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Lecture- 31



LECTURE 31:

Third gender Third gender or third sex is a concept in which individuals are categorized, either by themselves or by society, as neither man nor woman. It is also a social category present in societies that recognize three or more genders. The term third is usually understood to mean "other"; some anthropologists and sociologists have described fourth,[1] fifth,[2] and "some"[3] genders. Biology determines whether a human's chromosomal and anatomical sex is male, female, or one of the uncommon variations on this sexual dimorphism that can create a degree of ambiguity known as intersex.[4][5] However, the state of personally identifying as, or being identified by society as, a man, a woman, or other, is usually also defined by the individual's gender identity and gender role in the particular culture in which they live. Not all cultures have strictly defined gender roles.[6][7][8] In different cultures, a third or fourth gender may represent very different things. To Native Hawaiians and Tahitians, Māhū is an intermediate state between man and woman, or a "person of indeterminate gender".[9] Some traditional Diné Native Americans of the Southwestern US acknowledge a spectrum of four genders: feminine woman, masculine woman, feminine man, and masculine man.[10] The term "third gender" has also been used to describe the hijras of India[11] who have gained legal identity, fa'afafine of Polynesia, and sworn virgins.[12] While found in a number of non-Western cultures, concepts of "third", "fourth", and "some" gender roles are still somewhat new to mainstream western culture and conceptual thought.[13] The concept is most likely to be embraced in the modern LGBT or queer subcultures. While mainstream western scholars— notably anthropologists who have tried to write about the South Asian hijras or the Native American "gender variant" and two-spirit people—have often sought to understand the term "third gender" solely in the language of the modern LGBT community, other scholars—especially Indigenous scholars—stress that mainstream scholars' lack of cultural understanding and context has led to widespread misrepresentation of third gender people, as well as misrepresentations of the cultures in question, including whether or not this concept actually applies to these cultures at all.[14][15][16] [17] Sex and gender Main article: Legal recognition of non-binary gender Since at least the 1970s, anthropologists have described gender categories in some cultures which they could not adequately explain using a two-gender framework.[3] At the same time, feminists began to draw a distinction between (biological) sex and (social/psychological) gender. Contemporary gender theorists usually argue that a twogender system is neither innate nor universal. Anthropologist Michael G. Peletz believes our notions of different types of genders (including the attitudes toward the third gender) deeply affect our lives and reflects our values in society. In Peletz' book, "Gender, Sexuality, and Body Politics in Modern Asia", he describes:[18] For our purposes, the term "gender" designates the cultural categories, symbols, meanings, practices, and institutionalized arrangements bearing on at least five sets of phenomena: (1) females and femininity; (2) males and masculinity; (3) Androgynes, who are partly male and partly female in appearance or of indeterminate sex/gender, as well as intersexed individuals, also known as hermaphrodites, who to one or another degree may have both male and female sexual organs or characteristics; (4) transgender people, who engage in practices that transgress or transcend normative boundaries and are thus by definition "transgressively gendered"; and (5) neutered or unsexed/ungendered individuals such as eunuchs. Intersex people and third gender[Intersex people are born with sex characteristics, such as chromosomes, gonads, or genitals that, according to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies".[19] A sex and gender distinction is not universal, and Peletz's description of gender as designating biological variations as well as cultural practices is not unique. In a study of arguments that intersex people fit into a third gender classification, intersex scholar Morgan Holmes argues that much analysis of a third sex or third gender is simplistic:[20] much of the existing work on cultural systems that incorporate a 'third sex' portray simplistic visions in which societies with more than two sex/gender categories are cast as superior to those that divide the world into just two. I argue that to understand whether a system is more or less oppressive than another we have to understand how it treats its various members, not only its 'thirds'. Like non-

intersex people, some intersex individuals may not identify themselves as either exclusively female or exclusively male, but most appear to be men or women.[4][5][21] A clinical review suggests that between 8.5–20% of people with intersex conditions may experience gender dysphoria,[22] while sociological research in Australia, a country with a third 'X' sex classification, shows that 19% of people born with atypical sex characteristics selected an "X" or "other" option, while 52% are women, 23% men and 6% unsure.[23][24] Alex MacFarlane is believed to be the first person in Australia to obtain a birth certificate recording sex as indeterminate, and the first Australian passport with an 'X' sex marker in 2003.