

Gender, Ecology and Religions

A Queer Proposal for Climate Justice and Gender Justice



No
Reservation
required

Thursday 23 March 2023 13:30-15:00
3rd Floor, Mid-size Meeting Room Inamori Bldg



Sharon A. Bong

Visiting Research Scholar

Sharon A. Bong is Professor of Gender Studies at the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia. She has authored *Becoming queer and religious in Malaysia and Singapore* (2020), and co-edited *Gender and Sexuality Justice in Asia* (2020). She is former consultant to and coordinator of the Ecclesia of Women in Asia, an academic forum of feminist Catholic women theologians in Asia, a forum writer for the Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (on ecological ethics, sexual ethics, postcolonial theories and LGBTQ theologies) and a member of the Board of Editors and Board of Directors for *Concilium*, the international journal for theology.

To what extent are religions and spiritualities a source and resource in realising climate justice and gender justice? The Christian story of creation begins with fashioning order from chaos and positions the human at the centre of creation and superior to other creatures. Yet the church calls for an “integral ecology” that celebrates the profound relationality of Creator and all of creation. Within a Christian framework that is not only anthropocentric but also androcentric – privileging the domination of (hu)man over nature and man over women, respectively – might turning to other religions and spiritualities in Asia offer a way forward in realising the vision of an “integral ecology”?

An “integral ecology” is glimpsed when creation is valued as: 1) materiality with queer ecofeminists (and vegan feminists) insisting on blurring the boundaries between human and non-human, 2) as proliferation through the eco-theology of a Malaysian Jesuit priest-shaman, and 3) as interrelated through a “qi cosmology” of Confucianism that tempers Singapore’s neo-liberalist pursuit of progress. And in these other queer beginnings that go beyond the Christian narrative, in recuperating feminist-Christian stories of creation, lie radical hope.