



The international conference 'Sexual and Gendered Moralities' under the auspices of the International Association for the study of Religion and Gender (IARG) will take place in the city of **Ghent** from **26-27 November 2018**. The theme of this conference aims to bring together scholars from different disciplines researching the relationship between sexuality, gender and ethical life in contemporary society. In particular, we aim to focus on theoretical and empirical approaches at the intersection of religion, non-religion and the secular.

The event is organized and hosted by ECSO, Research Group on Ethics, Culture and Society, an interuniversity collaboration between the Centre for Research on Culture and Gender at Ghent University and RHEA Expertise Centre on Gender, Diversity and Intersectionality at the VUB, Free University of Brussels.

Keynote speakers

- Peter Nynäs, Comparative Religious Studies, Åbo Akademi University, Finland
- Vineeta Sinha, Sociology and South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore

Call for papers

Throughout the world, new moralities with regards to sexual, gender and reproductive rights, identities and expressions; alternative kinship forms and family arrangements; and creative post-patriarchal and anti-racial practices, life-ways and communities have emerged. Yet, in the wake of neo-conservative resistance that often appeals to religious (or religiously-sanctioned) moralizing discourses on gender and sexuality, these have shown to be fragile. Meanwhile, the daily 'art of living together' in conditions of growing

cultural and ethnic diversity, social inequality and existential precariousness is also challenged by frictions between different moral frames and sensibilities.

In the past year, hidden cesspools of sexual violence, harassment and everyday sexism and racism have been gushed out into public moral debate, further revealing secularism's 'false promise' of sexual and gender liberty in so-called advanced modern-liberal democracies. Such paradoxical developments show how the study of contemporary sexual and gendered ethical subjectivities requires the continuous challenging of secular-religious; North-South; West-East; tradition-modern; progressive-conservative binaries. While the secularization and individualisation of some societies away from institutional authorities appears to have opened up a 'subjectivization' of alternative ethical spaces for meaningful and ritual expression such as in new religious movements, spiritualities and more secularized well-being culture; it can equally be questioned how truly inclusive and potentially critical and subversive these 'spiritualities of the self' might be seeing the ascendance of a secular neo-liberal morality of self-responsibilization.

Taking disciplinary diversity towards the religious and non-religious into account, this conference wishes to focus on the broadly conceived realm of contemporary gendered and sexual ethics and moralities. We conceive of 'moralities' in a very open and broad sense related to the question, 'how to live a meaningful life?', from both theoretical and more empirical perspectives. Paper proposals from all disciplines that explore or discuss – but are not limited to - the following themes are welcome:

- Sexual moralities and eroticism in physical and digital spaces
- New (queer) forms of reproduction, kinship & parenting
- Religious, secular and humanitarian perspectives on sexual and reproductive rights
- Sexual moralities, harmful cultural practices and gender-based violence
- Normative perspectives on Intimate relationships in and asylum, migration and integration policies
- Gender and sexuality in new spiritualities and new religious movements
- Religion, Masculinity & Sexuality
- Queer theology and transcendence
- Changing moralities and religious orthodoxy

Practical information

- Please send your abstract to info@ecso.be before the **1st of May 2018**. The conference organization will inform all applicants about its decision before June 2018.
- Abstract should be maximum 250 words long and written in English. Please include your name, title and institutional affiliation.

More information on registration and fees for the conference can be found at www.ecso.be
