

# Bryan D. Lowe

Department of Religion  
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## EMPLOYMENT

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- Associate Professor (with tenure), Princeton University, Department of Religion, July 2024–present
- Assistant Professor (tenure track), Princeton University, Department of Religion, July 2019–June 2024
- Assistant Professor (tenure track), Vanderbilt University, Department of Religious Studies, Asian Studies Program, Graduate Department of Religion, August 2013–June 2019
- Mellon Assistant Professor, Vanderbilt University, Department of Religious Studies, Asian Studies Program, June 2012–August 2013

## EDUCATION

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- Ph.D. Princeton University, Department of Religion, 2012  
Dissertation: “Rewriting Nara Buddhism: Sutra Transcription in Early Japan”  
Primary advisor: Jacqueline I. Stone; Readers: Stephen F. Teiser and Martin C. Collcutt
- M.A. Princeton University, Department of Religion, 2009
- B.A. Middlebury College, Religion (Honors) and Japanese (High Honors), *Magna Cum Laude*, 2003

## PUBLICATIONS: MONOGRAPHS

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*How Buddhism Spread in Japan, c. 650–850*. Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism (University of Hawai‘i Press), 2026.

*Ritualized Writing: Buddhist Practice and Scriptural Cultures in Ancient Japan*. Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism (University of Hawai‘i Press), 2017.

Reviews: *Reading Religion* (<http://readingreligion.org/books/ritualized-writing>), *Religious Studies Review* 44/1 (2018): 120, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 45/1 (2018): 209–211, *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 44/2 (2018): 409–413, *Journal of Religion in Japan* 7/2 (2018): 176–182; *Journal of Asian Humanities at Kyushu University (JAH-Q)* 4 (2019): 95–100; *History of Religions* 59/1 (2019): 73–76, *Japan Studies Review* 24 (2020): 158–162; *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* (2019): 80/1: 257–262; *Nihon Bukkyō sōgō kenkyū* 日本仏教総合研究 18 (2020): 133–139; *Zhongguo zhongguo yanjiu* 3(2020): 297–301; *The Eastern Buddhist: Third Series* 1/1 (2021): 158–161; *postmedieval* 12 (2021): 237–252 (part of a review essay of five monographs)

Winner of the John Whitney Hall Book Prize from the Association for Asian Studies

## PUBLICATIONS: ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS

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- “An Ignored Archive, Accidental Archives, and Sacred Trash: Japan’s Shōsōin in the Comparative Middle Ages.” *Speculum* 101/1(2026): 333–338.
- “Homiletics.” In *The New Nanzan Guide to Japanese Religions*, edited by Matthew McMullen and Jolyon Thomas, 307–322. University of Hawai‘i Press, 2024.
- “Tenpyō 20 nen no Kugo shinmyō kyō hyakkan shakyō jigyō to kokka Bukkyō [The 748 CE Hundred-scroll Sutra Copying Project of *Scripture on Saving Protecting and Life* and State Buddhism].” In *Shōsōin monjo wo kangaeru* [Considering Shōsōin documents], edited by Miyazaki Kenji, 79–107. Hōzōkan, 2024.
- “Patrons of Paper and Clay: Methods for Studying Women's Religiosity in Ancient Japan.” In *Female Agency in Manuscript Cultures*, edited by Eike Grossman, 19–64. De Gruyter, 2024.
- “Japan I: c. 550–c. 850.” *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, edited by Jonathan Silk and Richard Bowring, 349–386. Brill, 2023.
- “Kokka Bukkyō ron no keifu [A Genealogy of the State Buddhism Model].” In *Nihon shūkyōshi 6: Nihon shūkyōshi no kiseki* [History of Japanese Religions vol. 6: Tracks in the Study of Japanese Religious History], edited by Yoshida Kazuhiko, Itō Satoshi, Uejima Susumu, and Satō Fumiko, 91–121. Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 2020.
- “Roads, State, and Religion in Japanese Antiquity.” *History of Religions* 59, no. 4 (2020): 272–303.
- “Kodai jūin no nettowāku to hitobito [Ancient Temple Networks of Monks and their People].” *Kodai shi wo hiraku* [Opening up Ancient History], edited by Yoshimura Takehiko, Yoshikawa Shinji, and Kawajiri Akio, 263–299. Iwanami shoten, 2019.
- “Kōmyō.” Co-authored with Monica Bethe. In *Brill’s Encyclopedia of Buddhism: Lives* (vol. 2), eds. Jonathan A. Silk et al., 1020–1025. Brill, 2019.
- “Nettowāku to shite no Tōdaiji [Tōdaiji as a Network].” In *Za Gureito Buddha Shinpojiumu (GBS) ronshū 14 gō* [Papers from the Great Buddha Symposium, no. 14], 87–104. Hōzōkan, 2017.
- “Bukkyō shinkō men kara mita gogatsu tsuitachi kyō gammon no saikō [A Reconsideration of the 5/1 Canon’s Dedicatory Prayer from the Perspective of Buddhist Devotional Practices].” In *Jōdai shakyō shikigo chūshaku* [Annotated Colophons of Ancient Sutra Manuscripts], ed. Endō Keita, 554–576. Bensei shuppan, 2016.
- “Chūgoku Tōdai to Nihon kodai ni okeru shakyō to ‘shōjōkan’ [Purity and Sutra Copying in Tang China and Early Japan].” In *Nara Heian jidai: chi no sōkan* [Correlation of Knowledge in the Nara and Heian Periods], ed. Nemoto Seiji et al., 91–112. Iwata shoin, 2015.
- “States of ‘State Buddhism’: History, Religion, and Politics in Late Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Scholarship.” *Japanese Religions* 39/1&2 (2014): 71–93.
- “Contingent and Contested: Preliminary Remarks on Buddhist Catalogs and Canons in Early Japan.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 41/2 (2014): 221–253.
- “Buddhist Manuscript Cultures in Premodern Japan.” *Religion Compass* 8/9 (2014): 287–301.
- “The Scripture on Saving and Protecting Body and Life: An Introduction and Translation.” *Journal of Chinese Buddhist Studies* 27 (2014): 1–34.
- “The Discipline of Writing: Scribes and Purity in Eighth-century Japan.” *Japanese Journal of*

