

Undergraduate Research Opportunity

PROJECT

The Wisdom of Torch: The Rise and Fall of Buddhist

Stone Lamps in Medieval China

Huaiyu Chen

Religious Studies

Hours required p/week:	6
Credits anticipated:	2

The aim of this project is to offer a comprehensive evaluation of the rise and fall of stone lanterns under the changing historical and religious conditions in medieval Chinese Buddhism. Because stone lanterns are significant objects in East Asian Buddhist culture, this project seeks to unfold how the stone lantern was invented by Chinese Buddhists in the mid-sixth century and was only exported to Korea and Japan in the eighth century, where admittedly the custom of building them flourished in the ensuing centuries. In analyzing stone lanterns as a unique case study, this project will demonstrate how the natural, socio-cultural, and religious challenges shaped the Buddhist monastic monumentality in medieval China. This project might interest scholars who work on cultural history, art history, religious studies, ritual studies, and material culture.

TEMPE

ONLINE

STUDENT

Research assistant's duties:

Students will be expected to read some primary sources in English translations and to take notes on the sources for this project. In the meantime, the assistant will proofread the English translations of Chinese inscriptional texts and help me to evaluate if these translations are accessible to non-specialist readers.

Required skills or qualifications:

Desired qualifications include some background in historical and cultural, as well as religious context of South and East Asia; having excellent command in written English; paying attention to details.

Skills student will acquire:

Students will experience reading primary sources and identifying useful primary sources, organizing primary sources, learning how to analyze primary sources, writing for non-specialist readers