

CHINA PAPERS
No. 18

CIC

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DU CANADA

CANADIAN STUDIES
IN CHINA

Brian L. Evans

August 2010

Canadian International Council
www.onlinecic.org

Conseil international du Canada
www.cicenligne.org

ABSTRACT

The support of Canadian Studies programs abroad by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade began some three decades ago. Today, Canadian Studies programs exist in nearly 40 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, and in Israel, New Zealand and Australia. There are over 400 Canadian Studies Centres worldwide with more than 40 of them in China. The goal of Canadian Studies in China is to provide educational, cultural, business and governmental elites with a deeper awareness of Canada, how it functions as a multicultural society and to provide some background understanding of Canadian international policies. In China, the seeds of Canadian Studies have been widely scattered. This is understandable given the geographic size and population of China and the diversity of Canadian interests there. If Canadian Studies are to progress in China as Chinese scholars of Canada would like, some major changes need to be considered. We need to work harder to assure that Canada remains understood and important to China. Unfortunately, if nothing is done beyond the current approach to Canadian Studies, serious, organized interest in Canada will stagnate. A foundation has been laid; it awaits a significant structure.

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis maintenant une trentaine d'années, le ministère des Affaires étrangères et du Commerce international apporte son soutien aux programmes d'études canadiennes à l'étranger. Aujourd'hui, il existe de tels programmes dans près de 40 pays des Amériques, d'Europe et d'Asie de même qu'en Israël, en Nouvelle-Zélande et en Australie. On dénombre ainsi dans le monde plus de 400 Centres d'études canadiennes, dont plus de 40 en Chine. Dans ce pays, ils ont pour but de transmettre aux élites des secteurs de l'éducation, de la culture, des affaires et du gouvernement une connaissance plus approfondie du Canada, de sa société multiculturelle et de sa politique internationale. Mais les semences plantées par les études canadiennes se sont beaucoup dispersées au fil du temps, ce qu'explique l'étendue géographique de la Chine et l'importance de sa population tout autant que la diversité des intérêts qu'y possède le Canada. Des changements majeurs sont donc nécessaires pour que les études canadiennes progressent en Chine au rythme où le souhaitent les universitaires chinois établis au Canada. Nous devons ainsi redoubler d'effort pour assurer au Canada d'être mieux compris et considéré par la Chine. Car malheureusement, tout intérêt sérieux et concerté pour le Canada continuera d'y stagner si rien n'est fait au-delà de l'approche actuelle des études canadiennes. Les bases ont été jetées depuis longtemps mais elles attendent toujours une structure digne de ce nom.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author served as Cultural Counsellor at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing 1973-1974 and served on the Academic Relations Committee of the Department of External Affairs in the late 1970s when the original Canadian Studies strategy was formulated. He has been involved in the Canadian Studies program in China during the past decade as a visiting scholar, special lecturer and conference keynote speaker.

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Canadian International Council, its Senate or its Board of Directors.

If you would like to download a copy of this report please visit www.onlinecic.org

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or have questions about our publications please contact: info@onlinecic.org

ISSN 1921-9865 (Online) ISSN 1921-9881 (Print)

© 2010 Canadian International Council

INTRODUCTION

The support of Canadian Studies¹ programs abroad by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) began some three decades ago. In 1975, the Commission on Canadian Studies, chaired by T.B. Symons issued its report *To Know Ourselves*. The report disclosed a widespread ignorance among Canadians of their own history and roots. It argued for the instituting of Canadian Studies programs across Canada at the university level. If we Canadians are unaware of our background, how could we expect other countries to be aware? The then Department of External Affairs was persuaded to provide support and encouragement for the growth of Canadian Studies abroad through its Academic Relations Division. At first, the encouragement was given to universities in the United States and the United Kingdom, such as Duke and Edinburgh, that already offered courses with Canadian content, and in France, to balance efforts made by the Quebec Parti Quebecois government. The Department soon moved from a policy of grafting onto existing programs to one of seeking out interested institutions in other countries. Today, Canadian Studies programs exist in nearly 40 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, and in Israel, New Zealand and Australia. There are over 400 Canadian Studies Centres worldwide with more than 40 of them in China compared to the United States, which has over 50. There are some 34 national and multi-national Canadian Studies Associations around the world, among them the Association for Canadian Studies in China (ACSC) formed in 1984. The Canadian Studies Associations are linked together through the International Council for Canadian Studies (ICCS) formed in 1981 as a non-profit organization, and established as a separate entity in 1987 with a Secretariat in Ottawa. The Council's Board of Directors has one representative from each of the participating country associations from which a four person Executive Committee is elected. In addition to the funding received from the Canadian government, ICCS raises funds from non-public sources. The ICCS manages, among other programs, the Canadian Studies program abroad on behalf of DFAIT. It sets the general goals for Canadian Studies under a mandate that calls for the worldwide promotion of "scholarly study, research, teaching and publication about Canada in all disciplines and all countries."² While the ICCS sets broad goals and principles, objectives within individual countries can be, and are, influenced by the Canadian Mission within a country. Thus, when looking at the nature of Canadian Studies in a given country, one must take into account both how well the program has responded to ICCS guidelines and to those suggestions or directives offered by DFAIT representatives within that country.

