousness' (Vodrážka 1998: 11; this and in this chapter all original translations from the Czech authors who have not been translated in print are by Dagmar Pegues).

2 On the topic of gender-relevant registers in biographic testimonies during state socialism, see Kateřina Zábrodská (in this volume). Petra Hanáková labels gender thematization in cinematography as 'latent feminism'; Libora Oates-Indruchová uses the term 'proto-feminism' for a similar phenomenon in contemporary pop culture (both in this volume).

3 Libora Oates-Indruchová reaches a similar conclusion (in this volume).

4 The concepts of 'wounding attachments' and 'injuring identities' are used by Wendy Brown (1995) and Judith Butler (1997) respectively, to represent a psychoanalytically motivated component of the functioning of power that goes beyond Foucault's conception in the sense that the subject is not only a dispersed and decentralized power disciplined by the technologies of the self (Foucault 1995 [1975], 1998 [1976] or, more precisely, performing this power (Butler 1993). On the contrary, it is, paradoxically, also willingly, actively and with significant affective investments subjecting itself to this power within the framework of forming its own culturally readable and coherent subjectivity; such identifications and formed identities may be counterproductive and injuring to the subject, albeit the subject may not reflect on this fact.

5 For the most part, the analysed texts were either published in exile – *Prima Sezóna* (*The Swell Season*, 1982 [1975]) by Josef Škvorecký – or they had to be published in Czechoslovakia in a significantly censored version or they were perceived as highly controversial and scandalous, as transgressing and disrupting the literary field of the period and its aesthetic conventions – *Zbabělci* (*The Cowards*, 1972 [1958]) also by Škvorecký, *Modlitba pro Kateřinu Horovitzovou* (*A Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova*, 1973[1964]) by Arnošt Lustig and to a certain extent also *Občan Brych* (*Citizen Brych*, 1963 [1955]) by Jan Otčenášek. Contrary to my approach, Libora Oates-Indruchová examines a selection of texts chosen in accordance with quantitative criteria (in this volume).

6 The answers of women responding to an inquiry on feminism in the same issue of the periodical *Iniciály* support her evaluation: poet Jana Štroblová says that women should make use of their feminine attributes that 'predetermine women to be the guardians of the fire, bearers of gentleness, or mothers' (Štroblová 1992: 14); prose writer Silvie Grošpicová considers feminism a 'completely redundant fad' (Grošpicová 1992: 16), and she raises the question whether handiwork produced by women may not be of a higher value than the intellectual nitpicking and 'campaigning for so-called women's rights?' (Grošpicová 1992: 17).

7 In the 1990s, isolated articles and interviews addressing the issue of feminism (usually rather general and not focusing on the dimension of literary theory) appeared in literary periodicals (Šmejkalová 1991, 1997; Věšínová 1992, 1995; Vodrážka 1993, 1998); a bilingual feminist periodical called *One Eye Open* was also published (it is symptomatic that its publication was initiated by American critics Deborah Dubois and Marci Shore and by translatologist Eva Věšínová).

8 Alternatively, such perspectives were utilized by critics who spent some time abroad (Indruchová 1996; Popovičová 1998; Věšínová 1992, 1995, 1996; Oates-Indruchová 2002; Věšínová-Kalivodová 2005, 2010; Volková 1997). In fact, gender-oriented publications appeared in the domestic literary criticism at the threshold of the new millennium (e.g. Kalivodová and Knotková-Čapková 2003; Kalnická 2002, 2003;

Heczková 2004, 2006, 2007, 2009; Topor 2005; Knotková-Čapková 2010; Kynčlová 2007; Matonoha 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010; Filipowicz *et al.* 2008).

9 For more on this topic see Wendy Brown (1998).

10 Cf. also note 4.

11 As to the course of actual emancipation, see the previous chapters in this book.

12 This is not to say that women did not play a significant role in the dissent (cf. Šiklová 2000, 2003, 2008; Bendová 2005; Horáček 2006) but as Hrabik-Samal observes, it was mostly in auxiliary and invisible positions of editors, proofreaders, translators, typists or simply spouses, wives, mothers. Thus, the more they oversaw the material aspect of day-to-day operations, the more they became invisible (Shana Penn reaches a similar conclusion in the history of Solidarność after the declaration of martial law in Poland in 1980 and further in the 1990s; Penn 2005).

13 The title of the book does not allude to the philosophy of Hélène Cixous, whose text 'The Laugh of the Medusa' (1976 [1975]) was written only two years later.

14 Some of these works include *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále* (*I served the King of England*, Hrabal 2006 [1973]) and *Příliš hlučná samota* (*Too Loud a Solitude*, Hrabal 2008 [1977]).

15 Confer, for instance the opening scene of the short story collection where the male protagonist and narrator uses the first-person perspective to depict the scene, as he is watching at the public swimming pool, encapsulating the traditional gender relation between a male viewer and the sexualized female viewed:

Marie Dreslerová [...] flopped down on her stomach and tried to get a grip on the small crevices between the tiles. Her blue bathing-suit cut into her crotch, showing a border of white skin where her bottom was exposed. She shrieked but Kočandrle, who was holding her by the ankle, wouldn't let go. Slowly he dragged her across the tiles until she fell back into the pool.

(Škvorecký 1982 [1975]: 1–2)

(The published English translation is far less offensive and more gender sensitive in wording than the original Czech; it even omits some sentences.)

16 The paternalistic attitude of the regime to the issues of gender (both in the sense of the state apparatus and ideology as well as expert knowledge) is observed by Hana Havelková (2007). In connection with this issue, Šmausová (2011 [2006]) follows Foucault's line of thought and discusses the pastoral power of the state (the state recruited feminist issues in the interest of its own power, for instance, the issue of regulation of the birth rate and liberal approach to terminations of pregnancy was subject to the actual development of demographic and economic needs). For details on paternalistic elements in the law see Barbara Havelková (in this volume).

17 Symptomatically, Iva Popovičová asks insightfully (with regards to the novel *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*): 'Does not personal memory, which remembers the Czecho/slovak nation but *forgets* women's voices also operate with exclusions, (sexual) oppositions and manipulations?' (Popovičová 1998: 151, original emphasis).

18 The heroine and narrator of the novel drives her bicycle to the brewery to show off her new short haircut – an extravagant fashion choice at the time (particularly in such a small town) – to her husband; after a short pause, when he evaluates the situation, his reaction is as follows:

All of a sudden Francin leapt at me, he bent me over his knee, tucked up my skirt and whipped me over the backside [...] and the cyclists nodded in contentment and the three lady members of the amenity society watched me as if they had ordered this rendering of satisfaction.

(Hrabal 2012: 134)

References

Achino-Loeb, Maria-Luisa (ed.) (2006) *Silence: the currency of power*, New York: Berghahn Books.

Althusser, Louis (1984 [1970]) 'Ideology and ideological state apparatuses', in *Essays on Ideology*, London: Verso. Originally in French 'Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État'.

Ambros, Veronika (2001) 'Czech women writers after 1945', in Celia Hawkesworth (ed.) *History of Central European Women's Writing*, London: Palgrave, pp. 201–19.

Ambros, Veronika (2002) 'Nepostižitelná místa a imaginární čas českých spisovatelek', *Jedním okem/One Eye Open*, special issue: Gender and Historical Memory 2:47–58.

Bečková, Michaela and Helena Kupcová (2007) *Labyrint ženského literárního světa*, Prague: Literární akademie.

Belsey, Catherine (1985) 'Constructing the subject, deconstructing the text', in Judith Lowder Newton and Deborah Silverton Rosenfelt (eds) *Feminist Criticism and Social Change: sex, class, and race in literature and culture*, New York: Methuen.

Bendová, Kamila (2005) 'Ženy v Chartě 77', in Petr Blažek (ed.) *Opozice a odpor proti komunistickému režimu 1968–1989*, Prague: Dokořán.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1993) *The Field of Cultural Production*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Brown, Wendy (1995) *States of Injury: power and freedom in late modernity*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Brown, Wendy (1998) 'Freedom's Silences', in Robert Post (ed.) *Censorship and Silencing: practices of cultural regulation*, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities.

Brownmiller, Susan (1975) *Against Our Will: men, women and rape*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Butler, Judith (1993) *Bodies that Matter: on the discursive limits of 'sex'*, New York: Routledge.

Butler, Judith (1997) *The Psychic Life of Power: theories in subjection*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Butler, Judith (1998) 'Ruled out: the vocabulary of the censor', in Robert Post (ed.) *Censorship and Silencing: practices of cultural regulation*, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities.

Chitnis, Rajendra A. (2005) 'Writing as being: Jiří Kratochvil, Zuzana Brabcová, Daniela Hodrová, Michal Ajvaz, Jáchym Topol', in *Literature in Post-Communist Russia and Eastern Europe: the Russian, Czech and Slovak fiction of the changes, 1988–1998*, London and New York: Routledge.

Cixous, Hélène (1975) 'Le Rire de la Méduse'; trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen (1976) 'The Laugh of the Medusa', *Signs* 1, 4: 875–93.

Clair, Robin Patric (1998) *Organizing Silence: a world of possibilities*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Culler, Jonathan (1991 [1982]) 'Reading as a Woman', in Robyn Warhol and Diane Price Herndl (eds) *An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Einhorn, Barbara (1993) *Cinderella Goes to Market: citizenship, gender and women's movements in East Central Europe*, London: Verso.

Fetterley, Judith (1978) *The Resisting Reader: a feminist approach to American fiction*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.

Filipowicz, Marcin (2007) *Roditelky národů: z problematiky české a slovenské ženské literární tvorby 2. poloviny 19. století*, Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus.

Filipowicz, Marcin, Joanna Królak and Alena Zachová (eds) (2008) *Od patriarchy k tatínkovi: západoslovanské modely otcovství*, Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus.

Foucault, Michel (1975) *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison*; trans. Alan Sheridan (1995) *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison*, New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, Michel (1976) *Histoire de la sexualité. Vol. 1: La volonté de savoir*; trans. Robert Hurley (1998) *History of Sexuality: the will to knowledge*, London: Penguin Books.

Funk, Nanette and Magda Mueller (eds) (1993) *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: reflections from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, New York: Routledge.

Gramsci, Antonio (1971 [1935]) *Selections from The Prison Notebooks*, trans. Q. Hoare and G. Smith, London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Grošpicová, Silvie (1992) 'Anketa', *Iniciály* 2, 25: 14–17.

Havel, Václav (1992 [1985]) 'Anatomy of a Reticence', in *Open Letters: selected writings, 1965–1990*; trans. Erazim Kohák, London: Vintage.

Havelková, Hana (2007) 'Náměty k diskusi o českém genderovém kontextu', in Blanka Knotková-Čapková (ed.) *Ročenka katedry genderových studií FHS UK v Praze 2005–2006*, Prague: Katedra genderových studií FHS UK v Praze.

Heczková, Libuše (2004) 'Mimo svět a několik dalších poznámek', *Slovo a smysl* 1, 1: 268–72.

Heczková, Libuše (2006) 'Cesta světla? Matriarchát Boženy Vikové–Kunětické', in Petra Hanáková, Libuše Heczková and Eva Kalivodová (eds) *V bludném kruhu: Mateřství a vychovatelství jako paradoxy modernity*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Heczková, Libuše (ed.) (2007) *Vztahy, jazyky, těla: texty z 1. konference českých a slovenských feministických studií*, Prague: Ermat and FHS UK.

Heczková, Libuše (2009) *Píšící Minervy: vybrané kapitoly z dějin české literární kritiky*, Prague: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy.

Holá, Petra (2010) 'Měly svou rasu a svůj původ: Lustigovy hrdinky Kateřina Horovitzová a Dita Saxová', in Blanka Knotková-Čapková (ed.) *Tváří v tvář: Gender jako metodologická kategorie literárních analýz*, Prague: FHS UK.

Horáček, Filip (2006) 'Příběh totality očima žen', *A2*, 7.

Hrabal, Bohumil (1965) *Ostře sledované vlaky*; trans. Edith Pargeter (2005) *Closely Observed Trains*, London: Abacus.

Hrabal, Bohumil (1973) *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále*; trans. Paul Wilson (2006) *I Served the King of England*, London: Vintage.

Hrabal, Bohumil (1974) *Postřižiny*; trans. James Naughton (2012) *Cutting It Short*, London: Abacus.

Hrabal, Bohumil (1977) *Příliš hlučná samota*; trans. Michael Henry Heim (2008) *Too Loud a Solitude*, London: Abacus.

Hrabik-Samal, Mary (1996) 'Ženy a neoficiální kultura a literatura v Československu v letech 1969–1989', in Jolana Kusá and Peter Zajac (eds) *Prítomnosť minulosti, minulosť prítomnosti*, Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku.

Hron, Madelaine (2003) 'Word made flesh: Czech women's fiction from communism to post-communism', *Journal of International Women's Studies* 4, 3: 81–98.

Iggersová, Vilma (1996) 'Žena hodná půl věty: Sidonie Nádherná z Borutína', in Dobrava Moldanová (ed.) *Žena – Jazyk – Literatura*, Ústí nad Labem: PF UJEP.

Indruchová, Libora (1996) 'Hrdinka v literární tvorbě současných kanadských spisovatelek', in Dobrava Moldanová (ed.) *Žena – Jazyk – Literatura*, Ústí nad Labem: PF UJEP.

Jansen, Sue Curry (1991) *Censorship: the knot that binds power and knowledge*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Johnson, Barbara (1980) *The Critical Difference: essays in the contemporary rhetoric of reading*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kalivodová, Eva and Blanka Knotková-Čapková (eds) (2003) *Ponořena do Léthé: Sborník věnovaný cyklu přednášek Metafora ženy*, Prague: FF UK.

Kalnická, Zdeňka (2002) *Obrazy vody a ženy: filozoficko-estetické úvahy*, Ostrava: Ostravská univerzita.

Kalnická, Zdeňka (2003) 'Božena Němcová, archetypálně-feministicky', *Česká literatura*, 51, 5: 67–75.

Kirss, Tiina A. (1998) '*Přítelkyně z domu smutku* Evy Kantůrkové: Genderová mapa vězení', *Jedním okem/One Eye Open*, special issue: Gender and Historical Memory 1: 109–21.

Knotková-Čapková, Blanka (ed.) (2010) *Tváří v tvář: Gender jako metodologická kategorie literárních analýz*, Prague: Gender Studies.

Królak, Joanna (2006) 'Žena v české literatuře socialistického realismu', in Jiří K. Nebeský and Libor Pavera (eds) *Žena v české a slovenské literatuře*, Opava: Slezská univerzita.

Kundera, Milan (1967) *Žert*; trans. Michael Henry Heim (1992) *The Joke*, London: Faber and Faber.

Kynčlová, Tereza (2007) 'Analýza genderových vztahů v Erbenově Kytici', in Blanka Knotková-Čapková (ed.) *Ročenka katedry genderových studií FHS UK v Praze*, Prague: Katedra genderových studií FHS UK v Praze.

Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: towards a radical democratic politics*, London: Verso.

Lishaugen, Roar (2003) '"Ta pravá, ta naše literatura": Jiří Karásek ze Lvovic jako zakladatel české homosexuální literatury', *Souvislosti* 14, 4: 56–69.

Lishaugen, Roar (2006) 'Za humny společenské konvence: Dílo Jiřího Karáska ze Lvovic ve světle queer', in Stanislava Fedrová (ed.) *Otázky českého kánonu*, Prague: UČL.

Loukotková, Jarmila (1991 [1973]) *Medúza*, Prague: Československý spisovatel.

Lustig, Arnošt (1964) *Modlitba pro Kateřinu Horowitzovou*; trans. Jeanne W. Němcová (1973) *A Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova*, New York: Harper & Row.

Matonoha, Jan (2007) 'Žena, která "není": Ženské psaní a destabilizace logocentrického diskurzu', in Libuše Heczková (ed.) *Vztahy, jazyky, těla: Texty z 1. konference českých a slovenských feministických studií*, Prague: Ermat and FHS UK.

Matonoha, Jan (2008) '"Ženské psaní" jako inscenace limit textu', *Česká literatura* 56, 2: 201–27.

Matonoha, Jan (2009) *Psaní vně logocentrismu: Diskurz, gender, text*, Prague: Academia.

Matonoha, Jan (ed.) (2010) *Česká literatura v perspektivách genderu*, Prague: Ústav pro českou literaturu AV ČR and Nakladatelství Akropolis.

Moldanová, Dobrava (ed.) (1996) *Žena – Jazyk – Literatura*, Ústí nad Labem: PF UJEP.

Müller, Beate (2004) 'Censorship and cultural regulation: mapping the territory', in Beate Müller (ed.) *Critical Studies, Censorship & Cultural Regulation in the Modern Age*, Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Nebeský, Jiří K. and Libor Pavera (eds) (2006) *Žena v české a slovenské literatuře*, Opava: Slezská univerzita.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2002) *Discourses of Gender in Pre- and Post-1989 Czech Culture*, Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice.

Otčenášek, Jan (1963 [1955]) *Občan Brych*, Prague: Československý spisovatel.

Penn, Shana (2005) *Solidarity's Secret: the women who defeated communism in Poland*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Popovičová, Iva (1998) 'Gender and the Kundera Paradigm: "truth-telling" in *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*', *Jedním okem/One Eye Open*, special issue: Gender and Historical Memory 1: 132–51.

Pynsent, Robert (2001) 'Czech Women Writers, 1890s–1948', in Celia Hawkesworth (ed.) *History of Central European Women's Writing*, London: Palgrave.

Pynsent, Robert (2004) 'Neplodní "Staří mládenci" jako výplod feministické ideologie Boženy Vikové Kunětické', *Slovo a smysl* 1, 1: 66–88.

Pynsent, Robert (2008) *Ďáblové, ženy a národ: Výbor z úvah o české literatuře*; trans. Jan Pospíšil, Prague: Karolinum.

Scott, Joan (1992) 'Experience', in Judith Butler and Joan Scott (eds) *Feminists Theorize the Political*, New York: Routledge.

Sedláčková-Gibbs, Helena (2002) 'Dluhy Olze: Psaní, identita a gender v dopisech Václava Havla z vězení', *Jedním okem/One Eye Open*, 2: 98–108.

Shore, Marci (1998) 'Narrative/Archive/Trace: the trial of Milada Horáková', *Jedním okem/One Eye Open*, special issue: Gender and Historical Memory 1: 27–41.

Šiklová, Jiřina (2000) 'Women and the Charta 77 movement in Czechoslovakia', in Robin L. Teske and Mary Ann Tetrault (eds) *Conscious Acts and the Politics of Social Change: feminist approaches to social movements*, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.

Šiklová, Jiřina (2003) 'O ženách v disentu', in Alena Vodáková and Olga Vodáková (eds) *Rod ženský: Kdo jsme, odkud jsme přišly, kam jdeme?* Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Šiklová, Jiřina (2008) 'Podíl českých žen na samizdatu a opoziční činnosti v Československu období tzv. normalizace v letech 1969 – 1989', *Gender, rovné příležitosti, výzkum*, 9, 2: 39–44.

Škvorecký, Josef (1958) *Zbabělci*; trans. Jeanne W. Němcová (1972) *The Cowards*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Škvorecký, Josef (1975) *Prima sezóna: text o nejdůležitějších věcech života*; trans. Paul Wilson (1982) *The Swell Season: a text on the most important things in life*, Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys.

Škvorecký, Josef (1992a) 'Je možný sex bez znásilnění?', *Respekt*, 32: 10.

Škvorecký, Josef (1992b) 'Je možné mluvit se ženou bez pohlavního obtěžování?', *Respekt*, 39: 13.

Šmausová, Gerlinda (2011 [2006]) 'Emancipace, socialismus a feminismus', in Libora Oates-Indruchová (ed.) *Tvrdošíjnost myšlenky: od feministické kriminologie k teorii genderu*, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Šmejkalová, Jiřina (1991) 'Co je feminismus? Kam s ní/m? Na okraj ženské otázky a současného feminismu', *Tvar*, 2, 37–41: 16.

Šmejkalová, Jiřina (1997) 'Feminismus: Fenomén feminismu ze všech stran', *Labyrint revue*, 1–2: 87–9.

Sokol, Elena (2005) 'Vaculík a Procházková: Czech sexual poetics or polemics?', *Slovo a smysl* 2, 3: 197–210.

Štroblová, Jana (1992) 'Anketa', *Iniciály* 2, 25: 14–17.

Thiesmeyer, Lynn (ed.) (2003) *Discourse and Silencing: representation and the language of displacement*, Amsterdam: J. Benjamins.

Thomas, Alfred (2005) *Čechy královny Anny: česká literatura a společnost v letech 1310–1420*, Brno: Host.

Thomas, Alfred (2007) *The Bohemian Body: gender and sexuality in modern Czech culture*, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Topor, Michal (2005) 'Cestou Luisy Zikové', *Slovo a smysl* 2, 3: 177–96.

Torfing, Jakob (1999) *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe, and Žižek*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Věšínová, Eva (1992) 'Feminismus ... ano?', *Iniciály* 2: 25: 1–6.

Věšínová, Eva (1995) 'Backlash a osudy feminismu', interview conducted by Naďa Macurová, *Tvar* 6, 1: 12.

Věšínová, Eva (1996) 'Ženy v literatuře: Komparativní téma', in Dobrava Moldanová (ed.) *Žena – Jazyk – Literatura*, Ústí nad Labem: PF UJEP.

Věšínová-Kalivodová, Eva (2005) 'Czech Society in-between the Waves', *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 12, 4: 421–35.

Věšínová-Kalivodová, Eva (2010) *Browningová nebo Klášterský? Krásnohorská nebo Byron? O rodu v životě literatury*, Prague: Karolinum.

Vodrážka, Mirek (1993) 'Před velkým exodem: Kořen českého antifeminismu', *Tvar*, 49–50.

Vodrážka, Mirek (1998) 'Ženy, feminismus a gender v české společnosti v období 1989–1997: Neortodoxní historická reflexe', *Tvar* 1, 9: 11–13.

Volková, Bronislava (1997) 'Images of women in contemporary Czech prose', in *A Feminist's Semiotic Odyssey Through Czech Literature*, New York: Edwin Mellen.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1992) 'Women's issues in Czechoslovakia in the communist and post-communist periods', in Barbara Nelson and Najma Chowdhury (eds) *Women and Politics Worldwide*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wolchik, Sharon L. (1994) 'Women and the politics of transition in the Czech and Slovak Republics', in Marilyn Rueschemeyer (ed.) *Women in the Politics of Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharp.

Zachová, Alena (2008) 'Paradoxy normalizačního paternalismu', in Marcin Filipowicz, Joanna Królak and Alena Zachová (eds) *Od patriarchy k tatínkovi: Západoslovanské modely otcovství*, Hradec Králové: Gaudeamus.

8   The Beauty and the Loser

Cultural representations of gender in late state socialism[1]

Libora Oates-Indruchová

If the image of the woman tractor driver, so often featured in both popular and scholarly discourse on gender in state socialism, contained a revolutionary potential for representational emancipation at the intersection of gender and class, this potential all but expired as state socialism was drawing its last breaths. Instead, traditional images of women and womanhood (and of men and manhood) dominated cultural representations of gender in late state socialism. Nevertheless, it would be simplistic to presume that the practice and dominant ideology of state socialism, which emphasized the emancipation of women in its official rhetoric from the early years of the regime, did not affect the range of positions available in discourse on gender during its late period. In this chapter I will use a textual sample from the *perestroika* years (i.e. years of significant discursive tension) to argue for the existence of diverse discourses of gender in late state socialism, from an unchallenged and unremarked residual patriarchal discourse to proto-feminist elements and even hesitant attempts at alternatives to both.

Research on gender under state socialism and its legacies has been predominantly concerned with women in the labour force, including the issue of the double burden, gender roles and state and private patriarchy, and reproduction and welfare.[2] This range of topics quite understandably conforms to the key foci and categories addressed by the Western women's movement prior to the fall of state socialism in 1989, and after that to the democratization processes in the former Eastern Bloc and to the European Union accession process in Central and Eastern Europe. However, discursive aspects of the state-socialist gender environment (discursive negotiations, repositionings and the creation of new meanings, for example) have received far less research attention.

In recent years, several pioneering works have appeared that move away from the entrenched East–West or Cold War discursive dichotomies and toward a more nuanced understanding of social practice and discursive meanings, including those of gender. The importance of this research perspective is twofold: on the one hand, it helps explain the regress into conservative, pre-state-socialist discourses after the demise of state socialism. Shana Penn's (2005) study, for example, shows how the invisibility of women's participation in maintaining the existence of Solidarność (Solidarity) in Poland contributed to the re-establishment of anti-emancipatory policies in Poland in the 1990s. On the other hand, such work enables a dynamic construction of subjectivities, creativity and the potential for change. Alexei Yurchak's (2006) seminal work on the last Soviet generation, for example, studies everyday state-socialist practice within its own logic and context, and with regard to gender, this scholarship foregrounds agency vis-à-vis state-socialist policies and material realities (see Harsch 2007; Penn and Massino 2009).

In this chapter I seek to contribute to this inquiry and investigate the effects of the state-socialist authoritative ideological discourse on the formation of gender discourses in late state socialism using the example of the Czech cultural environment. The first part of the chapter outlines the key theoretical concepts; the next two sections present an analysis of a textual sample consisting of journalism and novels produced during the *perestroika* years. The analysis will be concerned, first, with the dominant gender discourse produced by the authoritative ideological state-socialist discourse and the coexisting residual patriarchal discourse; toward this end, I analyse the content of two newspapers, *Rudé právo*, the newspaper of the Communist Party, and *Mladá fronta*, the newspaper of the Union of Socialist Youth. I then consider the effects of the authoritative and residual discourses on the formation of resistant, emergent and alternative discourses through my analysis of two popular novels, *Z neznámých důvodů* (*For Reasons Unknown*; Frýbová 1993 [1988]) and *Memento* (John 1989 [1986]). I will conclude by drawing out the implications of these discursive repositionings for the formation of post-state-socialist gender discourses.

