



GLOBAL MATTERS



A COMPENDIUM OF GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES AT ARCADIA UNIVERSITY

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What's up in Volume 4, Number 3?

In this issue of *Global Matters*, we visit Romania with Hugh Grady, London with Idroma Montgomery, learn about study abroad from Kathryn May, and find out about a new program in Paris from Mark Curchack. In addition, Hayat Alvi-Aziz writes about a lecture on the status of women and children in Iran and we report on NAFSA awarding Arcadia the Senator Paul Simon Award in recognition of our strong international programs and curriculum. And, finally, we introduce a new feature in this issue: the Photo Gallery. From time to time, *Global Matters* will include photographs taken by Arcadia faculty, students, and staff while studying, traveling, or working abroad. Danielle Green's photograph of the piece of the Berlin Wall that sits at the entrance to the Imperial War Museum in London inaugurates this feature.

Arcadia in Paris

Mark Curchack

Dean of Graduate Studies

On Thursday, February 16, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education approved Arcadia's proposal to establish an additional location in Paris and to extend our accreditation to cover the Masters in International Relations and Diplomacy offered there by the American Graduate School of International Relations and Diplomacy (AGSIRD). AGSIRD is a twelve-year old institution offering an American-style program to approximately 35 students from around the world. The faculty is equally global in its origins and outlook. The program itself is complimentary to our IPCR program, and we can anticipate student and faculty exchanges, and jointly offered courses.

On March 15, President Greiner, Provost Berger, and Dean Curchack will be present in Paris officially to sign the Memorandum of Understanding that will govern the relationship between the two institutions. Besides the obvious

connections between IPCR and the AGSIRD program, this alliance holds promises for possible CEA programs in France as well as opening avenues for other Arcadia department to work with French colleagues.

The Status of Women and Children in Iran

Hayat Alvi-Aziz

Assistant Professor of International Studies

If you've been following the news lately, you have probably heard about the insensitive and ignorant comments coming out of the mouth of Iran's newly elected President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.¹ His words have rattled the international community and angered many. His words also continue to further isolate an already extremely isolated Islamic Republic of Iran. He may not realize it, but he is actually digging Iran's metaphoric grave deeper and deeper, although Mr. Ahmadinejad himself is quite smug and righteous about his position and opinions.

Take for example his callous rants months into his presidency pronouncing that "Israel should be wiped off the map." He has also "invited" Israeli Jews to move to Europe, and called on European powers to repatriate them. Then, President Ahmadinejad announced that Iran will hold a conference questioning the validity of the Holocaust, which he has referred to as a "myth." This brought about a flurry of visa applications from various neo-Nazi groups in Germany who wish to attend the conference. What a strange set of bedfellows! Currently, Iran has threatened to resume nuclear activities if it is reported to the UN Security Council. In short, Iran under the rule of President Ahmadinejad and the corrupt clerics is increasingly posing a serious crisis in the international community.

What does this have to do with Arcadia University? A number of Arcadia students and faculty members attended a lecture by the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Dr. Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian Muslim woman.² Dr. Ebadi has long struggled against the hard-line conservatives in Iran, many of whom condemned the Nobel Prize selection and labeled her an "ex-convict." Of course, they conveniently left out the minor detail that they were the ones who had her thrown in prison as a political dissident in the first place. They also accuse her of aligning herself with Western, particularly American, human rights organizations who are seen as having their own political agendas, especially against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

¹ See the profile of Iran's President Ahmadinejad at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/790877.stm.

² Shirin Ebadi's profile is available here: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/3181992.stm.

Fortunately she has numerous supporters, especially among the reformists in Iran, who have offset the criticisms and accusations spewed by the conservatives. In particular, she is seen as a strong, courageous proponent for children and women's rights.

The theme of Dr. Ebadi's lecture was "Protecting the Rights of Women and Children in the World Today." The new Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, Ron Daniels, used this lecture to kick off his Provost's Global Forum lecture series. They were expecting 300 attendees, but they got a big surprise. The turnout numbered *one thousand!* Not all of the audience could fit into the auditorium, and by 6:30 p.m. the doors closed in many faces, so adjacent classrooms were filled with the overflow and the lecture was telecast in them. A significant number of people from the local Iranian-American community attended the lecture, and Dr. Ebadi was given several standing ovations.

Dr. Ebadi spoke in Persian, and her translator stood at the podium next to her and translated her words into English. During her lecture, Dr. Ebadi described some of the unfair laws that the clerics passed upon the Islamic revolution in 1979. Some of these laws specifically targeted women, grossly restricting their rights and freedoms and affecting their living standards and lifestyles.

