

## Sociology

International Master in Comparative Social Research

ID - 193

120 minutes

They may bring a Russian-English dictionary but no prepared notes of any kind. The test will be completely in English.

The exam will be composed of 3 sections. Grading of the overall exam will be based on weighting of the time allotted for each section. Students may use sheets of blank paper in order to take notes, but official answers must be provided in the test booklet.

### 1. Short Essay. Sample comparative-historical problem. 30 minutes.

Students will be presented with a table with countries as rows and country traits as columns. The table cells will contain either '1', meaning that a trait is present in a given country, or '0', that the trait is not present.

Write an essay that identifies the conditions that are necessary and/or sufficient for a '**High Level of Gender Discrimination at the Labor Market**' to emerge in a country based on the presence of the other traits. Students should describe their logic for arriving at the given result and assume the cell entries are correct.

Table 1

Impact on Inclusive Migration Policy

	World War 2 Victor	Internal Armed Conflict	Recent Sexual Revolution	Strong Information Economy	High Religiosity	High Level of Gender Discrimination at the Labor Market
Germany	0	0	1	1	0	1
India	0	1	0	1	1	0
Italy	0	0	1	0	1	1
Japan	0	0	0	1	0	1
Turkey	0	1	0	0	1	0
China	1	1	0	0	0	1
France	1	0	1	1	0	0
Russia	1	1	0	1	1	0
USA	1	0	1	1	1	0

**2. Long Essay. Develop a research proposal. 70 minutes.**

Students first read a short text by Katerina Liskova. Then fulfill the following task in an essay:

The author argues that the notion of love changes over time, and its meaning is contingent in historical eras and geographical spaces. Hence, the notion of love is socially constructed.

Sketch out a research proposal that can test some aspect(s) of this idea across a range of countries. Be sure to define a research question, define your concepts, list hypotheses and the reasoning behind them, describe in detail the method and its details (sampling, data gathering, analysis technique) that you will use to answer your question.

**3. Analytical reasoning. 20 minutes.**

The following multiple-choice analytical questions are designed to test your ability to accurately and quickly correctly determine the answer to problems. Please answer the following questions below:

Each question in this section is based on a set of conditions. Choose the response that most accurately and completely answers the question.

**I. Artists are generally whimsical. Some of them are frustrated. Frustrated people are prone to be drug addicts. Based on these statements which of the following conclusions is true?**

- 1) All frustrated people are drug addicts
- 2) Some artists may be drug addicts
- 3) All drug addicts are artists
- 4) Frustrated people are whimsical

**II. There are five books A, B, C, D and E placed on a table. If A is placed below E, C is placed above D, B is placed below A and D is placed above E, then which of the following books touches the surface of the table ?**

- 1) C
- 2) B
- 3) A
- 4) E

**III. Three ladies X, Y and Z marry three men A, B and C. X is married to A, Y is not married to an engineer, Z is not married to a doctor, C is not a doctor and A is a lawyer. Then which of the following statements is correct?**

- 1) Y is married to C who is an engineer
- 2) Z is married to C who is a doctor
- 3) X is married to a doctor

- 4) None of these

**IV. If A is the son of Q, Q and Y are sisters, Z is the mother of Y, P is the son of Z, then which of the following statements is correct?**

- 1) P is the maternal uncle of A
- 2) P and Y are sisters
- 3) A and P are cousins
- 4) None of the above

**V. There are five tent in a camp. P is to the right of Q, and T is to the left R. Q is to the right of S. Which of the tents is in the middle?**

- 1) P
- 2) Q
- 3) R
- 4) S

**VI. In a family there are husband, wife, two sons and two daughters. All the ladies were invited to a dinner. Both sons went out to play. Husband did not return from office. Who was at home?**

- 1) Only wife was at home
- 2) All ladies were at home
- 3) Only sons were at home
- 4) Nobody was at home

**VII. Based on the following statements, which is the correct conclusion drawn?**

- 1) There are five friends sitting in a row facing south.
- 2) Giri is sitting immediate right to Sharon.
- 3) Akhin is sitting immediate left to Sharon, Sharon is sitting immediate left fo Giri.
- 4) Punith alone is sitting between Nikhil and Akhin.

For identifying the position of any person sitting in the row which of the given statements are not required or not necessary?

