

**James Robson**  
**Department of Asian Languages and Cultures**  
**University of Michigan**  
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### **Professional History**

- 2004-Present **The University of Michigan**  
Assistant Professor of East Asian Religions, Dept. of Asian Languages and Cultures
- 2002-2004 **Williams College**  
Assistant Professor of East Asian Religions, Department of Religion

### **Academic History**

- 1995-2002 **Stanford University**  
Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies, Department of Religious Studies
- 2000-01 **Kyoto University, Japan**  
Fulbright-Hays Graduate Research Fellowship
- 2000 **Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies, Yokohama, Japan**  
Summer Intensive in Advanced Japanese
- 1997-8 **Qing Hua University, Beijing, China**  
Graduate Fellowship at Inter-University Board for Chinese Language Studies
- 1993-5 **Institute For Research in the Humanities [Jinbun kagaku kenkyūjo],  
Kyoto University, Japan**  
Monbushō Graduate Research Fellow
- 1993 **University of California, Santa Barbara**  
Master of Arts, Department of Religious Studies
- 1988-90 **Mandarin Training Center, Taiwan National Normal University**  
Chinese language training program.
- 1987 **University of California, Santa Barbara**  
Bachelor of Arts, Department of Religious Studies

### **Academic Honors/Fellowships**

- 2006-2007 Faculty Fellowship, The Institute for the Humanities, University of Michigan
- 2006-2007 Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Fellowship (declined)
- 2001-2001 Giles Whiting Dissertation Fellowship, Humanities and Sciences Stanford

- University, Fellow of Stanford Center for Buddhist Studies
- 2000-2001 Fulbright-Hays Graduate Research Fellowship for research in Japan
- 2000 Center for East Asian Studies Summer Japan Fund Grant (Tuition and Stipend for language study in Japan)
- 1999 Stanford Humanities Center Graduate Fellowship
- 1998 Summer Mellon Foundation Grant
- 1997 Stanford University Humanities Graduate Research Opportunity Grant
- 1997 Foreign Language and Area Studies Grant (Tuition and Stipend for language study in China)
- 1995-1999 Stanford University Graduate Fellowship (Tuition and Stipend)
- 1993-1995 Monbushō Graduate Research Fellowship- Institute for Research in the Humanities, Kyoto University
- 1988-1990 Taiwanese Ministry of Education Fellowship
- 1986 Dean's Honors University of California Santa Barbara

## Publications

### Books: In Preparation

*The Southern Sacred Peak [Nanyue]: Buddhism, Daoism and Local Religious History in Medieval China* [Manuscript being considered by Harvard University Press, East Asian Monograph Series]

### Articles

- 2006 Entries on “Nanyue zongsheng ji,” “Hengshan,” “Nanyue,” “Huoshan,” “Nanyue xiaolu,” “Wuyue,” “Huashan,” “Longhu shan,” “Luofu shan,” “Cantong qi,” and more (17 total) for Fabrizio Pregadio, ed. *Encyclopedia of Taoism* (London: Curzon Press).
- 2004 “Buddhism and the Chinese Marchmount System [Wuyue]: Excavating the Strata of Mt. Nanyue’s Religious History,” in John Lagerwey, ed., *Religion and Chinese Society: Volume 1 Ancient and Medieval China* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press).
- 2003 “A Tang Dynasty Chan Mummy [roushen] and a Modern Case of *Furta Sacra?* Investigating the Contested Bones of Shitou Xiqian.” Bernard Faure, ed. *Chan Buddhism in Ritual Context*. (London: RoutledgeCurzon).
- 1995 "The Polymorphous Space of the Southern Marchmount [Nanyue]: An Introduction to Nanyue's Religious History and Preliminary Notes on Buddhist and Daoist Interaction," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 8: 221-64.
- 1995 "Huang Shan: The Cult of Site (Sight) and Representation," in John Einersen ed., *Sacred Mountains of Asia*, (Boston and London: Shambala Publications, Inc.).
- 1995 "China's Marchmount System: *Geo-logics*," in John Einersen ed., *Sacred Mountains of Asia*, (Boston and London: Shambala Publications, Inc.).
- 1995 "Polymorphous Space: The Contested Sacred Space of Mt. Nanyue," in John Einersen ed., *Sacred Mountains of Asia*, (Boston and London: Shambala Publications, Inc.).