Authoritative ideological discourse and gender: negotiating with the residual; producing the resistant, the emergent and the alternative

Discourses consist of 'groupings of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by that social context, and which contribute to the way that social context continues its existence' (Mills 1997: 11). In the state-socialist context, the group of statements framing all the other groups of statements is, as Yurchak (2006) has postulated, the authoritative discourse circulated by and through state-socialist institutions and their media venues. Yurchak takes the concept of authoritative discourse from Mikhail Bakhtin, for whom it 'coheres around a strict external idea or dogma' (Yurchak 2006: 14). Authoritative discourse is

> sharply demarcated from all other types of discourse that coexist with it, which means that it does not depend on them, it *precedes* them, and it cannot be changed by them. [...] All these other types of discourse are organized around it. Their existence depends on being positioned in relation to it, having to refer to it.

(Ibid.: 14–15; emphasis added)

Because the authoritative discourse of state socialism was closely tied to the institutions of the state (i.e. what Louis Althusser (1984) calls ideological state apparatuses) and the ruling Communist Party, it is more precise to call it authoritative ideological discourse.

The 'precedes' in the quotation above implies a discursive playing field free from any prior ideology, including discourses pertaining to gender. That presents a challenge both for feminist theory and for studies of gender relations under state socialism: the former identifies patriarchy as an ideology, and the latter has documented lasting patriarchal conceptualizations and practices in state-socialist societies, despite official claims of their eradication. Patriarchal ideological discourse can therefore be understood as another authoritative discourse preceding the state-socialist one, coexisting and interacting with it. It bears the characteristics of Raymond Williams's (1977) concept of the 'residual' that is always present alongside the 'dominant': the residual 'has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process [...] as an effective element of the present' (122).

Since discourses and the relationships between them are structured by power, and since power relations 'have a directly productive role, whenever they come into play' (Foucault 1990: 94), the interplay of these two discourses by definition creates a space for discursive negotiation and destabilization of power. Sara Mills has emphasized that discourse theory is useful for feminist analysis precisely because it enables the identification of a plurality of often conflicting discourses within one text. Mills (1997) demonstrates that 'texts [...] are far from cohesive and [...] are fractured by [...] disjunctions' (100). Patriarchal discourse was residual, but in relation to the emancipatory rhetoric of state socialism it was also oppositional or resistant, producing fractures and inconsistencies, with both empowering and disempowering effects in terms of representations of gender.

Further textual effects were produced by the authoritative ideological discourse, which, by 'a combined force of institutional and cultural pressure', perhaps 'exceede[d] the plans and desires [...] of those in power' (Mills 1997: 54). The two principal effects are emergent and alternative discourses of gender. Williams (1977) defines the emergent as 'new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships [that] are continually being created' (123). The alternative produced in my sample, unlike the residual or the emergent, does not claim continuity; it does not point to the past, but neither does it imply discursive ambitions for the future. It relates to the authoritative ideological discourse, but not through opposition, resistance or outspoken compliance. Yet it is formulated within the ideological limits drawn by the authoritative discourse.

In the second and third parts of this chapter, I will read a sample of texts from the *perestroika* period against the main discourses of femininity and masculinity circulating in Western scholarly literature at the time. The second section looks at the production of the dominant gender discourse in official political rhetoric and journalism; the third at the formation of resistant, emergent and alternative discourses in official literature, that is, in texts published by state publishing houses.[3]

In this chapter official rhetoric and journalism represent examples of authoritative ideological discourse. The texts I analyse come from two main Czech dailies: *Rudé právo*, the Communist Party's newspaper, and *Mladá fronta*, the newspaper of the Union of Socialist Youth. I examine articles published between 1987 and 1989, the key *perestroika* years (1987 was the year of Mikhail Gorbachev's first state visit to Czechoslovakia). They pertain to regular events that either should or should not have an explicit gender focus: New Year's presidential addresses and press coverage of May Day and International Women's Day including speeches delivered by politicians on both occasions.[4]

This bureaucratic discourse is juxtaposed with texts representing the popular narrative fiction published by state publishing houses. Aleš Haman's (1991) large-scale research on reading and readership conducted in 20 Czech public libraries between 1986 and 1988 has guided my selection of the specific texts. From among the so-called best-readers (the most frequently borrowed books over the period of research), I selected Czech novels published during the *perestroika* years and set in present-day Czech society: Zdena Frýbová's (1993) *For Reasons Unknown*, first published in 1988, and Radek John's (1989) *Memento* first published in 1986.[5]

The dominant and the residual: emancipation and its discontents

Among the groups of statements that together form the authoritative ideological discourse of state socialism, those pertaining to the leading role of the Communist Party and to the revolutionary role of the working classes are foremost. For a gender analysis, the groups of statements concerning women's emancipation and the equality of men and women are also paramount. Therefore, in investigating the effects that the authoritative ideological discourse had on the formation of gender discourses, the starting point is texts that purposefully reiterate that discourse. Political speeches and the journalism of the party dailies represent this kind of text. They were intended for general public consumption, and they presented a 'public transcript' (J. C. Scott 1990: 2). One would expect them to contain the emancipatory rhetoric-driven dominant gender discourse in its purest form. However, this did not turn out to be the case for the texts in my sample: what I term the 'residual patriarchal discourse' intervened in the dominant discourse, with fairly conservative feminine and masculine connotations occurring in all the texts, thus producing discursive tensions.[6]

Interventions of the residual patriarchal discourse and the female Other: helpmates and superwomen

The tension between dominant and residual discourses is exemplified in the following quotation from an interview with one of the women invited to Prague Castle to attend the official celebrations of International Women's Day:

I am beginning to realize that it's high time to decide: whether I should choose public life, or what I should call all the going to meetings and organizing of various events, or the role of a mother with everything that comes with it. I feel that both can't be properly combined. And if so, then it is possible only if you have great support behind you, but nobody will guarantee you that in advance.

(Kasalová 1989: 1)

The speaker, a 23-year-old youth-organization functionary, had just received official state recognition for her activities in the public sphere, yet even in 1989 she still perceives the traditional divide implied by the change of family status: come marriage or motherhood, a retreat from public life ensues. True, there is a change compared with the pre-women's movement female trajectory: she is not questioning her right to paid employment when she speaks about the need to make a choice; rather, she is referring to the voluntary public activity she now does in addition to her full-time job. Nevertheless, she recognizes and accepts that there are limits to the involvement of women in the public sphere in a state-socialist society. On the one hand, the dominant emancipatory discourse has been reasserted in the sense that the utilitarian value of women – their ability to contribute to the workforce or to generate family income – is no longer the issue. On the other hand, however, this dominant discourse is curbed by the patriarchal discourse, which does not permit a full association of women with the public sphere, that is, with professional commitment, political activity, and, by extension, the realization of their full human potential. In Marxian terms, women cannot escape their association with simple reproduction because women's paid work is conceived solely in terms of their function in the private sphere, which is derived from their reproductive role.

The politicians' International Women's Day speeches only confirm the young woman's dilemma. They emphasize the efforts that the socialist state has made toward ensuring women's participation in the workforce, but strictly in relation to their traditional family role. The politicians imply that any problems that hinder women in the 'fulfilment of their duties in the family' (Adamec 1989b: 2) could be resolved by material solutions: better-supplied shops, better services, 'extension of maternity leave, higher maternity benefits and prolonging the legal entitlement to leave to care for a sick child' (Husák 1988b: 2). The underlying assumption here is that serving and caring for family members is unequivocally women's responsibility.

The interventions of the residual patriarchal discourse in the politicians' speeches, those texts that reiterate statements on emancipation, continue beyond the conflation of women with the private sphere and extend to the definition of women as the Other: they usually appear as helpmates but often also in the guise of superwomen. Thus President Gustáv Husák spoke to the women's delegation at Prague Castle on International Women's Day about how 'the experience of the last forty years has shown that only the removal of capitalist exploitation and the victory of socialism can create realistic conditions for a

radically new position of women in society, for their real equality' (Husák 1988b: 1). However, a closer examination of Husák's speech reveals that although the topic is social and economic processes, women are not constructed as initiators of these processes but as having the traditional role of helpmates: 'In the fifties, they selflessly went to work everywhere *society needed them*. [...] Their *help* in executing [...] revolutionary tasks has been priceless' (Husák 1988b, 1; emphasis added). The following year, Czechoslovakia's prime minister, Ladislav Adamec, continued in the same vein: 'nothing can move ahead or be substantially changed in our lives without the *trust* and *support* of [women]' (Adamec 1989b: 2; emphasis added). In other words, the politicians draw on the repository of the residual patriarchal discourse: women are not agenda-setting participants in building socialism, they are the auxiliary Other of 'society', helping to implement an agenda they did not set.

Similarly, the socialist job-and-family juggling artist, the 'superwoman', as Chris Corrin (1992) has dubbed her, is placed within the traditional patriarchal rhetoric and activities of the Other: woman as a helpmate or as a mother. In 1989, the annual delegation of 'women working in industry, agriculture, education, representatives of the cultural front, deputies, members of the People's Militia' to Prague Castle on the occasion of International Women's Day was supplemented by a delegation of 'twenty-five women-mothers who raised in an exemplary fashion a large number of children' (*Rudé právo* 1989: 2). *Rudé právo* printed interviews with four of the mothers, who are presented via superwoman rhetoric: 'They carried more than just the care of the family on their shoulders, but also employment and often public functions. Those of them not yet in deserved retirement are still exemplary workers' (Dragounová *et al.* 1989: 3). The four women were either party members or highly politically conscious; two had raised nine children, one had raised four, and the fourth had raised eleven. Both the politicization and quantification of motherhood are telling characteristics of the imagery of an ideal state-socialist (super)woman. The interviewers foreground the women's self-effacement and sacrifice: 'She stretches days into nights. There has to be time left for a children's bedtime story, for knitting and sewing whatever is needed for the children' (Dragounová *et al.* 1989: 3). However, the women themselves decline the praise by responding that they have lived 'not an exceptional, just an ordinary life', and they insist that they only did what was needed – they 'helped' (ibid.: 3).

If the young female functionary from the beginning of this section voiced a discursive tension, the rhetoric of supermotherhood produces a seamless conjunction between the residual patriarchal and dominant emancipatory discourses.[7] The resulting imagery is far removed from the attempts at an aggressive deconstruction of the traditional gender order that are bound with the early stages of the proletarian revolutions. The woman tractor driver, so often seen as an icon of this early period, had, for better or for worse, receded to the realm of legend in the last stages of state socialism. At least she left no trace in my sample of the dominant state-socialist discourse at the dawn of regime change, a time teeming with fairly traditional images of women.[8]

The palimpsest of middle-class masculinity

Jeff Hearn (1996) has observed that in contemporary research 'masculinity effectively acts as a normative and indeed culturally specific standard' (203). Literature on masculinity current in the West during the *perestroika* period identifies three main standards or models of heterosexual masculinity: middle-class masculinity, defined by 'competitiveness, personal ambition, social responsibility, and emotional restraint' (Tolson 1987: 39) and related to work, achievement and promotion, and moral integrity; working-class masculinity, 'characterized by an immediate, aggressive style of behaviour [rather] than a vision of personal achievement' (ibid.: 28); and the 'new man', 'a softer, more emotional, self-conscious sex object' (Segal 1990: 291) that challenges the macho image.[9] Below, I consider the position of the authoritative ideological discourse as represented by the New Year's presidential addresses and the May Day news coverage in *Rudé právo* and *Mladá fronta* in relation to these three models, even though men were not defined as a corporate group (see note 3). Still, 'socialism and state became unofficially so obviously identified with men that their autonomous role required no emphasis' (Brandes 2007: 190). With regard to the historical moment of *perestroika*, I also look at the coverage of Gorbachev's first visit to Czechoslovakia in April 1987 in the two newspapers.

If the new man entered Western discourse during the 1980s, as Lynne Segal (1990) argues, it is not surprising that this type of masculinity is absent from state-socialist discourses. I have illustrated elsewhere that such images of masculinity did not appear in the Czech context until the 1990s (Oates-Indruchová 2000). The working-class model does not make an appearance in this sample either, although it will appear in my discussion of popular culture in the third section. The middle-class model, however, is prominent, even hegemonic, in the authoritative ideological discourse, but with a shift in terms of the class connotations: it is attached to the working class. A simple transfer of the concept of class to the state-socialist authoritative ideological discourse, which, of course, professed a classless society, is problematic. Still, the examples in the following paragraphs show that the attributes associated with the middle class in Western discourse are reinscribed onto holders of blue-collar jobs, or at least those in professions outside the intelligentsia, in the state-socialist discourse.[10] It is these men who are endowed with the attributes of social responsibility and achievement in the world of work – and with the good old hallmark of the Western middle-class man, emotional reticence.

May Day coverage and the New Year's presidential addresses are texts that, thematically, were addressed to all citizens regardless of gender. Yet even the choice of settings in the May Day coverage is lopsided in terms of gender, favouring heavy industry and work environments with a predominance of blue-collar men. The May Day ritual included the decoration of 'Heroes of Socialist Work', whose names and biographies were published in the papers. The majority of them were men, but they were not necessarily in working-class professions, despite what the press celebration of working-class heroes would suggest.

In 1987, for example, *Mladá fronta* printed interviews with three of the newly decorated heroes: a miner (Andrle 1987), a bricklayer foreman (Šabata 1987) and a female cattle attendant (Štěpánek 1987). In 1988, the paper featured a miner (Šabata 1988), a cooperative farm chairman (Štěpánek 1988) and a female textile worker (Procházková 1988). *Mladá fronta* foregrounded heavy industry and leadership for the men (complemented by rank-and-file helpers' jobs for the women), while white-collar or intelligentsia 'heroes' were not deemed worthy of a special mention, although there were several decorations among these groups each year.[11]

The highlighting of the working class and of heavy industry is not entirely surprising in the context of the Communist Party's traditional ideological emphasis on the revolutionary role of the former and its political prioritization of the latter. Nevertheless, it is somewhat surprising that such associations were still current during *perestroika*, the time of economic decline, whose defining characteristics were over-reliance on heavy industry and a lack of scientific capital. In this context the prominence *Rudé právo* gave Gorbachev's visit to a heavy-machinery plant in Prague (a front-page headline and a story on the second page) has a tragicomic flavour intensified by the desperately loyal language of the article. The atmosphere created by the (male) workers is rendered thus: 'one can feel that they are proud of their plant, of revolutionary workers' traditions, of the experience and results of [...] several generations, even if they don't speak about it' (Houfová and Stano 1987: 2). Several attributes of the Western model of middle-class masculinity echo in this description of working-class men: emphasis on achievement and promotion, moral integrity (implied by the pride in traditions) and even emotional restraint (they don't speak about their feelings).

The authoritative ideological discourse that otherwise rejected everything bourgeois in this case embraces a bourgeois or middle-class model. Nevertheless, the values and attributes contained within this model are not necessarily alien elements fitted onto a state-socialist discourse of masculinity for lack of better-fitting home-grown concepts. Rather, as with the discourse of femininity, these values belong to a residual discourse that predated state socialism and was appropriated by the authoritative ideological discourse, which used them as a palimpsest, writing over the middle-class base with a working-class script. The quotation above also makes the process of appropriation explicit: the ideologically conscious journalists, who know what the ideal (male) worker feels, take up the active pen and verbalize the proper values for the silent, passive workers. The authoritative ideological discourse takes the citizens' voices away and paternalistically moulds, speaks for, and represents them.

The resistant, the emergent and the alternative: effects of state-socialist ideological practice

Now that we have seen a sample of texts that should have been reiterating the authoritative ideological discourse but that in fact demonstrate how a residual (patriarchal) discourse intervenes into the dominant (emancipatory) discourse,

we can contrast these bureaucratic texts with imaginative texts in order to inquire into their treatment of masculinity and femininity and especially to look for possible emergent and alternative discourses. The sample in this section will consist of two 'best-reader' novels published in the same period as the texts discussed above: perestroika. Both novels, For Reasons Unknown (Frýbová 1993, first published in 1988) and Memento (John 1989, first published in 1986), are typical perestroika novels in that they are critical of some phenomena existing in state-socialist society – sloppy work ethics and drug abuse, respectively – and this critical edge (read: critical of the malfunctioning of the system) was probably the chief cause of their popularity, since their literary merits are few.

For Reasons Unknown is a quasi-epic romance narrative influenced by novels set in professional environments by the British-Canadian author Arthur Hailey, then popular in Czechoslovakia. For Reasons Unknown's setting, a scientific research institute, provides an exotic yet recognizably Czech backdrop for a heterosexual romance. The orphaned heroine, Anka, meets a significantly older, sensitive man of respectable social status (a highly ethical and accomplished doctor), Marek, with whom she briefly enjoys creating the home and hearth that she never had with her parents. Because of a misunderstanding – she suspects him of a serious breach of professional ethics – she leaves Marek and agrees to a marriage of convenience with Miloš, the handsome and popular director of her institute, who is the novel's villain. It is only in the closing pages of the novel (after 12 years have elapsed, filled with a harmonious marriage and a happy life in the family-like community of the research institute) that the reader learns about the subject of the misunderstanding between Marek and Anka. After Anka experiences this revelation, she leaves Miloš (who reveals his true colours to Anka but subsequently dies of a heart attack) and returns to Marek.

If For Reasons Unknown rated as one of the most widely read books in the 1980s, Memento achieved the status of a cult classic in the perestroika years. It owed its popularity to its unflinching exposure of the world of drug dealing and addiction burgeoning in the midst of a state-socialist society, topics that until then had been taboo in the authoritative ideological discourse. John used actual police and medical reports on drug-related cases as material for the story of Michal, a gifted high-school student from a good family (today we would say middle class; his father is a former jet pilot, his mother a middle manager). Michal first encounters drugs socially as a teenager and gradually falls deeper and deeper under their influence. He does several stints in detox centres and in prison, until he ends up in a vegetative state in hospital. Parallel to the central theme of the causal relationship between drug addiction and self-destruction runs Michal's internal monologue, recording his efforts to reverse the trajectory of addiction and to negotiate a lifestyle that would balance a controlled drug intake, a steady income, modest but independent living conditions, and emotional fulfilment through a heterosexual relationship.

Their literary qualities aside, both texts are important as examples of alternative and resistant-cum-emergent discourses. I will read Memento as a search for an alternative model of masculinity. That model is constructed progressively through a fast-paced, chronologically organized narrative with only one storyline and no sidetracking. For Reasons Unknown, a text that contains elements of resistant and emergent discourses in relation to femininity, could not be more different in terms of narrative structure: the main storyline is accompanied by several subsidiary storylines, and there is plenty of foreshadowing, as well as many flashbacks. The heroine's femininity is not constructed by the text in a linear, cumulative way, as masculinity in Memento is, but in a fragmentary fashion, where narrative sequences are repeatedly played against each other in a cycle of subversion and reassertion.[12]

Femininity as resistance and emergent proto-feminism: bourgeois gentility meets the superwoman

Feminist scholars have repeatedly pointed out 'the institutionalized continuities of past and present – of women's central engagement with child-rearing and personal life, men's with economic and social power' (Segal 1990: 295) in imagery and social discourse. They have also variously characterized femininity in terms of attributes associated with external appearance (McRobbie 1991), the body (Smith 1988), or a certain 'style of the flesh' (Bartky 1988: 79) as well as with issues of morality, personal values or psychology (Ferguson 1983). Scholars have also contrasted femininity with corresponding attributes of masculinity (postulated early on by Kate Millett (1970) and later by R. W. Connell (1995: 68), for example). Dorothy Smith (1988) argues that femininity is a 'textually mediated discourse', 'a social organization of relations among women and between women and men which is mediated by texts, that is, by the materially fixed forms of printed writing and images' (39). According to her, images of femininity enter into social consciousness through texts, while texts also confirm and thus perpetuate the image of femininity already existing in social consciousness. Her proposition will be important for the argument below, in which I will use For Reasons Unknown to illustrate how textually mediated femininity linked to the bourgeoisie or middle class may take on a subversive role with respect to the state-socialist ideology of classlessness. I will further argue that this femininity at the same time subverts the image of the state-socialist superwoman (that self-effacing helpmate of the public sphere and angel of the private sphere) but also endows that superwoman with an empowering corona of individuality and achievement in the world of men precisely by drawing on the residual patriarchal discourse's repository of images.[13]

This imagery is delivered through the female protagonist, Anka. She is described as a woman of unusual beauty, an accomplished homemaker and a gourmet cook: 'She could not stand a man in the kitchen or cleaning the house. [...] She liked to cook [...] cooked every day, cooked wonderfully' (Frýbová 1993: 338). She is also a scientist wholly dedicated to her work. The descriptions of her tastes and environment connote subtly middle-class or bourgeois standards, a politically incorrect preference. Her culinary creativity is not affected by limited consumer choices. She does not live in the typical late-state-socialist

prefab block of flats but in an old (pre-state-socialist) villa with a garden, and 'she did not regret the money spent on domestic help' (ibid.: 338). The latter could imply that she pays for a state housecleaning service, but hints in the novel suggest otherwise. In other words, Anka purchases the labour of another – she perpetrates 'capitalist exploitation' in the ideological jargon of the time.

Contrary to the traditional perception of femininity that defines 'interest in appearance [...] as a specifically feminine one' (Marshment 1993: 143), Anka is rarely associated with an interest in clothing or other beautifying appurtenances of the feminine exterior, but this does not diminish her physical attractiveness to men. When her clothes are described, however, her taste places her in the bourgeois milieu, such as in the following quotation describing Anka at her husband's funeral, her first appearance in the novel:

> The rigid faces of the men [...] became slightly more animated when RNDr. Anna Berková-Zouharová, CSc. entered. [...] She walked on the arms of Professor Prokop, her immediate superior, and his wife.[14] Even at this moment, the men appreciated her perfect figure clad in a simple black suit. Those who knew Anna knew also that her veil covered an engaging face denying the recently passed thirty years of age.[15]
>
> (Frýbová 1993: 17)

The significant detail in this image is the veil. The scene takes place in 1985, when this accessory was hardly fashionable. Rather, it belongs to the stock imagery of pre-Second World War bourgeois women's fashion, the time of the First Czechoslovak Republic, a historical period carrying nostalgic connotations in popular culture to this day.[16] Introducing the connection between femininity and the middle class into the state-socialist environment creates a small gesture of resistance because it allows characters – and, by extension, readers – to 'assert their independence of the institutional powers' (Smith 1988: 51). Similarly, Anka's hyperbolic sartorial, culinary and domestic femininity sets her apart from state-socialist uniformity and drabness and becomes a locus for subverting the state-socialist authoritative discourse.

It is further significant that Anka's introduction to the reader includes the list of her academic titles: the CSc. places her among the intellectual elite, while her youth underlines her exceptional achievement. These qualities, in addition to the perfection of her physical appearance and her domestic skills, offer the reader much more than the state-socialist superwoman of the authoritative ideological discourse. The latter was selfless, self-effacing and the pillar of the public sphere's backstage, but she was also worn down by the combined pressure of her responsibilities and the shortcomings of the state-socialist economy – a creature stirring up sympathy and possibly self-identification in women readers, but hardly a desirable role model.

Anka, however, is a superwoman with a vengeance. The care of the private sphere and of her external beauty occur without exertion, characterizations that could be seen as falling into the familiar pitfall of presenting women's work and

the work of femininity as natural traits or pastimes. Nevertheless, compliance with these feminine stereotypes enables the character to expand woman-centred space beyond the traditional discursive limits of femininity. Anka's central concern is the pursuit of scientific knowledge, to which everything else is secondary, as the internal monologue of a male character at the close of the novel illustrates: 'She would not be overwrought if I told her that I didn't want her any more. She would happily continue to live in her lab. I have always known that a man can only come second in her life' (Frýbová 1993: 546).

This assessment of Anka's priorities appears in the text after several hundred pages emphasizing her professional efforts, so it is now clear that she is no helpmate in the world of work but an ambitious individualist. These attributes are doubly subversive: ambition and individualism in a female character subvert the patriarchal discourse of femininity ('ideology claims that women cannot be powerful and independent'; Marshment 1988: 31), while individualistic ambition subverts the authoritative ideological discourse's imperative of collectivism in state socialism.

The most vocal instance of the character's attractive individualism concerns her participation in a major congress held in Perth, Australia, beyond the Iron Curtain, to which her team leader, Prokop, was invited by the organizers. The male colleagues receive the information passively, but the only woman in the team is determined to go. The men respond with mockery:

> Everybody laughed and Prokop said: 'Wonderful. Everybody will be envious of me, because they'll think I've brought my young mistress along.'
> [...]
> 'What dress are you going to take to Perth, Anka?' inquired Zámiš.
>
> (Frýbová 1993: 395)

Anka's male colleagues deflect the professional focus of her announcement by making slighting references to her youth and femininity, perhaps because 'a beautiful or sexy body gains a woman attention and some admiration but little real respect and rarely any social power' (Bartky 1988: 73) or because 'women's presence in the workforce has always been a threat to men's sense of their "masculinity"' (Segal 1990: 297). Her subsequent announcement that she is all set to go suggests the latter reason. She has exposed the men's discursive emasculation:

> 'And who, if we may be so bold, is going to give you the few thousand dollars?' asked Zámiš sweetly, while Prokop indicated that the idle talk bored him. [...]
> [Anka responded,] 'If you followed professional literature like I do, you'd know in what journals the International Union for Bio-chemical Pharmacology advertises its scholarship offers.' [...]
> 'My child,' said Zámiš, 'forget it. Such organizations receive hundreds of times more applications like yours than they can accommodate.' [...]

