



East Asia Center

Newsletter

Fall 2009

Inside this issue:

News	1
Faculty Outreach	3
Lecture Series	8
Professor's Estate Gift	9
Faculty Projects	12
Alumni News	14

Message from the Director



John Shepherd, Director, East Asia Center

We are beginning another very busy and very promising year for the East Asia Center. We welcome this fall many new additions to our faculty: Harry Harding, the new Dean of the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, and in DEALLC, Soojeong Kim, lecturer in Korean, and Conan Carey, visiting lecturer in Japanese literature. Also joining us for the year are two lecturers in the Chinese language program,

Xiaorong Wang, from ECNU in Shanghai, and Jing Yuan, from IUP in Beijing. In January Charles Laughlin, the new Weedon Professor of Modern Chinese Literature, and Robert Stoltz, Assistant professor of modern Japanese history, will join us.

The new Asia Institute will serve as an umbrella for three Centers: East Asia, Tibet, and South Asian Studies. The creation of the Asia Institute as a fully staffed unit with enhanced outreach support, administrative staff, and student assistants will greatly strengthen program

development for each of the component Centers, which will retain their own programming and budgets. Rachel Stauffer, known to many of our faculty from her previous work as a teaching and technology support partner, will join the Asia Institute October 26 as its outreach coordinator. The Asia Institute will have an executive board of Center Directors and Department chairs (DEALLC and MESALC), with Rich Cohen as managing director, and a rotating director from among the Center and Department heads. I will serve this year as the first Asia Institute Director. The Asia Institute is located in 110 Minor Hall, where the East Asia Center also has a workspace. When New Cabell Hall reconstruction begins, our Center operations will be consolidated in Minor Hall. The support of the Asia Institute will help us in our efforts to win Title VI funding as a national resource center for East Asia, and enable us to expand our outreach activities and other programming. We are grateful to A&S Dean Meredith Woo for her steadfast support of Asian studies, especially in these difficult budgetary times.

This newsletter is full of items documenting the many programs, research projects, and outreach activities East Asia Center faculty and students are engaged in. We also have a very full list of visiting speakers. I hope to see you at many of these activities throughout the semester.

John Shepherd, Director, East Asia Center

Looking for course listings?

You can find the listing of East Asia related courses for Fall 2009 online at:

www.virginia.edu/eastasia/courses.html

January term and Spring 2010 courses will be posted soon.

DEALLC Welcomes New Professor in Chinese Literature

by Anne Kinney

Charles Laughlin will join the Department of East Asian Languages, Literatures and Cultures in January 2010 as the new Weedon Professor of Modern Chinese literature. Laughlin has served as Associate Professor of Chinese at Yale University and Director of the Inter-University Program for Chinese Language Studies at Tsing-hua University (IUP). IUP is universally recognized as the world's

premier Chinese language program. He has published two single-author books. *The Literature of Leisure and Chinese Modernity*, his most recent book, is the counterpart to his earlier *Chinese Reportage: The Aesthetics of Historical Experience*. The earlier book focuses on politically-engaged prose writing—in

(Continued on page 8)



Charles Laughlin

CLTA-VA Successfully Launched

by Miao-fen Tseng

Miao-fen Tseng has led a group of dedicated K-16 Chinese language educators to successfully launch the Chinese Language Teachers Association of Virginia (CLTA-VA). During her presidency from 2009-2011, she will work closely with the Foreign Language Association of Virginia (FLAVA) to increase the visibility of Chinese language education and maximize professional exchanges with other foreign language representatives associated with FLAVA.

The CLTA-VA aims to promote quality teaching and learning in Chinese language and culture at all educational levels, to enhance pedagogical development and career advancement in teaching Chinese as a foreign language, and to maximize professional exchanges and collaboration among Chinese language educators. Its inaugural meeting was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Foreign Language Association of Virginia in Richmond, Virginia on October 9th -10th, 2009. The luncheon was sponsored by the Taipei Economic and Culture Representative Office in Washington DC.

At the CLTA-VA's first annual meeting Hsin-hsin Liang and Shu-Chen Chen co-presented "effective preview assignments". Miao-fen Tseng and Ran Zhao co-presented on "moving from text bookish exercises to authentic tasks." For detailed information about the association and the annual meeting, please visit CLTA-VA's web site <http://www.clta-va.org>.

In addition to its annual meeting in conjunction with FLAVA, the CLTA-VA will also organize a workshop, seminar, forum, or consortium every spring in different areas of the

state. The combination of the events in fall and spring semesters will enable members and interested participants to benefit from frequent professional exchanges with Chinese language educators at all levels, as well as teachers of other foreign languages. The 2010 spring professional development activity will be held at George Mason University.

Miao-fen Tseng is a UVa lecturer of Chinese Language and the founder and president of the CLTA-VA

Department of East Asian Languages, Literatures and Cultures Welcomes New Faculty Members

Conan Carey

Conan Dean Carey received his BA in Philosophy, with a minor in Asian Studies, from SUNY New Paltz. While there, he was granted a Monbushō scholarship to study at Kanazawa University. During the course of his MA studies in Japanese Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he spent three years in China, Japan and Taiwan, graduating from both the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies in Yokohama and the Inter-University Program for Chinese Language Studies in Taipei. At Yokohama, he received the *Literature Award*. He is currently in the final stages of a PhD program in Japanese Literature at Stanford University, where he received a separate MA in Buddhist Studies. He returned from two years of doctoral research at Nagoya University courtesy of the Institute for International Studies (IIE) Fulbright fellowship program in 2008. His dissertation concerns the tension between questions of orality and literariness in the medieval folk tale anthology *A Collection of Familiar Tales, Past and Present (Kokon chomonjū)*, compiled in 1254 by Tachibana Narisue. A short monograph entitled "In Hell the One without Sin Is Lord" was published in 2000 by *Sino-Platonic Papers* (University of Pennsylvania). This concerned "Tours of Hell" (*jigoku meguri*) and picture storytelling in medieval China and Japan (Chn. *pien-wen [pien-hsiang]*, Jpn. *etoki*). His other interests include religion in pre-modern Japanese literature; Ghost festival dancing (*bon odori*) and the ghost festival in China and Japan; Early Japanese barrow graves and ritual keening (*mogari girei*); Celtic literature and religion; The Arthurian legends; The Japanese *mononoke* and the Irish banshee; Pre-modern states of awareness; and Zen Buddhism.



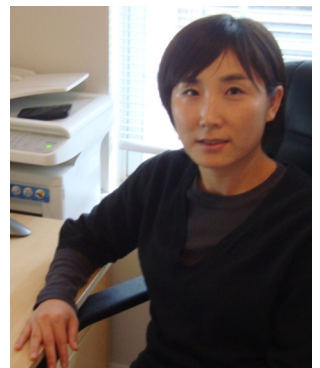
Soojeong Kim

Soojeong Kim, a recent Ph.D. in Korean Linguistics from UCLA, joined the department this fall as lecturer in Korean.

