

# Mountains and Sacred Landscapes

An International Conference Sponsored by:

India China Institute, The New School

International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture

Center for Latin American and Latino Studies, American University

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

April 20 – 23, 2017

The New School, New York City

Extended Proposal Submission Deadline: Sept 19, 2016 5pm EST

## Call for Papers and Proposals

The India China Institute (ICI) at The New School, the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture (ISSRNC), American University's Center for Latin American and Latino Studies (CLALS) and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) are excited to announce an international conference on the theme of mountains and sacred landscapes. The conference will include the latest research on the intersections of religion, nature and culture and will feature special presentations from the India China Institute's three-year [Sacred Himalaya Initiative](#).

The conference seeks to critically explore the ways in which the idea of sacred landscapes is entangled with diverse communities, with particular attention to mountain landscapes. The conference will feature interdisciplinary dialogue about what kinds of meanings shape, and are shaped by, the effects of climate change, mass extinction, human population growth and ecological degradation of mountains, forests, rivers, and other sacred landscapes.

As we enter the new geologic epoch that scientists and scholars are referring to as the 'Anthropocene,' diverse global mountain communities have begun to face growing social, economic, political, and ecological challenges. Melting glaciers, shifting agricultural patterns, conflicts over mining and resource extraction, risks to livelihoods, and the consequences of increasingly erratic global climate change pose unknown future challenges to many sacred landscapes, including mountain communities and ecosystems around the world, as well as the human and non-human beings that rely on them.

We invite scholars from all disciplines, including environmental history and environmental studies, science studies, anthropology, philosophy, political science, religious studies and geography, to submit proposals related to sacred landscapes.

Proposals may address any of the following themes:

- Challenges and opportunities for sacred landscapes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Theoretical and/or religious conceptualizations of place, space, and landscape
- Negotiation of community, climate change, and mountain spirituality
- Traditional/local knowledge and its effects on social and ecological justice
- Ecosystem sustainability and the future of mountain and forest people
- Ecosystem destruction and the fate of the non-human community
- Mountains as diverse ecosystems and sites of religious negotiation
- Manifestations of the sacred in diverse landscapes
- Negotiating environmental challenge through ritual practices

This year's conference explicitly seeks to disrupt the conventional "three people reading papers" session. We seek innovative and unconventional proposals

from all fields for this interdisciplinary conference. We invite proposals for individual papers, entire sessions, and alternative formats such as: round-tables, interactive workshops, conversations, or jam sessions; please review the alternative format submission guidelines below.

#### **Deadline**

**Monday, September 19, 2016 by 5pm EST (9pm GMT)** is the deadline for paper, panel, and alternative format proposal submissions. The Proposal Submission Form, <https://form.jotform.com/msl2017/sacred-mountains2017>, will open on June 17, 2016. With the exception of queries about travel aid grant applications (see below), please direct any inquiries regarding the conference to: [sacredmountains2017@gmail.com](mailto:sacredmountains2017@gmail.com).

#### **Participation Requirements for Presenters**

All presenters must be members in good standing of the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture and registered for the conference by **March 1 2017**. All scholars interested in religion, nature and culture are encouraged to support the Society by joining or renewing at the [ISSRNC membership page](#).

#### **Publications**

Presenters and session organizers are encouraged to submit their articles for publication, or their sessions for special issues, to the [Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture \(JSRNC\)](#).

#### **Submission Guidelines**

Before beginning the submission form, please ensure that your proposal meets the guidelines specified for each format: Paper, Panel, and Alternative Format.

For organizers of panels and alternative format sessions, please note this requires collating information for each person in your session. Please note that you are allowed to submit a maximum of two proposals in any format.

We suggest that you compose and organize the information in a word processor and then cut and paste your materials into the appropriate fields. Please note the form renders all text “plain text”, please use [\* and \*] to surround any phrase or word that needs to be italicized for example, “[\* Sand County Almanac\*] by Aldo Leopold”

#### **Paper Submission Guidelines**

Proposal authors will need to provide their first and last names, an email address, an affiliation or indication of status as an independent scholar, and country and then indicate if a visa letter will be needed, if a travel aid application will be filed and if an accommodation for a disability is needed, there is a field to specify needs. The remaining fields require a title, an abstract (150 words), and a proposal (500 words.)

