

## **James Alexander Benn**

*Department of Religious Studies*

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### **EDUCATION**

**University of California, Los Angeles:** 1995 to 2001. PhD, East Asian Languages and Cultures (Chinese Buddhism).

Advisor: Robert Buswell.

Dissertation: *Burning for the Buddha: Self-Immolation in Chinese Buddhism.*

**Italian School of East Asian Studies, Kyoto:** July to December 1999. Researcher.

**School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London:** September 1993 to September 1994. MA, Religious Studies (with Distinction).

Advisor: T. H. Barrett.

Thesis: *Temperance Tracts and Teetotalers under the T'ang: Buddhism, Alcohol and Tea in Mediaeval China.*

**Christie's Fine Arts Course London:** September 1986 to June 1987.

**University of Cambridge (St. John's College):** 1982 to 1986. BA, MA, Oriental Studies (Chinese).

Special Subject: Tang Intellectual History, supervised by T. H. Barrett and David McMullen.

### **CURRENT STATUS**

**McMaster University:** Associate Professor of Buddhism and East Asian Religions.

### **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

United Kingdom Association for Buddhist Studies,

International Association of Buddhist Studies,

Association for Asian Studies,

American Academy of Religion,

T'ang Studies Society,

Early Medieval China Group,

Society for the Study of Chinese Religions,

Chinese Military History Society.

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

**McMaster University:** Assistant Professor of Buddhism and East Asian Religions, 2005–2007.

**Arizona State University:** Assistant Professor of Chinese Religions, 2001–2005.

**Lewis and Clark College:** Visiting Assistant Professor in Asian Religions, 1998–1999.

## SCHOLARLY AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

### **Executive Positions:**

Co-chair, Chinese Religions Group, American Academy of Religion, 2009–

### **Journal Referee:**

*Asia Major* (3 reviews)

*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (2 reviews)

*East Asian History* (1 review)

*Ethnohistory* (1 review)

*History of Religions* (1 review)

*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (10 reviews)

*Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* (1 review)

*Religion* (1 review).

### **Editorial Board:**

Editorial Board for the Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism Series.

### **Manuscript Reviews for Publishers:**

Brill, Routledge, Wadsworth

### **External Reviewer:**

External Assessor, Standard Research Grant, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2006).

External Adjudicator for the Buddha Dharma Kyōkai (BDK) Canada Graduate Scholarship Competition (2004).

Rapporteur on sociological study of self-immolation for Economic and Social Research Council, UK (2004).

### **Other:**

T'ang Studies Society, Nominating Committee, 2007–2008.

University of Toronto/McMaster University Numata Buddhist Studies Programming Subcommittee, 2006–2008; 2009–

Selection Committee, BDK Canada Buddhist Studies Graduate Scholarship Competition (2006).

Planning Committee, 2003 Annual Meeting of the Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies.

## AREAS OF INTEREST

**Research:**

Buddhism and Taoism in medieval China.  
Physical and material aspects of religious practice.  
Relics, self-immolation, tea, apocrypha.

**Teaching:**

Buddhism, Taoism, Chinese Religions.  
Buddhist and Taoist texts in Chinese and in translation.

**HONOURS**

2001. UCLA Charles E. and Sue K. Young Graduate Student Award for Excellence. Given by the UCLA College of Letters and Science for exemplary academic achievement, research, and university citizenship. (\$5,000 US)
- 2000–2001. UCLA Dissertation Year Fellowship. (\$12,000 US)
2000. Fellowship from Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, UCLA. (\$12,000 US)
1999. Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai Fellowship for research in Kyoto. (\$10,000 US)
- 1997–98. Fellowships from Center for Chinese Studies, and Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, UCLA.
- 1996–97. Full fellowship from Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, UCLA.
1996. Summer language fellowship from Center for Chinese Studies.
- 1995–96. Fellowships from Center for Chinese Studies, and Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, UCLA.
1994. Awarded the Taught Master's Prize at SOAS.
- 1986–87. Fellowship from Christie's the Auctioneers.

**TEACHING AWARDS (NOMINATED)****Nominee:**

McMaster University, McMaster Student Union Teaching Award, Top Nominee for Faculty of Social Sciences: 2007–2008.