I completed the PhD Program in Korean Linguistics at the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at University of California, Los Angeles in 2007. I did my MA degree in Korean studies and Korean language at Ewha Women's University, Seoul, Korea. My research at UCLA generally focused on the interaction and grammar in Korean linguistics and language pedagogy. Specifically, my dissertation analyzes the interactional functions of the Korean modal suffix *-ci* through the examination of its frequency distribution and contextual information in the framework of conversation analysis. I provide a detailed description of the actual interactional practices in which discourse participants engaged. Particularly, the study applied my findings to language pedagogy by providing a curriculum model and actual tasks that can be implemented in a classroom.

As for my teaching career, I have had opportunities to teach a variety of Korean language courses at the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of California, Irvine, and the University of California, Riverside, Los Angeles City College, and Santa Monica Community College, California. I have taught Korean lecture and discussion classes for heritage and non-heritage students from an elementary to an advanced level.

As a researcher, I am specially interested in the Korean language testing. I have worked as a Korean language test developer for high schools and middle schools for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the UCLA Korean program. My specialty as a linguist is conversation analysis (CA), and I am interested in conducting in-depth acquisition study on interaction between a caretaker and a child in the framework of CA.



East Asia Center Faculty, National Consortium for Teaching About Asia Reach out to VA Teachers Through Semester-long Seminar

by Len Schoppa

East Asia Center faculty this year organized and taught a semester-long seminar for Virginia teachers interested in enriching their coverage of East Asia in their high school classes. Len Schoppa from the Politics Department served as organizer of the seminar, working with the National Consortium for Teaching About Asia, a project funded by the Freeman Foundation.

A total of 13 teachers from high schools in Richmond, Staunton, Albemarle and Orange County participated, attending sessions on topics such as Japanese religion, Chinese and Japanese poetry, the transition from Edo to Meiji in Japan, and the economic “miracles” in Japan and China. Schoppa reports that the seminar drew on the full Asia expertise avail-

able at the university, enlisting faculty members Paul Groner, Ellen Zhang, Bruce Reynolds, Brad Reed, Brantly Womack, Federico Marcon, and Gus Heldt as guest lecturers on specific topics.

Teachers reported that students in their classes have been expressing growing interest in learning about Asia in their classes, forcing them to stretch to supplement limited cover-

age in their textbooks. The seminar not only provided them with lecture- and reading-based information to share with their students but also introduced them to online resources and lesson plan ideas. All teachers were required to draw up three lesson plans to share what they learned with their students, and they are reporting back about their efforts in follow-up sessions this fall.

Conference and Workshop on China coming in March

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“Cultural Crossings: China and Beyond in the Medieval Period” Conference and “Digital Projects in Asian Art and Humanities” Workshop (March 11–13, 2010).

Dorothy Wong and Gustav Heldt (co-organizers) are proceeding with the planning of the “Cultural Crossings: China and Beyond in the Medieval Period” Conference and the “Digital Projects in Asian Art and Humanities” Workshop (March 11–13, 2010). To be held in conjunction with the “Treasures Rediscovered: Chinese Stone Sculptures from the Sackler Collections at Columbia University” exhibition (January 15–March 14, 2010) at the University of Virginia

Art Museum, the conference aims to take a broad look at new areas of inquiry in history and culture (especially Silk Road Studies), literature, gender, art, and religion of China and neighboring cultures in order to foster research that breaks down traditional national and disciplinary boundaries. The workshop features several major digital projects in Asian arts and humanities and provides an opportunity for dialogue that encourages collaborative research.

Thus far the conference has received funding sources from: The Buckner W. Clay Endowment for the Humanities Grant, Dharma Drum Buddhist College (Taipei), the East Asia Center, The Page-Barbour Interdisciplinary Initiative Grant, University of Virginia Art Museum, University of Virginia Medieval Studies Program, and the Weedon Foundation. A conference web-site will be launched this fall.

The EAC announces the creation of a new Faculty Development Grant

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All East Asia-related Faculty holding long-term paid appointments are eligible to apply for EAC Faculty Development Grants. These grants are designed to provide supplemental funds of up to \$500 per application to help defray the costs associated with: participating in East Asia-related workshops and conferences both in the U.S. and abroad (e.g., presenting or commenting on papers, chairing a session, meeting workshop requirements); research-related activities such as materials acquisition, transcription, and translation; and costs associated with the editing and publication of a manuscript (subventions). Applicants need to have applied for other applicable funding, such as departmental travel funds, in order to be eligible for this award. A separate application is required. Faculty may apply at any time during a regular semester at least two weeks before the last class. The grant application will be available on the EAC website at: <http://www.virginia.edu/eastasia/grants.html>.



China Program Updates

by Shu-chen Chen

Summer Language Institute

13 students enrolled in Chinese 101S and 102S this past summer. One of them was a high school student and three of them were non-UVA students. All in all, students enjoyed the experience of learning Chinese, working with multiple native speakers right in the classroom, eating authentic Chinese food cooked by members of the Chinese Students and Scholars Society (CSSS) and hearing about Chinese culture from Chinese natives first hand.

Engineering School: Summer Bridge Program

The Center for Diversity in Engineering of the School of Engineering and Applied Science for the first time invited faculty from the East Asia Center to give presentations concerning Chinese language and culture to their Summer Bridge program students this past summer. Professors Anne Kinney, John Shepherd, Bradley Reed, Peter Yu and Hsin-hsin Liang, Zhao Ran, Shu-chen Chen gave presentations to students in the Bridge Program, which were well received by the students. East Asia faculty were pleased to participate in a program seeking to heighten awareness among engineering students of cultural differences and possible disciplinary interconnections.

Chinese Corner

The Chinese program continues to send students to Chinese Corner which has been revived and held weekly since the summer of 2006. Chinese Corner is yet another program run by CSSS. The Chinese program deeply appreciates the hard work representatives from CSSS, Jiguang Li, Jiawei Huang, Ruiika Lin, and Huapu Pan have put into organizing events for our students to have direct experience of associating with Chinese natives in Charlottesville. With first hand experience of conversing with native speakers of Chinese, students are learning Chinese faster, more effectively and speaking in a more natural manner.

New M.A. Student, Zach Rowinski

Zach Rowinski is a new M.A. student focusing on issues of contemporary media, literature, development, and transition in present-day Tibet. After receiving a BA in Tibetan and Buddhist studies in 2006 from UVA, Zach spent

about two years living in Eastern Tibet working in coordination with several NGOs and non-profits on projects related to preserving centuries-old Tibetan literature. During this period, Zach also worked part-time for

UVA's Tibetan and Himalayan Library, focusing in particular on the Library's Tibetan Canons and Geotourism projects.



Elizabeth with a few of her students in China

New M.A. Student, Elizabeth Miller

Elizabeth Miller is a new Chinese Studies M.A. student focusing on minority policies and education in China. She earned her bachelor's degree in Applied Mathematics from the University of Toledo, after which she moved to China.