### Articles in Press

- 2006 “Local History, Lost Monks: The *Biographies of the Eighteen Eminent Monks of Nanyue* [Nanyue shiba gaoseng zhuan 南嶽十八高僧傳]” in *Études d’apocryphes bouddhiques: Mélanges en l’honneur de Monsieur Makita Tairyō*, edited by Kuo Li-ying (Paris: École Française d’Extrême-Orient).
- 2006 “Ritual and Tradition in Xunzi and Dōgen,” in Thornton C. Kline, ed. *Virtue, Nature, and Agency in the Xunzi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

### Articles in Preparation

- 2006 “Monastic Spaces and Sacred Traces: Facets of Chinese Buddhist Monastic Records,” in James Robson, Jinhua Chen, and James Benn, eds. *Monasticism in Asian Perspective: China* (Manuscript submitted to the University of Hawaii Press for review).
- 2006 ““Neither Too Far, Nor Too Near”: The Historical and Cultural Contexts of Buddhist Monasteries in Asia,” in James Robson, Jinhua Chen, and James Benn, eds. *Monasticism in Asian Perspective: China* (Manuscript submitted to the University of Hawaii Press for review).
- 2007 “To Change Place: On the Conversions of Sacred Sites in China,” in James Robson and Jinhua Chen, eds. *Images, Relics and Legends – The Formation and Transformation of Buddhist Sacred Sites* [Under review]

### Book Reviews

- 2006 Review of James M. Hargett, *Stairway to Heaven: A Journey to the Summit of Mount Emei*, in *Journal of Chinese Religions* (forthcoming).
- 2005 Review of Chen Jinhua, *Monks and Monarchs, Kinship and Kingship*, in *T’oung-Pao*, 2005, Vol. 90, 4-5.
- 2004 Review of Robert Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth*, in *Journal of Asian Studies*, 2004. Vol. 63.2; pp. 488-90.
- 1998 Review article of Stephen F. Teiser’s *The Scripture of the Ten Kings*, in *The Eastern Buddhist* 1998, vol. 31, no. 1.
- 1994 “Images of Borobudur: Traversing the Path to Awakening,” review of *Borobudur: Golden Tales of the Buddhas*, by John Miksic (London/Singapore: Periplus Editions, Inc., 1990), in *Kyoto Journal* #26.

### Public Lectures and Invited Talks

- “Mountains, Marchmounts and Buddho-Daoism in China.” Paper presented to conference “The Boundaries of Buddhist Studies,” University of Michigan, Feb. 19-20, 1999.
- “A Tang Dynasty Chan Mummy and a Modern Case of *Furta Sacra*? Investigating the Contested Bones of Shitou Xiqian.” Paper presented to the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Boston, Nov., 1999.
- “A Regional Perspective on Chinese Buddhism.” Paper presented to the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Boston, Nov., 1999.
- “Excavating the Strata of Mt. Nanyue's Religious History: Studying China’s Sacred Mountains.”

Paper presented to the Stanford Humanities Center, January 25, 2000.

“The Production and Transformations of the Southern Marchmount.” Paper presented to the Association for Asian Studies National Meeting, San Diego, March, 2000.

“Excavating the Strata of Mt. Nanyue's Religious History: Uncovering Traces of Buddhist and Daoist Interaction.” Paper presented to conference titled “Religion and Chinese Society: The Transformation of a Field and Its Implications For the Study of Chinese Culture,” The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, May 29-June 3, 2000.

“The Mummy [roushen] of Shitou Xiqian [Sekito Kisen] (700-790): A Modern *Furta Sacra* and Bone of Contention between China and Japan.” Paper presented to the East Asian Religions Study Group, Kyoto, Japan, Oct., 2000.

“Local Lineage, Local Practice: A Critical Look at the *Biographies of the Eighteen Eminent Monks of Nanyue* [Nanyue shiba gaoseng zhuan 南嶽十八高僧傳].” Paper presented to the Association for Asian Studies National Meeting, Washington D.C., April 2002. Panel on “Lineage in Chinese Buddhism of the Tang and Song.”

“Talismans and Talismanic Script in Chinese Esoteric Buddhism.” Paper presented at conference “Tantra and Daoism” at Boston University, April, 2002.

“A Local Perspective on Imperial Mountain Cults in Medieval China.” Paper presented at the 37th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Michigan, May, 2002. Panel on “Imperial and Local Religious Cults in Medieval China.”

“Signs of Power: Talismans and Talismanic Script in Chinese Esoteric Buddhism—Including a Preliminary Study of a Dunhuang Talisman and Stein #2708.” Paper presented at the International Association of Buddhist Studies, Thailand Dec. 2002. Panel on the “Power of Words in Buddhism.”

“Taking Place: Facets of Nanyue's Buddhist Monastic Records and the Conversion of Sacred Sites.” Paper presented at conference on “Buddhist Monasteries/Monasticism,” University of British Columbia, Feb. 2003.

“Virtual Images/Real Shadows: The Transposition of the Myths and Cults of Lady Wei.” Paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies National Meeting, New York City, March 2003.

“Death and Sickness in East Asian Buddhism.” Faculty response for papers presented at University of Michigan Graduate Student Conference in Buddhist Studies, Michigan, April 2003.

“Tracing Back the Radiance: Reflections on Neidan in Relation to Medieval Buddhist and Daoist Developments.” Paper presented at “Stanford University Neidan Symposium,” Stanford, June, 2003.