[25] The third International Intersex Forum, held in November/December 2013, made statements for the first time on sex and gender registration:[26][27][28][29][30][31][32][33][34] To register intersex children as females or males, with the awareness that, like all people, they may grow up to identify with a different sex or gender. To ensure that sex or gender classifications are amendable through a simple administrative procedure at the request of the individuals concerned. All adults and capable minors should be able to choose between female (F), male (M), non-binary or multiple options. In the future, as with race or religion, sex or gender should not be a category on birth certificates or identification documents for anybody. The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions states that the legal recognition of intersex people is firstly about access to the same rights as other men and women, when assigned male or female; secondly it is about access to administrative corrections to legal documents when an original sex assignment is not appropriate; and thirdly it is not about the creation of a third sex or gender classification for intersex people as a population but it is, instead, about self-determination.[35] In March 2017, an Australian and Aotearoa/New Zealand community statement called for an end to legal classification of sex, stating that legal third classifications, like binary classifications, were based on structural violence and failed to respect diversity and a "right to self-determination". It also called for the criminalization of deferrable intersex medical interventions.[36][37] Transgender people and third gender[Gender may be recognized and organized differently in different cultures. In some nonWestern cultures, gender may not be seen as binary, or people may be seen as being able to cross freely between male and female, or to exist in a state that is in-between, or neither. In some cultures being third gender may be associated with the gift of being able to mediate between the world of the spirits and world of humans.[38] For cultures with these spiritual beliefs, it is generally seen as a positive thing, though some third gender people have also been accused of witchcraft and persecuted.[39] In most western cultures, people who do not conform to heteronormative ideals are often seen as sick, disordered, or insufficiently formed.[38] The Indigenous māhū of Hawaii are seen as embodying an intermediate state between man and woman, or as people "of indeterminate gender", [9] while some traditional Dineh of the Southwestern US recognize a spectrum of four genders: feminine woman, masculine woman, feminine man, masculine man.[10] The term "third gender" has also been used to describe the hijras of South Asia[11] who have gained legal identity, the fa'afafine of Polynesia, and the Albanian sworn virgins.[12] In some Indigenous communities in Africa[vague] , a woman can be recognized as a "female husband" who enjoys all of the privileges of men and is recognized as such, but whose femaleness, while not openly acknowledged, is not forgotten either.[40] The hijras of India are one of the most recognized groups of third gender people. Some western commentators (Hines and Sanger) have theorized that this could be a result of the Hindu belief in reincarnation, in which gender, sex, and even species can change from lifetime to lifetime, perhaps allowing for a more fluid interpretation. There are other cultures in which the third gender is seen as an intermediate state of being rather than as a movement from one conventional sex to the other.[41] In a study of people in the United States who thought themselves to be members of a third gender, Ingrid M. Sell found that they typically felt different from the age of 5.[42] Because of both peer and parental pressure, those growing up with the most ambiguous appearances had the most troubled childhoods and difficulties later in life. Sell also discovered similarities between the third genders of the East and those of the West. Nearly half of those interviewed were healers or in the medical profession. A majority of them, again like their Eastern counterparts, were artistic enough to make a living from their abilities. The capacity to mediate between men and women was a common skill, and third genders were oftentimes thought to possess an unusually wide perspective and the ability to understand both sides.[42] A notable result of Sell's study is that 93% of the third genders

interviewed, again like their Eastern counterparts, reported “paranormal”-type abilities.[43] In recent years, some Western societies have begun to recognize non-binary or genderqueer identities. Some years after Alex MacFarlane, Australian Norrie MayWelby was recognized as having unspecified status.[44][45] In 2016, an Oregon circuit court ruled that a resident, Jamie Shupe, could legally change gender to non-binary.[46] The Open Society Foundations published a report, License to Be Yourself in May 2014, documenting "some of the world's most progressive and rights-based laws and policies that enable trans people to change their gender identity on official documents".[47] The report comments on the recognition of third classifications, stating: From a rights-based perspective, third sex / gender options should be voluntary, providing trans people with a third choice about how to define their gender identity. Those identifying as a third sex / gender should have the same rights as those identifying as male or female. The document also quotes Mauro Cabral of GATE: People tend to identify a third sex with freedom from the gender binary, but that is not necessarily the case. If only trans and/or intersex people can access that third category, or if they are compulsively assigned to a third sex, then the gender binary gets stronger, not weaker. The report concludes that two or three options are insufficient: "A more inclusive approach would be to increase options for people to self-define their sex and gender identity." [47] Third gender and sexual orientation[Before the sexual revolution of the 1960s, there was no common non-derogatory vocabulary for non-heterosexuality; terms such as "third gender" trace back to the 1860s.