With more open representation of the LGBTQ+ community, it’s easy to think that the LGBTQ+ community is a recent and modern phenomenon. However, if we look to history, we can see that the LGBTQ+ community has a long history in cultures all throughout the world.

**Two-Spirit**
Several Native American cultures recognized a 3rd or even more genders, known as “Two-Spirit,” before European colonization.

**The Sacred Band of Thebes**
In Ancient Greece, there was an elite military unit comprised of 300 gay men, 150 couples, that fought together in battle.

**King Mwanga II**
Between 1884 until 1897, the openly bisexual King Mwanga II ruled over the kingdom of Buganda, modern-day Uganda.

**Lian Xiang Ban (The Fragrant Companion)**
Playwright Li Yu wrote this Chinese comedy play that follows 2 women who fall in love and convince one of their husbands to take the other as a concubine to live happily together.

**Shikhandin**
This character in the ancient Hindu epic *Mahabharata* is a princess who kills herself in the hope of being reborn as a man. She is reborn as a woman but then undergoes a miraculous sex-change, becoming a man.

*A resource created by the IEA LGBTQ+ Committee*