


As part of the year-long learning community, Religion, Culture, and Identity, The College of New Jersey will be hosting two interrelated events, a one-day symposium and a week-long Tibetan Buddhist sand mandala ritual, that together explore the importance of sacred spaces within a variety of global traditions. The symposium, *The Creation and Contestation of Sacred Space*, brings together six noted scholars from across the U.S. whose work explores sacred spaces as they have been conceived and disputed in and among various religious traditions. The speakers, who represent a range of disciplines from art history to religious studies to anthropology and political science, will provide rich and varied perspectives on the role of sacred space. Paralleling the symposium will be the creation of the sand mandala, which Tibetan Buddhists believe spiritually purifies the environment and promotes world peace and harmony. The ritual will be conducted by two monks from the branch of Namgyal Monastery, the personal monastery of the Dalai Lama, in Ithaca, New York.

 The College of New Jersey
The School of Culture and Society
The College of New Jersey
2000 Pennington Road
Ewing, NJ 08628-0718

First Class
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 44
Trenton, NJ

TIBETAN SAND MANDALA RITUAL

Between February 9th and February 16th, Venerables Lobsang Gyaltzen and Tenzin Thutop, of Namgyal Monastery, Ithaca, New York, will visit TCNJ to perform a sand mandala ceremony. Dating back more than 3000 years to Buddhist India, mandalas are diagrams of sacred Buddhist symbols drawn with colored grains of sand. For the monks who undertake the ritual, the mandala represents the world in its divine form, offers a map guiding the mind toward enlightenment, and depicts the primordial balance of the energies of the body and the nature of mind. After the mandala is finished, the monks will ritually dismantle it, carry the blessed sand particles to a nearby lake, and cast them into the water. This final stage, thought to bless the lake, symbolizes the transience of all life and the Buddhist ideal of non-attachment to the material world. Each day, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., visitors will be able to observe the mandala's progress.

Events (all held in the lobby of Holman Hall, TCNJ):

February 9-16, 2008: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily,
Tibetan Sand Mandala Ceremony

February 9, 2008:
9-9:30 a.m. *Opening Ceremony*
4:30-5:30 p.m. *Public Lecture*
"Tibet, Buddhism Past and Present, and the Cultural Meaning of the Sand Mandala," presented by Professors Xinru Liu, Department of History, and Jess Row, Department of English, The College of New Jersey, and Venerables Lobsang Gyaltzen and Tenzin Thutop

February 15, 2008: 3-4 p.m.
Question & Answer Session on the Mandala Ritual
hosted by Professor Pierre Le Morvan, Department of Philosophy and Religion, The College of New Jersey and Venerables Lobsang Gyaltzen and Tenzin Thutop

SYMPOSIUM

THE CREATION & CONTESTATION OF SACRED SPACE

Saturday, February 9, 2008
Library Auditorium, TCNJ

MORNING SESSION: *The Creation of Sacred Space*

9:30-9:45 Welcome Remarks, Jo-Ann Gross, The College of New Jersey

9:45-10:15 Jodi Magness, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, "Sacred Space and Jewish Sectarianism in the Late Second Temple Period."

10:15-10:45 Maria Subtelny, University of Toronto, "Templificatio hominis: Man as Sacred Space in the Islamic Mystical Tradition"

10:45-11 Coffee/Tea Break

11:00-11:30 Zeff Bjerken, The College of Charleston, "The Mandala and the Creation of New Buddhist Sacred Space in Tibet"

11:30-12:00 General Panel Discussion

12-1:15 LUNCH BREAK

AFTERNOON SESSION: *The Contestation of Sacred Space*

1:30-2:00 Neal Keating, Hamilton College, "Indigenous Territories, Sacred Space, and Global Foreclosure"

2-2:30 Catherine Asher, University of Minnesota, "Mosques and Temples in India: Sacred and Contested Spaces"

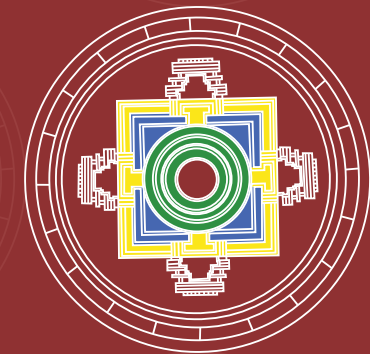
2:30-2:45 Coffee/Tea Break

2:45-3:15 Bernard Haykel, Institute for the Transregional Study of the Contemporary Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia, Princeton University, "Sacred Space, Dissent and Authority in Contemporary Saudi Arabia"

3:15-3:45 General Panel Discussion

3:45-4:00 Overall Comments and Concluding Remarks

THE CREATION & CONTESTATION OF SACRED SPACE



This program was made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations in this program do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.

*These events also made possible by generous support from the Committee for Cultural and Intellectual Community and the School of Culture and Society, The College of New Jersey.

For more information on these events, including bios of the participants, visit <http://www.tcnj.edu/~philos/religion/Spring2008Events.htm> or contact dlnuttin@tcnj.edu