[48][49][50][51][52][53] One such term, Uranian, was used in the 19th century to a person of a third sex—originally, someone with "a female psyche in a male body" who is sexually attracted to men. Its definition was later extended to cover homosexual gender variant females and a number of other sexual types. It is believed to be an English adaptation of the German word Urning, which was first published by activist Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–95) in a series of five booklets (1864–65) that were collected under the title Forschungen über das Räthsel der mann männlichen Liebe ("Research into the Riddle of Man-Male Love"). Ulrich developed his terminology before the first public use of the term "homosexual", which appeared in 1869 in a pamphlet published anonymously by Karl-Maria Kertbeny (1824–82). The word Uranian (Urning) was derived by Ulrichs from the Greek goddess Aphrodite Urania, who was created out of the god Uranus' testicles; it stood for homosexuality, while Aphrodite Dionea (Dioning) represented heterosexuality.[54] Lesbian activist Anna Rueling used the term in a 1904 speech, "What Interest Does the Women's Movement Have in Solving the Homosexual Problem?"[55] According to some scholars, the West is trying to reinterpret and redefine ancient thirdgender identities to fit the Western concept of sexual orientation. In Redefining Fa'afafine: Western Discourses and the Construction of Transgenderism in Samoa, Johanna Schmidt argues that the Western attempts to reinterpret fa'afafine, the third gender in Samoan culture, make it have more to do with sexual orientation than gender. She also argues that this is actually changing the nature of fa'afafine itself, and making it more "homosexual".[56] A Samoan fa'afafine said, "But I would like to pursue a master's degree with a paper on homosexuality from a Samoan perspective that would be written for educational purposes, because I believe some of the stuff that has been written about us is quite wrong." [57] In How to become a Berdache: Toward a unified analysis of gender diversity, Will Roscoe writes that "this pattern can be traced from the earliest accounts of the Spaniards to presentday ethnographies. What has been written about berdaches reflects more the influence of existing Western discourses on gender, sexuality and the Other than what observers actually witnessed." [58] According to Towle and Morgan: Ethnographic examples [of 'third genders'] can come from distinct societies located in Thailand, Polynesia, Melanesia, Native America, western Africa, and elsewhere and from any point in history, from Ancient Greece, to sixteenth century England to contemporary North America. Popular authors routinely simplify their descriptions, ignoring...or conflating dimensions that seem to them extraneous, incomprehensible, or ill suited to the images they want to convey (484).[59] Western scholars often do not make a distinction between people of the third gender and males; they are often lumped together. The scholars usually use gender roles as a way to explain sexual relations between the third gender and males. For example, when analyzing the non-normative sex gender categories in Theravada Buddhism, Peter A. Jackson says it appears that within early Buddhist communities, men who engaged in receptive anal sex were seen as feminized and were thought to be hermaphrodites. In contrast, men who engaged in oral sex were not

seen as crossing sex/gender boundaries, but rather as engaging in abnormal sexual practices without threatening their masculine gendered existence.[60] Some writers suggest that a third gender emerged around 1700 AD in England: the male sodomite.[61] According to these writers, this was marked by the emergence of a subculture of effeminate males and their meeting places (molly houses), as well as a marked increase in hostility towards effeminate or homosexual males. People described themselves as members of a third sex in Europe from at least the 1860s with the writings of Karl Heinrich Ulrichs[62] and continuing in the late nineteenth century with Magnus Hirschfeld,[48] John Addington Symonds,[49] Edward Carpenter,[50] Aimée Duc[51] and others. These writers described themselves and those like them as being of an "inverted" or "intermediate" sex and experiencing homosexual desire, and their writing argued for social acceptance of such sexual intermediates.[63] Many cited precedents from classical Greek and Sanskrit literature (see below). Throughout much of the twentieth century, the term "third sex" was a common descriptor for homosexuals and gender nonconformists, but after the gay liberation movements of the 1970s and a growing separation of the concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity, the term fell out of favor among LGBT communities and the wider public. With the renewed exploration of gender that feminism, the modern transgender movement and queer theory has fostered, some in the contemporary West have begun to describe themselves as a third sex again.[64] Other modern identities that cover similar ground include pangender, bigender, genderqueer, androgyne, intergender, "other gender" and "differently gendered".