During the past six years Elizabeth has lived in various cities and regions in China while working for an international education NGO teaching English and studying Chinese. She has returned to America to earn a master's degree with hopes of returning to Western China to do more non-profit education work in the future.

Elizabeth is also currently working in the East Asia Center as one of the Graduate Assistants and is the editor of the EAC newsletter.

UVA Receives “Project GO” Grant from the National Security Education Program

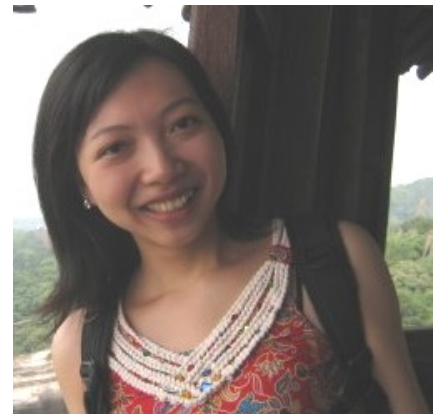


The US Department of Defense through the ROTC Language and Culture Project of the National Security Education Program has awarded the University of Virginia a two-year \$500,000 grant to incentivize the study of critical languages and cultures by students enrolled in the Army, Air Force and Navy ROTC programs. The main thrust of the Global Officer program focuses on intensive summer sessions courses and study abroad programs. Seven languages are supported by the grant: Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Hindi/Urdu, Persian, Korean, and Swahili. Dr. Richard J. Cohen, Managing Director, Asia Institute, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, will be the principal investigator for the grant. A third year extension of the grant is possible, bringing total support to \$750,000.

Visiting Lecturer in the Chinese Language program — Ms. Xiaorong Wang

Following Ms. Doris Diao in 2007-08 and Ms. Chrissie Wang in 2008-09, Ms. Xiaorong Wang joined the Chinese language program under the UVA-ECNU agreement in August 2009. Ms. Wang received her MA in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language at ECNU in June of this year.

Since 2007 she has been working for the UVA-in-Shanghai Chinese language program as Instructor (2007), Course Coordinator (2008), and Associate Field Director (2009). She is currently teaching Elementary Chinese (CHIN1010) and Accelerated Elementary Chinese (CHIN106).



Visiting Lecturer in the Chinese Language program — Ms. Jing Yuan

Following Ms. Wei Yao in 2008-09, Ms. Jing Yuan joined the Chinese language program under the UVA-IUP agreement in August of this year. The abbreviation “IUP” stands for Inter-University Program for Chinese language studies which is located at Tsinghua University where Ms. Yuan taught for four and a half years before she came to UVA. Yuan laoshi received her B.A. in Chinese Language and Literature at Beijing Language and Culture University and is working on her MA in Sociology at Renmin University. She is teaching Elementary Chinese (CHIN1010) and Advanced Readings in Modern Chinese (CHIN4010) with Dr. Ran Zhao.

Elena Pakhoutova Defends Dissertation — *Reproducing the Sacred Places: The Eight Great Events of the Buddha's Life and their Commemorative Monuments in the Medieval Art of Tibet*

Elena Pakhoutova defended her dissertation this summer on Representations of the Eight Great Events of the Buddha's Life and their Commemorative Stūpas in the Medieval Art of Tibet. These various artistic forms and literary sources are considered as a visual and religious theme central to the process of active assimilation of Indian Buddhist culture and formation of Tibetan religious traditions during the period known as the Renaissance of Buddhist Culture (10th – 13th centuries). Elena will receive her degree at the end of the fall semester.

In January 2010 Elena Pakhoutova begins her Curatorial Fellowship with the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art in New York City. This unique museum's fellowship is aimed to advance academic and museum scholarship and promote the art of Himalayan cultures within the larger context of Asian and Western Arts, making Himalayan art accessible to both the general public as well as specialists.

Marketing and Strategy in Southeast Asia, Professor Trey Maxham's January 2010 Course Travels to Asia

Marketing Strategy in Global Markets is a research-oriented course in the Marketing concentration curriculum that blends relevant classroom discussions, executive presentations, company visits, and marketing research to explore consumer behavior and cross-cultural marketing strategies in Southeast Asia. The course will expand some of the topics addressed in ICE, with special attention given to the different aspects of marketing across Southeast Asia. We will focus on key strategic issues such as posi-

tioning, brand management, promotions, public relations, market research, advertising, customer service and loyalty, and managing the marketing value chain.

Students will learn about Southeast Asian culture and business via in-class discussions and outside experiential learning. There will be several guest speakers, and active participation in the form of perceptive questions and comments will play an important role during the course.

Schedule Highlights for COMM4390

- December 28: Arrive in Singapore, check in rooms, and enjoy a welcome reception.
- December 29 – January 1: Class sessions and project work in Singapore.
- January 2 – 6: Class sessions and project work in Jakarta.
- January 8 -10: Company visits and project work in Kuala Lumpur.
- January 12-14: Class sessions and project work in Ho Chi Minh City.
- January 15: Final presentations, class synthesis, and closing reception.

Ellen Bayard Weedon Travel Grant Follow-Up Report by Lynn Huang

Traveling around China for two months this summer was one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. While I had visited China on two prior occasions, both were as a tourist. This time I headed back with two main intentions: to conduct field research and to gain a better understanding of Chinese society. I spent the spring semester studying food globalization in China's urban areas, focusing mainly on the fast food industry, primarily American chains (i.e. McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken). I have some understanding of Chinese culture because my parents

made sure to instill certain values linked to our Chinese identity in me while I was growing up. However, I did not anticipate being able to learn as much as I did culturally when I arrived.

I had chosen my destinations: Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, and Chengdu, based on their levels of urbanization. I was under the impression that since each of these places has achieved such economic and social development levels that they would be comparable. To my surprise, every city I visited had its own unique history of interaction between food and the community.

Shanghai was the one city that most resembled an American city in terms of the design and layout. Fast food restaurants were easily accessible and collecting observational data was not difficult. Ideally, I wanted to be able to track and possibly even interview frequent customers at these restaurants. After one day of observation, I realized that this original plan was not feasible. There was simply too much traffic at each of these establishments. Although I would return to make observations at the same time and day of the week, it was impossible to
(continued on page 10)

"...I did not anticipate being able to learn as much as I did culturally when I arrived. "

— Lynn Huang, Weedon Grant Recipient

"Funds are available to undergraduates, graduate students and faculty, and can be used for study abroad, summer language programs and research trips."

Over \$20,000 in Travel Grants Awarded

The East Asia Center awards Ellen Bayard Weedon Travel Grants, the Irwin S. Penn Memorial Scholarship, and Founders Student Travel Grants. All three of these programs award grants towards airfare to and from East Asia. Funds are available to undergraduates,

graduate students and faculty, and can be used for study abroad, summer language programs and research trips.

This year the Grants Committee of the East Asia Center awarded nearly \$24,000 in travel grants to faculty and graduate students

traveling to East Asia for research, and to undergraduates traveling to East Asia to participate in study abroad programs.

