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The Université Laval and the Scientific Exploration of the Canadian Far North

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Introduction

On 27 January 1962, the “Université Laval” inaugurated its Nordic Studies Centre. According to the University historian Jean Hamelin, this event had, beyond its scientific importance, a symbolic value. Hamelin wrote: “Other research centres already exist, but this one presents new characteristics: it is a creation of the University Council, which appoints members of its governing board; it is a research unit gathering around a specific subject of study, researchers coming from various disciplines and various institutions; it enjoys special funding from the University which shows its intention to privilege this research field. It is the beginning of what one calls “institutional research”, an effort to avoid scattering and duplication of research and a means to establish priorities for research (Hamelin 226-227). As early as 1955, the founder of the Centre, Louis-Edmond Hamelin, established the bases for its creation. Thus, the interest of the Université Laval in the Far North as a subject for scientific exploration goes back to half a century ago. As time went on, the Nordic Studies Centre and its pioneer explorers, including Louis-Edmond Hamelin, Jacques Rousseau and Marc-Adélarde Tremblay, established a tradition and raised an increasingly large interest in all aspects of the nature and the culture of the North, and inspired the creation within the University of other research centres devoted to the development of knowledge of the North. Today one can say that scientific research on the North is still a priority expertise field at the University. The University’s activities in this field have inspired many testimonies of its interest, including

archives, printed documents, a collection of rare books, museum pieces and, more recently, databases and other electronic research tools.

Scientific explorations of the Université Laval in the North

One could ask whether scientific researches on the terrain in the North can be considered as real explorations. This question was thought about by many explorers/researchers coming from various regions, including the film-maker Pierre Perrault and the researcher Louis-Edmond Hamelin.

Perrault wonders about the motivations and the objectives of travellers in the Arctic, on the one hand the celebrity gained by feats, deadly most of the time, such as those performed by Franklin and Scott, on the other hand the indifference and ignorance facing the results of research which requires patience in order to acquire a knowledge of the North:

“Would the call of the North correspond to a wish to die? Or would death, always present, in the history and on the banks attract and seduce some individuals, those who are looking for challenges and aspire to defeat the invincible at all costs? Is it the Pole, the North, the passage, which attract, or simply the feat, the wish to impress the audience? Because the audience loves bloody games, boxing, bullfights, feats of all kinds. We live in a culture of the feat in a world where the feat is no more necessary. He who crosses the island of Ellesmere on skis, who attempts to reach the North Pole with a *skidoo*, with a sledge drawn by dogs, or on foot, is not interested in the Pole but in the feat, and he will take care of his own publicity. He will write a book if he comes back, he will give lectures, he will make money out of the adventure. Celebrity has replaced glory. It remains possible to die on the sea to give substance to one’s legend.

But there are so many others whom no one talks about. David Gray, for example, who spends day after day, in all kinds of weather, watching the musk ox and who writes a book which will not be a success in bookstores. Or Joseph Svoboda, who for ten years, along with his students, from April to August, looked at the flowers in order to try to understand how the barren cold environment, the glaciers, the pergelisol, and a midnight sun which is always close to freezing, manage to feed the musk ox, the lemming, the Arctic hare with a few blades of grass, countless flowers and the crawling willow. But knowledge bows in front of legend. Reality is botany, the discreet and patient botany” (Perrault 1999, 372-373).

According to Louis-Edmond Hamelin, whether his colleague the researcher Jacques Rousseau was a Nordic explorer is a question

“which deserves precisions and the answer to it should entail nuances. If one intends to be the first to cross over an immense territory in the Far North, to spend winters there or to endorse geopolitical objectives, Jacques Rousseau does not fit into this category. [...] In addition, it is acknowledged that during the Second World War, the generalisation of aerial photos put an end to the former reservation of having no knowledge of the country to be explored.

[...] Around 1950, I used plane surveys to guide my own river trips at the border of the Middle North.[...]. Methodologically, exploration expresses a priority granted to the terrain when acquiring knowledge [...]. Professor Kenneth Hare (from McGill University), who also devotes himself to the biogeography of the Québec-Labrador region, proposes a new meaning to the term *exploration*: producing knowledge more scientific than what was transmitted by the discoverers of past centuries (Laverdière et Carette 1999, 4-5).

And without any doubt, even Rousseau shows in 1950 a spirit similar to the one of the explorers of the previous century when he writes: “To haunt rivers, lakes and forests which no white man has ever had a glimpse of....to go forward in the immense wilderness where one feels so much at home, much more than anywhere else, dumbfounded by the call of the unknown, always on the watch, looking for something new, unexpected, which nobody knows, to contribute to the growth of human knowledge, and, who knows, to human happiness, that is adventure!” (1)

The interest of the Université Laval in the scientific exploration of the North goes back to the 1940s and coincides, although with a few years' delay, to Canada's interest. From 1942 to 1944, the *Saint Roch*, a small ship of the “Gendarmerie Royale” of Canada, went on its first return journey through the Northwest Passage and thus made the Canadians and the Canadian government aware of the importance of the North. This interest has increased during the past fifty years, first fostered by military concerns of security and sovereignty during the Cold War, then in turns by the wish to know the natural resources of the North, by the awareness of the impact on the Inuit population of the new interest for the region, and lastly by the necessity of measuring the impact of climatic changes on the Nordic environment and of ensuring the Canadian sovereignty on the Northwest Passage. (2)