Arizona State University Last Lecture series: 2002, 2003, 2004.

Arizona State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean's Distinguished Teaching Award, 2005.

**CLASSES TAUGHT  
(LAST FIVE YEARS)**

Religious Studies 2K03. *Introduction to Buddhism*. Term I 2007–2008.

Arts & Science/Japanese Studies/Religious Studies 3S03. *East Asian Religious Traditions*. Term II 2007–2008.

Religious Studies/Japanese Studies 3UU3. *Buddhism in East Asia*. Term II 2005–2006; Term II 2006–2007; Term II 2009–2010.

Religious Studies 4H03. *Topics in Asian Religions: Life Writings in Asian Religions*. Term I 2006–2007.

RS 701. *Issues in the Study of Religion*. Term I 2007–2008 (co-taught with Dr. Anders Runesson).

RS 712. *Topics in the Study of Chinese Buddhist Texts I: Translated Texts*. Term I 2006–2007.

RS 713. *Topics in the Study of Chinese Buddhist Texts II: Indigenous Chinese Writings*. Term II 2005–06, Term II 2007–2008.

RS 717. *Topics in Chinese Buddhism: Recent Scholarship*. Term II 2006–2007.

RS 718. *Topics in Buddhist Studies: Recent Scholarship*. Term I 2009–2010.

RS 724. *Topics in Taoism*. Term I 2007–2008; Term II 2009–2010.

Religious Studies 6Y06. *Introduction to Literary Chinese*. 2005–2006, 2006–2007, 2007–2008.

ASU, Religious Studies 100. *Religions of the World*. Spring 2003.

ASU, Religious Studies 343. *Taoism*. Fall 2001, Spring 2002, Fall 2003, Fall 2004.

ASU, Religious Studies 351. *Buddhism*. Fall 2001, Fall 2002, Spring 2004, Fall 2004.

ASU, Religious Studies 394. *Chinese Religions*. Fall 2003.

ASU, Religious Studies 394. *Buddhist Texts in Translation*. Spring 2005.

ASU, Honors 394. *Chinese Religions* (ASU Honors College). Fall 2003.

ASU, Religious Studies 405. Seminar on *Religion and the Body*. Spring 2002, Spring 2004.

ASU, Religious Studies 405. Seminar on *Religion and Food*. Spring 2005.

ASU, Religious Studies 591. Graduate seminar on Religion and the Body. Spring 2003.

## GRADUATE SUPERVISION

### McMaster University

#### Chair:

MA, Religious Studies:

Stephanie Balkwill, “‘My Mother Watched Over an Empty House and was Separated from the Heavenly Female’”: Nüshu and the Writing of Religious Culture in China.” 2006.

Michael Harack, “The Role of the Sage in Cheng Xuanying’s Commentary on the *Zhuangzi*.” 2007.

He Yongshan, 2009–.

PhD, Religious Studies:

Kevin Bond (Assistant Professor, tenure track, University of Regina), “Forcing the Immovable One to the Ground: Revisioning a Major Deity in Early Modern Japan.” 2008. [Supervisor from 2007–08 only; Dr. Bond was previously supervised by Dr. Koichi Shinohara]

Stephanie Balkwill, 2009–; Randy Celie, 2007–; Chih-mien Adrian Tseng, 2007–.

#### Committee:

MA, Religious Studies:

Abigail MacBain, “Temples and Sūtras: Nara Japan’s National Defense System.” 2008.

Aurelius Rego, “A Study of the Role and Function of the Monks and Nuns of the Groups-of-six in Vinaya Literature.” 2009.

PhD, Religious Studies: Benjamin Fleming, “The Cult of the *Jyotirlingas* and the History of Śaivite Worship.” 2007.

PhD, Religious Studies: Kimberley Beek, 2007–; Hisako Omori, 2005–.

**Arizona State University**

**Chair:**

MA, Religious Studies: Brandon Cleworth, “Pain as Provocateur: The Unmaking of Angela da Folignio’s Body.” 2004.

**Committee:**

MA, Religious Studies: Kent Patten, “Zoroastrianism and Judaism: Exploring the Concept of Influence.” 2004.

