intersections

News Item

5/28/25 -“Photography as Veneration” | Ho Center for Buddhist Studies

May 24, 2025

Photo by Snowscat via Unsplash.

On May 28th, the Ho Center for Buddhist Studies at Stanford University will co-sponsor the talk “Photography as Veneration: A Japanese Expedition to Chinese Buddhist Sites, 1930-1942.”

WHERE: Stanford University, Lathrop Library, 518 Memorial Way, Stanford, CA 94305-224

WHEN: May 28th, 2025, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

SPEAKER(S): Mia Yinxing Liu, Assistant Professor in the Department of History of Art at Johns Hopkins University.

SPONSORED BY: The Ho Center for Buddhist Studies and the Center for East Asian Studies at Stanford University.

DESCRIPTION: This talk examines the Mizuno Nagahiro mission to the Yungang Grottoes between 1938 and 1945, focusing on not only the photographs that the Japanese team produced, but also their photographic process in both the context of war and the history of expeditionary photography. The Japanese mission, Liu argues, was groundbreaking in its understanding and practice of expeditionary photography *as*

veneration and as an agent reenacting the iconicity of sacred images. In turn, this mode reminds us of the role that photographic mediation plays in art historical studies, while also demonstrating an alternative ontological understanding of the photographic medium in general.

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