At the Université Laval the interest in the research in the North came initially in the Institute for History and Geography created in 1946 (Hamelin 1971a, 3-6). A first course on the North was taught at the University by Jacques Rousseau in 1948 (Hamelin 1960b, 4), the year of the first Nordic expedition of Louis-Edmond Hamelin, who became later on Director of the Institute. Subsequently, courses on the New Québec were taught. In 1952, the Institute for History and Geography undertook long-term studies assumed by regular professors (Hamelin 1971b [8]; almost all the Institute's geographers went on research expeditions in the Arctic and Subarctic zones of Canada (Hamelin 1960b, 5). In 1955, the Université Laval sent Louis-Edmond Hamelin on an expedition to explore the North of Québec and asked him to report on the feasibility of establishing a centre of Nordic research at the Institute for geography. Noting the awakening of Canada to the importance of the North, Hamelin declared that the University could not remain indifferent to the development of the region and proposed the foundation of a research centre in order "to foster the commitment of Laval to scientific studies on the North". He gave as an argument "a patriotic reason". The study of the North, even in Québec, was done only in English, thanks to the McGill Subarctic Research Laboratory, created the preceding year. "The author of this report", he wrote, "adopts a realistic attitude, namely to ask that French Canadians participate on equal terms in the development of the Arctic Ungava which is going to start very shortly. If one wishes that the French face of the Ungava be ensured through other people rather than through manoeuvres, one must act at another level" (Hamelin 1955, 3). However, he states "Even more important is the scientific goal. It is less as a French Canadian university than as an academic institution that Laval can aspire to running a research centre in the Ungava" (Hamelin 1955, 4). Already, two Laval professors, P-E Auger and Louis-Paul Dugal, had gone on scientific expeditions in the region. The researches of the proposed centre could help solve some problems related to political geography, especially "the layout of the central border of Québec-Labrador, the relationships between the United States, Québec and the Federation regarding radars; the relationships between the Federation and the Province in the Ungava; the political status of the islands along the bank of the Ungava; the political representation of the Ungava; the contact between white people and the Eskimos"(Hamelin1955,8). He added that "one should make an inventory of the region and a survey of natural resources and of those which can be exploited" (Hamelin, 1955, 8). This first initiative failed for lack of funding from the government of the Province. (Hamelin 1960b, 1) But Hamelin noted "Everything had not been lost" (Hamelin 1971b, 6). Even with scarce resources, the University continued to support expeditions and to train students in the field, establishing its credibility (Hamelin 1960b, 1) In addition, the

inhabitants of South Québec were increasingly aware of the very scant association of the Ungava and the domineering culture and the economy of South Québec. The number of researchers on the North in French Canada had grown. Theses and works in French on the North were appearing; the first article of the “Cahiers de géographie du Québec,” new series, 1956, was dealing with a Nordic theme. At the same time, the television was presenting a series of programmes on the New Québec. Some research organisations had acquired a certain experience, scientific but also administrative. Quebec was more prepared than ever for establishing a first Francophone Nordic Research Institute” (Hamelin 1971a, 6-7).

When Jean Lesage and his government came into office and the “Quiet revolution “started, Hamelin had new hopes, all the more since Lesage was a formal federal minister of the Canadian North and of Natural Resources. During a reorganisation of the Institute for Geography in 1960, Hamelin suggested again the establishment of a Centre for Arctic studies (Hamelin 1960b, 28), which would be, according to him, a “natural outcome” of the decade-long Nordic activities of the University (Hamelin, 1971b, [1]). This time the project was realised; on 14 April 1961 the Université Laval created the Nordic Studies Centre. The favourite subjects would be the low North coast of the Saint Laurent, the Québec-Labrador peninsula and the Québec part of “Hudsonie”; there would be a multi-disciplinary approach. The Québec-Labrador peninsula presented several advantages for the Centre. It was not too distant from Québec and it was vast. “One can experience, in fact, a great variety of Northern areas” wrote Louis-Edmond Hamelin in 1971 “terrestrial, as well as fluvial or marine environments, Indians, Eskimos, Euro-Canadians, traditional and modern ways of life, pluricultural societies, theoretical questions and concrete problems. Furthermore, the Nordic gradation is remarkable; according to our own terminology, we encounter Pre-North but also Middle North (subdivided in Low and High) and Great North conditions” (Hamelin 1971a, 21). And even in this too vast territory the Centre privileged “the borders of the peninsula: the bay of the Ungava, the Coast of Labrador, the North Coast of the Saint-Laurent and most of all the Québec banks of the Hudsonie” (Hamelin, 1971a, 21). Thus in 1965 the Centre organised an important multidisciplinary expedition in the Québec-Labrador peninsula. In 1967, it launched a ten-year project, called “Hudsonie”, the goal of which was “to bring out the optimal conditions of regional fitness” (Hamelin, 1971b, 11). The Centre opened, the following year, a research station at Poste-de-la Baleine, on the Hudson Bay. “This station (called B) is more than the headquarters of the Hudsonie project;” wrote Hamelin, “it serves

as a point of departure for expeditions in other regions of the Nouveau Québec or the North of Canada” (Hamelin 1971a, 21).

