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International Student Integration into the Canadian University: A Post-World War Two Historical Case Study¹

James D. Cameron

Abstract

This study claims that the scholars of both Canadian immigration and the social history of student life have neglected to examine the international student presence in Canada, increasingly important at its universities since 1945. Using a historical case study approach and based on a corpus of sources such as student, staff and faculty interviews, student publications, and university documentary and statistical records, this article, as an initial exploration, traces and analyzes the experiences of international students who studied at St. Francis Xavier University in Atlantic Canada since World War II.

The analytical tool of integration central to modern immigration studies focuses this exploration of the degree of international student incorporation into the university among three identifiable groups — American students, Coady International Institute participants, and overseas students. The article highlights important factors that seemed to either inhibit or further international student integration such as the students' national-linguistic backgrounds, their individual personalities, the policies and practices of their host institutions, their programs of study, their length of stay, the social context, federal and provincial government policies, and international political developments. The analysis also raises a series of critical questions about the historical experience of international students and demonstrates the need for further investigation at other universities.

Introduction

The founding in 1950 of a national organization called "Friendly Relations With Overseas Students" in Toronto was an implicit recognition of the growing importance of international students in post-war Canada and of the need to help them successfully integrate into their chosen college or university and into Canadian society.² While international students had been studying at Canadian universities in

¹ I am grateful to the St. Francis Xavier University Council for Research for the financial support that made this project possible, to Dr. John Sears, former StFX Academic Vice-President, for his insightful comments, and to the anonymous readers whose assessments helped to deepen my reflections on the experiences of international students in Canada.

² See "Friendly Relations With Overseas Students," Constitution, May 1950, RG 25, External Affairs, vol. 6502, file 8260-40, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Ottawa, Ontario.

small numbers since the 1800s, the last half of the twentieth century witnessed a vast increase from about 6,000 in 1950 to around 59,000 in 2001.³ These students, now recognized to be critical to the internationalization of Canadian universities,⁴ to the country's cultural diversity, its educational enrichment, institutional revenues, and the Canadian economy broadly, have been confronted by huge personal hurdles and untold hardships in post-war Canada. Since the 1980s, many studies by individual scholars as well as national organizations such as the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) have highlighted the special challenges they face.⁵ In 1980, Ruth Groberman wrote, "Canada is not a haven for International Students — as a country we do very little to encourage their presence here or to welcome them to our society."⁶ A more recent collaborative study published in 1998 noted that "positive changes" had been made but "many challenges remain" to be met if Canada and its universities are to give international students "the warmest welcome and the best experience possible."⁷

Literature

In spite of the popularity of social history since the 1960s and a growing literature on the origins and experiences of Canadian university students,⁸ little scholarly work has been devoted to the history of international student migration to Canadian universities. Some marginal references to them are made in selected institutional histories of Canadian universities, notably John G. Reid's *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963* (1984) and Martin L. Friedland's *The University of Toronto: A History* (2002). However, these references are always short and specific to the institution. To date, most Canadian university histories have entirely neglected international students. Almost all of the

³ Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *Annual Report 1950*, 21; and Priorities, Planning and Research Branch, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), *Foreign Students in Canada 1980-2001* (Ottawa, 2003), Annex A: Foreign Students by Level of Study. Available at: http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/research/papers/foreignstudents/students.html#_Toc32910760.

⁴ Jane Knight defines internationalization as "the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching/training, research, and service functions of a university or college or technical institute" ("A Shared Vision? Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Internationalization of Higher Education in Canada," *Journal of Studies in International Education* 1, 1 [Spring 1997]: 29).

⁵ Edward A. Holdaway, Wendy M. Bryan, and Wilfred H. Allan, "International University Students in Canada: Obtaining the Information Needed for Policy Making," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education* XVIII, 3 (1988): 13-29; Karen McBride, *A Warm Welcome? Recruitment and Admission of International Students to Canadian Universities: Policies, Procedures and Capacity* (Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), November 1998); AUCC and the Canadian Education Centre Network, *Opening the Door to International Students: An International Comparison of Immigration Policies and Practices* (Ottawa: Centre 2000); Christopher G. Cunningham, *The Integration of International Students on Canadian Post-Secondary Campuses* (Ottawa: Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), Research Series, 1991); and George J. Sefa Dei, *The Social Reality of International Post-Secondary Students in Canada* (Ottawa: CBIE, Research Series, 1992).

⁶ Ruth Groberman, "The Foreign Student Experience in Canada Today," in K. Victor Ujimoto and Gordon Hirabayashi, eds., *Visible Minorities and Multiculturalism: Asians in Canada* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1980), 155.

⁷ McBride, *A Warm Welcome?*, 44-45.

⁸ University histories and thematic studies since the 1970s have generally paid close attention to the student experience. See: Charles M. Johnston, *McMaster University: Volume 1* and *The Toronto Years. Volume 2* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976, 1981); Stanley B. Frost, *McGill University for the Advancement of Learning. Volume II, 1895-1971* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984); Frederick G. Gibson, "To serve and yet be free": *Queen's University, 1917-1961* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983); John G. Reid, *Mount Allison University: A History, to 1963* (Toronto: Published for Mount Allison University by the University of Toronto Press, 1984); George E. MacDonald, *The History of St. Dunstan's University 1855-1956* (Charlottetown, PEI: Board of Governors of St. Dunstan's University and Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation, 1989); Paul Axelrod and John G. Reid, eds., *Youth, University and Canadian Society: Essays in the Social History of Higher Education* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989); Paul Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada During the Thirties* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990); Christopher Nicholl, *Bishop's University, 1843-1970* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); J.M. Bumsted, *The University of Manitoba: An Illustrated History* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2001); and Martin L. Friedland's *The University of Toronto: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

published research about them, extending from the early 1970s to now, is devoted to contemporary trends and developments, and not to historical study.⁹ Moreover, the historical literature on Canadian immigration has tended to overlook them as well, since foreign students have been traditionally considered as temporary migrants to Canada rather than immigrants.¹⁰

The Ideal of Integration and Its Challenges

During the post-war period, Canada shifted its approach to immigrants from "Anglo-assimilation" to an official policy of multiculturalism as announced by the federal Liberal party under Pierre Trudeau in 1971.¹¹ Instead of requiring immigrants to renounce their "foreign" culture, Canada thereafter tried to value "the various aspects of the ethnic-minority heritage as positive contributions to the broader society."¹² The social ideal now is to integrate or incorporate immigrant groups and individuals into a larger social group "as an integral part of that unit." The process involves reciprocity: immigrants must surrender some of their ways while the host society "must meet the minorities part way and give up something to accommodate them." For all migrant groups in Canada, including international students, this means their "inclusion in a community whose structure and culture has been historically established by a different ethnic group or groups."¹³ It is difficult for host individuals and institutions to accommodate to the newcomers, just as it is a challenge for immigrants to accommodate to their new social reality in Canada. Despite the multiculturalism ideal, Canadian institutions have been slow to put it into practice.¹⁴

This historical study is a provisional exploration of the social incorporation of international students at one Atlantic Canadian university — St. Francis Xavier University (StFX) in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, post-World War II. Its findings suggest that the historical challenges to integration for international students in Canada have varied, depending on several key factors: their national-linguistic backgrounds, their individual personalities, the policies and practices of their host

⁹ For examples, see: John De Vries and Stephen Richer, *The 1988 Survey of International Students in Canadian Universities* (Ottawa: CBIE and the Department of the Secretary of State, Canada, 1988); Nancy Arthur, "Counselling Issues with International Students," *Canadian Journal of Counselling* 31, 4 (October 1997): 259-74; Jane Knight, "A Shared Vision? Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Internationalization of Higher Education in Canada," *Journal of Studies in International Education* 1, 1 (Spring 1997): 27-44; Nicolas Racine, Paul Y. Villeneuve, and Marius Theriault, "Attracting Foreign Students: The Case of Two Universities in Québec," *Journal of Studies in International Education* 7, 3 (2003): 241-52; Alice Schutz and Merle Richards, "International Students' Experience of Graduate Study in Canada," *Journal of the International Society for Teacher Education* 7, 1 (January 2003): 56-63; and Geoffrey Cudmore, "Globalization, Internationalization, and the Recruitment of International Students in Higher Education, and in the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology," *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 35, 1 (2005): 37-60.

