

CALL FOR PAPERS

Theme

Contemporary religious actors and their significance in gender and sexuality justice in Asia

The continuous reification of gender and sexuality norms, roles and expectations has contributed to the suppression of, and aggression towards human expression and embodiment in many parts of the world. The operations of mainstream religious institutions are major factors that galvanise this suppression through the deployment of patriarchal, sexist and heteronormative religious teachings, legalities and thought processes. Conservative interpretations and implementations of faith, in this sense, have played prominent roles in the production of gender and sexuality injustices (Maznah, 2010; Yip, 1997).

Nevertheless, there has been an uptake in religious practices, theologies, spiritualities and faith-based ideas that foster equity and justice in issues of gender and sexuality. The continuing proliferation of feminist, queer and LGBTI works on faith systems attests to this fact (Brazal and Si, 2007; Kugle, 2010; Langenberg, 2015; Shore-Goss et al., 2013). These endeavours, however, have largely resorted to re-renderings of ancient religious and scriptural texts, seers and saints, and theological tenets to canvass for gender and sexuality justice in non-Asian contexts. Less has been done to explore the roles of those whom we refer to as ‘contemporary religious actors’, or twenty-first century ‘key’ religious personages, groups, communities or organisations who/that pursue gender and sexuality justice through alternative, radical and even transgressive thought in a manner that speaks to Asian realities.

Held at the campus of Monash University Malaysia, CoGen 2018 is interested in examining how contemporary religious actors within and outside Asia can dialogue with, challenge, interrogate, and/or contribute to the pursuit of gender and sexual justice in various countries in Asia. As such, we ask the following questions:

- What happens when the lived experiences, activism, or intellectual and/or creative thought and works of contemporary religious actors become the primary category of analysis in the investigation and appraisal of gender and sexuality justice in Asia?
- How do the lived experiences, activism, or intellectual and/or creative thought and works of contemporary religious actors inspire, impact and transform epistemological productions in gender and sexuality justice in Asia?
- How can mainstream Asian conceptualisations of gender and sexuality justice be affected and transformed by contemporary religious actors?
- What are global, regional and local transformations that occur in matters of gender, sexuality and faith in these exchanges?

We are particularly keen on underrepresented research on the aforementioned intersections, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Academic-activist collaborations are particularly welcome.

We are also looking towards a high-quality publishable outcome from this Conference.

Single and panel abstract submissions of 150-200 words in MS-Word format should be emailed to cogen.monash@gmail.com before or by April 30, 2018. Abstracts should contain the title of the presentation, the name(s) of the author(s) and affiliation(s). An email containing a notification of acceptance or otherwise will be sent out on May 31, 2018. If your abstract is accepted, we expect you to be present at the Conference for your own presentation. The deadline for registration and payment of fees is September 24, 2018.

Conference Committee

- Joseph N. Goh PhD (School of Arts and Social Sciences) (chair)
- Sharon A. Bong PhD (School of Arts and Social Sciences)
- Thaatchayini Kananatu PhD (School of Business)
- Brendon Tagg PhD (Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences/Psychology)

References

- Brazal AM and Si AL (eds) (2007) *Body and sexuality: Theological-pastoral perspectives of women in Asia*. Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Kugle SS al-Haqq (2010) *Homosexuality in Islam: Critical reflection on gay, lesbian, and transgender Muslims*. Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications.
- Langenberg AP (2015) Sex and sexuality in Buddhism: A Tetralemma. *Religion Compass* 9(9): 277–286.
- Maznah M (2010) Making majority, undoing family: Law, religion and the Islamisation of the state in Malaysia. *Economy and Society* 39(3): 360–384.
- Shore-Goss RE, Bohache T, Cheng PS, et al. (eds) (2013) *Queering Christianity: Finding a place at the table for LGBTQI Christians*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Yip AKT (1997) Attacking the attacker: Gay Christians talk back. *The British Journal of Sociology* 48(1): 113–127.