After 1970, the Nordic Studies Centre completed its infrastructure and undertook research regularly, increasingly concentrating on natural rather than social phenomena. Today, because the extreme climatic conditions characterising Nordic regions make the balance of the ecosystems fragile, the Centre emphasizes the study of the impact of the climatic change on the biodiversity. Its researchers increase their knowledge of the natural systems of these regions, thanks to interdisciplinary approaches. About thirty researchers and more than a hundred students, including geographers, biologists, botanists, geophysicists, specialists in limnology and climatology, work in teams in regions where natural processes are still little influenced by human activities. The Nordic Studies Centre manages a research station in Whapmagoostui-Kuujuarapik on the East coast of the Hudson Bay; this station can accommodate researchers for a year. Furthermore, it comprises four relays for researchers, in Radisson, on the James Bay, on the Eau-Claire lake, on the Boniface river (the Nordic limit of the trees) and on the Bylot Island in the Canadian Arctic, and manages a network of climatologic and geocryologic stations. (3)

Stimulated by the success of the Nordic Studies Centre, the interest of the Université Laval in the scientific exploration of nature and of the Arctic society has been evident since 1970 through the creation of several groups and research chairs devoted entirely or partially to the study of the North. The “*Groupe interuniversitaire de recherches océanographiques du Québec, GIROQ* (Interuniversity group of oceanographic research of the Québec) was created in 1970 by the researchers of the universities Laval, Mc Gill and of Montreal. During the 1980s, after the hydroelectric development of the rivers of the Southwest of the Hudson Bay, it started to evaluate the impact of a modification of debits of fresh water on the coastal area of the Hudson Bay. Later on the GIROQ increasingly participated in great national and international programmes in oceanography, including the Canada-Japan programme “Saroma –Resolute Study (SARES)” and the “Northeast Water Polynya (NEW)”, which increase the solar component of the Group’s programming. At the end of the 90s, the GIROQ launched the programme called “Northeast Water Polynya Study (NOW)”. (4) In 2002, GIROQ merged with Québec-Océan, which, based at the Université Laval, brings together researchers from other universities in Québec. Thanks to governmental funding inspired by worries about the effects of climatic changes and contestations about Canada pretending to

sovereignty over the Arctic Archipelago, beyond the Nordic Canadian territory, the researchers of Québec-Océan have been working for several years from ice breakers in the Baffin and Beaufort seas, where the ecosystem is still not really studied (Desautels 2002a, 8; Desautels (2002b, 52).

When the Nordic Studies Centre started to specialise in natural sciences at the beginning of the 1980s, the social and human sciences researchers of the Université Laval with an interest in the North and the natives of that region, established in 1987 the “*Groupe d’études inuit et circumpolaires, GETIC* (Group of Inuit and circumpolar studies) under the umbrella of the Faculty for Social Sciences. It published during a few years the journal *Etudes inuit=Inuit Studies*. The “*Centre interuniversitaire d’études et de recherches autochtones, CIERA* (Interuniversity Centre for native studies and research) replaced the GETIC in 2004. It aims at carrying out research, in cooperation with other universities in a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and globalising perspective, on native cultures and societies, such as those in the Arctic. The CIERA carries out, above all, research in Québec and Canada, but is also interested, in a comparative perspective, in other circumpolar regions.(5)

ArcticNet, the administration of which is housed at the Université Laval, is a network of Canadian “centres of excellence” bringing together, among others, experts in natural, health and social sciences in order to study the impact of climatic changes in the coastal region of the Canadian Arctic. More than 100 ArcticNet researchers, coming from 27 Canadian universities and from 5 federal ministries, collaborate with research teams from the United States, Japan, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Poland, the UK, Spain, Russia, Greenland and France. Wishing to help prepare Canada “for the consequences and opportunities brought about by climatic changes and the modernisation in the Arctic”, ArcticNet carries out integrated regional studies of the impact on societies but also terrestrial and marine coastal ecosystems of the High Canadian Arctic, the East Canadian Arctic and the Hudson Bay.” Researchers use the Canadian icebreaker NGCC Amundsen to access the coast of the Arctic. (6)