¹⁰ More recently, governments have begun to view international students as "a source of highly qualified people for Canada's labour market," a policy that raises issues about encouraging a "brain drain" from developing countries and the level of our commitment to help them "build capacity." See AUCC, "International Student Recruitment" (Ottawa, 2002) available at: http://www.aucc.ca/pdf/english/reports/2002/innovation/intlstudent_e.PDF. The recent memorandums of agreement struck between the provinces and the federal government that permit international students to remain in Canada after graduation undertaking study-related work for up to two years are motivated in part by the desire for highly qualified immigrants. See CIC, "Canada—Nova Scotia Memorandum of Understanding on Post-Graduation Employment for Foreign Students" (Ottawa, 29 April 2004) at: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/policy/fed-prov/can-ns-mou.html>.

¹¹ House of Commons (Ottawa), *Debates*, 1971, VIII, 8582.

¹² Isajiw Wsevoid, "Social Incorporation," in Paul R. Magosci, ed., *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 1192.

¹³ Wsevoid, "Social Incorporation," 1192.

¹⁴ The host society often views successful integration as assimilation or conformity to Canadian society. Peter S. Li writes: "In this way, the study of 'successful' adjustment is based on the expectation of immigrants becoming similar to native-born Canadians, and rarely based on the understanding that Canadian society and its social institutions also need to accommodate to immigrants and their needs" (Peter S. Li, *Destination Canada: Immigration Debates and Issues* [Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2003], 52).

institutions, their programs of study, their length of stay, the local social context, federal and provincial government policies, and even international political developments. Apparently, overseas international students in particular, both at StFX and elsewhere, have traditionally faced a heavy imbalance of power in their relations with their host institutions that has often rendered them voiceless and vulnerable.¹⁵

Methodology and Sources

This is an institutional, historical case study that assesses the extent of international student integration into the university.¹⁶ Three distinct student groups were identified and the longitudinal analyses are presented here consecutively. Indicators of integration include: participation in on-campus employment, athletics, student government, student journalism, associational life, social events, special programs, and student services; friendships with Canadian students; expressions of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the institutional response to international students; and institutional policies and practices that facilitate the recruitment, admission, and integration of international students.¹⁷ Where possible, these indicators of integration were analyzed using a variety of sources including oral interviews with current and former administrators, staff, faculty and students,¹⁸ and reviews of the student newspaper, alumni news, statistical records, university calendars, and selected administrative papers and reports. Federal and provincial government records, university histories, and studies of international students in Canada have also been used to establish the historical context and to make some tentative comparisons. The representativeness of this study will only be determined by further historical case studies of international student incorporation at other universities in Canada.

Case Study: Institutional Background

In 1945, StFX was a small Catholic, undergraduate, residential, liberal arts college nearly one hundred years old. Bishop Colin F. MacKinnon had founded it in 1853 to supply the urgent clerical needs of the expanding Diocese of Antigonish, established in 1844 to encompass the seven counties of eastern Nova Scotia including Cape Breton. The college also became an avenue into the secular professions — law, medicine, and education — for a minority of ambitious males from its largely Scottish Catholic constituency. StFX was chartered to grant degrees in 1866 and after 1880 it became a residential college. From 1900, its prescribed liberal arts curriculum was expanded to include engineering and the sciences. In 1928, the college initiated its now famous extension program. Under the directorship of Dr. Moses Coady, it promoted adult education and stimulated community renewal and development among the farmers, fishermen, and industrial workers of eastern Nova Scotia.¹⁹ By 1945, the college had twenty-seven faculty and about 460 full-time undergraduate students. Their small campus of nine modest buildings was

¹⁵ Dei, *The Social Reality of International Post-Secondary Students in Canada*, 4. To some extent, the American students appear to be an exception to this finding.

¹⁶ In 1991, Christopher G. Cunningham did a national study of international student integration using survey data collected from post-secondary institutions. He focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the institutional delivery of services to foreign students. See *The Integration of International Students on Canadian Post-Secondary Campuses* (Ottawa: CBIE, 1991).

¹⁷ Another possible measure of integration, or at least of academic integration and success, would be the program completion rates for international students at StFX. Unfortunately, these data are not available.

¹⁸ Oral interviews with current faculty, staff, and students are identified by number rather than name in order to protect their anonymity.

¹⁹ Michael R. Welton, *Little Mosie From the Margaree: A Biography of Moses Michael Coady* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 2001).

situated on Antigonish's south side, side-by-side with another Roman Catholic institution, Mount Saint Bernard College (the Mount). This affiliated school for women, founded in 1883, was run by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame.²⁰ By 1951, StFX's Catholic constituency totalled 120,387, about 53 percent of the population of eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.²¹

International students had first come to StFX in the 1800s.²² Before World II, they usually accounted for less than 5 percent of student enrolment. After the war, the international student presence noticeably increased, as it did on many other Canadian university campuses.²³ The three distinct streams of StFX foreign students are examined in the following order: American students, the Coady International Institute participants, and overseas international students. Ultimately, each group has experienced various degrees of internal group cohesion and integration with the institution and local community.

International Students at StFX: The Americans

As Table 1 reveals, the American student enrolment at StFX was substantial during the 1950s and 1960s, ranging from about 8 to 12 percent of the student body. However, since the early 1970s, the numbers consistently declined to only 28 students or 0.6 percent of the total full-time enrolment of 4,337 in 2005-6. Following national and regional enrolment trends, other international student groups, for example Asians, have eclipsed the dominance of American student enrolments.²⁴ These students — largely but not exclusively male — traditionally came to StFX from the adjacent New England states of Maine and Massachusetts. Commonly their religious affiliation was Roman Catholic and their ethnicity Irish, Scottish, Quebecois, or Acadian. Often their ancestors had migrated from Atlantic Canada or Quebec to find work in the rapidly industrializing New England states.²⁵ Some combination of the following factors likely attracted them to StFX — recruitment by alumni, faculty and administrators,²⁶ family connections in the region, lower tuition fees, geographical proximity, or StFX's Roman Catholicism. Explaining the decline in American enrolments at StFX is difficult. It was probably related to multiple factors such as the distraction of the Vietnam War in the late sixties and early seventies, the attenuation of New England family links with the Maritime provinces, and a lessening of importance given to religiously-based higher education.²⁷

²⁰ Margaret MacDonell, *Mount Saint Bernard College, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, 1897-1947* (Montreal: Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame, 1998).

²¹ *Census of Canada* (Ottawa), 1951, I, Table 40, 1-3.

²² The first recorded foreign student at StFX was John Henry Joanning of Westphalia, Germany who attended in 1857-58 just five years after the college opened. "Report of St. Francis Xavier's College, Antigonish," 1 January 1857-1 January 1858, 9, St. Francis Xavier University Archives (StFXUA), Antigonish.