*Religious Studies* 39/2 (2012): 201–239.

“Texts and Textures of Early Japanese Buddhism: Female Patrons, Lay Scribes, and Buddhist Scripture in Eighth-Century Japan.” *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 73/1 (Autumn 2011): 9–36.

“Religion and Popular Culture in Japan.” In *World History Encyclopedia, Era 4: Expanding Regional Civilizations, 300–1000*. Edited by Wilfred J. Bisson. ABC-CLIO, 2011.

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#### PUBLICATIONS: ESSAYS AND PUBLIC FACING PIECES

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“What Is a Replica: Reflections from Shōsōin The Show.” *Ars Orientalis* 55 (2025): 185–96. (With Akiko Walley and Kit Brooks)

“When a Manuscript is More Than a Text: Princeton’s Sunidera Heart Sutra.” *Princeton University Art Museum Magazine* 2022 (summer): 19–20.

“Protection without Punishment: Turning to Buddhist Gods during Covid-19.” *Immanent Frame*. <https://tif.ssrc.org/2020/06/25/protection-without-punishment/>

“Mori de maigo: Kaigai kara mita kodai shi [Lost in the Woods: A Foreign Perspective on Early Japanese History].” *Shidai Nihonshi* 15 (2012): 211–217.

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#### PUBLICATIONS: BOOK REVIEWS AND REVIEW ESSAYS

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“Reflections on Esoteric Hegemony in Medieval Japan and the Modern Academy.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 52 (2025): 127–143.  
Review of Chisan Kangakukai (ed.), *Kamakura Bukkyō: Mikkyō no shiten kara* (Daizō Shuppan, 2023); Fabio Rambelli and Or Porath (eds.), *Rituals of Initiation and Consecration in Premodern Japan: Power and Legitimacy in Kingship, Religion, and the Arts* (De Gruyter, 2022); Aaron Proffitt, *Esoteric Pure Land Buddhism* (University of Hawai‘i Press, 2023); and Stephan Licha, *Esoteric Zen: Zen and the Tantric Teachings in Premodern Japan* (Brill, 2023).

“Review of Frydman, Joshua. *Inscribed Objects and the Development of Literature in Early Japan*. Brill, 2023.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 80/2 (2025): 265–271.

“Review of Paul Groner, *Precepts, Ordinations, and Practice in Medieval Japanese Tendai*. University of Hawai‘i Press, 2022.” *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 31 (2024): 359–367.

“Review of Robert F. Rhodes, *Genshin’s Ōjōyōshū and the Construction of Pure Land Discourse in Heian Japan*. University of Hawai‘i Press, 2017.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 80/1 (2020): 258–264.

“Review of Heather Blair. *Real and Imagined: Peak of Gold in Heian Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2015.” *Journal of Asian Humanities at Kyushu University* 2(2017): 137–141.

“Review of Justin Thomas McDaniel and Lynn Ransom (eds.). *From Mulberry Leaves to Silk Scrolls: New Approaches to the Study of Asian Manuscript Traditions*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.” *Material Religion* 12(2016): 522–523.

## FORTHCOMING

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- “Popularization and Periodization in the Study of Japanese Buddhism: Ancient, Medieval, and Original Enlightenment Thought.” To be published in *Transmission and the Making of Religious Knowledge: Essays on Japanese Buddhism in Honor of Jacqueline I. Stone*, edited by Levi McLaughlin, Lori Meeks, and Mark Rowe. 11,000-word draft submitted and accepted by editors. Expected publication in 2026.
- “The Politics of Penance in an Anxious Age, 697–770 CE.” To be published in *Oxford History Handbooks: Ancient and Medieval Japan*, edited by Thomas Conlan. 8,000-word chapter submitted. Expected publication in 2026.

