

International Students and U.S. Global Power in the Long 20th Century 20世紀を中心に見た留学生と米国の世界的勢力

Paul A. Kramer

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It was 1951 and Rozella Switzer, post-mistress of McPherson, Kansas, a prosperous, conservative, nearly all-white oil town of 9,000 people on the Eastern edge of the wheat belt, had not seen the Nigerians coming. That Fall, seven African students, all male, in their early- and mid-20's, had arrived in the area to attend McPherson College and Central College. The accomplished young men, who counted among themselves a one-time math teacher, a surveyor, an accountant, a pharmacist and a railway telegrapher, had come with high professional aspirations to acquire training in agriculture, engineering and medicine; within months, they were treated to a fairly typical round of Jim Crow hospitality, from half-wages at the local laundry to the segregated upper-balcony of the local movie house. While at least one of the men had been warned by his father that Christians "'don't practice what they preach'," the students were apparently unprepared for the Midwest's less metaphorical chill; with the arrival of winter, officials at McPherson College telephoned around town to gather warm clothes for the men, which is how they came to Switzer's restless and expansive attention. A widow in her 40's Switzer, according to *Time*, "smokes Pall Malls, drinks an occasional bourbon & coke, likes politics and people." She was also "curious about the

African students" and invited them to her home for coffee, music and talk.¹

"What they said," reported *Time*, "was an earful." Isaac Grille, a 21-year-old surveyor and civil engineering student, passionately described a Nigeria surging towards revolution and independence, causes to which the men hoped to lend their training. The students ably played to anti-Communist fears with compelling accounts of perilous non-alignment, telling of "Nigerian friends who study in Communist countries, come back home 'with plenty of money for political activity, and hot with praise for the Communists.'" They apparently read Switzer an editorial (conveniently on-hand) from the *West African Pilot* by their "hero" Nnamdi Azikiwe who, while a "non-Communist... hates the U. S. for its segregation" and "writes that Communism is the form of government most likely 'to ensure equality of freedom to all peoples.'" All of this got Switzer's attention. Discrimination, she later recounted, had always made her "'mad,'" but this was different. "'This,'" she said, "'made me scared. All they knew about America was what they knew about McPherson.

For the first time I really saw how important little things, a long way off, can be. We had to fight a one-town skirmish away out here in the middle of the United States.'"²

I'll set to the side for a moment what Switzer decided to do about her guests' perilous non-alignment and McPherson's miniature Cold War dilemma, and instead translate the post-mistress' anxious political observation (that traveling students had something to do with U. S. global power and its limits) into my own,

historiographic one: that the history of foreign student migration ought to be explored as U. S. international history, that is, as related to the question of U. S. power in its transnational and global extensions.³ In this sense, my argument here is topical: that historians of U. S. foreign relations might profitably study international students and, in the process, bring to the fore intersections between “student exchange” and geopolitics.

The payoffs would be wide-ranging. Such scholarship would enrich our knowledge of the junctures between U. S. colleges and universities and American imperial power in the 20th century.⁴ To the extent that international students participated in the diffusion and adaptation of social, economic, and technical models they encountered in the United States, such studies would contribute to the historiography of “modernization,” “Americanization” and “development.”⁵ As witnesses, victims and sometimes challengers of racial exclusion in the United States, foreign students were important if still neglected protagonists in the politics of “Cold War civil rights.”⁶ Such research might explore the historical and institutional specificities of student migration within the broader panorama of “cultural diplomacy” efforts.⁷ Eventually, such histories might make possible large-scale comparative work on the geopolitical dynamics of student migration across educational metropolises.⁸

Work of this kind would build on rich, existing histories, which can be usefully gathered into three loose categories. First are histories of U. S.-based educational and governmental institutions at the organizational center of international student migration, among which Liping Bu’s deeply-researched monograph *Making the World Like Us*, from which I draw heavily in the present essay, stands out.⁹ There is scholarship that centers on specific educational programs such as the Boxer Indemnity Remission, the Philippine-American

pensionado program, or the Fulbright Program.¹⁰ Finally, there is scholarship that treats the American encounters and experiences of foreign students, often organized by nationality or region of origin.¹¹ While it thus has a strong foundation on which to build, an international history of student migration that places questions of U. S. global power at its center still remains to be written.

To date, one of the chief obstacles in attempting to intertwine histories of student migration and U. S. foreign relations has been historians’ reliance on the analytic categories and frameworks of program architects themselves. Many of the earliest accounts of these programs were produced in-house by practitioners (foreign student advisors and program officers, especially) which combined historical sketches with normative, technocratic assessments of program “effectiveness.”¹² Thus, foreign students have often found a place in histories of “cultural diplomacy” alongside radio, television, artistic and musical propaganda, and approach which inadvertently reproduces a (somewhat sinister) aspiration from the period that “ideas” might be projected successfully by “wrapping them in people.”¹³ Most seductive, perhaps, is the category of “exchange” itself. Exchange—as in “educational exchange” or “cultural exchange”—is, after all, the peg around which both international student programs and of much of the scholarly literature that attempts to make sense of them quietly pivots. As a generality and organizing concept, it does successfully convey the fact of a multidirectional traffic, that is, foreign students entering the United States and U. S. students going abroad. But it fails cartographically: student migrations to and from the United States were scarcely “exchanges” in the pedestrian sense that most foreign students came from countries to which U. S. students by and large did not go; Europe proved a key exception in this regard. U. S.-centered student migrations resolve themselves into

“exchanges,” in other words, only if one either generalizes from a European-American axis or flattens the rest of world into a unitary, non-American space.

“Exchange” also telegraphs a sense of equality, mutuality and gift-giving. But if the programs by and large did not involve geographic exchanges, neither were they exchanges in their cultural economics, either. While, for example, the organizers of “educational exchange” often hoped for visiting students’ conversion or transformation through their encounters with American culture and institutions, one searches in vain for affirmative descriptions of the radical changes that visiting students would introduce to American society in return. Where “exchanges” between Americans and foreign students were sketched, they were deeply asymmetrical. At most, Americans were to gain from these encounters a less “provincial” approach to the world; foreign students were, by contrast, expected to take away core lessons about the way their own societies’ politics, economics and culture should be organized. Clifford Ketzels insight, in a 1955 dissertation on the State Department’s “foreign leader” program, can easily be applied to cultural and educational “exchanges” more generally:

With the exception of many professor and teacher exchanges, the other programs are predominantly ‘one-way streets,’ i. e., they primarily encourage the export of American technical knowledge and the development of better understanding and more friendly attitudes toward the United States. Only secondarily, if at all, are they concerned with the understanding of other nations or the import of technical skills and cultural values from which the United States, as a nation, might

profit.¹⁴

Stripping away the ideological idiom of “exchange” and examining how these projects were actually structured, one finds instead a set of three interlocking principles in play which proved remarkably resilient across time, across lines of sectarian and secular politics and across private and state sponsorship. The principle of selection involved the choosing of “representatives” from among what was believed to be another society’s future “directing” or “leading” class of political, cultural and intellectual elites, a process commonly understood not as selection but as “identification,” that is, the politically-neutral recognition of worth and leadership capacity on the basis of universally agreed-upon criteria.

The principle of diffusion involved the assumption that foreign students would return home and, both consciously or not, spread U. S. practices and institutions, values and goods.

To the extent that this diffusion was anticipated to travel not only outward from the United States but downward across the social scale of students’ home societies, it presumed and encouraged a vertical, top-down and authoritarian model of society. Third, the principle of legitimation involved the expectation that foreign students would, through their accounts of American life, play a favorable and vital role in aligning public opinion in their home societies towards the United States.

Across the long 20th century, of course, these same objectives also drove thousands of Americans the other way, across U. S. national borders, as students, teachers, missionaries, officials, professionals, experts and technicians.¹⁵ While not the subject of the present account, their story is nonetheless intimately bound up with it: these mobile Americans were often decisive in constructing, shaping and maintaining the long-distance fields of interaction that would draw foreign

students to U. S. colleges and universities: “identifying” potential student-leaders abroad; training them in the language skills required for study in the United States; familiarizing them with (often idealized) accounts of American society and education; recruiting them for admission to U. S. educational institutions; and ultimately, helping to evaluate their “success” (however it was defined) as agents of diffusion and legitimation upon their return home. It was this dynamic of selection and recruitment—at the intersection between “outward” and “inward” migrations—that tended to give educational networks a tight-knit and even personalist character, a globalism of connected localities.

If my argument here is topical, it is also emphasizes two interpretations of international student migration to the United States in the long 20th century. First is an argument for continuity: that despite a mid-century takeoff in student migration coterminous with (if not determined by) rising government sponsorship, supervision and institutionalization, key linkages—especially at the level of personnel, practices and discourses—bound earlier to later 20th century educational programs. This was because, as existing research has shown, large-scale efforts by the U. S. state to cultivate student migration worked through—even as they transformed—pre-existing, private-sector infrastructure.¹⁶ In this respect, the role played by the U. S. government in the development of international student migration represents a variant of what Michael Hogan has called a corporatist configuration of state and private agencies in the United States’ relations with the global environment.¹⁷

Second, I argue that, across the long 20th century and down to the present day, international students in the United States have been imagined by American educators, government officials, journalists and many ordinary citizens as potential instruments of U. S. national power, eventually on a global scale.

The question of how best to cultivate, direct and delimit their movements to and from the United States, how best to craft their experiences while in residence, and how to measure their impact upon the societies to which they returned, appeared early in the 20th century as high-stakes international and foreign policy concerns. Thus while Rozella Switzer’s “one-town skirmish” carried this sensibility both further “inward” (to a Kansas living room) and “outward” (to a global crisis) than was common before World War II, what might be called a geopolitical vision of international student migration was otherwise more exemplary than exceptional. Whether sponsored and administered by missionaries, philanthropists or government agencies, migrating students figured as prospective agents of U. S. influence in the world to which they would eventually return; American educational institutions came to be understood, both descriptively and prescriptively, as nodes and relays in global, U. S.-centered networks of power.¹⁸

If there is a case to be made for an international history of student migration to the United States, it might begin with striking correlations and counterpoints that bridge the two, usually separated spheres of foreign relations and educational history. Without U. S. colonialism, for example, it is extremely difficult to explain why Filipinos constituted one of the largest groups of Asian students, and of international students in the U. S. more generally, in the pre-1940 period. Latin American student flows, a relatively thin slice of the foreign student population prior to the mid-1930s, widened briefly to one of its thickest, precisely during a period of deepening U. S. government concern over hemispheric solidarity against encroaching fascism.

Postwar, state-sponsored programs in reeducation and “democratization” helped pushed Japan from twenty-second to tenth among student-sending countries and Germany from seventh to third. By contrast, the Soviet

Union saw its student numbers in the United States decline during the Depression and collapse with the onset of the Cold War, dwindling to a lonely two by 1956. All this suggests a rough, imperfect elective affinity, in other words, between educational networks and the geopolitics of “friendship” and “enmity.”