Third gender and feminism In Wilhelmine Germany, the terms *drittes Geschlecht* ("third sex") and *Mannweib* ("manwoman") were also used to describe feminists – both by their opponents[65] and sometimes by feminists themselves. In the 1899 novel *Das dritte Geschlecht* (The Third Sex) by Ernst Ludwig von Wolzogen, feminists are portrayed as "neuters" with external female characteristics accompanied by a crippled male psyche. Legal recognition .

Modern societies without legal recognition The following gender categories have also been described as a third gender: Africa[edit] Angola: Chibados, third-gendered shamans in• the Ndongo kingdom. [66] Southern Ethiopia: Ashtime of Maale culture[67]• Kenya: Mashoga of Swahili-speaking areas of the Kenyan• coast, particularly Mombasa.[68] Democratic Republic of the Congo: Mangaiko among the Mbo• people.[69] Asia-Pacific[Micronesia: Palao'ana in Chamorro language, Northern• Marianas Islands including Guam.[70] Polynesia: Fa'afafine (Samoan),[71] fakaleiti (Tongan), mahu (H• awaiian), mahu vahine (Tahitian), whakawahine (New Zealand Māori) and akava'ine (Cook Islands Māori).[72] Indonesia: Waria is a traditional third gender role found in• modern Indonesia. [73] Additionally, the Bugis culture of Sulawesi has been described as having three sexes (male, female and intersex) as well as five genders with distinct social roles.[2] Japan: X-gender (X ジェンダー) is a third gender or• genderqueer identity for people who are not expressly male or female.[74] In the Philippines, a number of local sex/gender identities are• commonly referred to as a 'third sex' in popular discourse, as well as by some academic studies. Local terms for these identities (which are considered derogatory by some) include baklâ and binabae (Tagalog), bayot (Cebuano), agi (Ilo nggo), bantut (Tausug), bading – all of which refer to 'gay' men or trans women. Gender variant females may be called lakinon or tomboy.[75] Europe[Albania: Sworn virgins,[12] females who work and dress as men• and inhabit some men-only spaces, but do not marry. 18th century England: Mollies[61]• 19th century England: Uranian[76]• Femminiello, in Neapolitan culture[77]• Latin America and the Caribbean Southern Mexico: Muxe, In many Zapotec communities, third• gender roles are often apparent[78] The muxe are described as a third gender; biologically male but with feminine characteristics.[78] They are not considered to be homosexuals, but rather just another gender[78] Some will marry women and have families, others will form relationships with men[78] Although it is recognized[by whom?] that these individuals have the bodies of men, they perform gender in a different manner than men, it is not a masculine persona but neither is it a feminine persona that they perform but, in general, a combination of the two[78] Lynn Stephen quotes Jeffrey Rubin, "Prominent men who [were] rumoured to be homosexual and did not adopt the muxe identity were spoken of pejoratively", suggesting that muxe gender role was more acceptable in the community.[78] Biza'ah: In Teotitlán, they have their own version of• the muxe that they call biza'ah. According to Stephen, there were only 7 individuals in that community considered to be

biza'ah in comparison to the muxe, of which there were many.[78] Like the muxe they were well liked and accepted in the community.[78] Their way of walking, talking and the work that they perform are markers of recognizing biza'ah.[78] Travestis of Latin America have been described as a third• gender, although not all see themselves this way. Don Kulick described the gendered world of travestis in urban Brazil as having has two categories: "men" and "not men", with women, homosexuals and travestis belonging to the latter category.[79] Middle East North American indigenous cultures[Two-Spirit is a modern umbrella term created at an Indigenous lesbian and gay conference in 1990 with the primary intent of replacing the offensive term, "berdache", which had been, and in some quarters still is, the term used for gay and gender-variant Indigenous people by non-Native anthropologists.[81] "Berdache" has also been used to describe slave boys, sold into sexual servitude.