MA, Religious Studies: Jeffry Halverson, “Sacred Bodies and Suicide Bombers: The Body and Self-Martyrdom in Islamic Legal Discourse.” 2004.

**Internal Examiner**

**McMaster University**

PhD, History: Harish Mehta, “‘People’s Diplomacy:’ The Diplomatic Front of North Vietnam during the War against the United States, 1965-1972.” 2009.

**External Examiner**

**Princeton University**

PhD, Religion: Stuart H. Young, “Conceiving the Indian Buddhist Patriarchs in China.” 2008.

**RESEARCH FUNDING  
(LAST FIVE YEARS)**

2008. Conference Grant, McMaster University Arts Research Board, funding for travel to XVth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies (\$1,000 CAN).
2006. Research Grant, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Standard Research Grant, “Tea in China: A Religious and Cultural History” (\$72,106 CAN).
2005. Research Grant, McMaster University Arts Research Board, “Religion and the Military in Medieval China” (\$3,419 CAN).
2005. Conference Grant, McMaster University Arts Research Board, funding for travel to American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting (\$1,256 CAN).
2004. ASU College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Faculty Grant In Aid (\$7,500 US). Support for *Tea in China, a Religious and Cultural History* book proposal.
2003. Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship for US-based Researchers at the Needham Research Institute, Cambridge (\$10,000 US). Support for research on religious and cultural history of tea in China.
2002. A. T. Steele Travel Grant (\$1,000 US). Travel to China for research at Buddhist cave-sites around Dazu, Chongqing.

2001. UCLA Center for Buddhist Studies funding for “Absence made Tangible: The Relics of the Buddha in India, China and Japan.”

## PUBLICATIONS

### PEER REVIEWED

#### BOOK

*Burning for the Buddha: Self-immolation in Chinese Buddhism*, Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism 19. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007.

Notices: *Chronicle of Higher Education* 53, no. 28, p. A21. *Choice* 45, no. 1 (September 2007).  
Reviews: *Hanxue yanjiu tongxun (Newsletter for Research in Chinese Studies)* 26, no. 3, August 2007, 55–56 [Stefania Travagnin]; *Middle Way* 82, no. 2, August 2007, 119 [Simon Hui-Chiao]; *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 76, March 2008, 198–202 [Natasha Heller]; *Tang yanjiu* 13, December 2007 [Chen Huaiyu]; *The Journal of Religion* 88, no. 2, April 2008, 269-270 [Marcus Bingenheimer]; *Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 2, May 2008, 678–681 [Wendi Adamek]; *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 69, no. 1, June 2009, 221–225 [Vincent Goossaert]; *Journal of Chinese Religions* 36, 2008, 124–127 [Linda Penkower]; H-Buddhism, H-Net Reviews, November 2009 [Ryan Overbey].

#### EDITED BOOK

*Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia: Places of Practice*, edited by James A. Benn, Lori Meeks, James Robson (Routledge, 2009).

#### JOURNAL ARTICLES

“Another Look at the Pseudo-*Śūraṅgama Sūtra*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 68, no. 1 (June 2008), 57–89.

“Written in Flames: Self-immolation in Sixth-century Sichuan,” *T’oung Pao* 92, no. 4-5 (2006), 410–465.

“Where Text Meets Flesh: Burning the Body as an ‘Apocryphal Practice’ in Chinese Buddhism,” *History of Religions*, 37 no. 4 (May 1998), 295–322.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS

“The *Lotus Sūtra* and Self-immolation,” in *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra*, edited by Jacqueline I. Stone and Stephen F. Teiser, 107–131. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

“Spontaneous Human Combustion: Some Remarks on a Phenomenon in Chinese Buddhism,” in *Heroes and Saints: The Moment of Death in Cross-cultural Perspectives*, edited by

Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara, 101–133. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007.

“Fire and the Sword: Some Connections between Self-immolation and Religious Persecution in the History of Chinese Buddhism” in *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses and Representations*, edited by Bryan Cuevas and Jacqueline Stone, 234–65. Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism 20. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007.

## **NOT PEER REVIEWED**

### **EDITED BOOK**

*Buddhism and Peace: Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-sacrifice*, edited with Jinhua Chen. Hualien: Tzu Chi University Press, 2007.

