

the constraint of language must remain a fundamental question for Québec Studies, which cannot forget the necessity of supporting initiatives in favour of French language teaching (and thus lend a hand to France in its fight to maintain French and francophone studies), as well as the need to ensure the translation of part of the scientific discourse on Québec into English and into other languages.

PROBLEMS AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The rapid development of Québec Studies around the world must not lead us to forget the considerable problems that remain and which still prevent any firm guarantee of their

20 years of age, and 640 million will live in francophone Southern countries, of which 280 million will be under 20 years of age" [writes Jean-Louis Roy]. That's why the AIEQ's outlook, as with that of Québec Studies in general, must turn towards Africa." (Amadou Lamine Sall, *op. cit.*, p. 278 [our translation]).

continuity. Québec Studies remain in a fragile situation, as they are supported more by individuals than by institutions or structures. The fragility is accentuated by the fact that they are confronted by new disciplines and new interdisciplinary perspectives.

One of the inherent difficulties with Québec studies is related, as we have seen, to the use of French as a scientific language. In all countries, except perhaps the United Kingdom, we observe that the “renewal of what is taught has not prevented a decline in the number of French students”¹⁰⁶ which entails the suppression of university positions and the fusion of certain French departments with other language departments, further handcuffing the emergence of Francophone and Québec Studies.

Other obstacles are linked to the accessibility of teaching and of documentation about Québec. In India, Africa, Asia, but also in

106. Jaap Lintvelt, *op. cit.*, p. 169 (our translation).

European and South American countries, the expansion of collections still largely depends on donations from Canadian embassies and Québec delegations. Everywhere one notes that “the documentation remains insufficient, which has the effect of limiting research: we work with what we can find.”¹⁰⁷ It so happens that government donations result from priorities which leave the coherence of the library collections open to chance. The distortion of the corpus is such that in some cases one finds collections of hundreds of titles that nevertheless do not include basic works or the literary classics. Even in French language countries, distributors may be lacking, making the purchase of works difficult even when they are known. Fortunately, the creation of the *Librairie du Québec à Paris* and the increased use of the Internet facilitate access to Québec documentation. Nonetheless, we are still awaiting the creation of a coherent

107. Deming Cao, *op. cit.*, p. 138 (our translation).

program for endowing and enriching university libraries.

Rich documentary holdings abroad will still never replace the need to spend time visiting Québec and doing fieldwork. We have seen how much the history of Québec Studies around the world was intimately linked to these visits, which have sometimes oriented entire careers. In this respect, travel grants remain essential, even to this day, for facilitating archival research and contact between researchers. Once again, one can only hope for the creation of a coherent travel grant program, which would seek to encourage visits to Québec for research and course-planning purposes, visits of Québec professors overseas, exchanges between foreign *québécoistes*, as well as student exchanges.

The fragility of Québec Studies' gains results from the fact that those who invest in them generally do so in a solitary manner and without institutional support. Government support, which is always essential, is not

enough to compensate for the isolation of researchers and the paucity of positions in Québec literature. In some cases, this is compounded by a lack of institutional flexibility, both in Québec and overseas. For instance, we observe resistance to the integration of Québec into programs of study in Italy,¹⁰⁸ the indifference of Québec universities to participate in centres or associations of countries outside francophone and anglophone space,¹⁰⁹ and the lack of flexibility in the negotiation of agreements between

108. "We must admit that structural problems at the university level have until now somewhat slowed down the development of research." (Sergio Zoppi, *op. cit.*, p. 235 [our translation]).

109. Romey Borges underlines that "no francophone Québec university is a member of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute created and funded by the governments of India and Canada in order to favour Canadian Studies in India and Indian Studies in Canada." (Romey Borges, *op. cit.*, p. 355 [our translation]). In the same manner, no Québec universities are part of the circumpolar consortium founded under the name University of Arctic.

libraries, which would permit a wider circulation of documents.¹¹⁰

The training of students cannot be considered without the possibility of employment. Of course, students who specialize in Québec Studies can find work in international, commercial or diplomatic relations, but these jobs are few in number. In order to ensure the renewal of faculty numbers, the positions which are occupied by those studying and teaching the subject of Québec overseas must be defined in such a manner that at retirement, any replacement must at the very least have a knowledge of Québec. This is not the case in many situations. For instance, the Chair in Québec Studies occupied by Rachel Killick at the University of Leeds is a personal chair. Upon her departure, the choice of her successor will be at the discretion of her department and of the university.

110. For example, the Shanghai Centre for Québec Studies asks that agreements of this sort be signed.

Everywhere we note the precarious institutional situation of Québec Studies, and setbacks remain common. For instance, the retirement of Cedric May, who pioneered Québec Studies in the United Kingdom, resulted in the disappearance of the program which he created at the University of Birmingham. In Germany, the Trier Centre for Québec Studies, founded in 1976, has just closed its doors.

In all these cases, the stability of the Québec presence is a precondition for useful and well thought-out interventions. Closing the Québec Delegation in Dusseldorf in 1996 slowed the development of Québec Studies in Germany and Austria. The support of the federal government, through its vast network of embassies, high commissions and consulates, in some cases ensures ongoing financing.¹¹¹

111. Ironically, David Parris writes that “a bit in the manner of Québec literature which, for a long time, survived thanks to the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, it is

Fortunately, the founding of the *Association internationale des études québécoises* in 1997 and the creation of the position of Councillor in Québec Studies at the Québec Ministry of International Relations in 2001 provide hope for an ongoing and sustained relationship between the government and foreign *québécoises*.