## CONFERENCE PAPERS

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- “Asian and Asian-American Scholars and the Founding of Buddhist Studies in North America.” Asian-Global Networks and Relationships in the Modern Spread of Buddhism. Oxford University, July 1, 2026.
- “Kenneth Ch’en and the Teaching of Buddhism in North America.” Rethinking the Origins of Buddhist Studies in North America Kenneth Ch’en and the Central Role of Asian and Asian-American Scholars in Founding the Field. Princeton University, April 18, 2026.
- “Reading the Underground Archive: Manuscripts, Excavated Objects, and Local Buddhism in Early Japan.” 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, August 15, 2025.
- “Do-It-Yourself Temple Construction and the Spread of Buddhism in Eighth- and Ninth-Century Japan.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 13, 2025.
- “The Ignored Archive: Japan’s Shōsōin in a Comparative Perspective.” Medieval Academy of America, 98<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, February 23, 2023.
- “The Promise and Perils of Movement: Mobile Preachers and the Study of Eighth- and Ninth-century Japanese Buddhism.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 21, 2022. (Paper accepted but not presented due to medical emergency)
- “Localized Readings: Buddhist Textual Production and Interpretation from Ancient Japan.” 19<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, August 16, 2022 (postponed from 2020 due to COVID-19).
- “Propagating Buddhism in the Japanese Provinces: Temple Construction on the Bōsō Peninsula, 650-850 CE.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 26, 2022.
- “Rags to Riches, Paper to Pots: Accessing the Religious Lives of the Poor in Ancient Japan.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 23, 2021.
- Panelist on Roundtable “Challenging Privilege in Buddhist Studies.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 21, 2021.
- “Excavating Texts and Reading Archaeology: Preliminary Reflections on Methods for a Study of Buddhism in Ancient Japan.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 2021 (postponed from 2020 due to COVID-19).
- “Contemplations of Self, Other, and an Awakened World: An Alternative Account of the Japanese Beginnings of Original Enlightenment Thought.” Original Thoughts: A Conference in Honor of Jacqueline I. Stone, Princeton University, May 18, 2019.

- “Even a Half Pint of Rice: Donation Networks of Preachers, Provincial Patrons, and the Impoverished in Ancient Japan.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 20, 2018.
- “Spoken Language is not a Hindrance” (Or is it)? Manuscripts, Performance, and Homiletics in Japanese Buddhism.” Interdisciplinary Conference on Preaching as Performance, University of Calgary, October 27, 2018.
- “Localizing the Universal: Narrative and Performative Strategies in Ninth-Century Japanese Homilies.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 20, 2017.
- “Ritualized Writing: Buddhist Practice and Scriptural Cultures in Ancient Japan.” Society for the Study of Japanese Religions Panel on Meet the Authors: New Books on Japanese Religions at Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 19, 2017.
- “A Sermon on Verso, A Preacher in the Provinces: Re-centering the Study of Heian Buddhism.” 18th Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, August 25, 2017.
- “Digital Timelines in a Japanese Religions Course.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 19, 2017.
- “From Dunhuang to Nara and Nara to Dunhuang: Manuscripts Sources and Shared East Asian Buddhist Cultures.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 21, 2016.
- “Rhetorical Strategies and Manuscript Cultures in Buddhist Sermons from Ninth-Century Japan.” AAS-in-Asia (Kyoto), June 26, 2016.
- “Patron Function and Authorial Intent in Early Japanese Manuscript Cultures.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, April 1, 2016.
- “Who’s the King? Ritualized Writing and Celestial Audience in Ancient Japanese Buddhism.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 23, 2015.
- “Kings Watching Kings: Ritual and Authority in Ancient Japan.” Annual Conference of South Central Modern Language Association, November 3, 2015.
- “Composing the Cosmos in Ancient Japan: Post-Mortem Realms in Dedicatory Prayers.” The Asian Studies Conference Japan, June 20, 2015.
- “Poeticized Cosmologies: Post-Mortem Realms and Dedicatory Prayers in Ancient Japan.” International Workshop on Traditional Sciences in Asia, June 19, 2015.
- “Poetics of Prayer: The Intersection of Literature and Ritual in Early Japanese Buddhist Mortuary Practice.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 29, 2015.
- “Composing Kingship and Cosmos: Prayer, Genre, and Ritual in Early Japan.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 23, 2014.
- “Instituting Transcription: Laborers, Administrators, and Scriptoria and the Emergence of a Textualized Buddhist Tradition in Japan.” 17th Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, August 22, 2014.
- “Restoration or Reform: Meiji Writings on Buddhism in the Nara Period (710–784).” The Asian Studies Conference Japan, June 21, 2014.
- “Networks of Practice: Early Japanese Buddhism through the Lens of the Shōsōin Corpus.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 30, 2014.