²³ Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, witnessed a proportional increase of international students from 4 to 7 percent in the 1950s. The University of Toronto saw rising numbers too as did Mount Allison in Sackville, New Brunswick. See: Gibson, "To serve and yet be free", 318; Friedland, *The University of Toronto*, 394; and Reid, *Mount Allison University*, 266.

²⁴ In the Atlantic region, Chinese students accounted for 5 percent of international student enrolments in 1990; by 2001, they comprised 15 percent. Priorities, Planning and Research Branch, CIC, *Foreign Students in Canada 1980-2001* (Ottawa, 2003), Annex C, Tables 4 and 17. Available at:

http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/research/papers/foreignstudents/students.html#_Toc32910760.

²⁵ Patricia A. Thornton, "The Problem of Out-Migration from Atlantic Canada, 1871-1921: A New Look," *Acadiensis* XV, 1 (Autumn 1985): 3-34.

²⁶ For example, John "Packy" McFarland sent nine athletes to StFX when he taught in Maine after graduating from StFX. Later, as a coach at StFX, he recruited in Springfield and Worcester, Massachusetts, and Portland and Bangor, Maine. *StFX Alumni News* (Spring 1993): 9.

²⁷ For an exploration of the decline of American student enrolments, see *StFX Alumni News* (Spring 1993): 12-15.

Table 1. International Student Enrolments at St. Francis Xavier University, 1950-2006

| Year | Total ^(a) | American/ Percentage of Total Student Enrolment | Coady ^(b) | Overseas | Total International Students |
|---------|----------------------|---|----------------------|------------|------------------------------|
| 1950-51 | 870 | 77 (8.9%) | - | 16 (1.8%) | 93 (10.7%) |
| 1960-61 | 1,351 | 165 (12.2%) | 21 (1.6%) | 29 (2.1%) | 215 (15.9%) |
| 1970-71 | 2,436 | 81 (3.3%) | 80 (3.3%) | 37 (1.5%) | 198 (8.1%) |
| 1980-81 | 2,240 | 87 (3.9%) | 52 (2.3%) | 116 (5.2%) | 255 (11.4%) |
| 1989-90 | 2,841 | 37 (1.3%) | 65 (2.3%) | 156 (5.5%) | 258 (9.1 %) |
| 2000-01 | 3,550 | 21 (0.6%) | 46 (1.3%) | 58 (1.6%) | 125 (3.5 %) |
| 2005-06 | 4,337 | 28 (0.6%) | 34 (0.8%) | 99 (2.3%) | 161 (3.7%) |

Sources: StFX *Calendars*, enrolment statistics in RG 44/2/3187-3190, RG 10-1/4/2037, and #95-72-660, box 21, StFXUA, Banner database, and Technical Support Group.

(a) Includes full-time undergraduate, graduate, and Coady students

(b) Includes only Coady students registered in the diploma program

Of the three groups of international students at StFX since World War II, the Americans integrated most readily and fully into the overall university community. They participated in athletics, such as basketball and football,²⁸ and other extracurricular activities.²⁹ Some Americans also served in student government. A number of graduates from the 1950s and 1960s returned to fill faculty and support staff positions at the university for the long term.³⁰ American graduates formed alumni association chapters and provided moral and financial support to the university. In 1949, President Patrick J. Nicholson expressed his qualified praise for the American students: "We have the maximum USA registration of our history this year with a total of around 60, but of these one-half come from Portland, Maine. We feel we must continue playing ball with Maine, but other applicants from the US must go through a sifting process. The Portland boys are really a superior group, and on the average the lads from the US are really excellent."³¹ They also seemed to coalesce well as a subgroup within

²⁸ American football was introduced to StFX in 1954. *Xaverian*, 9 October 1959, 4. The *Xaverian* was the official student newspaper at the time.

²⁹ Professor John O'Donnell, interview with author, 29 January 1993, StFX.

³⁰ Examples include: John O'Donnell, professor of music (1962-2000), native of Portland, Maine, StFX class of 1958; Patrick Walsh, professor of English (1963-1999), native of North Adams, Massachusetts, StFX class of 1958; John McFarland, Human Kinetics (1960-2000), coach and athletic director, from Portland, Maine, graduated in 1956; Ernie Foshay, also a native of Portland, Maine, graduate of 1961, financial aid officer, international student advisor, and director of counseling services; Janet Stark, University Registrar (2001-present), native of New Jersey, graduated in 1965; and Walter Kontak, professor of political science (1952-1989), class of 1949, and native of New York City.

³¹ President Patrick J. Nicholson to Rev. Donald F. Campbell, 22 March 1949, RG 5/11/1541, President Nicholson Papers (PNP), StFXUA.

the larger body of Canadian students. An American Club, first organized in 1910, allowed students to convene and read American newspapers, discuss current events, organize an American Thanksgiving dinner and even occasionally hire an "American bus" for the return trip home to New England at the end of the school year.³²

The successful integration of the students from the American northeast at StFX is not difficult to explain. They shared a geographic/linguistic affinity with Maritime Canada. Some students had family and ancestral ties in the region and were familiar with it through these links. Many shared the institution's Roman Catholic faith and participated in its common religious celebrations. In addition, American popular culture and consumer products were well-known among the Canadian students through television, radio, newspapers, and retail stores. In effect, the Americans shared a common western liberal democratic capitalist tradition with their Canadian counterparts. Finally, American students participated enthusiastically in sports common to both countries. Some have even been recruited to play football and basketball for the varsity teams. It has been claimed that StFX's superiority in basketball was due to the large presence of American students.³³ These students' experiences illustrate the observation made by Popadiuk and Arthur that "international students from source countries that share common language, cultural norms, and demographic characteristics such as race, are less likely to experience serious culture shock associated with cross-cultural transitions."³⁴

Yet, American students were not Canadian. Their integration occasionally faced some strains and stresses. They had different origins, accents, cultures, and political interests. An incident in 1959 revealed some cleavage between the two groups along these national lines. American students had flown the American flag at an StFX football game. In a letter to the editor of the student newspaper, the *Xaverian*, this act was condemned by "devoted Canadians" who asked rhetorically if Canada had just become the fifty-first state. Another letter, signed by "A True Canadian," rejected flying foreign flags and urged that only the Canadian flag be flown at varsity competitions. A response, signed by "Very Devoted Americans," claimed that the United States was the best nation, since it had won its independence in 1776, while Canada had not. To add a little salt to the wound, the American students observed, "we wouldn't want you for our 51st state, until you show yourself a nation worth respecting." The short dispute ended with a diplomatic *Xaverian* editor reminding the Canadian students that Americans had been important to the financial survival of StFX since the beginning of the century and for decades had comprised a significant minority of the student body.³⁵

While the flag controversy at StFX might seem trivial, it probably stemmed from some level of latent anti-Americanism. J.L. Granatstein has defined this sentiment as "a distaste for and a fear of American military, political, cultural and economic activities that, while widespread in the population, is usually benign unless and until it is exploited by business, political and cultural groups for their own ends."³⁶ The 1950s witnessed an upsurge of anti-Americanism in Canada, rooted in the growing dominance of the United States in the western world during the Cold War era, the excesses of the McCarthyite hunt for communists, and Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's prickly nationalism. Anti-Americanism gained even more force during the 1960s and 1970s as Canadian nationalism surged, the Vietnam War provoked protests, and resentment was stoked by the alleged "Americanization of the

³² *Xaverian*, 9 November 1946, 1; 23 November 1951, 3; 2 December 1955, 1; 23 November 1956, 2; and *StFX Alumni News* (Spring 1993): 12.