To learn more about these grants, visit:

www.virginia.edu/eastasia/grants.html

ASIAN STUDIES STUDENTS ENJOY LIBRARY'S NEW ASIAN STUDIES REFERENCE ROOM

BY CALVIN HSU

In May 2009 the Library invited faculty members in East Asian studies to participate in a focus group study, in order to assess the strengths of East Asian collections and map out a course of improvement. Shortly thereafter, the Library started to implement the faculty's recommendations.

The most significant (and symbolic) of all is the establishment of the Asian Studies Room (ASR). The Barrett Room on the 2nd floor of the Alderman Library has long been designated as the future repository of Yale Professor Stanley Weinstein's extensive collection of books on Buddhism, mostly in Japanese. In view of the faculty's recommendations, the Library has decided to put the room to immediate use. Over the summer hundreds of books in East Asian, i.e. CJK, languages were removed from all corners of the library, reclassified and re-shelved as part of the reference collection in ASR. Dozens of journals and newspapers were removed from the Periodical Reading Room on the 3rd floor and put on display in the Barrett anteroom. Similar steps have been taken for South Asian collections. Soon several computers will be set up for users to search the library's expanding number of databases on East Asia. There is a plan in place to renovate the whole area, as soon as the Library administration is able to raise the necessary funds.

The Library has also made other fundamental changes and in so doing has established a de facto international area studies program. From now on the East Asian Librarian will be responsible for developing library resources in CJK languages for the humanities and social sciences. As usual, subject librarians will be responsible for selecting Western language materials in their respective subject areas. Needless to say, the budget allocation system will reflect this change.

Finally, the Library has just hired a half time Korean specialist Mr. Seung Bong Jeon (sbj9d@virginia.edu), a Ph.D. student in Sociology, to develop and manage the Korean collection. This can be seen as a clear demonstration of the Library administration's commitment to supporting East Asian studies, especially in light of the current economic situation.

China-Studies Scholarship for Spring SAS Voyage

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**For full details,
 please see the voyage website at:**

[http://
 www.semesteratsea.
 org/voyages/
 upcoming-voyages/
 spring-2010.php](http://www.semesteratsea.org/voyages/upcoming-voyages/spring-2010.php)

UVA's Semester at Sea program is inaugurating a brand new mini-program this spring with a particular focus on China and Chinese Studies. To promote the program, the CY Tung Program in Sino-US Relations, the Semester at Sea is offering two \$20,000 scholarships to undergraduates working in the area of China studies who sign up for our 2010 Spring Voyage and participate fully in our program.

On this voyage, we are offering a special course with a focus on China-US relations, co-taught by Profs. John Israel (University of Virginia emeritus) and Shen Dingli (Fudan University, one of China's foremost experts on American studies, with a particular focus on US-China relations). In addition, Jonathan Spence from Yale will be delivering special lectures for the full shipboard community; and the Tung family, which funded this program, will be assisting us in preparing field experiences in Asian ports. The two students awarded \$20,000 CY Tung scholarships will be expected to enroll in this class (plus three others) and participate in Asian field programs, but otherwise would be treated like any other student on the voyage. Five Chinese students from Fudan will also be participating in this program with the assistance of CY Tung scholarships.

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 Students interested in being considered for this scholarship should contact Professor Leonard Schoppa (schoppa@virginia.edu) and provide the following items by October 26:

1) a letter of interest; 2) an unofficial transcript; 3) the name of a China studies professor who has agreed to supply a letter of recommendation. Please ask the professor to email a letter of recommendation directly to Professor Schoppa.

DEALLC Welcomes New Professor in Chinese Literature

(Continued from page 1)

particular the “reportage” form that was used to capture a variety of social and historical experience. In contrast to “reportage,” *The Literature of Leisure* focuses on a very different kind of prose, namely, the xiaopin wen (little prose pieces), incidental and informal essays that were explicitly non-political, written to amuse and entertain the reader. Since xiaopin wen were associated with the prose writing of late imperial China, the book also reveals to readers how the rigid dichotomy between tradition and modernity in the scholarship on modern Chinese literature is more apparent than real. Together, the two books demonstrate both the variety of approaches to the prose genre modern Chinese writers have taken as well as the interconnectedness of political literature and literature of leisure in the larger context of the Republican era literary field. Laughlin’s third book, an edited collection called *Contested Modernities in Chinese Literature*, also contributes importantly to shifting the boundaries of what constitutes Chinese literary modernity.

In recent years, Laughlin has taken over the presidency of the Association of Chinese Comparative Literature, from which position he organized the ACCL annual conference that was held at Tsing-hua University (Beijing) this year. Laughlin brings to our department administrative experience, experience running a language program, developing study abroad programs and organizing scholarly exchanges, as well as an extensive network of scholarly connections at China’s top two universities. Finally, Laughlin is also noted for his engagement with public discourse on China (he is currently participating in the Public Intellectuals Program sponsored by the National Committee on US-China Relations).

Remaining Fall 2009 Lectures



Every semester the East Asia Center invites scholars of East Asia from around the world to deliver a series of lectures at UVa to students, faculty, and community members.

The Fall 2009 semester has been quite busy for the East Asia Center’s lecture series, with nine lectures total scheduled from scholars working in a variety of disciplines on topics ranging from Japan’s diplomacy to a 19th century Tibetan chieftain. There are four lectures remaining in the series:

“Daoist Abbot Li Zongyang, Clerical Activism and Modern Reforms in Nanyang, 1880-1949”

Friday, October 16, 3 pm, New Cabell 311

Liu Xun, Associate Professor of History, Rutgers University

“Experiences in Asia: Study, Research, Tour and Internship”

A Special Event

Thursday, October 29, 6:30 pm, Wilson Hall 301

East Asia grant recipients will give brief presentations on what they did with their grant money

“Not the Whole Truth: Politeness, Censorship, and Language Ideology in China”

Friday, November 6, 3 pm, Brooks Hall 2nd Floor Lecture Room

Susan Blum, Professor of Anthropology, Notre Dame

“The Transformation of Burial Space in Early China”

Friday, November 13, 3 pm, Campbell Hall 160

Lai Guolong, Assistant Professor of Chinese Art and Archaeology, University of Florida

“How to Talk to a God: Modes of Discourse in Contemporary Daoist Ritual”

Friday, November 20, 3 pm, New Cabell 311

David Mozina, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of North Carolina Charlotte

Professor's Estate Gift to Support International Centers in College

From UVaToday October 6, 2009 — In planning her gift to the University of Virginia, Gertrude Greenslade showed remarkable foresight and a strong commitment to education, qualities that helped to shape her career as an internationally known expert on Soviet and Eastern European economics and, later, as a professor of economics at U.Va.

Before her death in March 2007, Greenslade arranged an estate gift of \$9.8 million to support international studies programs and give the University the flexibility to meet emerging needs of students and faculty.