- “The Evils of Buddhist Politics: National History (*kokushi*) and the State Buddhism Model.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 23, 2013.
- “Contingent and Contested: The Buddhist Canon in Eighth-Century Japan.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 20, 2012.
- “Formations of Buddhism and State: Demons, Sovereigns, and Sutra Transcription in Eighth-Century Japan.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 18, 2012.
- “Text as Practice: Patrons, Scribes, and Sutra Copying in Eighth-Century Japan.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, April 1, 2011.
- “Empowering Texts: Calligraphy, Scribes, and Sutra Copying in Eighth-Century Japan.” Hierarchies: Graduate Symposium in East Asian Art at Princeton University, February 28, 2010.
- “You Write What You Eat: Purity, Scribes, and Scripture Copying in Eighth-Century Japan.” Harvard East Asian Graduate Student Conference, February 28, 2009.
- “Inscribing Scribes: Purity, Textuality, and Scripture Copying in Buddhist Narrative Literature.” Princeton Graduate Student Symposium in East Asian Studies, June 4, 2008.
- “Dōji (?-744): In Search of a Contested Figure.” Princeton Graduate Student Symposium in East Asian Studies, May 18, 2007.

#### INVITED LECTURES AND WORKSHOPS

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- “Japanese Buddhism in the Back of Beyond: A New Perspective from Archaeological and Manuscript Sources.” Yale University, January 21, 2026.
- “Village Buddhism in 8th and 9th Century Japan: A New Perspective from Archaeological and Manuscript Sources.” Johns Hopkins University, November 4, 2025.
- “A Whole New Sensory World Buddhism’s Spread to the Japanese Provinces, 650-850 CE.” 6th annual conference on pre-modern Japanese religions: The Sounds and Colours of Japanese Rites. McGill University, October 23-24, 2025.
- “Preaching at Village Temples in Ancient Japan.” Premodern Japanese Religions Workshop. August 2-3, 2024.
- “Placing the Shōsōin in the Global History of Book Culture: The World’s Best Documented Scriptorium?” Emerging Book Cultures in Asia and the Middle East: Materiality, Paratexts, Practices workshop at University of Colorado Boulder, April 6-7, 2024.
- “A Temple in Every Village? Buddhism’s Spread in Seventh- through Ninth-Century Japan.” Stanford University, March 12, 2024.
- “Rags to Riches: Preaching to the Poor in Ancient Japan.” University of Hamburg, June 6, 2023.
- “Ritual Productivity: Bureaucratic Scriptoria in Ancient Japan.” Office Supplies: A Conference on the Material History of Writing, University of Pittsburgh, February 25, 2023.
- “Patrons of Paper and Clay: Methods for Studying Women's Religiosity in Ancient Japan” University of Hamburg, January 30, 2023. (Presented online)

- “Reaching the Poor and Preaching Poverty: A View of Ninth-Century Japanese Buddhism from Below.” University of Southern California, January 18, 2023.
- “Following the Paper Trail along the Silk Road: East Asian Buddhism as Shared Manuscript Cultures.” Connecting Dunhuang: Sites, Art, and Ideas along the Silk Road(s) Workshop, Tang Center, Princeton University, April 23, 2022.
- “How Buddhism Spread in Ancient Japan: Provincial Temple Construction and Social Networks, 650–850.” Institute for Advanced Studies East Asia Seminar, December 6, 2021.
- “Preaching Poverty in Ancient Japan.” Religion Initiative and the History Seminar at National Technological University Singapore, October 29, 2021. (Presented online)
- “The Fragility of Connection: Roads, State, and Religion in Japanese Antiquity.” Japan Forum, Harvard Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Harvard University, October 11, 2019.
- “Connectivity and Its Discontents: Roads and Religion in Ancient Japan.” Symposium on Between Worlds: Borders, Performance, & Deities, Columbia University, March 15, 2019.
- “Genre Trouble: Thinking about the *Tōdaiji fujumon kō* Relative to *Ganmon*.” Workshop on Ganmon Liturgies in Premodern East Asia, Columbia University, October 13, 2018.
- “Performing a Manuscript in the Ninth Century and Translating it in the Twenty-first: Methodological Reflections for Manuscript Studies” Varieties and Patterns of Manuscripts in Medieval Japan Conference, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), University of Hamburg, Germany, August 22, 2018.
- “Local Concerns: Death on the Road and in the Village in Ancient Japan.” Woodenfish Foundation Conference, Ultimate Concern: Death and Afterlife, Guangzhou, China, June 10, 2018.
- “Copying Sutras in Premodern East Asia: Technical, Ritual, and Human Dimensions.” University of Michigan, April 6, 2018.
- “Brambles on the Roadside: Religion, Roads, and State in Ancient Japanese Buddhism.” Donald Keene Center of Japanese Studies, Columbia University, March 8, 2018.
- “Preaching to the Periphery: Buddhism in Provincial Villages in Ninth-Century Japan.” Harvard University Buddhist Studies Forum, February 12, 2018.
- “On the Road and in the Village: Provincial Preaching and Ritual in Ninth-century Japan.” Workshop on Issues Regarding Religion and Society in Ancient and Medieval Japan at Princeton University, November 4, 2017.
- “Grounding Heavens: Pure Land Thought and Practice in Liturgical Texts from Ancient Japan.” The Pure Land in the Nara Schools, McGill University, September 29, 2017.
- “Inscribing Orality: Performance and Production of a Homiletic Manuscript from Ninth-century Japan.” Buddhist Book Cultures Symposium at the University of Denver, April 28, 2017.
- “The Lotus Sutra and the Ritual of Sutra Copying in Premodern East Asia.” International Lotus Sutra Seminar (Chiba, Japan). June 30, 2016.
- “The Nara Court Under Buddhism: The Religious Side of Political History in Ancient Japan.” 4th Stanley Weinstein Dissertation Prize Lecture at Yale University, March 10, 2016.

