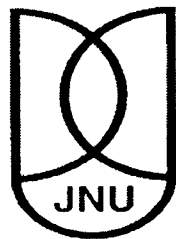


**QUÉBEC AND ITS PARTICIPATION IN  
*LA FRANCOPHONIE***

***Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the award of the degree of***

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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Date: 25/07/2013

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled “*Québec and its Participation in la Francophonie*” submitted by me for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

KUMARI MANSI

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

PROF. CHINTAMANI MAHAPATRA  
(Chairperson, CCUSLAS)

PROF. ABDUL NAFEY  
(Supervisor)

*Dedicated to My Parents*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Abdul Nafey for his continuous support throughout my M.Phil dissertation. His patience, motivation, enthusiasm, immense knowledge and his valuable guidance helped me to fulfil my research and write this dissertation.

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank Dr. Priti Singh, for her encouragement, insightful comments and initial guidance. I am also grateful to the entire faculty of the centre, especially the chairperson of my centre, Prof. Chintamani Mahapatra for his support to complete this research.

I am grateful to Shastri Indo-Canadian Library in-charge Reshma Rana Verma, who helped me to locate the material on my research topic in the SICI library as well as in other libraries in Canada and arranged books for me.

I am especially thankful to Dhritiman Chanda, who arranged and brought me the book, which I could not find in India, all the way from Montreal.

Any academic achievement is not possible without support from family and friends. In that sense I am lucky enough to have a very supportive family, especially my parents and my sister and Mihir. Other peoples who really deserve due acknowledgement for their support are Neha Singh, Manasi Singh, Bhavana Kumari and Kunal Anand. These people always showed faith in me and encouraged me to pursue my work.

Last but not the least I would like to extend heartfelt gratitude to my entire batch mates, especially Gaurav, Charu and Suprita who have always been a support for me and helped me in my work.

New Delhi

  
Kumari Mansi

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## PREFACE

For more than four decades now, the Quebec government has conducted its international relations, taking advantage of all the room for manoeuvre provided by the ambiguous nature of Canadian constitution. Having concluded almost 712 international agreements and offices across 20 countries spanning over five continents, Québec is the most active federated state in the field of international relations. The main factor leading to its international pursuit is 'identity quest' and 'nation building'. Québec through its *paradiplomatie identitaire* seeks to project and promote its distinct society status in Canada and in world. To this end, the organisation of French speaking community, *la Francophonie*, provides a much needed platform, much to the ire of federal government of Canada which views Québec's international involvement as infringement on its exclusive right to conduct foreign policy.

The aim of this research is a modest attempt to understand the nature of Québec's international relations while distinguishing it from foreign policy. Further, the research seeks to identify the domestic as well as international factors responsible for Québec's international endeavour, mainly after 1960. Taking the case of Québec's participation in *la Francophonie* this study aims to explore whether it challenges Canada's sovereign status in international system or provides Canada with the opportunity to expand its politico-economic influence over this linguistic zone. A particular reference to France and its relations with both the levels of government; federal and provincial, is made in order to understand trajectory of Québec's international relations as well as that of *la Francophonie*.

The methodology undertaken while executing this research monograph has been dependent on reports and papers published by government ministries like MRI and DFAIT. Reports from OIF have also been consulted. Along with these, articles from JSTOR, Wiley online, Sage, Cambridge University Press and Taylor and Francis were immensely resourceful. Other than these, Secondary sources include famous journals and research works on Canadian studies as well as Québec studies like *American Journal of Canadian studies*, *Canada in world affairs*, *Revue Quebecoise De Droit International* etc, have been largely consulted. Books on Canadian foreign policy and Québec's international relations like *Policy and Politics in Canada* ( Nossal et al: 2011), *Towards a francophone community: Canada's relations with France and French Africa, 1945-1968* (Robin S Gendron: 2006), *Québec : État et société* (Alain-G Gagnon (ed): 1994), *Histoire des Relations Internationales Du*

*Québec* (Paquin and Beaudoin: 2006), *A Short History of Quebec: A Socio-Economic Perspective* (Young and Dickinson, (1988). These resources helped me in getting the background information, validate my arguments and broaden my perspective and research.