For the 2009-10 year, the endowment created by Greenslade's gift will generate income of more than \$386,000, part of which will go to support the East Asia Center and the Center for South Asian Studies in the College of Arts & Sciences. With this support, the College can add course offerings in related social sciences and humanities fields while augmenting its administrative support for the two centers with the founding of a new Asia Institute within the College.

The East Asia Center provides an interdisciplinary forum for faculty and student interest in East and Southeast Asia; sponsors a speaker series and travel grants; and promotes activities and events related to Asia. The Center for South Asian Studies coordinates and promotes the study of South Asia, conducting research and outreach and offering a range of courses in South Asia's languages and related disciplines.

"The gift will help elevate the centers in the hopes of securing recognition as federally designated national resource centers," said Meredith Jung-En Woo, dean of the College. "Such a designation could result in increased federal support for graduate fellowships and a higher profile for the University's language and social science programs in these critical areas."

The endowment will also provide support for exchange programs between U.Va. and the University of Rome, École Normale Supérieure de Paris, and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris..

Woo noted that building global programs is one of the priorities established by the President's Commission on the Future of the University. U.Va. is broadening curricular and extracurricular programs to feature global themes and is creating new global courses, majors and minors. U.Va. faculty members are collaborating with graduate and undergraduate students to solve global problems and needs and to promote respect for differences among nations and cultures.

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"Gertrude was grateful to U.Va. for giving her the opportunity to teach," he said. "She never wavered in wishing to leave the bulk of her wealth to the University. She had only warm thoughts about it."

Born in 1920 in Albuquerque, N.M., Gertrude Guyton traveled a career path that was unconventional for women of her generation. After graduating with a bachelor's degree from Colorado State College of Education in 1940, she moved east to continue her studies at Johns Hopkins University. There, she completed a master's degree in economics in 1948 and, five years later, earned a doctorate in the same field.

She next moved to Washington, D.C., where she worked as a senior economist at the Central Intelligence Agency. Her area of specialization was of intense interest to the Cold War-era U.S. government: the Soviet Union's economy. From the agency's perspective, she also had the highly valuable skill of fluently reading and speaking Russian.

One of the few women at the CIA, Greenslade soon built a reputation as an expert on the economies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc nations. Her research would have been familiar to G. Warren Nutter, a U.Va. professor of economics and a national figure with ties to the Washington political and intelligence communities.

According to Kenneth Elzinga, who joined the University's economics department in the 1960s and is currently its most senior faculty member, Nutter was a "leading authority on the performance of the Soviet economy." Almost certainly it was he who first approached Greenslade about teaching at the University.
 Professor's Estate Gift (*con'd*)

In 1969, Greenslade began serving as a visiting professor in the Department of Economics, then housed in Rouss Hall, and assumed a regular, full-time post in 1973. When she earned tenure, she became only the second woman in the College to do so. She maintained close ties to the CIA, though, and married Rush V. Greenslade, another agency economist, in 1974. After retiring from the University in 1993, Greenslade rejoined the CIA as a consultant.

Nonetheless, the University remained an important part of her life. Thomas Nolan, who graduated from the College in 1978 and the U.Va. School of Law in 1982, was her friend as well as her attorney. He spoke of Greenslade's affection for U.Va.

"Gertrude was grateful to U.Va. for giving her the opportunity to teach," he said. "She never wavered in wishing to leave the bulk of her wealth to the University. She had only warm thoughts about it."

— *By Mary Carlson*



Virginia STARTALK Chinese Teacher Academy (VSCTA)

The 2009 Virginia STARTALK Chinese Teacher Academy, building on last year's success, continues to be praised for its well-integrated curriculum and excellent combination of theory and practice. The program is highly acclaimed by the STARTALK Central Office for its excellence and overall effectiveness and has been chosen to be one of the very few programs to create an online model workshop for Chinese language teachers.

The program, funded by a US government grant of \$75,000, successfully recruited fifteen K-16 teachers nationwide for its three-week long summer 2009 session. The Virginia STARTALK Chinese Academy (VSCA) contributes a crucial component to

the Governor's Foreign Language Academy implemented at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

Through the program, teacher trainees acquire knowledge in Chinese language acquisition, develop skills in critical analysis of pedagogical approaches, obtain feedback on their own teaching through a multi-faceted reflective approach, and sharpen observation skills through self-analysis of videotaped classes and frequent discussions. Through a teaching practicum, they learn to apply theories to implement research-supported best practices and created a highly communicative and interactive class. Their extensive learning experiences

culminate in the completion of the E-portfolio, and many of them have used it to launch or enhance their career and get on the path to the certification right after the program.

A program web site that features the E-portfolio is available at <http://xrl.us/UVaStartalk2009>. The website is created by Dr. Ran Zhao, who serves as the co-instructor and technology specialist.

The program will be implemented at UVa should we continue to receive funding from the US government in summer 2010 and in the years to come.

Miao-fen Tseng is the Program Director and a Key Instructor



Participants and instructors from the 2009 Virginia STARTALK Chinese Teacher Academy

Find more information on STARTALK at <http://xrl.us/UVaStartalk2009>

Ellen Bayard Weedon Travel Grant Follow-Up Report by Lynn Huang

(continued from page 6)

track the customers. The best I could do was to keenly observe.

In Beijing, Hong Kong, and Chengdu, I was able to expand beyond American fast food into other aspects of food globalization. I looked at how some of these communities were able to counter globalization with localization and was quite surprised in Chengdu of how unaware or unconcerned people were about the type of food they consumed. Hong Kong was at the opposite end of the spectrum –almost everyone knew the nutritional values of all foods they ate. Much of this variation can be attributed to historical background and physical differences in each region.

During my time abroad, I discovered that I underestimated a few extremely significant details about research. First, self-motivation was a key determinant in how much you can accomplish while overseas. There is so much one can do in a new place that it can be overwhelming, making it difficult to stick to personal deadlines, especially when there is no one checking up on your progress. Second, researching in a different social environment makes you more aware of the different approaches that must be taken. For example, I learned early on to never take out a piece of paper and pen when conversing with or interviewing an unfamiliar Chinese person. Third, being flexible and not getting frustrated with your research is key. I managed to adapt my research topic to the circumstances I was given at each of the cities I visited. However, I did sometimes feel very disheartened when I lost a day transitioning to a new place.

During my research, the encounters that I enjoyed most were the unplanned personal conversations I had with local people. When I was in Beijing, I was sitting in a park reading a book and a man in his late 80s approached me and started to talk to me about my background. I got to hear his story of serving on the police force and how he has seen China change and develop over the years. Another conversation I found really valuable was with a distant relative. His narrative about the years following the Long March and life through the Cultural Revolution were invaluable. I could write on endlessly about how this trip has enlightened me on many fronts.