### **CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS**

“Introduction,” in *Buddhism and Peace, Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-sacrifice*, edited by James Benn and Jinhua Chen, 1–11. Hualien: Tzu Chi University Press, 2007.

“Self-immolation in the Context of War and Other Natural Disasters,” in *Buddhism and Peace, Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-sacrifice*, edited by James Benn and Jinhua Chen, 51–83. Hualien: Tzu Chi University Press, 2007.

“Buddhism, Alcohol, and Tea in Medieval China” in *Of Tripod and Palate: Food and Religion in Traditional China*, edited by Roel Sterckx, 213–36. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

### **ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRIES**

“Diet” (228–29) and “Self-immolation” (758–59) in *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*. New York: Macmillan 2004.

### **BOOK REVIEWS**

Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song-Dynasty China*, *Journal of Asian Studies* 68/4 (November 2009), 1267–68.

Stephen F. Teiser, *Reinventing the Wheel: Paintings of Rebirth in Medieval Buddhist Temples*, *History of Religions* 49/1 (August 2009), 104–106.

Martha P. Y. Cheung, ed. *An Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation. Volume 1: From Earliest Times to the Buddhist Project*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 19/1 (January 2009), 132–34.

- Stephen Eskildsen, *The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18/4 (October 2008), 541–43.
- Benjamin Penny, ed., *Daoism in History: Essays in Honour of Liu Ts'un-yan*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18/4 (October 2008), 543–45.
- Jinhua Jia, *The Hongzhou School of Chan Buddhism in Eighth- through Tenth-Century China*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18/4 (October 2008), 545–47.
- Eugene Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 17/3 (July 2007), 351–52.
- Vincent Goossaert, ed. *Sanjiao wenxian: Materiaux pour l'étude de la religion chinoise*, (*Revue Annuelle*, no. 4), *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 17/3 (July 2007), 352–53.
- Robert E. Florida, *The Buddhist Tradition: Volume Five of Human Rights and the World's Major Religions*, *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 36/1 (2007), 169–70.
- Alan Cole, *Text as Father: Paternal Seductions in Early Mahāyāna Buddhist Literature*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 17/1 (January 2007), 95–97.
- S. A. M. Adshead, *T'ang China: The Rise of the East in World History*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 16/3 (November 2006), 332–33.
- H. W. Bodewitz and Minoru Hara, eds. *Gedenkschrift J.W. De Jong*, *Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series XVI*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 15/3 (November 2005), 382–83.
- John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65/1 (June 2005), 207–215.
- Charles Le Blanc, Rémi Mathieu et. al, *Philosophes Taoïstes II, Huainan zi*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 15/1 (April 2005), 123–25.
- Tansen Sen, *Buddhism, Diplomacy and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600-1400*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 68/1 (February 2005), 154–56.
- Michel Strickmann (edited by Bernard Faure), *Chinese Magical Medicine*, *Journal of Asian Studies* 63/4 (November 2004), 1113–14.
- Catherine Despeux, ed., *Bouddhisme et Lettrés dans la Chine Médiévale*, *Journal of Chinese Religions* 31 (2003), 229–31.
- Hamar Imre, *A Religious Leader in the Tang: Chengguan's Biography*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 13/3 (November 2003), 421–22.
- Antonino Forte and Frederico Masini, eds., *A Life Journey to the East: Sinological Studies in Memory of Giuliano Bertuccioli (1923-2001)*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 13/3 (November 2003), 430–32.
- David Schaberg *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 13/3 (November 2003), 419–21.
- Robert Ford Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 13/1 (April 2003), 138–40.
- Brook Ziporyn, *Evil and/or/as the Good: Omnicentrism, Intersubjectivity, and Value Paradox in Tiantai Buddhist Thought*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 12/1 (April 2002), 120–22.
- Shiyi Yu, *Reading the Chuang-tzu in the T'ang Dynasty: the Commentary of Ch'eng Hsüan-ying (fl. 631-652)*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 12/1 (April 2002), 130–32.
- Joseph P. McDermott, ed., *State and Court Ritual in China*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 10/3 (November 2000), 422–24.
- Bernard Faure, *The Will to Orthodoxy: a Critical Genealogy of Northern Chan Buddhism*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 10/1 (April 2000), 137–39.