At the beginning of the 21st century, the Université Laval created several research chairs in order to explore diverse aspects of changes which are starting to affect many human and natural Nordic environments. The *Chaire de recherche du Canada sur la condition autochtone comparée* (Canadian research chair on the comparative native condition),

established in 2002, includes in its research the study of the conditions of life of the native population of the Arctic. The *Chaire de recherche nordique en écologie des perturbations* (Chair of Nordic research in the ecology of perturbations), established in 2003, attempts to understand and analyse the processes related to the main ecological perturbations influencing the structure, the functioning and the balance of the Nordic ecosystems in the context of climatic changes (current or anticipated) in Nunavik and Nunavut. The *Chaire de recherche du Canada en géographie historique du Nord* (Canadian research chair in historical geography of the North), created in 2004, studies processes of native humanisation in the North of Canada, and the social and environmental challenges brought about by the changes of its space and its resources. The *Chaire de recherche du Canada sur la dynamique à long terme et les perturbations naturelles des forêts boréales* (Canadian research chair on the long-term dynamics and the natural perturbations of the boreal forests), also created in 2004, develops and exploits the analysis of pollens when determining factors and systems of perturbations--such as fires, insect infestations, and climatic changes-- in the structure and the resilience of the boreal ecosystems. Finally, the *Chaire de recherche du Canada sur la réponse des écosystèmes marins arctiques au réchauffement climatique* (Canadian research chair on the reaction of marine arctic ecosystems to climatic warming), also created in 2004, aims at following and anticipating the reaction of two marine archetypal ecosystems to climatic warming, by studying the relationships between biological productivity and the seasonal duration of the ice and surface temperatures.(7)

Furthermore, researchers from other chairs, other research centres, faculties and departments of the University, are also carrying out scientific explorations in the North. For example, in the spring of 2008, a scientific team comprising researchers from the Department of Biology of the Université Laval went on an expedition on a skidoo, starting from 1000 km away from Eureka, continuing up to the North part of Ellesmere Island, in order to study the last ice plateaux of North America (Hamann 2008).

The testimonies of scientific exploration in the North

Archives

Research centres

Several archive collections, kept at the the Université Laval Division of Archives, are sources of information on the start and the evolution of the University's scientific interest in the North. The most significant is the collection of the Nordic Studies Centre (U635). This collection holds mainly administrative documents, but some of those are helpful to get a knowledge of exploration activities of the Centre and of members of the staff, for example the annual reports of the Centre and the Decennial Evaluation of 1971. The documents in the congresses, colloquiums, symposiums series, present the results of research carried out not only within the Centre but elsewhere in the world. The archives of the GIROQ (U664) include also annual reports of this organisation, mentioning its research activities. But the archives of research centres must be completed by those coming from other administrative units of the University, such as the Chief Education Officer's office (U502), the Faculty of Higher Education (U530), the Research Commission (U587), and the Department of Geography (U556), which hold documents related to the creation of the research centres and their activities, as well as to activities of researchers who are not affiliated with any research centre.

Recent documents from chairs and research centres which are active in the North do not necessarily reach the University's Division of archives, because they are always either current or semi-current. The University has, however, implemented a calendar of conservation which prescribes in advance the preservation within the Division of archives of documents deemed to be valuable for long-term research and thus ensures the durability of future testimonies of the University's research in the North.

The institutional archives of the University must, in addition, be completed by some collections of non-institutional archives; the most important are those of pioneers in the field, among others, Louis-Edmond Hamelin, Jacques Rousseau, and Marc-Adélar Tremblay, as well as those of the filmmaker Pierre Perrault. Sometimes these collections hold documents of an institutional nature which are not to be found in institutional collections.

Louis-Edmond Hamelin's archives (P311)

The Division of Archives has only a few documents on Louis-Edmond Hamelin, founder and first director of the Centre for Nordic studies, but negotiations are in the process to ensure the

acquisition of this important corpus for the history of the scientific exploration of the North by the Université Laval. Meanwhile, his memoirs, *L'Echo du Nord* and especially chapter VI on “the Nordic world” bring a more than honourable testimony of the researcher’s career as scientific explorer of the North (Hamelin 1996, 211-271). Hamelin gives precisions on his career “One should not misunderstand my travels in the North. A journalist, though friendly, is surprised at my size, which contradicts for him the myth of the superman, the hero, the explorer, the adventurer, the husky trainer, the man-who-comes-back-from-the-place-from-which-one-never comes-back. He understands, at last, that I do not go to the North to jump over the most dangerous rapid, to see the last of the Mohicans, to walk into the longest portage, to kill a bear without a gun or to get rich by discovering gold dust. I do not go to the North to conquer but to understand and, eventually, serve” (Hamelin 1996, 215). Hamelin, born in 1923, is a “field geographer”. (8) He travelled more than fifty times in cold countries, including the North and the high mountains, after 1948. He was the president of the Canadian Northern Research Conference between 1968 and 1970, and from 1971 to 1975 he was a member of the legislative assembly of the Northwest territories. From 1984 to 1992 he was one of the Canadian representatives at the tripartite committee of James Bay. Among his numerous distinctions, he received the centennial medal the international polar year (1986).

Louis-Edmond Hamelin’s archives housed at the Division of Archives --totalling 4cm and covering the 1952-58 period--are essentially publications. The collection includes a list of his works, established in 1969, a 1998 interview, a few articles concentrating on the geography of the Québec (1952-1969) and a copy of the book *L’obiou entre Dieu et Diable* (1990) written in collaboration.

