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COLLEGE

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Global History

The China Program at Gordon College

by Dong Wang

The China program at Gordon College has been intimately linked with the East-West Institute of International Studies and its founder Raymond Lee. A former Gordon College dean of chapel, the Reverend Lee presently resides in Hong Kong and serves on the College's board of trustees.

Since its establishment in 1994, the East-West Institute has been devoted to furthering American-East Asian relations and cross-cultural understanding. Reverend Lee donated funds for the Institute's operations and its suite of offices on the third floor of the A. J. Gordon Memorial Chapel. I assumed responsibility for managing the Institute in 2005, after long-time history professor Thomas Askew retired as founding director.

The East-West Institute offers Gordon's students high-quality programs both on campus and abroad. Activities include:

- A new interdisciplinary minor in East Asian Studies, shared with the departments of History, Economics and Business, and Foreign Languages. Courses dealing with China include Mandarin Chinese, Pre-modern China, Modern China, Christianity in China, United States-China Relations, Women in China, and Chinese Nationalism.
- The Institute aids the Global Education Office in guiding students toward study opportunities in China: a number

of our students have participated, for instance, in Beijing University's Asian Studies Program.

- The Institute sponsors several East-West Lectures at Gordon each year, featuring leading scholars of Asia.
- The East-West Scholarship program funds qualified students who want to conduct primary research in China and other Asian countries: five Gordon students have been selected for the award thus far. A number of students from Asia also have studied at Gordon with the Institute's assistance.
- The institute sponsors an annual Lunar New Year Festival that celebrates the richness of East Asian cultures. This popular campus event is open to the entire community.
- The Institute is a cosponsor of the *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*. To mark the 200th anniversary of Protestantism in China, I will edit the journal's 2008 special issue on "Christianity in China as an Issue in the History of United States-China Relations."

Through its programs in Chinese language, culture, religion, history, economics, and foreign relations, the East-West Institute will continue to promote interactions between China and the Gordon community, and to equip our students to face the challenges of our increasingly integrated world.

From the Chair



Greetings,

The theme of our fall newsletter is global history, part of an increasing emphasis on global education here at Gordon, as well as at colleges nationwide.

In this issue you will find articles from alumni, current students, and faculty, focusing on two important opportunities: East Asian Studies and the summer travel seminar in Greece and the Aegean world. In future issues we'll give updates on additional programs having a significant history component, such as Gordon's "campus" in the beautiful town of Orvieto, Italy.

We also invite our alumni to keep us informed about any history-related activities in which they may be involved. To send us your news, contact our cheerful and multi-talented administrator, Becky Lord, at rebecca.lord@gordon.edu.

Best wishes,

Steve Alter
Acting Chair of History



Lebanon celebrates the Cedar Revolution.

Self-Reflections of a Young Historian

by Christine Lindner '02

I have repeatedly been surprised by my academic and personal trajectory. Most of my experiences from the past eight years would have unimaginable to the seventeen-year-old who drove up Massachusetts' Route 128 for the first time.

I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in the University of Edinburgh's Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. I arrived here after completing my (post-Gordon) undergraduate degree at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies and obtaining a master's degree in Middle East Women's Studies from the University of Durham (UK). The title of my Ph.D. thesis is "Exploring the Field: American Protestant Missionaries and the Emerging Protestant Circle in Beirut and its Hinterlands, 1820-1860." I strive to synthesize the methodological and theoretical insights of post-colonial and feminist theories to examine the spiritual and social nature of this cross-cultural encounter.

Work on this project has led me to question my personal ideologies. How does the historian position missionary activities within the imperialist context of commerce and military

interventions? What does it mean to be a white woman researching quasi-colonial encounters, where divisions of race were recognized yet were also dynamic and "fuzzy"? How do I research the personal agency of women whose various perceptions of and relationships with God reflect historical contexts different from my own?

My experiences, as a historian of Middle East societies, as an American living in Europe, and as a Christian studying the relationships among different Christians, has surprised me in the realizations it has demanded from me. The pursuit of knowledge requires not my isolation within university and research institutions, but rather, my active engagement with a world often marked by inequalities. Since graduating from Gordon College I have constantly been investigating persons from the past. Yet this research also illuminates how the circumstances of the past affect the lived realities of the present.



Christine Lindner in Northern Scotland.

From Gordon to Tokyo

by Hiromu Nagahara '03



Kinkakuji Temple in Japan

I'm based in Tokyo for this year, working on my doctoral dissertation. Because I'm affiliated with the University of Tokyo and the Ohara Institute for Social Research at Hosei University, I have access to a wide range of research sources, plus the opportunity to meet leading scholars in my field. Indeed, the cutting-edge work in that field (20th-century Japan) mainly comes from Japan itself.