Chinese Corner Reaches Out to the UVA Community

by Zhiwen Lu

Sponsored by the Chinese Student and Scholar Society (CSSS) of University of Virginia and the East Asia Center, Chinese Corner was first established in the summer of 2007. Today, it not only has an ever increasing attendance, it has also caught the attention of local newspapers, including UVA Today, The Cavalier Daily and the Daily Progress. Professor Shu-chen Chen of the Chinese program of the Department of East Asian Languages, Literatures and Cultures collaborates with Jiawei Huang and Huapu Pan of the Chinese Students and Scholars Society in hosting Chinese Corner in Wilson hall every Thursday night from 6:30 to 8:00. Recently weekly attendance has been about 100, with an almost equal number of American and Chinese stu-

dents. Students participating in this event receive direct exposure to native speakers and have the opportunity to hear short culture lectures. With a grant from the East Asia Center and the Arts and Sciences Council, Chinese Corner is now also able to provide Chinese food for all who attend. Participants include students taking Chinese language classes as well as those taking China-related courses who are interested in cultural exchange. Thus, more and more students are attracted to and benefit from this event.

Chinese Corner also offers many fun events in the summertime. During this past summer, Chinese Corner successfully held UVA's first Star Chef Competition, which stimulated students' interest in Chinese culture and

also provided a platform for Chinese students to show off their cooking skills.

Thanks to the collaboration and participation of all parties, Chinese Corner will continue to serve the UVA Chinese language community in the future. Students who are interested in anything related to China are welcome to stop by and participate regardless of their language levels!

Learn more about Chinese Corner by visiting:
<http://chinesecorner.csssuva.org/>
<http://picasaweb.google.com/CHNcornerUVA>

The United States and China: Still a 'Fragile Relationship'?

by Graham Odell

A talk by Dr. Harry Harding, "The United States and China: Still a 'Fragile Relationship'?" launched the East Asia Center's fall speaker series on September 11, 2009, before a large audience in Minor Hall. Harry Harding, the newly appointed Dean of the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy at UVA, and a prominent expert on US - China relations, is also the newest member of the East Asia Center's faculty.

The basic question Harding posed was whether Sino-American relations had evolved beyond a "fragile relationship". Harding argued a bilateral relationship can be defined across an axis of stability, ranging from "fragile" on one end, to "stable" on the other. A "fragile" relationship can be easily disrupted, whereas a "stable" one cannot. Drawing from his experience assessing political risk at the Eurasia Group, Harding identified three key aspects determining the status of a bilateral relationship: its degree of instability, events that may trigger this stability, and mitigating actions that may be pursued to diminish the impact of such triggers.

Structural (ie. long-term and overarching) aspects of a bilateral relationship, such as joint Sino-American opposition to the USSR in the 1970s and 1980s, can help sustain stability. The recent US-China relationship has been chiefly defined by economic interdependence. Harding identified three basic elements of this interdependence: foreign direct investment, intense two-way trade, and China's foreign exchange reserves. This last one contributes to interdependence particularly effectively because much of China's reserves are in US treasury bonds, whose value depends on the continued strength of the US dollar. Were the US economy to collapse, China's national savings would also suffer significant loss of value. In addition, the two countries share common interests on an increasing range of international issues, bilateral, regional, and global.

Although Sino-American relations are more stable now than they were in the 1990s, there are numerous potential triggers that could cause difficulties. These triggers can be put roughly into two categories: disagreements that gradually undermine the relationship, and severe shocks that can trigger instability. One disagreement that could weaken the relationship is the difference in the perceived trade relationship: the US believes Chinese exports are given an unfair advantage because of an undervalued Yuan; China, on the other hand, argues that the bulk of the profit for manufactured items goes to foreign firms and very little of it stays in China. Climate change and development in the Global South are two other areas of disagreement that could become gradual triggers.

An example of a potentially severe shock is Taiwan. Although the two countries have narrowed their stances on this issue, national interests can shift suddenly and unexpectedly. Two more triggers with equal shock potential would be the collapse of North Korea and another Tiananmen.

Lastly, Harding talked about the two sides' different perceptions of the relationship. Prior to this year, the US emphasized China's expected role in the world as a "responsible stakeholder". China, meanwhile, talked about a "strategic partnership"

(continued on page 15)

Faculty Updates: Research Projects, Summer Field Work, Recent Publications

Ever wonder what our professors are up to when they're not teaching or grading? This section features just a few of the projects that UVA's East Asia faculty are working on.

Ellen Fuller, Assistant Professor (DEALLC and SWAG) is working on her second book-length project, a study of social movements in Okinawa, Japan. The study aims to address existing gaps in social movement literature by focusing on the interactions among state (institutionalized politics) and non-state (uninstitutionalized politics) actors who attempt to re-define the boundaries of normative political participation.

Harry Harding: This August, I gave a presentation on "The Rise of China" to the 11th Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers, sponsored by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. I serve on the Board of Governors of the Rajaratnam School. Also, my article "How the Past Shapes the Present: Five Ways in Which History Affects China's Contemporary Foreign Relations," appeared in the *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, 16:1-2 (Spring-Summer 2009), pp. 119-34.

Yunsheng Huang was engaged in summer research in China on the topics of architectural and environmental studies. Through his cooperative work with Beijing University he has served as a reader for master degree theses for their architecture students. Professor Huang's field work on topics of cultural sustainability included sustainable habitation in the south and the application of solar energy. He was invited to have meetings with provincial officials to discuss environmental issues and gave a talk in Chengdu at Sichuan University. To prepare for his new class on "World Buddhist Architecture", he also visited temples and Buddhist mountains and some historic sites of vernacular architecture.

In June, **Clarke Hudson** (Dept. of Religious Studies) did fieldwork on Daoist and popular temples to the deity Xu Xun in Jiangxi province, China, and presented the paper "Qiu Zhaoao, a Sexual Alchemist at the Court of the Kangxi Emperor" at the Fifth International Daoist Studies Conference at Wudang Shan, Hubei. He is writing a book on inner alchemy and social thought (working title, *Distinction and Transcendence: Managing Mastership in Medieval China*).

Anne Kinney will be presenting a paper on *The Book of Odes* at the Early China Seminar at Columbia University on Jan 30 2010. In Spring I'll serve as discussant for the panel "Desire and Anxiety in the Portrayal of Women in Chinese Literature and Culture" at the annual meeting of the Association of Asian Studies in Philadelphia.

Hsin-Hsin Liang 2009 is my fourth summer to lead the UVA-in-Shanghai Chinese Language program at ECNU, but this time due to family reasons I only stayed 27 days. During that time I was able to recruit and train the ECNU graduate student instructors and to see that our UVA students were well settled before my departure. During my absence, Ms. Chrissie Wang, who was the visiting lecturer from ECNU on Grounds until May, was the on-site Field Director and the current visiting lecturer from ECNU, Ms. Xiaorong Wang, was the Associate Field Director. Their efforts along with the efforts of the other 8 ECNU graduate student instructors brought the program to a successful conclusion. The 2009 Program Yearbook can be found on the homepage of the East Asia Center. During the 3 weekends that I was in Shanghai I taught a course "Research on Classroom Teaching" to 52 ECNU students in the International Education MA program. Interestingly enough, about 15 of them "attended my lectures" by watching them on their computer screen in many different cities all over China.