[Anka's description of her successful application procedure follows.]

The men gaped in amazement. Finally, Miloš said: 'We are all, of course, happy that you were so successful, but you should have consulted us, before–' [...]

'It's true that Anka breached a dozen regulations,' continued Miloš. 'Don't you know that you can apply for a foreign scholarship only with the approval of your supervisor and the head of the institute?'

(Frýbová 1993: 397–8)

The men in this exchange are passive spectators to Anka's active disregard for the restrictiveness of state-socialist science policies and for the hard currency disadvantages of the Eastern Bloc. It is now obvious that their earlier disparaging comments about Anka's ambition were a collectively produced smokescreen hiding their own unquestioning and impotent submission to the discursive prohibitions on even considering the possibility of professional travel to a non-state-socialist country. Almost any successful resistance against institutional restrictions would have been attractive to state-socialist readers at the time, but here a complication arises, not because the doer is female per se but because she triumphs in front of (and over?) the male characters by means of unfeminine properties: rationality, ambition, worldliness and professional determination, all of which the men possess in smaller measures. This might earn her the reader's disapproval were it not for her flawless performance of 'doctrinal allegiance' (Foucault 1981: 63) to the discourse of feminine gesture and appearance.[17]

Textually, herein lies the crux of the apparent discursive incongruity: Anka's femininity is appropriately passive – it is relegated to descriptions of her appearance and to skills acquired without any visible effort. The character's behaviour in the text, her actions and direct statements that move the story forward, however, are matters of doing and achieving; the character is textually masculine because she is active. Without the careful textual performance of femininity, the statements Anka delivers through her actions, which point to ambition, individuality and self-assertion in the men's world of public achievement, would be unassimilable within the traditional discourse of femininity. No matter how attractive the character's subversion of state-socialist ideological discourse, she can only be acceptable to a reader positioned within patriarchal discourse provided that she is fashioned with a perfect feminine facade.

As I argue above, the character's bourgeois femininity is resistant to the authoritative state-socialist discourse in itself. This resistance is enhanced by her subversion of institutional structures and procedures. She thus satisfies both the reader's policing of the passive display of femininity and the reader's vicarious pleasure in resistance to the oppressive ideological environment. By means of this construction, statements that would otherwise be unassimilable and subversive of the dominant patriarchal discourse are smuggled in. This resulting superwoman could not be more different from the one presented in the International Women's Day coverage: she takes her life in her own hands instead of obligingly filling in where 'society needed her' (Husák 1988b: 1); she does not juggle

her job and family because it is her societal duty, she does it for her individualistic pleasure and ambition, as well as for the pursuit of scientific knowledge.

Feminist theorists, such as Smith (1988) and Mills (1991), have long argued for an understanding of femininity that emphasizes women's active negotiation, and appropriation, of discourses of femininity for their own empowerment. Still, it is highly problematic to claim Anka's version of the superwoman for feminism: any negotiation is not conducted by the character herself but by her presentation in the text. In order to be allowed traditionally masculine characteristics, her performance of femininity for the consuming male and policing female gazes must be delivered without a stumble. Her contribution, nevertheless, is that she broadens the discursive field of positions available for negotiation, and that contains a mild emergent proto-feminist element.[18]

An alternative in a void: corporeal masculinity

I argued in the first section that of the three principal models of masculinity circulating in Western literature in the 1980s, the middle-class type was co-opted by the authoritative ideological discourse to form the characteristics of its working-class hero and that this model constituted hegemonic masculinity. Further, the working-class macho type did not feature in my sample of the authoritative ideological discourse, and the so-called new man had yet to arrive in the Czech cultural environment. I will now explore if and how the first two models, or any alternatives to them, appear in *Memento*.[19]

In this account of a young Czech drug addict during the *perestroika* years, the protagonist's negotiation of his own lifestyle is presented against various other masculinities. The middle-class masculinity that his father represents is rejected as inadequate for Michal and his generation. Although he hardly speaks at all, the father is ever present in Michal's reflections, such as in the following example:

No pot belly or slacking shoulders. Always strict, undefeated, head up. – We survived concentration camps! And twenty-five years in the cockpit! What have you achieved that you look at me with that all-knowing look of yours and make judgments?

(John 1989: 31)

The father, as a principled citizen who contributes to society, stands for the values condoned by society. At the same time, however, he lacks an understanding of his son and is a punishing figure: '[Michal] remembered when father punished him by shaving his hair off after a teacher complained that Michal Otava and Olina Machová walked arm in arm during recess' (ibid.: 40). This fosters in Michal a longing for escape and a quest for empathy. Although the narrator does not make an explicit accusation, a causal relationship between the father's attitude toward Michal and Michal's susceptibility to destructive influences is implied and forms one of the reasons Michal falls under the influence of a drug-taking group of 'young

people of the kind [he] hadn't met before: magnanimous, aloof, above problems; and yet, friendly' (ibid.: 35–6). Michal believes he has finally found friends who, in contrast to his father, are not judgmental and with whom he can be himself.

Gradually, an implicit association is built between the values represented by Michal's father and an anonymous 'they', which can only mean 'society' and therefore the state-socialist regime, who are responsible for keeping the drug problem invisible and thus victimizing Michal and his generation: 'Did we know, then, at the beginning, where this was going to go? Did anybody try to tell us?' (John 1989: 116). Since the values espoused by the father and society correspond to the values of middle-class masculinity reinscribed onto the socialist (male) citizen, the regime itself becomes implicated in Michal's downfall. By rejecting these values, he rejects both this type of masculinity and the state-socialist regime, although this could never be explicitly stated in a text published by a state publishing house. Identifying with middle-class masculinity would thus have meant identifying with the regime. If we assume that this identification were transferred to the reader, it would have constituted a reading position hardly appealing to a young person in the perestroika period.

Even though the text marks middle-class masculinity as an inadequate model since it serves as an accessory to the hypocrisy concerning the drug problem, it is also obliged to pronounce a warning (memento) against unacceptable models of masculinity. The first of these models is working-class macho masculinity, marked by verbal and physical violence, which is attached exclusively to the underworld and the prison environment in the text and thus criminalized. Michal's descent into these environments therefore indicates the degree of his self-destruction.

The disqualification of both standard masculinities as role models for Michal (and the reader) leaves a void, which the text fills with several alternative masculinities. The first of them and also unacceptable is a masculinity that dare not speak its name – literally, as the word 'homosexual' is never mentioned. Yet Michal's encounters with and thoughts about Richard, his homosexual drug supplier, are prominent in the story. Homosexuality is both stereotyped and demonized (e.g. Richard's smile is 'diabolical'; John 1989: 53).[20] Michal recognizes what Richard is from his body language: 'That soft smile of his, that attentiveness, the gesture with which he lights up a cigarette' (ibid.: 54). Richard's external manifestations of homosexuality, which in the text imply a warped character, are congruous with his motivations. He supplies drugs to his young acolytes in order to study the drugs' effects on them – that is, to experiment on humans – and to make them addicted so they will agree to have sex with him in their desperation for drugs, as Michal eventually does. The experience becomes such a horrific memory of self-abasement that Michal cannot even give it a name. Instead he displaces it onto 'the bedspread with a floral pattern', the location where the act took place: 'He remembered every detail of that afternoon. Every fraying spot of the bedspread with a floral pattern' (ibid.: 82). Feeling polluted, Michal cuts his forearms 'to wash out all that filth' (ibid.: 83) with the blood streaming out of his body.

Michal's rejection of the masculinities offered both by the establishment and by marginalized men sets the stage for his effort to carve out a masculinity of his own, developed explicitly in confrontation with the other masculine types. He wants to free himself from his parents and from the other drug addicts by establishing an independent household and discontinuing associations with his erstwhile friends. He denounces achievement in the public sphere, although not his participation in it, and reduces his ambitions in the world of work to generating enough income to cover his material needs (he chooses to become a tram driver, a profession that he selects as suitable for accommodating his lifestyle, which includes recreational drug use). He identifies with having responsibility exclusively in the private sphere by attempting to maintain a semblance of family life with his girlfriend. Agency is an important part of this construction, and it includes control of his drug intake: 'How easily we managed to cut down to two shots a week. And ignore the gang. Spend every free moment together' (John 1989: 76).

Unlike Anka and her model of femininity, however, Michal fails in his claim of agency because he fails to discipline his body against drugs, and his negotiated alternative masculinity does not become a site of resistance against the dominant state-socialist ideological discourse because it does not lead to independence from the influences he has rejected. Whereas Anka's individualism leads to the subversion of both the collectivism-promoting authoritative ideological discourse and the residual patriarchal discourse because it empowers the heroine and the reader, Michal's individualism, although consciously subversive, does not achieve subversion of the dominant discourse because it ultimately disempowers the protagonist.

Most importantly, the memento is addressed to the body as the essence of masculinity. First, homosexuality is demonized by being linked to an evil character, and then a causal relationship is established between a desire for drugs and consenting to homosexual sex, which generates feelings of contamination and abjection. The degree of bodily decomposition becomes the measure of the protagonist's degree of drug addiction, following a downward curve toward physical destruction described in graphic detail. At an advanced stage of physical decay, Michal sees himself as 'a brainwashed limping junkie' with 'liver gone, veins gone, abscesses, ulcers in legs' (John 1989: 246, 251–2).

In a study of masculinity contemporary with Memento, Jonathan Rutherford (1987) argues that within 'dominant meanings of masculinity', bodies are to be subjected to men's wills: 'We live within a culture that alienates men from their bodies and sexuality. We learn to repress them because they are the antithesis of what it means to be masculine' (ibid.: 26). In the novel, Michal's consent to homosexual intercourse is the first instance of the protagonist's loss of control over his body, breaching his bodily integrity and therefore threatening his masculine subjectivity and ultimately his humanity, since in the end he ceases to function as a human being. By presenting the loss of control over one's body as the ultimate threat, the text constructs a corporeal masculinity that is the only possible alternative in the absence of a masculine model acceptable to the reader

and at the same time only mildly subversive of the authoritative ideological discourse. Unlike Anka in *For Reasons Unknown*, who has traditional femininity as a site of refuge and resistance, the state-socialist man has nothing, not even traditional masculinity, to fall back on. The body thus becomes the last resort, the only site over which he can exercise his agency. This fact alone might be seen as a moderate gesture of resistance contained within the text: the normative system of central state surveillance allows no other sphere of autonomous control aside from one's own body.

Conclusion

In the introduction I asked what effects the authoritative ideological discourse had on the formation of gender discourses in late state socialism, at least in the Czech cultural environment. I then argued that although the authoritative ideological discourse, which promoted women's emancipation, had to compete with residual patriarchal discourse, this competition had productive effects concerning the repositioning of discourses on heterosexual femininity and, in different ways, heterosexual masculinity.

In the case of femininity, exemplified in *For Reasons Unknown*, two repositionings occurred: On the one hand, traditional femininity (particularly femininity associated with the middle class) could be seen as resistant in relation to the authoritative ideological discourse and as a source of agency within the normative pressures of the regime. On the other hand, the state-socialist emancipatory ideal could be used, if sugar-coated with traditional feminine imagery, to shift the image of the doubly burdened socialist superwoman toward a more individualistic, empowering image with a moderate feminist potential. The authoritative ideological discourse affected masculinities differently, at least based on the example of *Memento*, narrowing rather than broadening the negotiable discursive positions available to a state-socialist male. Middle-class masculinity, which had been co-opted by the regime and became hegemonic, was divested of any resistant potential. Working-class macho masculinity, which was marginalized to the point of exclusion by the authoritative ideological discourse, did not present any discursive advantages. Neither of these normative standards offered an exercise of agency or resistance in the way traditional normative femininity did, nor did their interaction with the authoritative ideological discourse generate any potential for a more empowering male image. The corporeal masculinity that appears in the popular novel constitutes a shrinking of the negotiable discursive space to the last available site of control or agency – one's own body.

As imperfect or incomplete as the state-socialist emancipation project may have been, it did broaden the range of discursive positions for women. Not so for men. Such was the discursive legacy state socialism left behind. The points that have to be considered in research on gender discourses after 1989 include, but are not limited to, the following: First, given its resistant potential in relation to the authoritative ideological discourse, the residual patriarchal discourse was in a position to become dominant in the post-1989 period. Second, the state-socialist version of

the emancipatory discourse became residual. Third, although the field of attractive masculine positions in the pre-1989 cultural discourses seemed relatively empty, Peggy Watson (1993) has characterized the post-1989 gender order as 'the rise of masculinism', and any emergent masculinity would have had to coexist alongside the residual emancipatory discourse. Finally, the new man of the 1980s and Connell's hegemonic 'transnational business masculinity' (Connell 2000: 52) of the 1990s are two likely candidates to fill the void, but they also compete with each other. Only by examining the diversity of the state-socialist discursive environment, and the repressive and productive effects it had with regard to gender, can we achieve a fuller understanding of state socialism's legacies for the post-1989 period. Samples of state-socialist and post-state-socialist discourses have to be addressed contextually and with a fine-tooth comb in order to hone interpretive concepts that enable theoretically sensitive differentiations between the continued influences of state-socialist discursive structures and newly emergent discourses.

Notes

1   A slightly different version of this chapter was first published in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 37 (2012), 2: 357–83. © 2011 by The University of Chicago. All rights reserved.

2   On the double burden, see H. Scott (1976), Corrin (1992), Einhorn (1993) and Fodor (2004); on state and private patriarchy, see Heitlinger (1979), Wolchik and Meyer (1985), Havelková (1996), Ferree (2001) and Fodor (2002); on reproduction and welfare, see Mieczkowski (1985), Sieg (1995), Gál and Kligman (2000) and Saxonberg and Szelewa (2007).

3   Because the purpose of this chapter is to interpret state-socialist texts within the context of their creation, it is necessary to maintain the contemporary use of 'women' (and 'men') in order to investigate what kinds of discourses formed just around these two essentialized categories, for the authoritative ideological discourse was essentialist and heterosexist in its conceptualization of gender. Éva Fodor (2002) argues that the essentialization of women as a 'corporate group' was a political strategy, constructing women as 'a group of state subjects who were expected to derive their privileges and responsibilities in society from their group membership and were singled out as an identifiable building block of communism' (248). Thus in contemporary usage, the phrase 'women's emancipation' in the Eastern Bloc refers to this building block of the political system rather than to the shared oppression of women implied by the phrase 'women's movement' in the West. (For an overview of the emancipation discourse in Czech governmental policies, see Křížková and Vohlídalová (2009).) Although men were not defined as a group in state-socialist policies and rhetoric, as Ivan Vodochodský (2008: 67) has pointed out, the use of the category 'women', together with its biological essentialization, implied a binary (rather than plural) understanding of gender. This was partnered with discursive heterosexism: any permissible femininities and masculinities produced within this formation were heterosexual (homosexuality in Czechoslovakia was both criminalized and medicalized, with full decriminalization occurring only in 1990 and its removal from a list of illnesses in 1993; Sokolová 2004: 260–1). Homosexuality plays an important role in one of the texts discussed here, but it is presented as a demonized, marginalized subjectivity that is not a viable alternative in the quest for an acceptable model of, in this case, masculinity.

4   The texts were explicitly addressed either to women or to all citizens; since men were not defined as a corporate group in political rhetoric, I do not consider samples of authoritative ideological discourse aimed specifically at men. The sample consists of

11 speeches: May Day speeches (Husák 1987a; Štrougal 1987, 1988; Jakeš 1988, 1989; Adamec 1989a), New Year's presidential addresses (Husák 1987b, 1988a, 1989), and International Women's Day speeches (Husák 1988b; Adamec 1989b). Denisa Nečasová's chapter also looks into the gender discourse of the official International Women's Day celebrations.

5 Both novels were also best-sellers. Ninety-five thousand copies of *For Reasons Unknown* were published in 1988, and it was republished after the demise of state socialism (in 1993, 2001, 2005 and 2011). The novel was also published in Slovak in 1990. Four editions of *Memento* were published between 1986 and 1989 (the total number of copies printed exceeded 330,000). Another edition was published in 1995 and 2008, as well as translations into Bulgarian, German, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak and Ukrainian, all between 1987 and 1990. (For context, the total population of Czechoslovakia was approximately 15 million.)

6 Parts of this argument were first developed in Oates-Indruchová (2005).

7 Barbara Havelková (in this volume) documents the pro-natalist and pro-family turn in state policies of the 1970s and 1980s and points out that the discourse of these policies targeted exclusively women. Contrary to the previous normative role of workers and builders of socialism, women were now with increasing intensity defined as mothers, wives and homemakers.

8 Hana Havelková (2007) maintains that 'the ideal of the traditional gender order' (115) prevailed in the second half of the state-socialist period.

9 As Andrew Tolson (1987) defines it, middle-class masculinity corresponds to the bourgeois version of R. W. Connell's hegemonic masculinity, which Connell distinguishes from a later version of hegemonic masculinity, transnational business masculinity (Connell 2000: 52).

10 Holger Brandes (2007) points out that because the working class was 'the nominally ruling class', 'the class concept was so theoretically broadened that most vocational groups fell under the worker category' (ibid.: 187) in the former German Democratic Republic (or East Germany).

11 Roman Krakovský's (2004) analysis of the representation of the heroes in the May Day coverage in several Slovak dailies over the entire period of state socialism yielded similar results: professionals took the stage in the 1960s only to turn it back over to manual professions in the 1970s (137).

12 This structural difference between the texts will be apparent in the textual analysis of both novels: while the illustrative passages from *For Reasons Unknown* will be examples of discourse that does not mirror a storyline, the transparently progressive structure of *Memento* allows a textual analysis that creates an impression of a story running parallel to the analysis of discourse.

13 Jan Matonoha (in this volume) arrives at a contrary conclusion with regard to canonical literary texts, i.e. not popular literary texts, but texts with intellectual and artistic ambitions and at the same time mainly texts originating in dissident and émigré milieux: these texts do not negotiate gender discourses, but merely make use of stereotypical discursive gender structures.

14 RNDr. (*rerum naturalium doctor*) corresponds to an MSc.; CSc. (*candidatus scientarium*) approximates a PhD.

15 This reference to Anka's 'perfect figure' serves as a shorthand conveying to the reader that she possesses a flawless feminine body and thus meets that important criterion of femininity: the meaning of the body for femininity is a given, not problematized but conformed to. Anka's body is referred to from time to time but not discussed at length. It does not need to be, since both the characters and the readers know that it is not a problem (i.e. there is nothing wrong with that assignation of femininity) and that it is noticeably there. In *Memento*, on the other hand, the male body is made into the central problem of an alternative model of masculinity precisely because it does not carry such prominent meanings in the available models of masculinity.

16 The description of Anka also offers the reader unabashed consumerist pleasure, decidedly politically incorrect sentiment with regard to state-socialist ideology. Paulina Bren's (2010) insightful study of popular Czech television miniseries from the later phase of state socialism shows that despite its lofty anti-consumerist ideals the regime's mass-consumption media products were addressed to an acutely consum erist audience.

17 Michel Foucault (1981) defines doctrinal allegiance as that which

> puts the speaking subject in question through and on the basis of the statement, a is proved by the procedures of exclusion and the mechanisms of rejection whicl come into action when a speaking subject has formulated one or several unassimi lable statements.
>
> (Foucault 1981: 63–4

18 Petra Hanáková and Kateřina Zábrodská (in this volume) also in their research identi fied the need to give a name to the discursive phenomena that reflected the gende discourse, although they were not based in articulated feminist positions. Both author use the term 'latent feminism'. I prefer 'proto-feminism', because 'latency' implie dormancy that can be brought to life if favourable conditions arise. A proto-form, or the contrary, may or may not include the potential for a future development withi itself. The available research on the development of gender discourses after 1989 doe not yet enable an exhaustive conclusion whether it is more precise to speak of latenc or of a proto-form with regard to the gender discourse of the state-socialist period.

19 An earlier and extended version of this argument appeared in Oates-Indruchov (2006). For the concept of the body in an expert discourse under state-socialism se Petr Roubal's chapter.

20 Kateřina Kolářová's chapter also looks at representations of homosexuality in th *perestroika* period; Věra Sokolová (in this volume) then reports on her biographica research into self-identifications of non-heterosexual people in the 1970s and th 1980s.

References

Adamec, Ladislav (1989a) 'Pokrok vyžaduje především činy' [Progress requires abov all action]. *Mladá fronta*, May 2: 2.

Adamec, Ladislav (1989b) 'Projev soudruha Ladislava Adamce' [Speech by comrad Ladislav Adamec], *Rudé právo*, March 8: 2.

Althusser, Louis (1984) *Essays on Ideology*, London: Verso.

Andrle, Vlastimil (1987) 'Sousto pro nás' [A morsel for us], *Mladá fronta*, May 1: 3.

Bartky, Sandra Lee (1988) 'Foucault, femininity, and the modernization of patriarcha power', in Irene Diamond and Lee Quinby (eds) *Feminism and Foucault: reflection on resistance*, Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Brandes, Holger (2007) 'Hegemonic masculinities in East and West Germany (Germa Democratic Republic and Federal Republic of Germany)', *Men and Masculinities*, 1(2: 178–96.

Bren, Paulina (2010) *The Greengrocer and His TV: the culture of communism after th 1968 Prague Spring*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Connell, R. W. (1995) *Masculinities*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of Californi Press.

Connell, R. W. (2000) *The Men and the Boys*, Cambridge: Polity.

Corrin, Chris (ed.) (1992) *Superwomen and the Double Burden: women's experience change in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union*, London: Scarlet.

Dragounová, Anna, Lenka Tomešová, Jana Časnochová and Libuše Miarková (1989) 'Děti jsou darem životu: S maminkami velkých rodin' [Children are a gift to life: Talking to mothers of large families], *Rudé právo*, March 7: 3.

Einhorn, Barbara (1993) *Cinderella Goes to Market: citizenship, gender and women's movements in East Central Europe*, London: Verso.

Ferguson, Marjorie (1983) *Forever Feminine: women's magazines and the cult of femininity*, London: Heinemann.

Ferree, Myra Marx (2001) 'Patriarchies and feminisms: the two women's movements of post-unification Germany', in Laurel Richardson, Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier (eds) *Feminist Frontiers*, 5: 511–19, Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Fodor, Éva (2002) 'Smiling women and fighting men: the gender of the communist subject in state socialist Hungary', *Gender and Society*, 16, 2: 240–63.

Fodor, Éva (2004) 'The state socialist emancipation project: gender inequality in workplace authority in Hungary and Austria', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 29, 3: 783–814.

Foucault, Michel (1981) 'The order of discourse', in Robert Young (ed.) *Untying the Text: a post-structuralist reader*; trans. Ian McLeod, Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Foucault, Michel (1990) *The History of Sexuality*. Vol. 1, An Introduction; trans. Robert Hurley, New York: Vintage.

Frýbová, Zdena (1993 [1988]) *Z neznámých důvodů* [*For Reasons Unknown*], Rudná u Prahy: Jeva.

Gál, Susan and Gail Kligman (2000) *The Politics of Gender after Socialism: a comparative-historical essay*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Haman, Aleš (1991) *Literatura z pohledu čtenářů* [*Literature from the Readers' Perspective*], Prague: Československý spisovatel.

Harsch, Donna (2007) *Revenge of the Domestic: women, the family, and communism in the German Democratic Republic*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Havelková, Hana (1996) 'Ignored but assumed: family and gender between public and private realms', *Czech Sociological Review*, 4, 1: 63–79.

Havelková, Hana (2007) 'Náměty k diskusi o českém genderovém kontextu' [Suggestions for discussion on the Czech gender context], in Blanka Knotková-Čapková (ed.) *Ročenka Katedry genderových studií FHS UK Praha 2005–2006* [*The Yearbook of the Department of Gender Studies at the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University in Prague, 2005–2006*], Prague: FHS UK.

Hearn, Jeff (1996) 'Is masculinity dead? A critique of the concept of masculinity/masculinities', in Maírtín Mac an Ghaill (ed.) *Understanding Masculinities: social relations and cultural arenas*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Heitlinger, Alena (1979) *Women and State Socialism: sex inequality in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia*, London: Macmillan.

Houfová, Jarmila and Jiří Stano (1987) 'Ovzduší soudružské otevřenosti' [The atmosphere of comradely openness], *Rudé právo*, April 11: 1–2.

Husák, Gustáv (1987a) 'Projev soudruha G. Husáka' [Speech by comrade G. Husák], *Rudé právo*, May 4: 1.

Husák, Gustáv (1987b) 'V zájmu dalšího rozvoje důsledně naplánovat program XVII. sjezdu KSČ' [In the interest of further development to thoroughly fulfil the agenda of the seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia], *Rudé právo*, January 3: 1.

Husák, Gustáv (1988a) 'Udělejme vše pro další rozkvět naší vlasti' [Let's do everything for the further development of our homeland], *Rudé právo*, January 3: 1.

Husák, Gustáv (1988b) 'Z projevu soudruha Gustáva Husáka' [From the speech by comrade Gustáv Husák], *Rudé právo*, March 8: 1–2.

Husák, Gustáv (1989) 'Cílem naší společnosti je všestranný rozvoj člověka: Novoroční projev prezidenta ČSSR G. Husáka' [The goal of our society is the all-round development of human beings: the New Year's address by the President of the CSSR G. Husák], *Rudé právo*, January 2: 1.

Jakeš, Miloš (1988) 'Projev soudruha Miloše Jakeše' [Speech by comrade Miloš Jakeš], *Rudé právo*, May 2: 1.

Jakeš, Miloš (1989) 'Projev soudruha Miloše Jakeše' [Speech by comrade Miloš Jakeš], *Rudé právo*, May 2: 1–2.

John, Radek (1986, [3rd edn 1989]) *Memento*, Prague: Československý spisovatel.