As a member of ICCS since 1984, ACSC has access to a number of programs, which include:

- Faculty enrichment
- Faculty research
- Doctoral student research awards
- Canada-Asia-Pacific Award in Canadian Studies

Outside of ICCS-administered programs, Canadian Studies Centres in China have access to the DFAIT Canadian Studies Development Program, (since 2008 reconceived as the Understanding Canada: Canadian Studies Program), under which support is given to projects such as roundtables, conferences and workshops on Canadian issues, including cooperative research, invitations to Canadian scholars to undertake lecture tours and the publication of books. In addition, scholars have access to the five-week summer Special Award for Canadian Studies (SACS), and to the Canada-China Scholars' Exchange Program, through the Canadian Embassy and Consulates in China. The latter program is, however, broader based than Canadian Studies.

It is safe to say that the average Canadian is unaware of the amount of time, effort and money that is expended in these attempts to gain better understanding of Canada abroad. Nor is the average Canadian aware of the broad international network of scholars, students and researchers brought together under the umbrella of ICCS. Like all far flung empires, not all of its components will be active all of the time, particularly under a

1 For the purposes of this paper, the term "Canadian Studies" is limited to studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, including Business. The term "Canadian Studies" refers to the Canadian government program of that name and does not include all aspects of the study of Canada throughout China.

2 International Council for Canadian Studies, *Knowing Canada Better*.

program that offers a variety of carrots, but which has very few sticks, if any. The purpose of this paper is to look at the form, function and results of Canadian Studies in China

CANADIAN STUDIES IN CHINA

The first Canadian Studies programs in China began in 1984, following on China's agreements with the International Development Research Centre and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). It had been common for Canadians involved with China, particularly since the wheat deals beginning in 1961, to succumb to the idea that Canada and China had a special relationship. The symbol of this special relationship was Dr. Norman Bethune, who was well-known in China and little known in Canada. Ignored in these early days was the fact that Chinese and Canadians looked on Bethune differently. To the Chinese, Bethune was a communist and an internationalist who happened to be a Canadian; to Canadians, Bethune was a Canadian medical missionary, who happened to be a communist. But Bethune, as a symbol of Chinese-Canadian understanding, had past his best before date, with the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the subsequent introduction by Deng Xiaoping of modernization reforms in the early 1980s. Yet Canadians cling to the belief of the importance of Bethune to continued good Canada-China relations. In interviews, Adrienne Clarkson, author of the most recent biography of Bethune, claims that he is known by 1.5 billion Chinese. Even allowing for book promotional hype, such a statement is wide off the mark. Bethune, as a household word in China, began to decline rapidly in the 1980s. Indeed, one of Canada's Ambassadors to China during this period is said to have regarded Bethune as a traitor and requested, forcefully, that Chinese officials not mention his name in his presence.

Currently, those Chinese under 35 years of age are unlikely to spend much time thinking about Bethune, as the amnesia concerning the Cultural Revolution continues to spread. Younger Chinese are more familiar with Dashan (Mark Roswell), the Canadian star of Chinese television, proclaimed as the most famous foreigner in China.

Consequently, it is becoming more and more popular for Canadians to point to him as the symbol of China-Canada relations. Again, it is frequently said by members of the Canadian media that Dashan is known to 1.5 billion Chinese. This boast is perhaps more accurate, but to equate it with some sort of widespread understanding of, or friendship for, Canada, is to believe that Rich Little deepened the appreciation of Canada among Americans. The Chinese regard Dashan as an entertainer who happens to be a Canadian, while Canadians look on Dashan as a Canadian who happens to be an entertainer. In the case of Dashan, Chinese and Canadians are alike in being impressed by a non-ethnic Chinese speaking Chinese with such facility. But to promote the myth that some sort of amalgam of Bethune and Dashan predisposes all Chinese to be favourable towards Canada does both countries a disservice. Canadians need to be aware that, at the popular level, Chinese views of Canada are coloured just as much by the Lai Chongxing case (in which a known Chinese criminal who claimed refugee status in Canada has been able to use the Canadian legal system to avoid extradition and trial in China and now has a Canadian work permit) as they are by Dashan or Bethune. Also, knowledge of Canada among Chinese at the rice roots level is greatly influenced by stories relayed from Canada by Chinese immigrants.

All this is to say that it is foolish to attempt to assess the impact of Canada and of Canadian Studies on China based upon the popularity or unpopularity of individuals. The goal of Canadian Studies in China is to provide educational, cultural, business and governmental elites with a deeper awareness of Canada, how it functions as a multicultural society and to provide some background understanding of Canadian international policies. Or, as has more recently been stated by DFAIT: "The Program still aims to create and support a pool of foreign experts on Canada that in turn could transmit their knowledge or advise other colleagues, often in decision making positions, on issues of interest to Canada."³

3 Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Understanding Canada*.

