

Curriculum Vitae

Michael James Puett

Department of East Languages and Civilizations
Harvard University
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Cambridge, MA 02138
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Employment

- 2002 - Professor of Chinese History
Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations
Harvard University
- 1998 - 2002: John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Humanities
Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations
Harvard University
- 1994 - 1998: Assistant Professor of Early Chinese History
Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations
Harvard University

Education

- 1986-1994 University of Chicago
Department of Anthropology
September, 1994: awarded Ph.D.
December, 1987: awarded M.A.
- 1993-94 Department of Chinese Studies
Beijing University
Beijing, China
(Dissertation Research)

Professional Activities

- 2005-2008: Chair,
Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations
Harvard University
- 2005-2008: President,
Society for the Study of Chinese Religions
- 2007-2008: Chair,
China and Inner Asia Council
Association for Asian Studies
- 2005-2008: Co-chair,
Confucian Traditions Group
American Academy of Religion

Service at Harvard University:

Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) Faculty Council
Religious Studies Working Group (chair)
FAS Educational Policy Committee
FAS Task Force on Teaching and Career Development
Asia Center Executive Committee
Fairbank Center Executive Committee
Center for the Study of World Religions Advisory Board
Center for the Study of World Religions Executive Council

Member of the following departments at Harvard University:

East Asian Languages and Civilizations
Standing Committee for the Study of Religion
Inner Asian and Altaic Studies
Committee on Folklore and Mythology

Serving on the editorial boards of:

Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
Journal of Chinese Religions

Honors and Awards

- 2008 Joseph R. Levenson Memorial Teaching Prize
- 2003 Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation Senior Scholar Grant
- 2002 Harvard University Graduate Student Council
Excellence in Mentoring Award
- 1996 American Council of Learned Societies
Funding to organize the workshop, “Approaches to Understanding
Sima Qian's Shiji.”
- 1995 Marc Galler Prize for Best Dissertation
University of Chicago
- 1993-94 National Program for Advanced Study and Research in China
Committee on Scholarly Communication with China
- 1992-93 Center for East Asian Studies Dissertation Writing Grant
University of Chicago
- 1992 National Resource Summer Fellowship
- 1986-92 Mellon Fellowship in the Humanities
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Publications

Books:

Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity. Co-authored with Robert Weller, Adam Seligman, and Bennett Simon. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.)

To Become a God: Cosmology, Sacrifice, and Self-Divinization in Early China.
(Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002.)

The Ambivalence of Creation: Debates Concerning Innovation and Artifice in Early China. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.)

Articles and Reviews:

- “Combining the Ghosts and Spirits, Centering the Realm: Mortuary Ritual and Political Organization in the Ritual Compendia of Early China.” Early Chinese Religion: Shang Through Han (1250 BC-220 AD). Edited by John Lagerwey and Marc Kalinowski. (Leiden: Brill, 2009). Pages 695-720.
- “The Belatedness of the Present: Debates over Antiquity during the Han Dynasty.” Perceptions of Antiquity in Chinese Civilization. Edited by Dieter Kuhn and Helga Stahl. (Heidelberg: Würzburger Sinologische Schriften, 2008). Pages 177-190.
- “Human and Divine Kingship in Early China: Comparative Reflections.” Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond. Edited by Nicole Brisch. (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008.) Pages 199-212.
- “The Temptations of Sagehood, or: The Rise and Decline of Sagely Writing in Early China.” Books in Numbers. Edited by Wilt Idema. (Cambridge: Harvard-Yenching Library, 2007.) Pages 23-47.
- “Humans, Spirits, and Sages in Chinese Late Antiquity: Ge Hong’s Master Who Embraces Simplicity (Baopuzi).” Extrême-Orient Extrême-Occident 29 (2007): 95-119.
- “Listening to Sages: Divination, Omens, and the Rhetoric of Antiquity in Wang Chong’s Lunheng.” Oriens Extremus 45 (2005-2006): 271-281.
- “Innovation as Ritualization: The Fractured Cosmology of Early China.” Cardozo Law Review 28.1 (October 2006): 23-36.
- “The Offering of Food and the Creation of Order: The Practice of Sacrifice in Early China.” Of Tripod and Palate: Food, Politics, and Religion in Traditional China. Edited by Roel Sterckx. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.) Pages 75-95.
- “Bones.” Encyclopedia of Religion. Edited by Lindsay Jones. (New York: MacMillan Reference, Books, 2005.) Pages 1013-1016.
- “Forming Spirits for the Way: The Cosmology of the Xiang’er Commentary to the Laozi.” Journal of Chinese Religions 32 (2004): 1-27.
- “Following the Commands of Heaven: The Notion of Ming in Early China.” The Magnitude of Ming: Command, Allotment, and Fate in Chinese Culture. Edited by Christopher Lupke. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005.) Pages 49-69.

“The Ascension of the Spirit: Toward a Cultural History of Self-Divinization Movements in Early China.” Religion and Chinese Society. Edited by John Lagerwey. (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2004.) Pages 193-222.

“The Ethics of Responding Properly: The Notion of Qing in Early Chinese Thought.” Love and Emotions in Traditional Chinese Literature. Edited by Halvor Eifring. (Leiden, Brill, 2004.) Pages 37-68.

“Determining the Position of Heaven and Earth: Debates Over State Sacrifices in the Western Han Dynasty.” Confucian Spirituality. Edited by Tu Wei-Ming and Mary Evelyn Tucker. (New York: Crossroad Press, 2003)

“‘Nothing Can Overcome Heaven’: The Notion of Spirit in the Zhuangzi.” Hiding the World in the World: Essays on Zhuangzi. Edited by Scott Cook. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003)

“Violent Misreadings: The Hermeneutics of Cosmology in the Huainanzi.” Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. 72 (2000): 29-47.

“Humans and Gods: The Theme of Self-Divinization in Early China and Early Greece.” Thinking Through Comparisons: Ancient China and Ancient Greece. Edited by Stephen Durrant and Steven Shankman. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002)

“Philosophy and Literature in Early China.” The Columbia History of Chinese Literature, edited by Victor Mair. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001)

“China in Early Eurasian History: A Brief Review of Recent Scholarship on the Issue.” Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Peoples of Eastern Central Asia. Edited by Victor Mair. (Washington D.C.: Institute for the Study of Man, 1998), pp. 699-715.

“Sages, Ministers, and Rebels: Narratives from Early China Concerning the Initial Creation of the State.” Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 58.2 (December 1998): 425-479.

“Nature and Artifice: Debates in Late Warring States China Concerning the Creation of Culture.” Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 57.2 (December 1997): 471-518.

Review of Stephen Durrant’s The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writings of Sima Qian. Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, 57.1 (June 1997): 290-301.