

Towards a Transgender Religion in India

Taking a multidisciplinary approach, in this paper I intend to argue that religious attributes of the transgender community in the Indian context such as emasculation, surgery, birth and death rituals, and initiation ceremony have much to offer to form a distinct religion. The attributes as well as theological practices though have a genesis in pan-Indian religious tradition, it goes beyond the uniformity of the same and as a way to destabilize the religious devices, makes the dominant religion upside down. Taking instances from autobiographical tales such as Laxmi's and Revathy's I read the possibility of discovering a unique religious tradition parallel to Hinduism which destabilizes the mainstream theology.

Key Words: Theology; Literature; Transgender; Humanities

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Definition of Terms

- Hijr
- Hijra
- Transgender
- Eunuch

Time-Line

- Medieval Period: Transgender Profession
- Modern Period: Criminal Tribes Act
- Nationalist Period: Aestheticism and Eunuchism

Central Arguments

- The ascetic body is later developed as “eunuchism” in the Indian nationalist discourse.
- Denotification of the “criminal” tribes runs parallel to banning Hijra life in the Indian context.

Literature

- Me Hijra, Me Laxmi (Laxmi)
- Truth about Me (Revathy)
- Folklore and Folktales
- Origin Tales from Hinduism

Conclusion

- Interface: Theology; Literature; Transgender; Humanities