

Culturalist criticism of queer doctrine

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Abstract

Queer doctrine is generally considered as good medicine for liberation of gender and sexuality. However, actually queer helps not liberation, but oppression due to the following: 1) term queer actually means “freak”, “weird” and thus it represents all LGBT issues as freakish or issues which have no deep historical background and indirectly strengthens heteronormative/cisgender society based on Abrahamic values; 2) queer doctrine has been inspired by Marxism or its derivatives and thus queer doctrine is also an implementation of Abrahamic tradition as far as Marxism is an Abrahamic religion. Liberation of gender/sexuality is completely impossible if we follow Abrahamic paradigm or its derivatives. Postgenderism (radical elimination of gender) is nothing else but just another side of conservative Abrahamic coin. True liberation of gender/sexuality would be multigenderism, but not postgenderism, i.e.: in current conditions settling niches for more than two genders would be much more helpful than complete elimination of gender.

Key words: culturalism; LGBT; gender theory; multigenderism; queer doctrine; postgenderism

1. Problem introduction

Queer doctrine is closely connected with postgenderism; I suppose that it can be said that postgenderism is a part of queer doctrine.

I am strongly against naming of queer ideas with term theory due to the following reasons: any theory is issue of a particular science, i.e.: theories suppose tests/proves while doctrines don't: they just offer an interpretation of reality from certain particular ideas/dogmas and never suppose any tests. Thus, queer/postgenderism should normally be considered as a doctrine/faith but not as a theory, though adepts of the doctrine obviously can mind.

David Halperin says that object of queer doctrine is everything that is outside of widely spread social norms (Halperin 1997).

The concept of queer is usually considered as the best ‘medicine’ against heteronormative and cisgender society: queer suggests radical elimination of gender at all, and due to such measure it supposes solving of all possible problems that grow from gender.

Queer doctrine suggests that there are two main paradigms: gender binarity (this paradigm is considered as so called ‘traditional’) and queer (this paradigm is complete opposition to the first one). Also queer doctrine suggests that LGBT appeared only in contemporary history and was not known in previous epochs, i.e.: LGBT has no deep historical roots (however, actually there are numerous facts proving that LGBT has long history).

Despite ideologists of queer insist that their ideas help liberation of gender identity and liberation of sexuality, but actually queer doctrine indirectly helps not the liberation but exactly opposite side.

When they say that LGBT has no deep history and that all LGBT issues are just issues of contemporaneity it actually indirectly makes people conclude that only heterosexuality and gender binarity are norm and thus queer doctrine indirectly makes heteronormative/cisgender paradigm be stronger.

From the other hand queer doctrine actually makes LGBT rights movement be weaker.

The matter is about term queer. Initially word queer had the following meanings: “weird”, “freakish”. Naming should take into account etymology, for example, imagine that you produce plum jam and name it “shit”; it hardly makes the jam be popular among your customers and hardly changes people’s attitude toward word “shit”; alike situation is with term queer.

I don’t suppose that there are some people who would seriously like to be considered as freaks or outsiders. Even very ‘unusual’ people actually like to be considered not as funny exotic animals but as norm/variant of norm. When LGBT are considered as freaks it is nothing else but an issue that strengthens heteronormative paradigm.

Another unpleasant issue is that people inspired by ideas of queer doctrine often attack not real enemies of LGBT society, but make disturbances inside LGBT society by their radical and inappropriate slogans and demands.

As far as queer doctrine has become rather widely spread obsession I suppose it would be nice to provide some criticism, so in current paper is represented criticism of queer doctrine from the point of view of culturalism.

2. Milestones of culturalism

Since the text is about criticism of queer/postgenderism from the point of view of culturalism so I have to give a brief outline of culturalist ideas.

Culturalism is an anthropological paradigm that is closely connected with structural functionalism and also is a political ideology opposite to multiculturalism and to nationalism.

Main principles of culturalism are best way expressed in special paper “Thoughts on multiculturalism, nationalism and culturalism” written by Tresi Nonno. Speaking about key ideas of culturalism I follow her outline.

It is possible to say that culturalism is nothing else but applied ethnosemiotics.

Ethnosemiotics or cultural anthropology says that any culture can be represented as ordered pair of the following type: $\langle A; \Omega \rangle$ where A is set of ideas/concepts/memes and Ω is set of relations/distributions determined upon A.

Thus, any culture can be represented as discourse/text: set of concepts and set of distributions define text.

Considering culture as text we can single out more frequently used concepts just by plain analysis of word frequency. Also we can see what is more important and what is less important for a certain culture. In any cultural discourse can be singled out some concepts which determine culture in general.

All cultures can be subdivided into two paradigms depending on what concepts they have as central concepts of their discourses: first group is named cosmocentric paradigm (main object of discourse is nature/cosmos) and the second one is named sociocentric paradigm (main object of discourse is society/morality)

Cosmocentric cultures demonstrate higher interest in nature, science and realistic visual art. Also cosmocentric cultures demonstrate rather high degree of tolerance toward LGBT and positive attitude toward human body and different manifestations of human sexuality.

From the other hand cultures of sociocentric paradigm demonstrate lower interest in nature, lower interest in science and lower interest in visual realistic art, but instead they like to produce artificial systems that have no analogies in nature, for instance: algebra, abstract art and so on.