- “Empty Temples, Nameless Monks, and Why They’re Important: A New Take on Early Heian Buddhism.” Reassessing Kodai: An Interdisciplinary Workshop on Approaches to the Cultural History of Early Japan and its Historiography at the University of Michigan, February 12-13, 2016.
- “Nettowāku to shite no Tōdaiji [Tōdaiji as a Network].” Invited presentation at Great Buddha Symposium at Tōdaiji (Nara, Japan), December 20, 2015.
- “Ghastly Hauntings and Divine Justice: A New Approach to Ritual, Ethics and Kingship in Ancient Japanese Buddhism.” Invited lecture at Leiden University, May 11, 2015.
- “Composing the Cosmos: Prayer, Poetics, and Cosmology in Ancient Japan.” Invited lecture for Center for Buddhist Studies at UCLA, March 6, 2015.
- “Writing Societies: Colophons and Communities in Ancient Japanese Buddhism.” Workshop on Buddhist Manuscripts at the University of Chicago, February 26-28, 2015.
- “Haunted by Demons, Watched by Kings: Buddhism, Politics, and Sutra Transcription in Early Japan.” Invited lecture for East Asia Center at the University of Virginia, February 28, 2014.
- “Tilling the Karmic Garden: Sutra Transcription in Eighth-Century Japan.” Invited lecture for Kyoto Asian Studies Group, March 15, 2011.
- “The Discipline of Writing: Scribes and Purity in Eighth-Century Japan.” Columbia Center for Japanese Religion’s Purity Workshop, February 19, 2010.
- “Riting Scribes, Rewriting Nara Buddhism: Scribes and Sutra Copying in Eighth-Century Japan.” Invited Lecture for Duke University Triangle Japan Forum, December 2, 2009.

#### ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANT

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- Panelist for roundtable on “The State and Future of the Study of Premodern Japanese Religions,” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 23, 2024.
- Panelist for roundtable on “Reed, Brush, Chisel: Script, Literacy, and Writing Across Central and East Asia (400-1800),” UCLA, December 9, 2023.
- Presider for roundtable on “Expanding the Range of Japanese Buddhist and Religious Studies Workshop,” Harvard University, March 19, 2023.
- Panelist for roundtable on “The Shōsōin and the Tōdaiji Great Buddha,” Conference: The Shōsōin Imperial Treasury: New Directions in Research, Harvard University, March 16, 2023.

#### RESPONDENT TO PAPERS AND PANELS

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- Respondent to panel “Ritual Across the Divide: Integrating Premodern and Modern Approaches to Religious Practice in Japan.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 24, 2025.
- Respondent to panel “The Medieval in Chinese Religions,” Institute for Advanced Study-Rowan University Joint Initiative in the Humanities: The ‘Medieval’ in Global Contexts, April 30, 2025.

Respondent to panel “Women in Action and Memory in Medieval Japan,” Columbia University Graduate Student Conference on East Asia, October 18, 2024.

Respondent to panel “Preaching Buddhism: Ideals, Figures, and Practices,” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 20, 2023.

Respondent to panel “Epigraphic Research on Medieval Japanese Religion,” Expanding the Range of Japanese Buddhist and Religious Studies Workshop, Harvard University, March 19, 2023.

Respondent to papers presented by Sugimoto Kazuki, “Copying Buddhist Manuscripts in Ancient Japan: the actual practice evident in the Shosoin Documents and Shōgozō” and Nathalie Monnet, “Towards a Reassessment of the Contents of Dunhuang Cave 17: Research on the Derivative Aspects of the Dunhuang Manuscripts.” International Conference on Buddhist Manuscript Cultures, January 21, 2017.