This said, the world politics of student migration was always multi-layered: the imprint of U. S. state power in shaping these movements, for example, was uneven, felt more forcefully in some settings and moments than in others. Other factors, many of them far from conventional foreign policy concerns, played equally central roles in making and unmaking these transits: the presence or absence of pre-existing networks that either mitigated or exacerbated the friction of travel and logistics; economic stability and prosperity sufficient to generate necessary sponsorship locally; the availability and desirability of modern higher education closer to home, and the attractiveness of other nations’ educational and political systems, for example. When it came to educational circuits, in other words, diplomacy was not destiny.

FOSTERING INTERNATIONAL AMITY THROUGH STUDENTS



N. J. Gajjar, arriving from India, has his baggage inspected by a customs official as Miss Ruth Palmer (right) and Mrs. Rosalind Sawyer, representatives of the Committee on Friendly Relations Among Foreign Students, look on.

Pier and airport greeting services like this

one, organized by private organizations like the YMCA’s Committee for Friendly Relations with Foreign Students, were intended to mitigate arrival shocks and establish positive first-impressions that would both buffer visiting students from mistreatment and orient their loyalties to the United States. The two standing volunteers wear blue armbands labeled “Foreign Student Adviser.” From “Foreign Students Get Welcome Here,” *New York Times*, August 27, 1949, p. 15.

And things did not always (or even frequently) turn out as planned. Innumerable obstacles interrupted or deflected projected circuits of personnel, ideas and allegiances. Selection, diffusion and legitimation, while devoutly hoped for, sometimes spilled off the rails, when screenings failed to prune student radicals and dissenters, when students’ lateral solidarities overtook hoped-for vertical loyalties, when students’ encounters with the U. S. state and civil society proved alienating rather than binding. Then there were those more dramatic failures of educational power. There was what might be called the Yamamoto problem, when a former student in one’s military academy ended up using this training against one’s own country in war. There was the Nkrumah problem, when foreign students developed into radical, anti-colonial nationalists.¹⁹ There was the Qutb problem, when a visiting educator discovered in one’s society a religio-political enemy with whom no exchange could be suffered.²⁰

One way to begin resolving into meaningful histories the nearly infinite tangle of international student trajectories is to identify distinct and recognizable projects that animated and organized them, and to establish some loose chronological benchmarks. The first of three periods I’ll identify here, stretching from the late-19th century to around 1940, was characterized by four, parallel and overlapping types of student movement that

can be distinguished by their objectives, definitions of education and its utility, and structures of authority and sponsorship: migrations aimed at self-strengthening, colonialism, evangelism, and corporate internationalism. They are presented self-consciously here as a register of something like ideal types, subject to subdivision, in which historical instances always crossed and blended. A second moment, dating from the years leading up to World War II to the late-1960s, saw the exponential growth and diversification of international student migration to the United States, greater participation of U. S. government institutions in promoting and shaping it, and its intensifying geopoliticization, both structurally and discursively. Most of all, this period was set apart by a widespread, sharpened sense of foreign students as critical actors in the global politics of the Cold War and decolonization. A third moment, sketched only briefly here by way of conclusion, stretches from the 1970s to the early 21st century, and is characterized by the further increase of student migration to the United States at the nexus of privatizing universities and globalizing corporations. Here, as in the early moments, border-crossing students would be freighted with both aspirations for U. S. global power, and apprehensions about its limits.

The first of my pre-1940 types comprised outward, “self-strengthening” movements by students propelled by a sense of domestic social crisis, the exhaustion or failure of traditional solutions, and the perceived success of other, commensurable societies facing similar dilemmas. The paradigmatic sending society under this heading, in many ways, was the United States: facing industrial capitalist conflict and social upheaval in the late-19th century, hundreds of American students traveled to German universities in search of answers, returning home with new, state-centered models of social reform and blueprints for the research university itself;

they would face many obstacles in their efforts to transplant what they had learned in the U. S. institutional and ideological context, but would remake the landscape of U. S. politics, social thought and education in the process.²¹ While these transits bridged powerful, industrialized regions, other self-strengthening migrations were produced by crises of imperial subordination, when weakening states attempted to fight off greater surrenders of sovereignty by sending their youth abroad to selectively import the tools of their would-be colonizers, as a bulwark against complete external domination.²² The abortive Chinese Educational Mission of the 1870s and early 1880s, which sent 120 young men to high schools in New England and some to colleges and universities, was exemplary in its hopes to prevent further greater decline through the selective borrowing of Western science and technology, a process that reformers called “learning from the barbarians in order to control the barbarians.” The program, initially intended to last fifteen years and to include college education, collapsed after only eight, as the students themselves chafed under the demands of both U. S. and Confucian educations, and as conservatives in China increasingly suspected the students of barbarism and disloyalty. Many of the Mission’s participants nonetheless went on to occupy places of prominence in engineering, military technology and education during the last years of Qing rule.²³

As Chinese efforts suggested, some of the most sought-over settings for the pursuit of literal self-strengthening were U. S. military academies. Attendance at the academies by international students began following Congressional authorization in July 1868.²⁴ Caribbean and Central and South American states successfully presented candidates: by 1913, at least two Costa Ricans had studied at the U. S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, and West Point had admitted students from Cuba, Honduras and Ecuador.²⁵ “Many foreigners

have been educated at West Point,” noted the *New York Times* that year, “and to-day West Pointers are officers in nearly every regular military establishment in Central America.”²⁶ U. S. military training was also actively pursued by East Asian states attempting to fend off Western colonization. Qing attempts to achieve their first West Point appointments had stalled in the 1870s, and the Chinese would have to wait until 1905.²⁷ By contrast, Japan (which appears to have pressed for the first international admissions in 1868) could by 1904 boast seven graduates from Annapolis, including the commander of the Japanese Squadron of the Far East; in 1913, another graduate, Count Yamamoto, became premier of Japan.²⁸

A second category, in many ways the inverse of the first, consisted of colonial and neo-colonial migrations. These were educational circuits organized by imperial states with the aim of crafting a loyal and pliable elite in the hinterlands with ties to metropolitan society and structures of authority. An early and private variant in the British context was the Rhodes Scholarships, which had as their goal the integration through educational migration of a British-imperial, Anglo-Saxon race whose domain included the United States.²⁹ U. S.-centered variants of such migrations were inaugurated after 1898, most ambitiously but not exclusively in the United States’ new empire in Asia.³⁰ Some of these circuits wound through U. S. military academies. Filipino admission to the academies was anticipated even before the end of the Philippine-American War, but it was only in March 1908 that Congress authorized the admission of seven Filipinos to West Point, for future commission to the Philippine Scouts.³¹ The 1916 Jones Act permitted up to four Filipino midshipmen to be enrolled at the Naval Academy at one time; the first Filipinos arrived in 1919, and by 1959, twenty-four had graduated and returned to serve in the Philippine navy.³²

More ambitious in scope was the consolidating Philippine-American regime’s civilian *pensionado* program, established in 1903, which would eventually sponsor the travel and education of hundreds of elite Filipinos from across the archipelago to colleges throughout the United States, with the requirement of service in the U. S. colonial bureaucracy. By 1904, program supervisor William Sutherland would write optimistically if vaguely from the United States to the Philippines’ Governor General of “the advisability of this investment in ‘Americanization,’... not to mention the extremely favorable political and moral effect that this philanthropic work of the government produces both here and in the Archipelago.”

While the program’s objective was the “assimilation” of the *pensionados* and their diffusion of U. S. loyalties, values and practices, students traced a variety of paths from colonial attachment to nationalist estrangement; upon their return, many played critical roles in government, education and business, helping make possible the “Filipinization” of the colonial regime that accelerated in the 1910s and culminated in the Philippine Commonwealth of the 1930s.³³ A still larger project, in a neo-colonial vein, began in 1909 with the U. S. government’s remission of a Chinese overpayment of the Boxer Indemnity, returned with the stipulation that the funds be used exclusively to fund educational travel to the United States, with initial training at the jointly run Qinghua Preparatory School.

Similar in goals to the *pensionado* program, the School and larger Remission quickly brought neo-colonial and self-strengthening agendas into collision, as U. S. diplomats pressured Chinese officials and educators over administrative power, curricula, and the appointments of students, faculty and staff and as Chinese educators sought to adapt the school to a self-consciously nationalist era.³⁴

A third category consists of what can be called evangelical migrations. These were mediated by the United States’ expanding Protestant

missions of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which connected promising students and converts from far-flung mission schools to denominational colleges throughout the United States.³⁵ The goal here was to funnel talented “native” would-be missionaries to centers of theological intensity and fervor in the United States and then to cycle them back to their home societies to spread both the Gospel and Americanism.³⁶ “It is of the utmost importance, both for their nations and for ours,” wrote W. Reginald Wheeler, co-editor of a 1925 YMCA survey of “The Foreign Student in America,” “that they return to their homes with an adequate comprehension and appraisal of the life and spirit of America” and, especially, Christianity’s place in “building up the institutions and the life of our republic.”³⁷ While the largest numbers of student converts in the late-19th and early 20th centuries were recruited from Asia, it was also during this period that the first African students were recruited to black colleges and universities in the United States by African-American missionaries.³⁸ The attraction of such U. S.-educated native missionaries to Protestant denominations would only increase after World War I, as Western missionaries came to be seen in many mission fields as an intrusive, “imperialist” presence. Their appeal to potential converts grew with the missions’ turn in the early 20th century toward Social Gospel projects for the delivery of medicine, social services and education, which allowed international students to locate themselves educationally and professionally at the intersection of missionary and self-strengthening efforts. But even where they did not organize or sponsor student circuits themselves, Protestant missionaries actively attempted to evangelize foreign students studying in the United States toward non-religious ends. Beginning in 1911, for example, the international branch of the YMCA organized the Committee for Friendly Relations Among Foreign Students, an organization whose conversionist goals were packaged

inside a broad array of support services, from greeting at ports of entry, to mediation with immigration authorities, to organized Sunday suppers.³⁹ Protestant groups from China, Japan, Korea and the Philippines would develop as among the most well-organized foreign student associations of the early 20th century.⁴⁰



Foreign students and visitors, and their instructor, a specialist in the teaching of English as a foreign language, in an English class at the American University Language Center in Washington, DC. Such settings, while helping visitors to acquire necessary cultural skills, placed many who were not technically students in the structural position of “students.” From the University of Arkansas Special Collections, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Collection. My thanks to Vera Ekechukwu for locating this image.

