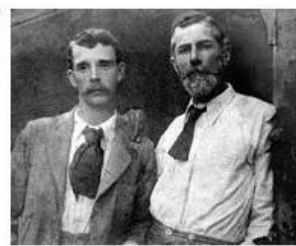




SWITCHINGVIEW

BY SIMON DAWSON

LOOKING AT GAY LIFE
THROUGH A DIFFERENT LENS



TEXTS AND RESOURCES

QUEER MINISTRY PART 2.

GENDER VARIANT SPIRITUALITY IN THE PRE-PATRIARCHAL WORLD

This video follows on from the first three videos in the series, where I set out my basic INTERMEDIATE TYPE thesis:

- Until recently the dominant patriarchal, Christian culture has taught that homosexuality was unnatural and to be condemned. Researchers and campaigners are now challenging this view and are telling a different story, a story that can be described as “from the underside of history.”
- This new narrative says that across history there is clear evidence that across history, homosexual and other LGBTQIA+ people have often been accepted and valued by the societies they lived within.
- Such people were often closely involved with a spiritual vocation (as priests, shamans or other forms of spiritual leadership) or in warfare.
- Sadly, much of this activity was systematically suppressed when European colonialism spread patriarchal, Christian homophobic values across the world.
- Because of the suppression this history has been all but forgotten, but the evidence is still there and can be uncovered.

These videos can be accessed through my switchingview website

<https://www.switchingview.com/t1.inttypes.html>

QUEER MINISTRY

In the QUEER MINISTRY video series this Intermediate Type thesis is expanded and updated.

Firstly, I describe new research into the history of patriarchy. Before patriarchy came into the world many societies across history had great gender equality. They were often matrilineal, with inheritance passed down the female side of the family. Such matrilineal cultures valued women's roles highly.

These same cultures also seemed to accept intermediate type people and queer ministry vocations.

This changed when patriarchy was spread across the world. Patriarchal cultures suppressed women's lives and queer ministry vocations. This problem was made worse when Christianity, as a state religion, adopted and enforced these patriarchal ideas.

The first two videos in the Queer Ministry series describe how Queer Ministry vocations fitted easily into such gender egalitarian and matrilineal cultures, in societies where patriarchy had not yet been imposed.

The remaining Queer Ministry videos takes this learning about Queer Ministry lives into the study of Judaism and Christianity. Queer Ministry vocations were common in the early stages of both religions but this activity was suppressed when each religion later adopted patriarchal ideas. We now need to recover these suppressed stories.

TEXTS USED IN THE VIDEO

Much of this video is based on the work of Randy P. Conner and Edward Carpenter.

Connor wrote *"Blossom of Bone"* (1993), a cross-cultural study which (according to the blurb on the back of the book) *"weaves together myriad accounts of gender variant shamans, priests, magicians and artists throughout the ages who have, in different ways, embodied the interrelationship of homoeroticism, androgyny, and the sacred."*

Much of the content of my Queer Ministry videos will be based on this book, and the *Cassels Encyclopaedia of Queer Myth, Symbol and Spirit* (1997), also edited by Conner.

Both books can be obtained second-hand, but copies may also be available online as PDFs to download. The books are invaluable in that, firstly, they contain well researched and scholarly evidence about this topic. And secondly, they look outside the Euro-centric academic ghetto in which much discussion of homosexuality is stuck.

Edward Carpenter's 1914 book on the same subject, *"Intermediate Types among Primitive Folk, a study in Social Evolution"* can be downloaded from my "Edward Carpenter Archive" website

<https://www.edwardcarpenter.net/ecpftite.htm>

One of Carpenter's sources for this worldwide data on Queer Ministry and Warrior Love is a 1906 book *"The Origin and The Development of the Moral Ideas"* by Edward Westermarck. Chapter 43 (in Volume 2) is a long and fascinating catalogue of the sorts of Queer Ministry and Warrior Love examples I have given in this video. There is a very good version available cheaply on Amazon Kindle.

PATRIARCHY

My main source for the history of patriarchal development is *“The Patriarchs: how Men came to Rule”* (2023) by Angela Saini. This is an excellent, very scholarly but very readable text, which explains this new research in a very clear way.