- Donald Holzman, *Immortals, Festivals and Poetry in Medieval China*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 9/3 (November 1999), 458–60.
- Dominik Declercq, *Writing Against The State: Political Rhetorics in Third and Fourth Century China*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 9/3 (November 1999), 460–61.
- Charles Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, 58/4 (November 1999), 1115–16.
- Jérôme Ducor, *Le Sûtra d'Amida prêché par le Buddha*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 9/2 (July 1999), 337–39.
- Christian Daniels and Nicholas K. Menzies, *Joseph Needham Science and Civilisation in China, volume 6, Biology and Biological Technology; Part III: Agro-Industries: Sugarcane Technology and Forestry*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 9/2 (July 1999), 341–43.
- Stephen Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 9/1 (April 1999), 198–200.
- Livia Kohn and Michael LaFargue, eds., *Lao-tzu and the Tao-te-ching*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 62/2 (1999), 388–89.
- John Kieschnick, *The Eminent Monk*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 8/3 (November 1998), 496–98.
- Francois Jullien, *The Propensity of Things: Toward a History of Efficacy in China*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 8/3 (November 1998), 498–500.
- Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao: Debates among Buddhists and Taoists in Medieval China*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 8/3 (November 1998), 500–502.
- Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 8/2 (July 1998), 307–309.
- Tadeusz Skorupski, ed., *The Buddhist Forum*, vol. IV, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 8/2 (July 1998), 305–307.

## **ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION**

### **PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES**

- “The Silent Saṃgha: Some Observations on Mute Sheep Monks,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, forthcoming.

### **PEER-REVIEWED CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS**

- “Biographies of Eight Auto-Cremators and Huijiao’s *Critical Evaluation*” [introduction and translation] in Robert F. Campany, Wendy Swartz, and Lu Yang eds., *Early Medieval China: A Sourcebook*, forthcoming.

### **NON-PEER-REVIEWED CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS**

- “One Mountain, Two Traditions: Buddhist and Taoist Claims on Zhongnan shan in Medieval Times,” in *Images, Relics, and Legends: The Formation and Transformation of*

*Buddhist Sacred Sites, Essays in Honour of Professor Koichi Shinohara*, Oakville: Mosaic Press, 2010, edited by James Benn, Jinhua Chen, James Robson.

## PRESENTATIONS AT MEETINGS

### **INVITED**

- “Tea as Beverage and Ritual Offering in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Monasteries.”  
Department of East Asian Studies, University of Toronto, January 29th 2010.
- “The Buddhist Arts of Tea in Medieval China.” The 22nd Sammy Yukuan Lee Lecture on Chinese Archaeology and Art, University of California, Los Angeles, November 7<sup>th</sup> 2009.
- Invited discussant for two panels, “Preparation for Death: Practice at the End of Life” and “Thinking about the Dead,” at multidisciplinary symposium on *Buddhists at the End of Life*, University of California, Santa Cruz, May 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> 2009.
- Invited participant, Numata Chair in Buddhist Studies inaugural symposium, University of Calgary, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2009.
- Invited discussant for panel “Enlivenment of Religious Images” at symposium on *The Chinese Art of Enlivenment*, Harvard University, October 24<sup>th</sup>–25<sup>th</sup> 2008.
- “The Chinese Sources of an Apocryphal Sutra: Another Look at the Pseudo-*Śūraṅgama sūtra*,” invited lecture, sponsored by the Harvard Buddhist Studies Forum, Harvard University, May 5<sup>th</sup> 2008.
- “‘Do not point to any shape and call it the Dao:’ Heterodoxy and Images in Medieval China,” presented at conference on *Images in Motion: New Perspectives on Buddhist Arts*, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, February 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> 2008.
- “Hybrid Cosmologies in the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*,” presented at conference on *Text, Translation, and Transmission*, University of California, Berkeley, October 18<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> 2007.
- “Buddhist Laymen and Tea during the Tang Dynasty,” invited lecture, sponsored by the Buddhist Studies Seminar, Columbia University, April 12<sup>th</sup> 2007.
- “Buddhist Laymen and Tea during the Tang Dynasty,” invited lecture, sponsored by East Asian Studies and the Buddhist Studies Workshop, Princeton University, April 11<sup>th</sup> 2007.
- “The Sense of Smell in Medieval China: Some Preliminary Remarks,” presented at conference on *The Senses of Religion: Knowledge, Miracles, Worship and Sensory Experience in the World’s Religions*, Yale University, October 27<sup>th</sup>–29<sup>th</sup> 2006.