A fourth and final category of pre-1940 student migrations can be described as corporate-internationalist. These developed in the aftermath of World War I among educators and business and philanthropic elites preoccupied with the causes of the war, and possible ways to forestall future conflict. They derived what can be called the proximity theory of peace:

ignoring the French and German students who had shared dormitories in continental Europe before 1914, they hypothesized that wars were the atavistic by-products of irrational nationalism rooted in a society's most provincial and isolated lower strata. The only way to reform this primitive consciousness was from a society's elites downward; the way to widen the horizons of the world's directing elite was to bring them physically together in the common setting of the university which, they presumed, was not an arena of conflictual politics. While, particularly in the immediate postwar period, corporate internationalists acted in the name of peace, they fastened and often subordinated pacifist idioms to projects in the expansion of U. S. corporate power through the training and familiarization of foreign engineers, salespersons and administrators in U. S. techniques and products for potential export: world peace and unobstructed flows of capital and goods would be commensurable if not identical aims.⁴¹ If evangelical migrations principally linked the United States and Asia in the early 20th century, corporate-internationalist networks would stretch most thickly between the United States, Europe and Latin America. Their most prominent institutional hub was the Institute for International Education (IIE), founded in 1919, which connected interested students and universities with funders, primarily the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, the Carnegie Corporation and Rockefeller.⁴² But similar networks of student migration would also be sponsored by private, corporate civil society organizations like Rotary International.⁴³ On the demand side, corporate-internationalist migration appealed to the bourgeoisies of industrial and industrializing societies that hoped either to draw adaptable insight from the United States' technological and productive supremacy, or to seek employment in U. S. corporations that were greatly expanding in scope in the post-World War I period.⁴⁴

All four types of global educational

endeavor—and their cross-pollinations—hit snags. Would-be self-strengtheners could find themselves socially and politically isolated rather than empowered on their return home, their imported ideas becoming suspect when they collided with nativist and exceptionalist conceptions of the proper order of things; they sometimes also found that pre-emptive self-colonization did not necessarily stave off the real thing. Corporate-internationalists found that long-standing cultures of capitalism, industry and commerce in their home societies could prove stubborn soil in which to transplant American practices and institutions.⁴⁵ The proximity to the U. S. metropole wrought by colonial and neo-colonial migrations could foment disaffected, nationalist sentiments as easily as solidarities. Evangelical students frequently expressed their shock at the looseness of American sexual morality and the vulgarity of American materialism.⁴⁶ Indeed, students brought to the United States as either converts or colonial protégés often experienced what might be called metropolitan letdown: the deflation of the utopian images used to attract them to the United States upon sharp encounters with American realities.⁴⁷

During this period, some of the starkest limits were expressed when foreigners—especially, it seems, Asians—petitioned Congress for admission to U. S. military academies. When in the 1870s, requests by Qing officials for the admission to West Point of two students from the Educational Mission were refused, it helped triggered the collapse of the program. In Spring 1906, with tensions between the United States and Japan on the rise, Congress barred foreigners from entering the Naval Academy.⁴⁸

In March 1912, during a discussion of the admission of a Cuban to West Point, Senator Gallinger of New Hampshire took the opportunity to rail against foreign admissions more generally. "I doubt the wisdom of educating these young men, who possibly may become troublesome to us in time of war," he was quoted as saying. "I am not sure that it is

good policy to educate representatives of the warlike Chinese people, who number four hundred or five hundred million.”⁴⁹ (The Cuban was admitted.) Such fears even extended to people who were not technically “foreigners.”

In 1908, Senator Slayden of Texas objected to the idea of Filipinos at West Point on the grounds that such trainees might return home to foment revolution in the Islands.⁵⁰

The cause of networked affiliation was also not helped by rising barriers to immigration.⁵¹ Students from China and Japan had been legislatively class-exempted from late-19th and early 20th century exclusion laws, alongside merchants, tourists and diplomats, but in administrative practice, port authorities tended to see in traveling Asian students well-disguised “coolies” seeking illegal entry, and more than one aspiring undergraduate found themselves detained at Angel Island.⁵² Much to the frustration of both educators and students, international interest in U. S. education was on the increase just as barriers to migration were rising. The restrictive 1924 Johnson-Reed Act did not exempt visiting students from its rigid quota system, and students could find themselves harassed, arrested or deported if they happened to arrive after their country’s annual entry quota had been filled.⁵³ The Institute for International Education and Committee on Friendly Relations intervened to mitigate these rules and to buffer students from their application, greeting students at ports of entry to smooth over relations with officials and lobbying for quota exemptions for bona fide students in exchange for tighter, university-mediated certification regimes.⁵⁴

Due to the success of these efforts, restrictionist legislation and administrative practice did not quash student migration—the region/race most intensely targeted by this legislation, “Asia,” was still sending the United States half of its international students in the mid-1930s—but they did make it far more complex logistically and, when it came to the goals of diffusion and legitimation, far more

alienating. For much of the 20th century and into the 21st, things would get complicated where students found themselves at the cross-currents that roiled between the global politics of inclusion and exclusion.

That said, by the 1930s, the United States was already clearly emerging as a magnetic hub for student migration. While statistics for the early period were haphazardly collected, they demonstrate a pattern of growth and diversification, with a particular takeoff in the 1920s. In an informal, early census conducted in 1905, only nine colleges registered foreign students; by 1912, 37 colleges did.⁵⁵ By 1930, when the Committee on Friendly Relations was conducting annual surveys, foreign students attended about 450 colleges and universities; by 1940, the number had grown again to 636.

Reported overall student numbers grew from about 600 in 1905 to about 1,800 in 1912 to nearly 10,000 in 1930. Throughout this early period, the largest sending macro-region was Asia (led by China, Japan and the Philippines), followed narrowly but consistently, until a dropoff in the 1930s, by Europe (led by Russia, Germany and Britain), and then by North America, especially Canada. Central and South America followed, with comparatively small but growing numbers arriving from Africa, the Middle East and Australasia. While no gender statistics appear to have been collected prior to the mid-1930s, in 1935, 22% of foreign students registered by census-takers were women, a figure that appears to have been relatively stable for those years, although specific percentages varied by national origin.⁵⁶

The rising threats of European fascism and Japanese militarism ushered in a second era in the history of student migration to the United States characterized by both deeper state engagement and geopoliticization. To this point the federal state had, through immigration law, arguably inhibited student flows at least as much as it had cultivated them. Its promotional energies had been

confined to colonial and neo-colonial migrations—the Philippine and Chinese experiments—and earlier programs associated with the Belgian Relief Commission and the education of French veterans in the United States during and after World War I. Also prior to this period, there was no particularly strong relationship between diplomatic “friendship” and student circulation: in the 1930s, for example, the Soviet Union consistently sent more students to the United States than did any other European country. In contrast, by 1945 student migration patterns had begun to align with the United States geopolitically: through financial support, program administration and the granting of visas the State Department, often working through the IIE, drew student-allies close, beginning in the late-1930s and into the 1940s with the sponsorship of Latin Americans, and European and Chinese refugees. Perceived student-enemies, especially those of Japanese descent, whether U. S. citizens or otherwise were, as threatening “foreigners,” punished and isolated.⁵⁷ While the mechanisms were varied, student circuits had begun to resemble wartime patterns of alliance and enmity.

The immediate postwar decades saw the explosive growth of student migration to the United States measured along every axis: in the sheer scale of student numbers, in the breadth of sending countries, in the proliferation of sponsoring programs, and in the numbers of receiving colleges and universities. From a total of 7,530 in 1945, student numbers doubled by 1947, then again by 1951, again by 1962 and yet again by 1969, reaching over 120,000 that year.⁵⁸ The mounting gravitational pull of U. S. colleges and derived from many causes. The massive expansion of American higher education during these years presented foreign students with an appealing array of programs and fields of specialization.

In war-torn and occupied stretches of Europe and Asia, the demand for reconstruction pushed further than “self-strengthening” ever

had: centers of higher education had been destroyed, promoting an external search for the technical skills and resources required for social reconstruction. With the advent of decolonization, elite youth from newly-independent societies would be drawn to U. S. colleges and universities in pursuit of technical, policy and institutional frameworks suited to the building of modern, robust nation-states; for some, this represented a self-conscious alternative to colonial-metropolitan transits.

By 1960, a unitary sense of the category “foreign student” buckled before the varieties it was intended to contain.⁵⁹ As Kenneth Holland, president of the IIE, noted in 1961, while twenty-five years earlier it had been customary to speak of “the foreign student” as if they shared “the same interests, the same needs, and even the same peculiar quaintness,” what impressed him now was “the fact of diversity.” The rising significance of international students to U. S. colleges, universities and public life, however, was unmistakable. Although the United States, as surveyed in 1959-1960, received a far smaller percentage of foreign students relative to its total enrollments (1.5%, as compared Morocco’s 40%; Switzerland, Austria and Tunisia’s over-30%; the United Kingdom’s 10.7%, and France’s and Germany’s 8%, for example), the United States attracted more total foreign students that year (48,486) than any other single country. In 1959-60, 1,712 institutions of higher education in the United States reported having enrolled foreign students; eighteen of these reported over 400 students and five of them (the University of California, New York University, the University of Minnesota, Columbia University, and the University of Michigan) had enrolled over a thousand.⁶⁰



A Filipino woman named Egdona (shortened to Dona) gives a suburban family a lesson in Philippine dance. This photograph was an illustration in a December 1961 article in *Parents' Magazine* that encouraged families to welcome foreign students and visitors into their homes. "Maybe you can't travel, but you can bring the world to your door by opening your home to foreign visitors," it stated. From the 1920s onward, but particularly during and after World War II, numerous commentators voiced their hopes that the presence of international students in the United States might cultivate a "cosmopolitan" outlook among Americans. From "Discovering the Rest of the World," *Parents' Magazine*, December 1961. Special Collections, University of Arkansas.

About half of the arriving students in 1959-60 were undergraduates, while the rest were graduate students or identified as "special students." About 41%, a number that was on the rise, received outside financial support (more graduate students than undergraduates); although government aid was growing, state grants only made possible a small percentage of student exchanges (about 7.5%). Students' specialties varied by region, but engineering predominated, followed by the natural and physical sciences (particularly for students from Asia, the Middle East and Latin America), humanities, social sciences and business administration. Students came from a total of

141 countries and "political areas"; the largest national contingent was, as it had always been, Canadian (12%), but the next six largest national groups were from the "Far East" and "Near East," beginning with Taiwan and Hong Kong (9.3%) and India (7.8%); with Iran, Korea, Japan and the Philippines each exceeding 1,000 students (or about 2%). While students identified as being from Africa comprised a small proportion of the foreign student population in 1959-60 (about 4%, one quarter of whom were from the United Arab Emirates), this population would quadruple by 1967.⁶¹

Government involvement and geopoliticization only intensified in post-World War II period, by which point student migration became surrounded by, and to some degree embedded in, a much broader state practice that came to be known generically as the "exchange of persons."⁶² Facilitated by the declining cost of long-distance commercial air travel, "exchanges of persons" involved U. S. government-sponsored visits to the United States by "identified" leader-counterparts from other countries—and movements by Americans in the opposite direction—for the purposes of diffusion and legitimation. It built on prewar and wartime Latin American precedents, but magnified them geographically and bureaucratically: in the postwar period, a plethora of government agencies, from the State Department to the Department of Agriculture, many initially associated with the Marshall Plan, undertook such efforts and employed them to connect to a much larger world that previously. In some respects, student migrations resembled "exchanges of persons" like the State Department's Foreign Leader Program, but the student presence was vaster in scale, longer term, less centrally administered and funded, and less directly controlled. If there were official confusions between these categories, it was in part because participants in exchange programs were in many ways considered "students," whether or not they were enrolled in school.