She explained how such laws were wholly incompatible with Iranian culture, not to mention democracy. Dr. Ebadi eloquently described women's rights and democracy as "two sides of the same coin." Dr. Ebadi described how the ridiculous new laws passed by the clerics treated girls as young as nine years old as adults in terms of crime and punishment. She said a nine-year old girl would be treated equivalent to a 40-year old man if she commits a crime! She also mentioned how these laws considered the value of a woman's life to be half of that of a man's, and in the law courts two female witnesses would equal one male witness.

Moreover, she pointed out that these chauvinistic laws had nothing to do with religion, since the very clerics (i.e., the Guardian Council) who passed these laws ultimately overturned them as a result of the persistent feminist political activism.

Needless to say, we in the audience were overwhelmed, inspired, and shocked all at the same time. The shock came from hearing about the human rights abuses in Iran. The inspiration and deep respect for this woman, who many described as a "sweet-looking grandmother," stemmed from learning about her personal courage and sacrifices in facing the thugs of the regime. She has spent time in prison, she has been followed and monitored by government agents and secret police, she and her colleagues have received countless threats and suffered harassment, yet she keeps going.

During the questions and answers session after the lecture, one U-Penn student very frankly asked Dr. Ebadi what he described as an "Oprah" question: In the

face of such adversity, dangers, and challenges, “what makes you tick?” She responded that if you believe in something strong enough, you will find the determination to do it.

We felt tremendously privileged to have this opportunity to be in the presence of a Nobel Peace Prize winner and tireless activist for human rights. Clearly, modern global society needs many more people like her! Dr. Ebadi’s memoir, *Iran Awakening: A Memoir of Revolution and Hope*, (Random House) will be coming out in May 2006.

Londontown

Idroma Montgomery

Undergraduate Student

One of my preferred places to go in London was our university’s library. Sitting in front of the computers on the second floor became my observation time, where I watched bits and pieces of lives occur in short bursts. I got to understand New Cross, its jumble of histories and foreign buildings mixing with modern architecture that gave way to the cozy confines of English homes. I loved the familiarity of my area’s unrepentant urbanity; crowded and brash, the air was always filled with a cacophony of city noises competing for attention. From New Cross I would eagerly jump on the tube, always so enticing from my bedroom window, in order to see not just the city, but its inhabitants. I would travel for hours to no particular destination looking at all the different people who made the trains their temporary home. I developed a fascination for the businessmen with their crisp Saville Row suits and polished shoes, hair fashionably mussed and mouths set as though their job was only an annoying hindrance until their pub cavorting later. The fashionable urban kids and *rudebwoys* preened and grimaced at the women in the train carriages, displaying their painfully expensive hip-hop uniforms in all their post-dandy glory. The tourists would gawp at their tube maps and assortments of guides, their eyes shining bright with the gilded excitement that London inevitably brings. I would wonder what they were all thinking, where they were going, what their lives would bring once we left each other’s sight forever.

Through my observations I begin to understand the patchwork of English life, at least from an outsider’s perspective. But as a Goldsmiths student in SE 14, I realized how disconnected we were from the city proper. On the tenth floor of my dearly loved sociology building, Warmington Tower, I could see the gauzy outline of Canary Wharf, witness how the tracks of New Cross and New Cross Gate stations snaked off into the horizon into London. I could feel the distance; I began to feel cleaved in two. I’d discovered the truth of isolation within the city. With our sprawling boroughs and constant supply of youth fuelled pubs, clubs, sights and stores, it became less necessary to venture very far to feel like an integral part of Something Important. But still I longed for that romantic feeling

that used to overtake me whenever I saw the skyline of Londontown. But it was impossible to return to those days, I wasn't a tourist, I was an inhabitant. Yet there is always some event to turn your perspective around....

Mine occurred amidst friends on an unexpectedly cold May evening. My adopted flat started watching a Chelsea match, my favorite soccer club, beat Manchester United. It was an activity that had allowed me to move closer to my male friends over the term. To celebrate their victory, we went to pound a pint night at the Tiananmen Square student union. A strict non-drinker in the States, I had fallen for the warm camaraderie that results from pub life. Drinks soon chased warm feelings and we were warmed by victory, pints and discussion, with interrupted bits of conversation on seemingly nationally mandated mobile phones. We stayed until Mark and Steve, the Union's bodyguards and vague friends, forced us out the door. Our throng, comprised of numerous hardy students, made our way round the building, and out onto the side road, the poster-plastered brick wall dividing us from the main building and field. We passed through the small, dark alleyway that connected us to St. James, our street, filling the sometimes-forbidding silence with raucous laughter and songs. When we finally made it to the front of our block (the residence hall was gated to keep out ne'er do wells and occasionally frightening art students), we were filled with the sort of boredom that could turn dangerous if left unheeded. Made daring by the warmth still in our throat, we decided to do what at the time, seemed absolutely reasonable. We were going to climb one of the higher points on our campus, the design building.