Also sociocentric cultures demonstrate low tolerance toward LGBT, rather high level of misogyny, negative attitude toward human sexuality and different manifestations of human body. Pure sociocentric and pure cosmocentric cultures are ideal types and most of really existing cultures are placed somewhere between two extremes since in any culture elements of both paradigms are represented. In any culture cosmocentric or sociocentric paradigm dominates.

However, sociocentric issues can appear in cosmocentric cultures and vice versa. Sociocentric issues appearing inside cosmocentric cultures are usually much lighter than those of pure sociocentric cultures: for instance Abrahamic attitude toward LGBT supposes strict prohibition of LGBT issues while Confucian attitude toward LGBT just supposes segregation of different activities.

Most cultures existing upon our planet belong to cosmocentric paradigm. Abrahamic religions are probably the purest sociocentric issues ever existed in the history of mankind.

People's behavior is generally determined by culture (actually it doesn't mean that everything in human behavior is determined, but it means that certain ways of behavior are more probable than others).

Culture is not determined by genetics/race; for instance: Breivik is much less European than Ayan Hirsi, i.e.: it means that culture can be acquired and people can change culture and can be taught/assimilated.

Contacts between cultures of the same paradigm are much easier than between cultures belonging to different.

When cultures belonging to different paradigms borrow something from each other it usually leads to cargo cults and social disturbances, i.e.: culture consistency of ideas that form culture is important for social progress.

3. Culturalist attitude toward queer doctrine and postgenderism

According to culturalism, if we are going to analyze root of a phenomenon we should pay due attention to its etymology/origin. Culturalism says that any phenomenon is product of particular cultural tradition.

Queer doctrine dislikes speaking about cultural roots of different phenomenon as far as queer doctrine was inspired by Marxism that escapes any discourse about culture and cultural trends.

If we speak about liberation of gender we should first of all think of roots of oppression of gender.

Main root of oppression of gender and sexuality is Abrahamic tradition, so if we are going to liberate gender and human sexuality we should speak about reduction and elimination of Abrahamic influence on mankind.

Abrahamic tradition has many implementations which usually are not considered as derivatives of Abrahamic religions by wide public. For instance, Marxism usually isn't considered as an Abrahamic religion, but it is Abrahamic religion by its origin and by its ideas. And the same can be said about queer doctrine since it has been inspired by Marxism.

Main feature of different Abrahamic traditions is their ignoring of different contexts of reality and their desire to impose their radical ideal plans to reality immediately now.

Their plans can be very conservative (for instance: in Bible, in Torah, in Quran can be seen strict prohibition of gender variations and any sexuality except reproductive) or can be very liberal (queer doctrine offers complete *lessez-faire* in the field of sexuality and immediate elimination of gender). Both approaches are just different sides of the same coin.

It's quite remarkable that all ideas about elimination of gender are supported and developed mostly by radical feminists, but not by transgender people: radical feminists are not satisfied by models of gender existing in modern Western culture, so they don't see any other solution

except of undoing gender (Butler 2005) at all while transgender people mostly consider existing gender models as sufficient.

The fact that existing gender models need to be modified and can be modified is rather obvious; however, the concept of gender hardly can be eliminated in foreseeable future. Elimination of gender is a completely utopian project that supposes reality of 31st century, but not actual reality of nowadays.

In contemporary Western culture initial cosmocentric values are piled by Abrahamic issues and different cargo cults inspired by Abrahamic issues.

Liberation of gender/sexuality is completely impossible if we follow Abrahamic paradigm or its derivatives. Liberation of gender/sexuality is possible only within cosmocentric paradigm.

In this connection especially notable and absurd are attempts of certain LGBT to be followers of Abrahamic religions and even attempts to state that there aren't anti-LGBT passages of Abrahamic sacral texts. Even if we find that Abrahamic tradition isn't against certain letters of LGBT, but it is very much against different manifestation of human body and sexuality while positive attitude toward LGBT is impossible without positive attitude toward human body. Ethnosemiotics says that if we carefully read sacral Abrahamic texts in due cultural contexts we understand that it's completely impossible for an LGBT to be follower of any Abrahamic traditions, and no reforms can make harsh and abrasive anti-LGBT passages become LGBT friendly. However, LGBT who want to be followers of Abrahamic traditions simply ignore arguments of science, facts and logic. So called LGBT theology inspires hatred toward cultural anthropology/ethnosemiotics/comparative religion: if you are impartial anthropologist you can't follow obscurant myths of LGBT theology.

As far as initially Europe is a cosmocentric tradition and so in order to restore its cosmocentric gender patterns and cosmocentric attitude toward sexuality and manifestation of human body it will be helpful to turn to those cosmocentric cultures which allows more than two genders or allows certain gender backlash. Traditions of Two Spirits people of Native American, *kathoey* of Thailand, *onnagata* actors of Kabuki Theater should be matter of analysis and attention. Multigenderism doesn't mean direct and uncritical copying of scenarios existing in corresponding cultures, but liberation of gender and sexuality in Western culture obviously should take into account cultural scenarios existing in other cosmocentric cultures.

True liberation of gender/sexuality would be multigenderism, but not postgenderism, i.e.: in current conditions settling niches for more than two genders would be much more helpful than complete elimination of gender.

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