Kasalová, Jana (1989) 'Obyčejná dívka' [An ordinary girl], *Mladá fronta*, March 8: 1.

Krakovský, Roman (2004) *Rituel du 1er mai en Tchéchoslovaquie, 1948–1989*, Paris: L'Harmattan.

Křížková, Alena and Marta Vohlídalová (2009) 'The labour market and work-life balance in the Czech Republic in historical perspective', in Hana Hašková and Zuzana Uhde (eds) *Women and Social Citizenship in Czech Society: continuity and change*, Prague: Institute of Sociology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

Marshment, Margaret (1988) 'Substantial women', in Lorraine Gamman and Margaret Marshment (eds) *The Female Gaze: women as viewers of popular culture*, London: Women's Press.

Marshment, Margaret (1993) 'The picture is political: representation of women in contemporary popular culture', in Diane Richardson and Victoria Robinson (eds) *Introducing Women's Studies: feminist theory and practice*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

McRobbie, Angela (1991) *Feminism and Youth Culture: from 'Jackie' to 'Just Seventeen'*, Houndmills: Macmillan.

Mieczkowski, Bogdan (1985) 'Social services for women and childcare facilities in Eastern Europe', in Sharon L. Wolchik and Alfred G. Meyer (eds) *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Millett, Kate (1970) *Sexual Politics*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Mills, Sara (1991) 'Negotiating discourses of femininity', *Journal of Gender Studies*, 1, 3: 271–85.

Mills, Sara (1997) *Discourse*, London: Routledge.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2000) 'Male bodies resisting the West and the past: body and masculinity in advertising in the Czech Republic', *East Central Europe–L'Europe du Centre-Est: Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift*, 27, 2: 21–35.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2005) 'From Raisa to Hillary: gender discourse in political speeches and selected news coverage of the perestroika and early transition years', in Jiřina van Leeuwen-Turnovcová and Nicole Richter (eds) *Mediale Welten in Tschechien nach 1989: Genderprojektionen und Codes des Plebejismus*, Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2006) 'The void of acceptable masculinity during Czech state socialism: the case of Radek John's *Memento*', *Men and Masculinities*, 8, 4: 428–50.

Penn, Shana (2005) *Solidarity's Secret: the women who defeated communism in Poland*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Penn, Shana and Jill Massino (eds) (2009) *Gender Politics and Everyday Life in State Socialist Eastern and Central Europe*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Procházková, Eva (1988) 'Kluci, zahrádka, vřetýnka' [Boys, garden, yarn skeins], *Mladá fronta*, April 30: 3.

Rudé právo (1989) 'Setkání se zástupkyněmi žen: přijetí na ÚV NF a vládě ČSSR' [Meeting representatives of women: Reception at the Central National Front Committee and the Government of the CSSR], March 7: 2.

Rutherford, Jonathan (1987) 'Who's that man?', in Rowena Chapman and Jonathan Rutherford (eds) *Male Order: unwrapping masculinity*, London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Šabata, Petr (1987) '"Škola" mistra Malého' [The 'school' of foreman Malý], *Mladá fronta*, May 1: 3.

Šabata, Petr (1988) 'Bouřlivák' [A headstrong man], *Mladá fronta*, April 30: 3.

Saxonberg, Steven and Dorota Szelewa (2007) 'The continuing legacy of the communist legacy? The development of family policies in Poland and the Czech Republic', *Social Politics*, 14, 3: 351–79.

Scott, Hilda (1976) *Women and Socialism: experiences from Eastern Europe*, London: Allison & Busby.

Scott, James C. (1990) *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: hidden transcripts*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Segal, Lynne (1990) *Slow Motion: changing masculinities, changing men*, London: Virago.

Sieg, Katrin (1995) 'Sex, subjectivity, and socialism: feminist discourses in East Germany', in Ellen E. Berry (ed.) *Postcommunism and the Body Politic*, New York: New York University Press.

Smith, Dorothy (1988) 'Femininity as discourse', in Leslie G. Roman and Linda K. Christian-Smith, with Elizabeth Ellsworth (eds) *Becoming Feminine: the politics of popular culture*, London: Falmer.

Sokolová, Věra (2004) '"Don't get pricked!" Representation and the politics of sexuality in the Czech Republic', in Sibelan Forrester, Magdalena J. Zaborowska and Elena Gapova (eds) *Over the Wall/After the Fall: post-communist cultures through an East–West gaze*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.

Štěpánek, Jindřich (1987) 'Zůstal jen film' [Only a film remained], *Mladá fronta*, May 1: 3.

Štěpánek, Jindřich (1988) 'Jak si udělat čas na koníčka' [How to find time for one's hobby], *Mladá fronta*, April 30: 3.

Štrougal, Lubomír (1987) 'Projev L. Štrougala' [Speech by L. Štrougal], *Mladá fronta*, May 1: 1–2.

Štrougal, Lubomír (1988) 'Projev Lubomíra Štrougala' [Speech by Lubomír Štrougal], *Rudé právo*, April 30: 2.

Tolson, Andrew (1987) *The Limits of Masculinity*, London: Routledge.

Vodochodský, Ivan (2008) 'Muži–rodina–socialismus: Mužství a generace v biografických vyprávěních o manželství a otcovství v 70. letech 20. století' [Men– family–socialism: masculinity and generation in biographical narratives on marriage and fatherhood in the 1970s], unpublished PhD thesis, Prague: Charles University.

Watson, Peggy (1993) 'The rise of masculinism in Eastern Europe', *New Left Review*, 198: 71–82.

Williams, Raymond (1977) *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wolchik, Sharon L. and Alfred G. Meyer (eds) (1985) *Women, State, and Party in Eastern Europe*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Yurchak, Alexei (2006) *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: the last Soviet generation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

9 The feminist style in Czechoslovak cinema

The feminine imprint in the films of Věra Chytilová and Ester Krumbachová

Petra Hanáková

Czech (or Czechoslovak, as applicable) cinema has not previously been subject to analysis in gender terms: most existing works on the subject cover only limited ground, or are BA and MA dissertations and remain unpublished (these include two longish ones on the portrayal of women in 1950s films: Zemančíková 2005, Kupková 2007); only one study derived from a dissertation, on the depiction of unlawful sexuality in 1930s Czech cinema (Kupková 2001, 2006), has been published.[1] Even the two monothematic issues of film journals devoted specially to feminism (or post-feminism) avoided any application to the context of Czech film (these were *Cinepur* 61/2009 on the subject of 'Film and gender', and *Iluminace* 4/2008, focused on 'Post-feminism and feminist film studies'). The subject of gender has left the reflection of Czech cinema untouched, and gender analysis is still deemed to be something culturally extraneous, only applicable to the fruits of cultures that were affected in a big way by the political activism of the 1960s and 1970s feminist movement.

This situation might seem entirely logical in the case of a Central or East European country left largely unaffected by the second wave of feminism, which, amongst other things, gave quite a boost to critical analysis of representation and brought with it the terminology for a new reading of such cultural products as films. That notwithstanding, thorough analyses of the kind do already exist in the context of both Polish cinema (for instance Ewa Mazierska and Elżbieta Ostrowska's *Women in Polish Cinema* of 2006, and Iwona Kurz's works in cultural anthropology (2009)), and Hungarian film (the major achievements of Anikó Imre (2005), but also such studies as Beata Hock's (2010)), so any hypothesis that relies on the region's different political and cultural evolution will not hold water.[2] Domestic reflections of Czech cinema are marked by a peculiar silence on the subject of gender – we have no analyses of the extent of women's authorship of films, or any studies devoted to how women are actually portrayed on the screen in films by different directors, male or female.[3] Few as they have been (and possibly for that very reason), any attempts to look at Czech cinema in gender terms tend to provoke disproportionate reactions and counter-attempts to 'protect' this or that film from any analysis perceived as ideological and a priori prejudicial to it.[4]

The situation where foreign authors, of either sex, write about Czech or Czechoslovak cinema is rather different, and the gender perspective is not infrequent; this applies to, for instance, the books and analytical studies in journals by the aforementioned Polish-British historian Ewa Mazierska. And the main platform for feminist writing about cinema, the journal *Camera Obscura*, has already printed two gender analyses of *Sedmikrásky* (*Daisies*), despite generally paying little attention to East European cinema (see Lim 2001; Parvulescu 2006).

In this paper, my intention is to go back to a number of remarkable projects in the history of Czechoslovak film that may be described as critical from the gender viewpoint, and to identify on the level of both content and form some of the ways in which they might be read as feminist statements. The films in question are by two major authors, Věra Chytilová and Ester Krumbachová, whose formal style and thematic focus are highly specific. I shall be looking at only part of their output, namely those projects on which they shared authorship in some degree; this is precisely because the conjunction of their two perspectives gave rise to a highly specific, gender-critical viewpoint. This is evident in three of their joint works: from their first collaboration on *Daisies* (1966), through *Ovoce stromů rajských jíme* (*Fruit of Paradise*, 1969), to *Faunovo velmi pozdní odpoledne* (*The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun*, 1984), as it is in Ester Krumbachová's independent directorial début, *Vražda ing. Čerta* (*The Murder of Mr Devil*, 1970), which picks up on the experience of working on *Daisies*.[5] All these films are typified by a striking stylization, fragmentary narration, expressivity, games with language, allegory and sundry other devices that take things 'beyond' a realistic or a socially critical narrative. At the same time, they can be seen to contain an extraordinarily productive cross-fertilization of the two authorial approaches and a measure of cross-correction between the two approaches to gender and in a sense, then, two possible feminisms: the frankly militant and politicizing view, and a subversively interpretative perspective that ironizes social norms and expectations.

Before work began on the script for *Daisies*, Krumbachová had already collaborated on a number of quite striking films as either screenwriter or art director; they included, for example, Zbyněk Brynych's *A pátý jezdec je strach* (*And the Fifth Rider is Fear*, 1964) and Jan Němec's *O slavnosti a hostech* (*The Party and the Guests*, 1966). Chytilová had also made her mark previously with some striking *cinéma-vérité* offerings, notably the medium-length *Strop* (*Ceiling*, 1961) and *Pytel blech* (*A Bag of Fleas*, 1962) and the feature-length *O něčem jiném* (*Something Different*, 1963). Their joint New Wave films, that is, *Daisies* and *Fruit of Paradise*, took, by contrast, the path of stylization and allegorization, and although Chytilová had focused on the female characters in her previous films, it was not until these two that she arrived (in all likelihood influenced in part by Krumbachová) at a clear gender statement and an examination of the positionality of women – whether in society generally, or in stories and representations.

I call this type of reflection of and experimentation with visual and semantic clichés (also present in a radical form in Krumbachová's *The Murder of Mr Devil*) latent feminism, by which I mean that this is a kind of reflection of gender

that is to do with experience, avoids conceptualization and does not have a particular axe to grind (so it is not primarily some political statement or manifesto).[6] Yet not one of the films mentioned is a direct reflection of any social situation; they offer no model behaviours and, since they are in essence allegories, they resist being pigeon-holed as of their time (with the partial exception of *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun*, though there too the realities of 1980s post-Prague Spring period of Normalization in Czechoslovakia are merely the backcloth to a story with a more general pertinence). The latently feminist statement is attributable here to the approach chosen by the author, which is to play, at the level of content, with stereotypes and the audience's expectations, both of which are comprehensively subverted at the level of form; it is this experimenting with both content and form that opens the way to discovering new avenues for female authors to make statements even at a time when any reflection of gender had yet to be conceptualized or given a methodological framework. By referring to the feminine authorial statements, or the imprint of woman's authorship, I do not mean it in any essentialist sense, as something 'biological' or 'physical' about the manner of writing, i.e. *écriture*: the women in question do not present some return to the essence of the feminine self-expression, but are really responding to and rewriting generalized 'male' statements and patterns of making them. Much more than 'essential', the feminine statement/narration in my perception derives from a postulation of the positioning of women that is then, and above all, subverted.

In this context, we can avail ourselves of the unique testimony in which Krumbachová defined the difference between a man's and a woman's approach to creative work. It comes in an interview with her reprinted by Antonín J. Liehm in his book *Closely Watched Films*, a collection of interviews with 1960s New Wave authors. In answer to the question: 'Do you believe there is such a thing as a feminine approach to reality, to creativity?' Krumbachová says:

> [W]e live and function in a man's world. [...] We are still living as guests in a man's world. Naturally, this also implies a certain advantage for women, since we can laugh at the world made by men. Generally a woman isn't a fan of this or that soccer team, and so she can laugh at the antics of men who get so worked up about a silly game that they start fighting with each other. It's hard to define the woman's outlook precisely, but I think there's no question but that women are more spontaneous. They don't filter everything through reason. And yet they have brains. [...] And men and women take different things seriously. It would be good if all these traits could be more mixed up.
>
> Basically, of course, all this isn't very important. True respect is earned only by thought – a man's or a woman's – real honest thought, which can't be squeezed into any stereotype.
>
> (Liehm 1974: 281)

Quite evidently, this reflection does not come out of a prior conceptualization (on the contrary, it actually demands conceptualization, or definition, of a

woman's view), but even so it hints at how it is possible for a woman to function in what is shown to be a man's world. This 'strategic' consideration is obviously remarkable in the context of the 1960s, traditionally presented as the age of women's (not merely sexual) liberation, so the idea of woman as a guest in a world tailored to the needs of man is particularly surprising. The implied future solution elevates a faith in a liberal conciliation and in thinking (and art) that goes beyond sexuality, though what is more remarkable is that Krumbachová expects the exclusion of women to endure, while converting it into a temporary advantage. She treats this position as essentially one of narration that allows her to put an ironic gloss on the ways of the world as given. Faith in the power of feminine humour and of a wit based on experience is transformed into a strategic advantage, with hints of its being a possible level for women's solidarity. As we shall see, ridicule and a rational detachment, combined with formal experimentation, also mark out all the films created by the Krumbachová–Chytilová duo, effectively defining their feminist aesthetic.[7]

Towards a feminist aesthetic: *Daisies* (*Sedmikrásky*, 1966) and *The Murder of Mr Devil* (*Vražda ing. Čerta*, 1970)

An attempted delineation of this aesthetic – as a possible feminist style or statement against the cultural backdrop of an age that more or less rejected any reflection of gender – is the purpose of the present chapter. I shall take forward my previous attempt to give a gender-based reading of *Daisies* and *The Murder of Mr Devil*, where I analysed both films as projects to implement 'feminist aesthetics in its medusan, anarchic, freewheelingly subversive form' (Hanáková 2005: 63).[8] In that first attempt, I partially framed both films in the context of the Czech New Wave and modernism in art as a male project,[9] though that paper's main purpose had been to look for terms by which to identify topics and formal methods that might be described as (latently) feminist. This quest for terms and possible readings came mainly from the psychoanalytical version of Anglo-American feminist film theory and mirrored its attempts to find effective methodological tools. For the British area this was summarized pregnantly by Laura Mulvey:

> In the early '70s, the Women's Movement claimed the female body as a site for political struggle, mobilizing around abortion rights above all, but with other ancillary issues spiraling out into agitation over medical marginalization and sexuality itself as a source of women's oppression. *A politics of the body led logically to a politics of representation of the body.* It was only a small step to include the question of *images of women* in the debates and campaigns around the body, but it was a step that also moved feminism out of familiar terrains of political action into a terrain of *political aesthetics.* And this small step, from one terrain to another, called for a *new conceptual vocabulary*, and opened way for the influence that semiotics and psychoanalysis have had on feminist theory. The initial idea that images contributed to women's alienation

from their bodies and from their sexuality, with an attendant hope of liberation and recuperation, gave way to theories of representation as symptom and signifier of the way that problems posed by sexual difference under patriarchy could be displaced onto the feminine.

(Mulvey 1996: 66, emphasis added)

In the Czech context, this process, a shift from political activism to conceptual reflection and analysis of artistic form, including the unconscious, hidden, social and cultural mechanisms that feed it, is of course uprooted, or accelerated, precisely because of having missed out on the years of activist consciousness-raising and grassroots activities of the women's movement (it says something that there are not even workable Czech translations of such terms as 'consciousness-raising' and 'grassroots'). The mediated reception of these impulses only began in the last 20 or so years, and that was only among a small, often academic, section of society. However, without direct experience of feminist activities the position of this adopted conceptualization has necessarily been rather shaky. Yet even so, the tools originating in the context of classical 'Western' feminist theory are useful, even beneficial, since it transpires – chiefly in the context of semiotics and psychoanalysis – that the patterns on which Czech films draw reach further back into history: in many of their stereotypes they are rooted in times that preceded socialist themes and aesthetics. Given that our prime concern here is latent, that is, undeclared and non-topicalized feminism, and that our argument centres pre-eminently on form (narrative patterns, in the main), the conceptualization of formal experiments as a necessary requirement to a feminist statement – starting with the classic studies by Laura Mulvey and Teresa de Lauretis on the gender analysis of film narrative – is fundamental to the present study.

In my previous essay I looked at the work of Věra Chytilová and Ester Krumbachová as a departure from the usual period representation of gender and showed how they both work consciously with traditional gender stereotypes in both storyline and form. At the same time I suggested that these methods differ between the two women in important ways, as do their respective forms of authorial self-representation. The present contribution is not only expanded to include other projects by the pair, but is also an attempt to find another possible key to a better understanding of the specific features of that part of 1960s and 1970s Czech cinema that could be described as subversive in terms of gender. It should further be possible to pursue the subject right up to the present (by, for instance, focusing on resonances of feminist themes in Věra Chytilová's later works, where she makes her own partial return to the early poetics of the time when they worked together with Krumbachová). This updating should also be worthwhile given that it has been plain from the reception of Chytilová's post-1989 output that any radical feminine viewpoint remains unacceptable and a provocation as far as the mainstream is concerned.

Since I am concerned here with two women whose position within the film industry was, in their time, exceptional, it is worth looking at how they were

presented and reflected at that time. There is much food for thought here in Josef Škvorecký's book *All the Bright Young Men and Women*, long the only overview of the New Wave, no matter that it is more a memoir than a scholarly study. Škvorecký has plenty to say about how attractive and charismatic the two women are (while with male directors he concentrates on their films only), but he also makes them into a pair who are mutually complementary on the gender front. Thus Chytilová is presented as the masculine warrior type ('Věra's most prominent artistic trait became evident: her almost militant feminism. Sometimes I feel that Věra is first a woman, and only after that a human being', Škvorecký 1975: 103), while he sees Krumbachová as 'one hundred percent woman, but unlike Věra she is not a feminist' (ibid.: 119). This delineation is obviously not short on paradox – Chytilová as an author who seeks to provoke, tending towards a truth, a moralist and formalist, is compared to the suffragettes (ibid.: 107) and presented more as a man, but at the same time is 'first a woman, and only after that a human being' (ibid.: 103), while the ironic commentator and philosophizing screenwriter Krumbachová is presented as the perfect woman, who 'obviously' hates other women, but above all as a muse in the service of other geniuses – a view that already had some support through her original job as a film and theatre costume and set designer ('Ester affected many a good Czech film with her finery and millinery more than is usually presumed', ibid.: 118). This attempt at pigeon-holing them overlooks their close authorial rapport and the conspiracy of irony out of which their joint projects sprang, just as it ignores the radical gender insight to be found in Krumbachová's texts.

Were we to seek labels for the two women's approaches and distinguish between them without recourse to dichotomous male/female typecasting, we could describe Chytilová's style, including the evidence of her other projects, as direct, political and rallying to a cause (she actually gravitates gradually towards a highly expressive, 'exalted' realism), while Krumbachová remains largely analytical and subversive (in the manner of her parables, which are philosophical, even conceptual, gender 'fables'). And yet although both women built up a unique standing in Czech cinema during the 1960s, Krumbachová's directorial debut *The Murder of Mr Devil* was, unlike their joint films, rejected at the time – despite being a sequel to *Daisies*; it was widely seen as a failure and incomprehensible, a view held, incidentally, by Chytilová and Jan Němec in the memoir documentary *Pátrání po Ester* (*Searching for Ester*, 2005).[10]

In any event, among Czech films of (not only) the 1960s and 1970s, *Daisies* and *The Murder of Mr Devil* were eye-openers, from the very manner in which they position centrally not just the female characters, but also their crazy ideas, their desires and their pleasures and pains. As I have shown previously (Hanáková 2005), opting for this line of action had in both cases a clear and fundamental effect on the films' form – it is as if making a woman central to the narrative actually promoted narrative fragmentation, and that invites questions as to possible narrative patterns that would go beyond the stories that dominate our (Western) culture, which are driven by an Oedipal narrative logic.[11] The fragmentation, non-linearity and nonsensicality of the narrative, the leaps across time

---

and space, but above all the unmasking of language as an instrument not of communication, but of persuasion, manipulation and the maintenance of a symbolic order feed the line in subversion in both films. That itself can be interpreted as latently feminist precisely on account of the nonsensical, liberating aspect of woman's (ab)use and subversion of language, which in this reading is a masculine instrument not traditionally meant for women. In the films of Chytilová and Krumbachová male language is seized, denaturalized, deprived of its power to define and determine the position of women in discourse; it is revealed as absurdly empty and once it has been thus unmasked it begins to serve as a tool in the conspiracy of women against the power of men. The chance to be subversive shows here as a by-product of feminine creativity and humour. And provided we agree with the basic postulate of feminist criticism – that the traditional film is actually made for a male audience – then in the case of both these films it is first and foremost a female audience that will appreciate the liberating subversion (for more on this see Hanáková 2005).

The reason this overview of my earlier thoughts has been so broad here is that I mean to follow on from them and expand their methodological background. In this progression, my lead inspiration in favour of the original analysis is Barthes's brief reference to yearning for the truth as the driving force in (Oedipal) narration – the very question of truth, truthfulness and authenticity being one of the obsessions of the Czech New Wave and being reflected and mutated in a radical way in both the films in question. The remarkable passage from *The Pleasure of the Text* on the Oedipal targeting of narratives is often cited piecemeal; in its entirety it runs:

> The pleasure of the text is not the pleasure of the corporeal striptease or of narrative suspense. In these cases, there is no tear, no edges: a gradual unveiling: the entire excitation takes refuge in the hope of seeing the sexual organ (schoolboy's dream) or in knowing the end of the story (novelistic satisfaction). Paradoxically (since it is mass consumed), this is a far more intellectual pleasure than the other: *an Oedipal pleasure (to denude, to know, to learn the origin and the end)*, if it is true that every narrative (every unveiling of the truth) is a staging of the (absent, hidden or hypostatized) father – which would explain *the solidarity of narrative forms, of family structures, and of prohibitions of nudity*, all collected in our culture in the myth of Noah's sons covering his nakedness.

(Barthes 1975: 10, emphasis added)

Remarkable here is how the sensual or even erotic character of possible engagement with the text unfolds as socialized, rational and bound by injunctions: 'stripping' is at the same time a quest for knowledge, a formalization, a tending towards submission to preset limits. The nature of *truth* figures oddly here alongside (forbidden) nudity and the Law of the Father, meaning the symbolic patriarchal structure. This disparity creates an intense inner tension (primarily along the axes pleasure vs. abuse of it, truth vs. exploitation, truth as authenticity of being

vs. truth as power norm/dogma), and it is this disparity that Chytilová and Krumbachová put to the test, letting their characters continue in it for as long as possible until the absurd, derivative, stereotypical models that determine social boundaries are unveiled in all their atrocity. (Thus *Daisies* tests the limits of the language of courtship and the economics of sexual exchange; the Lady in *Mr Devil* makes such headway in the art of being a housewife and mistress that she unmasks both modes of female existence; Eva in *Fruit of Paradise* spends so long actively trying to be the object of the male gaze and a victim that she becomes their antithesis; and the Faun attempts to be the model seducer until personalized *vanitas* starts courting him in the person of his female boss/Death.) Within the subject and plot, this leads to an *implosion* of cultural and social codes, which is supported in the films in question by an *explosion* of formal codes: while the thematic references are so overloaded that they collapse and reveal just how fabricated they are, the image is set free and thrives outside the space-time continuum, the framework of perspective and normal colour schemes, but even outside the customary rhythm of the movements of the figures across the screen (one thinks, for instance, of Chytilová's typical accelerated, jerky, blurred images that for some viewers become unbearably 'hysterical'). This two-way destruction is, I believe, the key to the subversive poetics of the films in question. We shall therefore proceed to look in greater detail at the ways in which authorial style and feminist aesthetics show up in later films, not discussed in my earlier paper, to wit *Fruit of Paradise* and *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun*. Central to our interest will again be narrative modes, the principles by which narration is structured and the positions that those principles assign to the characters – as the focal points of formal experimentation with a feminist statement.

'Don't go asking after the truth!': *Fruit of Paradise* (*Ovoce stromů rajských jíme*, 1969)

There are several senses in which *Fruit of Paradise* is central to the collaboration between Věra Chytilová and Ester Krumbachová. Following *Daisies* it can be read as the next stage in working with the heroine's transgressive story, and also as an allegory not only of the human condition, but also of the position of the woman-as-author faced with how women are fitted into narratives schematically. This film is also central in the context of their actual cooperation, standing as it does between the radical experiment with *Daisies* and the independent, but jointly created poetics that influenced Krumbachová's direction of *Mr Devil*, and the much later return to working together on *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun* (1984), following a break forced upon them for political reasons.[12]

In *Fruit of Paradise*, the issue of truth, one of the key themes of the Czech New Wave,[13] is opened up on a ground plan overladen with references to familiar narratives or narrative forms – from the high tradition of the narrative about original sin and man's banishment from the Garden of Eden, through the fairy-tale tradition of stories about Bluebeard and the medieval legend of Robert le

Diable up to the crime thriller of popular culture, news reports about a serial killer or racy stories about infidelity at spa resorts. This is all woven together in an action and picture puzzle erected around the three main characters – the heroine Eva, her philandering husband Josef, and the seducer and murderer Robert, who hangs out at the spa. Eva is the main vehicle of the topic and the one that asks questions, linking together and opening up the various levels of the narration, while the other characters seem never to have stepped outside 'their' stories and focalization framework. From the outset, Eva is defined by her unrestricted movement outside the bounds of the circumscribed scene of the action (the abstracted space of the 'spa' and the 'beach'), by which she paradoxically mirrors the constant movement of Robert, who flits here and there, being both inside the company (as a brilliant companion, seducer, a great bloke) and outside it (as a murderer who cooks up his death-dealing subterfuges offstage, so in a literal sense ob-scene-ly).

