

German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)

Gender and Sexuality in East Asia, 1/5

(Joint Social Science and Humanities Study Group)



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Towards a Transnational Sexual Field

Male Vietnamese Migrants in Contemporary Japan

An Huy TRAN, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen

Transnational movements of people across borders have been one of the most prominent forces in shaping sexualities and genders. While migrants' economic and labour practices have constituted a relatively wide spectrum of both academic and non-academic interests, the sexual and gendered dimensions of migration attract less attention. In particular, sexualities have historically been marginalized, and are still 'absent as a social factor in mainstream sociological studies of migration' (Carrillo 2017; Manalansan IV 2006). Moreover, in contrast to female migrants' sexual and gender identities and behaviours, the sexual and gendered experiences of male movers have not been adequately investigated.

This lecture takes a closer look at the intersection of sexualities, genders and transnational mobilities in an East Asian context. Drawing on data from life-history interviews with male Vietnamese migrants in Japan and returnees in Vietnam, the lecture aims to capture and conceptualize the ways in which migrants' sexualities and masculinities are shaped and negotiated during various migration processes. It examines migrants' everyday life experiences, and focuses on the strategies to negotiate intimate relationships and encounters, sexual and gender identities in specific socio-cultural settings. I will also identify multi-level factors that contour migrants' sexualities and masculinities in transnational migratory contexts, and analyse them from a Bordieuan field perspective to move towards a theorization of a transnational sexual field. Finally, I will discuss various methodological challenges in the context of the current Covid-19 pandemic.

An Huy TRAN is a PhD researcher at the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen and a visiting research fellow at Waseda University. His research interests include transnationalism, student mobility, migrants' entrepreneurship, intermediaries/brokerage and the migration industry. Tran's latest publication is Liu-Farrer and Tran (2019) "Bridging the Institutional Gaps: International Education as a Migration Industry," *International Migration* 27(3), 235-249.

About:

The DIJ Social Science Study Group is a forum for scholars conducting research on contemporary Japan. Meetings are held once a month and are open to speakers from all disciplines of the social sciences. The event is open to all. Registration is required via kottmann@dijtokyo.org.

Venue:

Online. For further information please refer to www.dijtokyo.org