[82] Kyle De Vries writes, "Berdache is a derogatory term created by Europeans and perpetuated by anthropologists and others to define Native American/First Nations people who varied from Western norms that perceive gender, sex, and sexuality as binaries and inseparable." [16] Mary Annette Pember adds, "Unfortunately, depending on an oral tradition to impart our ways to future generations opened the floodgates for early nonNative explorers, missionaries, and anthropologists to write books describing Native peoples and therefore bolstering their own role as experts. These writings were and still are entrenched in the perspective of the authors who were and are mostly white men." [15] This has resulted in widely diverse traditions of gender-variant and third-gender traditions among the over 500 living Native American communities being homogenized and misrepresented under English-language names, and widely misinterpreted by both non-Native and disconnected descendants alike. [15] "[Two-Spirit] implies that the individual is both male and female and that these aspects are intertwined within them. The term moves away from traditional Native American/First Nations cultural identities and meanings of sexuality and gender variance. It does not take into account the terms and meanings from individual nations and tribes. ... Although two-spirit implies to some a spiritual nature, that one holds the spirit of two, both male and female, traditional Native Americans/First Nations peoples view this as a Western concept." [16][17] At the conferences that produced the book, *Two-Spirited People*, I heard several First Nations people describe themselves as very much unitary, neither "male" nor "female," much less a pair in one body. Nor did they report an assumption of duality within one body as a common concept within reservation communities; rather, people confided dismay at the Western proclivity for dichotomies. Outside Indo-European-speaking societies, "gender" would not be relevant to the social personae glosses "men" and "women," and "third gender" likely would be meaningless. The unsavory word "berdache" certainly ought to be ditched (Jacobs et al. 1997:3-5), but the urban American neologism "two-spirit" can be misleading. [17] While some have found the new term two-spirit a useful tool for intertribal organizing, it is not based in the traditional terms, and has not met with acceptance by more traditional communities; [17][16] the tribes who have traditional ceremonial roles for gender-variant people use names in their own languages, and have generally rejected this "binary" term as "western". [16][83] History[Mesopotamia[Stone tablet from 2nd millennium BC Sumer containing a myth about the creation of a type of human who is neither man nor woman. In Mesopotamian mythology, among the earliest written records of humanity, there are references to types of people who are not men and not women. In a Sumerian creation myth found on a stone tablet from the second millennium BC, the goddess Ninmah fashions a being "with no male organ and no female organ", for whom Enki finds a position in society: "to stand before the king". In the Akkadian myth of Atrahasis (ca. 1700 BC), Enki instructs Nintu, the goddess of birth, to establish a "third category among the people" in addition to men and women, that includes demons who steal infants, women who are unable to give birth, and priestesses who are prohibited from bearing children. [84] In Babylonia, Sumer and Assyria, certain types of individuals who performed religious duties in the service of Inanna/Ishtar have been described as a third gender. [85] They worked as sacred prostitutes or Hierodules, performed ecstatic dance, music and plays, wore masks and had gender characteristics of both women and men. [86] In Sumer, they were given the cuneiform names of ur.sal ("dog/man-woman") and kur.gar.ra (also described as a man-woman). [87] Modern scholars, struggling to describe them using contemporary sex/gender categories, have variously described them as "living as women", or used descriptors such as hermaphrodites, eunuchs, homosexuals, transvestites, effeminate

males and a range of other terms and phrases.[88] Egypt Inscribed pottery shards from the Middle Kingdom of Egypt (2000–1800 BCE), found near ancient Thebes (now Luxor, Egypt), list three human genders: tai (male), sht ("sekhet") and hmt (female).[89] Sht is often translated as "eunuch", although there is little evidence that such individuals were castrated.[90] Indic culture The Hindu god Shiva is often represented as Ardhanarisvara, with a dual male and female nature. Typically, Ardhanarisvara's right side is male and left side female. This sculpture is from the Elephanta Caves near Mumbai. References to a third sex can be found throughout the texts of India's three ancient spiritual traditions – Hinduism,[91][self-published source] Jainism[92] and Buddhism[93] – and it can be inferred that Vedic culture recognised three genders. The Vedas (c. 1500 BC–500 BC) describe individuals as belonging to one of three categories, according to one's nature or prakrti. These are also spelled out in the Kama Sutra (c. 4th century AD) and elsewhere as pumsprakrti (male-nature), stri-prakrti (female-nature), and tritiya-prakrti (third-nature).