³³ *Xaverian*, 9 October 1959, 4.

³⁴ Natalee Popadiuk and Nancy Arthur, "Counselling International Students in Canadian Schools," *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling* 26, 2 (June 2004): 128.

³⁵ The exchange of letters to the editor can be found in: the 1959 *Xaverian*, 9 October, 2; 16 October, 5; 23 October, 4-5; and 7 November, 5.

³⁶ J.L. Granatstein, *Yankee Go Home? Canadians and Anti-Americanism* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1996), 4.

Canadian universities."³⁷ Canadian universities were certainly the scene of sharp protests against US involvement in Vietnam and disputes about the impact of American professors taking jobs in Canada. More investigation is required to determine the extent of the anti-American climate on university campuses and the impact it has had on the integration of American students studying at Canadian universities since the 1950s.

Two years after its introduction in 1973, the federal Non-Immigrant Entry Records and Employment Visa regulation threatened to weaken the integration of the American students at StFX. The *Xaverian* carried the headline, "Controversy Mounts over Foreign Student Employment." A week earlier, the StFX Students' Union president, Mike Cahill, had fired the campus police chief, fifteen other campus police, and twenty percent of the staff of the Bloomfield Centre (the Student Union building) on advice he had received from the local representative from the Department of Manpower and Immigration. All of these students were Americans, and they were released from campus employment "pending verification of their work visa status," since the regulation required foreign students to obtain working visas before accepting employment. Although the Students' Union executive had apparently been reminded about the new regulation early in the 1974 academic year, the Americans hired on campus were in violation. The issue was soon resolved when Manpower and Immigration allowed the Students' Union to rehire the American students while their work visa applications were being processed because of their "special circumstances of university employment."³⁸ A few years later, the provincial government's foreign student differential fee in 1979 would also remind American students of their foreigner status; but on the whole, these were relatively minor disturbances of a generally robust and healthy integration of American students at StFX post-World War II.

The Coady International Student Participants

Another group of international students present at StFX since 1959 registered through the Coady International Institute. Before Coady had been established, a small stream of overseas foreign students and observers intent on the study of community development had been attracted to study the philosophy and methods of StFX's famous Extension Department. Extension at StFX had been founded in 1928 under the directorship of Dr. Moses Coady. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, it had developed a successful program of local community mobilization through study clubs for adults which ushered into existence a range of credit unions and cooperatives in the Maritimes. It was called the Antigonish Movement.³⁹ After the war, in the context of the Cold War and Third World decolonization, students came from less developed, often recently emancipated countries, such as

³⁷ Granatstein, *Yankee Go Home?*, 192-215.

³⁸ *Xaverian*, 31 January 1975.

³⁹ Key studies of the Antigonish Movement include: Moses Coady, *Masters of Their Own Destiny* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939); Alexander Laidlaw, *The Campus and the Community: The Global Impact of the Antigonish Movement* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1961); Daniel W. McInnes, "Clerics, Fishermen, Farmers and Workers: The Antigonish Movement and Identity in Eastern Nova Scotia, 1928-1939" (PhD thesis, McMaster University, 1978); and Michael R. Welton, *Little Mosie From the Margaree: A Biography of Moses Michael Coady* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 2001). University outreach and public service was not unique to StFX. See James Shute, "From Here to There and Back Again: International Outreach in the Canadian University," in Sherry L. Bond and Jean-Pierre Lemasson, eds., *A New World of Knowledge: Canadian Universities and Globalization* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1999), 21-24.

India, to observe the Extension Department in action. Most stayed only a short time, while some enrolled in StFX's Social Leadership program or its shorter certificate courses.⁴⁰

Well over 100 students came during the 1950s — about 30 percent from Asia, 10 percent from Africa, and 60 percent from the Caribbean and Latin America. A substantial minority were Roman Catholic priests.⁴¹ In 1955, adult students, some of whom were government officials, came from India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Burma, Jamaica, the Netherlands, and even from the United States, for example from Alabama and Louisiana. Commonly, these students were somewhat older than the regular undergraduates and were sponsored by an organization such as UNESCO, the Colombo Plan, Canada's Department of Trade and Commerce, the International Labour Association, the International Cooperative Alliance, the United States government, or the Knights of Columbus.⁴² Dr. Coady, now Director Emeritus, hoped their studies of Extension and the Antigonish Movement would make them effective warriors in the Cold War fight against Communism although he was sceptical about success in Latin America.⁴³

Whether these adult students became committed anti-Communists is extremely difficult to establish. It is also difficult to assess their degree of integration into StFX and the local community during the later 1940s and 1950s.⁴⁴ Those whose stay was short had little time to be incorporated into university life. Yet, a group of them did form a new society called the "International Cooperative Club" in 1947. It was formed to elicit interest in adult education, to provide a friendly place for foreign students, and to promote social awareness and leadership.⁴⁵ As the students were older, foreign, usually non-white, and in a program separate from the regular undergraduates, they faced special challenges to successful integration, even though the campus sociology was close-knit and student enrolments were generally under one thousand.

In particular, while observing the impact of the Extension Department, these students faced challenges travelling in the Maritime Canada region. Monsignor Michael J. MacKinnon, Dr. Coady's successor as Director of Extension in the 1950s, claimed that "discrimination flourished" in parts of Nova Scotia. In October 1952, under the Colombo Plan, the federal government sent five people representing the governments of India, Nigeria, South Korea, and Formosa to StFX for special studies. MacKinnon was dismayed to find that, in certain small towns and villages, he could not acquire meals or accommodation for his party of sophisticated foreign government officials. In subsequent years, he avoided these localities.⁴⁶ Evidently, many local whites made no distinction between the blacks of Nova Scotia and those "from away." From the time of the Black Loyalists, people of colour in Nova Scotia had been victims of racism.⁴⁷ As these attitudes only began to change in the 1960s, black

⁴⁰ President Patrick J. Nicholson, Commencement Speech, 1947, RG 5/11/14028, PNP, StFXUA. The Social Leadership program was first offered in 1941 originally as a two year program, but after 1954, it was compressed into one calendar year with eight months of classroom study and four months of fieldwork.

⁴¹ This enrolment profile is based on a review of the published student registration lists found in the StFX *Calendars*, 1945-1960.

⁴² President Hugh J. Somers to Right Rev. A.S. MacKenzie, 6 February 1960, RG 5/12/179-81, President Hugh J. Somers Papers (PSP), StFXUA.

⁴³ Dr. Coady to Gregory T. Feeney, 13 April 1956, RG 30-2/1/4578, Director Coady Papers, Extension Collection, StFXUA.

⁴⁴ World War II vets who enrolled at StFX during the late 1940s were also facing their own challenges of integration. See James D. Cameron, *For the People: A History of St Francis Xavier University* (Kingston/Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 268-269.

⁴⁵ *Halifax Herald*, 31 December 1947; and StFX *Calendar*, 1954-55, 28.

⁴⁶ Monsignor Michael J. MacKinnon, untitled typescript, 1959, MG 10-30, MacKinnon Papers, the Beaton Institute, Sydney, Cape Breton.

⁴⁷ Bridglal Pachai, *Beneath the Clouds of the Promised Land: The Survival of Nova Scotia Blacks. Volume II: 1800-1989* (Halifax: The Black Educators Association of Nova Scotia, 1991), 205, 308.

students at StFX and in the local district were occasionally the targets of the more heavily entrenched racism.