“Mr. Tea versus Mr. Alcohol: Battling Commodities in Medieval China,” *Second Annual Alumni Lecture*, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of California Los Angeles, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005.

Invited discussant for two papers at annual *Buddhist Studies Graduate Student Conference*, Princeton University, April 22<sup>nd</sup>–24<sup>th</sup> 2005.

“Magic and the Military in Medieval China,” presented at Yale University Council on East Asian Studies Workshop on *Manipulating Magic: Sages, Sorcerers and Scholars*, Yale University, April 15<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> 2005.

“One Mountain, Two Traditions: Zhongnan shan in Sui and Tang Times,” presented at *International Symposium on Images, Relics and Legends: Formation and Transformation of Buddhist Sacred Sites in China*, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 15-16<sup>th</sup> October 2004.

“Chinese Buddhist Martyrs? Some Reflections on Typologies of Self-immolation,” presented at conference on *Imagined Worlds of Martyrdom*, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2004.

“Buddhism, Alcohol and Tea in Medieval China,” presented at conference on *Food and Religion in Traditional China*, University of Cambridge, April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2004.

“Burning Buddhist Monks: Some Reflections on Self-immolation and Conflict,” invited lecture, University of Washington, December 17<sup>th</sup> 2003.

“‘On Drinking Tea and Nourishing Life,’ *Kissa Yōjōki* by the Japanese monk Eisai (1141-1215),” *Text Reading Seminar* presented at the Needham Research Institute Cambridge, June 13<sup>th</sup> 2003.

“The Silent Saṃgha: Some Observations on Mute Sheep Monks,” presented at conference on *Monasticism in Asian Perspectives*, University of British Columbia, February 21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> 2003.

“Self-immolation and Peace? Some Examples from the History of Chinese Buddhism,” presented at conference on *Buddhism and Peace*, University of British Columbia, May 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> 2002.

“Fire and the Sword: Some Connections between Self-immolation and Religious Persecution in the History of Chinese Buddhism,” presented at conference on *Death and Dying in Buddhist Cultures*, Princeton University, May 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 2002.

“Spontaneous Human Combustion: Some Remarks on a Phenomenon in Chinese Religion,” presented at conference on *The Moment of Death: Cross Cultural Perspectives*, McMaster University and University of Toronto, October 12<sup>th</sup> 2001.

“Self-immolation, Religious Persecution and the Founding of the Tang Dynasty,” invited lecture, Italian School of East Asian Studies, Kyoto, November 12<sup>th</sup> 1999.

“Deliverance by Fire? Some Observations on Taoist Auto-cremation,” invited lecture, Stanford University, May 10<sup>th</sup> 1999, and Stanford Japan Center, Kyoto, September 27<sup>th</sup> 1999.

“Written in Flames: Self-immolation in Sixth-century Sichuan,” presented at conference on *Body, Form and Practice in East Asian Buddhism*, Lewis and Clark College, Portland Oregon, April 24<sup>th</sup> 1999.

“Written in Flames: Self-immolation in Sixth-century Sichuan,” presented at UCLA China Studies Workshop, May 27<sup>th</sup> 1998.

“The Biography of a Sixth-century Self-immolator,” *Text Reading Seminar*, presented at the Needham Research Institute, Cambridge, May 15<sup>th</sup> 1998.

“Where Text Meets Flesh: Burning the Body as an ‘Apocryphal Practice’ in Chinese Buddhism,” versions presented at UCLA China Studies Workshop, May 1997, and at the Needham Research Institute, Cambridge, September 1997.

### **CONTRIBUTED**

Discussant for panel on “The Lotus in the Sea of Fire: The Burning Monk Thich Quang Duc,” *Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies*, Chicago IL, March 26<sup>th</sup> 2009.