Thus a dual topography is opened up: while within the enclosed space of the spa and the beach the company adheres to its conventions (a boringly repetitive world of tittle-tattle, flirting and indolence), only transgressive characters, namely Eva and Robert, pass into the space of adventure, excitement and danger that lies beyond its perimeter. These are not, however, transgressions of the same order: while Robert is society's dark, demonic *subconscious* who 'murders blondes', by which he merely takes the schemas of gender dynamics to 'artistic' extremes,[14] Eva, who admittedly seeks to stick to the rules, necessarily breaks them by her longing for that which is described in the story as the truth. The subject of truth frames the story, but it also keeps forcing us to ask what this trope (rather than concept) actually means here and how it ties in with the narrative positions in the film, and above all with the function of the chief female character. Eva, in a modern incarnation of the Bible story, is characterized first and foremost by her desire to see, to know, to solve mysteries – put simply, by her *curiosity*. And as Laura Mulvey has noted, curiosity is one of the possible keys applicable in thinking about narrativity and the female gaze:

> There are three themes associated with curiosity implicit in my argument so far: it involves an active look and one that has been associated primarily, although not of course exclusively, with women; it relates to the enclosed space of secrets that echoes the interior/exterior topography associated with a particular mythology of the feminine; it is experienced almost like a drive with an aim and object to discover something felt so strongly that it overwhelms prohibition or danger. Pandora's myth juxtaposes an iconography of enigma with a narrative of curiosity.

(Mulvey 1996: 61)

Mulvey is postulating here an active gaze, the urge to know, the breaching of interdictions, and self-reflection as the foundation of feminine narration, the road down which the films in question also travel. Mulvey further shows that this active structuring of the story through a feminist perspective based on

inquisitiveness might better be linked to the *desire to know*, rather than just see, meaning that it can be viewed as *epistemophilia*. Here, precisely through self-reflection, the desire to know is turned back towards the subject of the gaze, the woman at the centre of the story, whose 'curiosity appears as a desire to uncover the secret of the very figuration she represents' (ibid.: 59). The woman-as-enigma, woman-as-duplicity, the 'woman who never knows what she wants' and other patriarchal figurations of 'typical' womankind as the antithesis of supposedly transparent, logical and straightforward masculinity is here examining herself, exposing the scope for her own figuration and position in the narrative, irrespective of the fact that (or precisely because) the classical male story usually fails to afford her this option. The choice of Pandora as an emblem for solving this aporia (remember that the logic of Pandora is: my form and character were first created by men, who have subsequently reproved me for how I am 'by nature') is very productive and graphic, though Mulvey also refers us to other figurations of woman lying at the very foundations of our culture, most notably the person of Eve, described as primogenitrix, the cause of the fall of Man and the originator of the sufferings of all mankind:[15]

> The motif of curiosity also links Pandora's story to Eve, the first woman of Judaeo-Christian mythology, who persuaded Adam to eat the apple of knowledge. [...] Although Eve's story highlights the knowledge theme, the epistemophilia inherent in the drive of curiosity, the myth associates female curiosity with forbidden fruit rather than with forbidden space.
>
> (Mulvey 1996: 60)

In *Fruit of Paradise* this dual line in curiosity is intertwined: Eva investigates the space both inside and outside the spa and she breaches prohibitions, even making a secret search of Robert's room; her curiosity is initially stirred by the briefcase that Robert tries to get rid of in quite absurd ways, most likely, as we see the action unfold, because its contents could be his downfall.[16] But Eva also 'tastes' anything that is on offer (at the outset she is an all too fussy, betrayed wife, but towards the end she even tries a brief holiday fling), but most of all she is drawn to Robert and the mystery he exudes. Robert has fascinated her from the beginning, even before she begins to suspect him of having committed crimes, for the ease with which he (parasitically) breaches the norms of a given society. Eva's pursuit of the truth and knowledge starts with her husband ('Will you ever tell me the truth?' she asks, when Josef starts receiving perfumed letters at the spa), passes through the stage where she is fascinated by Robert's free and easy manner and captivated by his actual personality, despite being aware of the dangerous truth about him as murderer, only to end with the breakdown that the realization of this brings about.

In the breakdown scene we see Eva faced with a traumatic truth. In logical sequence we can read the chain of her discovery of the fact thus: 'Robert is a murderer' – 'In stories, the woman is generally the victim, not the detective' – 'So, I am somewhere where I ought not to be' – 'But at the same time, Robert is

only interested in me in this position'. Eva comes round out of this ecstasy of truth into a hectic state of hypertension (the symbolic scene where she starts playing the drum kit furiously and for no apparent reason) and subsequent delirium from having finally, through her exposure, succeeded – as another potential victim, that is, in the position of object – in catching Robert's attention.[17] At this juncture, the film switches into the phase in which Eva becomes erotically provocative and openly flirts with death, leading up to the final confrontation, which bears a remarkable similarity to the showdown in a western, the scene in which two renegades fight their final duel and settle accounts. While Eva gives an appearance of submitting, Robert makes his declaration to her only in the form of a meta-narrative admission of being tired of his role (he actually says: 'I trust you', 'I needn't lie to you', 'You're the only one who came voluntarily') – yet at the same time he continues in his own narrative logic and is all set to kill Eva. Eva offers herself as a sacrificial victim, but finally, whether by mistake or guile, she kills Robert (from being an object she is once more a subject, and in genre terms she becomes the 'last girl standing', or 'the final girl' who overpowers the murderer or monster).

Eva has thus become both bearer and recipient of the (murderous, triumphant, ob-scene) truth. So if truth is to be taken at the outset in the meaning of that trust and reliance that subsists between partners, it is subsequently replaced by a broadly critical urge to scrutinize society and unmask it, and ultimately it rises to a traumatic encounter with a horrifying version of truth that puts Eva's existence in jeopardy while also liberating her from any social inhibitions. Only by an inversion of the narrative positions of murderer/victim can the protagonist secure an active position in the story (and her very survival), though at the same time she completely disengages herself from all her original connections in a kind of symbolic sacrifice – a version of death. In the final scene, as Eva re-enters the space, that is the spa, dressed symptomatically in red (previously red had been reserved for Robert, and the traditional symbolism of it – blood, passion, obscenity – is relatively transparent here), she suddenly finds it quite difficult to clamber over the wall that separates her from the world of society. In the highly expressive epilogue, after vain attempts to re-enter by the same way she left, she eventually gets back into the now snow-covered gardens of the spa through a breach in the wall. She dashes towards the startled Josef with the insistent warning: 'Don't go asking after the truth! Even I'm past wanting to know', but he just turns away in a panic. The truth, now unveiled, continues to stand between them, and although Eva renounces it and gets rid of her red gown, Josef still leaves her. In the epilogue that follows, Eva, in an odd state of rapture, dances a strange dance with a red flower and finds herself not only outside society (let us assume that this late in the year there is no one left at the spa), but also outside the story, language and time.

The gravitation towards timelessness and holding out against closure are features familiar to us from *Daisies*, where they can be read as tending towards the feminine space. The heroines live for the moment, determined to have their fun and loath to submit to the linear flow of the narrative – but the urge to know, to

arrive at some point, is replaced in them by the imperative of transgression; accordingly they keep the gag going and defy the expectations of the storyline to the point that even when they, this pair of naughty girls, finally do mend their ways, this too is revealed as a vacuous performance. The story is brought to an end by the invisible power of Morality, the Law and Language (the last tellingly in the written form: the verdict is delivered in an intertitle, thereby reconstituting the Word as an instrument of power). Similarly, the protagonist in *The Murder of Mr Devil* passes through cycles, defying linearity and parading herself in static tableaux. Here, too, the ending is just tacked on verbally, when the Lady briefly mentions, in her conclusory comments, that she has become rich beyond her wildest dreams and is currently financing an expedition to find the abominable snowman. The traditional narrative structure has collapsed, giving way to heterotopias into which the plot 'folds', to be brought to an end only from without – by commentary, intertitle or meta-narrative epilogue. Not until *Fruit of Paradise*, however, is this proceeding brought to an active final transgression, and so to a feminist statement: Eva's curiosity, her migrations through space and her defiance of the traditional way a story should go lead her into a no man's land, a curious standstill and an adherence to 'her' version of the story – and so also to the risk that she cannot come back from the heterotopia, despite her declared determination to forget all that she has been through. The truth, in the sense of knowledge, but above all as self-awareness and the awareness of her positioning (in the narrative), is revealed as an incommunicable hurdle that shows the heroine in a state of aporia, proverbial nakedness (the biblical commentary in the epilogue adds: 'And they saw that they were naked') and above all *loneliness*. Robert, as her only worthy (ob-scene) opponent, is no longer, and in essence Eva partly takes his place – though in a condition of practical incommunicablity, effectively the negation of any follow-up to her story.

'Odd how exciting things can get sometimes': *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun* (*Faunovo velmi pozdní odpoledne*, **1984**)

The authorial farewell of the Chytilová–Krumbachová duo in their final joint film remarkably winds back the schemas that broadly characterized their earlier works. While their focus had previously been on women, this time centre stage is taken by an ageing roué, apparently standing on the other side of the story as the one to whom the narrative belongs. Karel Faun, once more a character with mythological resonance (Faunus, the successor to Dionysos, or the half-goat Pan; but there could also be an echo of the ageing 'devil' from *The Murder of Mr Devil* here), seems to be leading a life such as many men can only dream of. He is characterized by his job – highly prestigious in its day: he is employed in foreign trade. As he says himself, he has 'travelled the world'. He lives in Malá Strana (the historic core of west-bank Prague), and he is unfettered by any ties of family or long-term relationship. Moreover, he seems to be the centre of attention – at home in his studio flat he is forever launching into amorous adventures with young women, and his female colleagues at work cannot leave him alone.

However, as in the earlier films, all these preliminary assumptions are demolished and unmasked. From the outset, the hero is like a hunted animal, being more often than not actually assailed by women (notably his concierge, his female boss and his secretary Vlasta). He has no firm control over his own life and the young women that he chooses for his flings are usually not only stupid, but afford him less in the way of erotic pleasures and more of unforeseeable, frustrating encounters and moments for reflection. (In one instance, erotic anticipation of a visit by one woman is overtaken by a more apt, 'old man's' grumpy musing: 'I just hope she doesn't go and mess the place up'.) And although the hero tries to sustain all the attributes and apparent privileges of his lifestyle, his loss of stamina and control over his own body begins seriously to inhibit his freedom of action. Faun is basically a tragicomic figure trapped in his role much more fatally than the women of the earlier films: unlike them, he does not even try to break free; on the contrary, he clings stubbornly to his ways irrespective of the fact that, at his age, they bring him more problems than pleasures. And so the concierge's buffoon, the girls' predictable dirty old man, and his colleagues' good catch is hardly ever the hunter he takes himself to be; he is more an elusive trophy or easily available distraction.

The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun differs significantly from the earlier films by being fairly clearly set in an identifiable context; while *Daisies*, *Fruit of Paradise* and *Mr Devil* remain sufficiently on the plane of parable for their setting to be quite universal (and not even the costumes designed by Krumbachová suggest any particular period fashion), the action of this film clearly takes place during the period of Normalization (between the suppression of the Prague Spring of 1968 and the fall of the communist regime). Here we are much closer to realism, if a rather expressive, even grotesque version of it: the story still admits of a metaphorical reading, but it is firmly anchored in the reality of the time when it was made. This is one aspect among others that conjoin gender statement and the broader political framework, and so this film can be read on both levels, and its time frame and topicality are perceived much more readily.[18]

With its two planes, the film permits of a topological analysis: on the one hand, Faun's clinging to his bachelor routine may be understood as an image of the way people would typically withdraw to their private world during Normalization; on the other, the idea of public space as men's playground and private space as women's sanctuary is paradoxically inverted. At work, Faun has to cope with attacks from his inscrutable female boss, harassment by his female colleagues and wisecracks from his male colleagues, and, because of the concierge's jibes (whether at how old or how ridiculous he is), even crossing the yard of the building where his flat is can be traumatic. By contrast, he tries single-mindedly to keep control of the private space of his garret (where, standing in front of a poorly lit mirror, he can still flatter himself: 'Hm, I'm still looking quite young.'). His flat is got up to look like a place of erotic adventure and he presents himself as a connoisseur of classical art, though, while it makes the flat into a colourful counterpoint to the Normalization cheerlessness of offices and housing estates, this identity is also eventually shown to be vacuous

and a mere mask.[19] The point being that his artistic interests, like his carefully chosen and well-matched clothes, are not marks of his good taste, but more a means to attract attention, mere props that lack any deeper significance – so, paradoxically, his appreciation of high art is not the antithesis of period (escapist) consumerism, as traditionally analysed, but merely a means to an end: sexual consumerism.[20] Moreover, the way in which his 'boudoir' is filmed makes it feel claustrophobic: there is nothing cosy or elevating about it at all. The courtyard, which the hero has no way of skirting, is watched over by the concierge, who terrifies him by her constant spying (which might, but need not, be a metaphor for political surveillance as well), but what is worse, she reminds him of his true age (symptomatically, he calls her an 'unlovely old bag'). The space beyond the flat comes across as full of snares and dangers that Faun lacks the power to brave with dignity. We soon appreciate the nature of these pitfalls for the unwary when a beautiful pregnant woman with a child passes him: a mere fleeting smile from her nearly floors him ('Women can be so damn malicious', he comments). This is a significant inversion of cause and consequence, agency and reaction, guilt and accusation.

Within the corpus of films under consideration here, *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun* is the first to offer no character with which the viewer can identify. In *Daisies* we could enjoy the little improprieties and skylarking of the 'naughty' girls; in *Mr Devil* we might respond to the cynical, pragmatic efforts of the Lady to be the most perfect partner in sin, and we might root for her in her subsequent battle with the devil; and in *Fruit of Paradise* Eva's curiosity alone offers a fairly strong measure of something to identify with. By contrast, *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun* has no characters whose viewpoint or story we might wish to share. Not only are Faun and his male colleagues ironized, but so too are all the female characters. In one instance the film even plays on the audience's expectations: for a time it looks as if Faun's colleague/secretary is the sole voice of reason, especially from the point where she has had enough of his ineptitude and decides to quit her job. When Faun, drunk, sets off to find her, we are first led to expect that he will finally appreciate her worth and settle down in a partnership that is more compatible in terms of age and outlook. But when they do meet up again, she turns from being a sensible commentator into a half-crazed caricature whose declaration frightens the life out of him, and the anticipated idyll collapses into a nightmare. No alternative is offered by any of the other male characters either; they are all similarly tragicomic figures locked in a merry-go-round of infidelities and daily jockeyings for power within relationships built on principles of hierarchy and manipulation.[21] And the women remain simple caricatures: little imps, sexy viragos, harpies and stalkers. The absence of any point of identification and the jeering directed at both the male and the female characters (all those we come to know better are more or less ghastly; women and men alike are complicit in upholding the system and try to exploit each other) again take us from parable to social criticism, and the feminist statement is mixed in with the political.

Even *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun*, though less obviously than the earlier films, is an investigation of the pitfalls of narration, more precisely, of the

narrative promise, and it is here that we may look for a continuation of the formal game-playing seen so far as symptomatic of a latently feminist statement. The matter of 'how the tale is told' is revealed in one tiny, seemingly insignificant scene. In it, Faun is in the lift at work, eyeing up a new female colleague and, enchanted by her, he comes out with: 'Odd how exciting things can get sometimes'. This is a moment of sexualized visual contemplation, but it also carries the obvious promise of adventure and a tale to be told, unveiling the gratification afforded by the seduction process, or rather by the imagination of it. This is Faun's curiosity – not self-reflective as in the case of Eva, but more glimpses of an imaginary encounter with the 'enigma that is woman', which, however, is to be not studied and laid open, but sustained and enjoyed precisely as a mystery, a fantasy, something to imagine. Faun's attitude may well bear an outward resemblance to Eva's final outburst: 'Don't go asking after the truth! Even I'm past wanting to know', but that had been based on some prior direct confrontation with terror at the secret that had guided Eva through the film. By contrast, Faun creates a fantasy screen that prevents him from having direct contact with the real world. Faun's curiosity does not entail the same peril as Eva's because it is constantly being propped up by the fantasy structures that keep bringing him back into the narrative. It is as if the male imagination in this model not only does not need a woman-as-subject, but actually no woman-as-object either; for the hero, the narrative is first and foremost the constant repetition of schemas and tactics, and basically it does not matter who occupies the prey or adversary slot. Being a part of a story, which is again what underlies the hero's identity, is of a quite different order from the case of Eva in *Fruit of Paradise* or the girls in *Daisies*. There is no point at which the hero tries to extricate himself from the narrative schemas and fantasies that have him defined as 'seducer'; on the contrary, he rests everything he does on them because they provide him with imaginary support independently of his actual age and physical condition. This obviously follows logically from the active and passive narrative positions traditionally given to the male and female characters in narratives, but what is remarkable about both *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun* and *Fruit of Paradise* is the juxtaposition of the feminine way of coming to terms with the narrative structure (self-reflection, an active perspective, subversion of the story) and the masculine ongoing imagination of a tale to be told (fantasy, illusion, paranoia). This opposition is an obvious inversion of the traditional structure of the gender-based division of labour in a narrative – here the woman is not the passive victim of clearly preset positions, and masculine activity is mere illusion, sustaining what is in essence a passively defined imagination of freedom.

The central characters selected, that is, Eva and Faun (also like Marie in *Daisies* and the Lady in *The Murder of Mr Devil*), are not here properly imaginable characters, representatives of their type, but tools of gender reflection. These films are an exceptional examination of the potential for feminine narrative and for making a feminist statement, which is achieved through the unique twin perspective of heroine and hero alike. For the heroines, the need to break out of the narrative stereotypes is a challenge (to be defiant, gain self-knowledge

and be subversive), while the hero takes refuge in traditional, schematic and consequently fantasy scenarios, which offer a guarantee that his world and his own integrity will remain. In both films we find the motif of curiosity: while feminine curiosity moves the action on towards the denouement and takes the heroine to places outside the story, masculine curiosity is no more than a return to the fantasy formula of repeated seduction, a denial of the self and the upholding of an illusion. These two distinct strategies and the final outcomes of the authors' experiments with the potential of narration are a source for the gender statement that can be traced in all the films analysed here.

This paper has focused on several joint projects by two major figures of the period stretching from the 1960s to the 1980s, the aim being to show how the feminine, or even feminist, statement and aesthetic took shape in their work. My focal concept is 'latent feminism', which denotes a particular type of experimentation with both form and subject that points the way to a possible feminist style that need not be overtly political or tub-thumping. The stories are largely allegorical and they examine (and splinter) their own narration by the exercise of self-reflection, and this kind of experimentation with them has proved a viable way of putting stylistic and formal innovations at the service of gender revision. In any event, it is remarkable how the need to explore gender positions and stereotypes in the period in question (a period of film modernisms) showed up spontaneously in the cinema of both the Eastern Bloc, and, slightly later – on a gradually more conceptual, more political plane – in the West as well. Věra Chytilová and Ester Krumbachová's projects were a serious achievement in this progression and an inspiration for the definition and gradual conceptualization of a feminine, or even feminist, film aesthetic.

Translation: David Short

Notes

1 This overview is based on data concerning works completed or in progress at all three film departments at Czech universities: the Dept. of Film Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague; the Institute for Film and Audiovisual Culture, Masaryk University, Brno; and the Dept. of Theatre, Film and Media Studies, Palacký University, Olomouc. To the best of my knowledge, no similarly focused works have appeared at any Gender Studies departments. (After this study was written, the Prague Department saw the appearance of an MA dissertation on the subject of autobiographical aspects in the work of Czech women directors of animated films – see Děcká 2011).

2 Other books by Ewa Mazierska also provide food for thought; these include her comparative study *Masculinities in Polish, Czech and Slovak Cinema: Black Peters and men of marble* (2010). Key works by Anikó Imre include her collection of papers *East European Cinemas* (2005), which seeks, among much else, to provide a gender assessment of East European film, describing the absence of any feminist reflection as 'perhaps the most sore omission' in the critical discourse of the region (Imre 2005: xiv). Beata Hock is the author of a gender analysis of the Hungarian cinema industry (Hock 2010) – this area of research, notably in its comparative dimensions, at the very

least offers even relatively traditional historians considerable research potential for the entire region. (It is right and proper to note here that while most of these authors are from Eastern Europe, they work or have worked, whether long-term or for a period, abroad and so have been in direct contact with environments where feminist discourse is common.)

3 This silence on the gender front as a fact of its scant reflection also in the Czech literary canon is discussed by Jan Matonoha (in this volume).

4 Typical of this was the furore caused a few years back by the publication in *Britské listy* of a British student's gender analysis of the film *Jízda* (*The Ride*, Svěrák 1994, see Čulík and Bird 2001); the subsequent aggressive readers' responses to this study are summarized and analysed in my paper 'Gender a film (u nás)' (Hanáková 2007).

5 Although it is not customary in contemporary writing about cinema, this paper will include synopses of the films discussed with respect to the expected diverse audience of this volume. In all cases these are films whose narrative structure is fragmented, made up of scenes that are linked loosely, if not necessarily causally, and so the synopses can capture only one (and often only the most superficial) dimension of these experimental works that are based on their visual attributes and subversive humour:

> *Daisies* follows the adventures of two girls (both called Marie) who decide to be as bad as the world that surrounds them. They hang around in bars and restaurants and let themselves be treated to expensive meals by older men. At the end they destroy a sumptuous banqueting table, for which they are punished in line with the film's moralizing framework and destroyed by the deus ex machina of an invisible judge.
>
> *Fruit of Paradise* captures the married partners Eva and Josef during their stay at some posh spa or hotel. Eva suspects her husband of infidelity and is herself attracted to the smooth Robert, whose behaviour is highly suspicious. The available evidence hints that Eva will unmask Robert as a serial killer, but from the outset her sense of horror is mingled with enchantment. At first she offers herself as his next mistress/victim, but then she kills him (without it being apparent whether this was the outcome of a sophisticated strategy or instinctive self-preservation). Following this act, Josef casts her off and Eva sinks into a state of lonely ecstasy.
>
> *The Murder of Mr Devil* concerns a middle-aged woman (the Lady) who claims considerable expertise in the kitchen and in 'the art of pleasing gentlemen'. She is in the middle of a romantic entanglement with an old friend, Mr Devil, whose main interest, however, is in having a steady supply of food. When it transpires that he is a real devil from hell, the heroine decides to get rid of him with the assistance of a witch. The devil flies up and away via a lift shaft, but leaving behind him a sack of magic raisins that cause beautiful visions. The Lady makes a fortune out of them and so can afford the cost of a polar expedition in search of the abominable snowman.
>
> *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun* follows the daily round of a middle-aged bachelor, his endless flings with young girls, his interaction with colleagues of both sexes, and his differences with his female boss and the female caretaker of his block of flats. As age gradually takes its toll, his success as a Don Juan wanes until in the final scene he is led away by his lady boss/Death.

6 Kateřina Zábrodská and Libora Oates-Indruchová struggle similarly to find a name for this phenomenon in the context of their studies. Zábrodská also operates with the term 'latency', Oates-Indruchová with 'proto-feminism' (both in this volume).

7 The concept of feminist aesthetic(s) was introduced by Patricia Erens in her essay 'Towards a feminist aesthetic: reflection-revolution-ritual' (1979), where she pointed to the significance of experiments with form for the shaping of the feminist message. Among the model feminist films discussed she included *Daisies*. Likewise Laura

Mulvey, as we shall see, stressed in her early writings the need for formal analysis in any examination of the potential scope for female authorship and testimony.

8 An earlier version of this argument appeared under the title 'Voices from another world: feminine space and masculine intrusion in *Sedmikrásky* and *Vražda ing. Čerta*' (Hanáková 2005).

9 This reading of modernist tendencies in art is shared by many historical and theoretical studies (which generally read modernism as a revolt of sons against fathers), see Tickner (1994), Felski (1995) and, for the Czech environment, such books as Pachmanová (2004) or Heczková (2009). The present essay sets out from the Czech New Wave as a markedly masculine modernist tendency, where the emphasis was generally on the difference between the sexes, rather than on seeking areas of concurrence, with automatic acceptance of the traditional division of roles and of the myth of the author-man-hero as the prime mover of action and history. The feminine and masculine spheres were generally kept strictly apart, with the woman accorded the role of sexual object or antagonistic subject, entering the masculine sphere either as an obstacle or a reward. In the New Wave we find both the latter type of womanhood (the sexual trophy) and, more typically, the image of woman 'in the kitchen', whose limited yearning for domesticity and family life is portrayed as a threat to man's 'natural' desire for freedom (the typical situation in films by, for instance, Miloš Forman or Ivan Passer, notably *Intimní osvětlení* (*Intimate Lighting*, Passer 1965) or *Hoří má panenko* (*The Firemen's Ball*, Forman 1967). At the centre of many classic New Wave films we find projections of male fantasies or traumas – most obviously the trauma of the loss of sexual prowess, whether metaphorical or literal, as in *Ostře sledované vlaky* (*Closely Watched Trains*, Menzel 1966), *Žert* (*The Joke*, Jireš 1968), *Případ pro začínajícího kata* (*Case for a Rookie Hangman*, Juráček 1969) or *Návrat ztraceného syna* (*Return of the Prodigal Son*, Schorm 1966). (For a definition of modernism in East European cinema see Kovács 2007.)