In strictly numeric terms, the largest number of exchanged persons—if not exactly “students”—were military trainees. After World War II, the U. S. government’s education of foreign military personnel, affiliated with the Military Assistance Program (MAP) was greatly expanded, streamlined and systematized, some of it taking place at the U. S. military academies, but the majority at other military schools, bases and facilities inside and outside the United States.⁶³ The Latin American Ground School, for example, founded in the Panama Canal Zone in 1946 and later renamed the School of the Americas, would train tens of thousands of military officers from Latin American client states in counter-insurgency techniques that included torture.⁶⁴ Such training was closely tied to arms transfers to foreign governments through either grants or sales. It sought, on the one hand, to shore up American global power by providing what researcher and advocate Ernest W. Lefever called “security assistance”: “promoting stability within and among participating states... by enhancing their capacity to defend themselves.” It was also directed at what Lefever called “our larger political interest,” which he expressed, interestingly, in classic “internationalist” terms: “strengthening the bonds of mutual understanding through a person-to-person program that has introduced thousands of actual or potential foreign leaders to American life and institutions.”⁶⁵ By the 1970s, the cartography of military training mapped well onto the structure of U. S. global power, with roughly equal numbers of military trainees from Western Europe, East Asia and Latin America (between 70,000-80,000 each, most of them brought to the United States), and over 150,000 from Southeast Asia, most of them trained in the region. “Never before in history,” Lefever claimed, “have so many governments entrusted so many men in such sensitive positions to the training of another government.”⁶⁶ By 1973, he estimated that the military had trained 430,000 foreign nationals, approximately twice the number of Fulbrights

granted to foreign nationals between 1949 and 2007.

The state’s growing investment in a geopolitical sense of student flows was powerfully illustrated in the early 1950s with respect to Chinese student-migrants. Facing the imminent collapse of the Nationalist Government and the cut-off of both state and private supports, Chinese students in the United States were initially provided emergency assistance by the State Department, and encouraged to return to China as “future democratic forces” that would, according to two members of Congress, be “in a unique position to exert a profound influence on the future course of their country.” With the outbreak of the Korean War, however, this diffusionist project was slammed into hard reverse, and students were barred from returning to China precisely on the grounds that their technical knowledge might now help strengthen and modernize the economy of a Communist enemy. Facing financial crisis, trapped in a legal black hole and stigmatized as crypto-Communists, Chinese students were eventually “offered” legal status most could not refuse; the majority remained in the United States. The State Department negotiated the return of the rest as a trade for Americans held by the Chinese state, a practice which gave “exchange of persons” new meaning.⁶⁷

Alongside with selected curtailments, the state became far more actively involved in facilitating and promoting student migration in the post-World War II period. While only a fraction of international students received direct financial support from the U. S. government, the state also came to play significant yet indirect roles. For one, it helped sponsor the professionalization of foreign student advising: prior to World War II, the only official attention most colleges paid to foreign students as such was to assign them, often haphazardly, to an interested professor. As a result, students often had to navigate a

bewildering array of concerns—immigration laws, admission and certification procedures, curricular decisions and language issues, among them—more or less on their own. But beginning with a 1942 conference in Cleveland organized by the IIE in cooperation of the State Department, the Office of the Coordinator for Inter-American Affairs, and the U. S. Office of Education, foreign student advisors forged a profession with its own organization (the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, or NAFSA), defining themselves through their advocacy for both students and student programs, and their knowledge of labyrinthine federal regulations and a proliferating social-scientific literature on students’ “adjustment” and “attitudes.”

NAFSA, in turn, would push for the simplification of immigration procedures and convince authorities to delegate some certification tasks to advisors themselves.⁶⁸

The state’s most direct and immediate postwar interventions in international education were in “re-education”: the inculcation of “democratic” and “anti-militarist” values in conquered German and Japanese citizens.⁶⁹ But the archetypal post-World War II “exchange of persons”—one that included not only students, but scholars, educators and experts—was the Fulbright Program, heralded by the *New York Times* in October 1947 as “the most comprehensive program of student exchange ever undertaken by any nation.”⁷⁰ The project was inaugurated in September 1945 with Arkansas Senator J. William Fulbright’s amendment to the Surplus Property Act of 1944, “a bill authorising use of credits established through the sale of surplus properties abroad for the promotion of international good will through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture and science.”⁷¹ Cast then and since as a literal swords-into-plowshares endeavor, it authorized Congress to enter into agreements with foreign governments for the sale of abandoned “war junk,” the credits for which, administered by bi-

national commissions, would used to fund educational travel to and from the United States. By 1964, the program stretched to 48 countries, and had involved the participation of over 21,000 Americans, and over 30,000 citizens of other countries.⁷²

Framed in a language of mutual understanding, the Fulbright Program was also from the outset an exercise in power. In a brilliant exploration of its early formation, Sam Lebovic maps the politics at the core of the early program’s practice and rhetoric: American officials’ insistence on bulk sales of both usable and unusable “war junk” to fund the program; a sense of “educational exchange” as equivalent to other “intangible benefits” to be gained in return for the sales (alongside landing rights, commercial concessions for U. S. airlines, property for embassies and free trade agreements); and successful attempts to secure U. S. majorities, many of them with close ties to the U. S. state, on commissions that were ostensibly “private” and “binational.”⁷³ Whether through Americans’ sponsored travels abroad, or foreigners’ visits to the United States, the Program’s goal was a world made safe for American leadership through the diffusion and legitimization of “American” values and institutions.

Fulbright was himself quite clear about the Program’s foreign policy implications in a 1951 article that expressed its goals in a Cold War idiom. Strikingly, the program’s primary end was “not the advancement of science nor the promotion of scholarship,” but “international understanding,” which Fulbright defined as the two-way breaking down of national stereotypes, with an emphasis on foreign exchangees as vectors of affirmative imagery of the United States. Of the carefully-chosen example of a Greek doctor who, having recently studied at the Mayo Clinic, had set up a successful hospital in Tyre, he inquired: “Cannot we expect a man like this to be influential with his friends and neighbors—and his 40,000

patients—in their attitudes toward America?”

He concurred with Soviet charges that the program was a “clever propaganda scheme”; it was, indeed, “one of the most effective weapons we have to overcome the concerted attack of the Communists.” It did so in effect by turning the whole of American society into a USIA broadcast of sorts, based on the belief that “when foreigners come to our shores, what they see will be good.” Despite what he acknowledged were the nation’s “occasional strange aberrations,” Fulbright believed that if free world peoples understood the United States, “they will throw in their lot with us.”⁷⁴

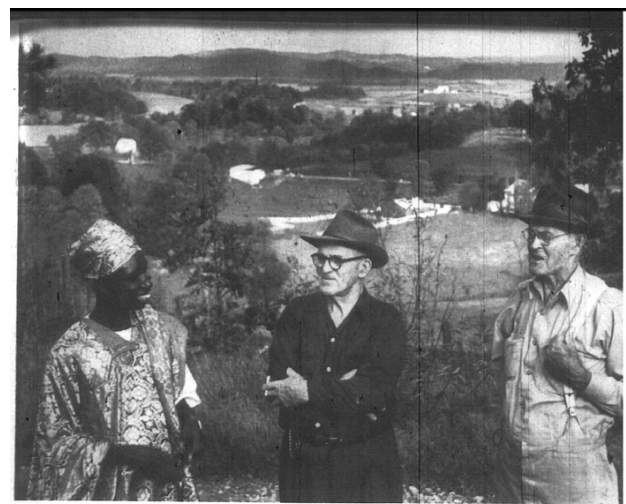
While the Fulbright Program clearly drew on and helped to shape post-World War II “internationalist” practices and ideologies, it also involved the synthesis and amplification of older educational migration forms, practices, institutions and discourses. In its sense that educational circuits could cement global power relations, it self-consciously looked to colonial and neo-colonial migrations. Fulbright would, for example, cite as sources of inspiration both his experience of the Rhodes Scholarship—that great imperial in-gathering of Anglo-Saxons—as well as the Boxer Indemnity Remission scholarships, which had helped develop what he referred to as Chinese-American “friendship.” Missionary idioms and impulses—secularized and nationalized, to be sure—were also present, in the hopes that Fulbright scholars, moving to and from the United States, might be agents of both the diffusion and vindication of universal American values. Closer still to the Fulbright’s surface were corporate-internationalist migrations, whose organizing principle had been that war could only be prevented and “progress” realized through cross-cultural understanding, which itself could only be accomplished through the proximity and “exchange” of enlightened elites. Not surprisingly, the program would be administered by already-existing private organizational agencies most responsible for giving life to these discourses

over the previous twenty-five years, especially the Institute for International Education.

Perhaps most vitally for an era of reconstruction and nation-building, the Fulbright program cast itself as the supply-side of self-strengthening, providing the universal techniques and capacities required to construct legitimate nation-states.

The issue of nation-building was pressed forward by the postwar collapse of European colonial systems and the emergence of independent nation-states in Africa and Asia; both sent students to American colleges and universities in search of both the technical skills with which to modernize their societies’ economies and infrastructure, and of political and social science models of development.

Writing in the *New York Times* in 1960 of Asian societies, for example, Harold Taylor observed “a desperate need for educated leaders—in the foreign service, in domestic affairs, in medicine, transportation, industry and, above all, in education itself.” For Taylor, Asia’s modern universities were “not merely repositories of knowledge and communities of scholars”; they were, instead, themselves “agencies of social change.”⁷⁵



ONUOHA AND TWO FARMERS APPRAISE EACH OTHER ON A HILLTOP. BOTH URSCHHEIM, 74 (CENTER), AND JOHN A. CATE, 75, ARE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR VETERANS

Geoffrey Baba le Onuoha converses with two Tennessee farmers, Ulrich Heim and John A. Cate, both Spanish-American

War veterans, in 1954. A Catholic-school educated, secondary school teacher and postal telegraph clerk in Lagos, he was inspired to study in the United States by a USIA pamphlet on the Tennessee Valley Authority, and came to attend Morristown Normal and Industrial College, a small, all-black junior college and high school maintained by the Methodist Church. From "Onuoha and the Good People," *Life* 37 (November 8, 1954).

In this context, he called on the U. S. government to provide supports—from translated American classroom and library materials to educational exchanges—to university students in Asia, who had “shown their readiness to assume responsibility for building a new society.” While Taylor himself de-emphasized Cold War competition, many others (including, as we’ve seen, the Nigerian students) referenced the Soviet Union’s education of the youth of decolonizing societies and, in particular, Moscow’s Patrice Lumumba Friendship University, opened in 1960. While American educators and journalists tended to minimize the Soviet educational threat by emphasizing reports of Soviet discrimination against international students of color and student disillusionment with the communist project, the very presence of competing Soviet educational circuits nonetheless heightened a sense of international education’s geopolitical urgency.