Those who currently teach Québec Studies overseas were not initially hired to do so. It is only with time, passion and perseverance that they managed to convince their department, and then their university, to carve out a space for Québec. This work, often receiving little recognition,¹¹² means that those who “work in the domain of Québec Studies do not do so in

thus the federal government which has been the primary funder” of the Irish Association for Canadian Studies, mainly constituted of Québec specialists (David Parris, *op. cit.*, p. 196 [our translation]).

112. David Parris underlines that if one can sometimes obtain a promotion thanks to this devotion, “it is certainly not considered as an asset” by the institutions (*ibid.*, p. 198 [our translation]).

an exclusive manner.”¹¹³ There is certainly no lack of young talent to support this teaching and this interest. However, the possibility of finding a professorship in the field lags behind the enthusiasm of young researchers, who sometimes even adopt the strategy of keeping their work from being *too* Québec-centred in order to increase their chances of being hired by a university. For example, it is beneficial for a historian “to attach himself or herself to a North American working group or to find a theme which brings him or her into contact with specialists of other geographic spaces, such as questions of immigration, international relations, but even here there is no guarantee.”¹¹⁴ The situation is the same in literary studies.¹¹⁵ The only exceptions to the rule are

113. Deming Cao, *op. cit.*, p. 138 (our translation).

114. Jacques Portes, *op. cit.*, p. 295 (our translation).

115. If new recruits in Québec literature “benefit from the presence of supervision in Québec Studies to do their thesis on a Québec subject, they must also be very careful to not limit themselves too much to the Québec context and to

in the United States and Canada, where the availability of positions allows for a renewal of the professorial corps. The creation of a Chair in Québec Studies at York University in 2001 (financed by the Québec government) and the hiring over the last decade of a dozen new professors in Québec Studies in American universities¹¹⁶ offers some hope for change in other countries. Nevertheless, it would be useful for the government to study the possibility of financing Chairs in Québec Studies in several strategic universities, as the Canadian government has done most recently by creating a Canadian Studies Chair in Paris.

Researchers and students who have chosen Québec as their object of study generally work

choose a subject susceptible to a larger treatment in the broad fields of French, historical or sociological studies. Barring this, and given the fragile institutional position of Québec Studies, they risk diminishing their chances of finding a position at the end of their studies.” (Rachel Killick, *op. cit.*, p. 183 [our translation]).

116. See Jane Moss, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

in isolation, and this remains an important obstacle in the development of collaborative projects, even in countries where Québec studies are already institutionalized, such as the United Kingdom and Germany. The “individual activities of several devoted professors,”¹¹⁷ which remain on the periphery of the work undertaken by their colleagues as a whole, nevertheless arrive at astounding results. The fragility of their gains demands the immediate adoption of a concerted, associative and institutional vision so that the retirement of these researchers with a passion for Québec does not result in the loss of what they have built. Progress has been achieved in the past few years, such that “we are obliged to note that even [if researchers in Québec Studies] are still in the minority, they are no longer solitary, without impact or allies.”¹¹⁸

117. Peter Klaus and Ingo Kolboom, *op. cit.*, p. 258 (our translation).

118. *Ibid.*, p. 264-265 (our translation).

The happy fluke that brought Klaus Ertler, Józef Kwaterko, Árpád Vígh or Voichita Sasus towards Québec¹¹⁹ “risks being ephemeral or left to chance as long as Québec Studies are not framed within a separate structure, as in the case of French studies, which benefit from a leading place in the *Romanistik*.”¹²⁰ In the meantime, the necessary coordination between researchers demands a rapid tightening of the associative network in order to ensure a significant Québec presence in Canadian Studies and Francophone Studies associations, but also to stimulate the creation of national Québec Studies associations where the number of researchers warrants it, and to give the *Association internationale des études québécoises* the means to realize its ambitions.

119. See the story of their chance discovery of Québec in Árpád Vígh’s article (*op. cit.*, p. 123) and in “Mémoires pour l’avenir,” *Cahiers francophones d’Europe centre-orientale*, vol. 11, 2001.

120. Peter Klaus and Ingo Kolboom, *op. cit.*, p. 263 (our translation).

Nonetheless, these associations are insufficient to give foreign *québécois* the instruments which they require. For instance, a professor's sabbatical can put the teaching of Québec Studies within a university on hold for a year. The creation of an inter-European system of networking would, for example, allow for the possibility of and encourage professorial exchanges, replacements, intensive courses, etc.

More fundamental questions are raised concerning the utility of Québec Studies, the integration of foreign researchers into the scientific discourse on Québec, and the reciprocity of exchanges. David Parris asks to what point the studies produced by foreign professors can be pertinent, except when part of a comparative framework projects an unexpected look on Québec.¹²¹

121. On this subject, see David Parris' remarks, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

In addition, foreign researchers must also manage to distribute the results of their work, thereby making them accessible. The creation of Canadian Studies journals in most countries provides one means to distribute this knowledge. However, the consideration of these articles in Québec is not ensured, yet this is as important as the simple fact of publishing them. The diffusion of knowledge nevertheless constitutes only one of the aspects of the full participation of foreign *québécois* in the discourse on Québec. One must also foresee their integration in the refereeing of texts (be it through editorial committees, juries, or the publication of their book reviews), their participation in research and publication programs, and in the full achievement of a reciprocity of interests.

CONCLUSION AND PROJECTS

The point of developing Québec Studies around the world is not simply to maintain a