Respondent to papers presented by Akao Eikei, “Two Outstanding Tang Manuscripts in the Kyoto National Museum’s Moriya Collection” and Ochiai Toshinori, “A Manuscript Fragment of Woncheuk’s Yogacara Commentary.” International Conference on Buddhist Manuscript Cultures, Princeton University, January 15-17, 2016.

Respondent to papers presented by Michael Como, “The Medicine Buddha and the Dragon King: Healing and Rainmaking in Ninth-Century Japan” and Samuel Morse, “The Healing Buddha as Kami: Shinto-Buddhist Syncretism in the Early Heian Period and the Unified Silla-Period Standing Buddha at Watasumi Shrine, Tsushima.” Workshop sponsored by Columbia University’s Center for Buddhism and East Asian Religions, “The Cult of the Healing Buddha in East Asia,” Donghwasa Temple, South Korea, May 29–31, 2013.

Respondent to a paper presented by Satō Fumiko, “Kokka Bukkyō ron no seisei katei kara mita kokushi gaku to Bukkyōshigaku ni tsuite no gakumonshiteki kōsatsu [A disciplinary history style reconsideration of the formation of the state Buddhism model from the perspective of national history and Buddhist studies.” Research Group on Buddhism and Modernity, Kyoto University, May 25, 2013.

## WORKSHOPS AND PANELS ORGANIZED

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Workshop co-organizer: “Reinventing the Study of Chinese Religions A Conference in Honor of Stephen F. Teiser.” Princeton University, June 9–10, 2026.

Workshop co-organizer: “Rethinking the Origins of Buddhist Studies in North America Kenneth Ch’en and the Central Role of Asian and Asian-American Scholars in Founding the Field.” Princeton University, April 18, 2026.

Workshop co-organizer: “Tangible Knowledge: Japan’s Shōsōin and the Making of Manuscripts, Treasures, and Archives.” Princeton University, March 1–2, 2025.

Workshop co-organizer: “Thinking Through Minshū Bukkyō: Popular Buddhism and the Study of Premodern Japan.” Princeton University, September 22, 2023.

Panel organizer: “Situating Japan’s Shōsōin in the “Global Middle Ages”: Three Perspectives.” Medieval Academy of America, 98<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, February 23, 2023.

Cluster leader (with Lori Meeks), “Enriched Reading Practices,” From the Ground Up: Buddhism and East Asian Religions (Frogbear) Cluster, June 25–29, 2022.

Workshop co-organizer: “Doctrine and Practice beyond Borders: International Interactions in East Asian Buddhism.” Princeton University, September 16, 2022.

Panel organizer: “Putting Knowledge to Work: A Panel in Celebration of Jacqueline Stone.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 24, 2019.

Roundtable organizer: “Digital Pedagogy for the Analog Past: Technological Tools and Methods for Teaching Premodern Japanese Materials.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 19, 2017.

Panel organizer: “Between Performance and the Page: Buddhist Preaching in East Asia.” AAS-in-Asia (Kyoto), June 26, 2016.

Workshop co-organizer: “Networks and Religious Difference in Asian Buddhist Traditions.” Vanderbilt University, April 3–4, 2015.

Panel organizer and chair: “The Creative Power of Death: Tradition and Innovation in Early Japanese Mourning Practices.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 29, 2015.

Panel organizer and chair: “Approaching Ancient Japan: New Methods and Sources for an Interdisciplinary Study of the Nara Period (710–784).” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 30, 2014.

Panel organizer: “Committed Scholars: Buddhist Studies and Politics in Early Twentieth-Century Japan.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, November 23, 2013.

Workshop co-organizer: “Religious Negotiations at the Boundaries.” Vanderbilt University, February 22–23, 2012.

Film screening and panel discussion organizer: “Buddhism after the Tsunami: The Souls of Zen 3/11 Japan Special.” Vanderbilt University, March 11, 2013.

Workshop co-organizer for “Japan’s Oldest Archive: A Workshop on the Shōsōin.” Princeton University, March 24–25, 2012.

Panel organizer: “Transcription and Transformation: Buddhist Scribal and Manuscript Cultures in Japan, Tibet, and Thailand.” Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, April 1, 2011.

Workshop co-organizer: “Graduate Student Symposium in East Asian Studies.” Princeton University, June 4–5, 2008.