[94] Texts suggest that third sex individuals were well known in premodern India and included malebodied or femalebodied[95] people as well as intersex people, and that they can often be recognised from childhood. A third sex is discussed in ancient Hindu law, medicine, linguistics and astrology. The foundational work of Hindu law, the Manu Smriti (c. 200 BC–200 AD) explains the biological origins of the three sexes: A male child is produced by a greater quantity of male seed, a female child by the prevalence of the female; if both are equal, a third-sex child or boy and girl twins are produced; if either are weak or deficient in quantity, a failure of conception results.[96] Indian linguist Patañjali's[97] work on Sanskrit grammar, the Mahābhāṣya (c. 200 BC), states that Sanskrit's three grammatical genders are derived from three natural genders. The earliest Tamil grammar, the Tolkappiyam (3rd century BC) refers to hermaphrodites as a third "neuter" gender (in addition to a feminine category of unmasculine males). In Vedic astrology, the nine planets are each assigned to one of the three genders; the third gender, tritiya-prakrti, is associated with Mercury, Saturn and (in particular) Ketu. In the Puranas, there are references to three kinds of devas of music and dance: apsaras (female), gandharvas (male) and kinnars (neuter). The two great Sanskrit epic poems, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata,[98] indicate the existence of a third gender in ancient Indic society. Some versions of Ramayana tell that in one part of the story, the hero Rama heads into exile in the forest. Halfway there, he discovers that most of the people of his home town Ayodhya were following him. He told them, "Men and women, turn back", and with that, those who were "neither men nor women" did not know what to do, so they stayed there. When Rama returned from exile years later, he discovered them still there and blessed them, saying that there will be a day when they, too, will have a share in ruling the world. In the Buddhist Vinaya, codified in its present form around the 2nd century BC and said to be handed down by oral tradition from Buddha himself, there are four main sex/gender categories: males, females, ubhatobyañjanaka (people of a dual sexual nature) and paṇḍaka (people of non-normative sexual natures, perhaps originally denoting a deficiency in male sexual capacity).[93] As the Vinaya tradition developed, the term paṇḍaka came to refer to a broad third sex category which encompassed intersex, male and female bodied people with physical or behavioural attributes that were considered inconsistent with the natural characteristics of man and woman.[99]

Mediterranean culture[2nd century Roman copy of a Greek sculpture. The figure is Hermaphroditus, from which the word hermaphrodite is derived. In Plato's Symposium, written around the 4th century BC, Aristophanes relates a creation myth involving three original sexes: female, male and androgynous. They are split in half by Zeus, producing four different contemporary sex/gender types which seek to be reunited with their lost other half; in this account, the modern heterosexual man and woman descend from the original androgynous sex. The myth of Hermaphroditus involves heterosexual lovers merging into their primordial androgynous sex.[100][non-primary source needed] Other creation myths around the world share a belief in three original sexes, such as those from northern Thailand.[101] Many have interpreted the "eunuchs" of the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean world as a third gender that inhabited a liminal space between women and men, understood in their societies as somehow neither or both.[102] In the Historia Augusta, the eunuch body is described as a tertium genus hominum (a third human gender),[103] and in 77 BC, a eunuch named Genucius was prevented from claiming goods left to him in a will, on the grounds that he had voluntarily mutilated himself (amputatis sui ipsius) and was neither a woman or a man (neque virorum neque mulierum

numero).[104] Several scholars have argued that the eunuchs in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament were understood in their time to belong to a third gender, rather than the more recent interpretations of a kind of emasculated man, or a metaphor for chastity.[105] The early Christian theologian, Tertullian, wrote that Jesus himself was a eunuch (c. 200 AD).[106] Tertullian also noted the existence of a third sex (*tertium sexus*) among heathens: "a third race in sex... made of male and female in one." [107] He may have been referring to the Galli, "eunuch" devotees of the Phrygian goddess Cybele, who were described as belonging to a third sex by several Roman writers.