10 In *Searching for Ester* there is a scene in which Chytilová questions why Němec, Ester Krumbachová's ex-husband, had not helped Ester in the film-making process when he saw, as *The Murder of Mr Devil* was being made, how inadequate (in Chytilová's opinion) the film was going to turn out. It is remarkable that this documentary, which analyses the alcoholic and sexual excesses of Krumbachová with no holds barred, failed to be equally free in shaking off the period views of the film, which in the meanwhile has been rediscovered, during the 1990s, and begun to acquire almost cult status.

11 This is how forms of narration are analysed in the classical psychoanalytical theories of narrative: they attempt to show the extent to which the classical storyline in Western culture is structured according to Oedipal logic, that is, how it is male desires and pleasures that are automatically written into the narrative. Teresa de Lauretis takes such notions (mainly in the writings of Stephen Heath and Roland Barthes) as her point of departure and shows how Oedipal narration in film is tied to the gaze that dominates the film's space:

All narrative, in its movement forward toward resolution and backward to an initial moment, a paradise lost, is overlaid with what has been called Oedipal logic – the inner necessity or drive of the drama – its 'sense of an ending' inseparable from the memory of loss and the recapturing of time [...] the unfolding of the Oedipal drama as action at once backward and forward, its quest for (self) knowledge through the realization of loss, to the making good of Oedipus' sight and the restoration of vision.

(de Lauretis 1982: 125–6)

12 For several years following her 'formalist' *Fruit of Paradise* Chytilová was prevented from working. She was allowed back on the scene with *Hra o jablko* (*The Apple Game*), which she directed in 1976 after sundry political petitions (including her

famous letter to President Husák, which, *inter alia*, was argued from the specific standpoint of the female artist; for the text of that letter see Liehm 1976) and interventions from the international film-making community. Even so, as was the custom of the age, her subsequent films were only shown at non-mainstream cinemas, and positive reviews of them were often blocked by the censor – still very much the case with, for example, *Kalamita* (*Calamity*, Chytilová 1981), see Cieslar 2006. The break did not permit her to make the film about the nineteenth-century woman writer Božena Němcová based on her screenplay that had been ready since the 1960s (published later in *Dramatické umění*, Chytilová 1989). Krumbachová, having collaborated with Karel Kachyňa on *Ucho* (*The Ear*, Kachyňa 1970) and Jaromil Jireš on *Valerie a týdnu divů* (*Valerie and her Week of Wonders*, Jireš 1970), did not return, except for *The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun* (1984), to any major commissions until the 1990s, her stylistic imprint being most recognizable in her last work, on Petr Václav's *Marian* (1996).

13 *Slnko v sieti* (*The Sun in a Net*; Štefan Uher, 1962), with which the New Wave actually began, has been described as an 'authentic film'. Discussions of truth and authenticity were obviously part of the formal reflections of the *cinéma-vérité* approach and other styles aimed at seeking the 'truth' of an image. On the next plane, there is the obvious question of authenticity of authorial statements and political attitudes – see for example the contributions by Galina Kopaněva and Jaromil Jireš in Ulver 1997: 34–9; 61–2.

14 As I have pointed out elsewhere, the subject of the dead or tortured girl/woman is fundamental to many stories in both literature and film:

For that matter, a dead (or dying) girl has often been observed in literature not as a subject ceasing to be, but as a supreme aesthetic object (one recalls Poe's famous thesis that there is no greater beauty or poetic melancholy than in contemplation of the death of a beautiful girl). This is actually an obscene, but entirely ideal male story that determines the proper, 'safe' position of women in a narrative: the dead girl is perceived solely through male contemplation; she is an effect, a state of mind, she inspires, but says nothing herself, she cannot even rise against this avalanche of imagery. [...] Moreover, from *Případ pro začínajícího kata* (*Case for a Rookie Hangman*, 1969) we know that 'all drowned girls look the same', which is a perverse, but utterly logical extension of *così fan tutte*.

(Hanáková 2009: 269, n.24)

15 Mulvey recalls that the first part of the Pandora myth tells how she was moulded out of clay by Hephaestus, how the gods brought her to life and how they endowed her with irresistible beauty and the box containing all the ills that she duly brought to earth – making her the instrument of their purposes. In light of this origin, Pandora as an emblem of innate or natural female curiosity is highly contradictory, since there is nothing natural about her and the true directors of her actions are entities and powers over which she has no control (Mulvey 1996: 55, cf. Zeitlin 1986).

16 At the same time it looks as if Robert *wants* the briefcase to be found, which fits his profile as a devil/tempter. So the red briefcase figures as an object of curiosity, a Pandora's box, whose owner wants it to be opened.

17 The storyline involving a murderer of women is doubled up in an interesting way when Josef and Robert become friends ('You men are all alike', Eva says, ironizing the fact by inverting *così fan tutte*) and Josef de facto starts helping Robert to get rid of Eva. Here the film oscillates between being a parable and a caustic caricature of social relations, and it can be read on both levels, as Jaroslav Boček has pointed out (Boček 1997: 70–5).

18 Yet it is remarkable how little the visual culture of the Czech Normalization era has been reflected; exceptions are Jaroslav Dietl's TV series as an emblem of Normalization television propaganda. The first fairly comprehensive attempt to embrace the

broad field of Normalization culture is the volume *Tesilová kavalérie* (*The Polyester Cavalry*; Bílek and Činátlová 2010), though out of all the audiovisual output available it looks chiefly at television. Chytilová's film *Kopytem sem, kopytem tam* (*A Tainted Horseplay*, 1988) is discussed by Kateřina Kolářová (in this volume), precisely in the context of Czech society during Normalization.

19 The vacuity of acceptable patterns of masculinity in the Normalization culture is discussed in this volume by Libora Oates-Indruchová.

20 'Centrally directed' consumerism is also described by Paulina Bren as the typical subject of Normalization-era television series (Bren 2010: 177–200). And for all his sexual openness, Faun is highly conservative: he frowns at the fashion excesses of the girls he seduces, which are often not of a Normalization-era dullness, but outrageously gaudy and anti-conventional.

21 Broadly speaking, the depiction of relationships between men and women in the films of Věra Chytilová and Ester Krumbachová negate the thesis of Czech feminists that claims that under socialism women and men were forced into partnership in resistance to the regime (Šiklová 1997, 1998). In these films there is no real partnership, merely a power struggle, manipulation and parasitism, put simply, a caricature war of the sexes. This argument is further expanded by Kateřina Zábrodská, using biographical material (in this volume).

References

Barthes, Roland (1975) *The Pleasure of the Text*, New York: Hill & Wang.

Bílek, Petr and Blanka Činátlová (eds) (2010) *Tesilová kavalérie: Popkulturní obrazy normalizace*, Příbram: Pistorius & Olšanská.

Boček, Jaroslav (1997) 'Podobenství Věry Chytilové' [Allegories of Věra Chytilová], in Stanislav Ulver (ed.) *Film a doba: Antologie textů z let 1962–1970*, Prague: Sdružení přátel odborného filmového tisku.

Bren, Paulina (2010) *The Greengrocer and His TV: the culture of communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Brynych, Zbyněk (Director) (1964) *A pátý jezdec je strach* [*And the Fifth Rider Is Fear*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1961) *Strop* [*Ceiling*], Prague: Studio FAMU. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1962) *Pytel blech* [*A Bag of Fleas*], Prague: Krátký film. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1963) *O něčem jiném* [*Something Different*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1966) *Sedmikrásky* [*Daisies*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1969) *Ovoce stromů rajských jíme* [*Fruit of Paradise*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1976) *Hra o jablko* [*The Apple Game*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1981) *Kalamita* [*Calamity*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1984) *Faunovo velmi pozdní odpoledne* [*The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1988) *Kopytem sem, kopytem tam* [*A Tainted Horseplay*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (1989) 'Tvář naděje: Naše paní Božena', *Dramatické umění*, 2: 145–95.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (2005) *Pátrání po Ester* [*Searching for Ester*], Prague: Bionaut Films. Film.

Cieslar, Jiří (2006) 'Kalamita aneb Zima v železniční zemi', in Miloš Fryš and Petr Gajdošík (eds) *Věra Chytilová mezi námi: Sborník textů k životnímu jubileu*, Příbram, and Česká Lípa: Camera obscura and Nostalghia.cz.

Cinepur (2009) special issue *Film a gender*, 61.

Čulík, Jan and Christine Bird (2001) '"Film *Jízda* Jana Svěráka je jen pornografie – je typickou ukázkou soft porn": Je takový odsudek ospravedlnitelný?' *Britské listy*, 11 April. Online. Available: www.blisty.cz/files/isarc/0104/20010411d.html (accessed 1 September 2005).

de Lauretis, Teresa (1982) *Alice Doesn't: feminism, semiotics, cinema*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.

Děcká, Eliška (2011) 'Autobiografičnost v díle režisérek českého animovaného filmu', unpublished MA dissertation, Faculty of Arts, Prague: Charles University.

Erens, Patricia (1979) 'Towards a feminist aesthetics: reflection-revolution-ritual', in Patricia Erens (ed.) *Sexual Strategems: the world of women in film*, New York: Horizon.

Felski, Rita (1995) *The Gender of Modernity*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Forman, Miloš (Director) (1967) *Hoří má panenko* [*The Firemen's Ball*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Hanáková, Petra (2005) 'Voices from another world: feminine space and masculine intrusion in *Sedmikrásky* and *Vražda ing. Čerta*', in Anikó Imre (ed.) *East and Central European Cinema*, AFI Film Readers, New York: AFI and Routledge.

Hanáková, Petra (2007) 'Gender a film (u nás)', in Libuše Heczková (ed.) *Vztahy, jazyky, těla: Texty z 1. konference českých a slovenských feministických studií*, Prague: Ermat and FHS UK.

Hanáková, Petra (2009) '"Ach, Markéta je jediná, kdo bude poražen v těchto válkách a kdo v nich shoří!" Genderová glosa proti srsti Markety Lazarové', in Petr Gajdošík (ed.) *Marketa Lazarová: Studie a dokumenty*, Prague: Casablanca.

Heczková, Libuše (2009) *Píšící Minervy: vybrané kapitoly z dějin české literární kritiky*, Prague: Filozofická Fakulta Univerzity Karlovy.

Hock, Beata (2010) 'Sites of undoing gender hierarchies: women and/in Hungarian cinema (industry)', *Medijska istraživnaja*, 16, 1: 9–30.

Iluminace (2008) special issue 'Postfeminismus a feministická filmová studia', 4.

Imre, Anikó (ed.) (2005) *East European Cinemas*, New York: Routledge.

Jireš, Jaromil (Director) (1968) *Žert* [*The Joke*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Jireš, Jaromil (Director) (1970) *Valerie a týden divů* [*Valerie and Her Week of Wonders*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Jireš, Jaromil (1997) 'Vlna pravdy ve filmu' [The truth wave in film], in Stanislav Ulver (ed.) *Film a doba: Antologie textů z let 1962–1970*, Prague: Sdružení přátel odborného filmového tisku.

Juráček, Pavel (Director) (1969) *Případ pro začínajícího kata* [*Case for a Rookie Hangman*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Kachyňa, Karel (Director) (1970) *Ucho* [*The Ear*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Kopaněva, Galina (1997) 'Proč film-pravda' [Why cinéma-vérité], in Stanislav Ulver (ed.) *Film a doba: Antologie textů z let 1962–1970*, Prague: Sdružení přátel odborného filmového tisku.

Kovács, András Bálint (2007) *Screening Modernism: European art cinema, 1950–1980*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Krumbachová, Ester (Director) (1970) *Vražda ing. Čerta* [*The Murder of Mr Devil*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Kupková, Marika (2001) 'Zakázaná sexualita v českém meziválečném a protektorátním filmu', unpublished MA dissertation, Faculty of Arts, Brno: Masaryk University.

Kupková, Marika (2006) '"Mně je líto, že jsi muž!" Typizace svobodné matky v českém hraném filmu meziválečné a protektorátní éry', in Petra Hanáková, Libuše Heczková and Eva Kalivodová (eds) V bludném kruhu: Mateřství a vychovatelství jako paradoxy modernity, Prague: Sociologické nakladatelství.

Kupková, Marika (2007) 'Socialistický realismus v diskursivní dimenzi české kinematografie čtyřicátých a padesátých let', Iluminace, 19, 2: 141–43.

Kurz, Iwona (2009) '"Trędowata" albo qui pro quo, czyli ciało w kulturze filmowej dwudziestolecia międzywojennego' ['Trędowata' or qui pro quo: body in film culture of the inter-war period in Poland], in Sebastian Jagielski and Agnieszka Morstin-Popławska (eds) Ciało i seksualność w kinie polskim, Cracow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.

Liehm, Antonín J. (1974) Closely Watched Films: the Czechoslovak experience, New York: International Arts and Sciences Press.

Liehm, Antonín J. (1976) 'Triumph of the untalented', Index on Censorship, 5, 3: 57–60.

Lim, Bliss Cua (2001) 'Dolls in fragments: Daisies as feminist allegory', Camera Obscura 16, 2: 1–77.

Mazierska, Ewa (2010) Masculinities in Polish, Czech and Slovak Cinema: Black Peters and men of marble, Oxford: Berghahn.

Mazierska, Ewa and Elżbieta Ostrowska (2006) Women in Polish cinema, Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Menzel, Jiří (Director) (1966) Ostře sledované vlaky [Closely Watched Trains], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Mulvey, Laura (1996) Fetishism and Curiosity, London: British Film Institute.

Němec, Jan (Director) (1966) O slavnosti a hostech [The Party and the Guests], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Pachmanová, Martina (2004) Neznámá území českého moderniho umění: Pod lupou genderu, Prague: Argo.

Parvulescu, Anca (2006) '"So We Will Go Bad": cheekiness, laughter, film, Camera Obscura, 21, 2: 144–67.

Passer, Ivan (Director) (1965) Intimní osvětlení [Intimate Lighting], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Schorm, Evald (Director) (1966) Návrat ztraceného syna [Return of the Prodigal Son], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Šiklová, Jiřina (1997) 'Feminism and the roots of apathy in the Czech Republic', Social Research, 64, 2: 258–80.

Šiklová, Jiřina (1998) 'Men and women united for a higher purpose, Transitions, 5, 1: 34–5.

Škvorecký, Josef (1975 [1st edn 1971]) All the Bright Young Men and Women: a personal history of the Czech cinema, Toronto: Peter Martin Associates.

Svěrák, Jan (Director) (1994) Jízda [The Ride], Prague: Luxor Film Company. Film.

Tickner, Lisa (1994) 'Men's Work: masculinity and modernism 1905–1915', in Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly and Keith Moxey (eds) Visual Culture: images and interpretations, Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press.

Uher, Štefan (Director) (1962) Slnko v sieti [The Sun in a Net], Bratislava: Koliba Studios. Film.

Ulver, Stanislav (ed.) (1997) Film a doba: Antologie textů z let 1962–1970, Prague: Sdružení přátel odborného filmového tisku.

Václav, Petr (Director) (1996) Marian, Prague: Tosara Film. Film.

Zeitlin, Froma I. (1986) 'Signifying Difference: the case of Hesiod's Pandora', in Playing the Other: gender and society in classical Greek literature, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zemančíková, Kateřina (2005) 'Obraz ženy v českém filmu v letech 1948–1956', unpublished BA dissertation, Faculty of Humanities, Prague: Charles University.

10 The AIDSed *perestroika*

Discourses of gender in negotiations of ideological consensus in late-socialist Czechoslovakia[1]

Kateřina Kolářová

The AIDS outbreak in the time of normalized boredom

The image of suffocating ennui so well captured in Václav Havel's phrase 'the bleak sky [of] boredom and mortifying eventlessness' (cited in Oates-Indruchová 2002: 54) has become one of the quintessential associations of the period of late socialism. However, portraying this long period as one overdrawn moment of tedious stasis makes invisible the intense ideological labour spent on producing and maintaining the aura of quiet, content and conflict-free 'normalized' times. Socialism, as Alexei Yurchak argues, appeared to 'be forever' until it was suddenly 'no more' (Yurchak 2006). Even if in retrospect – a retrospect often informed by a powerful abjection of the 'shameful' communist past – the fall of the regime might appear inevitable and only a question of time, Yurchak documents how on the contrary it came as a surprise, a 'stunning shock' experienced as a 'break of consciousness' (ibid.: 2). Similarly Michal Pullmann's most recent study of *perestroika* (*přestavba*) radically questions the notion of the foreseeable end of socialism and reinterprets *perestroika* as an experiment in the transformation of state socialism, an experiment invested in an attempt to renegotiate and re-establish the waning ideological consensus that the socialist state is – despite its drawbacks – the best state order imaginable (Pullmann 2011). Breaking down the presumption of 'the "totality" of the communist experience' (Bren 2010: 3), recent scholarship has instead drawn attention to moments of friction, fissures and ways of differentiating investment in the (dis-)continuities of the socialist present. My reading of *Kopytem sem, kopytem tam* (*A Tainted Horseplay*; dir. Věra Chytilová 1988), a film rendition of the 'bleak times of Normalization' and the first and only Czech(oslovak) full-length feature film dealing with HIV and AIDS, builds on these differing investments. Reading *A Tainted Horseplay* I attempt to make visible the ideological labour invested in recreating and re-construing the socialist consensus and in negotiating the ambivalences and contradictions that shaped socialist reality: 'they had always known that life in socialism was shaped through a curious paradox, that the system was always felt to be both stagnating and immutable, fragile and vigorous, bleak and full of promise' (Yurchak 2006: 4).

A Tainted Horseplay is an exceptional film. In 1989, when it was released, it was sensational. This was reflected in its broad reception and number of reviews it received. Even in 2011, the film was still keenly remembered by the librarian who shared with me, during my research for this essay in the National Library, their memories of '*the* AIDS narrative'. And in view of the lack of preventive campaigns focusing on AIDS and HIV in the (post-)socialist period, it is reasonable to assume that *A Tainted Horseplay* significantly shaped the cultural perceptions of AIDS of more than one generation.

The narrative strategies of *A Tainted Horseplay* are less extraordinary; it is a classic example of an 'outbreak narrative' (Wald 2008). The AIDS epidemic is primarily an 'epidemic of signification', to use the phrase coined by Paula Treichler; that is, an epidemic of cultural 'meanings, definitions, and attributions' that have shaped the discursive presence of AIDS (Treichler 1987: 1, 1999: 315). In her study of the cultural imaginations of contagion, Priscilla Wald takes an innovative turn on Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities and shows how outbreak narratives serve to (re-)construe imaginations of belonging and how 'imagined communities' turn into 'imagined immunities' and shared vulnerabilities (Wald 2008: 29–67).

The outbreak narrative, Wald writes, promotes 'an understanding of communicable disease as a cause rather than an expression of social formations throughout history' (ibid.: 47). We will encounter this rhetorical use of the outbreak narrative shortly as I discuss the ways in which AIDS was turned into a metaphor of moral and social decay. Both the outbreak narrative as well as the metaphor of social/moral crisis framed the whole discourse on AIDS in Czechoslovakia from the mid-1980s and through a peak in the years 1988–9. It produced a powerful archive attesting to the sentiments of vulnerability that affected both the physical as well as the ideological body of the community. In the late 1980s, HIV and AIDS, as I argue in greater detail elsewhere, became a prosthesis for a narrative of contagion of a different sort: 'asociality' (Kolářová 2013). The narrativization of contagion – as a danger to collective 'immunity' – reveals collectivity as a fragile and tenuous construction contingent upon the common acts performed by the members of a community. Thus, the omnipresent danger of the community's dissolution, also

> [D]erives power [as it] remind[s] its citizens that the community, and all of the benefits it confers on them, is contingent on their acts of imagining, just as the literal health of the nation depends on their obeying the regulations set in place by medical authorities.
>
> (Wald 2008: 53)

Analysing *A Tainted Horseplay*, the high-profile narrative of the *perestroika* period, the concept of shared vulnerabilities inspires us to look for signs of various and even contradictory investment in the imaginations of the community in the moment of crisis. Significations of AIDS then both reflect but also participate in articulating and construing the anxieties resulting from the 'break of consciousness' and from the process of reimagining and re-construing the socialist community that was happening covertly under 'the bleak sky of boredom and mortifying eventlessness'.

The discourse on AIDS in Czechoslovakia has been, since its beginnings in the mid-1980s, moulded by the sentiment that AIDS puts society to the test and strips it to its bare essentials; or as one of the longer articles on AIDS framed it: 'AIDS examines the cultural state of society' (Hanušová 1988: 8). In this sense the discourse on AIDS is interwoven with the self-critical reflection that defined the times of *perestroika*. To approach this connection, I propose two different lines of reading. First, I examine the contemporary reactions the film raised. I discuss the ways the reviews turned AIDS into a trope signifying 'moral decay' (both individual and social), with indications of dissolving social bonds as well as the utter and general collapse of social relationality. Looking for the implicit gendered associations of these metaphors, I raise questions that have been omitted so far in the studies of *perestroika*. Addressing the ways in which the ambivalences and discontinuities – the 'shock' and 'breach' (Yurchak) or 'experiment' (Pullmann) – utilize and/or are defined by gender and sexuality, this text explores the gendered narratives and meanings that are called forth and activated by the newly experienced shared vulnerability. Further it puts forth the gendered imaginations of socialist communality. Second, I move on to deconstruct and analyse the outbreak narrative itself and the moral panic in which it was steeped. In its later part, the essay ventures onto a more speculative plane and reads the film's somatic semiotics for signs of the inarticulate. If in the first line of reading, I am interested in the gender underpinnings of the imaginations of the community and its futurity, in the second, I am looking for signs of rupture and breach that mark the difficulty of articulating that which existed in a void and for which positive models of speech appear to have been lacking: masculine subjectivity.

Socialist governance through the normalized 'public–private'

Since the 'carnival of revolution' (Kenney 2003) that swept through Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, a good amount of scholarship has emerged that maps gender relations within state socialism as well as in the moment of post-socialist transitions,[2] the rich content of which is outside the scope of this essay. My own argument profits from and contributes to critical reflection on the ideological constructs of the intimate and the private and their relation to notions of the public. The specific form and political significance of ideological constructs of the public–private binary are key points in the critical conceptual exchange of feminist theory and gender analysis paradigms along the so-called East–West axis. In her early contribution to the debate, Hana Havelková stressed the transformative ambitions of socialist ideology whose 'goal was to remove the boundaries between private and public'. This was, she proposed, an attempt to deactivate 'the "bourgeois" sexual contract [and] [...] to achieve a radical transformation of the family' (Havelková 1993: 90; cf. also Havelková 1999). Nonetheless, the binary between the private and the public remained a potent power mechanism. Ambivalence around this binary framed most of the scholarship.

The following quote from Barbara Einhorn is illustrative: while 'undervalued' in the official discourse, 'at the unofficial level, however, the private sphere was invested with a value in inverse proportion to state strictures' (Einhorn 1993: 6). Libora Oates-Indruchová puts it even more radically:

> [N]ot only did state socialism not dismantle the patriarchal discourse, but its oppositional position to the official ideology placed this discourse into an empowered position of resistance, and therefore of something desirable, from the perspective of popular sentiments resenting the state ideology.
>
> (Oates-Indruchová 2005: 59)

Furthermore, the private was identified as a substitute for various forms of deficiencies in the public, and the political, spheres. Arguably, the private subsidized the deficient civic society, as well as compensated for the failing economy. The private was interpreted as 'the only space for the development of individual initiative and autonomy' (Einhorn 1993: 6) and the only space where 'human dignity could be shaped' (Havelková 1993: 92; cf. also Gál and Kligman 2000; Gál 2002).

However helpful these early conceptualizations were, they tread a fine line with a romanticization of the private – which, moreover, is often too automatically synonymized with family – as 'both haven from and site of resistance to the long arm of the state' (Einhorn 1993: 6) and as a bastion of personal freedom and individual self-realization (Havelková 1993: esp. 91–2).[3] In discussing these concepts, I stress a different accent in the relationship between the private and the public: I propose to read the division and 'outsourcing' of the private, as compensation for the failing public sphere, as an effective strategy for maintaining ideological consensus and social equilibrium. Introducing the concepts of 'privatized citizenship' and 'domesticate[d] public realm', Paulina Bren has recently shifted the discussion in this direction. In her words, the private actually became the very sphere of the political, it 'became the favoured site for acting out citizenship' (Bren 2010: 159). The domestic sphere and the private were the prime tropes in the ideology of Normalization, a fact that Bren demonstrates in her readings of Normalization TV series and TV pop culture of the time.[4] From this perspective, the fact that the private appeared as the sphere of (relative) autonomy and (limited/constricted) freedoms is actually an effect of the ideological footings of late socialism and an important form of late-socialist (or 'Normalization') governance as well as part of the consensus that maintained the state regime. This perspective then underlines the importance of gender structures and gender culture to late-socialist governance.

Reading the moral panic narrative in the construction of the 'AIDS crisis', I examine the ways in which the narrative of epidemiological threat raised anxieties about threats of a societal nature. These were, as I will show, not only gendered vis-à-vis their references to heteronormative framings of sexuality, they also envisioned a specific relationship between the private and the public. The politics of gender representation in *A Tainted Horseplay* is surprisingly – and for

its director even shockingly – stereotypical.[5] I will however not expound on the limits of such representation; this is a recognized critical endeavour. Instead I will ask what ends were served by the ossified gender stereotypes – in particular, stereotypes of femininity – and how were they utilized as a tool of signification at a very particular historical moment. Furthermore, I argue briefly that the metaphors of AIDS were used as a prosthesis (cf. Mitchell and Snyder 2000) to express images of social demise where sexuality and gender relations, as the sexual pun in the title of the film reveals, played a central role in expressing pathology, both biomedical and social.