## PODCAST INTERVIEWS

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“History & Myth in Ancient Texts.” *Beyond Japan Podcast* with Oliver Moxham. May 6, 2021.  
<https://japaninnorwich.org/2021/05/06/beyond-japan-ep-34-history-myth-in-ancient-texts-with-prof-bryan-low/>

“Ritualized Writing Buddhist Practice and Scriptural Cultures in Ancient Japan.” *New Books Network* with Luke Thompson. December 4, 2017.  
<https://newbooksnetwork.com/bryan-d-low-e-ritualized-writing-buddhist-practice-and-scriptural-cultures-in-ancient-japan-u-of-hawaii-press-2017>

“Bryan Lowe On Ritualized Writing: Buddhist Practice and Scriptural Cultures in Ancient Japan.” *Authorial Intentions* with Chris Benda. April 10, 2017/  
<https://ir.vanderbilt.edu/handle/1803/8430?show=full>

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Princeton University

Buddhist Stuff: Material Culture and Worldly Desire, Spring 2024 (undergraduate)  
Japanese Mythology: Spring 2021, Spring 2023 (undergraduate)  
Junior Colloquium, Fall 2024 (undergraduate)  
Religion in Japanese Culture: Fall 2019, 2020 (undergraduate)  
Readings in Japanese Religions: Fall 2019, 2020, 2022, 2025 (graduate)  
Studies in Japanese Religions: Spring 2024 (graduate)  
Zen Buddhism: Spring 2020, Fall 2022, Spring 2025 (undergraduate)

### Vanderbilt University

Approaches to the Academic Study of Religion (formerly Senior Seminar in Religious Studies): Fall 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2018  
Buddhist Literature From Buddha to the Beats (First Year Writing Seminar): Fall 2015, 2017, and 2018  
Japanese Mythology: Fall 2014 and 2017  
Religions of Japan: Fall 2012, Spring 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2018  
Zen Buddhism: Spring 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019  
Senior Thesis advisor (one thesis 2013); Senior thesis committee (two theses 2013, one thesis 2014, one thesis 2018)

### Kyūshū University

Topics in Text and Material Culture II: Buddhist Manuscript Cultures and Digital Resources. Graduate Student Summer Seminar, July 2016

### Princeton University (as Assistant in Instruction)

Performance and Practice in Kyoto: Summer 2011 (course in Kyoto)  
Assistant in Instruction (Main Instructor: Professor Thomas B. Hare)  
Chinese Religions: Spring 2009  
Assistant in Instruction (Main Instructor: Professor Stephen F. Teiser)  
The Buddhist World of Thought and Practice: Fall 2008  
Assistant in Instruction (Main Instructor: Professor Jacqueline I. Stone)

### Master's Theses and Dissertation Committees

Ph.D. Dissertation, reader, Kelly Carlton: "Children in Medieval Chinese Buddhism: Discourse on Ethics and Practice," Princeton University, 2025  
Ph.D. Dissertation, committee member: Filippo Gradi, "The Noise of Suffrage: Modern Japan in the Global Rise of Mass Politics," Princeton University, 2025

Ph.D. Dissertation, reader, Sinae Kim: “Preaching Buddhism in Medieval China: Sutra Lecture Texts, Rituals, and Manuscripts,” Princeton University, 2024

Ph.D. Dissertation, external reader: Jonathan Thumas, “Places Apart: Buddhist Reclusion in Medieval Japan,” Harvard University, 2024

Ph.D. Dissertation, Abigail MacBain, external reader: “Foreign Persuasion: Overseas Monks and the Birth of Cosmopolitan Japan,” Columbia University, 2021

Master of Arts, primary advisor: Briana Foley, “Armor, Bauble, Heirloom: Three Case Studies on Tibetan Jewelry,” Vanderbilt University, 2019

Master of Theological Studies reader for Alexandra Felber: “Genderless Sexuality and No-Self: The Misinterpretation and Reclamation of the Transgressive Dakini in American Tibetan Buddhist Communities,” Vanderbilt University, 2018

## AWARDS/FELLOWSHIPS

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Melancthon W. Jacobus Preceptorship in Religion, July 2023–June 2026

Princeton Histories Fund (Princeton University), 2024

The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Research Fellowships in Buddhist Studies (administered by American Council of Learned Societies [ACLS]), 2020 cohort (award taken from 9/2021–5/2022)

John Whitney Hall Prize Book Prize, Association for Asian Studies, 2019

Japan Foundation Research (Short-term) Fellowship, Summer 2017

Research Scholar Grant—Semester (Vanderbilt University), Spring 2017

National Endowment for the Humanities, Summer Stipend, 2016

Stanley Weinstein Dissertation Prize, Council on East Asia Studies, Yale University (biennial, 2012–2014 competition period)

Research Scholar Grant—Summer Stipend (Vanderbilt University), Summer 2015

Junior Faculty Teaching Fellow, Center for Teaching (Vanderbilt University), 2013–2014

Grant for Research on Buddhist Texts Using Old Japanese Manuscripts (*Nihon koshakyō wo riyō shita Butten kenkyū he no jōsei* 日本古写経を利用した仏典研究への助成), International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies (Tokyo), 2013–2014