- A. first statement is not mandatory
- B. second statement is not mandatory
- C. third statement is not mandatory
- D. fourth statement is not mandatory

# Socialist love: from utopia to pragmatism

 [opendemocracy.net/od-russia/katerina-liskova/socialist-love-from-utopia-to-pragmatism](https://opendemocracy.net/od-russia/katerina-liskova/socialist-love-from-utopia-to-pragmatism)

Katerina Liskova

What we know as love can change fast. In Czechoslovakia, the state's idea of marriage went from an utopian ideal to a functional arrangement in 20 years flat.



Чехословакия 1950-х: равенство мужчин и женщин в действии. Фото из архива автора. Despite what people might think, love is not eternal. Not only can an emotion experienced by any two given people might (and all too often does) disappear, the very notion of love changes on a broader scale. It shifts over time and place, across historical eras and geographical spaces, affecting what people perceive as desirable, what they strive for in their intimate lives and beyond and how they understand themselves.

More interestingly, love — an innermost feeling that we tend to perceive as subjective — is connected with and shaped by broader socio-political structures. Love is political.

Under state socialism in Czechoslovakia, the idea of love underwent a series of transformations along with the shifting character of the regime. Here, not one, but two different modes of love existed in the space of 40 years. Political events, seemingly remote from romantic sentiments, had direct and tangible effects on ways people engaged in relationships and conceived of love.

## The country of free love

The advent of socialism in Czechoslovakia brought about a universal accent on equality. Not only were people to be equal as workers but also as spouses and parents. The legal standing of women and men in marriages changed dramatically with new civil codes introduced soon after communist takeovers.

In Czechoslovakia, the Act on Family Law of 1949 stipulated that wives were newly on par with their husbands, who lost their age-old power over women and children. The law had spouses jointly making decisions regarding property and children, made divorce easier, and freed women from needing their husbands' approval in order to work outside the home.

Also, the wording about “marital duty” that connoted sex in marriage was omitted from legal documents. “The law deliberately does not mention marital duties because this duty as well as the duty to have children results from the very essence of marriage as a voluntary union of two people who seek in it the fulfillment of their personal life,” a women’s magazine informed its readers in 1950. “Duty” fell out of fashion, replaced by unenforced engagement in love, sex and their expected result – children.



Институт сексологии в Праге. Фото из архива автора. With the legal framework changed, people were expected to change their attitudes to marriage as well. A new branch of experts surfaced who studied human sexuality and advised people how to live in happy sexual unions: sexologists. A whole Sexology Institute was founded in Prague in 1921, way before [Alfred Kinsey had a chance to publish his first report in the west](#). They were medical doctors who conducted clinical research and who also wrote marriage manuals. Those books published in the 1950s extolled the virtues of equal unions that people should enter solely out of love.

“Love is possible only among free people”

“Love is possible only among free people,” proclaimed Josef Hynie, the founding father of Czechoslovak sexology, in 1948.

His colleagues from the Sexological Institute elaborated:

“It is true that the consistent inclusion of women into societal and work processes and their economic independence from men loosen marital bonds. The woman eludes the thrall of her husband. She is no longer *only* a servant, *only* a housekeeper, *only* a representative, *only* a child-rearer but becomes an equal partner economically as well as socially. [...] Wherever a marriage is based on mutual love and respect, the economic and social independence of both partners creates all the prerequisites to a much stronger union without falsity and pretense, stemming from a voluntary and joyful desire for shared life.”

Throughout the 1950s, women’s freedom has become historically unprecedented: guaranteed equality in the workplace, legal equality within marriage – and men stood to benefit too. True love and happy marriage rewarded both sexes.

This is not to say that everyday lives and lived realities of marriages changed overnight. In fact, many stayed tiresomely unaltered. But the fact that reality didn’t always live up to expectations was not seen as reason to

abandon the expectations. Quite the contrary – the sexologist Vladimír Barták advised young unmarried people not to set their hopes lower than finding their true soul mate. People should never settle for marriages of convenience, he believed.

## Peak of stupidity

Less than a dozen years later, everything looked dramatically different. In the early 1970s, the bestselling marriage manuals penned by the authors from the very same Sexological Institute announced that “man and woman are not equal biologically nor socially” and advised to embrace the fact that “despite the principle stipulated by law, the responsibility for running the household and caring for children lies mostly with the woman” – and if her husband helps from time to time, she should “appreciate man’s help, have respect for it, despite the fact that it actually is his legal duty.” Equality was not envisioned as part of these arrangements.



