

## Curriculum Vitae

Michael James Puett

Department of East Languages and Civilizations  
Harvard University  
2 Divinity Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
USA  
(617) 495-8360

### 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)  
Standing Committee on General Education  
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           Bernhard Karlgren Distinguished Visiting Professorship  
Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study
- 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.)

Narrative, Authorship, and Historiography: Studies on Sima Qian's Shiji (Records of the Historian), editor. (Forthcoming from the State University of New York Press.)

#### Articles and Reviews:

“The Haunted World of Humanity: Ritual Theory from Early China.” Rethinking the Human. Edited by J. Michelle Molina and Donald K. Swearer, with Susan Lloyd McGarry. (Cambridge: Center for the Study of World Religions, 2010), pp. 95-111.

“Ritualization as Domestication: Ritual Theory from Classical China.” Forthcoming in: Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual, Volume I: Grammars and Morphologies of Ritual Practices in Asia. Edited by Axel Michaels, Anand Mishra, Lucia Dolce, Gil Raz, and Katja Triplett. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), pp. 365-376.

“Becoming Laozi: Cultivating and Visualizing Spirits in Early Medieval China.” Asia Major, Third series, 23.1 (2010): 223-252.

“Centering the Realm: Wang Mang, the Zhouli, and Early Chinese Statecraft.” Statecraft and Classical Learning: The Rituals of Zhou in East Asian History. Edited by Benjamin A. Elman and Martin Kern. (Leiden: Brill, 2010.) Pages 129-154.

“Sages, Gods, and History: Commentarial Strategies in Chinese Late Antiquity,” Antiquorum Philosophia 3 (2009): 71-87.

“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.