As with anti-Americanism, the impact of racism on the admission and incorporation of foreign students at Canadian universities needs investigation from a historical perspective. Contemporary studies have certainly claimed that racism is entrenched and invidious, especially in its effects on visible minorities.⁴⁸ More broadly, historians are demonstrating its impact on the history of Canadian law, employment, and social life.⁴⁹ While universities have often proclaimed liberalism and tolerance, they too are part of the regional social fabric and reflect regional attitudes and cultural values. Some personal testimonies and university histories have revealed the presence of racism within the university setting, demonstrating the need for a broad historical probe.⁵⁰ A key question is this: How have we treated international students of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds in Canadian venues that have traditionally claimed to be liberal and tolerant?

Students of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds have certainly been present at StFX at Coady. Its origins were rooted in Dr. Coady's vision for adult education, the special needs of the adult students who were coming to StFX in the post-war era, and the commitment of both the Bishop of the Diocese of Antigonish and the president of the university to the cause of international development. Coady declared in 1947 that "we have definitely decided that our only hope here is to raise about a million or more, build an International House, and staff the place with competent professors to take care of courses, short and long, for people from everywhere."⁵¹ Unfortunately, "a million or more" failed to materialize,⁵² so financial stringency delayed the realization of Coady's vision until shortly after his death in 1959. By then, the university's president, Rev. Dr. Hugh J. Somers (1954-1964) was convinced that problems faced by the overseas international students with residence space, courses with undergraduates, and language, including the need for private tutoring, demanded a separate institute with a residence, special courses, and full-time staff. As a result, the StFX Board of Governors established the Coady International Institute in 1959, and through the 1960s, they secured a small number of buildings for the new work dedicated to international development. In his first report, the founding director Rev. Francis Smyth (1960-1970) underlined that the new program would be "a specialized training in social leadership" rooted in the Antigonish Movement but adjusted according

⁴⁸ One conclusion of Brian J. O'Neill's and Shankar A. Yelaja's 1994 review of research on multiculturalism in post-secondary education was this: "Racism emerges most consistently as a significant concern within post-secondary institutions." See: "Multiculturalism in Post-Secondary Education: 1970-91," in J.W. Berry and J.A. Laponce, eds., *Ethnicity and Culture in Canada: The Research Landscape* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 489; and Frances Henry and Carol Tator, "Racism and the University," *Ethnic Studies* XXVI, 3 (1994): 74-90.

⁴⁹ Examples include: Patricia E. Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1989); and *The Oriental Question: Consolidating a White Man's Province, 1914-41* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003); Constance Blackhouse, *Colour-Coded: A Legal History of Racism in Canada, 1900-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); and James W. St. G. Walker, "Race," *Rights and the Law in the Supreme Court of Canada: Historical Case Studies* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997).

⁵⁰ See: Dei, *The Social Reality of International Post-Secondary Students in Canada*, 5-9; Friedland, *The University of Toronto: A History*, 307-8, 324, 467, 629-31; and Paul Stortz, "Rescue Our Family From a Living Death": Refugee Professors and the Canadian Society for the Protection of Science and Learning at the University of Toronto, 1935-1946," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, new series 14 (2003): 231-61.

⁵¹ Dr. Coady to Rev. Michael Gillis, 14 February 1947, MG 20/1/941, Coady Personal Papers, StFXUA.

⁵² The Carnegie Corporation of New York that had supported the early work of the Extension Department during the 1930s decided not to bankroll the proposed international house even though Dr. Coady, Vice-president Hugh Somers, and Bishop John R. MacDonald canvassed them for support in 1947. Record of Interview, 24 Feb 1947, StFX Extension Department File, Carnegie Corporation Archives, Columbia University, New York.

to the needs of international students who would have to extract from it what was useful to their own situations.⁵³

The international student enrolments Table 1 reveals that the annual number of Coady participants registered in the diploma program was usually less than one hundred.⁵⁴ Twenty-one students completed the course in 1961. One student each came from these countries: Brazil, England, Malaya, Puerto Rico, Switzerland, Trinidad and the United States; two each came from Canada, India and Iraq; three came from East Africa; and five came from South Africa.⁵⁵ By 2005, 4,700 international students from over 130 countries had completed the diploma and certificate courses initiated in 1959.⁵⁶ Most of the students came from less-developed regions in the global south such as Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. In age, they ranged from their twenties to their fifties. Rarely did women account for more than about 30 percent of total enrolments. From the 1960s, the students' formal educational levels gradually increased. In its early years, the Institute targeted front line development field workers, but since the 1990s the staff's recruitment emphasis has been on middle management in governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).⁵⁷ Clergy and sisters, especially Roman Catholic, have been important minority participants in the Coady programs. While financial sponsorship has come from a wide range of agencies — religious, government, and NGOs — the Canadian International Development Agency has been the main source of funding.⁵⁸

Group Cohesion and University Integration

In spite of the challenges to achieving internal group cohesion, the succession of Coady participants have generally worked effectively together as a group. The first registrar, George Wicks (1960-1966), commented on the hurdles: "The problems inherent in having under one roof as many as 100 students, of both sexes, many races, various religions, widely differing educational and cultural backgrounds, married, single, and of ages varying from early 20s to 50 plus, call for sensitive handling and great patience."⁵⁹ For example, gender relations could be strained to the breaking point when males from a traditional, patriarchal society expected female students to defer to their views and wishes. Racial and tribal differences sometimes created conflict and division. International tensions such as those between Pakistan and India over the Kashmir region, or domestic ethnic conflicts, have threatened to divide the Coady students. Distractions from study, such as emotional stress because of separation from family, and now the opposite, with close connections to home through the internet, have resulted in less-than-full involvement in the Coady program.

Nevertheless, since the founding of the Institute, staff and students have developed a variety of ways to bridge the potential linguistic, racial, ethnic, political, religious, and gender barriers. Students are expected to have an adequate working knowledge of the English language since all courses are offered in English only. Group-building activities have been undertaken from the beginning of the

⁵³ President Somers to Bishop John R. MacDonald, 29 March 1959, RG 5/12/4861a/b, PSP, and Board of Governors' Minutes, 26 October 1959, StFXUA; Board of Governors Executive Minutes, 29 November 1959, StFXUA; Rev. Francis Smyth Report in Board of Governors Minutes, 17 May 1960, StFXUA.

⁵⁴ Following the curricular approach before 1959, the Coady offered a longer diploma program (originally about eight months long) and shorter certificate programs (usually not more than three weeks in duration).

⁵⁵ Social Leadership Program Student List, 1960-1961, StFXUA.

⁵⁶ Coady International Institute, *Annual Report 2004-2005*, ii.

⁵⁷ Coady staff interview with author #1, 23 May 2006; and #2, 17 May 2006, StFX.

⁵⁸ This enrolment profile is drawn from a review of Coady International Institute student lists, annual reports, staff interviews, and statistical data supplied by staff. See the Coady annual reports available online at: http://www.coady.StFX.ca/annual_reports.cfm.