“The Influence of Buddhist Literature on Medieval Chinese Concepts of Wit and Humour,” presented at the *XVth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, Atlanta GA, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2008.

“*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*: Hagiographic Collection or Monastic Manifesto?” presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion*, Philadelphia PA, November 21<sup>st</sup> 2005.

“Buddhist and Taoist Attitudes to Food in Medieval China,” presented at *11th Annual Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies Conference*, “Feast, Famine, and Fasting: Food and Material Consumption in Medieval and Renaissance Culture,” Tempe AZ, February 19<sup>th</sup> 2005.

“The Silent Saṃgha: Some Observations on Mute Sheep Monks,” presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies*, Tempe AZ, October 11<sup>th</sup> 2003.

“Self-cultivation and Self-immolation: Preparing the Body for Auto-cremation in Chinese Buddhism,” presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies*, San Diego CA, March 9<sup>th</sup> 2000.

“Is Self-Immolation a ‘Good Practice’? Yongming Yanshou’s Endorsement of Relinquishing the Body in his *Wanshan Tonggui ji*,” presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion*, San Francisco CA, November 25<sup>th</sup> 1997.

## CONFERENCES AND PANELS ORGANISED

*Buddhism's Occult Technologies* [sponsored by the University of Toronto/McMaster University Yehan Numata Buddhist Studies Program], McMaster University, April 11<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> 2008.

[In collaboration with University of Toronto] *Whither Buddhist Studies? A Workshop on Buddhist Studies Doctoral Education in North America*, Toronto Ontario, April 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> 2007.

Panel on “New Directions in the Study of East Asian Buddhism,” *Annual Meeting of Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies*, Tempe Arizona, October 11<sup>th</sup> 2003.

One-day symposium on *Absence made Tangible: The Relics of the Buddha in India, China and Japan*, held at UCLA, January 27<sup>th</sup> 2001. Sponsored by UCLA Center for Buddhist Studies.

One-day conference on *Body, Form and Practice in East Asian Buddhism*, held at Lewis and Clark College, Portland Oregon, April 24<sup>th</sup> 1999.

## CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Chair and discussant, “Spirituality and the Evolution of Rituals in Asia,” *Annual Meeting of Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies*, October 9<sup>th</sup> 2003.

## MEMBER OF FACULTY SEMINARS

“Religion and Conflict: Disrupting Violence,” Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict, Arizona State University, 2003–2004.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

### DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

#### **McMaster:**

Graduate Affairs, 2006–2008; Chair, 2009–

Library Liaison, 2009–

Chair, Search Committee for tenure-track position in Early Judaism, 2007–2008.

Undergraduate Affairs, 2005–2006.

Search Committee for two tenure-track positions in Asian Religions, Fall 2005.

#### **ASU:**

Search Committee for Lecturer, Spring 2004.

Committee on Undergraduate Education, 2001–2003.

Search Committee for position in Korean Religions, Spring 2002.

Recording secretary for faculty meetings, 2001–2002.

### **FACULTY SERVICE**

**McMaster:**

Faculty of Social Sciences Tenure and Promotion Committee, 2009–2010.

### **COLLEGE SERVICE**

**ASU:**

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Academic Grievance Committee, Spring 2003.

Center for Asian Studies: Library Committee 2002–2005, (Chair, 2004–2005); Committee for New Initiatives, 2002–2005; Advisory Committee, 2003–2005.

### **UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

**McMaster:**

University Library Advisory Council, 2010–

Graduate Scholarships Committees (OGS, SSHRC, Prestige), 2006–2008.

**ASU:**

Search Committee for joint position in Chinese Literature, School of Global Studies, Department of Languages and Literatures, Fall 2004.

Steering Committee, East Asian Civilisations and Cultures Track, School of Global Studies, 2004–2005.

Curriculum Committee, East Asian Civilisations and Cultures Track, School of Global Studies, 2004–2005.

Curriculum Committee, Asian Studies Track, School of Global Studies, 2004–2005.

### **SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**

Member of the Board of Directors, Asian Arts Council, Phoenix Art Museum, 2004–2005.

Lectures for ASU President's Community Enrichment Program: 2002, 2004.