The potential political stakes in winning the youth of the Third World were on display in a 1960 project to bring 250 students from Kenya and other British-controlled areas of East Africa to U. S. colleges and universities. The effort, coordinated by labor leader Tom Mboya, was the largest such educational “airlift” to that point, but \$100,000 in promised transportation funds from the State Department fell through at the last minute, jeopardizing the students’ Fall enrollments. In trying to make up the shortfall, Mboya had the

good fortune of a competitive U. S. presidential race: he first approached Richard Nixon, whose overtures to the State Department were rebuffed, then John F. Kennedy, who possessed both private wealth and an eagerness to demonstrate support for African independence, in part as a way to send positive messages to African-Americans that did not involve binding civil rights commitments. The resulting “Kennedy airlift” was produced by a unique confluence of events, but suggested the broader ways that, at particular junctures of global and domestic U. S. politics, student migration could emerge as at least a symbolic priority. It did not, however, not solve the problems of the Kenyans who, like many foreign students, faced poverty in the United States.⁷⁶



Baseball legend Jackie Robinson, who backed efforts to bring African students to the United States, greets the first "African Airlift" arrivals in New York in September 1959. Photo by Daniel Nilva for the African-American Students Foundation.

Courtesy Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Jackie Robinson Papers.

It was in the context of increasing investments by the U. S. state, expanding student numbers, global decolonization and Cold War rivalry that what were long-standing emphases on foreign

students as future leaders and potential instruments of American power reached their apogee.⁷⁷ “In the cold war race to control men’s minds and hearts,” stated the *Chicago Defender*, in what would become a commonplace, “the foreign student occupies an important place.”⁷⁸ Writing in May 1954 in defense of the Smith-Mundt Act, which partially funded foreign student exchanges, Walter Lippmann similarly drew a tight connection between foreign students and the fortunes of U. S. global power. Attracting, training and aligning the elites of the decolonizing world, he maintained—the Nigerians in Switzer’s parlor, in a sense—held the key to victory in global Cold War competition. “In any true estimate of the future of the enormous masses of mankind who are awakening, who are emerging from bondage and from ancient darkness, from foreign and native domination,” he wrote,

we must presume that the educated class can be, and will be, certain to decide their direction.

From these elite will come the politicians, the civil servants, the military commanders and the industrial managers of these new countries. What these key people know, and what they believe about themselves and about the rest of the world, is the inwardness of the whole vast movement of historical forces.

The key to U. S. dominion—Lippmann’s focus was Asia and the Pacific—was the affective capture of these aspirants and their training in “the universal principles of freedom.” As long as the United States did not become “alienated from the educated class,” a “new order of relations between Asia and the West” was possible. “If that alienation is allowed to happen,” he warned, “as some of our stupidest philistines do their best to make happen—armies and weapons and pacts and

money will be of no avail.”⁷⁹

While the hope of turning student flows into networks of influence was more consistently articulated during the post-World War II period, this did not make the goal any easier to realize in practical terms. For one, there were institutional tensions that had to be worked out in the corporatist nexus between state and private agencies. To be sure, there were abiding reciprocities here: since the late-1930s, private organizations like the IIE had turned eagerly to the state for sponsorship, and state agencies had looked to the educational private sector initially as an administrative necessity and, in the postwar period, as a virtue: the private-sector face of international education either distinguished the U. S. state’s “cultural” programming from “propaganda”—the informational praxis of the Communist other—or, at the very least, projected the image of non-propaganda. (It was telling that the distinction here was often not drawn very clearly.)

But while the interests of state and private-sector proponents partly overlapped, there were also places where they failed to fully align. Whether for reasons of professional autonomy or “internationalist” sensibility, university educators and foreign student advisors, for example, tended not to share the State Department’s enthusiasm for fusing “educational” and “informational” programs.⁸⁰ Indeed, educational associations lobbied actively for the formal separation of these functions; Laurence Duggan, head of the IIE beginning in 1946, for example, wrote to the Assistant Secretary of State expressing his concern that student fellowships “must not be a means whereby our government hopes to influence foreign students in the United States in favor of particular policies and programs.”⁸¹ While the division here was not trivial, it sometimes mapped onto the distinction between debated means and agreed-upon ends or, put temporally, between “short-term” and

“long-term” strategies: many if not all international educators expressed hopes that the fragile desiderata of diffusion and legitimacy might be realized, perhaps more slowly, on their “own,” while they might be threatened precisely by too heavy an “informational” hand. The struggle appears to have been resolved through nominal concessions to “educational” autonomy. The State Department’s Office of Educational Exchange established two sub-divisions, the “informational” Division of Libraries and Institutes and the “educational” Division of International Exchange of Persons that, in practice, worked closely together.

There was also, more fundamentally, the problem of the U. S. state’s political and financial support for “student exchange” in the first place. While its advocates advanced anti-Communist arguments, so did its detractors: Senator Joseph McCarthy, among others, saw in such programs the undesirable government-sponsored attraction of student-subversives to American shores. While the 1947 United States Information and Educational Exchange Act, or Smith-Mundt Act, had authorized annual Congressional appropriations to support educational and cultural programs, throughout the 1950s, Congress sliced back requested budgets for educational exchange programs (even as “informational” budgets grew), prompting public campaigns in their defense by a wide range of educators, journalists and political figures. While never merely instrumental, the Cold War idioms of advocates like Fulbright and Lippmann should be read in part in the context of budgetary battles they often lost. Supportive presidents made a difference: the Kennedy administration’s activism in defense of educational exchange, together with a more hospitable Congressional environment (one that included Fulbright as the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee), made possible the passage of the transformative 1961 Fulbright-Hays Act which, implementing the suggestions of a task force in

which NAFSA had played a key part, was to provide funds to improve and extend services, training and orientation programs for international students.

In two major shifts, Fulbright-Hayes dramatically widened the scope of government support to all international students, rather than just U. S. government-financed ones (who made up less than 10% of all international students), and simultaneously shifted program rhetoric from the Smith-Mundt Act’s pursuit of “a better understanding of the United States in other countries” toward a new emphasis on promoting “mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.”⁸² The 1966 International Education Act, sponsored by the Johnson administration, similarly authorized ambitious programs for both the support of international students in the United States and the expansion of international studies programs on American college campuses. But in both cases, Congress failed to appropriate the necessary funds. By the late 1960s, Johnson’s internationalism was focused violently on Southeast Asia; educational priorities among both politicians and philanthropists were turning towards domestic, Great Society project from which, many assumed, international students might drain resources. While vocal, the student exchange lobby could ultimately not compete with these other agendas. And perhaps it was also the case that, by the late-1960s, college campuses themselves seemed sub-optimal as settings for the inculcation of consensual, Cold War values.

Finally, there was the problem of audience: foreign students could not be made into agents of American power successfully (if at all) without their also becoming witnesses. Indeed, from early in the 20th century, proponents of international education had concluded that, in causal terms, legitimacy came before diffusion: students would scarcely desire to transmit the practices, values and institutions of a society

that they had not come to respect. While Fulbright and others confidently assumed that the warm bath of American society would (mostly) on its own vaccinate international students against Communist doctrine—or even dissolve ideological encrustations—the problem of student attitudes towards American society also became one of heightened concern in the 1950s and 1960s. “What these foreign students think of us may matter even more in the future than it does today, for they are a picked group,” the author and editor W. L. White observed in 1951, noting that the current President of Ecuador, the Lebanese chairman of the UN Human Rights Commission, Afghanistan’s General Director of Labor, and the Guatemalan Minister of Commerce, had all once studied in the United States. Presuming a vertical, diffusionist model of society, observers then assumed that this American-trained global elite would automatically and successfully transmit its perceptions throughout society. “Soon they will return to their native lands,” wrote White, “spreading over the earth’s six continents what they now are seeing, learning and feeling about America.”⁸³ Impressions received would be “carried back to the universities and shops of their homelands,” predicted the *New York Times*, “to be spread, if good, like bountiful propaganda; if bad, like a festering virus.”⁸⁴

If this anxiety was animated in part by the growing presence of foreign students in American colleges and campus communities, it also coincided with the advent of foreign student advising as its own profession. If they did not exactly invent what was sometimes called the “foreign student problem,” advisors would play a unique role in defining and addressing it. And many came asking: throughout the 1950s and 1960s, surveying the attitudes and opinions of international students developed into something of a cottage industry among educational agencies and academic social scientists and their graduate students. As research, it had the advantages of apparent

novelty, “naturally” divisible populations (often delineated either by campus, or by nationality or region of origin, or both) and, without too much difficulty, a sense of geopolitical relevance, often front-loaded in introductions.

In surveyors’ queries, one can read a landscape of curiosity and vulnerability: a self-consciousness and sensitivity about American political systems, consumer cultures, gender and sexual norms and, closest to home, about college institutions and attitudes about foreigners. While students’ responses were, of course, bounded by the questions asked, the surveys and studies that resulted from them also registered them as agents upon whose opinions of American society, at a particular global conjuncture, a great deal seemed to hinge. If students were a probing audience to American society, including to what Fulbright himself had elusively called the “occasional strange aberrations” in American life, the problem became how best to direct students’ attention, insulating them from Lippmann’s “philistines” and failing that, managing students’ impressions of them.⁸⁵

It was in this context that problems of race assumed great prominence. The Nigerians of McPherson, Kansas were not alone: throughout first two-thirds of the 20th century, approximately half of the students traveling to the United States were people for whom vacancy signs tended to vanish in American cities, and who could be casually consigned to the backs of buses throughout the South. And many students who were not directly victimized by race were onlookers: for 27% of students surveyed in 1961, it topped the list of American “shortcomings” (followed by “intolerance of foreigners”); 12% identified it as “personal problem.” Some students, prepared by mass media in their home countries, had braced themselves to witness and experience segregationist culture, although for 29% of those surveyed, things were worse on the ground than they had anticipated.⁸⁶



International students frequently encountered signs like this one in bus and train stations and other public accommodations throughout the South, whether in residence there, or traveling through on vacations; students of color were often denied equal access to these facilities. When polled in 1961, students registered racial discrimination and "intolerance of foreigners" as among Americans' chief flaws. Foreign student advisors worked constantly to mitigate discrimination and often explained it away as a limited, fading and superficial aspect of American democracy.