Идеальная чешская семья после "нормализации". Фото из архива автора. Together with equality, love disappeared from the discourse of Czechoslovak sexology. Authors scrambled for specific-sounding, yet convoluted expressions such as “emotional disharmony between the spouses” or “emotional estrangement”, “the disturbance of the emotional realm in the marital union” or a “discrepancy in mutual displays of tenderness and feelings.” Love did not merely go unmentioned — all these expressions connoted a problem, a lack.

I think we should leave love to the arts

Indeed, if “love” was mentioned at all, it tended to carry negative connotations. The sexologist Jaroslav Zvěřina of the Sexological Institute railed against the “love ideology of sexuality.” According to him, “like any feeling, love in and of itself is neither good nor bad. It can become either, it depends on its consequences. I think we should leave love to the arts. We should lead people to responsibility towards themselves and their environment. Excess of emotions only weakens that responsibility.” People were to forget love and embrace discipline instead.

A true champion of the idea that discipline should trump love was Miroslav Plizák, arguably the best-known Czechoslovak sexologist. In his 1975 bestselling marriage manual, he ridiculed the idea of marital love and happiness as the “peak of stupidity”:

“We refuse to hear anything about the need for discipline in marriage because we remained enslaved to art nouveau ideas about marriage; we keep believing that above all marriage should be a groove of love in which spouses romantically frolic, and we resist the assertion that marriage must be an institution that is “office” of sorts.”

Plzák believed that marital life should be mechanised, just like riding a bike or operating a machine. People should avoid contemplating their marriage (“am I happy?”, “is that all there is?”) and, if they felt bored, they were to beget an offspring. After all, having children was the function that marriage was to serve in the first place. And women’s function was to raise the children and care for the home.

## Normalisation of hopelessness

Why such a vast difference between the early and late stages of Czechoslovak socialism? The first decade or so after the régime change was characterised by utopian thinking. The strong postwar sentiment that the foundations of the world needed to be *remade* was accompanied by the need to *rethink* those foundations. The close relationship between a man and a woman was seen as a paradigmatic social bond, and back in the 1950s it was believed such bonds should be based on equality and friendship, blossoming into love.

The 1970s and 1980s in Czechoslovakia were dubbed the “Normalisation” period by proponents of the regime. What communists wanted to “normalise” were the political conditions that had been upended by the processes leading up to the Prague Spring of 1968.

The wave of protest that had swept the nation and caught the imagination of people worldwide rolled over the cultural landscape: films by Jiří Menzel, Věra Chytilová, Miloš Forman and others became known as the new wave; books by Milan Kundera and Bohumil Hrabal became renowned for parting with schematic realism. This new art and literature breached the command economy by proposing reforms aimed to reintroduce some market elements and spilled into civic life in form of attempts to return participatory features into politics.

People gave up change at a personal as well as political level, approaching reality in a pragmatic way. This moral disposition reproduced the “normalised” status quo

After the Soviet-led tanks quashed all that in August 1968, people abandoned all hope. The socialist utopia had been revised already during the 1960s, but now with “Normalisation” in place, policies binding people to their homes and families were implemented and marriage manuals inadvertently took part in narrowing horizons and diminishing expectations: “Look around you. Dissatisfied? Forget it, this is all there is,” the new marriage manuals appeared to say.

People gave up change at a personal as well as political level, approaching reality in a pragmatic way. This moral disposition reproduced the “normalised” status quo, guaranteeing that the order did not dissolve. Social stability, undisturbed by men and women desiring different arrangements at home and beyond, was to be the natural result.

We should take note of how quickly idealistic drives can yield to utilitarian imperatives — and how unnoticed this change occurs to those involved. In Czechoslovakia, the crossover took no more than a decade. Love is surely not eternal, but when we abandon utopian yearnings, when we settle for what is, when we give in to normalising pressures of the day, we are ditching a chance for better futures. We should think about that every day, not only on Valentine’s.

*The collapse of state socialism ushered in a revolution of the intimate. Share your thoughts on utopian/utilitarian love below.*



This article is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International licence. If you have any queries about republishing please [contact us](#). Please check individual images for licensing details.