Avoiding the cops who patrolled regularly after eleven, we quickly sneaked towards the field using the back way. Rushing unsteadily up the rickety, rusting stairs on the side of the building, we discovered our first obstacle. The design building had a ladder leading up to its roof, but the rungs only started halfway up. This was nothing but a minor inconvenience for my male friends, all over six feet, but to me it seemed the end of my adventure. My friends helped me up, however, making sure I scrambled up the roof with helpful 'got it, duck?' and 'you're so small, love!' When we all got onto the roof, we looked around. The entire campus was visible, lit by the light of the monstrous visual arts building to the front of us. My friends Sam and Andy pointed to a smaller building perched between our roof and the lower roof of the conjoined English building. There were chairs on the smaller structure's roof; someone had already thought of our idea. Shakily we climbed up, any false step might have easily killed us. We filled the rooftop and once again looked around.

I might have gasped at the sight, I really can't remember. I could see all of New Cross spanning in front of me, twinkling gently in the night. My breath was stolen in the night as I turned around, trying to take in everything at once. My best friend took out his mobile to take pictures; I noticed some of the other boys do the same. Even in May I was still amazed by the dependency of Europeans to their cellular technology. The sparrows were singing their confusing night-song, many nights had been spent on the curb of Loring Hall, attempting to figure out

why birds would start singing at eleven at night. We could see the sparkling lights of the London Eye and the quiet majesty of St. Paul's rising like solemn specters in the night to greet us. To the right of us we could see the skyscrapers of Canary Wharf so easily. They reminded me of my childhood in New York, gazing rapturously at the monoliths of Manhattan. For the first time London felt whole to me, not just a city of scattered villages. It was like the city was still throbbing and moving while we were standing still. Time seemed to clash with itself in that moment, as if it couldn't decide whether to rest or march onwards.

I looked up and saw how clear and bright the night sky was. London wasn't as cloudy and bleak as it was always portrayed. It wasn't the air so much as the sense of its own past that made the air seem so heavy. The stars shined proudly in the sky and I tried to remember the little that I learned with my passing obsession with astronomy. I tried pointing out Ursa Minor to my friend Andy, but he couldn't see it. He told me that the sky was much clearer in Devon, where there was less pollution. I added this to the spotted tapestry of facts that made up my mental image of England and her regions. Soon we all grew silent, overwhelmed with the sight. I sat down, looked around and saw home rising up from every direction, a home that allowed both a now and a future. And I was experiencing it with part of a large family forged in months of false steps, long nights and shared weeks. After awhile though, I had to make my way back to Earth. It was easy to take London for granted once I learned the city so intimately, easy to ignore the parts that I loved as I shied away from the ever fearful tourist identity. I played it cool, became the ideal Goldsmiths student so that I might understand English life just a bit more. But after that night, I learned to not only love my city, but to respect it on its own terms. I, after all, was never very far from life north of the river Thames.

Senator Paul Simon Award

Arcadia's creation of an integrative learning environment infused with international and multicultural experiences has been recognized by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Arcadia is one of five winners of the prestigious Senator Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization.

In recent weeks, Arcadia also was ranked fourth in the nation based on its percentage of undergraduate students studying abroad. Open Doors 2005, the Institute of International Education's (IIE) annual census, lists Arcadia University in fourth place—nationally—among Masters Institutions ranked by “undergraduate participation in Study Abroad” in 2003-04.* The U.S. Congress has declared 2006 the Year of Study Abroad.

Also receiving the 2006 Paul Simon Award are: Concordia College (Moorhead), Earlham College, Michigan State University, and Purdue University. All five will be featured in the NAFSA report Internationalizing the Campus 2006: Profiles of

Success at Colleges and Universities, to be published this fall. The awardees also will be recognized at a special ceremony on Wednesday, May 24, during the NAFSA annual conference in Montréal.