The resources for the current research were available at and obtained from open sources on internet and JNU central library website, and Shastri Indo-Canadian library, New Delhi, the research monograph suffers from a limitation of resources in French language. Most of the literature consulted is in English because of limited availability of French language literature. Added to that is the short availability and scope of two semesters, within which the research had to be completed, which in turn makes this work prone to certain limitations. The constant endeavour has been to make this research worth within this limited scope of resource and time.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ACCT	Cultural and Technical Cooperation Agency (Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique)
CF	Canadian Forces
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MAI	Ministry of International Affairs ( <i>Ministère des Affaires Internationales</i> )
MAIICC	Ministry of International Affairs, Immigration and Cultural Communities ( <i>Ministère des Affaires Internationales, de l'immigration et des Communautés Culturelles</i> ).
MAFP	Ministry of Federal-Provincial Affairs ( <i>Ministère des Affaires Fédérales-Provinciales</i> )
MAIQ	Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs of Québec ( <i>Ministère des Affaires Intergouvernementales du Québec</i> ).
MRIFCE	Ministry of International Relations, Francophonie and External Commerce (Ministère des Relations Internationales, Francophonie et Commerce Extérieur du Québec)
OAS	Organisation of American States
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OIF	International Organisation of la Francophonie ( <i>Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie</i> )
OCAM	Common African and Malagasy Organisation (Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache).
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WTO	World Trade Organisation



# Chapter I

## QUEBEC'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND LA FRANCOPHONIE: AN INTRODUCTION

In February 1968, Québec alongwith France and other fifteen independent French African states participated in ministerial level conference in Libreville, Gabon. The invitation for this meeting of ministers of education was directly addressed to Québec, leaving out federal government of Canada which led to escalation in dispute between governments of Québec and Canada. The Gabon affair, as it came to be known famously, was the first overt confrontation emerging from Québec's aspiration to undertake its international relations and its desire to represent itself in the emerging organisation of French speaking community, *la francophonie*.

The incident involved not only Québec-Canada but also foreign governments like France and other francophone countries. The Québec and Canadian governments competed with each other in order to represent French Canadians in this organisation. In their respective quest both the government relied upon government of other French speaking countries. The French support to Québec provided it the much needed boost to its ambitions forcing the Canadian government to rely on other French speaking countries to endorse its claim for membership on the basis of its sovereign status. For the first time the domestic clash between Québec and Canada over foreign policy was exported into international arena and claims over responsibility to foreign policy between federal government and provincial government made its way into an international organisation, *la francophonie*.

These conflicts over jurisdiction and claims and counter-claims to make policies are normal in federal sets-up. But they have increased tremendously in contemporary times. Probably, it is for reasons of economic inter-dependence that one witnesses increasing inter-meshing of the domestic and the international, giving rise to the term 'intermestic' in the study of foreign policies. Whatever, provinces have become important actors in foreign policy formulation and conduct; and federal governments everywhere have to concede increasing autonomy to provinces and take them on board in foreign policy negotiations and agreements.

A major challenge, rather dilemma, facing federal governments often is that federal government alone enjoys the status of sovereign entity in international relations; and in all international negotiations and agreements, federal government has to be the signatory for and on behalf of the sovereign state. Conflict between Canadian federal government and provincial governments, mainly Québec, over conducting foreign policy is an old one; and has stymied both federal and provincial governments on many an occasion in the past precisely in the context of the principle of state sovereignty.

