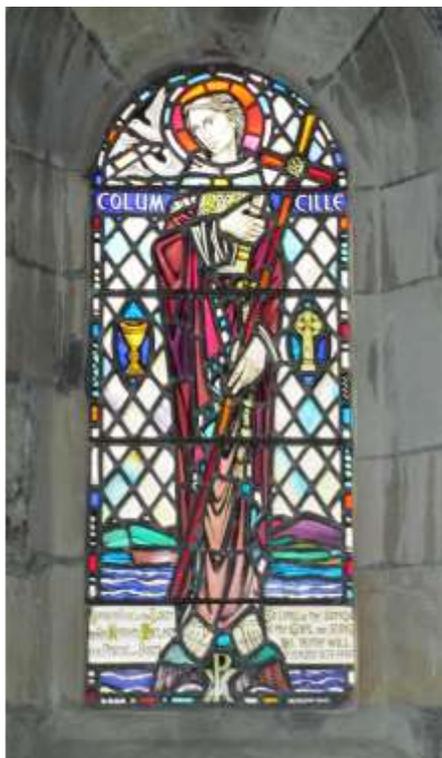




**GORDON**  
COLLEGE

# Department of History

## Fall 2013



*St. Columba*

Last summer I traveled with my family to Scotland on the trail of ancient Irish monks, including St. Columba, the founder of a monastery on the Island of Iona which grew to become the center of Celtic Christianity, sending missionaries throughout the British Isles and Northwestern Europe. I returned to Wenham this fall to find many students and faculty excited to be exploring the story of the Christianity from its ancient roots onwards. This fall we are dedicating an issue of the History Department Newsletter to ancient, Medieval, and early modern studies at Gordon College.

We look forward next month to a conference at Gordon organized by Prof. Tal Howard, director of the Center for Faith and Inquiry, [“Protestantism? Reflections in Advance of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, 1517-2017.”](#) This gathering will feature lectures by distinguished scholars from the U.S., Europe, and Asia reflecting on the global legacy of the Protestant Reformation. Later this fall Prof. Agnes Howard will travel to Italy to teach for the Gordon-in-Orvieto program her course on early modern women, “Women, Religion, Family, and Convent.” In the spring Prof. David Wick (who is currently on sabbatical in Athens) will lead students to Greece and Turkey on an international seminar, “History of Ancient and Modern Greek Culture and Christianity in the Aegean.” We will share with you the story of three students who

graduated with Honors in History in May whose theses focused on the medieval and late antique history, and who are now pursuing graduate work, and another group of students whose work on a medieval manuscript from Mt. Sinai took them to Oxford over the summer.

We are delighted at Gordon to be able to equip students to study the distant past. A crucial element of that is our language offerings. In addition to modern languages used by historians around the world, our students can now study many ancient languages, including Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Syriac. As history faculty we are so committed to encouraging language study that we recently decided to allow four credits of intermediate-level language or of beginning courses in a second language to count directly toward the major. The outcomes are rich for the students who pursue these opportunities!

All the best,  
Jennifer Hevelone-Harper ('92), Professor of History



*Iona Abbey*

#### Adventures in Budapest

by Laz Mancilla '13



When travelers say that Europe's best-kept secrets are in the East, they really mean it. It goes for education as well. Budapest's Central European University (or *Közép-európai Egyetem* in Hungarian) should be awarded "Best Up And Coming University in Europe." Situated in an old palace by the Danube in the city center, the biggest temptations from schoolwork are the amazing nightlife, café culture, and the concert, opera, or ballet performances that happen frequently. While Gordon's History department prepared me well for the intensive one-year M.A., CEU offers a 2-year course in Comparative History for those who wish to stay longer in this amazing city. All courses are taught in English, and it is accredited in the U.S. The Source Language Institute offers Old Georgian, Syriac, Persian, Slavonic, and Ottoman Turkish (to name a few) on a regular basis, not to mention modern languages. And with the generous endowment of George Soros, most people here go tuition free and receive a stipend and housing, though the cost of living is extremely reasonable.

#### Conference on Faith and History by Rebekah Connell '15 and Jennifer Hevelone-Harper '92

*"200 smart and smiling historians, 49 concurrent sessions, 10 history alumni, 5 eloquent Gordon students presenting, 5 plenary sessions, 1 tired me."* — Jennifer Hevelone-Harper (from 10/6 Facebook posting)

The Conference on Faith and History, held biennially and hosted last October at Gordon College, provides a forum for scholars of Christianity and history to learn from one another. Professors, scholars and students from all over the country bring their questions and insights. The intermingling of so many levels of scholarship is a big part of what makes the CFH such a valuable experience. It was a unique privilege for Gordon students and professors to be able to attend presentations by notable historians who have widely influenced the study of history.

Dr. Mark A. Noll, Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame, presented the conference's final lecture, entitled "*Scriptura Sola* after Nearly 500 Years: A Protestant Blessing or a Protestant Curse?" *Scriptura sola*, Latin for "by scripture alone," refers to the belief that the Bible includes all the information necessary for a life of salvation. Noll's talk laid out the progression of Protestants' use of *scriptura sola* throughout American history. Noll explored the diverse meanings that people have drawn from this concept during different time periods. He also raised difficult questions about the Protestant use of scripture, including the historical justification of slavery and outright disagreements between congregations of the same faith.



