



Queer migration and drag performance in Japan: Rethinking identification, participation and belonging

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論文要旨

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論文題目 (外国語の場合は日本語訳を併記すること)

Queer migration and drag performance in Japan: Rethinking identification, participation and belonging
(クィアな移民とドラッグパフォーマンス: 日本にアイデンティファイすること、参加すること、所属すること)

論文要旨

This thesis investigates drag performance and queer migration in the context of Japan. Drag, a gender subversive performance that disrupts norms of gender and sexuality while reinforcing social images of femininity and masculinity, is used as a lens in understanding identification, participation, and belonging of queer migrant drag performers.

In Chapter One, I argue that drag is an exemplification of queer being to use as a resource for queer migration research and state my research questions. Queer migration research envisions subjectivities to be examined outside of the normative to describe both LGBT migration based on identity politics and as a way of challenging normative ideologies surrounding migration. Drag for queer migrants creates a way of reconfiguring subject positions through gender subversive performance that challenges normative injunctions of gender and sexuality, but drag also risks embodying misogyny, xenophobia, homophobia, and racism in service to the status quo. Based on my own experience, I demonstrate that drag for queer migrants could be a way of understanding their identification, participation, and belonging in service of the status quo while simultaneously resisting and attempting to transform it.

Accordingly, this thesis asks the following questions. First, how does the queer migrant's sense of norms, ideologies, and expectations of sexuality and gender become reshaped through migration? Second, how do queer migrants negotiate constraints and possibilities of sexuality, gender, and race in a context of heteronormativity? Third, how has migration transformed queer communities, cultures, and politics in Japan? To answer these questions, I argue in favor of a queer methodology: a critical phenomenological *tojisha-kenkyu* underpinned by feminist standpoint theory to be complemented with interviews and ethnography.

Chapter Two situates this thesis within queer migration scholarship in a literature review that explores the development of the queer studies approach to migration as a field of study and addresses the gap this thesis fills by bringing drag performance into queer migration studies. Queer migration scholarship has focused on narratives of placement/displacement from repression to liberation using queer theory to critique the heteronormative structures and policies that situate queer migrants in such positions. The queer studies approach to migration argues for a methodology critical of positionality and sensitive to power relations of sexuality, gender, and race in social structures to negotiate the possibilities of subjectivities outside of normative discourse. Frameworks used in queer migration studies demonstrate a need to connect localized histories of queer bodies with their present moment and utilize differential belonging which combine different forms of unlikely queer coalitions to forge a strategy of common interest. Perspectives on queer migration in the Japanese context show that foreign bodies are racialized outside of normative injunctions. Drag, as a subculture, has been understood as a homosexual practice, a stigmatized culture, and a means of survival. However, this is rendered differently in the Japanese context as a form of escapism. Accordingly, this thesis adds to scholarship by adding new perspectives from Japan and drag performance to

queer migration studies.

Chapter Three argues in favor of a queer methodology to engage with the power dynamics of positionality in the research process by combining methods and disciplines assumed to be conflicting in academic coherence, in addition to outlaying data collection methods. Arguing for the value of a queer methodology opens a queer theoretical vein for shifting between margin and center by merging *tojisha-kenkyu*, feminist standpoint theory and critical phenomenology which I theorize as “stronger” standpoint theory. *Tojisha-kenkyu* allows for locating standpoints from marginalized locations of queer/foreign at the margins. Feminist standpoint theory is applied to argue for the validation of knowledge production from marginalized standpoints to challenge hegemonic objective discourse with excluded subjective realities situated outside of that discourse. However, these marginalized standpoints do not stand alone. They are (only) made possible through other signifiers, such as male/white often in the center of power and knowledge production. To critically engage and account for these positions, I solidify this approach using queer phenomenology, a form of critical phenomenology, to challenge the taken-for-granted orientations of hegemonic heteronormativity and whiteness. Through this, I can activate a “stronger” standpoint from the margin with *tojisha-kenkyu* and the center with queer phenomenology. Concrete methods used to collect data include phenomenological interviews with seven drag performers who perform in Osaka, Tokyo, and Nagoya to investigate the research questions from their queer migrant standpoint. Ethnography was conducted at a drag show called Beauty Blenda in Osaka and Tokyo from 2018 to 2019 to complement the research adding detailed descriptions of the cultural settings, performances, venues, and audiences of drag performance.