ORIGINS AND CURRENT STATUS OF CANADIAN STUDIES IN CHINA

From a modest beginning in 1984, Canadian Studies in China currently boasts of some 43 separate centres and programs. Their 400, or more, members form the base for the ACSC, whose Canadianists organize regional conferences, often on specific themes, and who participate in the biennial national meetings. The individual centres are located in or attached to institutions of higher learning, where courses on Canada are offered. Some courses are directly on Canada, while others include aspects of Canadian experience within course content. More intensive study is carried out by graduate students who choose a Canadian topic for their theses and who have supervisors with a record of study in Canada and/or of publications concerning Canada. In the early years, the range of topics was narrow. In Canadian literature, perhaps the most popular field, they might include the study, sometimes comparatively, of the writings of Canadian authors, Margaret Atwood and Margaret Laurence being popular subjects. Students in the Social Sciences might write on Canadian immigration policy, the lives of individual Canadians such as missionaries or diplomats who had careers in China. In recent times, topics range further afield. With the help of the internet and instructors who have links within Canada, students undertake topics such as the structure and content of Canadian media, the nature of multiculturalism, Canada's health system, separate aspects of Canadian foreign policy, etc.

Students and their professors are able to test their ideas through meetings of the ACSC. Under the ACSC are regional associations that meet in between national meetings, while the ACSC sponsors the biennial national conferences. The association members, through the ACSC website, internet newsletters and journals, publish news of activities and their work. Some publish their work in Canadian Studies Journals in other countries. Within China, members of the ACSC have produced a plethora of books, monographs and articles. These range from translations of important Canadian works on law, history and society and the writings of Canadian authors such as Margaret Atwood, Margaret Laurence, Rudy Wiebe, Farley Moat and others, to specialized studies by Professor Liu Guangtai of Hubei Normal University on Chester Ronning and on Pierre Trudeau, to a volume by Professor Jiang Peng of the World History Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) on "The Civilization of Canada" in a series on World Civilizations published by CASS. Few of these publications, however, are likely to have an impact beyond universities and specialized agencies in the Chinese government.

Most of the above-described activities are supported and to a great degree subsidized by the Canadian Government through its Embassy and Consulates in China. This support includes grants for translation of Canadian works, major awards to assist scholars to spend a year in Canada to do first-hand research and short-term summer grants for scholars to experience Canada first-hand and to explore a topic of their interest. The Embassy is also very influential in establishing the themes for the biennial conference held by the ACSC and in assisting with bringing in Canadian speakers.

In addition, the President of the ACSC is invited to the annual meetings of the ICCS, where there is an opportunity to share and compare experiences with Canadian Studies Associations from around the world. In 1990, the ICCS annual meeting was held in Beijing in conjunction with the national ACSC meeting. Through the internet, ICCS provides associations with updates on Canadian publications, comprehensive bibliographies of Canadian Studies and other networking information. Beyond the ICCS connection, members of ACSC, and indeed anyone anxious to learn more about Canada, can reach out and touch individual Canadians, Canadian organizations and institutions through the internet.

To gain an appreciation of how far Canadian Studies have come in China since their inception in 1984, it is instructive to look at the notes for a paper, "Two Decades' Canadian Studies in China," delivered in Chongqing in the fall of 2004 at the biennial ACSC conference. The author, Professor Wang Bing of Liaoning Normal University, pointed out that, in the 1950s, only about 15 articles on Canada appeared in Chinese newspapers. The 1960s were little better with only 17 articles about Canada. In the 1970s, with diplomatic relations having been established, the article count rose to 111 and the Chinese government sponsored the translation of a *History*

of Canada and a *Centennial History of Canada* by Shandong University. In addition the Chinese government developed a North American Economic Research Division at Wuhan University and a North American Economic and Geographic Research Division at East China Normal University. Both of these initiatives were designed to meet government diplomatic and political purposes. The main focus was the United States and research areas were limited to history, geography and economics.

In the 1980s, the growth of reform and the opening of China provided greater impetus to learn more about Canada, encouraged in part by the Chinese scholars and professors who went as visiting scholars to Canada after 1978 to upgrade their skills that had been stunted by the Cultural Revolution. With the establishment of the ACSC in 1984 came the recognition of Canadian Studies as a discipline in Chinese universities. In 1985, ACSC members attended the ICCS conference in Montreal establishing the Chinese Association as the tenth member of the Council. Also in 1985, Ruan Xihu published the first monograph on Canada, entitled "Ethnic Groups in Canada." Since the mid-1980s, ACSC membership has grown steadily and now numbers over 400 members. Research has become more diversified to include law, culture, literature, environment, language, education, ethnic studies, media, along with interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. Until his untimely death in 1987, a key figure in the promotion of Canadian Studies in China was Professor Hsieh Pei-hsieh of the University of Regina, who, although from Taiwan, had close ties with the University of Shandong. The outstanding growth in the 1980s was capped by the combined ACSC and ICCS meeting held in Beijing in 1990, the year following the Tiananmen incident.