My dissertation is about Japan's mass entertainment media during and after World War II and the "culture wars" it provoked. I focus on critiques of popular songs being produced by the Japanese record industry (which was largely owned by Western companies such as Columbia and Victor) and on the efforts of both the

government and private groups to regulate and, in some cases, ban those songs.

The politics and morality of entertainment media is a topic of considerable interest. It's transnational in scope: debates over popular songs raged in many industrialized societies in the period I study (1950s), often drawing on similar concerns: struggles over democracy and freedom of expression, fears of juvenile delinquency, and anxieties regarding gender and sexuality. My aim is to analyze these cultural struggles in Japan and to show how they played out on both sides of the Pacific in the postwar era.

The Mountain of Silence

A College Student's Pilgrimage to the Monastic Dwellings of Mt. Athos

by Michael Tishel '08

One foot in front of the other: it had come down to that. Struggling uphill for hours on end, with the blazing Grecian sun heating my sweat-stained back: these were the austere circumstances surrounding my hike to the top of Mt. Athos.

Home to hundreds of Eastern Orthodox monks, the rugged terrain of Mt. Athos, a small peninsula in northern Greece, has served as a training ground for spiritual athletes since as early as the tenth century. For equally as long, Christian pilgrims have made their way to this holy mountain to recharge their "spiritual batteries" and seek advice from the wise and humble men who live there. My father, a friend and I decided to make this

journey. I did not know what I was seeking. Answers of some sort were certainly desirable, but my young, naïve mind was attracted to the romantic serenity and mysticism that, I soon discovered, did not capture the essence of the mountain. Sweat and dirt were not included in my dreams of Mt. Athos; they were included in the reality. I soon found my mind and heart scrambling to keep up with my weary body and fallen instincts. Our guides, one of whom was a hermit, silently beckoned us to enter a week's worth of spiritual exercise, following in the footsteps of saints who have walked this path before us.

As I climbed to the peak of the mountain, I realized how precious each moment was. Each moment is like an eternity, like a pearl, like a fruit ripe for the taking. Maybe I was made more aware of this on Mt. Athos because I wanted to hold onto those moments in particular. But the principle has stayed with me. Access to God is available now. Father



Athanasius, our hermit-guide, taught us a three-fold principle. "There is a rule to hiking," he said. "Never look up to the peak, or you will become despondent at the length of your journey. Never look back or you will become proud at how far you have come. Rather, always look in front of you, ask for God's mercy, and siga, siga (little by little)." This, I have discovered, is my vocation.

Reflections on Greece 2007



Expectations . . .

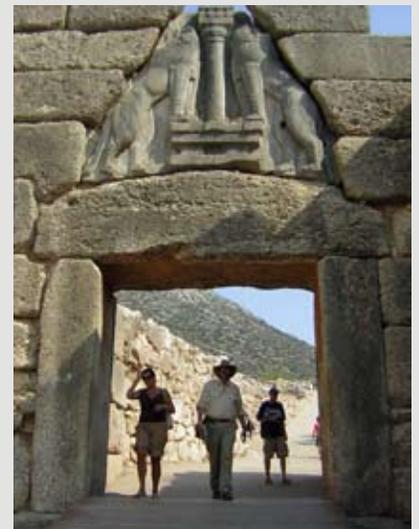
by Allison Kuhns '08

Anticipating my trip to Greece, I expected to collect great memories, but I also expected a good deal of academic stress and culture shock. As it turned out, I had worried needlessly. The work was manageable and the culture was anything but shocking. At times I felt more at home in Greece than I do on Gordon's campus. Walking through the Plaka neighborhood in Athens, being greeted with smiles by the locals, it was easy to see how the Greeks have earned their reputation for hospitality. We felt a powerful sense of welcome.

Every day we visited places and saw things that I had previously only dreamed about. At archaeological sites such as Ephesus, Delphi, and Mycenae, I could imagine the ancient Greeks living there. And the stops on Paul's missionary journeys, such as Berea, the shrine of Lydia, and the Church of St. Demitris, touched my soul: we actually walked in the

footsteps of Paul and the early Christians. Then at night we would find restaurants with local Greek food and explore the contemporary city.

I've tried to pick a favorite day or moment to describe, but how can I pick a favorite between the ruins of Philippi, climbing Mount Olympus, or wandering through Aristotle Square in Thessaloniki? I had approached the Greek world expecting it to be difficult to adjust to, but now I can't wait to experience that world again. And I really miss the food . . .



. . . and Exploration

by Luke Suttmeier '08

A recurring theme of the Gordon College Greece Seminar was exploration. We were encouraged to spend part of each day exploring Greek culture on our own. Minutes by foot from our hotel in Athens, we could stroll and shop in a medieval neighborhood, visit the Temple of Zeus or Hadrian's Arch, or see other masterpieces of Greek and Roman architecture. On breaks from doing research at the American University in Thessaloniki, we would grab Greek food in Aristotle Square. The choice was ours; exploration was one of our objectives and the options were limitless during our three weeks in Greece.