⁵⁹ George Wick's Recollection, n.d., author's files and interview, 30 March 1994, Antigonish.

program, and sensitive, diplomatic student leaders have been encouraged to promote positive relations. Moreover, most students live in a common residence complete with a library that has functioned as a common gathering place in the evenings where staff have traditionally worked to make it a comfortable, hospitable place. In fact, the first director of the Institute decided to create a family atmosphere through the Institute's food services program by securing the services of four Sisters of St. Martha, a Roman Catholic "congregation" admired for its traditions of hospitality and compassion.⁶⁰

One of the strongest galvanizers of group cohesion has been the common professional interests of the Coady participants. Aboyah Joseph Apozorah, a student in 2002, wrote: "Sharing experiences in the development field with 52 participants from 22 different countries facilitated by well seasoned development practitioners was really a great learning experience." Another student, Jabu Manombe-Ncube, mused: "I found the Coady course relevant to my work in all respects. At Coady I underwent a renewal as a person, taking some time for thinking, reading and reflection within the limits of time available. I enjoyed being part of a new group in this stage of my life." The anecdotal evidence as well as recent graduate survey data show that Coady students value most highly the opportunity to share experiences with development practitioners from around the globe.⁶¹

In spite of occasional incidents of racial discrimination and problems of communication, the integration of the Coady students into the local predominantly white community, while short-lived, also appears to have been reasonably successful. For decades, Antigonish residents have witnessed the annual appearance on their streets of this mature and diverse group of professional students. In the early years of the Institute, some Coady participants even roomed with local residents. From the beginning, Coady students have attended local churches and taken advantage of cultural events such as live theatre and the annual Highland Games. In recent times, Coady staff have organized the public community welcome to introduce the incoming class to the local community as well as the formal farewell at the end of the program. In 1987, the Institute initiated an annual Speakers' Bureau list that highlighted the professional expertise of the Coady students so that local groups and organizations could draw on them for special presentations. Another program called "Conversation Partners" has facilitated individual contact with community members interested in meeting regularly with a Coady student hoping to practice English language skills.⁶² World Awareness Week has been another opportunity for the Coady students to showcase their cultural traditions for local residents. Through these formal programs as well as the daily activities of life in a small town, the Coady participants have connected positively with local residents.

Integration of the Coady participants with the larger StFX undergraduate student body since 1959 has been much more problematic than their internal group cohesion or integration with the local community. Undergraduates and Coady students themselves have often commented on these challenges. The lack of interaction is a common refrain in the *Xaverian*. A recent guest editorial was headlined: "Make friends with Coady students, you may be surprised what you learn."⁶³ The causes of the weak integration are relatively obvious. When the university's Social Leadership program was compartmentalized as the Coady International Institute in 1959, it was located on the southern periphery of the campus where it remains, and its students have always been physically separated from the undergraduates. Furthermore, the Coady program was specifically designed for the Coady

⁶⁰ Coady staff interview with author #3, 23 May 2006, StFX; Monsignor Francis Smyth, interview with author, 14 April 1994, Antigonish.

⁶¹ *The Coady Connection* 22 (2003-2004): 2; 20, 1 (March 2000): 3. The *Coady Connection* is the Institute's bi-annual newsletter. "Coady Graduate Tracer Survey, 2006" (unpublished internal document).

⁶² Coady staff interview with author #4, 23 May 2006, StFX.

⁶³ The *Xaverian*, 26 October 2006. An example from over thirty years ago is found in the *Xaverian* 30 November, 1973.

students so they tracked through their studies at StFX as a single, cohesive group, and within a much shorter time frame than the general student body. Neither were there any overlapping courses. In fact, since 1972, the Coady diploma program has not even run parallel with the university academic year. Instead, it runs from spring through to December.⁶⁴ This new schedule meant that the Coady students would be well into their program and accustomed to a deserted, rather peaceful campus when the undergraduates suddenly arrived in September each year. The Coady participants were older professionals, sometimes married, with largely different interests from the undergraduates. Many were appalled at the undergraduates' initiation antics, excessive drinking, waste of food, and destruction of property.⁶⁵ Hence, many factors, some of them inevitable and probably immutable, militated against a successful incorporation of the Coady participants into the broader undergraduate university community. The potential for mutual enrichment remains essentially unrealized.

Overseas International Students

For the purposes of this review, the overseas foreign students are the last of the identifiable groups of international students at StFX. After World War II, their annual numbers remained less than forty until the mid-1970s when they began to increase as part of a national trend in which the number of foreign students across Canada grew by 73 percent to a total of 32,200 by 1983.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, at StFX, they have rarely exceeded 150 annually and increases in total undergraduate enrolments means that in 2006 foreign students are a smaller proportion of the student body than they were in 1980-1981 (see Table 1). The majority of these overseas students have been males between the ages of 18 and 24. More recently, the female proportion has been rising, a gender shift that reflects the national trends. In 1980, about 36 percent of foreign students were female whereas in 2001 females accounted for about 46 percent. Like other Canadian Anglophone universities, many of StFX's overseas students since World War II have come from former British colonies in Asia (Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore) and in the Caribbean (St. Lucia, Bermuda, and the Bahamas).⁶⁷ However, during the last decade, increasing numbers have been coming from places such as Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Zambia. The national origins of the overseas students have become more diverse, especially since 2000. While facing hurdles common to all international students in the areas of language, food, finances, discrimination, and loneliness, they have not themselves formed any kind of homogeneous group.⁶⁸ Like internationals at other Canadian universities, many of these students have taken programs in engineering (perhaps more common in the 1950s), the sciences, mathematics, business administration, and information systems.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ The published rationale for the schedule change related the harsh impact of the winter weather on the Coady students who were primarily from much hotter climates in the south as well as the tendency of bad winter weather and roads to disrupt their field studies. *Xaverian*, 11 February 1972, and 18 January 1973.

⁶⁵ For examples, see the comments by Callistus Zwane in "The Coady Experience," *Xaverian* 18 October 1995, 6. Coady staff interview with author #3, 23 May 2006, StFX.

⁶⁶ Lynn Barr, "Foreign Students at Canadian Universities," *Canadian Social Trends* 13 (1989): 10.

⁶⁷ CIC, *Foreign Students in Canada 1980-2001*. Available at: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/research/papers/foreignstudents/annex-c.html>.

⁶⁸ Both Cunningham, in *The Integration of International Students on Canadian Post-Secondary Campuses*, 13; and Popadiuk and Arthur, in "Counseling International Students in Canadian Schools," 128, have highlighted international student pluralism and the dangers associated with ignoring it.

⁶⁹ This general profile of the post-World War II overseas international students who enrolled at StFX is based on a review of student lists and summaries found in: RG 44/2/3187-3190, RG 10-1/4/2037, AVP #95-72-660, box 21, StFXUA; and the StFX *Calendars* (1945-46 to 1963-64), convocation booklets, and Banner reports.

The reasons for the increasing diversity of international students at StFX are similar to those propelling the trend elsewhere in Canada. Political change such as the collapse of the Communist regimes in eastern Europe and substantial economic growth in some of the developing countries have reduced barriers to global student migrations. Moreover, StFX, like other universities, has begun to recruit in non-traditional regions, such as the Middle East and China.⁷⁰ It has also entered into "study abroad" exchange agreements since the early 1990s with at least forty-six universities in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Asia while participating in mobility programs and collaborating with universities in the developing world.⁷¹ Meanwhile, CIC, the CBIE, and the privately funded Canadian Education Centre network have been promoting Canada globally as an excellent destination for international students.