On my return to UVA, I taught Intermediate Chinese (CHIN201 & 202) on Grounds, following Dr. Ran Zhao's first week teaching of this course. Besides teaching, the major project for me was to proofread the manuscript of *The Routledge Advanced Chinese Multimedia Course: Crossing Cultural Boundaries*. After having worked with the other three colleagues for more than two years, we are pleased to learn that the book is scheduled to be published in October this year.

Federico Marcon is currently working on: *The Names of Nature – The Study of Nature and the Making of Modern Japan* - his book manuscript on the emergence of a proto-scientific field of nature study between the 17th and the early 20th centuries.; "Inventorying Nature: Tokugawa Yoshimune and the Sponsorship of Honzōgaku in Eighteenth-Century Japan" - an article to be published in 2010 in the volume "Nature's Horizons" edited by Brett Walker, Julia Thomas, and Ian Miller; "Indexing Nature: Homonymy and Synonymy in early modern European and Japanese encyclopedias of natural history" - article, a portion of which will be presented at the 2009 Annual Meeting of the Society for the History of Science at Phoenix; and "Exchanging Goods and Trading Ideas: Commerce and Knowledge in Kimura Kenkadō's Salon" - article, a portion of which will be proposed to be presented at the 2010 AAS meeting. In Spring 2010 Professor Marcon will teach a seminar on "Samurai, Monks, Townspeople, and Courtesans: Ideas and Society in Early Modern Japan" (HIEA 1501) and a survey class on the history of the Scientific Revolution in early modern Europe.

Trey Maxham: This past May, I traveled to Beijing, Qingdao, Hangzhou, and Shanghai with 30 UVA undergraduate students to learn about business in the region. My class is a research-oriented course in the Marketing concentration curriculum that blends relevant class-

Newsletter

East Asia Center
University of Virginia
New Cabell Hall B031
P.O. Box 400781
Charlottesville, VA 22904.

Phone: (434) 924-7836
Fax: (434) 924-6977
Email:
eastasiacenter@virginia.edu

Director: John Shepherd
Newsletter Editor: Elizabeth
Miller

[www.virginia.edu/
eastasia](http://www.virginia.edu/eastasia)

Faculty Updates *(continued)*

room discussions, executive presentations, company visits, and marketing research to explore consumer behavior and market strategies in China. I traveled to Shenzhen, China in late May to meet with key company executives at BYD to learn more about the electric car market and the impressive work at BYD.

I am offering a J-term class in Southeast Asia to learn more about business in the region (Commerce 4390). The class will visit Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore. Similar to my class in China, this class will visit companies and meet with executives in the region to better understand the cultural influences and consumer insights that drive business strategy in Southeast Asia. (The class is open to non-commerce students.)

I will be leading our Global Immersion Experience (GIE) program in China from May 10 - June 23, which is the capstone experience for our MS Commerce program. First, my 24 students will spend eight days in residence here in Charlottesville to learn about some macro issues in globalization (social, political, economic, etc.). Second, the students will spend approximately one week at Peking University and complete a tailored course on "Doing Business in China." Third, I will lead the students to Shanghai, Chengdu, Shenzhen, and Guangzhou for some company visits and executive presentations to better understand business in China. Fourth, we will visit HKUST for about eight days where we will summarize key findings in class discussions and student presentations. We will have a similar group of 24 students in SE Asia (with Peter Mailet), and they will join us at HKUST to share insights about China and Southeast Asia to hopefully better understand China from a broader context. I will be happy to share other details if that would help.

Len Schoppa spent two weeks in July and August following the election campaign in Japan, watching the opposition Democratic Party of Japan oust the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party from power for the first

time since 1955. The LDP was knocked out of office for 11 months in 1993-94 after it split, but the August 30 election marked the first time it had ever been pushed out of power by a rival party--and the DPJ did so in a landslide victory. Schoppa followed LDP candidate Taro Kono on a day of campaign activities, observing how he was attempting to save his own career in a political atmosphere where most of the LDP candidates in his region were going down to defeat. He also traveled to Kumamoto in relatively rural Kyushu to see how the DPJ was attempting to make inroads in a region that had been the LDP's base. In September, Schoppa spoke at the American Economic Institute and the US Chamber of Commerce before audiences of Washington, DC professionals who were eager to learn how the DPJ won its victory and what the party was likely to do with its new power.

John Shepherd continued his research on the 1918 influenza epidemic in East Asia this summer. I am also coediting a collection of papers tentatively entitled "Death at the opposite ends of the Eurasian continent: mortality trends in Taiwan and the Netherlands, 1850-1945"

Brantly Womack is busy editing two books. *China's Rise in Historical Perspective* is a collection of papers from the conference series at the Miller Center last Spring. Authors include Joseph Esherick, Dwight Perkins, Barry Naughton, Mark Elvin, and other luminaries. It will be published in simultaneous hardback and paperback by Rowman and Littlefield. The second, *China among Unequals: Asymmetric Foreign Relations in Asia*, is a collection of Womack's writings on Chinese asymmetric external relations. It will be published in Singapore by World Scientific Press. He participated in a conference honoring Wang Gungwu's 80th birthday at National University of Singapore, and also gave talks in Shanghai, Beijing, Taipei, Toronto, and Nanning.

Dorothy Wong: In early June I visited the Dunhuang cave-temples for further field research on the murals and paintings of the cave-temple. I also presented a paper on "Reassessing the Wall Paintings of Hōryūji" (based on my chapter in the Hōryūji Reconsidered volume, 2008) to the community of researchers at the Dunhuang Academy. I will give the same presentation as the Edwin L. Weisl Jr. Lecturer in Art History at Carlton College in October. Next spring I will teach a 5000-level seminar called "Art of the Silk Road" (for advanced undergraduates and graduate students).

Yu Xiaoming (Peter Yu)'s book *China: Ancient Culture, Modern Society* (co-author with G. Wright Doyle) will be published soon by Strategic Book Publishing, New York.

Ellen Zhang finished the final revision of her book manuscript, *Transformative Journeys: Travel and Culture in Song China (960-1279)* in May. She was in China in the summer conducting research for her new project on filial piety and is presenting some preliminary findings at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Montreal this November. She is currently co-editing a volume, entitled *Recent Western Scholarship on the Intellectual History of Imperial China (Song to Qing)*, which includes Chinese translations of thirteen articles that were originally published in English.

Zhao Ran: In Summer 2009 I worked with Miao-fen Tseng in Richmond for UVa's second Startalk Chinese Teacher Academy. We had 15 teachers from all over the country, and the three-week program proved to be inspirational for both the teacher trainees and us as trainers. I was a co-trainer and technology specialist for the program. I helped the teachers compile their e-Portfolios and constructed a website introducing our program and featuring the teachers' portfolios. We are looking forward to running the program for the third year in 2010, and this time we plan to have it here at UVa! Please check <http://xrl.us/UVaStartalk2009> for our program and help us spread the word!

