
Transformation of Gender Culture in Czech society 1948–1989

The status of women in Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1989, their organization in a historic perspective, feminist awareness in socialism and capitalism as well as feminist and critical criminology, criminal law and justice, feminism in Czech cinema with a focus on the work of director Věra Chytilová and other themes were discussed by participants of a one-day conference that took place at the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University on January 14. The international conference was part of the three-year research project Transformation of Gender Culture in Czech Society 1948–1989.



PhDr. Hana Havelková, Ph.D., Department of Gender Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Charles University

“The project is very ambitious in the sense that it spans a whole long period. It turns out that there is inexhaustible material because every area of society is gendered in some sense and important from a gender point of view,” project leader and head of the Department of Gender Studies at the Faculty of Humanities of Charles University PhDr. Hana Havelková comments on the breadth of the material studied. *“No one has yet approached the topic the way we did. Using the most up-to-date methods in social sciences, we focused on the analysis of the field of culture of the period, on the way people thought and on the way gender issues were written about. I would stress that in our project we also try to dismantle certain myths that originated in socialism – the myth of the strong woman, of solidarity between the sexes, the myth of the state versus women etc. When we look deeper into the material, we can see that it shatters these myths. A huge potential of new findings emerges which remove the clichés in which women’s status has been discussed so*

far. So I believe that our project will produce many new findings, a new perspective, and that it can open a whole new chapter in the debate about gender culture in Czech society.”

The morning part of the conference was dedicated to the presentation of the book “The Insistence of Thought: from Feminist Criminology to Gender Theory” published this year by the Sociologické nakladatelství publishing house to mark the birthday of Professor Gerlinda Šmausová, Czech-German criminologist, sociologist, leading gender theorist and founder of the gender studies department at the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University in Brno.



Professor Gerlinda Šmausová’s book was presented by editor Libora Oates-Indruchová

In the afternoon, the conference featured a panel presentation of individual parts of the research project carried out by different research teams and a follow-up a round-table discussion on the subject of Periodization of the Socialist Era from a Gender Viewpoint.

The research project supported by the Czech Republic’s Grant Agency was launched in 2009 and concludes this year. The team of 14 experts from different fields will present the results of their work in a collective monograph due to be published next year.

(Marie Kohoutová)

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