Changing Features of Institutional Life

The story of how well the undergraduate overseas international students have integrated into the university defies easy generalizations. Although incomplete, the records reveal a history of successes and failures. Until the 1960s, the international student at StFX entered a small, close-knit, largely residential, gender-segregated, hierarchical university, where the Roman Catholic priest-professor was dominant in residence life, the faculty, and the administration. As well, the Sisters of St. Martha, known for their welcoming and hospitable spirit, were a significant presence in campus life. At the adjacent affiliated women's college, Mount Saint Bernard, the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame ran the institution. Life was closely regulated, and the clergy and the congregational Sisters functioned *in loco parentis*. Like most of the students they taught, most were born in the region and had white ancestry — Scottish, Irish, English, and Acadian. Roman Catholicism was the "established" denomination of both institutions. In this institutional setting, where students, faculty, and staff lived and studied together, it was hard for a student to remain anonymous and in the shadows. Overall, this close-knit "Xaverian family," as it was known, offered good support to foreigners "from away."⁷²

Overseas international students who entered StFX after the 1960s entered a transformed institution. Participating in a national trend propelled by the baby boomers, rising prosperity, and expanding economic opportunities,⁷³ enrolments rose from 870 in 1950-51, to 2,436 in 1970-71, and 4,337 in 2005-06. The university responded with new buildings and new hiring, especially of lay faculty and staff. Thus began an irreversible trend of institutional laicization. The international youth movement, committed to democracy, equality, and personal freedom, also influenced the future development of StFX.⁷⁴ Religious commitment and practice became less overt, students assumed control of residence discipline, from 1971 women were permitted in the male residences, the prescribed curriculum was abolished in 1968, and students gained representation on university committees, the newly-formed senate, and the board of governors. Students of age could consume alcohol on campus and illicit drug usage appeared.

⁷⁰ Admissions staff interview with author #7, 10 May 2006, StFX.

⁷¹ See: Ian Spencer Memo, 10 May 1993, StFX University Registrar's Office; StFX *Calendar* 2005-2006, 16-17; and Rachel Boomer, "Education, Bhutanese Style," *University Affairs*, August-September 2006, 8. The AUCC maintains a vast data base called "Canadian University International Exchange Agreements Database" that contains hundreds of agreements negotiated since the 1980s: <http://oraweb.aucc.ca/showcue.html>.

⁷² Fathers Malcolm MacDonnell, 9 November 1992, and Gregory MacKinnon, 29 September 1992, interviews with author, StFX.

⁷³ Douglas Owrain, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

⁷⁴ For analyses of the youth movement, see: Cyril Levitt, *Children of Privilege: Student Revolt in the Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984); Robert Fraser, ed., *A Student Generation in Revolt* (New York, NY: Pantheon, 1988); and Kenneth Weshues, "Inter-generational Conflict in the Sixties," in S.D. Clark, ed., *Prophecy and Protest: Social Movements in Twentieth Century Canada*, (Toronto: Gage, 1975), 387-408.

In sum, the critical transformations that affected the Canadian and international student experience at StFX in the sixties and afterward were: a dramatic growth in size and numbers, faculty laicization, secularization, faculty professionalization, expansion of curricular choice, integration of the sexes, increased personal freedom and responsibility, ethical and religious diversity, and democratization of university governance. These changes made it more challenging for the overseas students to integrate, largely because they could easily remain anonymous and more marginalized in a larger and less close-knit institution. Undoubtedly, the new, more liberal StFX also produced culture shock for those from less liberal and more traditional societies.⁷⁵ Recent studies have highlighted the challenging transition issues confronted by international students from countries dramatically different culturally and geographically.⁷⁶

Integration and the Overseas Undergraduate

Periodically, an overseas student would use the *Xaverian* to highlight the challenges and difficulties faced by foreign students and to chide the Canadian students and administration for being insensitive. After studying for three years at StFX (1982-1985), Koh Kui Heng of Singapore wrote that it had been "the most exciting and challenging time of my life" but claimed that the orientation for international students in 1982 had been poor and the residence initiations insensitive. In one instance, frosh students had their eyebrows shaved off. Heng declared: "I truly condemn such actions as being of poor taste, for my culture attaches an important symbolic value to one's eyebrows." A few years later, Ahmed Gariba, another overseas student, urged the Canadian students to be more aware and friendly to foreign students who are "a particularly vulnerable group." He asserted: "International students have in the past, and still do, play positive roles in the student life of StFX. They have shown interest in wanting to be a part of the Xaverian community. They attend most parties on campus and participate in all extracurricular activities, yet they remain at the margins and periphery of the student community and their integration is still incomplete." He advised Canadian students: "Get to know your international neighbours very well, attend their parties, and extend invitations to them. They have very interesting stories to tell you; the stories of other parts of the world." In 1992, K.S. Ramadenai, a mathematics and computing science student, wrote to the *Xaverian* editor that being a foreign student was culturally a tough learning experience. He also encouraged Canadian students to be sensitive to the loneliness, separation, and shock experienced by overseas students. After spending two and a half years at StFX, and speaking with many other international students, he claimed that "most of them are lonely, find themselves at a loss and, to some extent, unwanted in this country."⁷⁷ These experiences have been confirmed by international students at other universities in Canada.⁷⁸

The foreign students who spoke out about their experiences at the university recognized that attaining successful integration was a two-way street. Personality differences, assumptions about gender roles, and embarrassment about weak English language skills often made overseas students at StFX reticent to participate broadly and assertively in student life. Ramadenai encouraged his counterparts from overseas "to escape isolation through making friends, learning the culture, [and]

⁷⁵ Student interviews with author #1 and #2, 18 and 24 May 2006; and staff interviews #5 and #6, 17 and 24 May 2006, StFX.

⁷⁶ For example, see Popadiuk and Arthur, "Counseling International Students in Canadian Schools," 126-130.

⁷⁷ "Foreign Student Speaks," *Xaverian*, 7 March 1985, 15; 12 February 1987, 13; 4 March 1992.

⁷⁸ See Vijay Agnew's account of her sojourn during the early 1970s as a female graduate student from India at the University of Waterloo and the University of Toronto in *Where I Come From* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003), chapters 1,2, and 5; and George J. Sefa Dei's experiences being an African student in Canada during the 1980s in *The Social Reality of International Post-Secondary Students in Canada*.

avoiding hasty judgements."⁷⁹ Gariba lobbied to gain representation on the StFX Students' Union Council in 1986. At first, the Council voted to allow him to sit as a non-voting member, but some months later, although it was a split decision, he was given full status. His supporters had argued that the overseas students had special needs; the defeated opponents claimed that granting the vote was a dangerous precedent since other special groups would demand representation on the Council. It is unclear how long this position persisted, but another international student representative was elected to the Students' Union in the fall of 2005.⁸⁰

Sometimes, developments external to the campus had a direct impact on the challenges faced by international students. Work visas are now essential before foreign students can accept any employment on or off-campus. Moreover, until 2006, they were forbidden to work off-campus part-time during the academic year or full-time during the Christmas, reading, and summer breaks.⁸¹ Similarly, only students who could demonstrate an integral link between their program of studies and a work placement were permitted to remain in Canada for any extended period of time after graduation.

During the later 1970s, the provinces imposed further financial burdens on international students when they initiated foreign student differential fees, arguing that Canadian taxpayers were not willing to subsidize the rising numbers of foreign students whose families paid no taxes in Canada. The CBIE, and national, provincial, and university student organizations opposed the policy, initiated by Alberta and Ontario in 1977, Quebec in 1978, and Nova Scotia in 1979. The StFX *Calendar* alerted its international students of the new provincially-imposed policy: "Students who are not Canadian citizens or landed immigrants and who first registered after July 1, 1979, are required to pay this additional fee." In 1979, regular tuition was \$815 and the differential fee was \$750; by 2005-06 regular tuition had climbed to \$5,975 and the international fee to \$4,900. As these fees mounted during the 1980s, Father Gregory MacKinnon, president of StFX from 1978 to 1990, labelled the fee regulations "unprogressive legislation." He urged, without success, that students from the world's twenty-five poorest countries be exempted.⁸² The fees could not help but remind the international students of their "foreign status" and ultimately of their difference from the main stream.