[108] The Americas[Mesoamerica[The ancient Maya civilization may have recognised a third gender, according to historian Matthew Looper. Looper notes the androgynous Maize Deity and masculine Moon goddess of Maya mythology, and iconography and inscriptions where rulers embody or impersonate these deities. He suggests that a Mayan third gender might also have included individuals with special roles such as healers or diviners. [111] Anthropologist and archaeologist Miranda Stockett notes that several writers have felt the need to move beyond a two-gender framework when discussing prehispanic cultures across mesoamerica,[112] and concludes that the Olmec, Aztec and Maya peoples understood "more than two kinds of bodies and more than two kinds of gender." Anthropologist Rosemary Joyce agrees, writing that "gender was a fluid potential, not a fixed category, before the Spaniards came to Mesoamerica. Childhood training and ritual shaped, but did not set, adult gender, which could encompass third genders and alternative sexualities as well as "male" and "female." At the height of the Classic period, Maya rulers presented themselves as embodying the entire range of gender possibilities, from male through female, by wearing blended costumes and playing male and female roles in state ceremonies." Joyce notes that many figures of mesoamerican art are depicted with male genitalia and female breasts, while she suggests that other figures in which chests and waists are exposed but no sexual characteristics (primary or secondary) are marked may represent a third sex, ambiguous gender or androgyny.[113] Inca[Andean Studies scholar Michael Horswell writes that third-gendered ritual attendants to chuqui chinchay, a jaguar deity in Incan mythology, were "vital actors in Andean ceremonies" prior to Spanish colonisation. Horswell elaborates: "These quariwarmi (menwomen) shamans mediated between the symmetrically dualistic spheres of Andean cosmology and daily life by performing rituals that at times required same-sex erotic practices. Their transvested attire served as a visible sign of a third space that negotiated between the masculine and the feminine, the present and the past, the living and the dead. Their shamanic presence invoked the androgynous creative force often represented in Andean mythology." [114] Richard Trexler gives an early Spanish account of religious 'third gender' figures from the Inca empire in his 1995 book "Sex and Conquest": And in each important temple or house of worship, they have a man or two, or more, depending on the idol, who go dressed in women's attire from the time they are children, and speak like them, and in manner, dress, and everything else they imitate women. With them especially the chiefs and headmen have carnal, foul intercourse on feast days and holidays, almost like a religious rite and ceremony.[115] Art and literature[In David Lindsay's 1920 novel *A Voyage to Arcturus* there is a type of being called phaen, a third gender which is attracted neither to men nor women but to "Faceny" (their name for Shaping or Crystalman, the Demiurge). The appropriate pronouns are ae and aer. [117] *Mikaël*, a 1924 film directed by Carl Theodor Dreyer, was also released as *Chained: The Story of the Third Sex in the USA*. [118] Literary critic Michael Maiwald identifies a "third-sex ideal" in one of the first AfricanAmerican bestsellers, Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem* (1928).[119] Kurt Vonnegut's 1969 novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* identifies seven human sexes (not genders) in the fourth dimension required for reproduction including gay men, women over 65, and infants who died before their first birthday. The Tralfamadorian race has five sexes.[120][non-primary source needed] Spirituality[In Hinduism, Shiva is still worshipped as an Ardhnarishwara, i.e. half-male and half-female form.[121] Shiva's symbol, which is today known as Shivalinga, actually comprises a combination of a 'Yoni' (vagina) and a 'Lingam' (phallus). The third genders have been ascribed spiritual powers by most indigenous societies.[122] At the turn of the common era, male cults devoted to a goddess that flourished throughout the broad region extending from the Mediterranean to South Asia. While galli were missionizing the Roman Empire, kalū, kurgarrū, and assinnu continued to carry out ancient rites in the temples of Mesopotamia, and the third-gender predecessors of the hijra were clearly evident. It

should also be mentioned of the eunuch priests of Artemis at Ephesus; the western Semitic qedeshim, the male "temple prostitutes" known from the Hebrew Bible and Ugaritic texts of the late second millennium; and the keleb, priests of Astarte at Kition and elsewhere. Beyond India, modern ethnographic literature document gender variant shamanpriests throughout Southeast Asia, Borneo, and Sulawesi. All these roles share the traits of devotion to a goddess, gender transgression and receptive anal sex, ecstatic ritual techniques (for healing, in the case of kalū and Mesopotamian priests, and fertility in the case of hijra), and actual (or symbolic) castration. Most, at some point in their History.