Is Asia ready for the rainbow?

by Hei Kiu Au
Voices of Asian youth

where the Seoul Queer Parade is being held right now!
The 3Cs
Main challenges in Asia
Have you noticed the main reasons the youth cite for not supporting LGBT+?

3Cs

Colonialism, Confucianism, Church
Case Study 1: Singapore
PM of Singapore on 377A
Section 377A of the penal code

Any male person who, in public or private, commits, or abets the commission of, or procures or attempts to procure the commission by any male person of, any act of gross indecency with another male person, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 2 years.
60.2% of LGBT+ individuals have had homophobic or transphobic experiences.
Health challenges faced by LGBT individuals in Singapore

- higher self-reported behavioural issues, such as suicidal thoughts and attempts
- increased risk of poor mental health
- bullying in school, harassment on the streets and online, and rejection by healthcare providers
- NGO who provides shelter for homeless transgender persons was not granted registration
Case Study 2: China
Neo-confucianism & Filial Piety
Absolute obedience to parents/elders

Carrying on the family blood line and surname

**filial piety** noun

**Definition of filial piety**
: reverence for parents considered in Chinese ethics the prime virtue and the basis of all right human relations
Giving no offspring is the greatest among the three violations to filial piety.
— Mencius (孟子)
over 90% of gay men in China marrying women without disclosing their sexual orientation
“Lavender marriages”

which is a marriage of convenience in order to fulfill their filial duty
Case Study 3: South Korea
Religion Demographics

Size of Religious Groups

[Unit: 10,000 people / Statistics Korea, 2015]

- Catholics 389 (18%)
- Protestants 968 (45%)
- Buddhists 762 (35%)
- Others 37 (2%)
- Those with a religion 2,155 (56%)
- Those with no religion 2,750 (44%)

※ ‘Others’ include Confucianism, Won Buddhism, Jeungsangyo, Cheondogyo, Daejonggyo and Islam.
Queer festival severely delayed by violent anti-gay protests in Korean port city

On Korean Christian Homophobia

06/30/2015 05:38 pm ET | Updated Jun 30, 2016

Why Korea’s Christian churches are leading the anti-gay charge

Gay Pride In Korea Faces Christian Wrath As Seen At Rally In Seoul

Thousands of Christians protest against gay pride march in South Korea
Timeline of the rise of the anti-LGBT movement

1700s
Christianity introduced through diplomatic missions

1910-45
American Christianity/Protestantism spreads during Korean War

1950-53
Korean Christians emerge as spiritual leaders during Japanese colonization

1970s-80s
Rise of Yoido (Pentecostal Church) with the economic miracle, “prosperity gospel”

1999
First Korean Queer Culture Festival

2015
Korean Churches coalition (Anti-LGBT Response Committee) formed
If values such as LGBT rights seep into our society, these traditional principles and our social structure [will be] torn apart.

— Yoon Deuk Nam, General Secretary
Korean Christian Council
The 3Cs
Positive trends/breakthroughs in Asia
Case Study 4: India
How did it happen?

- Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code
- Delhi High Court’s rule in 2009
- Supreme Court upheld the ban in 2013
- Continued legal fight, referencing trend of liberal judgements
  - Recognising the rights of transgender Indians
  - A general right to privacy
- Supreme Court’s rule on Sep 6, 2018
History owes an apology to the members of this community and their families, for the delay in providing redressal for the ignominy and ostracism that they have suffered through the centuries.

— Justice Malhotra
We have thrown out the British once again.

— Harish Iyer, a veteran gay activist and writer
Case Study 5: Taiwan
Timeline of the path to Taiwanese marriage equality

1949
- KMT loses the Chinese Civil War and escapes to Taiwan

1949-75
- Martial law imposed by military dictatorship led by Chiang Kai-shek

1975 onwards
- Lessening political control allow LGBT+ communities to flourish

2014
- Empowerment of youth movements due to the success of the Sunflower Student Movement

2016
- Over 200,000 rallied for same-sex marriage

17 May 2019
- Same-sex marriage is officially legalized in Taiwan
Reasons for Taiwanese success
Less Tolerance for Homosexuality in More Religious Countries

% Homosexuality should be accepted by society

Religiosity scale*

Correlation: -0.78

* Religiosity is measured using a three-item index ranging from 0-3, with "3" representing the most religious position. Respondents were coded as "1" if they believe faith in God is necessary for morality; "1" if they say religion is very important in their lives; and "1" if they pray at least once a day. The mean score for each country is used in this analysis. Religiosity scores for the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Spain and Japan are from the Spring 2011 Global Attitudes Survey.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q27.
Vice Ganda
Filipino comedian, host, singer and actor
bakla

adj.

Third gender?

Effeminate man?

Male cross-dressing?

Transgender?

Derogatory term/ linguistic reclamation?
The Genderbread Person
by www.ItsPronouncedMetrosexual.com

Gender Identity
Woman  Genderqueer  Man
Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It’s the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.

Gender Expression
Feminine  Androgynous  Masculine
Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.

Biological Sex
Female  Intersex  Male
Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.

Sexual Orientation
Heterosexual  Bisexual  Homosexual
Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.
The Future
Riding the Momentum
"We are tolerated, but not accepted. Tolerated is more of, 'We have to endure you... but only up to here.'"

— Lesbian filipino activist Ging Cristobal
“Human rights should never be put to a vote”
— Bruce Knotts
Links with SDGs

5 GENDER EQUALITY

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
What can you do?

Sign a petition!  
Start a GSA!
Personal Reflection

Why I chose this topic
Voices of our Future
Acknowledgement
Asia is ready. Thank you!

Presented by Hei Kiu Au