Throughout the 1990s, Canadian Studies enjoyed further steady growth. From eight Centres in the 1980s, the number grew to the over 40 of the early 21st century. Some centres specialize: for example, Shandong University in literature, Liaoning Normal University in multiculturalism and immigration, Inner Mongolia University in Native Studies and Heilongjiang University in language and bilingualism. Although no direct count has been made, the increased specialization and spread of activity has led to more papers being published in national journals and more articles in influential newspapers. Two book series were launched in the 1990s. The first, *Glimpses of Canada*, begun at Beijing University in 1992, has become *Canadian Studies Research* since 2004. The second series, *Canadian Horizon*, has been published by CASS since 1996. In 1995, a two volume history of Quebec was published along with histories of Canadian literature and Canadian drama. Within universities, Canadian Studies concentrations at the graduate level were introduced at Nanjing University, Shandong University, Nankai University, Lanzhou University, Tianjin Normal University, Inner Mongolia University, Sichuan University, Hubei Normal University and others. A number of institutions have given Canadian professors adjunct status, and most have more than one linkage with Canadian universities.

Outside of the immediate Canadian Studies program in the 1990s, but greatly contributing to the growth of the study of Canada was a joint CASS and Royal Society of Canada project that ran from 1993-1998. Called the Democracy Project, it brought together scholars in the Social Sciences from China and Canada in joint seminars held in both countries. Funded mainly by CIDA with assistance from DFAIT and CASS, it enabled Canadian experts such as Alan Cairns, Jan Meisel, Craig Brown, Ramsay Cook, David Bercuson and Stephane Dion to engage with Chinese counterparts on questions of Canada's history, social, political and economic structures. It was the first, and perhaps the only, intense and in-depth engagement between scholars of the two countries on the subject of Canada. The outcome was an increased interest in Canada within CASS and the publication of a collection of papers in China.

In the same vein, CIDA sponsored linkages between Canadian and Chinese business and management schools, begun in the early 1980s, deepened the understanding of Canada in China, and vice versa. Some of these linkages remain active up to today. Other CIDA-funded projects involving training Chinese in Canada's legal and governmental systems have added further dimensions to the picture of Canada in China. These projects are but a sample, there being many others in education, performing arts, etc., all of which fall outside the rubric of Canadian Studies, but which enhance the appreciation of Canada by China's policy makers.

The ACSC conforms to the general organizational pattern of Canadian Studies Associations around the world. ACSC has over 400 members, among them fine established scholars and talented young researchers. Many of the established scholars have benefited from time in Canada. Among them are those who hold doctoral degrees from Canadian universities, offer courses devoted to Canada and organize special conferences on Canadian themes at their universities. One such example is Professor Wang Bing of Liaoning Normal University, who holds a doctor's degree in education from the University of Calgary. In 2006, with support from the Canadian Studies development fund of the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, Professor Wang organized a highly successful conference on the theme of multiculturalism in which the Canadian experience was used to illuminate the problems that China faces with ethnic minorities. At this conference, a younger Chinese scholar, Gu Junwei, presented an insightful paper on the treatment of minorities in Canadian media. It was extraordinary because he had never been to Canada, yet nearly all of what he said rang true to the Canadians in attendance. Subsequently, he was able to travel to Canada on a short-term SACS grant to test his ideas through meetings with Canadian media outlets. This enabled him to polish his original paper and to give a revised version to the ACSC biennial conference at Nanjing in November 2008. This is but one example of the Canadian Studies program at work.

In fact, the 13th Biennial Conference of ACSC held in Nanjing, November 7-9, 2008, in conjunction with the latest ACSC report to ICCS, provide the most recent overall snapshot of the state of Canadian Studies in China. Sponsored by the Nanjing University of Finance and Economics, the conference met at the university campus for the first day's plenary sessions and for the final evening concert of Canadian songs and a Canadian speech contest. Over 120 delegates, among them half a dozen from Canada and one from Mexico, attended. The plenary sessions were addressed by Chinese and Canadian scholars as well as by university, Canadian Embassy and ACSC representatives. The priority conference themes had been laid down earlier in the year by the Canadian Embassy in Beijing in keeping with the newly launched "Understanding Canada: Canadian Studies" initiative. This initiative represents a more forceful approach to Canadian Studies to be taken by DFAIT, which, it is said, to provide "a program better adapted to the new realities of the academic environment...[and]...aiming to demonstrate how the program could in several cases, come in support of Canadian foreign policy."⁴ It was recognized that the laying down of a list of priority themes "raised a few concerns in some circles especially regarding academic freedom and the possible exclusion of some disciplines."⁵

The priority themes were:

- Democracy, Rule of Law, Human Rights
- Economic Prosperity and Competitiveness
- Environment and Energy
- Managing Diversity
- North-American Partnership
- Peace and Security

Given that conference organizers would unlikely receive funding from the Embassy should the list of themes not be respected, not surprisingly the plenary addresses, more or less, reflected them. Chinese scholars discoursed on anti-corruption practices of the Government of Canada, the fight against money laundering in Canada, university responses to Canada's innovation strategy and on the 'soft power' of Canada. Canadian contributors spoke of Canadian-Chinese relations today, Aboriginal health in Canada and Canadian approaches to managing diversity.

After the first day, panel discussions, divided among five broad categories, were held at the Shuangmenlou hotel. The panels were: Economics and Law; International Affairs, History, Society, Government; Culture and Multiculturalism and Education, and E. Literature. While the plenary talks had been delivered mainly in English, the papers in the panels were delivered some times in English, sometimes in French and sometimes

⁴ Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Understanding Canada*.

