Queerness through Homosociality and Queer-baiting

The Coexistence of Blood, Sweat & Tears and Stigma

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- Homosocial -- homosexual continuum
- S. Korea gender and sexuality norms
- K-pop norms: Idols and fans
- BTS’ BST and V’s Stigma
Homosocial - homosexual continuum

- Homosociality: “describes and defines social bonds between persons of the same sex” (Hammaren & Johansson, 2014, p.1)
- Reconceived through desire and the potential erotic; continuum between homosocial and homosexual (Sedgwick, 1985)
  - slipperiness despite heteronormative order
S. Korea gender & sexuality norms

- Contemporary hegemonic gender expectations as partially driven by Confucian ideals around gender
- Obligatory heterosexuality + heteropatriarchal family system; homosexuality in mainstream consciousness
  - emergence of “gay shame” and pride of coming out
Alternative gender and sexuality norms?
K-Pop norms & expectations: male idols

- “ Manufactured versatile masculinity” (Jung, 2010)
  - de/reconstruction of pop culture for a globally consumable product
  - S.Korea hegemony and an international market
Or a distinction between stage and reality?
K-Pop norms & expectations: female fans

- Generally cis-heteronormative female fans as content generators for “shipping” culture
- Capitalizing on this subculture market -- production of queer-baiting moments and interactions
  - grows fanbases; popularity = survival
Situating BTS
BTS’ Blood, Sweat, & Tears
Music Video
2016 MAMA: Between BST & Fire
V’s Stigma
I’m sorry I’m sorry
I’m sorry ma brother

Even if (I try to) hide it, or conceal it, it can’t be erased

Are you calling me a sinner
What more do I have to say

I’m sorry I’m sorry
I’m sorry ma sister

Even if (I try to) hide it, or conceal it, it can’t be erased

So cry
Please dry my eyes
BST and Stigma simultaneously: possibilities of transnational k-pop, gender, and sexuality