Canadian dilemmas are deeper in history on the issue. Born in ambiguity, divided on linguistic and cultural lines and overshadowed by giant southern neighbour, Canada's aspiration of international legitimacy and sovereignty is challenged time and again by its provinces, mainly Québec. Québec, through its doctrine, famously known as *doctrine Gérin-Lajoie du prolongement externe des compétences internes du Québec* (Gerine-Lajoie doctrine of External Prolongation of Québec's Internal Competence), asserts the right to international relations with foreign countries in areas under its jurisdiction. It has gone to the extent of having its own foreign ministry, the *Ministère des Relations Internationales* (MRI). Québec undertakes its international activity in order to fulfil this identity quest, i.e. recognition as distinct French nation in predominantly Anglophone North America, through its *paradiplomatie identitaire*, which Canada seeks to downplay and project a unified Canada abroad.

Placing identity at the heart of the matter will be simply oversimplification of conflict of interests here, between federal government of Canada and provincial government of Québec mainly after 1960s. While Québec modernised heavily in the wake of the Quiet Revolution (*Révolution Tranquille*), shedding its conservative roots and revamped its domestic and international aspirations. Going beyond the borders in order to fulfil its domestic modernisation drive was perceived by Canada as a potential threat to the national unity and sovereignty. Québec established bilateral cultural relationship with France and moved further to become involved in larger multilateral francophone cooperation on its own by participating in *la Francophonie* – a group of countries united by French as common language.

A unique transnational movement and a multilateral forum with 75 member states and governments (56 members and 19 observers), *la Francophonie*, as a product of decolonization, united former French colonies to protect, project and promote their interests in international fora.

Two points can be highlighted here: Québec wanted to consolidate French language and cultural quest at home and abroad; and secondly, it enabled the Canadian foreign policy, may be unwittingly, to reach out to francophone countries – a foreign policy which till 1960s was mostly inclined towards the United States and Britain with active involvement in the British Commonwealth. Federal power in Ottawa had opposed the move of Québec since the very beginning and the subsequent federal-provincial conflict shaped the initial years of *la Francophonie* along with strained Ottawa-Paris relations as France was perceived as interfering into Canadian domestic problem, after *l'affaire du Gabon* and De Gaulle's 'vive le Québec libre' speech. Paris was seen encouraging Québec's separatist movement. Québec's independent participation in *la Francophonie* directly challenged Canadian sovereignty internationally and threatened national unity domestically.

Canada's early involvement in *la Francophonie* stems from its perceived threat to national unity from Québec-France and Québec-Francophonie relations. In fact these relations can be said to offer Canada several economic and political opportunities in this part of world where Canada seemed to offer an alternative to France's neo-colonialism, and Canadian overtures fitted in well its profession of liberal internationalism. Taking cognisance of the broader politico-economic opportunity offered by this linguistic zone, Canada soon took initiative to institutionalise *la Francophonie*. This institutionalization served Canada to manifest its traditional multilateral ideology par excellence as well as to limit Québec abroad as further institutionalisation of *la Francophonie* meant increased diplomatic relations which is exclusive privilege of states. A considerable increase of development aid to French Africa (from 1960s onwards) is the exhibition of extent of Canadian resources to the developmental project of *la Francophonie* and hence the importance of Canada to this organisation than the provincial participation of Québec.

Containing Québec abroad has not been the only motive behind Canada's increasing role in *la Francophonie*. If so, what are other issues involved? What does

Québec's participation in la francophonie has to offer to Canada? Is it just the manifestation of Canadian bilingualism and multiculturalism or opportunity to gain more political-economic influence in this region? Or simply it is to foster national economic development as this linguistic zone provides a potential market to Canadian products? Or there is more to it? Or as a forum of North-South dialogue, *la Francophonie* offers another opportunity to Canada to project and pursue its role as a 'go-between' the North and the South.

## Review of literature

Of the literature available on Québec's international relations, scholars have underlined that Québec international relations revolves round its identity quest and its national interest. According to *Québec's International Policy: Working in Concert* (2006), "the Government of Québec will conduct its International Policy in accordance with the values that forge Québec's identity". Here one may question the nature of Québec's international participation; whether it may be categorised as foreign policy?

