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**REPRESENTATION OF TRANSGENDER IN INDIAN CULTURE AND LITERATURE**

*Authored By*  
**Anjan Das**

**Assistant Professor in English, B. N. Mahavidyalaya, Itachuna, Hooghly, West Bengal.**

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## REPRESENTATION OF TRANSGENDER IN INDIAN CULTURE AND LITERATURE

**Anjan Das**

Assistant Professor in English, B. N. Mahavidyalaya, Itachuna, Hooghly, West Bengal.

### Abstract:

*This paper is prepared to explore the 'transgender' and its 'reflections' in the ever changing course of our world-wide scenario, particularly in our Mother India. The term 'transgender', which is chiefly related with socio-cultural attribution, gets profoundly discussed from various representations, including cultural, mythical, social and the literary arena. The cultural symbolism and depiction of gender ideology, its gendered stereotypes are lucidly discussed in the immediate means of representation, and more emphatically analyzed with respect to a larger context of socio-historical processes and relations. On literary perspective, three basic elements like 'social production, consumption and representation' are explicated with reference to some mythical epics and Indian literature in English. An attempt to aesthetize the socio-cultural constructs behind gender and its multilayered representations, irrespective time and place, is adopted for a larger concept of 'humanity for humanity's sake'.*

**Keywords/Phrases:** Gender, representation, literary arena, socio-cultural constructs, anesthetize, humanity.

### 1. Studies of Transgender

The very term "transgender" is a socio-cultural construct in association with the most prevalent other genders ---masculinity and femininity. Transgender is a part of Indian culture and specifically a sub-field of LGBT in postmodern perspective. If masculinity is called the First Sex, if femininity is the Second Sex, then transgender is known as the Third Sex, rather it may be called a combination of both. Identity of this Transgender varies from time to time and from place to place. In India. It is interesting to know that this third gender in Punjabi culture is called "Khusra", in Telugu, it is "Kojja", in English, it is "hermaphrodite" or "eunuch", and in Bengali, the transgender people are known as 'hijras'. More interestingly, the population of this third sex in India, according to 2011 census report, is about 5 million in relation with the total population of 1.5 billion. Though their configuration in total population is very negligible, though they are sometimes called *man minus man*, rather *man plus woman*, their contribution is enough to the cultural and virtual worlds of India.

The term *hijra or transgender* is a 'term- umbrella' which gets inclusion of all the non-cissexual as well as non-heterosexual individuals like transsexuals, transvestites, hermaphrodites, inter-sexed, eunuchs, impotents, homosexuals, bisexuals, androgynies, gynomimetics, emasculated, impotent, castrated, effeminate, transgendered and so on. In simple words, all those who are somehow sexually anomalous or dysfunctional are considered the above. As per their own narrative, the *hijras or transgender* people themselves like to distinguish between those who are born with ambiguous genitals and those who are made such through castration. As in Western