⁵ *Ibid.*

in Chinese. A few titles from these sessions give an idea of the current range, breadth and depth of Canadian Studies at China's universities:

- "Overpass Multiculturalism: Reflections of the Canadian Multiculturalism"
- "Comparative Study on the Ethnic Relations between China and Canada"
- "From Quantum Theory's Uncertainty Principle to Information Multiple Processing and Various Endings Brought About by Butterfly Effect"
- "A Comparative Study of Margaret Atwood's Happy Endings and Stephen Dobyns' Kansas"
- "On the Duplessis Government"
- "Histoire de Passion et de Mort, de Neige et de Fureur"
- "Studies on Species Diversity of the St. Lawrence River"
- "Feminism in the Making: The Significance of Ethel Wilson's Literary Style"
- "Multiculturalism Reflected in Canadian Media"
- "Une Etude sur le Film Quebequois"
- "On the Brief Characteristics of Universities' Administration in Canada"
- "An Impact of the Humanities Education in Canadian Universities on the Reform in Chinese Universities"
- "The Development and Innovation of Higher Education"
- "Ivory Tower or Company: Commercialization of Canadian Universities in the World as a Big Market"
- "Towards a Better Understanding of the Real Needs of the North American Indians"
- "On the Impact of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms"
- "Characteristics and Development of Foreign Policy and Sino-Canadian Relations in Harper's Government"
- "Why Young People Do Not Vote – Observation and Analysis of Canadian Low Voter Turnout"
- "Canadian Foreign Policy toward Taiwan"
- "On Research of Canadian History in China"
- "Margaret Atwood and Quilt Making"
- "Harper Administration Human-Rights Diplomacy towards China"
- "The Impact of NAFTA on Canada"

Each of the above topics, and many more, was the subject of a paper delivered by a Chinese scholar keen on Canadian Studies. There can be little doubt that Canadian Studies in China has matured and come of age, although a truer picture of its real nature would have included at least one plenary address devoted to Canadian literature.

In a brief preliminary report summing up the first year's global operation of the new "Understanding Canada" initiative, the anonymous writer(s) reflect upon how successful the program was, because the results show that 84% of the grants awarded were directly linked to the stated priority themes. This is perhaps not too surprising, particularly since it was made clear in the application forms that priority consideration would be given to those themes. In the list of possible subjects, in priority order, history, politics and literature came last. These are the very areas that have formed the main foundation of ACSC. It is noteworthy that the list of successful candidates for the summer 2009 Special Award for Canadian Studies under the new priorities is quite different from that of 2008. While the 2008 list contains the names of young, not-yet-established scholars, the 2009 list is exclusively of professors and doctors from universities from CASS. Three of the 15 awards were given to professors from schools of foreign languages, with the rest being distributed among law, political science, environment, international studies, etc. Continuing in the self-congratulatory style of the report of the results of the first year of the implementation of "Understanding Canada," the writer(s) conclude: "It was an interesting

and full year for “understanding Canada” and great results were achieved. Having responded to the expectations regarding governmental priorities while continually respecting academic freedom and its partners, the team both in Ottawa and abroad, will continue to work on the development and success of the program.”⁶

Clearly the message coming from DFAIT, not just in China, but to all Canadian Studies Associations abroad, is, “This is how you are to study Canada.” Such a message, if delivered to Canadian scholars engaged in the study of another country, would be rejected, if not laughed at. It is clear that the new approach does not sit well with the ICCS, who in their document entitled, “Knowing Canada Better: Strategic plan 2008-2013, Appendix 2 Rethinking the Study of Canada,” include the following recommendation, beginning on page 14: “Endeavour to take into consideration government priorities and directives within research and teaching activities and projects, keeping in mind that changes in government priorities and directives occur more often and more rapidly than research can adjust to, and that, as a consequence, the two cannot be completely compatible.”⁷

THE FUTURE OF CANADIAN STUDIES IN CHINA

In 2006, the International Council for Canadian Studies celebrated its 25th anniversary with the publication of a work by Serge Jaumain entitled “The Canadianists: The ICCS / 25 Years in the Service of Canadian Studies.” On page 12 there is a description of the long-term potential impact of the program:

The world over, Canadian Studies are taught to many tens of thousands of student by professors who, in the course of their academic careers, were one fine day awarded a scholarship in Canada. This allowed them to complete their studies, that is, to specialize in a specific field of their choosing, and later suggest to the administration of their university that one or more courses on Canada be offered by that institution. While it may be true that not all of the students they teach will go on to specialize in Canadian Studies, their young charges will at least have been given the opportunity, during their university years, to learn something about this country. It takes no great exertion of imagination to grasp that, in one way or another, the knowledge of Canada they acquired through these courses will stand them in good stead in their chosen profession.⁸

Such is the dream, but like all programs, there is never enough money for Canadian Studies in China. Unfortunately, all too frequently, there are not enough resources to follow up on initiatives. Some scholars will be successful in gaining support to go to Canada for graduate degree work, while others will be given a shorter term exposure. Still others might independently win a place in a Canadian graduate program or pursue their studies of Canada at a Chinese institution. For a number of others, a paper delivered at a conference will represent as far as they go in the study of Canada.