Jacques Rousseau’s archives (P174)

Jacques Rousseau (1905-1970), “tireless traveller in the Nordic wastes of Québec” (Blais 1974, 12-13) and ethnologist with an international reputation, joined the Nordic Studies Centre in 1962. He had been a PhD professor at the Botanic Institute of the University of Montreal (1928-1944), then assistant director and later director of the Botanic Garden of Montreal (1938-1956), curator at the *Musée national de l’homme*, in Ottawa, (1956-1959), and associate professor at the Centre of Arctic studies of the Sorbonne, as well as lecturer at the *Ecole pratique des hautes Etudes* in Paris. (1959-1962). Rousseau began to be attracted by the challenge of the Canadian Far North in 1944. He familiarised himself with that region, going from the Pre North to the Middle North up to the Far North. During his expeditions, he

defined the “hemiarctic” zone, discovered new plants and met Amerindians, whose culture and customs he studied. His observations on the native nations represent a great part of his scientific work. His travelling companions (including Louis-Edmond Hamelin and the painter René Richard) unanimously recognize his craving for knowledge, his intrepidity, and his wish to always go forward in spite of very hard conditions. According to Hamelin, “Jacques Rousseau does not travel cosily and as such he travels under the hard conditions of the past; his robust constitution and his determination allow him to live rough; with ardour he goes into big rapids but he has the sense to do this with experienced Indian guides)[...] In the portages he takes a large part in the moving of heavy equipment (canoe, engine, tent) and fragile items (herbarium, artefacts). With such a style [...] Jacques Rousseau clearly belongs to preceding generations; he knows the end of a grandiose era.” (Laverdière et Carette, 1999, 5) He drew maps, made an inventory of a hundred new plants, and analysed the multiple facets of the culture of the “Montagnais” and the “Cris”. His curiosity always on the alert, he wrote countless notes on everything he observed. Nevertheless, according to his biographers “The fascination of discovery was stimulating him more strongly than the act of studying in an orderly fashion the vegetation or the Amerindian population” (Laverdière et Carette 1999, 373). Rousseau’s published works are very numerous (about 600 titles) and diversified. Among the numerous distinctions and honorific titles granted to him, let us state his nomination in 1948 as “*Fellow*” of the *Arctic Institute of North America* (Montreal and Washington); he was appointed governor in 1954. After Rousseau died in 1970, Louis-Edmond Hamelin wrote of the “Nordic” that “unfortunately for the Québec, an important part of his expeditions is reported in manuscripts only. Here again, one should give the real dimension of Jacques Rousseau, who never ceased to be a universal observer, like the masters of the past century” (Hamelin 1970a, 258).

The Jacques Rousseau archive (9) is a witness of the numerous activities undertaken by this researcher during his eventful life. One can get knowledge of the explorer of the North and of his activities at the Nordic Studies Centre. The collection includes in particular travel diaries and reports. It has eleven series, among which three are of particular interest for studying the explorer of the North. The series A, “the man”, comprises, among other items, curriculum vitae, a bibliography, an interview, correspondence, photocopies of press releases and articles related to Rousseau’s activities. The series B, “the explorer”, includes notebooks, travel reports illustrated by photos, bibliographic files, brochures, articles, press releases, maps and films on the explorations of Rousseau on the Lake Mistassini and in the Ungava in the 1940s.

The diaries are full of observations on the plants, the geographical sites, the environment, as well as comments on the journeys, the schedules, and the peripeteia encountered during the expeditions. The series D, “the ethnologist”, displays, among others, the special interest of Rousseau in the Amerindians and the Inuit. It documents the culture, the language, the art, the way of life and the human problems of the inhabitants of the North. The collection includes nearly 31 metres of textual documents, more than 6000 negatives on glass, which are often very interesting and of an exceptional quality.

Marc-Adéland Tremblay’s archives (P186)

Marc-Adéland Tremblay, an anthropologist, sociologist, and professor, born in 1922, studied social sciences at the Université Laval and anthropology at Cornell University. He joined the Université Laval in 1956 and became professor with tenure in 1963. He wrote 25 books and about 180 articles and documents published in specialised journals. Tremblay was a member of the Nordic Studies Centre from its foundation in 1961. He was one of the founding members of the GETIC in 1987 and its director from 1991 to 1994. Furthermore, he closely participated in the organisation of the North-Laval and Québec-Russia colloquiums and the International Congress of arctic social sciences. He was president of the Canadian University Association of Arctic Nordic Studies from 1985 to 1989. Tremblay became Professor Emeritus of the Université Laval in 1994.

Marc Tremblay’s archives (10) display the numerous facets of his career. Of special interest for his research on the North are his files on the Nordic Studies Centre and the GETIC. The first witnesses the genesis, the creation, and the first years of the Centre and gives information on Tremblay’s contribution as a member of the Executive Committee. The file includes minutes, reports, memoranda, correspondence and other printed matter. The file on the GETIC witnesses Tremblay’s activities within the Group from 1988 onwards. The file includes agendas, minutes, conference presentations, printed material, numerous reports and correspondence.