*Scholars came together with students for the Conference for Faith and History.*

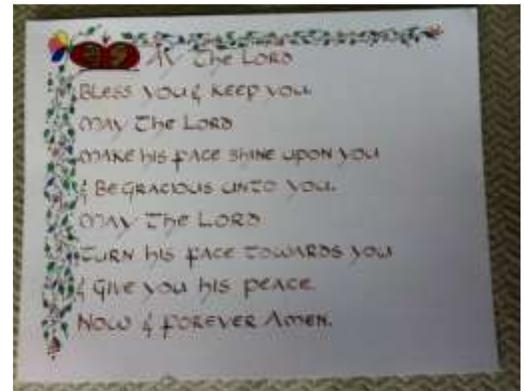
Other conference topics included humanism in Turkey, sex and politics from the medieval church to the Reformation, and Christian identity and practice in the early Middle Ages. A wide variety of panel discussions, presentations and keynote talks brought over 250 visitors to campus.

Ten Gordon faculty members participated. During the undergraduate conference that accompanied the professional conference on campus, Gordon students Nick White '13, Anna Yearwood '13, Lazaro Mancilla '13, Abigail Sargent '13 and Hannah Otto '15 presented papers, as did recent graduate Ian Keir '12. Thanks to overlap with Homecoming, alumni could attend sessions, too.

#### Illuminating the World

by Elspeth Currie '16

On hearing that my History of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales class would have a Manuscript Illumination project, I groaned inside. Facts, dates, and papers are my forte, and twelve years of mandatory art classes had taught me that I was not artistically gifted. However, after a brief introduction, I found myself warming to the project. After about an hour of practice with the calligraphy pen and ink the letters began emerging with uniform beauty and relative ease. After copying my seven lines of verse out onto paper I was surprised to find that over half an hour had transpired. Indeed, this was a trend that would continue as I progressed through my project. What felt like ten minutes of drawing vines and leaves in my manuscripts borders was in actuality closer to forty. I didn't mind: there was a certain pleasure to be found in illuminating. In fact, I found it hard to stop, my eyes always seeing another swirl or leaf that could be added. When I finally deemed it to be finished I had to smile not only because I was proud of my work but also because I remembered my hesitation at the beginning of it all. It turns out, manuscript illumination wasn't so terrible. In fact, it was rather enjoyable!



#### Four Students Chosen to Attend Oxford Summer Seminar

by Maggie Brooks '15

*Maggie Brooks '15, Abigail Sargent '13, Christina Alvernaz '15, Hannah Otto '15, participants in a research project on an ancient Syriac manuscript led by Profs. Ute Possek and Jennifer Hevelone-Harper, were selected to attend the LOGOS Seminar on "Biblical Manuscripts, Vocation, and the Christian Mind" in Oxford. Maggie Brooks '15 describes her experience.*

The LOGOS in Oxford seminar gave me the unique opportunity to travel to one of the world's most prestigious institutions to engage in lectures and workshops that challenged and strengthened my academic abilities. I had the chance to translate Syriac texts with experts such as Peter Williams and to hear from renowned theologians like Alister McGrath. Time was well spent both inside and outside the lecture hall. When not learning about the latest innovation in manuscript studies, or exploring the vast collection of the Bodleian Library, we were visiting the many historic sites and museums England has to offer. The communal living style that the program offered allowed me to make strong connections with the program's participants who were all very diverse in background, age and experience. It was so exciting to be able to meet other young scholars who encouraged me in my academic pursuits and shared advice from their own experiences. The LOGOS seminar opened many doors for me and provided me with invaluable experience that I will carry with me throughout my lifetime.



## Department of History

### Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern History at Gordon

#### Honors Theses and Graduate Studies

This past spring three history majors earned departmental honors in history by successfully defending honors theses; all three wrote on late antique or medieval topics. Abigail Sargent '13 analyzed gender roles and sanctity in newly Christianized Anglo-Saxon England with her thesis: "Serving God Alone: Developments in the Practice of Anglo-Saxon Female Monasticism." This fall Abigail is doing graduate work at Fordham University in medieval studies. Laz Mancilla '13 explored early Christian pilgrimage in his thesis: "Seeking the Place: Landscape and Spiritual Experience in the Eastern Mediterranean, 200-400 A.D." He is currently working towards a master's degree in medieval studies at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. Anna Yearwood '13 completed a joint honors thesis in the Departments of History and Art. She explored book production and the illumination of medieval manuscripts in the British Isles and in Italy in her thesis: "Art and Prayer: Exploring Illuminated Manuscript Production." Using techniques and materials from the Middle Ages she created her own Book of Hours, inspired by insular manuscripts such as the Book of Kells and the devotional practices of medieval lay Christians. Anna is now in Oxford completing a certificate in apologetics.

by Jennifer Hevelone-Harper '92



#### Announcements

##### [Center for Faith and Inquiry Hosts Protestantism Conference: November 14-16, 2013](#)

"Protestantism? Reflections in Advance of the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, 1517-2017"

A conference sponsored by the Center for Faith and Inquiry at Gordon College in partnership with the University of Notre Dame, the Boston Theological Institute and Refo500

The world edges closer to a significant symbolic date: October 31, 2017, the quincentennial of the Protestant Reformation. Countries, social movements, churches, universities, seminaries, and other institutions shaped by "Protestantism" face a daunting question: how best to commemorate the Reformation 500 years after the fact?



*Ancient Ephesus*

##### [Prof. David Wick Leads International Seminar in Greece: May 22-June 13, 2014](#)

The History Department's intensive, exciting four-week exploration of ancient and modern Greek culture, art, life and worship is led by Dr. Wick, Gordon's professor of ancient and classical history, and involves students in classroom study and travel in Greece and Turkey. The seminar will focus on ancient history, culture and landscape; New Testament backgrounds and historical culture; and modern orthodox, secular and protestant cultures in Greece.

#### Alumni and Student Updates

We would love to hear from you! Please send contributions to: [elisabeth.whittet@gordon.edu](mailto:elisabeth.whittet@gordon.edu).