While finding funding for keen young scholars of Canadian Studies is one problem, the retention of established and mature scholars is another. The retirement regulations in Chinese universities, which put established scholars out to pasture at the time in their careers when they are having their greatest impact, plus the conscious ageism in grant application regulations or the unconscious ageism in evaluations, has proved to be discouraging factors to senior, productive scholars. Moreover, these senior scholars, as members of ACSC, are unable pursue the cause of Canadian Studies as vigorously as they might, because of lack of resources. ACSC’s lack of resources is evident in its inability to keep its website up to date, or to maintain its online newsletter. What should be key instruments in networking among scholars, bringing to their attention news and opportunities, is moribund, or lethargic, at best. ACSC has had to rely too heavily on the spare time of already overburdened academics, who must undertake the great efforts needed to organize successful biennial meetings. Overburdened academics are also unable to exploit what resources that are available, say for staging workshops, roundtables

6 Ibid.

7 International Council for Canadian Studies, *Knowing Canada Better*.

8 Jaumain, “The Canadianists.”

and special conferences on Canadian issues. They need to know how to go about it and in this ACSC should play a vital role.

There is another problem that perhaps faces all Canadian Studies programs abroad, but is exacerbated in China because of language barriers: how to entice busy Canadian specialists, i.e. Canadian Canadianists, to undertake a lecture tour in China of two or three weeks duration. Canadian Canadianists are among academia's most stay-at-home people. In the past, some have stated outright that they cannot see how such a tour would advance their careers. Even for someone who is willing to undertake a tour, the logistics, given busy home schedules, present a major challenge. As a result, apart from the previously mentioned Royal Society of Canada/CASS collaboration, real Canadian experts have been thin on the ground in China. The breach has been filled by Canadian China specialists and by visiting politicians willing to discourse on subjects, oft times quite peripheral to their own areas of expertise. The hazard faced by politicians speaking at Canadian Studies Centres is illustrated by the experience of Premier Ralph Klein of Alberta at Peking University. After giving a talk on the intricacies of the oil industry, he agreed to answer questions. The first question was: *What do you think of Margaret Atwood?* There is only so long, however, that Chinese academics, seriously engaged in the study of Canada, can make do with yet another lecture on Chinese immigration to Canada, multiculturalism or Canada-China relations – topics they have heard expounded upon many times before. For too long, Canadian Studies in China has had to depend upon serendipitous and occasional visits by a Canadian expert and upon Canadian China specialists.

Despite this, the seeds for Canadian Studies have been well sown, but the question is how are they to be tended and brought to maturity. In this case, one comes up against a problem inherent to Canadian Studies programs outside Canada that are so dependent on DFAIT. In the pursuit of DFAIT's specific objectives, thriving Canadian Studies Associations and Centres are a plus, but it is a rare academic who is willing to tailor his or her research strictly to the interests and objectives of Canadian diplomacy and trade. Yet, with shortages of funds, DFAIT is naturally reluctant to underwrite what it might see as the tangential interests of a purely academic nature, no matter how famous is the scholar proposing them. Unless, perhaps, if that academic has an established and an influential national profile.

In China, the seeds of Canadian Studies have been widely scattered. This is understandable given the geographic size and population of China and the diversity of Canadian interests there. Nonetheless, it can be argued that Canada, through DFAIT, has sown what, under the new "Understanding Canada" strategy and priorities, it is no longer prepared to reap. There is a firm foundation in China for the study of Canadian literature (French and English), history and politics, represented by scores of professors and by hundreds of students, but DFAIT has placed these fields at the very bottom of its priority list for funding. Are they no longer essential to understanding Canada? This can only be discouraging to ACSC executives and members who are being invited to be like blades of grass, bending in whichever direction the winds from DFAIT bid them. In the past, the Department's financial gatekeepers have not always been sensitive to the nature of the academic contributions being made.

It would seem that Canadian Studies in China is at a crossroads. If Canadian Studies are to progress in China as Chinese scholars of Canada would like, some major changes need to be considered. Most of the current centres lack the critical mass of scholars needed to sustain vibrant and robust programs. The designation of a few centres, say, in Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing, as Canada Institutes, drawing their membership from the scholars in those cities and surrounding areas, and to which smaller centres could look for leadership and direction, would do much to raise and maintain interest in the scholarly study of Canada. Such Institutes would have to seek private and public funding in order to reduce the current dependence on Canadian government sources and to carry out programs of their own design, which could include ones to attract Canadian experts as visitors. Chinese scholars, who have published substantial works on Canada, could be attached (no matter their age) as Senior Fellows to an institute and contribute their ideas and expertise on Canada in exchange for research opportunities in Canada. The alternative, given the current situation, is to do nothing and to watch the broad scholarly interest in Canada wither in the face of DFAIT priorities.

No matter what, since its beginnings in 1984, Canadian Studies in China have outgrown the original concept. To date, Canadian Studies in China can be termed a success. Not only has it recruited excellent scholars to its fold, but it has established itself throughout the length and breadth of China. Moreover, the study of Canada has had its impact upon Chinese views of multiculturalism, civil society, volunteerism, university governance and in a host of other areas. It is a time now for Canada's Canadianists to recognize what has been accomplished in China, to exploit still further the wonders of information technology that have shrunk the Pacific into a pond and to build upon the interest in Canada that Chinese Canadianists have so ably demonstrated.