According to Nelson Michaud and Isabelle Ramet "When two states build up contacts and engage in various exchanges to fulfil their mutual interests", what results is called international relations and this definition also applies to non-sovereign entities. Hence what Québec does abroad is not foreign policy but simply international relations. Most scholars have contended that foreign policy can only be taken in the purview of sovereignty. Since the sub-state unit are non sovereign, they cannot have a foreign policy but they can have international relations.

With 7 general delegations, 5 delegations, 10 bureaus, 4 trade branches and 2 areas of representation in multilateral affairs (*la francophonie* and UNESCO) Québec is the only non-sovereign state to have such a vast international presence. As Louis Balthazar succinctly points out that « Québec is the most active sub-state » which sits at the "top of 350 federated states", with a presence over five continents and across 20 countries" (Balthazar, 2003:7) and having concluded almost 712 international accords of which 368 are currently in force.

Québec's international pursuits challenge the Realist analyses of world politics which assume that "states are only significant actors; that they act as units; and that their military security objectives dominate their other goal" (Nye and Koheane). In case of Québec, none of the above mentioned factors hold true; neither Québec is a sovereign state nor does it undertake any military objectives. But it does conclude agreements with various sovereign states and sub units. What propels Québec into international relations if it is not concerned with matters of high politics like military, security, war and peace?

Many scholars identify four main interests which propel the sub-state unit into international activity: economic interests, environmental interests, security interests and political interests. In case of Québec, a fifth interest, and most important, can be added: *identity interest/nation building*. Québec, through its foreign activity wants Canada and other countries to take notice of its unique cultural identity and distinct status. What matters most is its identity quest; a profound desire to gain recognition as a 'distinct society' in Canada and world. Québec, through its international activity, "actively wants Canadians-and citizens of other countries-to take notice" of its unique identity and distinct status using a *paradiplomatie identitaire*.

In order to fulfil its nation building project, Québec built up an impressive set of institutional structures and administrative capacities to express its statecraft (Cooper, 1997: 44). For Claude Morin the evolution of Quebec's diplomacy since 1960 is "l'art de l'impossible," as it's federated-state status has not barred Québec's international development.

The development of international relations of Québec needs to be seen in the context of 'structural transformation in world politics during the last half a century' (Belanger et al (1994). This structural transformation needs to be studied at two levels; one at domestic level and other at international level. At domestic level, it was Quiet Revolution of 1960s when Québec opened its arms to modernisation and increased interaction with outside world. At the international level, the increased interdependence between states (Nye and Keohane) especially in economic sector after Second World War and decolonisation movement highly influenced Québec to involve itself in internationalism.

As Nossal et al (2011) put “Quiet revolution marked the emergence of greater intervention by Québec state, a desire by French Canadians for greater control over their economy, the coming of age of baby boom generation and decline of roman catholic church, the rise of feminism, the ‘national question’ and dreams of independence”. Thus, from the decolonization era of the 1960s to our current postmodern period, and depending on the sensitivity of their interlocutors, Quebec officials have tried to craft their interventions in order to be considered as representatives of a nation, a province, a homeland, an economy, a people, a state (Louis Belanger, 2002)

The Québec government could take advantage of new transnational realities, of the increasingly blurring of the difference between domestic and external politics, of the developing international role of federated units (Louis Balthazar, 1999); intermeshing politics. So it can be underlined here that although domestic factors have encouraged the international relations of Québec, the general international climate of that time cannot be neglected. As Balthazar puts “the building up of Québec’s international relations resides in the general international climate of that period. The Quiet Revolution would not have continued with such success if it had not taken place in such international climate.” (Balthazar, 2003 :8). As much as the Québec was in transition in 1960s, so was the world outside it. International scenario was perhaps just ripe for Québec to project its interests abroad. For the international relations of Québec to take place, her mother country, Gaullist France was more than supportive; in fact it provided the early momentum to its international aspirations.