Named for the late U.S. Sen. Paul Simon, the award recognizes innovative and creative efforts in campus internationalization. Simon was a strong advocate for international education throughout his career. His leadership in this area was especially evident in his robust support, along with Sen. David Boren, for the creation of the National Security Education Program, which addresses critical national security deficiencies in language and cultural expertise. He believed strongly in the need for America's future leaders to know and understand the broader world.

**The Open Doors calculation is based on the number of undergraduate study abroad students from Arcadia's annual response to the Open Doors survey divided by the number of undergraduate degrees conferred (from IPEDS). Arcadia had 217 undergraduates abroad in 2003-04 and awarded 304 undergraduate degrees in 2003.*

Study Abroad: One Student's View

Kathryn May

Undergraduate Student

Editor's note: What follows is Kathryn May's reflections on study abroad. She was asked by Jan Finn, Director of International Services, to write about her experiences for a new brochure on study abroad. The piece is presented using the formatting given to it by Kathryn.

Study abroad isn't just about going to another country for a couple months. *It is so much more than that.* It's about **packing** up your **life** into **TWO BAGS** and leaving everything and everyone that is familiar to you. It's about **taking risks** and *pushing yourself* out of your comfort zone. It's about becoming **FULLY IMMERSSED** in another system of education. It's

about a place, previously unfamiliar to you, becoming your **HOME**. It's about *traveling* and seeing places you've never seen. It's about *meeting people* from all over the world and learning about them, and at the very same time *learning about yourself*. It's about learning to live in and become part of **another culture**. It's about that **sense of belonging** when you finally know your way around and have developed a network of *friends* you grow to **love**. It's about **BEGINNINGS** and **endings**. It's about *SHARING* all of this with everyone you know whether they stayed here or had adventures around the world of their own. *It's about coming **HOME** with so much more than you left with.*

A Visit to Romania

Hugh H. Grady

Professor of English

I visited Romania, with the help of a Federal Assistance Award from Nov. 27-Dec. 2, 2005. In Bucharest I participated in a conference sponsored by the New Europe College, "The Lures and Ruses of Modernity," where I presented a paper on Monday, Nov. 28 entitled "Shakespeare's View on Modernity, and What It Means Today," and I chaired another of the conference sessions on Tuesday, Nov. 29. The next day, Nov. 30 I gave a lecture before faculty and students of Al. I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania entitled "Emerson, Presentism, and America's

Shakespeare." I presented the same lecture to English faculty and students on Dec. 2, 2005 at Ovidius University, in Constanta, Romania.

The paper on Shakespeare and Modernity highlighted ways in which, in spite of the incompleteness of the modernity of Shakespeare's London, Shakespeare created "thought experiments" across a wide range of his works in which he explored such aspects of modernity as the morally corrosive effects of autonomous rationality, politics, and market economics, while exploring the possibilities of a historically new category of the aesthetic embodied in his works.

The paper on Emerson, Presentism, and America's Shakespeare explored the ways that Shakespeare was appropriated in the United States disencumbered of his associations with British nationalism. Ralph Waldo Emerson, who lectured on Shakespeare more than once and wrote a crucial chapter on him in his important *Representative Men*, was a key figure in this process. Emerson argued that Shakespeare was only being properly appreciated in the nineteenth century, in the wake of the interpretations of him by Goethe and Coleridge, and thus exemplifies the critical procedures I (and a number of colleagues) have been calling "presentist criticism"—interpretation anchoring the text in our own present rather than in its moment of historical production.

In all three presentations, the liveliest discussions from the audience came from varied responses to the ideas of critical presentism. Listeners debated its merits, some praising its potential, others fearing it would inevitably politicize art. A young student in Iasi particularly articulated this last response, and I and the audience discussed for several moments the desirability (or not) of keeping art completely separate from politics—as in, for example, discussions of anti-Semitism in evaluating Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.

Overall what was accomplished was a sharing of my approach to Shakespeare and Shakespearean interpretation to a Romanian audience. For the faculty, this meant increased exposure to an American version of cultural materialism that differs in some important points from its British cousin. For students it meant learning about the central position of Shakespeare in American cultural life (academic and theatrical, especially) and of an American approach to the controversial and historically fraught issue of the political dimensions of literary studies.

In addition, I met many scholars, both Romanian and European, had an exchange of views and of writings, and made friends that I hope will prove long-range.

Photo Gallery

From time to time, *Global Matters* will publish photographs submitted by Arcadia faculty, staff, and students. The following photograph of a piece of the Berlin Wall that now sits at the entrance to the Imperial War Museum in London was taken by Danielle Green of the Center for Education Abroad during London Preview 2005.

