

Kevin Buckelew

Department of Religious Studies
Northwestern University
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Topics: Chinese Buddhism, with a focus on Chan (Zen) Buddhism, apocryphal scriptures, and the relationship between Buddhism and Daoism

Themes: gender and masculinity; embodiment; authority; agency and responsibility; metaphor and figurative language; conceptions of work, debt, and moral obligation

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Northwestern University, Department of Religious Studies

2026–	Associate Professor of Religious Studies
2019–	Assistant Professor of Religious Studies
2018–19	Weinberg College Fellow

EDUCATION

Columbia University, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures

Ph.D., 2018; M.Phil., 2014; M.A., 2011

Advisors: Chün-fang Yü, Bernard Faure, Zhaohua Yang

Columbia University, Department of Religion

M.A., 2009

Sarah Lawrence College

B.A. in the Liberal Arts, 2007

RESEARCH AFFILIATIONS

2016–17	Academia Sinica, Institute of History and Philology, Taiwan
2015–16	Kyoto University, Institute for Research in the Humanities, Japan
2012	Renmin University, Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Religious Theory, China

NON-DEGREE EDUCATION & TRAINING

Summer Language Intensives

2011	Princeton in Ishikawa, Kanazawa, Japan
2010	International Chinese Language Program (ICLP), Taipei, Taiwan
2008	Columbia in Beijing, China

Academic Workshops

2017	“Space and Cyberspace” GIS Mapping Workshop, Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts, Taiwan. Led by Professor Marcus Bingenheimer. June 5–16
2014	NEH Seminar on Daoism, University of Colorado, Boulder. Led by Professors Terry Kleeman, Stephen Bokenkamp, and Chang Chao-jan. July 14–August 1

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

2026–27	Faculty Fellowship, Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities, Northwestern University
2026	Distinguished Teaching Award, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, Northwestern University
2018–19	College Fellowship, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences, Northwestern University
2016–17	Fulbright U.S. Student Program (IIE) Fellowship, Taiwan
2016–17	Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation Dissertation Fellowship (declined)
2017	Matching Travel Award, Columbia University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures
2017	Student Travel Grant, Columbia University Graduate Student Advisory Council
2015–16	Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) Dissertation Research Fellowship, Japan
2011	Faculty Fellowship, Columbia University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

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| 2011 | Departmental Prize Fellowship, Columbia University Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures |
| 2011 | Departmental Honors for M.A. Thesis, Columbia University Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures |
| 2010 | Huayu Enrichment Scholarship, Taiwan Ministry of Education |

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Discerning Buddhas: Authority, Agency, and Masculinity in Chan Buddhism. New York: Columbia University Press (Sheng Yen Series in Chinese Buddhist Studies), 2025.

Buddhist Masculinities. Co-edited volume with Megan Bryson. New York: Columbia University Press, 2023.

Journal Articles (peer-reviewed)

“Transcendents in Translation: Buddhist Affordances for Imagining *Xian* 仙 in China.” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 51, no. 2 (2023): 171–205.

“Possessing Enlightenment: Sorcery, Selfhood, and Tragic Responsibility in a Chinese Buddhist Apocryphon.” *Numen* 70, no. 4 (2023): 337–368.

“Ritual Authority and the Problem of Likeness in Chan Buddhism.” *History of Religions* 62, no. 1 (2022): 1–48.

“Becoming Chinese Buddhas: Claims to Authority and the Making of Chan Buddhist Identity.” *T'oung Pao* 105, no. 3–4 (2019): 357–400.

“Pregnant Metaphor: Embryology, Embodiment, and the Ends of Figurative Imagery in Chinese Buddhism.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 78, no. 2 (2018): 371–411.

Book Chapters (peer-reviewed)

“How Chan Masters Became ‘Great Men’: Masculinity in Chinese Chan Buddhism.” In *Buddhist Masculinities*, edited by Megan Bryson and Kevin Buckelew (New York: Columbia University Press, 2023), 51–77.

Book Reviews

Review of *The Women Who Ruled China: Buddhism, Multiculturalism, and Governance in the Sixth Century*, by Stephanie Balkwill. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 145, no. 1 (2025): 213–215.

Review of *Embodying Xuanzang: The Postmortem Travels of a Buddhist Pilgrim*, by Benjamin Brose. *Journal of Chinese Religions* 52, no. 2 (2024): 261–264.

Review of *Chan Before Chan: Meditation, Repentance, and Visionary Experience in Chinese Buddhism*, by Eric M. Greene. *History of Religions* 61, no. 4 (2022): 423–25.

Review of *The Records of Mazu and the Making of Classical Chan Literature*, by Mario Poceski. *Reading Religion: A Publication of the American Academy of Religion* (February 2019).

Review of *Daoism in Japan*, ed. Jeffrey L. Richey. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 79, no. 1 (February 2016): 225–27.