International students of color encountered forms of racial exclusion on summer travels and field trips—a site of particular trepidation for foreign student advisors—but also at the heart of campus rituals, as when, at a June 1924 college graduation ceremony in Colorado, white female graduates refused to march in pairs with Chinese male graduates who, as a result, were asked to march with each other.⁸⁷ No problem was more immediate or intractable than the search for acceptable lodging in racially divided housing markets. One limited solution involved the formation of International Houses which, beginning in the 1920s, brought together American and international students under a single campus roof, simultaneously expressions of "international" idealism and cosmopolitan withdrawal in the face of residential segregation. "No one blinked at the fact that a lack of adequate housing and

discrimination against foreign students were factors which made the Houses desirable," wrote Gertrude Samuels of New York's I-House in 1949.⁸⁸

It was clear to many that foreign students—whether as sufferers or observers of racial discrimination in the United States—might take away with them impressions of democracy's racial limits that might eventually jeopardize the nation's legitimacy before world audiences. Especially in the post-World War II period, concerted efforts were undertaken to explain racial discrimination in the United States as a residual and gradually eroding reality, perhaps one of Fulbright's "strange aberrations." In December 1951, for example, the American Field Service, which coordinated year-long high school exchanges, took eighty European teenagers to the Harlem YMCA, where they "heard informal reports on various phases of Negro life in New York and in this country." The presentations, by Edward S. Lewis, executive director of New York's Urban League; Thomas Watkins, editor of the *Amsterdam News*; and two officials from the Harlem YMCA itself, told of "continued discrimination and gradual progress." Lewis stated outright that the program's purpose was to address what he called the "'weak point in democracy's armor'" vis a vis Communist propaganda, and "to correct any stereotyped impressions among the visitors." "Why doesn't the United States help its own people first, rather than worry about the rest of the world?" one student asked. After noting that active efforts were underway to improve African-Americans' standing in the United States, Lewis observed that "'Americans realize that what is happening in the rest of the world is just as important as what is happening in this country. We know that our survival as a nation depends upon what happens elsewhere.'" ⁸⁹

Rozella Switzer's approach to these issues was somewhat more confrontational. Over the weeks following her kaffe klatsch with the

Nigerians, she apparently “moved through McPherson as relentlessly as a combine.” Her “crusade” began with an urgent call to the department store manager, whom she persuaded, along with three other merchants, to align each of the students with the gift of a new suit, overcoat and gloves. Switzer then took her message—“‘We’ve got a chance to whip some Communists, and all we have to do is act like Christians’”—to barber shops, the Ritz movie-house and even the American Legion, one of whose members she “buttonholed,” telling him, “‘I’m going to make a decent guy out of you if it takes all next year.’”

Switzer met resistance, as when Shorty, the only barber in town that she had convinced to cut the Nigerians’ hair, was boycotted by white customers and criticized by preachers. But by the following December, when her story could be narrated as a modern-day parable of Christmas hospitality on the pages of *Time* (replete with the Nigerians, “some of them in native costume” caroling with other college students), Switzer’s (and the students’) “one-town skirmish” had achieved some modest results.⁹⁰ Restaurants and the movie house had opened their seating to the Africans (although whether this extended to the town’s 23 non-African black people remained unclear); high school students in a social science class had gone “to check up on race relations” in the community. The Nigerians were still traveling 35 miles to get their hair cut, but local merchants had promised to “look into the barbershop situation.”⁹¹

For *Time*, the biggest change had been McPherson’s unconscious “cast[ing] aside its old measurements of comfortable solidity.” In this, the magazine predictably read the embattled world power into the tiny Kansas town. “‘Challenged by a fragment of the world’s demand on the U. S., McPherson was trying—as a whole humble people was trying—to ‘act like Christians’ and measure

up.”⁹² If the magazine’s desire to see the empire in small-town microcosm was misguided—as was its characteristic trumpeting of humility—the article also told the story of students who had managed, in a particular global context, to leverage the expectations and mandates of diffusion and legitimation, in whatever small ways, into recognition and opening. Unforeseen, unbidden and uneven, here, perhaps, was something like exchange.

While the dynamics of international student migration to the United States would change after the 1960s, in ways that can only be sketched briefly here, the debate on the presence of foreign students in American society would often remained grounded in geopolitical concerns. During this period, the labor and technical demands of newly-industrializing regions drew international students to American colleges and universities in unprecedented numbers. As many public universities experienced neo-liberal budget cutbacks, particularly during and after the 1980s, they became increasingly reliant on foreign student tuitions and enrollments to sustain revenue streams and the demand for key programs, especially in engineering, computer science and mathematics. Also over these decades, along with other new tasks that universities took on as service providers for corporations, they emerged as major placement centers for highly trained labor. For many observers, the United States’ very success in attracting, training and employing foreign students—in a progressively more competitive, global educational environment—was both an index and precondition of “American” national strength.

But this particular understanding of educational power would be challenged in the wake of terrorist attacks, particularly after September 11th and the realization that two of the hijackers, having entered the country on tourist visas, had been sent student visas at a

Florida flight school.⁹³ Calls for more aggressive government surveillance and monitoring of foreign students, understood by many to be a population disproportionately threatening to the “homeland,” were met with critical responses, particularly by university officials and foreign student advisors. Faced with burdensome new regulations (sometimes racially inflected in practice), they maintained, talented students would simply pursue options in more open societies and their labor markets; in doing so, they would strip American universities and corporations of their skills, and the larger consumer society of their actual and potential earning power. Updating century-old discourses, the proponents of openness argued that international students, in fact, enhanced American power, particularly as carriers of American practices and institutions, and of positive imagery about American society. “People-to-people diplomacy, created through international education and exchanges,” stated Secretary of State Colin Powell in August 2002, “is critical to our national interests.”⁹⁴ The struggle between proponents of what might be called the empire of the homeland and the empire of the talent pool was not resolved during the first decade of the 21st century; the question of how deeply international students would transform both American global power and domestic society remained open. Some of them, and some of their children—one Kenyan-Kansan from Hawaii and Indonesia comes to mind—would go far.

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editor of the Cornell University Press book series [“The United States in the World,”](#) he is currently at work on an imperial history of U. S. racial politics from the 1860s through the 1960s. His web-site can be found [here](#).

This is a revised version of an article that was published in *Diplomatic History*, 33, 5 (2009).

Recommended citation: Paul A. Kramer, “International Students and U.S. Global Power in the Long 20th Century,” [The Asia-Pacific Journal](#), 3-3-10, January 18, 2010.

Notes

I would like to thank Liping Bu, Rotem Giladi, Damon Salesa, Dirk Bonker and Sam Lebovic for their insights, comments and criticisms, and Vera Ekechukwu for her research and archival assistance. Any errors are my own.

¹ “The One-Town Skirmish,” *Time*, December 29, 1952.

² “The One-Town Skirmish.”

³ For the purposes of this paper, the term “student” largely refers to those attending colleges and universities, rather than participating in other kinds of training. Despite their different connotations, I use the terms “foreign student” and “international student” interchangeably; the former term was more commonly used in my sources to refer to students whose origins lay outside the United States. I use the term “student migration” rather than the more common term, “student exchange” because of its narrower, and more accurate, sense of the character of international student travel.

⁴ In my future research, I intend to approach student migration using the lens of empire. For works that examine the relationships between universities, knowledge-production and American foreign relations see, for example, David C. Engerman, “American Knowledge and

Global Power," *Diplomatic History* 31:4 (September 2007), 599-622; Noam Chomsky, et. al., *The Cold War and the University: Toward an Intellectual History of the Postwar Years* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997).

⁵ On modernization, see Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Michael Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); David C. Engerman, et. al., eds., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); David C. Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). For a recent special issue on the global history of modernization, see *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (June 2009). On the historiography of "Americanization," see Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger, "Americanization Reconsidered," in Fehrenbach and Poiger, eds., *Transactions, Transgressions, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), pp. xiii-xl; Mary Nolan, "Americanization as a Paradigm for German History," in Mark Roseman, Hanna Schissler and Frank Beiss, eds., *Conflict, Catastrophe and Continuity in Modern German History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), pp. 200-220; Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, "Shame on U. S.? Academics, Cultural Transfer and the Cold War: A Critical Review," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Summer 2000), pp. 465-94, and responses.

⁶ On the connections between the Cold War, the black freedom struggle and civil rights politics, see esp. Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Mary Dudziak, *Cold*

War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); James Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Brenda Gayle Plummer, ed., *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U. S. Foreign Relations, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Kevin Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2006); Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁷ Some of the key works in the burgeoning field of "cultural diplomacy" and "public diplomacy" studies include Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U. S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Nicholas Cull, *Cold War and the United States Informational Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1955* (Louisiana State University Press, 1999); Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), and foundational work in this field, Frank Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: U. S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). For an exchange on public diplomacy scholarship, see *American Quarterly*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (2005).

⁸ To make U. S.-centered student migrations fully legible will ultimately require rigorous comparative work situating the U. S. case in the context of other educational metropolises.

On the British context and colonial and post-colonial student migrations, for example, see Hakim Adi, *West Africans in Britain, 1900-1960: Nationalism, Pan-Africanism, and Communism* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1998); Lloyd Braithwaite, *Colonial West Indian Students in Britain* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001); Amar Kumar Singh, *Indian Students in Britain* (New York: Asian Publishing House, 1963). For comparative approaches, see Hans de Wit, *Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America and Europe: A Historical, Comparative, and Conceptual Analysis* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002); Otto Klineberg, et. al., *International Educational Exchange: An Assessment of Its Nature and Its Prospects* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976).

⁹ Liping Bu, *Making the World Like Us: Education, Cultural Expansion, and the American Century* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003). See also Jennifer Leigh Gold, "Color and Conscience: Student Internationalism in the United States and the Challenges of Race and Nationality, 1886-1965" (PhD dissertation, UC Berkeley, 2002). For a recent textbook overview, see Teresa Brawner Bevis and Christopher J. Lucas, *International Students in American Colleges and Universities: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

¹⁰ See, for example, Hongshan Li's excellent *U. S.-China Educational Exchange: State, Society, and Intercultural Relations, 1905-1950* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008).

¹¹ The exemplary work here is Weili Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China's Name: Chinese Students in the United States, 1900-1927* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

¹² The classic example of such an in-house history would be Walter Johnson and Francis J. Colligan, *The Fulbright Program: A History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965).

¹³ The quotation is commonly attributed to Robert Oppenheimer, although I have been unable to track down the original source.

¹⁴ Clifford Ketznel, "Exchange of Persons and American Foreign Policy: The Foreign Leader program of the Department of State" (PhD, University of California, 1955), p. 70, quoted in Giles Scott-Smith, *Networks of Empire: The U. S. State Department's Foreign Leader Program in the Netherlands, France, and Britain, 1950-1970* (Brussels: P. I. E. Peter Land, 2008), p. 28.

¹⁵ See, for example, Jonathan Zimmerman, *Innocents Abroad: American Teachers in the American Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Motoe Sasaki-Gayle, "American New Women Encounter China: The Politics of Temporality and the Paradoxes of Imperialism, 1898-1927," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Spring 2009); Elizabeth Cobbs-Hoffman, *All You Need is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Merle Curti and Kendall Birr, *Prelude to Point Four: American Technical Missions Overseas, 1838-1938* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1954). U. S. students were, of course, also studying abroad. See, for example, Whitney Walton, "Internationalism and the Junior Year Abroad: American Students in France in the 1920s and 1930s," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (2005), pp. 255-78. Especially after World War II many programs, notably Fulbright, would sponsor educational travel abroad by American scholars and students as well as travel to the United States.

¹⁶ Institutional connections between early 20th century "internationalist" programs and U. S.-

government sponsored ones are also emphasized in both Bu and Gold.