In his memoir, *Memoirs D'espoir: Le Renouveau 1958-1962*, De Gaulle, during his sojourn in Québec, had observed that Canada is separated into two radically different ethnic communities and instead of long cohabitation there is just a compromise and not at all a national unity. This observation shaped De Gaulle’s later policies towards Québec and Canada; his obvious preference being Québec. J F Boshier in his book *The Gaullist attack on Canada* identifies following points to substantiate why Québec attracted France in 1960s; anti-Americanism, rationalism, closer post-war relations, common social changes and a shared bureaucratic instinct. French support for Québec was driven by de Gaulle’s idiosyncratic search for an independent role of France in Western alliance (Nossal et al, 2011).

Further, it is impossible to understand developments in the Canada- Quebec-France triangle in the 1960s without referring to the decolonization phenomenon that was at its height during the decade. Although decolonisation occurred over a period of three centuries (Meren: 2011) it was only in later half of twentieth century that it became a global phenomenon. The idea of 'self-determination' was increasingly a force behind decolonization becoming global. By 1960s decolonisation had reached its apogee and France loomed large out of this.

At the other side of Atlantic, the examples, ideas, and discourse of decolonization too became increasingly pronounced and the metaphors like 'Québec like colony' and 'France like liberator' became of part of Québec's intellectuals group and it did not take long for the ideas and implications of decolonization to spill into the province's political life (Meren, 2011). Both sides of Atlantic referred frequently to decolonization to justify their deeds. The intersection of the idea of Quebec as colony with the reinvention of France as a champion of decolonization at once spurred and shaped the special relationship that had begun to emerge between Paris and Quebec City in 1960 with the establishment of what became known as Quebec's *Délégation Générale* in Paris. The signing of independent agreement between Québec and France on education, followed by culture further consolidated this newly established relationship between Québec and France, much to the ire of Canada.

Notwithstanding resistance from Canada, Québec moved on the path of institutionalising its international relations and developed bureaucratic apparatus to undertake this function in highly professional and institutionalised way. The three major events of 1960s that marked the beginning of institutionalization of Québec international relations are; 1961, the opening of *Maison du Québec* in Paris, the 1964 conclusion of first ever international entente on education with France and finally the 1965 pronouncement of Gerin-Lajoie doctrine. In fact in case of Québec, the policy pronouncement in international domain precedes the institutional set-up. It has mandated the *Ministère des Relations Internationales* to direct the government's international initiatives, coordinate the activities of government departments and agencies in this regard, manage a network of representatives abroad, as well as negotiate and enforce international agreements. In that sense Québec MRI functions as mini foreign ministry. This institutionalization of Québec international relations has a parallel. It developed side by side with the development of its relations with

other francophone world and eventually the development and institutionalization of this French speaking community, *la francophonie* which also started in 1960s.

It should be noted here that by late 1950s and early 1960s, Québec started taking interest in other French-speaking peoples around the world. Government of Quebec began to assert its right to represent French Canadians internationally, thereby challenging federal exclusivity in foreign affairs and, in the federal view, posing a threat to Canada's national unity (Gendron 2001: 19). The first skirmish, as noted by Gendron (2001: 20) between the federal and provincial governments was over relations with the international French-speaking community when federal government announced, in April 1961, funding of an educational assistance programme worth \$300,000 to the countries of French Africa. Québec perceived it as an infringement of provincial jurisdiction as education is a provincial matter, further as flag-bearer of French culture in North America, it was demanded that it should be channelled via Québec, which was later put down by federal government.