Chapter Four examines how the temporality of drag performance presents a possible

framework for reorganizing the norms, ideologies, and expectations of sexuality and gender into the everyday lived experience of queer migrants. Meaning-making paradigms, a term used to postulate identification and predicate a gendered, sexual, and racial imposition on identities of the dominant culture, accrue around queer migrant bodies in which they become *gaijin*. This I argue as a disorientation that foregrounds unfamiliarity and failure to extend into space revealing advantages and disadvantages in Japanese society. Reappearing as a drag performer is a way to make sense of disorientation. For example, the otherness bestowed upon becoming *gaijin* allows queer migrants to explore stigmatized practices which becomes an advantage. This is connected to the cultural flows and commercialization of drag, in which RuPaul's Drag Race (RPDR) has created a new global economy for drag to be consumed and (re)produced. I emphasize that queer migrants try to make sense of their worries and failed orientations related to the norms, ideologies, and expectations of gender, sexuality, and race by making them visible through drag. I argue drag is a parody—a form of self-reflexivity that places a demand on our knowledge and recollection of what we see as a beholder—of gender norms because it manages to install, reinforce, undermine, and subvert the conventions and presuppositions it appears to challenge. Applying the concepts of temporal drag—to tell a historicized story of gender through a new one—and performativity—to highlight the repetition of gender—I argue that drag makes intelligible how queer subjectivity appears in the negotiation of social norms and cultural significance. I examine how these conflicts with queer migrants' foreignness, sense of who they are (ontologically) or whom they think they are (epistemologically), and how these affect how queer migrants fit into the social setting. I theorize queer migrants' usage of drag to make sense of their identifications as “dragging” up based on the above concepts to describe the queer temporality of taking from historical understandings of what gender as a fixed idea is and

bringing it to the present in a distorted reappearance, which mitigates the disorientations by allowing (re)appearances to have meaning outside of conventional norms.

Chapter Five discusses the precarious social and institutional space queer migrants occupy in Japan theorized as “beyond assimilation” based on multilayered citizenship, which conceptualizes the participation of queer migrants’ formal/informal status and bringing into dialogue their positioning in their country of origin. I argue that queer migrants secure memberships in relevant categories and thus reject assimilation regardless of co-existence policies such as *tabunka kyosei* aimed at building a multicultural communal society. Such policies govern foreign bodies as a palatable experience in service to the dominant culture, strengthening their proximity and invisibilizing their actual lived experience. Their proximity to the main culture allows queer migrants to participate in queer communities, offering a small step towards social mobility and an opportunity to find a support system, such as through drag families. I argue the creation of drag families is a possibility to challenge, conform to, and distort productivity (through, for example, labor and procreation needed for reproduction) by drawing on the concept of gendered family. In their compliance with reproduction or chrononormativity, a term that describes bodies organized in time for maximum productivity, queer migrants restructure their participation by shifting between conforming and non-conforming practices leading to alternative possibilities of meaningful experiences and intimacies.

The final chapter, Chapter Six, builds on the previous chapters by arguing that the multiple identifications and the space beyond assimilation to participate in Japanese society on their own terms has provided queer migrants with a sense of belonging and a construction of power. This politics of belonging creates a dynamic that fortifies political activism in queer communities and poses the risk of neo-colonizing, a process of colonizing local values in which

universalized narratives of sexual liberalism are imposed on local experiences of queerness. I develop my argument using my ethnography of the drag show Beauty Blenda in Osaka and Tokyo. My ethnography demonstrates a politics of belonging which facilitates the construction of inclusion and exclusion of particular people, social categories, and groupings. These boundaries create a position of power for queer migrants to introduce a political agenda related to queer liberation into their performances, which brings a political inclination to the wider context of the queer community. As queer migrants are in a distanced position from the dominant culture while participating in the mainstreamification of queer culture, I argue that RPDR has created a sense of belonging which queer migrants have appropriated for their benefit creating a normalized subjecthood. Through their transnational mobility, queer migrants bring a “liberal” and “logical” understanding of queer liberation, or “how to be LGBT” to Japan.

論文審査の結果の要旨

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要 旨				
<p>日本におけるクィア移民という経験とドラッグ・パフォーマンスの経験がいかに交差するかという独創的テーマをもつ本論文は、自らクィア移民でありドラッグ・パフォーマーである筆者が、当事者仲間に対する聞き取りおよび仲間と主催するドラッグショウのエスノグラフィに依拠して行った、当事者研究の成果である。日本のクィア文化における「外国人」表象の研究はこれまでも散見されるが、実際に日本で活動する「外国人」ドラッグ・クィーンによって「生きられた経験」の聞き取り調査およびエスノグラフィに基づいた本論文は、学術的に斬新かつ有意義な貢献をもたらしている。また、著者自身が「外国人」ドラッグ・クィーン当事者としてパフォーマンスを行いかつ研究に携わるという方法を当事者研究の蓄積の上に展開する方法論においても、これを批判的現象学、フェミニスト理論、クィア理論を用いた理論構築においても、貢献度が高い。英語と日本語による多種多様な先行文献を大胆かつ生産的に横断しながら参照し、それらの応用も著者</p>				