Pierre Perrault’s archives (P319)

The archives of Pierre Perrault, radio speaker, writer and filmmaker (1927-1999), are interesting, as they bring a different approach to the perception of the North by a non-scientific but cultural explorer. Perrault, even though he had no formal connection with the Université Laval, had a kind of intellectual affinity with that institution through the teaching

and research in ethnic studies carried out there. This affinity pushed him to donate his archives to the University (among them works and films on the North). In 1972, Perrault gave to Louis-Edmond Hamelin a minor part in one of his films on the North and the following year he wrote the preface to one of Hamelin's books. The Université Laval granted him a doctorate honoris causa in 1986. During the summer of 1987, on the South of Ungava Bay, Perrault shot the film *L'oumigmag*, on the musk ox. He had no clue at the time that "we shall come twice to the Ungava, five times to the land of Ellesmere, and we shall need five summers and seven trips in order to shoot two films". (Perrault 1995, 31) In 1995, he published the essay "*L'Oumigmatique, ou l'objectif documentaire*" about shooting the film in which he explains his fascination with the North and with the musk ox. "Indeed, the musk ox has been an obsession of mine for a long time, like an incomparable metaphor, like a model, being offered to any human being, and more strangely to a population on American territory forgotten by history and by Princes. A nation abandoned to itself and to winter." (Perrault 1995, 32) In 1999, he published *Le mal du Nord*, relating his journey in the Arctic on the icebreaker *Pierre Radisson* in 1991, and in which he displays the same philosophical and poetical mind inspired by his preceding journeys into the North. "I didn't succeed, of course, in expressing the North of the world nor did I understand why the North geese have been returning each spring, long before compasses were invented, in this incredible direction. Why has the musk ox chosen to live on the South of the ice and the North of the snow? A lot of the unknown remains to be explored provided that one wonders about it. I greet the question which inspires the journey" (Perrault, 1999, 12).

The Pierre Perrault archival collection includes, among others, nearly 17m. of textual documents, close to 8500 photos, more than 1000 sound recordings and 150 videos, covering mainly the years between 1947 and 1990. It includes correspondence, agendas, personal diaries, travel reports; manuscripts, typed and printed texts, press releases related to his literary and cinematographic work and an important sound and textual documentation gathered for radio programmes and films. Classification of the collection was established in accordance with the activities of the "man of his word" that was Perrault. There are seven series. Of special interest for Perrault's travels in the North is the file "Gélivures" and three sub-series. The sub-series "L'Appel du Nord" (The call of the North) is related to a series of Radio Canada broadcasts inspired and sustained by Perrault's journey on the *Pierre Radisson* icebreaker, a journey that he also related in his book *Le Mal du Nord*.(11) The subseries "L'Oumigmag ou l'objectif documentaire" deals with the film and the book

L'oumigmatique.(12) Finally, the subseries “Le Cycle du Gand Nord: Cornouailles ” (The Great North Cycle: Cornwall) deals with Perrault’s second film on the musk ox. (13)

The Division of archives of the Université Laval manages its own archival collection but it also enables the researchers, via the network of the Québec’s archives, of which it is a member, to locate other collections elsewhere in Québec where archives contain travelling reports on the Arctic or on the explorations in the North. (14)

Publications

To disseminate the result of its research was to be, since its creation, a priority for the Nordic Studies Centre, first to fulfil its scientific goal and also to enable the francophone scientists to publish in their own language ; another reason was, according to Louis-Edmond Hamelin, writing in 1960 that “one should make up for the deep general ignorance concerning the Northern territories of Québec; it would not be wrong to teach the Québécois (*sic*) about what constitutes two-thirds of their Province” (Hamelin 1960b, 13). By developing the knowledge of the North and disseminating the results of its research, the Centre should also be, according to its founder, “a kind of prerequisite to a sound political administration and to a rational economical exploitation” (Hamelin 1960b, 30). Thus, from 1961 to 1970, the printed works of the Nordic Studies Centre researchers represented more than 10 000 pages. (Hamelin 1971a, 33). From the very start, the Centre had been equipped with a documentation centre, an information service geared to the general audience and the governments, as well as with a little museum (Hamelin, 1960b, 14-15). Today, the museum does not exist any more, and if there is no information service within the structure of the Centre, there are continuous efforts to publicize the results of its research. There is still a documentation centre, comprising, either on paper or on electronic media, publications, theses and dissertations by students and researchers associated mostly with the Centre but sometimes coming from elsewhere.

Today the Library of the Université Laval possesses more than 150 publications coming from the Nordic Studies Centre. When the Inuskiutiit Katimajit Association created the journal *Etudes inuit= Inuit Studies*, in 1977, the Nordic Studies Centre was, with the Faculty for Social Sciences of the Université Laval and the Centre for Anthropology, among the contributors. The Centre’s participation ceased in 1980, but the Department continued to contribute for several years. In 1986, the GETIC started to contribute to the journal, and its successor, the CIERA, still does. The number of publications displaying results of

expeditions undertaken by Université Laval researchers must amount to several thousands. Several of them, especially Louis-Edmond Hamelin and Jacques Rousseau, were very prolific. A bibliography of Hamelin's work (2002) lists 900 items, although they are not all related to the North (Hamelin 2002, 96). His publications include *Nordicité canadienne* (1975, 1980), *Le Nord et son langage* (1978), *Le Nord canadien* (1988), and his memoirs *Echo des pays froids* (1996).