You can get a snap-shot of her arguments in this website article.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/angela-saini-patriarchy-matriarchy-gender-equality>

The information from Conner, Carpenter and Saini has been supplemented as follows:

SHAMANISM

Ideas around ecstasy and transcendence having taken from

- Mircea Eliade – *“Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy”*
- Barbara Ehrenreich – *“Dancing in the Streets: a History of Collective Joy”*

Ehrenreich’s book is very good on the psychology of patriarchy, and how western psychological theory struggles to understand non-western, non-patriarchal cultures.

AMERICA

My main source is Will Roscoe – *“Changing Ones: Third and Fourth Genders in Native North America”*

This book contains the information about the berdache Osch-Tish, whilst the life of Whe’Wha is described in a full-length biography, also by Roscoe, titled *“The Zuni Man-Woman”*

Mark Rifkins’s *“When Did Indians become Straight - Kinship, the History of Sexuality, and Native Sovereignty”* is a good source on the effect of colonialism on these indigenous tribes.

The data on cultural suppression in Canada can be found at

<https://mta.ca/about/indigenous-engagement/mikmaw-women-strength-nation>

<https://www.ccsa-nccah.ca/docs/emerging/RPT-HealthTwoSpirit-Hunt-EN.pdf>

This website may also be helpful. It is a web-resource for teachers of early teenage children to create lesson plans about *“Native Americans, Gender Roles, and Two-Spirit People”*. The website explains many of the issues related to diverse gender constructs and indigenous spiritualities in a simple and straight forward way.

<https://lgbtqhistory.org/lesson/native-americans-gender-roles-and-two-spirit-people/>

The video extract about Harry Hay is taken from “*Hope along the Wind, The Life of Harry Hay*”. This is a full-length biography of Harry, created by Eric Slade, and can be found on the Vimeo Platform at:

<https://vimeo.com/45524983/278eabe951>

SOUTH AND MIDDLE AMERICA

The main source is again Randy Connor - *Blossom of Bone*.

The *Florentine Codex* can be found on this web resource. It is a fascinating document. On the one-hand it tells us about the original 16th Century Nahau culture. But a careful reading of the text (given in both Nahau and Spanish) also illustrates how the document, written by indigenous Nahau people, was appropriated and mis-translated by their Spanish overlords .

<https://www.latinxproject.nyu.edu/intervenxions/digital-florentine-codex>

The similar *Codex Rios* is here

[https://www.wikiwand.com/en/articles/Codex_RiosWorld Gender Customs](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/articles/Codex_RiosWorld_Gender_Customs)

POLYNESIA

Edward Carpenter’s “Intermediate Types, and the “World Gender Customs website”

https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/content/two-spirits_map-html/

AFRICA

Conner’s “Blossom of Bone” (previously cited) and Dag Oistein Endsjo’s “*Sex and Religion: Teaching and Taboos in the History of World Faiths*” (Reaktion Books 2011). This is a fantastic and very readable discussion of the interactions between sex and religion across the world and across history. Be a bit careful however. Because of the book’s date Endsjo does not take account of the recent research challenging common patriarchal assumptions absorbed into the religions he describes.

INDIA

Randy Conner as before

Serena Nanda “*Neither Man Nor Woman: the Hijras of India*” (1999) is informative on modern Hijra culture but does not look back to previous times.

I used Dorlin Kindersley’s “*The Illustrated Mahabhatrata: the Definitive Guide to India’s Greatest Epic*” to find a simple way into this complex and fascinating text

Madhavan Kutty is an Indian journalist and commentator. “*the Village Before Time*” is his memoir of life in a remote Keralan village with deeply embedded matrilineal customs.

BRITAIN AND EUROPE

The BBC article I cited on Celtic matrilineal culture is here

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c20g7j707g8o>

The full scholarly article in the “Nature” journal (open access) is here

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-024-08409-6>

This blog may also be relevant and point you to good sources about Iron-Age women. There are many people excavating stories from “the underside of history”, working within all sorts of contexts, and our work often overlaps.

<https://sylviavlinsteadt.substack.com/p/of-chariot-women-and-motherlines>

I found out about the homosexual and gender variant Anglo-Saxon burials from this source.

<https://news.liverpool.ac.uk/2023/10/04/the-burials-that-could-challenge-historians-ideas-about-anglo-saxon-gender/>

the archaeological dig report is here.

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/browse/issue.xhtml?recordId=1087779>

I used Conner, *Blossom of Bone*, as the source of information about the Neolithic cave-paintings.

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