gender

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Abstract:

The word ‘gender’ acquires different meanings in the political, media and colloquial language in Bulgaria in early 2018 (during the discussion Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and its ratification). [The Convention was drawn up on 11.05 .2011 in the city of Istanbul and was signed by the Republic of Bulgaria on 21.04.2016.]

The word ‘gender’ has a negative connotation in a specific socio-cultural context. The word is used to name people of different sexual orientations and it is used as a synonym for gay, lesbian, transgender person. It is used to refer to the so-called ‘third sex’.

Думата "джендър" придобива различни значения в политическия, медийния и разговорния език в България в началото на 2018 г. (по време на обсъждането на Конвенцията на Съвета на Европа за превенция и борба с насилието над жени и домашното насилие (Истанбулска конвенция) и нейната ратификация). [Конвенцията е изготвена на 11.05 .2011 г. в град Истанбул и е подписана от Република България на 21.04.2016 г.].

Думата "джендър" има негативна конотация в специфичен социокултурен контекст. Думата се използва за назоваване на хора с различна сексуална ориентация и се използва като синоним на гей, лесбийка, транссексуален човек. Тя се използва за обозначаване на така наречения "трети пол".

Etymology:

Analysis of the root/s of the word

gen·der | \ ˈjen-dər \

plural genders

Definition of *gender*

(Entry 1 of 2)

1a: a subclass within a grammatical class (such as noun, pronoun, adjective, or verb) of a language that is partly arbitrary but also partly based on distinguishable characteristics (such as shape, social rank, manner of existence, or sex) and that determines agreement with and selection of other words or grammatical forms

b: membership of a word or a grammatical form in such a subclass

c: an inflectional form (see INFLECTION sense 2a) showing membership in such a subclass

Marriam-Webstar

Cultural specificity:

As we said/stated above the dispute begins over the ratification of the “Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence”, known as the Istanbul Convention in 2018. Some Bulgarian politicians make absurd interpretations of the word “gender” and they present it as synonymous with the “third sex”. The topic of violence is replaced by a discussion of non-standard forms of sexuality and condemnation of the demonstration of non-traditional gender identity. The focus of the debate is on the “third sex”, and the topic in the Convention on Violence against Women has proved to be secondary. This is an indicator of the conservatism of

Bulgarian society in terms of topics such as sexual orientation, homosexuality, transgender and all forms of sexual orientation or gender identity, other than traditional ones. Tensions have been created in some groups of the Bulgarian society, politicians and non-governmental organisations are participating in discussions, negative moods and reactions are being created.



The “third sex” - Gospodari

The manipulations of politicians and the media in the public have resulted in: the term “gender” being burdened with negative connotations as it has already been. Proponents of conspiracy theories go to extremes, believing that Western Europe is trying to undermine the values of the traditional Bulgarian family. The result is that Bulgaria has not ratified the convention.

Bulgarian society continues to have respect for what it perceives as values- family, marriage, raising and educating children in traditional moral principles. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church defends the position for two sexes and for marriages between members of both sexes. Political parties remain in different positions. Non-governmental organisations, including the Bulgarian Centre for Gender Studies Foundation http://bgrf.org/ , Gender Land https://gender.land/gender/, Gender Alternatives Foundation, “Animus Association” Foundation, Bulgarian Helsinki Committee are researching the topic of equality between women and men, and they agree that this has to do with the gender” tour - http://bgrf.org/.

The word “gender” continues to be used as a synonym for fagots, transvestites, confused people, but there are no homophobic crimes in Bulgaria based on hatred. There have not been incidents involving a high degree of cruelty and brutality.