Welcome to a land of carefree fun: 'what else can you do here than fool around?'[6]

A Tainted Horseplay features three young men (that these best friends – Pepe, Dědek and František – are heterosexual goes without saying) and their circle of friends. Hardly model socialist heroes, the protagonists manifest no interest in contributing to the common socialist good. Instead they fill their days with play, erotic pursuits and careless fooling around. The film plot is fairly simple, predictable and not of central importance; the narrative is a series of loosely connected gags and humorous sketches that parade the protagonists' lavish and disregard-for-the-consequences lifestyle of *carpe diem*. On several occasions the narrative overlaps with the sketches of surrealist theatre or film the protagonists themselves produce in an attempt, as they suggest, to create an alternative world for themselves.

The speeding train of absurd comicality comes to a harsh halt when Pepe tests positive for AIDS [sic].[7] The blood test was supposed to be another joke; however, it initiated a wave of panic and xenophobia in the previously so tightly bound group. Terrified by AIDS and the all too automatic prospect of death, everyone tries to save his/her own neck leaving the HIV-positive Pepe, the former charismatic and attractive ladies' man, behind. It is not difficult to decode that AIDS has been turned into a metaphor that carries meanings other than those it acknowledges. AIDS and the 'contagious', 'diseased' body alike are used as a tool, a narrative vehicle that facilitates a modern morality play; as a sign of a careless and promiscuous life that disrespects laws of propriety and morality, AIDS leads to disease and certain death. However, as I show in the next section, the trope of AIDS conflates the individual with the collective and social pathology: 'What else can we do here [in this state, in this moment in history, under this political regime] than fool around?' ask the protagonists suggestively and somewhat apologetically. By implication, AIDS is represented as a symptom of the diseased and pathological state of Czechoslovakian socialism of the late 1980s.[8] It is not (only) his philandering that kills Pepe (and endangers everyone else's lives), but it is (also) the 'cultural state of society' that AIDS has unmasked. The AIDS [sic] virus is, in this story, a metaphoric expression for a virus of a different contagion: the actual 'asociality' of the socialist system itself. I will return to these two prevalent metaphoric significations of AIDS (sexual

transgression on the one hand, and metaphors of asociality, social ennui and demise on the other) shortly in the following section to show how they supported each other in the context of late-socialist Czechoslovakia.

Despite the fact that its fame was rather short-lived (it was overshadowed later in the year by the political events of the revolutionary autumn), *A Tainted Horseplay* made a significant impression on audiences in 1989. Several factors contributed to its success. Its central theme, AIDS, was a sensation. Even though the popular print media, especially *Mladý svět* (*Young World*) covered the topic comprehensively,[9] *A Tainted Horseplay* was (and in fact remains) a rare example of placing AIDS in a fictional narrative. Combining the sensational topic of AIDS that was inciting acute affective responses with a rather direct critical commentary on the state of the Czechoslovak society helped to establish *A Tainted Horseplay* as the piercing and revealing picture of the present. Furthermore, the film's director, Věra Chytilová, as well as its cast, added to the notion of exceptionality. Chytilová, a member of the Czech New Wave movement, was perhaps best known outside Czechoslovakia for her film *Sedmikrásky* (*Daisies* 1966).[10] In the more strongly policed context of post-1968 Normalization, she was periodically banned from film-making during the 1970s, but she was widely recognized in the 1980s as a director working consistently on the fine line of state censorship approval and as a director bringing a moralizing and critical perspective to socialist reality. The reputation of *A Tainted Horseplay* also built on the fact that the main protagonists were part of the theatre group Sklep (Cellar) whose fame had grown in the 1980s and the film profited from the distinct expressive style and humour of the group.

(Reproductive) futurity and visions of 'the era of decay'[11]

A Tainted Horseplay received a broad reception; reviews of it appeared in a number of dailies, contemporary film journals, and magazines of specific interest groups (e.g. *Kostnické jiskry*, a protestant weekly; Kotlář 1989). Despite the broad response, the individual reviews and commentaries form a consensus of sorts about the 'meaning' of the film; *A Tainted Horseplay* was received as a modern-day morality story portraying the 'moral decay' of late-socialist society, where the fatal pathology of AIDS buttresses the diagnosis of the present as 'ailing'.

The reviews associate the danger of AIDS contagion with 'the epicurean Egocentrism' (*Film a doba* 1988: 480) and social irresponsibility of socialist youth,[12] while the notion that the film 'is a story of ordinary, if devil-may-care, but *normal young people and their relationships*' (*Kino* 1989: 7; emphasis added) underwrites the moralistic appeal. The reviews may vary slightly in their wording, from allusions to 'the Sodom of our present' (Kotlář 1989: 3), and the contemporary version of 'the profligate Pompeii devoured by lava' (*Svobodné slovo* 1989: 5), or even to more obviously religious references appropriate for their source in a protestant medium: 'the sin flourishe[s], [...] sprouting from the very core of our present' (Kotlář 1989: 3), yet all the commentaries are concerned with the nature

of the young people's 'relationships' (read: sexual and intimate relationships). And as the references to Pompeii and Sodom indicate clearly, the reviews see these 'relationships' as destructive enough to bring society to the brink of its demise. The notion of sexual transgression is a doxic mainstay of the AIDS discourse, but for what specific reasons did the sexuality of Czechoslovakian youth represent a danger to socialist society? And how did specific configurations of gender relationships assist in articulating these threats?

Dagmar Herzog demonstrates that the socialist project informed normative definitions of intimacy and sexuality while simultaneously becoming an integral part of its ideological structures. Redefining sexual and intimate relationships in 'sexual evolution' was, according to Herzog, part of the socialist modernization of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as well as a tool to distinguish itself from the bourgeois capitalist Other: 'True love belongs to youth the way youth belongs to socialism' (cited in Herzog 2008: 74), proclaimed a GDR government memorandum of the early 1960s.[13] The epidemic of AIDS signification in the late 1980s in Czechoslovakia represents another example of the mutual contingency of normative definitions of socialist sociality on the one hand and sexual morality on the other, as I discussed in an earlier work in relation to AIDS epidemics in Czechoslovakia (Kolářová 2013). For instance, in *Mladý svět*, the magazine specifically oriented towards (socialist) youth, one of the most significant pieces covering the AIDS 'threat' claims: 'AIDS *Now* is the time for *faithful love*!/AIDS *Marriage or a faithful relationship* of two healthy people cancels out all [...] concerns [with how to protect oneself from the HIV infection]' (John 1987: 12–13, emphasis added).[14] Here, through the promise of health (i.e. absence of pathology and disease), the readers are hailed into a (heteronormative) sexual morality of faithfulness and monogamy. The urgency of the AIDS crisis translates into sexual discipline expressed in the exhortation: '*Now* is the time for *faithful love!*' However, the call to 'faithful love' went beyond a morality of individual romantic relationships; it became the safeguard and promise of *healthy* social relations at large. Faithfulness and love were turned into significations of health; AIDS/disease on the contrary became a symptom of failed commitments and obligations, individual as well as collective. Obviously, against these criteria, *A Tainted Horseplay* reveals an unflattering picture of late-1980s Czechoslovakian youth. This is also the tone prevalent in the film reviews:

> Life [for the youth] took the form of a big party, where everyone was either a friend or a lover, as convenient as everyone else.
>
> (*Kino* 1989: 7)

> [P]romiscuity and sex, often practised as sport, exhibition or prank, gradually [became] incompatible, even utterly dissociated, from emotions of any kind. [...] Hopes that, emancipated from social prescriptions, sex would bring authenticity to relationships proved false. More than anything else, it degraded into its opposite.
>
> (*Film a doba* 1988: 481)

Yet, as these quotes highlight, the quality of the relationships rather than simple sexual frivolity and promiscuity became the common denominator of the moral critique expressed in the film reviews. They critique the relationships for being devoid of 'authenticity', 'truth', and essentially lacking – or even opposing – 'love' and emotion. Lauren Berlant has argued that 'love' can be and often is invoked as a forceful concept capable of revitalizing the national narrative (Berlant 1997: 203). The socialist community of late-1980s Czechoslovakia relies on love for ideological revitalization. The exclamatory statements arguing that *now* was the time for faithful love are in fact interpellative proclamations calling for morally binding visions of community and sociality. Love was understood as binding *healthy* couples and, by extension, a *healthy* and robust society. The critique of the disassociation of sexuality from emotions that we encounter here raises broader questions about the affective politics employed by socialist ideology.[15]

The ideology of (heteronormative) love and romance informs and intersects here with ideological definitions of a collective social (as well as socialist) commitment and (self-)sacrifice. Consider again the way in which the reviews juxtapose notions of 'liberation' against authenticity and commitment; and how they favour the latter concepts as the only source of fulfilment and true love/romance/ intimacy. The intimate relations of *A Tainted Horseplay* are dismissed; they may be 'liberated', 'but not much happiness is to be found in them' (*Kino* 1989: 6). The normative conflict over love and sociality resounds, for instance, in the terms through which the reviewers disassociate themselves from the depicted youth: they criticize them for their 'abandon', 'lightness', 'unwillingness to accept commitments', and they chastise them for having '[no] responsibility towards others'. Again, the (supposed) lack of authentic intimacy is construed as a signifier of a qualitative lack of individual intimate relations. And, more importantly, the void of authenticity in romantic relationships is also used as a code for irresponsibility towards society and the community – 'They take whatever they want, no one is concerned with the price' (*Kino* 1989) – and an egoistic 'professional interest in oneself and one's pleasures' (*Film a doba* 1988: 480). The social detachment of the youth displayed in their sexual promiscuity thus exposes, as the reviews have it, the fragility of social bonds and the precariousness of the community's future.

Futurity seems to be at the troubled heart of visions of the 'era of decay': 'the AIDS diagnosis lends the film a chilling sense of the here and now, chillier at that than from "our" [Czechoslovak] perspective, more than a real picture, *the film articulates a realistic prognosis for the future*' (Lukeš 1989: 6, emphasis added). Imaginations of community are temporal projects, they need their 'trace[s] of immemorial past' that weave individual existence into 'the weft of a collective narrative' (Balibar cited in Wald 2008: 52), but they also need visions of a common future. In the case of *A Tainted Horseplay*, it is images of a troubled, endangered and perhaps impossible futurity that are endowed with the power to call and demand new labour and commitment towards imagining the (socialist?) community.

Visions of futurity provide the narrative with its diegetic framework. The openings as well as the closing scenes, albeit in different ways, all construe visions of beginnings and futures, be it the surreal gag picturing the birth of a human heart, pacing off to launch a fight for a better world juxtaposed with scenes of Pepe and his girlfriend Jiřina waking to a new day, their friend Jana's pregnancy later in the film or, eventually, Pepe's encounter with a small boy, the 'obligatory token of futurity' (Edelman 2004: 12), in the final scene that closes the film's narrative. The latter scenes employing the motifs of children illustrate what Edelman terms 'reproductive futurism', a heteronormative ideology of futurity that binds 'the future' together with 'our children'. 'If there is a baby, there is a future, there is redemption' (cited in ibid.: 13). Yet, the fact that, in the opening scene, the brave heart is crushed by 'the speed of the times' casts a shadow over the future as envisioned in A Tainted Horseplay. Also the promise of redemption remains unfulfilled while no (healthy) child can come into the world of our protagonists. Jana's pregnancy, a result of being 'morally compromised' because of her promiscuous relations, does not lead to a happy motherhood. Instead, it results in the cruel disclosure of her (and her baby's?) HIV-positive status. The (possibly) infected and infectious unborn baby becomes a potent symbol of the compromised and fatally diseased future of the socialist society whose youth is as morally corrupt as the protagonists in A Tainted Horseplay as Lee Edelman concludes:

If [...] there is no baby and, in consequence, no future, then the blame must fall on the fatal lure of sterile, narcissistic enjoyments understood as inherently destructive of meaning and therefore as responsible for the undoing of social organisation, collective reality, and inevitably, life itself.

(Ibid.: 13)

A Tainted Horseplay can serve as an illuminating example that demonstrates how gendered discourses of romantic love, reproductive futures and socially 'responsible' sexuality were utilized to both express and dramatize social anxieties and to compel fellow citizens to take responsibility for the community's future.

The fact that Czechoslovakian society faces a fatal danger is met with disbelief and confusion that recalls a sudden waking from a slumber: 'How could we have permitted things to go so far?' (Film a doba 1989: 303). The moment of self-reflection reveals an urgent probing of future steps, a questioning of where to go from here, 'and what now? [...] How to get out of this?' (ibid.). However, even if the reviews point towards individualism as the symptom of the crisis, they do not picture it as the sole or even primary cause; they locate the source of the disease and pathology beyond the individual in the larger social context. The following is an illustrative quote: 'The film wants to reveal the possible reasons of this [negative] development [...] in the insufficiently motivated and encouraged interest in one's life calling, the impossibility of bringing to fruition one's potential or of finding fulfilment in one's profession' (Film a doba 1988: 481).

The commentaries turn the film into a diagnostics of the ills of the moment and give expression to a sense of general ennui. Some of the reviews even explicitly acknowledge their prosthetic and metaphoric reading of AIDS:

The motif of [AIDS] danger serves [...] 'merely' as a starting point for a more general account of the ethical and moral state of society; an account of the world where a cynical humour and [...] modern forms of Carpe Diem compensate for the loss of order, basic human values and security and of forms of valuable self-realization.

(Zemědělské noviny 1989: 2)

Similar sentiments inform the interviews with Věra Chytilová, the film's director. One of the interviewers comments: '[Y]our most recent film, A Tainted Horseplay reflects frankly and bluntly the devaluation of [moral] values in our society. Devaluation, which depresses each and every one of us at every step, most dangerously deforming the characters of young people' (Film a doba 1989: 303). Read against Pullmann's and Yurchak's theses, the criticism in the reviews reads not so much as an expression of dissent and detachment as an expression of a realized obligation towards the fate of the (socialist) community and towards its common futurity.

As is the nature of outbreak narratives, A Tainted Horseplay, in the images of endangered futurity that threaten to kill children through the virus of pathology, dramatizes the tenuousness of the threads holding communities together; it lays bare and accentuates the danger of dissolution and demise. It is the ideological concepts of romantic love and emotional authenticity that serve the critique and the call towards social self-transformation. Intimate love relations, the supposedly private sphere, are called upon as bearing enough of a binding/affective force to effect a transformation of the public and the social. As an embodiment of this heteronormative interpellation, the future (child) is invoked as 'the telos of the social order' (Edelman 2004: 11) while it actually serves as its legitimization. In performances of shared vulnerability the symbolic Child and the required obligations towards (heteronormative) structures of intimacy interpellate the viewer to share(d) obligations towards the social consensus.

The self-destructive (male) body

So far, I have discussed the uses of AIDS as a prosthetic device for articulating anxieties born out of a specific historical moment and in a context of arguably weakening bonds of social cohesion. Turning AIDS into a metaphor for social 'decay' and social death – because no future – appears to have been a compelling strategy of re-articulating an affective politics of attachment and belonging.

The reading offered in the second part of this text challenges the metaphoric/prosthetic interpretations both for their moralizing bias as well as for dematerializing embodiment. Below, I extrapolate the film's somatic semiotics to illustrate how bodies and performances of embodiment create an alternative and more

subtle level of signification well beyond the scope of the genre of morality. The soma, I will argue, articulates the contingent and conflictual attachments to late-socialist reality; the soma and modes of embodiment are the site upon which the internal tensions and conflicts are (re-)bound into an apparent unity of social consensus. Despite the promises of such an analysis, body politics and embodied performances of subjectivity in socialist contexts remain largely unexplored in published research.

If a great deal of scholarship as well as popular cultural memory of the social-ist past has been driven by looking for the signs that would foreshadow the coming 'revolutionary' transformation, the focus on bodily performances draws our attention instead to traces that speak of the continuity and residuary of authoritative discourse and social realities. As the materialized effect of discur-sive and other power structures of both the past and the present, embodied sub-jectivity offers a more nuanced reading of the processes under way in the moment of transformation.

In the remainder of this essay, I am concerned with embodied performances of masculinity in *A Tainted Horseplay*. First, I examine the somatic semantics of humour that relies upon the specific use of male bodies. Second, I reconsider the critique of the disorderly and (self-)destructive behaviour of the male protago-nists. In contrast to the reading based upon a 'narrative prosthesis' that effect-ively de-corporealizes the troubled bodies (in this case the contagious, excessive bodies) into mere bearers of meaning, I want to return somatic weight and sig-nificance to the film's strategies of representation. I argue that the (self-ab)use of male bodies is governed by a specific and distinct logic constitutive (as well as expressive) of a concept of subjectivity attempting to carve out a position between a rejection of and an attachment to its context.

A somatic semantics of humour

As the reviews copiously outlined, the film's protagonists and their friends are not the epitomes of socialist heroes. Their bodies, likewise, depart pointedly from the normative prescriptions of socialist embodiment. These are not bodies paraded on the Spartakiade fields, of which Petr Roubal writes in this volume. These bodies are undisciplined, gluttonous, always desiring some or other form of pleasure. They are either too slim and too long ('you sleazy earthworm') or too fat and clumsy (Dědek). Only Pepe's body is granted some sort of allure; it is eroticized and endowed with sexual prowess. But not for long; Pepe's body too is turned into a site of ridicule as one of his searches for his own femme fatale takes an odd turn. When Pepe eventually finds the very woman whose image he had pinned up above his bed, and whose image he used to project upon the actual bodies of his lovers, their erotic foreplay is harshly interrupted. Pepe is chased away by another lover of hers and finds himself running through the hotel halls and into the cold of the night, stark naked but for a bow tie and socks.

In these performances, male bodies become part of a grotesque semantics. As the Other of the rational and disciplined body, grotesque embodiment creates

moments of disruption; it carries significations that subvert, ephemerally and conditionally, the symbolic order, socialist as well as gender. In the following, I examine several scenes from the film and look into the ways in which grotesque bodies (and specifically male bodies) are employed as a tool for conveying a specific form of humour. I am interested in the semantics of humour for its capa-city to articulate ambivalent meanings of association and disassociation with the ironized authoritative discourse.

First, I draw attention to the opening scene of the film. Or more precisely, it is a sequence from the surrealist theatre play the film protagonists produce. Given the prominent placement of this sequence, I propose to read it as a form of alle-gory for the larger film narrative. 'Thousands and thousands of years ago, [...] the human heart was born. Freshly born, it took to pacing squarely and bravely', announces the voice-over with elation. Yet, the triumph changes quickly into a moment of crisis; suffocated by sulphates, the brave heart begins to lose its powers. Likewise on the verge of suffocation, the blood platelets fight for sur-vival. In despair, they chant: 'We demand that the pace of time be slowed down!', 'We demand oxygen supply!'

The second scene I discuss is also part of the protagonists' experimentations with surreal drama. This time, it is the genre of B-type vampire movies that is called on for comic effect. A male vampire lowers his head to sink his fangs into an innocent young woman's throat. Cut back to the actual film narrative: Pepe lowers his head to kiss the neck of another young woman he is about to seduce. Cut again: a scene of vampiric orgiastic frenzy. At its peak, in one mighty rip, the vampire count tears open his own stomach and takes to pulling out his innards. As the first shock of disgust passes and the loud screams of his vampire mistresses fade away, we realize that his innards are the most ordinary of social-ist sausages.

Working with different conventions and different metaphors, both scenes speak to the condensed signification of AIDS. The pathology of contagious illness (AIDS) conflates with the pathology and decay of socialist reality. Blood platelets collapsing crushed 'by the pace of time' and the innocent young woman being drained of life-giving blood by a parasitic vampire/lover: both scenes perform a parody on the authoritative discourse pillorying 'asocial elements', 'parasites' and others who hinder the progress of socialist society. 'The pace of time' is similarly a cynical reference to the emptied and clichéd political state-ments about rapid changes in society in which, in actuality, the experience of stasis and boredom was predominant. The bravely pacing heart parodies the vision of the socialist hero fighting unflinchingly for a better world, fighting to relieve the pressure on the platelets, i.e. the proletariat and the labouring working class. Or, if we take the vampire scenes: next to the obvious play with sexual meanings and the danger of AIDS, the audience trained in reading and decoding between the lines would recognize a sardonic shift in the images of the asocial elements (perhaps even the perfidious bourgeois) sucking on the blood of duti-fully working responsible socialist citizens. It would be hence easy to read both scenes as acts of critique and/or ideological opposition to the authoritative

discourse and to the state-socialist regime. Clearly, this is a plausible reading and as the reviews show, the moments of critique were read and greatly (if carefully and implicitly) appreciated. Yet, as I want to propose, this is not complex enough.

Both gags rely heavily on representations of grotesque bodies. However, their grotesqueness (and comic effects) dramatize the bodies' vulnerable fragility. These scenes too foreshadow sickness and the (impending) physical collapse that Pepe eventually embodies. Thus, the somatic semantics of grotesque humour opens up a different level of interpretation, where the body, as a signifier, surpasses the semantics of linguistic irony; it somatizes the conflict between detachment and the impossibility of detachment from the ironized and parodied reality, an impossibility that is represented on and through the vulnerable materiality of the body.

Yurchak's use of Sloterdijk's concept of 'humour that ceased to struggle' is illuminating. Such humour, they both argue, does not engage in acts of radical subversion of the dominant norms and discourses it references,

> [I]t pokes fun at the kind of things that may make us outraged or disempowered, but still, for various reasons, remain important, meaningful, and even dear because we identify with them, support them, believe in them, [...] or simply recognize them as immutable and therefore not worth struggling with.
>
> (Yurchak 2006: 277)

Thence, as Yurchak argues, *anekdoty*, the jokes and witty stories, 'traversed boundaries between support and oppositions, sanity and insanity, social responsibility and cynicism, rationality and absurdity, life and death' (ibid.). Yurchak's reading explains the complex working of consensus and authorial discourse, which allowed for certain forms of self-detachment and even engagement with the most glaring absurdities and discrepancies of the late-socialist context. However, this engagement does not address the absurdities directly, but through figurative speech, which provides the speaker with a safer position, a position that would not put him/her into political trouble, but also a position that would not force him/her into a definite disconnection from the structures he/she was living. Yet, Yurchak continues in his argument, the engagement via figurative speech and/or metaphors, however critical, allowed the critiqued phenomena to persist. Thus, these forms of humour did not aim at subversion, radical upturn or deconstruction of the referenced reality; rather they provided a means of survival and passing. Yurchak sums up, '[t]hey enabled one to have a meaningful, creative, ethical life in the spaces and zones that traversed the boundaries between support and opposition, and therefore they became yet another technique in the ongoing deterritorialization of Soviet reality' (ibid.: 281).

Yurchak's consideration of the semantics of humour is valuable not only for displacing the all too common binary of opposition and compliance. It also displays the ways in which the expressed forms of detachment are more often

signs of difficulty and disturbance, yet are still forms of attachment and perhaps even forms of conditioned survival.

Even if Yurchak's analysis does not explicitly address the embodied nature of the semantics of humour, the body's primary presence in the examples he gives from the Soviet context is as striking as it is in *A Tainted Horseplay*. This prominence of the body, and specifically the troubled forms of embodiment that defy gendered normative imperatives of able-bodiedness (such as, health, proper functionality, containment of all bodily fluids and resistance to viruses) stand out and thus lead me to ask: how does the body relate to the negotiating, critiquing, as well as reinforcing and buttressing of the consensus? And does the body and its forms of embodiment allow for articulating positions and sentiments that would have been impossible to bring to language and/or express otherwise? In searching for answers to these questions I look specifically at male bodies and forms of male performative embodiment in *A Tainted Horseplay*. In the remainder of this chapter, and in order to explore what Yurchak coins as 'zones that traversed boundaries between support and oppositions' (Yurchak 2006: 281), I return to the performances of grotesqueness and grotesque bodies, to the uncontrolled/uncontrollable gluttony and excess but also to the images of bodies exposed, naked, leaking, vomiting, collapsing, penetrated by the virus, and in general bodies out of bounds.

Bodies of excess: struggling for a masculine subjectivity

It was the self-indulgence ('the epicurean Ego-centrism', 'professional interest in oneself and one's pleasures'; *Film a doba* 1988: 480), the pathology of excess that was identified as the main culprit and source of disease. The self-indulging excess threatened both the health and integrity of the individual (body) in acts of irrational self-waste as well as the collective (body), which suffered from a disorganization and decomposition of social health and healthy social structures. As organization and decomposition of social health and healthy social structures. As the discussion of promiscuous sexuality and absence of 'love' indicated, the pathology of bodily excess was threatening because the (sexual) acts had no end beyond themselves; these were actions of individual pleasure and/or amusement and thus did not have, in the moral judgments of society, any valuable social function. However, sidestepping such (hetero)normative critique, the excessive acts of self-indulgence that the male heroes perform can be thought of as acts challenging (or wishing to challenge) notions of social functionality and society's wholesome unity. The acts of excess rupture the ideological, and unmaintainable, notions of the functioning, healthy and unified collective body of a socialist community (cf. Roubal's readings of the Spartakiádes in this volume). The logic of 'economy of expenditure' (*Ökonomie der Verausgabung*; Bette 2005), likewise, allows for conceiving the acts of apparent irrationality, self-waste and (self-destructive) excess as acts that articulate, even if conflicted, notions of a masculine self and subjectivity.