#### **Panel Submission Guidelines**

Panel organizers will need to provide their contact information at the top of the form; the panel’s title, abstract (150 words), and proposal (500 words), and indicate whether or not the session will need an LCD projector and finally information and materials for each participant. For the panel’s respondent and session chair (one is not required) respectively, you will need to provide first and last names, an email address, an affiliation, and country and then indicate if the person will need a visa letter, if a travel aid application will be filed and if an accommodation for a disability is needed, there is a field to specify needs. For each of your other participants you will need to provide the same information you have for your respondent and chair with the addition of a title, an abstract (150 words), and a proposal (500 words).

Please note that the panel organizer will not only need to fill out their contact information at the top of the form but also complete the fields in association with their role on the panel (e.g.respondent, chair, or participant) further down the form: the panel organizer will need to re-enter some of the information input as contact information at the top of the form.

### **Alternative Format Submission Guidelines**

Alternative format session organizers will need to submit their contact information, a title, a format description (750 words, clarified below), and the session's abstract (150 words) and a proposal (500 words), indicate whether or not an LCD projector will be needed and then information for each person in the session.

For "Format" (750 words) please describe the session's format how it will be conducted (500 words, suggested), and then list the roles (e.g. facilitator, moderator, speaker etc.) and names of the people in the session; please remember to specify your own role in the session (250 Words, suggested).

For each person in the session, including yourself, you will need to indicate first and last names, an email address, an affiliation or status as an independent scholar, and country and then indicate if the person will need a visa letter, if a travel aid application will be filed by that person and if an accommodation for a disability is needed, there is a field to specify needs.

Please note that if your alternative format session is accepted you will need to provide an abstract for each participant.

Please also note that for alternative format sessions with more than 6 people, send the additional information along with a title of the session and your contact information to the organizers at [sacredmountains2017@gmail.com](mailto:sacredmountains2017@gmail.com), immediately after you finalize and submit the proposal.

### **Travel Aid Grants**

Scholars whose papers are accepted and who would be unable to attend without financial support will have an opportunity to apply for modest, supplementary travel grants. Most of these grants will go to students with little funding available to them or scholars from institutions and countries with fewer resources for travel to international conferences. The full instructions for submitting a travel grant are available as a [PDF](#). To apply for a travel grant you will need to provide a letter of need and a CV per the guidelines and on the submission form (<https://form.jotform.com/msl2017/sacred-mountains2017>), please select “yes” when prompted as to whether you will or not apply for a travel grant. Please note, that just selecting “yes,...” on the form is not an application for travel aid; the letter and CV must be submitted per [the guidelines](#). If you are part of a panel or alternative format submission please inform the session organizer that you will be submitting a travel grant application when he or she collects your information and if relevant title, abstract and proposal for the panel or alternative format submission.

### **Visas**

Scholars who will need letters of invitation in order to obtain a visa for travel to the United States must indicate this through their application form. This process can often take considerable time so it should be undertaken upon the acceptance of proposals or papers. On the submission form (<https://form.jotform.com/msl2017/sacred-mountains2017>), please check “yes,” after the prompt regarding whether or not you need a visa letter.

### **Mountains and Sacred Landscapes on Social Media**

The official hashtag for the conference is #MTNSL2017 on Twitter and Facebook, we encourage you to follow and connect with the conference sponsors.

## **Conference Sponsors**

### **International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture**

More information about the International Society for the Study of Religion,

Nature and Culture and the JSRNC can be found online at:

[www.religionandnature.com/society/](http://www.religionandnature.com/society/). Interested scholars are also encouraged to follow the [ISSRNC Facebook page](#), Twitter [@ISSRNC](#) and [Academia.edu](#).

### **India China Institute**

More information about the India China Institute at The New School can be found online at [www.indiachinainstitute.org](http://www.indiachinainstitute.org). Interested scholars are also encouraged to follow the [ICI Facebook page](#), Twitter [@india\\_china](#) and our [YouTube channel](#).

### **Center for Latin American and Latino Studies**

More information about the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies at American University can be found online at: [www.american.edu/clals/](http://www.american.edu/clals/). Interested scholars are also encouraged to follow the Center on Twitter [@AU\\_CLALS](#) and our [Facebook page](#).

### **International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development**

More information about the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development can be found online at: [www.icimod.org](http://www.icimod.org). Interested scholars are also encouraged to follow the [ICIMOD Facebook page](#), Twitter [@icimod](#) and [YouTube](#) channel.