Québec could not do much to get the educational aid to French Africa channelled the way it wanted in order to place itself internationally; but its inclusion by France in the cooperation network of French-speaking countries (which were its former colonies) called *la Francophonie* gave it the required impetus to place itself internationally. *La Francophonie* as defined by Rowswell (2002: 215) is “a group of countries having French as (un)common language” followed decolonization. Its adherents seek to advance the use of French for the sake of the language and to pursue political and economic interests in and between states (Weinstein 1976: 485). For some scholars, francophonie is a concept “ambiguous” (Tardif: 1984), and to some it is a “polysemic notion” ( Benalil : 2006) which has linguistic, geographic, spiritual and institutional meanings. To others, La francophonie is not only linguistic and institutional concept, but it is cultural, economic, political and above all popular concept (Michel Têtu quoted in Mounia Benalil). François-Pierre Le Scouarnec, englobes these notions while classifying la francophonie, one with capital ‘f’ ; la Francophonie and other with small ‘f’ ; la francophonie. The first one refers to what certain political scientists call a ‘regime’ and the second one refers to a group of linguistic, cultural, sociological and geographical notion, widely spread and very real. Hence, *la Francophonie* precedes and justifies, la Francophonie; the regime. The focus of present work is la Francophonie.



The 1968 l’Affaire du Gabon, where, at France’s behest Gabon's extended invitation to Québec not to Canada to attend the meeting of the Conference of National Education Ministers (CONFEMEN) in Libreville further strained this triangle. Encouraged by France, Québec attended this meeting on its own behalf, and thus set an avant-garde in the history of Canadian politics where a province had participated autonomously in international conference. This threatened Canada’s national unity and sovereignty. According to Ivan Head (quoted in Engler, 2009: 203), then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau’s principal advisor on foreign affairs the Gabonese invitation to Québec was “one of the most serious threats to the integrity of Canada that this country has ever faced...it contains the seeds of the destruction of Canada as a member of the international community”. He further saw the invitation to Québec as no less than formal act of recognition of Québec’s international independence.

Initially the federal government had been supportive of Québec’s activity abroad but this incidence made the Canadian government take a hard position towards Québec internationalism. Throughout Trudeau’s years in power, federal government “blocked or impeded all attempts at giving Québec an international status or official role abroad” (Charbonneau 2010:84). After Trudeau retired, federal government became flexible and allowed Québec to have a say in international relations but under the aegis of federal government.

However it was not easy for Québec to get the membership of la francophonie. It involved several rounds of negotiations between two levels of government to reach at an agreement which can finalize the modalities of Québec’s participation in la francophonie. Finally the 1985 Québec-Ottawa concluded that Québec cannot be represented directly and in Canadian delegation under the designation of Canada-Québec. It was further agreed that the summit will be divided into two parts; the first part dedicated to political and economic issues of the world where only federal government can intervene and the second part dedicated to matters of cultural and development where other governments, like Québec, can intervene and have their say. The first summit meeting took place in 1986. It was the first step towards the institutionalization of this multilateral organisation.

From the founding of the Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique in 1970, the OIF has evolved its organization and mission over the past four decades. What started as a language based movement in world politics has increasingly come “to act as a powerful French-speaking voice in defence of both French culture and language and in advancing French-speaking nations multiple global, political and economic interests” (Neathery-Castro et al: 2005). The linguistic goal of the organisation is primordial but with the change in international system, it has incorporated politico-economic dimension to its existence

Québec participates actively in *la Francophonie* through various multilateral institutions like *Agence universitaire de la Francophonie*, and financing cultural forum like TV5 for nearly 30 years, developmental work like French language promotion and teaching in Southeast Asia, vocational and technical training in other francophone countries along with its active participation in works promoting values like peace, democracy and human rights in francophone world.

*La francophonie* has become a preferred platform for both federal government and Québec government to protect and project its interests. For Québec as Jean Lesage said that “contacts with French-speaking countries would provide Quebec with necessary "oxygen," giving it an international identity and providing new sources of cultural and economic support (Lesage quoted in Weinstein, Brian 1976: 489). For Canada it has “been to weaken Québec’s sovereignty movement” abroad. The federal government has given more aid to French-speaking countries in an attempt to diffuse Québec nationalist initiatives in this area and to try to redirect them through the national entity (Peter St. John quoted in Englar, 2009: 204).