¹⁷ On corporatism, see Michael Hogan, "Corporatism," in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 226-36.

¹⁸ This discourse linking international students in the United States to U. S. global influence continues down to the present: the website of the U. S. Department of State announces that "Tomorrow's Leaders are Being Educated in the U. S. Today" above a list of 207 current and past foreign leaders who are graduates of U. S. colleges and universities at both the undergraduate and graduate level. See <http://www.educationusa.state.gov/home/education-usa/global-left-nav/information-for-u/international-students-yesterday---foreign-leaders-today3>

¹⁹ On Nkrumah's career at Lincoln University, see John Henrik Clarke, "Kwame Nkrumah: His Years in America," *Black Scholar*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1974), pp. 9-16.

²⁰ The Egyptian philosopher Said Qtub traveled to the United States between 1948 and 1950 on a scholarship to study the U. S. educational system, spending time in Washington, DC and in Greeley, Colorado at the Colorado State College of Education. In his writings, he would develop an intensely critical stance on American life and culture, emphasizing its decadence, immorality and materialism. His work would later inspire Al Qaeda. On Qtub, see Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Knopf, 2007).

²¹ On Americans in German universities in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and their engagement with European social politics, see Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge;

London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998); Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Christopher John Bernet, "Die Wanderjahre': The Higher Education of American Students in German Universities, 1870-1914," (PhD dissertation, SUNY Stonybrook, 1984).

²² Examples of two very different sending societies whose students arrived with self-strengthening aspirations in the United States would be Japan and Cuba. On Japan, see James Thomas Conte, "Overseas Study in the Meiji Period: Japanese Students in America, 1867-1902," (PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 1977). On Cuba, see Louis A. Perez, *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), passim. In the African context, Tuskegee Institute emerged in many settings as what can be called a "self-strengthening" model, despite its accommodationist politics in the United States.

See Michael O. West, "The Tuskegee Model of Development in Africa: Another Dimension of the African/African-American Connection," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (1992), pp. 371-87. For American figures influenced by Tuskegee, see Richard D. Ralston, "American Episodes in the Making of an African Leader: A Case Study of Alfred B. Xuma (1893-1962)," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (1973), pp. 72-93; Thomas C. Howard, "West Africa and the American South: Notes on James E. K. Aggrey and the Idea of a University for West Africa," *Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1975-6), pp. 445-66.

²³ On the Chinese Educational Mission, see Thomas LaFargue, *China's First Hundred: Educational Mission Students in the United States, 1872-1881* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1987 [1942]). For portraits of its architects and supervisors, see Edmund H. Worthy, Jr., "Yung Wing in America," *Pacific*

Historical Review, Vol. 34, No. 3 (1965): 265-87; Edward J. M. Rhoads, "In the Shadow of Yung Wing: Zeng Laishun and the Chinese Educational Mission to the United States," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (2005): 19-58. The mission was intimately tied to China's first diplomatic delegations to the Western hemisphere: see Charles Desnoyers, "'The Thin Edge of the Wedge': The Chinese Educational Mission and Diplomatic Representation in the Americas, 1872-1975," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (1992), pp. 241-63.

²⁴ "Japan's Annapolis Graduates," *New York Times*, February 13, 1904, p. 2.

²⁵ "Costa Rican Middy Let In," *New York Times*, March 3, 1905, p. 1; "Chinese at West Point," *New York Times*, June 16, 1905, p. 3; "Fears Training Foreigners," *Washington Post*, March 22, 1912, p. 4.

²⁶ "Persian for West Point: Congress Expected to Grant Request for Entrance to Foreign Students," *New York Times*, July 13, 1913, p. 2.

²⁷ See LaFargue, *China's First Hundred*.

²⁸ "Japan's Annapolis Graduates"; "Uriu, Admiral of Japan; Career in America and His Native Country of 'The Mahan of the Mikado's Navy," *New York Times*, February 21, 1904, p. SM7; "Annapolis Graduate Premier of Japan," *New York Times*, February 13, 1913, p. 4.

Cross-national naval training of this kind was one element of a transnational navalist politics whose German-American axis is explored by Dirk Bonker in "Militarizing the Western World: Navalism, Empire, and State-Building in Germany and the United States before World War I," (PhD dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2002).

²⁹ Thomas J. Schaeper and Kathleen Schaeper, *Cowboys into Gentlemen: Rhodes Scholars, Oxford, and the Question of an American Elite* (New York: Berghen Books, 1998). On early

20th century inter-imperial dialogue between the British Empire and the United States and its Anglo-Saxonist racial frame, see Paul A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule Between the British and U. S. Empires, 1880-1910," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 88 (March 2002), pp. 1315-53.

³⁰ For colonial and neo-colonial educational programs between the United States and the Caribbean, see, especially, Louis A. Perez, "The Imperial Design: Politics and Pedagogy in Occupied Cuba, 1899-1902" *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos*, Vol. 12 (Summer 1982), 1-19; Edward D. Fitchen, "The Cuban Teachers and Harvard, 1900: An Early Experiment in Inter-American Cultural Exchange," *Horizontes: Revista de la Universidad Catolica de Puerto Rico*, Vol. 26 (1973), 67-71; Solsirée Del Moral, "Negotiating Colonialism: 'Race,' Class, and Education in Early Twentieth-Century Puerto Rico," in Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco Scarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), pp. 135-144; Pablo Navarro-Rivera, "The Imperial Enterprise and Educational Policies in Puerto Rico," in Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco Scarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), pp. 163-174.

³¹ "Work for Islanders: Employment for Our Newly Acquired Peoples," *Washington Post*, p. 27; "Agree on Filipino Act," *Washington Post*, p. 4.

³² H. Michael Gelfand, *Sea Change at Annapolis: The United States Naval Academy, 1949-2000* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 48.

³³ On the *pensionado* program and Filipino students in the United States, see Kimberly Alidio, "Between Civilizing Mission and Ethnic Assimilation: Racial Discourse, U. S. Colonial

Education and Filipino Ethnicity, 1901-1946" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2001), chapter 3; Charles Hawley, "'Savage Gentlemen': Filipinos and Colonial Subjectivity in the United States, 1903-1946," (PhD dissertation, University of Iowa, 2000), chapter 1; Lawrence Lawcock, "Filipino Students in the United States and the Philippine Independence Movement, 1900-1935," (PhD dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1975); Emily Lawsin, "Pensionados, Paisanos, and Pinoys: An Analysis of the Filipino Student Bulletin, 1922-1939," *Filipino American National Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 4 (1996) 33-33P, 50-50G; Noel V. Teodoro, "Pensionados and Workers: The Filipinos in the United States, 1903-1956," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 1-2 (1999): 157-78. For a period sociological report, see Leopoldo T. Ruiz, "Filipino Students in the United States," (MA thesis, Columbia University, 1924). On the role of education in Filipino travel to Seattle, see Dorothy B. Fujita-Rony, *American Workers, Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919-1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), chapters 2. On Filipino students who remained in Chicago, see Barbara M. Posadas and Roland L. Guyotte, "Unintentional Immigrants: Chicago's Filipino Foreign Students Become Settlers, 1900-1941," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (1990): 26-48. Sutherland quote from Hawley, p. 35.

³⁴ On the Boxer Indemnity Remission, see Michael Hunt, "The American Remission of the Boxer Indemnity: A Reappraisal," *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (1972): 539-60; Richard H. Werking, "The Boxer Indemnity Remission and the Hunt Thesis," *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1978): 103-6; Delber L. McKee, "The Boxer Indemnity Remission: A Damage Control Device?" *Newsletter of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (1991): 1-19. On both the Remission and the Qinghua School, see

Hongshan Li, U. S.-China Educational Exchange. On returned students, see Edwin Clausen, "The Eagle's Shadow: Chinese Nationalism and American Educational Influence, 1900-1927," *Asian Profile*, Vol. 16, No. 5 (1988), pp. 413-28; Edwin Clausen, "Nationalism and Political Challenge: Chinese Students, American Education and the End of an Era," *Asian Profile*, Vol. 16, No. 5 (1988), pp. 429-440; Yung-Chen Chaing, "Chinese Students in America in the Early Twentieth-Century: Preliminary Reflections on a Research Topic," *Chinese Studies in History*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (2003), pp. 38-62; Yung-chen Chiang, "Chinese Students Educated in the United States and the Emergence of Chinese Orientalism in the Early Twentieth Century," *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2004), pp. 37-76.

³⁵ The literature on the American missionary movement in the late-19th and early 20th centuries is extensive. For some of the principal works, see William R. Hutchinson, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Daniel H. Bays and Grant Wacker, eds., *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home: Explorations in North American Cultural History* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003); Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008). On U. S.-China missions, see Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); Valentin H. Rabe, *The Home Base of America China Missions, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); Lian Xi, *The Conversion of Missionaries: Liberalism in American Protestant Missions in China, 1907-1932* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997). On Chinese-American missionary education, see Daniel H. Bays and Ellen Widmer, *China's Christian Colleges: Cross-Cultural Connections*,

1900-1950 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Jessie Gregory Lutz, *China and the Christian Colleges, 1850-1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971). For one lasting international connection that was inaugurated with missionary work, see David A. Heinlein, "The New Brunswick-Japan Connection: A History," *Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (1990), pp. 1-20.

³⁶ The specific mechanisms through which overseas U. S. missionaries channeled students to U. S. colleges remains to be explored further. Dr. L. H. Pammel, president of the Association of Cosmopolitan Clubs of America, noted in the 1925 survey that "foreign students returning to their country often recommended the particular institution they attended, or some missionary in a foreign country speaks highly of a certain institution. The Methodist Church directs foreign students from Methodist missions to attend its institutions in this country. The Presbyterian, Episcopal, and other colleges do likewise." W. Reginald Wheeler, Henry H. King and Alexander B. Davidson, eds., *The Foreign Student in America: A Study by the Commission on Survey of Foreign Students in the United States of America, under the Auspices of the Friendly Relations Committees of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association* (New York: Association Press, 1925), 270.

³⁷ Wheeler, et. al., eds., *The Foreign Student in America*, xiii.

³⁸ Walter L. Williams, "Ethnic Relations of African Students in the United States, with Black Americans, 1870-1900," *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 65, No. 3 (Summer 1980), pp. 228-49. On African-American missions to Africa, see Sylvia M. Jacobs, ed., *Black Americans and the Missionary Movement in Africa* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982).

³⁹ On the Committee on Friendly Relations among Foreign Students, see Bu, *Making the World Like Us*, esp. chapter 1; Gold, "Color and Conscience."

⁴⁰ See, for example, the annual reports of the Committee on Friendly Relations which contain reports from Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Filipino Protestant associations. *Unofficial Ambassadors* (New York: Committee on Friendly Relations among Foreign Students, 1929-1953). On the Chinese Students Christian Association (CSCA), see Timothy Tseng, "Religious Liberalism, International Politics, and Diasporic Realities: The Chinese Students Christian Association of North America, 1909-1951," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, Vol. 5, No. 3-4 (1996), pp. 305-330.