Graduate Research Fellow at the Center for the Study of Religion (Princeton University), 2011–2012

Fulbright (IIE) Grant for graduate research in Japan, 2010–2011

Japan Foundation Grant for graduate research in Japan, 2010 (declined)

Society for the Promotion of Buddhism (BDK) Fellowship for graduate research in Japan, 2010 (declined)

Friends of the Princeton University Library Prize for Outstanding Scholarship by a Graduate Student, 2010

Department of Religion Teaching Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, 2009–2010

Princeton University Graduate Fellowship, 2006–2012

Princeton University East Asian Studies Prize, 2006–2008

East Asian Studies Program, Princeton University, Summer Fellowship, 2006–2009

Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, Summer Fellowship, 2007–2009

Department of Religion, Princeton University, Summer Fellowship, 2006–2007

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## OUTSIDE SEMINARS AND RESEARCH AFFILIATIONS

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Otani University, Kyoto, Japan, 2010–2011  
Research Fellow on Fulbright IIE grant

Middlebury College Chinese School, Middlebury, VT, 2007  
Intensive nine-week program in modern Mandarin

Nanzan University Center for Japanese Studies, Nagoya, Japan, 2001  
Semester abroad program focusing on Japanese language

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## LANGUAGES

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Reading: Japanese (modern, classical, and kambun [Sino-Japanese]), Chinese (classical and modern Mandarin), French

Speaking: Japanese (fluent), Mandarin (basic proficiency)

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## RELEVANT NON-ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

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Coordinator for International Relations on the JET Program, Nagano, Japan, 2003–2005

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## PROFESSIONAL AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

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Referee/Reader: *Archives of Asian Art*, *Asian Perspectives: The Journal of Archaeology for Asia and the Pacific*, Brill, *Eastern Buddhist*, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, *History of Religions*, *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, *Journal of Asian Humanities at Kyūshū University*, *The Medieval Globe*, *Monumenta Nipponica*, National Endowment for the Humanities (Fellowship Program), *Numen*, Social Science Research Council (International Dissertation Research Fellowship, 2016–2018), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, University of Hawai'i Press

Editorial Board, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 2026–present

Executive Committee, Program in East Asian Studies, 2025–2029

Executive Committee, P.Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Center for East Asian Art, 2025–2029

Editorial Board, Kuroda Institute, 2024–present

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Religion, Princeton University, 2024–present

Executive Committee, Center for Culture, Society, and Religion, Princeton University, 2022–present

Athletics Fellow for Wrestling Team, Princeton University, 2022–present

Co-chair, Buddhism Unit, American Academy of Religion, 2020–2025

Search Committee Member, Lecturer, Religions of South Asia, Department of Religion, Princeton University, 2025

Search Committee Member, Assistant/Associate Curator of Asian Art, Princeton University Art Museum, 2023

Fulbright Faculty Advisor, Princeton University, 2022–2023

Advisory Committee, Chinese Buddhist Canon Research Newsletter, 2022–

Undergraduate Committee, Department of Religion, Princeton University, 2019–2021, 2022–2023

Faculty Facilitator, Social Science Research Council (International Dissertation Research Fellowship Workshop), 2020

Steering Committee, Buddhism Unit, American Academy of Religion, 2016–2019

Steering Committee, Japanese Religions Unit, American Academy of Religion, 2015–2020

John Whitney Hall Prize Committee, Association of Asian Studies, 2019–2020

Area director for Critical Studies in Asian, Islamic, and Jewish Traditions in the Graduate Department of Religion, 2017–2019

Co-organizer of Group for Premodern Cultural Studies, Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities, 2017–2019

Search Committee Member, Buddhist Traditions of South Asia and/or Southeast Asia, 2018

Learning Outcomes Assessment Program Committee, Department of Religious Studies, Vanderbilt University 2018

Fulbright Interviewer, Vanderbilt University, 2015, 2017, and 2018

Strategic Planning Committee: Asian Studies Program, Vanderbilt University, 2014–2015

Study Abroad Review Committee: Asian Studies Program, Vanderbilt University, 2013–2015

Curriculum Review Committee: Department of Religious Studies, Vanderbilt University 2013–2014

Site Editor and Contributor for Guide to Shōsōin Research, <https://my.vanderbilt.edu/shosoin/>

Advisory Board, H-Shukyo, 2012–2016

Overlook Seminar Co-coordinator, Vanderbilt University, 2012–2013

Departmental Faculty Library Representative, Vanderbilt University, 2012–2013

Religion Department Graduate Student Committee, Princeton University, 2009

Graduate Student Representative to Faculty Search Committee in Religion, Princeton University, 2007–2008

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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American Academy of Religion

Association for Asian Studies

International Association of Buddhist Studies

Kodai Jiinshi Kenkyūkai

Society for the Study of Japanese Religions

Shōsōin Monjo Kenkyūkai