2009 East Asian Studies graduate Stephen Leonelli recently participated in the summer four-week “Woodenfish” Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program at Fo Guang Shan monastery in Taiwan

Woodenfish Humanistic Buddhist Monastic Life Program: the Meanings of Meditation

After four years of studying Buddhism and Chinese religions at UVa, I was itching to contextualize and challenge my understanding of contemporary Buddhist practice. This summer I was given a unique opportunity to do just that—the “Woodenfish” Program not only gave me insight into the functioning of a modern Buddhist monastery, but also provided first-hand meditation instruction from practicing monks and nuns. The most intense and rewarding part of the Program was definitely the seven-day silent meditation retreat. The structure, form, and content of the retreat were designed to mirror our daily lives, but on a higher, more profound (and removed) level.

On a Monday morning, we first put on “noble silence” (jinyu 禁语) badges to notify the rest of the monastery community that we were not to be distracted from our practice, and thus our retreat began.

Fo Guang Shan monastery is part of the Linji (临济) Tradition in Chan Buddhism, which was brought to China in the 4th – 5th century CE. After the sixth Chinese Chan patriarch, Hui Neng, passed away, the Chan School broke into several traditions including Linji. The Linji tradition is known for its practice of banghe (棒诃, “stick and shouting”); so much as looking to the left or right during meditation would warrant a sudden smack from the “compassion stick” to remind the practitioner to focus on his or her practice. The venerable nuns in charge of our retreat went easier on us because this was the first meditation experience for most. Nevertheless, they were always holding the compassion stick like a sword, resting on the shoulder, poised to strike compassionately.

Each morning we woke at 5, completed Tai Chi exercises and early morning meditation, and had breakfast at 6:30. All directions and instructions were shouted at us by the head nun: BE MINDFUL, DON'T BE DISTRACTED, CROSS YOUR LEGS, TAKE A BREAK. Each meditation session began with her sudden shout, SAH!!! And then two nuns would walk quickly up and down the aisle wielding compassion sticks. After breakfast, we did chores followed by extended morning meditation. We would meditate sitting for approximately 30 – 40 minutes and then have a short walking meditation session; we would usually have about three sessions back to back. Lunch was followed by afternoon meditation sessions, chores, dinner, and evening meditation sessions before bed.

Meditation was painful. Sitting with a straight back and with legs in lotus position (I am still unable to sit in this posture so I would just sit in half lotus with one foot up), I felt pains in other parts of my body—my arms would ache, my neck would become stiff, my legs regularly lost circulation. There were a couple sessions at the beginning when I literally felt like I wouldn't be able to walk after the seated meditation sessions. I was always grateful for the walking meditation to shake out my legs and arms.

One of the most interesting concepts that was continually emphasized in the “dharma talks” —sermon-like monologues delivered by a monk or nun, often incorporating teachings and anecdotes from the Buddha's life—was Buddha nature (fo xing 佛性). Chan

(continued on page 15)

On September 25, East Asia Center faculty, staff and students gathered for a potluck and a chance to get to know each other.



(continued from page 14)

Buddhism teaches that every sentient being (even animals, hungry ghosts, and hell demons) has Buddha nature— each being has the potential to realize enlightenment in this lifetime. This means we need to see the world as the Buddha would see it; we must treat others with compassion, love, and forgiveness, and we must strive to realize the truths the Buddha realized: impermanence, emptiness, non-duality (to name a few).

These philosophies are embodied in the metaphor of the seven-day retreat. When I felt such pain in my legs during meditation, I was instructed to concentrate on the origin of the pain, to penetrate the pain and find its root; the same instruction was given to address feelings of itchiness, coldness or hotness—find where the sensations were coming from. After intently searching for the origin of these sensations, I found that there was no origin—there was nothing causing them. All of these feelings were impermanent— they would come and go, intensify and disappear. It was my mind (xin 心) that created the sensations, the attachment to my form and body that ached or felt itchy.

Buddhism posits that there is no inherent self; we are nothing more than the 5 aggregates (se shou xiang shi xing 色受想识行: form, sensation, perception, consciousness, volition). All of these aggregates in reality are illusory, products of our mind (xin 心). The meditation retreat provided space and time to contemplate the ways my mind/xin works, the ways I attach to my form, sensations, perceptions, consciousness, and volitions. By contemplating these aggregates, the goal was to free myself from them, to detach from myself and achieve stillness of mind, free from everything.

There were sessions when I felt I had achieved correct posture and concentration that allowed me to move beyond my form. The feeling is hard to describe, but in a way it was as if there was a centripetal force spinning inside me, but in complete stillness. The force was pulling every part of my body in toward itself. I could feel every breath, every heartbeat, through my entire body. It was as if I had achieved a hollowness inside the frame of my body.

But then, as soon as I was aware of it, my consciousness and perception went crazy and I wanted so badly to hang onto that physical feeling—and then I thought, Oh no! I've now become attached to this feeling—it's just another hurdle I have to jump! My meditation did not progress beyond that stage, but we were told not to make judgments about meditation sessions (there is no unsuccessful or bad meditation). I did notice, though, that my ability to concentrate and focus on my breath was directly related to my experience with pain. Toward the end of the week, I was able to sit for the entire session, sometimes even skipping walking meditation to continue sitting, and afterward stand up and walk around without any hindrance.

Thus, the metaphor exposes itself. Buddhists believe that life is full of pain. Physical, mental, emotional, and day-to-day, pain in all its forms arises because of our inability to see that our physical form and sensations, our mental perceptions and consciousness, and our daily volitions are products of a turbulent mind/xin. If we can learn to control our mind, we will realize that all objects and feelings are impermanent and therefore empty of inherent value and should thus not be attached to or craved. We cause ourselves so much pain because we fail to realize the way our minds work. The retreat was an intense experience in which I was inflicting pain upon myself by attempting to sit in stillness with legs crossed and back straight. I had to take responsibility for the fact that I was causing myself pain through meditation, and detach from that pain by controlling my mind. I had to still my turbulent mind, and in that moment of stillness, there was promise of clarity.

At the end of the seven days, when we were instructed to remove our badges of noble silence, I sat with eyes downcast, breathing deeply because at that moment I realized, even the seven-day retreat—the opportunity to understand myself—was gone; impermanent.

Stephen Leonelli is currently a Princeton-in-Asia Fellow at the Natural Resources Defense Council in Beijing, China. He can be reached at leonelli.stephen@gmail.com.

(Harry Harding Lecture, continued from page 11)

with the US. Neither side was comfortable with the other's definition. For the moment, however, that disparity has been papered over, with both sides now describing the US-China relationship as "positive, cooperative, and comprehensive". Nevertheless, there is still a wide gap in the two countries' worldviews. Harding characterized the US as a "post-modern" power that emphasizes the responsibility of nations on the international stage and the right of humanitarian intervention in other countries even without their governments' consent. China, on the other hand, is a "modern" power because it is most concerned with the more traditional values of sovereignty and territorial integrity. These two clashing worldviews could prove to be irreconcilable.