⁴¹ For an account of corporate-internationalist ideology in Euro-American projections, see Victoria de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

⁴² On the history of the IIE, see Stephen Mark Halpern, "The Institute of International Education: A History" (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1969); Bu, *Making the World Like Us*, esp. chapter 2.

⁴³ On Rotary, see Brendan Goff, "The Heartland Abroad: The Rotary Club's Mission of Civic Internationalism" (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2008).

⁴⁴ For German-American encounters, see Mary Nolan, *Visions of Modernity: American Business and the Modernization of Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁴⁵ On tensions at the intersection of U. S. and European cultures of commerce, see De Grazia, *passim*.

⁴⁶ For worried reflections on precisely these reactions to American culture and society, see

Wheeler, et. al., eds., passim.

⁴⁷ For disillusioned Filipino migrants see, for example, Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), pp. 402-7.

⁴⁸ *New York Times*, October 24, 1906, p. 9.

⁴⁹ "Fears Training Foreigners."

⁵⁰ "Against Philippine Policy," *Washington Post*, March 27, 1908; "Filipino Army Officers," *Washington Post*, May 28, 1908, p. 6.

⁵¹ On the rise of anti-immigrant politics in the late-19th and early 20th centuries, see John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988).

⁵² On the tensions between exclusionists and promoters of Chinese student migration to the United States, see Qingjia Edward Wang, "Guests from the Open Door: The Reception of Chinese Students into the United States, 1900s-1920s," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1994), pp. 55-76.

⁵³ On the 1924 Johnson-Reed act and subsequent exclusionary state, see Mae Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

⁵⁴ The IIE, for example, compiled a guide to immigration laws as they applied to foreign students, for the use of both students and their advisors. Ruth Crawford Mitchell, *Foreign Students and the Immigration Laws of the United States* (New York: Institute of International Education, 1930).

⁵⁵ For the pre-1912 period, I rely on the informal surveys published by Rudolf Tombo in 1905, 1906, 1907, 1909, and 1912 in *Science*. See Tombo's similarly-titled articles: *Science*,

Vol. 22, No. 562, (Oct. 6, 1905), pp. 424-8; *Science*, Vol. 24, No. 606 (Aug. 10, 1906), pp. 166-73; *Science*, Vol. 26, No. 656 (Jul. 26, 1907), pp. 97-104; *Science*, Vol. 30, No. 770 (October 1, 1909), pp. 427-35; *Science*, Vol. 36, No. 930 (Oct. 25, 1912), pp. 543-50.

⁵⁶ As I pursue this research further, I hope to build in both a gender analysis and a discussion of the distinctiveness of female students' experiences in the United States. To date, the historiography of female students from outside the United States is limited. For a notable exception, see Huping Ling, "A History of Chinese Female Students in the United States, 1880s-1990s," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (1997), pp. 81-109.

⁵⁷ On U. S.-Latin American cultural programs, see Manuel Espinosa, *Inter-American Beginnings of U. S. Cultural Diplomacy, 1936-1948* (Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1976). For an insider's account of wartime Chinese-American educational programs, see Wilma Fairbank, *America's Cultural Experiment in China, 1942-1949* (Washington: Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U. S. Department of State, 1976). On the tensions between U. S. and Chinese officials that surrounded these efforts, see Frank Ninkovich, "Cultural Relations and American China Policy, 1942-1945," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (1980), pp. 471-98. On students of Japanese descent, see Gary Okihiro, *Storied Lives: Japanese American Students and World War II* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999); Allan W. Austin, *From Concentration Camp to Campus: Japanese American Students and World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

⁵⁸ Beginning in 1948, the Institute for International Education began publishing its own census of international students in the United States, entitled Open Doors. For additional years, see *Open Doors* (New York: Institute for International Education, 1948-

present). The initial figures here are drawn from Unofficial Ambassadors, the earlier CFRFS census.

⁵⁹ In this paper, I use the term “foreign student” because it reflects contemporary categories—the term “international student” appears to have come to prominence later—conveying what was an important and palpable sense of the students’ “alien” presence in the United States.

⁶⁰ Kenneth Holland, “Who is He?” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 335: The Rising Demand for International Education (May 1961), p. 9.

⁶¹ Holland, “Who is He?”; Ernest Boynton, “African Students Have Their Brushes with American Racial Prejudice,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, p. 11.

⁶² On the Foreign Leader Program, an exemplary “exchange of persons” program, see Giles Scott-Smith, *Networks of Empire*.

⁶³ On the Military Assistance Program, see Chester J. Pach, *Arming the Free World: The Origins of the United States Military Assistance Program, 1945-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). Its specifically educational dimensions, which may have constituted the single largest U. S.-government sponsored educational program in the post-1945 period, remains to be studied. On police training, see Jeremy Kuzmarov, “Modernizing Repression: Police Training, Political Violence and Nation-Building in the ‘American Century,’” *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (April 2009), pp. 191-221.

⁶⁴ Lesley Gill, *School of the Americas: Military Training and Political Violence in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

⁶⁵ Ernest W. Lefever, “The Military Assistance Training Program,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol.

424 (March 1976), p. 88.

⁶⁶ Lefever, p. 86.

⁶⁷ For a detailed account of this episode, see Yelong Han, “An Untold Story: American Policy toward Chinese Students in the United States, 1949-1955,” *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1993), pp. 77-99. Quotation on p. 80.

⁶⁸ On the development of NAFSA, see Bu, *Making the World Like Us*, esp. chapter 5. For works that reflects the new, postwar professionalism, see Cora DuBois, *Foreign Students and Higher Education in the United States* (Washington: American Council of Education, 1956); Edward C. Cieslak, *The Foreign Student in American Colleges: A Survey and Evaluation of Administrative Problems and Practices* (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1955).

⁶⁹ On postwar German-American programs, see Karl-Heinz Fussl, “Between Elitism and Educational Reform: German-American Exchange Programs, 1945-1970,” in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945-1990: A Handbook* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 2004), 409-416; O. Schmidt, “Civil Empire by Cooptation: German-American Exchange Programs as Cultural Diplomacy, 1945-1961” (PhD dissertation, Harvard, 1999); H. Kellerman, *Cultural Relations as an Instrument of U. S. Foreign Policy: The Educational Exchange Program between the United States and Germany, 1945-1954* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 1978). On postwar Japanese-American programs, see Takeshi Matsuda, *Soft Power and Its Perils: U. S. Cultural Policy in Early Postwar Japan and Permanent Dependency* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

⁷⁰ *New York Times*, quoted in Sam Lebovic, “To Finance Out of the Sale of War Junk a Worldwide System of American Scholarships”: The Origins of the Fulbright Program and the

Production of American Cultural Globalism, 1945 – 1950” (unpublished manuscript).

⁷¹ Arthur Power Dudden and Russell R. Dynes, *The Fulbright Experience, 1946-1986: Encounters and Transformations* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1987); Richard T. Ardnt and David Lee Rubin, eds., *The Fulbright Difference, 1948-1992: Studies on Cultural Diplomacy and the Fulbright Experience* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1993); Johnson and Colligan, *The Fulbright Program: A History*. On Senator J. William Fulbright, see Randall Bennett Woods, *Fulbright: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁷² Colligan and Johnson, pp. 3-4.

⁷³ Lebovic, “To Finance Out of the Sale of War Junk”

⁷⁴ J. William Fulbright, “Open Doors, Not Iron Curtains,” *New York Times*, Aug. 5, 1951, p. 140.

⁷⁵ Harold Taylor, “The Student: A Key Man in Asia,” *New York Times*, July 10, 1960, pp. SM11.

⁷⁶ James H. Meriwether, “‘Worth a Lot of Negro Votes’: Black Voters, Africa, and the 1960 Presidential Campaign,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 95 (December 2008), pp. 737-763.

⁷⁷ Seymour M. Rosen, *The Development of Peoples’ Friendship University in Moscow* (Washington: Office of Education, Institute of International Studies, 1973).

⁷⁸ “African Students Play Key Role in Cold War Battle for Minds,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, June 5, 1963, p. 13.

⁷⁹ Walter Lippman, “Today and Tomorrow: Wanton Carelessness,” *The Washington Post and Times Herald*, May 27, 1954, p. 17.

⁸⁰ Liping Bu discusses these tensions in *Making the World Like Us*, pp.157-9.

⁸¹ Duggan, quoted in Bu, *Making the World Like Us*, p.. 159.

⁸² Quoted in Bu, *Making the World Like Us*, p. 233.

⁸³ W. L. White, “Foreign Students: An Opportunity,” *The Reader’s Digest* 59 (September 1951), p. 116.

⁸⁴ “Foreign Students Get Welcome Here,” *New York Times*, August 27, 1949, p. 15.

⁸⁵ A few selected works in the much larger genre of social studies of foreign students would include: Richard D. Lambert and Marvin Bressler, *Indian Students on an American Campus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956); *The American Experience of Swedish Students: Retrospect and Aftermath* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956); Ralph L. Beals and Norman D. Humphrey, *No Frontier to Learning: The Mexican Student in the United States* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957); *Survey of the African Student: His Achievements and His Problems* (New York: The Institute for International Education, 1961); John W. Bennett, et. al., *In Search of Identity: The Japanese Overseas Scholar in America and Japan* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958).

⁸⁶ Barbara Bundschu, “African Students Find U. S. Friendly, but Rap Apathy, Racial Intolerance,” *Chicago Daily Defender*, Dec. 5, 1961, p. 9

⁸⁷ The incident is described in Ye, *Seeking Modernity in China’s Name*, p. 81.

⁸⁸ Gertrude Samuels, “‘One World’ under One Roof: All Races and Creeds Live at International House and are Inspired to Combat Divisive Prejudices,” *New York Times*,

May 8, 1949, p. SM22.

⁸⁹ "Foreign Students Query Racial Bias: Negro Leaders Here Concede Weakness in Democracy, but Stress Press, Communism Here Minimized," *New York Times*, December 29, 1951, p. 9.

⁹⁰ Just as I am aware of *Time's* mediation/construction of this particular narrative, I am conscious of the evidentiary issues involved in drawing as heavily on newspaper and magazine journalism as I have in this paper. This essay represents a preliminary framework for archival work in

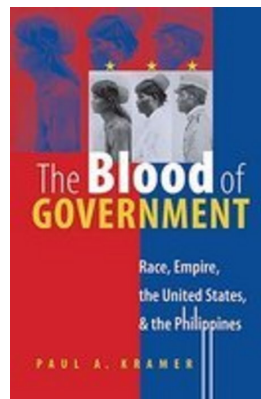
foreign exchange program archives, such as the archives of the Institute for International Education. Such research will, I hope, allow me to cross-check journalistic sources in ways that I am still not able to do in the present draft.

⁹¹ "The One-Town Skirmish."

⁹² "The One-Town Skirmish."

⁹³ The politics of student migration to the United States in the post-9/11 landscape are described in Bevis and Lucas, chapter 8.

⁹⁴ Powell, quoted in Bevis and Lucas, p. 210.



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