In addition to its general holdings, the Université Laval library has a significant collection of rare books on Nordic and polar expeditions: one part comes from the joint library of the Université and of the "Séminaire du Québec" before it was split into two distinct collections in 1964; their acquisition by the University could go back to the 19th century (Lambert 2006, 39). Other works were acquired in order to strengthen the collection. Some come from the Nordic Studies Centre, which had gathered some publications related to the exploration of the Arctic and the Antarctic; several come initially from other research centres with which the Nordic Studies Centre collaborated. Some publications were given to the University by researchers, such as Louis-Edmond Hamelin. Most of the books are explorers' reports from the 18th to the 20th century, for example Sir John Franklin's as well as others who had participated in the long search for his lost crew. One can also find explorers' diaries from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th in the Antarctic as well as in the Arctic, such as Admunsen, Nansen, Fiala, Sverdrup, Mikkelsen, Stefansson, and Shackleton, as well as more exotic travellers, such as Léonie d'Aunet and Luigi, Duke of the Abruzzi. There are also the oldest book of the collection, *Relation de Groenland* (1647) by Isaac de La Peyrère (15), and, among the most recent books, the limited luxury edition of *The North Pole* by Robert Peary, signed by the author (16), and *Seven log-books concerning the Arctic voyages of Captain William Scoresby, senior* (17) of Whitby, England (1917). (18)

Besides its rare books collection, the Library of the Université Laval has access, through its electronic catalogue, ARIANE, to virtual libraries in the form of databases. The Library contributes to the building up of two of these databases, in French and English. *Notre mémoire en ligne* (19) is published by the Library of the Université Laval in cooperation with the Canadian Institute of historical micro reproductions (providing also an important collection of microfiches), the Bibliothèque nationale du Canada, the University of Toronto Libraries and the Bibliothèque nationale du Québec. This database gives access via the Internet to a virtual library constituted by works on the history of Canada since the arrival of

the first Europeans till the end of the 19th century. Reports on journeys and explorations, as well as native studies, are quite interesting. *Nos racines* (20), a joint project of the Université Laval, the University of Calgary and the Initiative canadienne sur les bibliothèques numériques, ICBN (Canadian Initiative on Digital Libraries), represent an approach to the history of Canada by towns and regions, such as the North. This database provides access to digitized primary and secondary works in local history, including travel accounts and works related to the journeys. To be precise, one can find, for example, Emile Petitot's *Quinze ans sous le Cercle Polaire* (21), published in 1889 and *Adventurers of the Far North*, by Stephen Leacock, published in 1914 in the "Chronicles of Canada" series.(22)

ARIANE gives also access to other databases useful for retrieving reports of travel in the North or publications dealing with the exploration of the North. *Repère* (23) is an analytical index which enables to locate the information published since 1980 in French language journals published in the Québec, elsewhere in Canada, in France, in Belgium and in Switzerland. These periodicals are of a general or a specialised nature and cover all fields of knowledge. *Eureka* (24) enables to make research in daily newspapers and monthlies, French Canadian, Francophone or European and to obtain the text of the articles the very day they appear. *Journal STORage (JSTOR)* (25) gives access to digital reproductions of more than 700 retrospective collections of scientific publications, some of which including articles on the exploration of the North. The oldest issues go back to 1831. Finally, *ISI Web of Science* (26) is a multidisciplinary database indexing more than 8500 periodicals. *Web of Science* corresponds to three databases: *Science Citation Index Expanded*, *Social Sciences Citation Index* and *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*. It facilitates the research by citation in addition to the traditional research by subject or author. The research by citation permits to find articles which quote a book, a patent or another article.

The video library of the Université Laval has many films on the North and especially the Inuit culture, including the whole filmography of the director Arthur Lamothe. Lamothe's films constitute a living testimony of the traditions and customs of native populations often about to become extinct, and they show forsaken ceremonies and ancient rites. The map library of the Université Laval comprises numerous maps of the North including some dating back to the beginning of the 20th century, documenting, like the reports of which they are an integral part, Joseph-Elzéar Bernier's explorations from 1904 to 1911. These explorations have a current

political significance because they support, like the subsequent journeys of the *Saint Roch*, the Canadian pretensions to sovereignty on the Arctic Archipelago. (27)

Objects

Explorations undertaken by researchers of the Nordic Studies Centre have disclosed archaeological objects which are nowadays part of the holdings of the Université Laval, under the Library's responsibility. The collection includes some 1450 artefacts and archaeological objects, mainly tools and garments (28), coming mainly from the North of Quebec, especially from Pamiok Island in the bay of the Ungava and from the Payne lake inside the Ungava peninsula. Gathered by the archaeologist Thomas Lee between 1964 and 1972, these objects are interesting inasmuch as they help understand the beginnings and the evolution of the archaeology in Quebec. Other excavation sites located near the lakes Abitibi, Albanel and Aylmeer, as well as in Sept-Iles, Blanc Sablon and Mingan (Seigneurie Bissot), enabled Lee and the archaeologist René Lévesque to find other objects which complete the collection. Furthermore, around 15 paintings in the University's collections display the Nordic experience of the famous painter (and former trapper) René Richard, a friend of Jacques Rousseau (Laverdière et Carette, 1999, 1).

