**The Acadian Identity: The Creation and Recreation of Community**

**Naomi E.S. Griffiths**

Naomi initially had major interest in how communities were formed and developed over the centuries rather than the history of the Acadian Colony. Naomi’s family had an extensive military background and because of this she had tried to understand why people were accustom to separating themselves into groups; why political, social, and religious divisions exist between people to an extent that life can be squandered to protect the sanctity of a religion.

The Treaty of Aix-La Chappelle, in 1748 was a truce between the Anglo-French for control over North America. After this treaty was established the Acadians had seen a magnitude of incidents between the English and French Forts on both sides of the boundaries of the colony, leading up to the seven year war where the authorities of Halifax has thought about sending the Acadians into exile. During the years after the Treaty was signed in 1748, most of the Acadian people were deported to other British colonies and dispossessed of their land in Nova Scotia.

Acadian society emerged as a result of the great transatlantic migration of the people of Europe to North America. The Acadian peoples, mostly originate from France, but their homeland would be known as “Nova Scotia or Acadia” from 1632-1763. The land that the Acadians had developed is one of the most important border sections between New England and New France.

The Acadian culture hadn’t been truly established until it was transferred to Great Britain in 1713. The community was economically self-sufficient, and developed a tightly knit social structure, where kinship ties were strong. The Acadians developed a set of political traditions that would serve the community up until the Deportation of the colony. Although many other notions such as Christianity, private property, political structure and community authority, and technology were all adopted from European cultures.

Immigrants who migrated to the colony of Acadia were driven by improved social and economic conditions, rather than religious views. Acadians weren’t controlled by the priests or the Catholic religion, most Acadians would only see a priest on a few occasions in a year, and only if they were within reach of Port Royal and Grand Pre.

By 1755, the Acadian people had labelled themselves as an indigenous people, living on the same lands of four or more of generations of their ancestors. Since 1713, the Acadians had flourished economically, namely in the agricultural industry, exporting many products to Boston and Louisbourg. In 1713 the population of the Acadian people was roughly 3000, that increased closer to 20000 by 1755. They had expanded their settlements from what is now New Brunswick, all the way into the river valleys and on the northern shore of the Bay of Fundy.

The years 1713-1755 were of great importance to Acadian existence, these decades were the foundation of a community memory of a “Golden Age” for the later generations of Acadians. In these decades life was believed to be full and abundant, where children could expect to know their grandparents and other relatives. This was a rare occurrence in the 18th century. During these years, the English officials at Annapolis Royal also allowed the Acadians to take some charge of their own political life. This “Golden Age” would come to an end in mid-summer of 1755, where the decision was made to ‘send all the French Inhabitants out of the Province.’ This was not thought to be an act of genocide, but rather an act of eighteenth-century politics.

In the year 1760, following the ‘deportation’ of Acadians, those who were still alive were scattered across the Atlantic world. When the exile was officially over in 1764, the rebuilding of Acadian communities was a very slow progress. Some Acadians were given rights to own land in Nova Scotia again after they had sworn an unequivocal oath of loyalty to England. They were now under control of the British Empire and were considered to be a minority living amongst a mixture of peoples.