自身の経験の再帰的評価を通じた丁寧な考察は、本論文が副次的にめざすオリエンタリズムの超克を示すものと言える。さらに、学術論文として内容が充実しているだけでなく、読むものを引き付ける文体においても、当該研究の魅力を十二分に発揮する成果となっている。

以下では、章立てに沿って細部について講評する。

第1章の序論は、オートエスノグラフィと移民研究両方の観点からドラッグの概要を描き出す魅力的な出だしである。この、複雑な主題に対する発明的ともいえる接近の仕方によって、ジェンダーおよびその身体化を中心とした考察が、さまざまな意味を持つ移民の過程を鋭くあぶり出し得ることが示されている。第2章は、中心的クィア移民研究を概観し、主要なドラッグ・パフォーマンスのエスノグラフィを射程に入れた十分な先行文献批評となっている。

第3章の方法論については、本論文の主題に照らして非常に深長に研究されかつ明白に記述され、学術的に価値の高い知見を提供している。聞き取りとエスノグラフィを含む方法の組み合わせは、豊かな質的データ群を生み出しているが、当事者であることの利点を活かし、ドラッグ・コミュニティにおける多様な聞き取り相手に接近し得たことは、とくに高評価に値する。この方法論から、研究過程における慎重な再帰的思考が、後半で他類を見ない魅力的な実証データを引き出し得たことが明らかである。

第4章は、ジェンダー規範のドラッグ・パフォーマンスへの影響について探索し、一時性(temporality)の理論を参照しながら日本におけるクィア移民の主体性と生きられた経験(lived experience)について考察する。そこでは、たとえば一般化・商業化したドラッグにおける視覚文化の役割など、具体的な文脈についての深く込み入った洞察が見られる。聞き取り相手の語りの引用は、聞き手との信頼関係をよく表しているばかりでなく、個々のパフォーマーにとってのドラッグにおける主体性と意味、および、かれらにとってのコミュニティの重要性を如実に示している。かつてスティグマに対抗するための行為だったドラッグが、今や日常的行為としてホスト社会におけるパフォーマーの生を動機づけているという議論は、とくに独創的である。

第5章は、クィア移民であるドラッグ・パフォーマーのホスト社会への同化の政治について、やはり慎重な議論を展開する。ドラッグ・パフォーマンスを通してクィア移民の経験を考察するにあたって本論文を発明的なものにする主要部である本章では、繊細な分析が聞き取り相手の直面する障壁と排除を的確にとらえ、表現している。そしてそのことによって、クィア移民の困難に対する読む者の共感を誘う。

クィア・コミュニティへの移民の影響について考察する第6章は、とくにドラッグの隆盛に関連する経済要因を考慮し、ドラッグ・パフォーマンスを商業化しかつ物象化する可能性のある新自由主義の陥穽を指摘する。そして、その中でもかれらにとってクィア・コミュニティが重要であり続けることも明らかにする。しかし、ここではまた「西洋」的にクィアであることの日本社会に対する優越感とこれによって保たれる襟帯も描かれ、「外国人」ドラッグ・パフォーマーたちの文化的新植民地主義(neo-colonialism)志向も導き出される。本章は、興味深く独創的な本論文に、さらに複雑かつ重厚な洞察を提供しているのである。

各章をふまえた結論は、批判的現象学、クィア理論、フェミニスト理論を用いたクィア移民とドラッグ・パフォーマンスという交差する二つの経験の理解について、ドラッグが、クィア移民にとってコミュニティを形成する資源として、同時に、「よそ者」であることを経験する源泉として働くことを明らかにする。そして改めて、クィア研究に身体的空間的移動を組み込むことで生まれる新たな視座を提供する。

以上から、本審査委員会は、本論文が、クィア移民がドラッグ・パフォーマンスを通してホスト社会との関係を構築する過程についての当事者研究の成果であり、その過程における権力の作用、排除と包摂、社会への参加と所属、アイデンティティの変化についての洗練された解釈を提供するばかりでなく、クィア研究と移民研究双方の理論・方法論における重要かつ独創的な知見の価値ある集積であることを認める。よって、本審査委員会は、学位申請者の HUGHES Phillip Brian に博士（学術）の学位を得る資格があることを認める。