Problematization:

Cultural Specificity

As we said/stated above the dispute begins over the ratification of the “Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence”, known as the Istanbul Convention in 2018. Some Bulgarian politicians make absurd interpretations of the word “gender” and they present it as synonymous with the “third sex”. The topic of violence is replaced by a discussion of non-standard forms of sexuality and condemnation of the demonstration of non-traditional gender identity. The focus of the debate is on the “third sex”, and the topic in the Convention on Violence against Women has proved to be secondary. This is an indicator of the conservatism of

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The term ‘gender’ includes only two sex - male and female. This is explained in Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in an extensive explanatory report on the disputed points in the international treaty. At the same time, parts of the Convention may apply to people of different sexual orientations or gender identities.

The word “gender” is translated into the Bulgarian language as „социален пол” – “social sex”.

On January 12, 2018, a proposal about ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was submitted to the National Assembly and it is presented officially. Standpoints and positions have been submitted by political parties and non-governmental organisations and they are published on the website of the Bulgarian Parliament. https://www.parliament.bg/

The public debate began with headlines of fake news in Bulgarian media in early 2018. Media publications include the information that after the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in Bulgaria will be “introduced a third sex.” Political parties took an active part in this debate and they defended different positions.

The Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (BOC) also took part in the discussion. BOC organised a discussion on January 23, 2018. Other Christian religious organisations in Bulgaria also took part in the public debate and the discussion and they are against the Istanbul Convention, defending religious values and marriage between people of two sex.

As a result of these debates, the Council of Ministers did not ratify the Istanbul Convention, 8 ministers voted against it.

The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) wants a referendum on the Istanbul Convention. The Bulgarian parliament rejected the BSP's proposal on March 7, 20218. Only 67 BSP for Bulgaria MPs voted in favor, saying the people should be asked. 121 MPs were against - all MPs from GERB and MRF and some of the representatives from “United Patriots” and “Volya” – “Will”. 23 deputies from the United Patriots and Volya abstained. https://www.dnevnik.bg/

The Bulgarian Socialist Party, patriotic and nationalistic parties vote against the ratification of the Istanbul Convention after the debate in the Bulgarian Parliament. Two of the three parliamentary committees did not approve the proposed text of the Istanbul Convention on January 24, 2018. Only the ruling Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria (CEDB) strongly support the text of the Istanbul Convention. The deputies from the parties BSP, Volya and United Patriots voted categorically “no”.

The Constitutional Court declared after a vote on July 26, 20218 that the Istanbul Convention did not comply with the Constitution. Eight constitutional judges supported the decision [8], four signed with a dissenting opinion. https://news.lex.bg/ The Constitutional Court of Bulgaria ruled the decision N 13 in constitutional case №3 / 2018, ruling that “the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence does not comply with the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The Association of European Journalists-Bulgaria (AEJ) conducts a study and the final report finds that some rules of journalistic ethics have not been observed by some Bulgarian media on the topic of the Istanbul Convention and that some publications have negative assessments (14 March, 2018). https://aej-bulgaria.org/

In conclusion

The conclusion are: The word ‘gender’ is used as a synonym for: gay, lesbian, fagot, homosexual, transgender, transvestite, man in women's clothing, hermaphrodite, a person with gender reassignment surgery. The word ‘gender’ contains negative evaluations that range from ridicule and contempt for different people to insults, rejection, abusing and xenophobia.

Communication strategies:

The word ‘gender’ became part of the communication strategies of various organisations, political parties and institutions in Bulgaria in 2018. The goals are different and some of them are to create a focus on national themes, on family values and raising children.

The goal of the Bulgarian Socialist Party and the patriotic and nationalist parties in Bulgaria is to create the preservation of traditional family values and virtues.

The second goal is to activate certain groups in Bulgarian society and to strengthen nationalist sentiments to form attitudes against decisions of the institutions of the European Union.

The third goal is to start a new topic and expand its discussion to become part of society's agenda.

The fourth goal objective is to mislead what the nature of the Istanbul Convention is.

The fifth goal is the creation of a political party and personal popularity through participation in media, debates and virtual forums on the topic of gender.