Conclusion

The specialisation in research on the North pursued by the Université Laval for more than a half century has fostered the creation of several real and virtual collections, of an archival, bibliographical or museological nature. These collections ensure the conservation of historical testimonies for future research on the North and the explorations undertaken in the past. The University has also implemented necessary mechanisms to ensure the growth and the durability of results from future or contemporary scientific research performed within the institution and thus to ensure the continuation of its participation in the exploration of the North.

Notes

1. Jacques Rousseau, « Toundra », 1950, vol.4, n° 31 (1950) : 34. Quoted in Camille Laverdière and Nicole Carette, *Jacques Rousseau, 1905-1970: curriculum, anthologie, témoignages, bibliographie*. Sainte Foy, Québec : Presses de l'Université Laval, p.1

2. See for example Louis-Edmond Hamelin (1970b), « Nord canadien, où es-tu ? », *Forces*, no 10, p.36-41

3. Information available at the Website of the “Vice rectorat à la recherche et à la création de l’Université Laval” on the Nordic Studies Centre page (<http://www.vrr.ulaval.ca/bd/regroupement/fiche/70.html>).
4. Information available at the website of Québec-Océan (http://www.quebec-ocean.ulaval.ca/history_fr.asp)
5. Information from the Website of the « Centre interuniversitaire d’études et de recherches autochtone » (<http://www.ciera.ulaval.ca/ciera/presentation.htm>) accessed in April 2008
6. Information from the ArcticNet Website (<http://www.arcticnet-ulaval.ca/index.php?fa=ArcticNet.aboutUs>) accessed in April 2008
7. Information available at the « Vice -rectorat à la recherche et à la création de l’Université Laval » Website on the pages of various chairs.
See <http://www.vrr.ulaval.ca/bd/regroupement/>.
8. From the Preface by Fernand Grenier to Marie de Saint-Alphonse –de-Liguori, soeur, RSR “Bibliographie analytique de l’oeuvre du docteur Louis-Edmond Hamelin :précédée d’une biographie”
Thèse, Bibliothéconomie,[S.I. :s.n.], 1962,p.II
9. For a description of the whole collection of archives voir Simon Barabé, François Boulianne, Céline Savard et Josée Pomminville, « Répertoire numérique détaillé du fonds Jacques Rousseau (P174) », [Québec] : Université Laval, Bureau du Secrétaire général, Division des archives, 2004. 175 p.
10. For a description of the whole collection of archives see Hélène Mercier, « Répertoire numérique détaillé du fonds Marc-Adélarde Tremblay (P186) », [Québec] : Université Laval, Bureau du Secrétaire général, Division des archives, 2001. 41 p.
11. Pierre Perrault, *Le mal du Nord*. Hull, Québec : Vents d'Ouest, 1999, 380 p.
12. Pierre Perrault, *Oumigmatique ou l'objectif documentaire : essai*. Montréal : L'Hexagone, 1995. 309 p.
13. For a description of the whole collection, see Céline Savard, « Répertoire numérique détaillé du fonds Pierre Perrault (P319) », [Québec] : Université Laval, Bureau du Secrétaire général, Division des archives, 2000. 289 p.
14. Voir <http://www.rdaq.qc.ca/>.
15. [Isaac de la Peyrère], *Relation du Groenland*. Paris: A. Covbre,1647, 278p.
16. Robert Peary, *The North Pole*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910,xii, 326 p.
Edition limitée; 32e sur 500; signed by the author.
17. William Scoresby, *Seven log-books concerning the Arctic voyages of Captain Willima Scoresby, senior, of Whitby, England*. New York: Explorers Club, 1917, 8v.

18. *Celebrating research: rare and special collections from the membership of the Association of Research Libraries*, editors, Philip N. Cronenwell, Kevin Osborn, Samuel A. Streit. Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, c2007, p.134.
19. *Notre mémoire en ligne* (<http://www.canadiana.org/>)
20. *Nos racines* (<http://www.nosracines.ca/f/>)
21. Emile Petitot, *Quinze ans sous le Cercle Polaire*, Paris : E. Dentu, 1889, 322p.
22. Stephen Leacock, *Adventurers of the Far North*, Toronto: Glasgow, Brook & Company, 1914. 152p.
23. *Repère* (<http://repere2.sdm.qc.ca/#focus>)
24. *Eureka* (<http://www.biblio.eureka.cc/WebPages/Search/Result.aspx>)
25. *JSTOR* (<http://www.jstor.org/>)
26. *SI Web of Science* (http://images.isiknowledge.com/help/WOS/h_database.html)
27. *Celebrating research*, p. 134
28. *Celebrating research*, p 134

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