CONCLUSION

The Canadian Studies program in China is at a crossroads. For it to develop further, some major changes need to be considered. Most of the current centres in China lack the necessary critical mass to sustain robust programs. Those that are capable of doing so should be recognized and designated as Institutes of Canadian Studies, which can network with smaller centres in their geographic area. Currently, among the best candidates for Institute status are Beijing, Nanjing, Chongqing and Shanghai. Institutes should be charged with raising the profile of Canadian Studies in their areas through conferences, speakers programs, research projects and library resource building. Institutes will have to seek funds outside those provided by DFAIT, from private sector interests. It is assumed that the Institutes (as well as centres) will continue to enjoy 'in kind' support from Chinese education authorities. Institutes must be capable of attracting Canadian experts on Canada for short- and long-term visits. Chinese scholars of Canada, with established research and publication records, must be recognized, no matter their age, as Senior Fellows of an Institute and be invited to participate in the planning of the Institute's ongoing projects. Institutes should as soon as possible link with one or more Canadian institutions. This is not only important to the Institutes themselves, but very important to encourage Canadian specialists to take seriously the Canadian Studies program in China, and to bridge the gulf that continues to exist between Chinese specialists on Canada and Canadianists in Canada. In addition to internal and external academic relations, the Institutes, along with the centres, must be encouraged to establish community outreach programs with local schools, public service organizations and media, to raise the knowledge of Canada beyond the "Bethune/Dashan" level. The anticipated increase in Chinese tourists to Canada can be expected to spark a farther interest in the 'real' Canada, which ideally will encourage Chinese schools to include the study of Canada in school curriculums.

The above recommendation for the establishment for Canadian Studies Institutes and pro-active programs involving both China and Canada involves much more money than is currently being expended and a much greater effort at co-ordination. Nonetheless, it is an effort worthy of the support from Canadian governments at all levels, not to mention the private sector. It has been 40 years since the exchange of official recognition between Canada and China. Now, more than ever, China is in Canada's future. We need to work harder, however, to assure that Canada remains understood and important to China. Unfortunately, if nothing is done beyond the current approach to Canadian Studies, serious, organized interest in Canada will stagnate. A foundation has been laid; it awaits a significant structure.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Association for Canadian Studies in China. "Listserve No 29." March 17, 2007. <http://www.canadastudies.com.cn/cs/79985.html> (Accessed July 29, 2010)
- _____. *Harmonious Development in Canada and China: Comparative Studies*. Proceedings, 13th Biennial Conference, 7-9 November, 2008. Nanjing University of Finance and Economics, 2008.
- Canada. Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. "Understanding Canada, The First Year." <http://www.international.gc.ca/studies-etudes/report-bilan.aspx?lang=eng>. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- _____. "Our Partners." <http://www.international.gc.ca/studies-etudes/partners-partenaires.aspx?lang=en>. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- Canada. Government of Canada. "Academic Relations Programs in China." http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/china-chine/academic_relations_academiques/academic_relations_universitaires.aspx?lang=eng (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- _____. "Nominations are open for the 2009 Special Award for Canadian Studies." http://geo.international.gc.ca/asia/china/media/education/default_1-en.aspx?id=13614. (Accessed August 2009).
- _____. "Announcement of Scholars for the 2009 Special Award for Canadian Studies." http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/china-chine/highlights-faits/highlights-faits_14232.aspx?lang=en. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- _____. "Canada-China Scholars' Exchange Program." <http://bourses.gc.ca/CCSEPCdnChina-PEUCCCdnchine-Eng.aspx>. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- "Dashan." <http://www.dashan.com/en/index.htm>. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- de Finney, James, et. al, eds. *Canadian Studies at Home and Abroad*. Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1995.
- Hoerder, Dirk. *To Know Our Many Selves: From the Study of Canada to Canadian Studies*. Ausberg: Wißner-Verlag, 2005.
- Howard, Martin. "Report of the ICCS Member Associations and Associate Members, Quebec – May 22-23, 2009." International Council for Canadian Studies. ICCS Associations Annual Report, 2008-2009. http://www.iccs-ciec.ca/pdf/reports_and_summaries/complete-Associations-report09.pdf. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- International Council for Canadian Studies, "Knowing Canada Better: Strategic Plan 2008-2013." May 2008. http://www.iccs-ciec.ca/pdf/ICCS%20Strategic%20Plan%202008-2013_en.pdf. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- Rooth, Tim, et. al, eds. *Canadian Studies in Britain 1970-210*. London: British Association for Canadian Studies, 2007.
- Serge Jaumain. "The Canadianists: The ICCS / 25 years in the Service of Canadian Studies." International Council for Canadian Studies. 2006. http://www.iccs-ciec.ca/pdf/CEIC_25_en.pdf. (Accessed July 29, 2010).
- Wang, Bing "Two Decades' Canadian Studies." PowerPoint notes provided by the author.

