Despite generations of feminist and queer deconstructions of gender and sexual binarisms in diverse disciplines, the modern/colonial belief in the heteronormative sexual (and thus gender) binary between ‘man’ and ‘woman’ seems to still be strongly held in contemporary society. In this conference, we ask if the binary gender system works as a kind of belief, a question that leads us to explore the relationship between ‘gender’ and systems of ‘faith’ by focusing on three different relations between the two: ‘gender as faith’, ‘gender against faith’, and ‘gender in faith’. The convergences and conflicts between gender and faith also ask us to look more closely at the complex and diverse articulations of gender within different religious “faiths”.

Questions to be addressed by the conference include the following: Is the analogy of gender heteronormativity and “faith” still relevant in a cultural and religious context not focused on faith? Are “queerness” and “faith” compatible? How do actual non-heteronormative gender positions within religious traditions contradict conservative religious demonisations of gender theory as “gender ideology”?

In collaboration with the Zentrum für Gender- und Diversitätsforschung of the University of Tübingen (ZGD Tübingen)
THURSDAY – 10 DECEMBER 2015

15:00 INTRODUCTION: Zairong Xiang and Gero Bauer
15:15 – 16:00 ROUNDTABLE I: Conversation Among Participants
16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break
16:30 – 19:00 PANEL I: GENDER IN / AGAINST FAITH
CHAIR: Regina Ammicht Quinn
Ayse Güc-Isik (Ankara): The Construction of Femininity and Masculinity in Islamic Thought
Marcin Sroczyński (Warsaw): A Year of Conflict – The ‘War on Gender Ideology’ Discourse of the Polish Catholic Church, and the Liberal Backlash
17:30 – 18:00 Coffee break
18:00 ROUNDTABLE II: Final Discussion

FRIDAY – 11 DECEMBER 2015

10:15 INTRODUCTION: Zairong Xiang and Gero Bauer
10:30 – 13:00 PANEL II: CONTESTING HETERO-NORMATIVITY FROM WITHIN
CHAIR: Whitney Bauman
Willem Flinterman (Amsterdam): Going Medieval? Jihad and Heteronormativity
Keri Day (Fort Worth): ‘Queering’ Faith in U.S. Black Christianity: Black Feminist and Womanist Perspectives
11:30 – 12:00 Coffee break
Piro Rexhepi (New York): Regulating Faith through Sexual Representation: Balkan Islam (after) Homonationalism?
Blossom Stefanow (Mainz): Queer Fathers in the Egyptian Desert: Four Stories of Masculinity Beyond Maleness
13:00 – 14:30 Lunch Break
14:30 – 16:00 PANEL III: QUEER POLITICS IN FAITH
CHAIR: Gero Bauer
Surat Shaan Rathgeber Knan (London): Twilight People: Stories of Faith & Gender Beyond the Binary
David K. Seitz (Toronto): Reparing Faith, Repairing Citizenship? The Work of World-Building in Queer Church
Maheshvari Naidu (Kwa-Zulu Natal): Faith and the Lesbian Body: Narratives of Contested Belief
16:00 – 16:30 Coffee Break
16:30 – 17:30 PANEL IV: THEORIZING GENDER AND FAITH
CHAIR: Ingrid Hotz-Davies
Sourav Kargupta (Kolkata and Aarhus): Witnessing the ‘Outside’ to Faith-Like Structures: Woman’s Body and the Problem of the ‘Sati’
Nina Cvar / Jasmina Sepetavc (Ljubljana): The Transcendence of the Momentary: Queering Sex, Gender, and Temporality
17:30 – 18:00 Coffee Break
18:00 ROUNDTABLE II: Final Discussion