The sixth goal is to present traditional Christian values, not to oppose the gender ideology of the Christian worldview. This goal is of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (BOC), as well as other Christian denominations in Bulgaria: Catholicism, Protestants, Evangelicals and others. BOC says in a statement: “In this context, prepared and legally justified, the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church presented to the public its objections to specific, ambiguous and even controversial texts of the convention, finding them unacceptable and alien to Bulgarian spiritual traditions. Expressing this principled position, the Holy Synod met with broad support, which confirmed the need for a serious debate on the subject and practically postponed the vote on this controversial convention by the National Assembly. https://www.pravoslavie.bg/

Subversion:

The subversions of the use of the word ‘gender’ are on several levels: linguistic, legislative, institutional, political, social, media, religious, scientific and others.

The word ‘gender’ is used as a noun and as an adjective.

The noun „джендър” – ‘gender’ is masculine, but there are also feminine words, such as „джендърка” – gender woman. The plural form of the noun is „джендъри” – genders. The nouns „Джендаризъм” – Gendarmerism and “Джендърство” – Gendership are derivative words used to describe both ideology or legislation and a type of

behaviour in society in support of differences and tolerance.

The word ‘gender’ is also used as an adjective in the following terms: gender ideology, gender brochures, gender promotions, gender worldview, gender stereotypes, gender roles, gender behavior, gender prejudice.

In the language of legal documents at a national and international level, the word ‘gender’ is understood as social sex. The Constitutional Court analyses the terms “sex”, “gender”, “sexual orientation” and “gender identity”, which in the Bulgarian translation of the Convention are respectively “gender”, “social gender”, “sexual orientation” and “gender-based identity”. https://news.lex.bg/

Gender behaviour is discussed in NGO documents. The two concepts are closely related and yet have different meanings. The term “sex” is associated with the biological and physiological characteristics that define the individual as “male” or “female”. The term “gender” refers to socially established roles, behaviors, activities and characteristics that in society are considered appropriate for men or women, respectively. https://genderalternatives.org/bg/

The third layer is the media language, which leads to opposition and involvement in public debate and dialogue on the topic.

“Violence is often excluded from support services based on their orientation. Certain groups of individuals may also be discriminated against on the basis of their gender identity, which simply means that the gender they identify with does not coincide with that defined at birth. ”

But further there is an important clarification in Art. 313

“In addition, when providing a gender-sensitive interpretation of each of the foundations of the Convention, Parties may, if they wish, extend the interpretation to individuals who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, who may also encounter these forms of gender-based harassment and violence.” https://www.clubz.bg/

Clubz.bg is the only media outlet in this group that publishes extremely negative comments about the Convention, such as those of Petar Moskov (“Aren't the rights of whites, heterosexuals, Christians being violated") https://aej-bulgaria.org/

The fourth layer is the daily speaking and entering the vocabulary of even students and young people. For example: „Ах, ти мръсен джендър такъв! - Ah, you filthy gender like that! As a part of a swearing and as a part of a vulgar language and low register of the language.

The fifth layer is political language. With insane ideologies like "genderism" you can successfully drive all of humanity crazy. This is the perfect way to corrupt and demonize entire generations. Gender ideology, claiming to deconstruct some stereotypes, creates others. The question is who decides which are the more correct, the truer ones. That is, what is the criterion? Who is the last authority? https://www.pravoslavie.bg/

Discussion:

The debate over the use of the word ‘gender’ and the Istanbul Convention is gradually coming to an end in 2019 in Bulgaria. However, the impact of the debate is a fact, the word ‘gender’ entering the media publications, the political vocabulary and the colloquial language. The word ‘gender’ continues to be used by different people, even by young people, students and pupils, who think that it has a negative meaning and they use it to insult and express intolerance towards people/others with a different sexual orientation and identity (gays, lesbians, transsexuals, transvestites). Politicians are less likely to use the word gender to refer to the so-called third gender, but the term continues to be used figuratively. In this sense, the discussion regarding the word ‘gender’ continues in different circles: scientists, psychologists, sociologists, media experts and others.

References/Further Readings:

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