THE CIC CANADA-CHINA RELATIONS PROJECT

Bilateral relations between the governments of Canada and the People's Republic of China are a matter of strategic interest to Canada. Recent changes in the frequency of high-level visits, the effective style and content of bilateral communications and perspectives held about each country by various sectors of each other's society all suggest that the Canada-China relationship has changed significantly in recent years. Yet China remains vitally important to Canada for a variety of reasons and in a variety of sectors. Political and diplomatic cooperation on issues of direct bilateral concern and also on issues of global import remains critically important. Commercial and trade ties linking Canada with the world's third largest and fastest growing economy are of obvious importance. Cultural and civil society ties, including immigration patterns and the ancillary effects they generate, are also important. In these and other matters, the Canada-China relationship will likely grow in importance in the years to come. While the diversity of links between Canada and China militates in favour of giving due attention to a multiplicity of commercial, academic and civil society links, bilateral cooperation at the federal/central government level remains important.

In keeping with CIC objectives to advance research and dialogue on international affairs issues of importance and interest to Canadians, the CIC Canada-China Relations Project has focused on supporting research and analysis toward building a policy framework for Canada's relationship with China. The project's activities have been developed along three thematic areas that reflect issues of common concern: a) Chinese domestic institutional and normative contexts for engagement; b) Economic relations; c) Collaboration on global issues such as environment, health and security.

- a) Domestic Context for Engagement: The Canada-China relationship can be most effective when it is grounded on complementarity of interests, which in turn requires mutual understanding of domestic normative and institutional conditions in both countries. Canadian initiatives with China, ranging from WTO compliance and business regulation to human rights, can be effective only if they are designed and implemented in light of China's domestic conditions, ranging from popular norms to governmental structures and policy priorities. Similarly, China's success in nurturing productive relationships with Canada will require appreciation of Canadian domestic conditions. The papers for this thematic area were commissioned and directed by Professor Jeremy Paltiel of Carleton University.
- b) Economic Relations: Economic relations between Canada and China are critically important. Economic relations include bilateral trade and investment relations, and also extend to local effects of economic conditions and behaviour. In the trade area, Canada's strengths match up extremely well with China's needs. In trade and investment relations, efforts to promote normative and institutional accommodation in China for Canadian business objectives are consistent with Chinese development policies and also serve important Canadian interests in the areas of good governance. As well, national economic behavior by the two countries in response to changing economic conditions at the global, regional and local level have important effects on the Canada-China relationship. The papers for this thematic area were commissioned and directed by Yuen Pau Woo, President of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.
- c) Collaboration on Global Issues: The importance of China's responsible participation in systems for addressing global policy concerns in areas such as environment, health and security cannot be overstated. Yet China's participation in the global community can be distorted by its responses to apprehension and competition from other global actors, particularly the United States, the European Union and Japan. Canada has a significant role to play in supporting China's responsible participation, not only through direct bilateral programming but also through our capacity to deploy good offices, legitimation and other soft power resources both bilaterally and globally. The papers for this thematic area were commissioned and directed by Professor Brian Job of the University of British Columbia.

The papers here presented in connection with the CIC Canada-China Relations Project offer informed, nonpartisan recommendations for a variety of stakeholders in Canada, including the government and private and public sector institutions and individuals, with a view toward furthering the development of healthy long-term relations between Canada and China. While historical and current conditions may result in disagreement as to how best to manage the Canada-China relationship, China's importance to the world requires our attention. We hope that the papers presented here can further the process of understanding and effective engagement that will strengthen the foundation for productive relations for the long-term interests of both countries.

Dr. Pitman B. Potter

Chair

CIC China Working Group

The Canadian International Council (CIC) is a non-partisan, nationwide council established to strengthen Canada's role in international affairs. With local branches nationwide, the CIC seeks to advance research, discussion and debate on international issues by supporting a Canadian foreign policy network that crosses academic disciplines, policy areas and economic sectors.

The CIC features a privately funded fellowship program and a network of issue-specific Working Groups. The goal of the CIC Working Groups is to identify major issues and challenges in their respective areas of study and to suggest and outline the best possible solutions to Canada's strategic foreign policy position on those issues. The CIC aims to generate rigorous foreign policy research and advice.

CIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair

Jim Balsillie, Co-CEO, Research In Motion

Co-vice Chairs

Bill Graham, Chancellor of Trinity College and Chair, Atlantic Council of Canada

Perrin Beatty, President and CEO, Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Directors

David Bercuson, Director, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary

Scott Burk, President, Wealhouse Capital Management

Raymond Chrétien, Strategic Advisor, Fasken Martineau

André Desmarais, President and Co-CEO, Power Corporation of Canada

Edward Goldenberg, Partner, Bennett Jones LLP

Nicholas Hirst, President, CIC-Winnipeg Branch

Jennifer Jeffs, President, CIC

Tom Jenkins, Executive Chairman and CSO, Open Text Corporation

Keith Martin, Past-President, CIC-Toronto Branch

Indira Samarasekera, President, University of Alberta

Janice Stein, Director, Munk Centre for International Studies

Jodi White, Distinguished Senior Fellow, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and Arthur Kroeger College of Public Affairs, Carleton University

45 Willcocks Street, Suite 210
Toronto Ontario M5S 1C7
TEL: 416-977-9000, 1-800-668-2442
FAX: 416-946-7319