“Moving Mountains and the Problem of Place in Chinese Religious Geography.” Paper presented to China Humanities Seminar, Harvard University October, 2003.

- “Signs of Power: Talismans and Talismanic Script in Chinese Esoteric Buddhism.” Paper presented to University of Toronto/McMaster University Buddhist Studies Seminar (Sponsored by the Yehan Numata Program in Buddhist Studies), McMaster University, November, 2003.
- “Sites of Conversion: Locating Buddhist Sacred Sites within the Chinese Religious Landscape.” Paper presented at conference entitled “Images, Relics, and Legends: Formation and Transformation of Buddhist Sacred Sites in China,” at the University of British Columbia, October 15-16th, 2004.
- “Japanese Sacred Mountains: A Response to Barbara Ambrose’s Documentary “Pilgrimage to Oyama.”” Respondent for Japanese Religions Group and Sacred Space in Contemporary Asia Consultation at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Antonio, 2004.
- “Moving Mountains and the Problem of Place in Chinese Religious Geography.” Paper presented to Center for Chinese Studies, Winter 2005 Noon Lecture Series, at the University of Michigan, April 5th, 2005.
- "On (the) Word Magic in Medieval Chinese Religions." Paper presented at conference entitled "Manipulating Magic: Sages, Sorcerers, and Scholars," at Yale University, April 15 to 17, 2005.
- "To Change Place: On the Conversions of Sacred Sites in China." Paper presented to Stanford Humanities Center Seminar entitled, "Sacred Geographies: Space, Place, and Network in Asian Religions and Cultures," Stanford University, April, 2005.
- “Searching for a Better Return: The Background and Development of the Practice of “Preparatory Cultivation” [nixiu 逆修, yuxiu 預修] and the Economy of Salvation in East Asian Buddhism.” Paper presented at “Conference on the Study of Chinese Buddhism,” at Xilai Temple, June 10th-12th, 2005.
- “Qing Dynasty Local Daoism in Hunan Province.” Respondent for panel entitled "Analyses preliminaires sur les pratiques religieuses dans le Hunan (Anhua) de l'epoque Qing a nos jours" at the 4th annual meeting of the International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) Shanghai, August 20-24th, 2005.
- “Local Visions of Paradise and Hell in East Asian Art.” Respondent for three papers on East Asian and Islamic visions of paradise. A symposium sponsored by the History of Art Department at the University of Michigan. September 24th, 2005.
- "The Magic Word: Did Chinese Buddhists Believe in Their Spells?" Paper presented at Stanford University Humanities Center Symposium on "Knowledge and Belief." Stanford University, Oct. 14-15th, 2005.
- “Relic Wary: The Ordinary and the Extraordinary Aspects of Chinese Buddhist Relics.” Paper presented at the symposium entitled “Buddhist Relics Redux’ Workshop” at the

University of California at Berkeley. November 5th, 2005.

“Buddhist Biographies.” Respondent for panel entitled “*Re-Wri(gh)ting: Reading Chinese Buddhist Biographies after Wright*,” at the the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, Nov. 19-22, 2005.

“Inside Chinese Images: Local Religion in Hunan Province.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Oriental Society, Seattle, Washington, March 2006.

“Molehills out of Mountains: Towards a Phenomenology of Chinese Religious Landscapes.” Paper presented at symposium “Sand, Stones and Stars: The Natural World and the Religious Imagination in Asia” at Yale University, April, 2006.

“Numinous Peaks: The Contours of Chinese Religious Geography.” Invited talk for Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions, April, 2006.

“The Southern Sacred Peak [Nanyue]: Buddhism, Daoism and Local Religion in Medieval China.” Invited talk at Chung Hwa Institute for Buddhist Studies, Taiwan, October, 2006.

“Magical Words and the Limits of Buddhist Rationality.” Invited talk for National Yunlin University, Taiwan, October 2006.

“Tracing Back the Radiance: On the Buddhist Roots of Daoist Internal Alchemy [Neidan].” Invited talk for Academia Sinica, Taiwan. October, 2006.

“Searching For a Better Return: The Practice of “Preparatory Cultivation” [nixiu 逆修, yuxiu 預修] and the Economy of Salvation in East Asian Buddhism.” Paper presented at symposium “Harmony in Discord: Buddhism as a Means of Integration across Cultures,” at Beijing University, November, 2006.

“Spirit Into Script.” Invited talk for the Council on East Asian Studies, Yale University, December, 2006.

“Pre-Tang Buddhist Sacred Geography.” Paper for conference “Rituals, Pantheons, and Techniques: A History of Chinese Religion Before the Tang.” Paris, December, 2006

### **Service to the Profession**

Peer reviewer for E.J. Brill, Yale University Press, and *Asia Major*, and *Journal of Chinese Religions*  
Steering Committee for Chinese Religions Section of the American Academy of Religion (2006-2009).