

Effect of Globalization on Transgenders in India

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ABSTRACT : *Emerging economies like India are experiencing mobilization of third gender and sexual identity politics raising fundamental questions of citizenship, human rights, cultural identity and tradition. With economic globalization in the developing world, a Western, hegemonic notion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) identity has been exported to traditional societies thereby destroying indigenous sexual cultures and diversities. This paper aims at exploring the effects of globalization and colonization in developing world with special reference to India. After briefly describing the globalization in general, this paper examines the tradition of trans genders prevailed in India in relation to the pre-colonial era and forces of neoliberal globalization. The twin-process of globalization and colonization has significantly influenced the acceptance of hijra communities in Indian society, while simultaneously strengthening the view of Western historians and scholars.*

KEYWORDS : *Hijras, colonization , globalization and trans genders.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the global system, marked with widening income disparities, economic growth disparities, human capital disparities (life expectancy, nutrition, infant and child mortality, adult literacy, enrolment ratio etc.), disparities in the distribution of global economic resources and opportunities, the disturbing question that arises is that who would protect the interests of the genders who are under privileged like the second and third genders. This article examines how globalization has impinged upon the life of transgender and society's behavior towards them, and how these, in turn, are related to the colonization in Indian context. Both the needs for effective public health and a respect for third gender rights require an insistence on the right to sexual diversity as part of a wider move towards the recognition of difference as an essential part of the human condition.

Globalization : Globalization has been described as the gradual elimination of economic borders and concomitant increase in international exchange and transnational interaction. Globalization has been identified with economic reforms, structural adjustment programs, new world trade order and the opening up of the commercial markets and the global communication village and the world increasingly becoming similar and smaller. In the context of weaker sections of a society this would mean a better social and economic status. Globalization has an impact on all aspects of life, including the construction, regulation and imagination of sexuality and transgender. In issues of sexuality, as in other spheres, globalization increases inequalities, acting as an oppressive influence.

II. INDIAN SCENARIO

In the Indian culture, the most prevalent transgender are hijras. Hijras are physiologically male but they adopt feminine gender identity and roles. Hijras have a long attached recorded history of almost 4,000 years with India. During the Mughal empire in the 16th and 17th centuries, castrated hijras – or eunuchs – were respected and considered close confidants of emperors, often being employed as royal servants and bodyguards. These jobs were so coveted that historians say some parents actually castrated their sons in order to attain favor with the Mughal kings and secure employment for their children. But despite acceptance centuries ago, hijras today live on the fringes of Indian society and face discrimination in jobs and services such as health and education.

The Truth of Colonization and Globalization : Culturally, people have a right to be allowed their freedom of expression. Through centuries, the transgender has been institutionalized and also holds a special relevance in the society. The transgender are enjoying more civil rights; being counted in the census, right to vote, option to display third gender on passports, and other freedoms. They are legitimized in several places in the world and free to express the truth as they see it – a fundamental right of any human being.

The life of hijras are different today in India, because of the kind of laws that were introduced when the British came. The whole concept of unnatural and natural was defined in our law. This treatment stems from the British enacted legislation: 'The Criminal Tribes Act 1871' under which hijras were criminalized and persecuted. This is not about the East versus West. This is about accepting and understanding the truth. By being truthful, the "third gender" for centuries were able to get more recognition and have a better life than today. The western culture and laws have a narrative of binary gender – male or female. As a result, several resources and money are utilized to promote science, research, groups, communities, viewpoints only from a binary gender perspective. The western narrative of binary gender could overshadow the cultural diversities and the viewpoints of others in the world who believe in the "third gender" and respect it. With globalization occurring at a faster pace than ever before, it is important to account for everyone's voice to be heard and be respected and not just the loudest voice in the room. It also so happens the South Asian countries happen to be some of the most populous in the world and statistically would have more "third gender" persons. Non-western cultures have accepted the truth as nature delivers for centuries instead of forcing people to use a strategy of secrecy and lying. In truth, there is respect for all human beings and everyone should be working towards an environment that fosters saying the truth. A big part of the problem here is the Western gaze—that much of what those are educated in the West and speak English primarily learn about other cultures' understandings of gender are filtered through the words of American, European, or Australian historians, anthropologists, NGO workers, journalists, lawyers, and others. There is always a danger of exoticizing other cultures, of over-simplifying cultural understandings of gender, or of painting an exaggerated positive picture.

III. CONCLUSION

In trying to define itself as a relatively young nation in a post-colonial world, Indian society has constantly had to contend with urges to both maintain its traditions (and even turn to more orthodox, "uncorrupted" forms) and globalize. Because conceptions of globalization are largely associated with the West, India's colonizer, this debate invokes notions of authenticity, progress, and independence. Though globalization is seen in whole country but hijras are still not accepted by people. The awareness should be brought about the problems of discrimination against hijras. Whether transgender identity is described as a third gender or a transition from one gender to another, whether transgender people are stereotyped as workers or healers or sex workers, how gender identity relates to sexuality, are all questions rooted in a cultural framework. It's impossible to know what impact the globalization export of transgender terminology has had on different countries, and maybe it doesn't matter, as it is an individual's experience within the present context that is most important to that person's welfare.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Caregiver of Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome Support Group, www.caissg.org, for article on "Third Gender – Equality and Truth"

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