Government regulation of foreign students was only one example of how developments external to the university campus could affect the integration of foreign students. International political events were another. At the conclusion of the 1980-1981 academic year, two Iranian students at StFX reflected on the Islamic revolution in their home country. They claimed that the Canadian Department of Employment and Immigration would only issue visas for four months to Iranian students. They also experienced tension with some American students because of the hostage-taking crisis and they claimed that some had even tried to start fights. This unpleasantness was mild compared to the conflict between pro- and anti-Khomeini groups at Concordia University in Montreal.⁸³ On the other hand, the StFX Iranian students claimed that certain professors had been especially supportive of them during the time of crisis in their homeland. Yet, that tumultuous period reveals that international student integration could be subject to the vagaries of international affairs, especially

⁷⁹ Student interviews with author #1 and #2, 18 and 24 May 2006, StFX.

⁸⁰ *Xaverian*, 16 October 1986, and 19 February 1987; 18 July 2006.

⁸¹ *Xaverian*, 21 October 1981. On 27 April 2006, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Monte Solberg, announced the Off-Campus Work Permit Program. It allows international students to apply for job permits to work off-campus twenty hours weekly during the school year and full-time during the summer break. This program had been preceded by pilot off-campus work programs in Manitoba, Quebec, and New Brunswick. See the CIC website at: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/guide-faq.html>.

⁸² *Xaverian*, 15 November 1979; StFX *Calendar*, 1981-82, 32; 2005-06, 5; 8 November 1985, 5.

⁸³ *Xaverian*, 3 April 1981, 8; 21 January 1982, 3.

those involving their home countries, a fact driven home with a vengeance for the more than seventy Japanese students who had been forced to leave the University of British Columbia during the Second World War.⁸⁴

Recent Institutional Responses to International Students

During the 1980s when overseas international student numbers at StFX increased significantly, the university became more aware of the need to give them special support. In 1983, the administration appointed Ernie Foshay, a former American student and then a member of the StFX staff, as the first Foreign Student Advisor. That same year, when foreign student enrolments were 101 (52 Americans and 49 overseas), he helped to organize an International Student Association. The new association aimed "to promote a better understanding of the different cultures on the campus," to help overseas students adjust to Canada, and "to provide remedial assistance where language difficulties exist." The society also planned to cooperate with other similar societies at Atlantic universities on issues of mutual concern such as the foreign student differential fee that had been increased that year to \$1,300. Members planned an International Pub, an International Night, an International Film Series, and visits to local schools. Overall, the society hoped to help ease the international students into life in Canada."⁸⁵

Canadian students and support staff at StFX also revealed increased awareness of the special challenges faced by the overseas students. It became common practice for staff, in Student Services and the Chaplaincy for example, to organize a Christmas dinner for those who could not return home for the holidays. An article by Mark LeBlanc in a 1985 edition of the *Xaverian* explained to Canadian students the unique difficulties faced by foreign students. He urged them to remember that the effective integration of the overseas students had an important public relations angle: "Our international students are good advertisements and when they graduate can spread the X-ring tradition to all parts of the world, thus strengthening our university's reputation."⁸⁶

During the years from 2000 to 2005, as annual full-time international student registrations began to increase once again, the international students themselves, the university administration, and the Students' Union have worked towards better integration of the overseas students. Student groups, such as the International Student Society, and quite recently, the new Chinese Association,⁸⁷ provide support and organize social events. Since the late 1990s, an International Student Advisor has been a permanent position, frequently assisted by student interns who have been supported financially by the StFX Students' Union. As well, a "Welcome Week" has become an effective means to orient overseas students to the campus and local services.⁸⁸ Those support staff with direct responsibilities for international students, the International Student Advisor, the Student Exchange Coordinator, and the Academic Coop Program Manager, as well as other interested staff and faculty, have devoted countless hours beyond their official duties to the needs of overseas students. The university now

⁸⁴ Elaine Bernard, "A University at War: Japanese Canadians at UBC During World War II," *BC Studies* 35 (Autumn 1977): 36-55.

⁸⁵ *Xaverian*, 6 October 1983, 3.

⁸⁶ *Xaverian*, 27 January 1993; 2 October 1985.

⁸⁷ In her survey-based analysis of diversity within the Chinese student subculture at the University of Toronto during the mid-1970s, Angelina T. Wong noted the tendency for Chinese students to form their own organizations. She writes: "In almost every major Canadian university, Chinese visa students have banded together to form a Chinese Student Association which is comparable to the mutual-aid societies or 'tongs' organized by the Chinese labourers who came to build the Canadian Pacific Railway a century ago. These associations provide companionship, housing referrals, pot-luck suppers and study-aid for a group of young sojourners who would otherwise feel very much alone in an alien culture." In "The Contest to Become Top Banana: Chinese Students at Canadian Universities," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* XI, 2 (1979): 68.

⁸⁸ *Xaverian*, 12 November 2003 and 22 September 2004.

requires a certified level of English language proficiency for students without an English language education and it also provides some language support through its Writing Centre LEAP Program (Learning English for Academic Purposes). A series of short international student profiles in the *Xaverian* during the 2004-2005 academic year highlighted the richness of the overseas student presence at StFX.⁸⁹ The Students' Union itself sponsored a report in 2006 to assess international student services on campus in order to make recommendations to the university administration while also providing space in the Student Union Building for a new international student lounge.⁹⁰ Although the university has no published institution-wide policy on internationalization, it seems to be incrementally adopting policies and practices that will further that goal despite its limited financial resources.

Conclusion

Since the end of World War II, Canada has witnessed rising numbers of international students on its university campuses. They have enriched campus life, broadened the educational experiences of Canadian students, helped to internationalize the universities, and contributed to institutional revenues and the economy. As with post-war immigrants, the successful integration of these students into their universities has been difficult and challenging. It is fundamental to the nature of their experiences at their host universities as an often vulnerable and relatively powerless minority. This exploratory case study has highlighted some of these hurdles and shows how one university in Atlantic Canada and its internationals — American students, Coady participants, and overseas internationals — have tried to address them.

The challenges to integration derive from a complex series of factors: students' national and linguistic backgrounds, their individual personalities, the policies and practices of their host institutions, their programs of study, their length of stay, the social context, federal and provincial government policies, and even international political developments. Generally, those internationals, such as the American students, who shared with Canadians the English language and an industrial, liberal-democratic, capitalist heritage, integrated most readily. Those overseas international students, such as the Coady participants who studied as a group of professionals in shorter programs specially designed for them, developed group cohesion quite easily but integrated only marginally with the wider university community. The undergraduate overseas international students of increasingly diverse national and cultural origins have faced the most difficult barriers to successful integration. The major players — federal and provincial governments, university administrations, faculty and support staff, and Canadian students and their unions — have often appeared slow to recognize the vulnerability and special needs of this group.

In the present context of rapid globalization, even more international students will be arriving on Canadian university campuses. Historical investigations of foreign student integration at other Canadian universities can test and supplement the findings of this case study. The findings, if used to improve policy and practice, might well promote a more successful internationalization, now a central aim of almost all Canadian institutions and associations of higher education.⁹¹ Further historical studies of international students will also contribute to the social history of student life at Canadian universities and to the immigration literature on temporary migrants in Canada.

⁸⁹ *Xaverian*, 12 November 2004, 19 January, 9 February, and 9 March 2005.

⁹⁰ StFX Students' Union, "International Report" (Spring 2006); and the *Xaverian*, 28 September 2006.

⁹¹ Jane Knight, "A Shared Vision? Stakeholders' Perspectives on the Internationalization of Higher Education in Canada," *Journal of Studies In International Education* 1, 1 (March 1997): 30.