The concluding part of this chapter centres around two key notions: the self and indulgence. I explore how the somatic semiotics of excess and irrational

self-expenditure activate the notion of the self. I will be concerned with the question of whether we can read the ultimately self-destructive acts of the male protagonists as paradoxical acts of self-articulation that actually construe the notion of the self. And lastly, I ask what anxieties and conflicts the notion of the masculine self embodies in the late-socialist Czechoslovakian context.

Oates-Indruchová has identified important differences in the ways the normative concepts of gender and gendered subjectivities operated in the late-socialist context. Where femininity, even if in its patriarchal normatives could provide a site of 'resistance against the dominant state-socialist ideology' (Oates-Indruchová 2002: 81), Oates-Indruchová identifies a 'void' in accessible and socially valued models of masculinities (Oates-Indruchová 2006, 2012). This lack of scripts for masculinity interestingly accentuates masculine embodiment, 'the physical body [...] is felt as the only sure locus of an autonomous masculinity' (Oates-Indruchová 2002: 81):

> The state-socialist male has nothing, not even any traditional masculinity to fall back upon. The body thus becomes the last and only resort where he can exercise his agency – and this fact alone could possibly be seen as a moderate gesture of resistance contained within the text: the normative system of central state surveillance allows no other sphere of autonomous control, but one's own body.
>
> (Oates-Indruchová 2012: 377)

The indulgence in food, drink and sex performed by Pepe, František and Dědek can be read as an expression of the individual subject's demand for the use of *his* own body; an act of transgressive excess that lays bare that the social functionality (of socialist society) is contingent upon a collective compliancy. The indulgently wasteful egocentrism clearly conflicted with the ideologies of collective use/profit and with the corporeal demands of the biopolitical rationality of socialist modernism. The 'socialist personality' was required to be, as Carol Poore notes, 'active, industrious, honest, rational, well educated, and proficient'. It was also 'urged to perform socially useful work, take responsibility for the collective, lead a healthy lifestyle and participate in sports' (Poore 2007: 250). Sports and physical education is an apt sphere to look for the demands of the ideology of collectivity upon individual bodies. Oates-Indruchová says:

> The ultimate goals of the society were to build first socialism and then communism. In this logic, [...] an individual's body was not his or her own, but s/he had to take care of it in the public interest: an individual was in the service of society. [...] [A]n individual's activity was to be motivated by solidarity and co-operation.
>
> (Oates-Indruchová 2003: 57; see also Roubal in this volume)

For my own argument, I revisit the performances of self-waste of the male protagonists as specific performances of the body that draw out a clash between different embodied economies and different body politics. However, it is not the claim of the individual self against the (socialist) collectivity that I advocate.[16] Arguably, *perestroika* opened up a space for articulating individual demands, and the newly legitimate notion of 'authenticity' even allowed for the assertion of individually defined rights of identity (e.g. homosexuality; see also Sokolová in this volume, and Pullmann's discussion of homosexuality 2011: 160). My reading of *A Tainted Horseplay* aims to highlight the discursive difficulties if not the impossibility that accompanied the birth of such an authentic individual subjectivity.

To speak of individual subjectivity in relation to *A Tainted Horseplay* is not an easy task. If on the one hand the grotesque bodies and their investment in excess disrupt the notion of hegemonic unity performed as homogenous collective subjectivity, it is in fact only in the form of ironic and even self-parodying pronouncements that the protagonists articulate their relations to their own selves. Pepe's angry statement, 'You will not tell me what I can or cannot do!', that he hurls in a self-assured bravado at the angry father of a woman he seduced and who now wants to run away with him turns into its own parody. As the father points a hunting gun at him, Pepe forgets all about self-assertion and runs for his life. In short, the protagonists do not assert themselves in any articulate way, they do not speak of or demand any form of self-realization or recognition that does not slip into parody or irony. They do not invest in articulating their subjective views, positions, aspirations; they do not explicitly communicate about their conflicted relationships with social reality or the state regime. The three friends and their (non-existent) choices embody the void of acceptable masculinities Oates-Indruchová talks of. They bear out the impossibility of articulating an autonomous male subjectivity within the official discourse of socialism.

In other words, the somatized economy of expenditure seems to flesh out the discursive limits of individuation. Even if the protagonists resist the normative interpellation prescribing considerate uses of their bodies, the subject position that they develop through their transgressive corporealities can only result, as the film narrative illuminates, in making them vulnerable to the point of death, literally (through AIDS) or symbolically (signified as their compliance to previously despised 'normalized' life structures). The acts of resistance to the late-socialist conformity performed on and through the men's bodies cannot construe any positive or self-affirming position. Their self-asserting resistance can only lead to self-harm or self-destruction. Pepe contracts 'a deadly disease' and Dědek and František, in consequence of this shock, say 'yes' to what they previously rejected and parodied. Dědek withdraws from town into the woods and into the realm of the private; he marries his girlfriend and settles down to monogamous family life. František, even more strikingly, finally succumbs to the calls of the Communist Party membership and becomes the leader of the local unit of the Union of Socialist Youth. The last we meet him, he is giving a speech in front of the same assembly that he previously shocked by orchestrating a gag in which a naked female figure wrapped only in an American flag ran through the hall

squealing loudly. Dědek's and František's decisions are in fact the paradigmatic representations of the only choices made available for projects of subjectivity in the socialist framework. Where František accepts the party-overseen and organized public engagement, Dědek symbolically withdraws into 'nature' and into the private realm of family,[17] providing a concrete narrative illustration of the theoretical discussion in the introduction. Besides these two alternatives, no other choice seems possible, as Pepe's illness pointedly tells us.

The stopped-short or outright failed attempts to articulate one's self reveal the impossibility of conjuring positive meanings for individual subjectivity. This is in contrast with the official discourse that presented the socialist state as 'first and foremost a system in which a person can fully realize his human essence' (Fér cited in Bren 2010: 187). Bren further states,

> [D]uring [N]ormalization, realizing one's 'human essence' was to take priority over more concrete economic concerns. The terms 'self-realization' (*seberealizace*) and 'self-actualization' (*sebeaktualizace*) became favourite catchwords of the regime, both indicated a person's chance to develop his or her best self and to indulge in whatever activities that would require'.
>
> (Ibid.)

The representation of the male (self-indulging) embodiment in *A Tainted Horseplay*, however, reveals and demonstrates several disruptions in the discourses of self-authentication. First, the official discourse promises self-actualization, but these promises, as we see clearly in the film, fall flat. The regime's false promise has also been commented on and critiqued by the film reviewers. Second, discontinuity is much harder to communicate and the film achieves this only through drawing attention to the uses of the body and embodiment. The desire to imagine and formulate a new relationship, one that could exist outside the structures of the present social reality, runs up against the impossibility of these desires taking a more concrete form. The male characters of *A Tainted Horseplay* illustrate the lack of means to construe the forms of the self they desire. These discontinuities mark the period of *perestroika* that embodied the 'breach of consciousness' where new openings were emerging, openings that were still difficult to fill with concrete visions and imaginations.

The attempts (and failures) to envision masculine subjectivity bear on the role female characters are assigned in the film. In the work quoted above, Oates-Indruchová has shown how, in the 1980s, femininity, paradoxically despite and because of its essentialization and compliance with heterosexist patriarchal discourse, enabled an 'empowering image with a moderate feminist potential' (Oates-Indruchová 2012: 378 and in this volume). In *A Tainted Horseplay* we observe a similar confirmation of the heterosexist order, yet here there is no offer of any form of emancipation for the feminine subject. On the contrary, the feminine is objectified and symbolically violated in the attempts to re-articulate the masculine. Male bodies are envisioned as the site of a discursive struggle to articulate the self, whereas female bodies are defined only through their 'mere'

materiality.[18] Where masculinity is signified as the *embodied subject*, femininity is defined as the *body*; where masculine bodies are transformed into tools that confer meaning, female bodies are a simple material fact.

Moreover, the female body becomes (only) important as symbolic exchange, a form of 'symbolic traffic' (Rubin 1975), where the static materiality of women's bodies seems to balance out the tensions and insecurities played out on/through the bodies of men.[19] The understanding that social ennui suffocates (male) individual self-realization, even the understanding that the self-destructive acts are (failed) attempts at self-fashioning and self-construction, are underwritten by the objectification and by the traffic in meaning carried out on and at the expense of female bodies. Femininity and the enforced state-socialist form of emancipation served ideological purposes in the project of socialist modernity. The fact that the authoritative socialist discourse allowed for some forms of self-realization and feminine subjectivity was coupled with the specific demands it laid on women. Women, as Bren argues in her discussion of the late-socialist TV popular culture, were interpellated as the healers of the socialist family, both the private and the public one (Bren 2010: 167). Thus did the female bodies balance out and 'heal' the painful impossibility of male subjective articulations.

Conclusion

The 'AIDS crisis' represents one of the discursive sites upon which the constructions of socialist collectivity and embodied unity/communality were asserted as much as put to test. I have argued that metaphors of biomedical danger facilitated articulations of apprehensions related to the nature of socialist communality and its vulnerable futurity. The film narrative and its genre framing (the outbreak narrative) on the one hand construe moral panic directed at the 'socially irresponsible' and 'asocial' behaviour that through an excessive interest in the individual threatens the collective future and survival (both biomedical as well as ideological). On the other hand, it suggests emphatically that the critiqued indulgence in individualism is a collective failure of social structures and of the state. The prosthetic reading of the AIDS metaphors in *A Tainted Horseplay* reflects the semantics of self-transforming criticism. In the late *perestroika* years, exposing the so-called social ills became (conditionally) allowed; the expressions of criticism of the regime were made possible precisely by the system's proclaimed commitment to the society and its socialism (Pullmann 2011: 128). This investment in critique that confronted the proclaimed ideals of socialism with the 'actual' state of socialist society was acknowledged not only as legitimate but even as motivated by ambitions to 'transform' and improve socialist affairs. The semantics of *perestroika*, Pullmann argues, provided a prominent place for the sincere, truthful and impartial naming of things, including a critique of egoism and lack of engagement in public affairs, as well as general moral imperatives referencing the presumably universally shared values of 'life', 'truth' and 'wisdom' (Pullmann 2011: 120–2).

The critique, however, as I attempted to show, is by definition tempered by its intense attachment to images of community and its investment in ideologies of

social cohesion. The lamented lack of love and emotional authenticity that the film reviewers perceive in the intimacies of the young generation express, alongside moral judgement, concern with youth's authentic commitment to the future, i.e. to preserving the ties of (socialist) community. The visions of no future that the reviews anxiously read into the film's narrative through the metaphors of AIDS convey the shocking realization that things that seemed to be 'forever' could really be 'no more'. In this line of reading, I was concerned with illuminating the extent to which the narrative of (biomedical) contagion was embedded in and called upon contemporary discourses of social and political crises.

Male bodies, as I have argued in some detail, become the site of multilayered conflicts between (normative) concepts of collectivity and individuality. They carry the burden of the signifying tensions and decomposition of the socialist community, but they also figure as the last resort of autonomy for the (masculine) individual subject.[20] However, as the narrative closure of the film makes clear, the masculine subject remains underwritten by the void and its autonomy still appears only in acts of excess – signifying the inarticulate and/or the not-yet-articulable – that eventually and inadvertently lead to self-harm and self-destruction.

The examples discussed reveal and emphasize the crucial role gender played in the processes of (attempted and failed) renegotiations of the waning consensus, as well as in the (likewise failed) search for alternative visions of self and community. Gender – as a category giving shape to social structures, to notions of sociality, community and its futurity, and as a category of subjectification defining performances of embodied subjectivity – facilitated articulation of the ambivalent, conflicted and paradoxical relationships with late-socialist reality and its ideological underpinnings.

In this sense, I was concerned to reveal the mutual underpinnings between the historical moment of late state socialism and gender culture. Discussing *A Tainted Horseplay* I asked what gendered notions and meanings were called upon to make sense of this moment, but also in what ways was gender invoked to imagine alternatives and perhaps even to effect changes in the social reality. In other words, I offered a reading that attempts to unearth the reconstructive labour performed by ideologies of gender in the process of an (ideological) reimagining of (socialist) community. In this sense, the images of decayed sexual morality, and the reiterations of the ideology of romantic love serve to reconstrue visions of stability and reproductivity against which the tensions of changes and discontinuities are juxtaposed and negotiated. By analogy, the stereotyping of the female characters seems to be a strategic tool to counter the struggles for new meanings and the discontinuities embodied by the male subject. This however implies that the moments of 'breach of consciousness' strengthen the residual patriarchal discourse. In short, *A Tainted Horseplay* illustrates the falseness of the metaphor of 'suffocating boredom'. The impression of the stagnant surface was a result of an intense ideological labour that relied (also) on the normatives of gender.

Notes

1 I owe cordial thanks to both editors for their insightful comments and critiques. In its various stages, the text has also benefited from comments and criticism offered by Michaela Appeltová and colleagues in the research project. The theses presented here regarding the semantics of HIV and AIDS draw on my earlier research supported by the Grant Agency of the Czech Academy of Sciences (KJB 908080902).

2 In this note I am referencing only the works that I do not quote in more detail in the discussion. Feminist explorations of the socialist regimes and state structures may have set out with the question 'does socialism liberate women?' posed by Hilda Scott (1974) but they developed a more nuanced analysis of the ways in which socialist ideologies framed women's lives and socialist states utilized gender as a structural tool (for more details see the Introduction to this volume). Increasingly, studies of gender move towards intersectional work. For the Czech(oslovak) context, Věra Sokolová's study explores gender at the intersection of ethnicity and sexuality (2008) and her numerous essays, as the one included in this volume, explore the formation of heteronormative gender and sexual orders before and after 1989.

3 The emphasis on the division between the private and the public/official political sphere (re)produces an understanding that citizens and their private lives were dissociated from the public and the impacts of the political, a view that despite its reiteration in contemporary public discourse has been convincingly challenged by the recent scholarship quoted earlier.

4 Moreover, as Pullmann argues, the ideological consensus depended (also) upon differentiated codes of communication attributed to and distributed among the public and the private spheres respectively, and upon the ability of citizens to use these codes in appropriate ways.

5 As Petra Hanáková shows in a previous chapter in this volume, Věra Chytilová's earlier work has fabricated female characters that radically transgressed gender conventions and social conformity. In contrast, women in *A Tainted Horseplay* are cast as either objects of men's desire or objects of symbolic exchange. They become unbearable and hysterical as soon as they are partnered off and as they demand to become mothers. Or, alternatively, in the role of femme fatale, they turn into the Czechoslovakian version of a Typhoid Mary, the carriers of a vicious virus.

6 I quote the words of the film's protagonist.

7 The connection between presumed sexual deviancy (homosexuality) and HIV and AIDS in the Czechoslovakia of the late 1980s is complex and does not follow the same route as in the Western context (cf. Kolářová 2013). Suffice it to say that it is significant that the film narrative points towards Pepe's long-sought-after femme fatale as the virus carrier. In this way, the narrative joins in the trend to heterosexualize HIV and AIDS, which then allows for formulating a presumably universalized moral appeal.

8 Petra Hanáková discusses another of Chytilová's films, *Faunovo velmi pozdní odpoledne* (*The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun*, 1984) for a potential allegorical depiction of the regime's collapse (in this volume).

9 *Mladý svět*, the magazine of the Union of Socialist Youth, was a media platform that offered repeated comprehensible coverage of AIDS in the 1980s; in an earlier essay I attended to the changes and development in the discursive constructions of AIDS throughout the 1980s in the coverage provided by *Mladý svět* (Kolářová 2013).

10 For more in-depth discussion of Věra Chytilová's œuvre, including *Daisies*, see Petra Hanáková's chapter in this volume.

11 The quote is from Jiří Císler's review; in full: 'this cabaret-like "*dolce vita*": the gilded picture of the era of decay, where for long now there has been no one to do the revolution' (Císler 1989: 5).

12 Dorothee Wierling highlights the symbolic precariousness of the category of 'youth'

in the context of the GDR (Wierling 2008). With respect to the Czechoslovakian context of the 1980s, the number of texts in popular media discussing 'youth' and its dissociation from the programme of socialism, indicates that also here 'youth' functioned if not as an 'internal enemy', as Wierling terms it (ibid.), then as the ambivalent and liminal object of anxieties and hopes for the future. This ambivalence played out in *A Tainted Horseplay*.

13 However, as Herzog adds, the Memorandum was also quick to add a cautious note warning against an 'indiscriminate sexual experimentation' and sexual permissiveness. It advised love relationships should be 'deep' (*tief*) and 'clean' (*sauber*) (Herzog 2008: 74).

14 The quote comes from the first large article following the relaxation of censorship of AIDS in relation to Czechoslovakia. The quote illustrates not only who the newly defined 'others' – alien and dangerous bodies – were, it also highlights the morality that was constructed through the crisis. The quote is taken from a longer paratextual commentary to the actual feature article. In its entirety it ran as follows:

> AIDS Promiscuous sex is a danger to your life!/AIDS In particular avoid sex with prostitutes, drug abusers and casual sex with foreigners./AIDS The IV syringes (unsterilized) are next to sex the main cause of infection!/AIDS Always protect yourself during intercourse! There are three advantages: a) it is an effective contraception, b) it protects you from STDs: gonorrhoea, syphilis, c) it protects you from AIDS.

15 A detailed discussion of the ways in which the state regime used affectivity remains beyond the scope of the present essay. My initial reading is that affectivity and an appeal to affective engagement with the social became a tool of governance especially apt at the moment of crumbling ideological consensus.

16 The tension between the collectivity and individuality is one of the biased binaries challenged by scholars critiquing the value-laden appreciations of the socialist past. Therefore, it is illuminating to realize how *A Tainted Horseplay*, and specifically its troubles to articulate the masculine self, defies this binary distinction. The male bodies become/turn into grotesque and/or excessive embodiment when they are together, with one another, or in interactions with other members of their circle. In this way, these performances of transgressive embodiment complicate the notion that disruption of the socialist ideology of collectivity will necessarily bring out a subject defined through independent singularity. Without doubt, the visions of communality offered by *A Tainted Horseplay* are problematic because they are firstly contingent upon a profound gendered asymmetry, and secondly transient and ephemeral (they dissolve quickly under the shock of AIDS), nonetheless they are important markers of late-socialist figurations of subjectivity.

17 Dědek's withdrawal into the woods suggests a similar romanticization of nature to that observable in the so-called tramp movement, an antidote to the discredited political and public sphere (Bren 2002).

18 Jan Matonoha's chapter in this volume provides a highly inspiring discussion of contemporary gendered scripts which, in discussing female body/embodiment, effect its objectification while at the same time parade it as a form of agency. Matonoha's and my own text present similar arguments in relation to vulnerable subjective positions and 'injuring identities'.

19 Simultaneously, the symbolic traffic in women's bodies maintains the relations between men within the borders of an acceptable *homosocial* collectivity and intimacy while guarding against those relations sliding into *homosexuality* (Sedgwick 1985).

20 The fact that *A Tainted Horseplay* employs male characters and masculine bodies to convey these anxieties and tensions is another reflection of the gender order. It manifests the ways in which (only) the masculine subject was culturally intelligible as 'the

subject proper' and could thus bear the significations of threat and social fragility, while femininity, as discussed earlier, could only be assigned the task of social redemption.

References

Berlant, Lauren (1997) *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: essays on sex and citizenship*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bette, Karl-Heinrich (2005) 'Risikokörper und Abendteuersport', in Markus Schroer (ed.) *Soziologie des Körpers*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkampf.

Bren, Paulina (2002) 'Weekend get-aways: the *tramp*, the *chata*, and the politics of private life after the Prague Spring', in David Crowley and Susan Reid (eds) *Socialist Spaces: sites of everyday life in the Eastern bloc*, Oxford: Berg.

Bren, Paulina (2010) *The Greengrocer and His TV: the culture of communism after the 1968 Prague Spring*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1966) *Sedmikrásky* [*Daisies*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1984) *Faunovo velmi pozdní odpoledne* [*The Very Late Afternoon of a Faun*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Chytilová, Věra (Director) (1988) *Kopytem sem, kopytem tam* [*A Tainted Horseplay*], Prague: Barrandov Studios. Film.

Císler, Jiří (1989) 'Kopytem sem, koptem tam', *Scéna* 14, 11: 5.

Edelman, Lee (2004) *No future: queer theory and the death drive*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Einhorn, Barbara (1993) *Cinderella Goes to Market: citizenship, gender and women's movements in East Central Europe*, London: Verso.

Film a doba (1988) 'Kopytem sem, kopytem tam', 34, 9: 480–3.

Film a doba (1989) 'Pravdivost tvorby', 35, 6: 300–9.

Gál, Susan (2002) 'A semiotics of the public/private distinction', *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 13, 1: 77–95.

Gál, Susan and Gail Kligman (2000) *The Politics of Gender after Socialism: a comparative-historical essay*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hanušová, Jiřina (1988) 'AIDS prověřuje kulturní úroveň společnosti', *Mladý svět*, 30, 44: 8–9.

Havelková, Hana (1993) '"Patriarchy" in Czech society', *Hypatia*, Special Cluster on Easter European Feminism, 8: 89–96.

Havelková, Hana (1999) 'Women in and after a "classless" society', in Christine Zmroczek and Pat Mahony (eds) *Women and Social Class: international feminist perspectives*, London: UCL.

Herzog, Dagmar (2008) 'East Germany's sexual evolution', in Katherine Pence and Paul Betts (eds) *Socialist Modern: East German everyday culture and politics*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

John, Radek (1987) 'AIDS', *Mladý svět*, 29, 30: 9–13.

Kenney, Padraic (2003) *A Carnival of Revolution: Central Europe, 1989*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kino (1989) 'Kopytem sem, kopytem tam aneb Vem si co chceš a zaplať za to', 44, 2: 6–7.

Kolářová, Kateřina (2013) 'Homosexuální "asociál" a jeho zavirované tělo: vir HIV a nemoc AIDS v socialistickém diskurzu (Československo 1983–89)', in Pavel Himl, Jan

Seidl and Franz Schindler (eds) *Miluji tvory svého pohlaví: Homosexualita v dějinách a společnosti českých zemí*, Prague: Argo.

Kotlář, Alexandr (1989) 'Odplata za hřích a milí diváci', *Kostnické jiskry*, 74, 20: 3.

Lukeš, Jan (1989) 'Kopytem sem, kopytem tam', *Záběr*, 22, 9: 6.

Mitchell, David and Sharon Snyder (2000) *Narrative Prosthesis: disability and the dependencies of discourse*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2002) *Discourses of Gender in Pre-and Post-1989 Czech Culture*, Pardubice: Univerzita Pardubice.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2003) 'The ideology of the genderless sporting body: reflections on the Czech state-socialist concept of physical culture', in Naomi Segal, Roger Cook and Lib Taylor (eds) *Indeterminate Bodies*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2005) 'From Raisa to Hillary: gender discourse in political speeches and selected news coverage of the *perestroika* and early transition years', in Jiřina van Leeuwen-Turnovcová and Nicole Richter (eds) *Mediale Welten in Tschechien nach 1989: Genderprojektionen und Codes des Plebejismus*, Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2006) 'The void of acceptable masculinity during Czech state socialism: the case of Radek John's *Memento*', *Men and Masculinities*, 8: 428–50.

Oates-Indruchová, Libora (2012) 'The Beauty and the Loser: cultural representations of gender in late state socialism', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 37: 2: 357–83.

Poore, Carol (2007) 'Disability in twentieth-century German culture', Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Pullmann, Michal (2011) *Konec experimentu: přestavba a pád komunismu v Československu*, Prague: Scriptorium.

Rubin, Gayle (1975) 'The traffic in women: notes towards a political economy of sex', in Rayna Reiter (ed.) *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, New York: Monthly Review.

Scott, Hilda (1974) *Does Socialism Liberate Women? Experiences from Eastern Europe*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky (1985) *Between Men: English literature and male homosocial desire*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Sokolová, Věra (2008) *Cultural Politics of Ethnicity: discourses on Roma in communist Czechoslovakia*, Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag.

Svobodné slovo (1989) 'O kopytech a starém Římě', 17 March: 5.

Treichler, Paula (1987) 'AIDS, homophobia and biomedical discourse: an epidemic of signification', *Cultural Studies*, 1: 263–305.

Treichler, Paula (1999) *How to Have Theory in an Epidemic: cultural chronicles of AIDS*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wald, Priscilla (2008) *Contagious: cultures, carriers, and the outbreak narrative*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Yurchak, Alexei (2006) *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: the last Soviet generation*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Wierling, Dorothee (2008) 'Youth as internal enemy: conflicts in the education dictatorship of the 1960s', in Katherine Pence and Paul Betts (eds) *Socialist Modern: East German everyday culture and politics*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Zemědělské noviny (1989) 'Od podobenství k plakátu', 23 March: 2.

Index

women *continued*
  91, 100; pregnant 42, 50n42, 51n76;
  rights 76n39, 181n6; under state
  socialism 112, 126; status 18, 34, 46, 74,
  118; writing 14
women's committees 58, 61, 65–6, 68,
  76n43–9, 77n50–2; Czechoslovak
  Women's Committee 60–1, 64, 66,
  76n41, 77n54; isolated 61, 64; local
  76n34
women's movement 4, 12, 20n18, 57, 60,
  66, 72–4, 214–15; agenda 11;
  communist 59; Czech 16, 62, 74n2,
  77n63; destroyed 9–10; international 69;

pre-women's movement 192; traditional
  demands 67–8, 71; Western 188, 205n3
women's organizations 5, 10, 13, 37,
  57–62, 67–73, 74n3, 76n42, 78n79
Woolf, V. 13

youth sexuality 240
Yurchak, A. 189, 234, 236, 243, 246–7

Zábrodská, K. 6, 11, 16–17, 20n18, 110,
  129n6, 181n2, 207n18, 227n6, 230n21
Zemědělské noviny 243
Zemek, P. 87
Zveřina, J. 87, 89