

## STRUCTURING AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Although the degree of structuring varies by country, continent and academic tradition, it remains that in most countries, we observe a display of associative efforts and an expansion in terms of distribution, teaching and research. This attests to the general emergence of Québec studies which has been occurring over the last twenty years. The movement towards this institutionalization is often initiated by the seminar presentation of a visiting Québec writer or professor, by a trip to Québec, or through family ties with Québécois. This is followed by the publication of some articles and works on Québec, while at the same time courses and seminars are developed. This inevitably gives rise to the

---

distant from Scandinavia. Each researcher has without a doubt his or her own reasons, but the map of the circumpolar region gives us an initial explanation." (Elisabeth Lauridsen, *op. cit.*, p. 329 [our translation]).

production of masters and doctoral theses. The meeting of several researchers then leads to the founding of a national association (of Canadian studies, sometimes later of Québec studies), to the creation of a journal, and to the establishment of research and study groups and documentation centres. In certain countries, these initiatives have enabled the creation of Masters and Doctoral degree programs in Québec studies, to collaborations with Québec, to the integration of Québec studies within college programs, to the publication of teaching guides, to student and post-doctoral research exchanges.

It is the isolation of specialists which leads to the necessity of collaboration : “for a very long time, [research] has been linked to individual researchers, prior to entering a phase of consolidation and institutionalization.”<sup>56</sup> This process often gives rise to reluctance within the university : professors’ personal involvement

---

56. Ursula Mathis-Moser, *op. cit.*, p. 246 (our translation).

in Québec culture and society is “not something that university authorities have hoped and prayed for, nor inscribed in their institutions.”<sup>57</sup>

Canadian studies associations provides an initial form of support, but the insufficient representation of the French language motivates researchers to develop other associative strategies: whether this be through existing associations, like the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF) or through the *Conseil international d'études francophones* (CIÉF). In the United States, Québec specialists founded the Northeast Council for Québec Studies in 1980, which in 1984 became the American Council for Québec Studies (ACQS). In France, an *Association des jeunes chercheurs européens en littérature québécoise* (AJCELQ) was founded in 1993. Finally, the *Association internationale des études québécoises* (AIÉQ) was created in 1997 through

---

57. David Parris, *op. cit.*, p. 197-198 (our translation).

the efforts of Québec and foreign professors, made possible by the financial support of the Ministère des Relations internationales du Québec and by its incumbent at the time, Sylvain Simard.<sup>58</sup>

Little by little, relationships between foreign researchers are formed through the relay of Québec, a structure which Jean-Marie Klinkenberg qualifies as a “network”: “this model enables Belgian, European and Québec researchers to come into contact, without Québec researchers always being at the centre or even present in the research projects.”<sup>59</sup> This configuration also gave the United States the *Québec Summer Seminar*, which has been animated for a long time by two professors

---

58. Sylvain Simard had several years earlier defended a thesis which appeared under the title: *Mythe et reflet de la France. L'image du Canada en France, 1850-1914*, Ottawa, Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, coll. “Cahiers du Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française.”

59. Jean-Marie Klinkenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 83 (our translation).

from Plattsburgh, and in which hundreds of professors from the United States, Mexico and Europe have participated since 1979. For students, the "European seminars for graduate students in Canadian studies" allow doctoral students to present their thesis topics and discuss them once a year.

Some projects have instituted a genuine reciprocity between Québec and other countries. In Spain, comparative research on the urban spaces of Barcelona and Montreal have brought together specialists of the two cities. As for Belgium and France, the involvement of researchers in projects organized by the Centre de recherches en littérature québécoise of Université Laval falls within this ambit. However, these exchanges are still very rare, despite the constitution of organizations and bilateral programs which should favour them. Here one thinks of the *Centre de coopération interuniversitaire franco-québécoise* in the case of France ; the Shastri Institute in India ; the cooperation agreement between Université

du Québec à Montréal and Brazilian universities ; or even the "CANO" project of the "NORDPLUS" exchange program with the Nordic countries, a project whose launch has nevertheless been delayed.

#### THROUGH CANADIAN STUDIES

Québec studies have been able to penetrate foreign university programs in two manners : through Canadian studies or through French studies, which have been recently redefined, in numerous countries, as franco-phone studies. While these two perspectives have opened up an institutional route for Québec studies, they nevertheless each pose their own methodological and political problems. In some cases they have in fact proven to be genuine dead-ends.

If one excludes academics who hesitate before identifying themselves as "Canadianists" or as "Québecists" (especially sociologists, historians, specialists of social phenomena or of feminist questions, etc.), it becomes apparent