In the late 1960s Canada began to expand its aid to francophone nations as a way to placate Québec nationalist. This is because “the idea of federative state cannot be rooted in nationalism, and this fact leaves a dangerous political void at the heart of the state... Such states have no natural unifying principle and consequently more vulnerable to dismemberment, separation and political interference than are nation states” (Barry Buzan quoted in Thomsen & Hynek, 2006: 851). Canada being a nation of two nationalisms always felt the fear of disintegration.

Québec nationalism and its increased demand for autonomy in foreign policy have always threatened Canada's sovereignty and national unity. Canada sought to answer this challenge in *la Francophonie* by taking up bigger role as Thomas Axworthy says, "Multilateral organisations are most often the best ways to achieve Canadian end" externally but here internally to meet the challenge posed by Québec on its sovereignty. As Charbonneau (2010:85) emphasises that the "varied attempt at defining on its own terms Québec international status, Canada provided the early political impetus to institutionalize francophone multilateral cooperation". A more institutionalised *la Francophonie*, although seen as a pan-cultural movement, has more political dimensions within the organisation (OIF) and between participating countries (Canada-France) and inside the country (Canada-Québec) as well. Does Canada gain from international involvement of Québec, in terms of its political economic reach and influence in francophone community or it tends to lose its international personality as one sovereign state in world community?

. Throughout the literature available on Canadian foreign policy, huge portion is devoted to Canada-US relations. Not much importance is placed on other regions of world. Of the literature available on Québec's international relations, the history of its evolution till 1960s has been dealt with in details. Literature on Québec vis a vis la francophonie focuses mainly on Québec-Canada rift and Québec-Paris-Ottawa triangle while what these powers do within the organisation to justify the raison d'être of la francophonie is not properly highlighted. What is mainly highlighted is the conflict at various levels. The literature on Québec-Canada relations focuses primarily on their conflict over culture and language. *La francophonie* is mainly described as a language movement and not much light is thrown on political-economic aspects as that of NAFTA, G8 and EU. Canada's role in *la Francophonie* during the initial years of formation is talked about but the later decades are not dealt with in details.

### **Definition, Rationale and Scope of the Study**

The proposal aims to study the nature of Québec's international relations and explore to what extent federal governments have accommodated the Québec international pursuits. The international activities pursued by Québec, especially after

1950s, will be the focus of the proposed study with special reference to its role and participation in *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF).

The study aims to examine whether domestic factors like Quiet Revolution encouraged Québec to expand its reach beyond the regional and national boundaries or if it were international developments such as the process of decolonisation that prompted it to demand more autonomy in conducting its international relations. A reference to France's role and Ottawa-Paris-Québec equation will also be made. A focus will be on the sovereignty concern of Canada being challenged by Québec's international aspiration.

The case of *la Francophonie*, as it is major point of power conflict between federal and Québec government over foreign policy, will be taken up in order to understand power dynamics in Canadian federal set up. An attempt would be made to understand why Canada allows Québec to pursue its international policies, a concept contradicting traditional notion of sovereignty and statehood in international system. Is Canada becoming more and more post Westphalian state in wake of globalisation? Further the study would try to find out whether Québec's participation in la francophonie is the end product of its international relations or is it the starting point for its international relations? The study also tries to find out whether Canada's increased interest in francophone community is just an outgrowth of Canada's domestic bilingual and bicultural nature or Canada has deeper politico-economic interest in francophone world, long considered economically backward and politically unstable. Is there a broader power game involved where Canada can hope to play a middle power, guiding power, go-between; and why not even a great power role in the French-speaking world?

## Research Questions

- ❖ How the Québec's involvement in international affairs can be categorized?  
Whether it is a case of sub-unit undertaking foreign policy?
- ❖ With a federal state like Canada allowing its constituent elements to undertake international activities, to what extent and, more important, how the principle of sovereign state has been modified/ adjusted?
- ❖ To what extent the projection of domestic values in international policies has been influenced by Canada-Québec rift?
- ❖ What have been the Quebec nationalist interests and goals while seeking engagement in international affairs?
- ❖ What have been the principal accords and political understanding between Ottawa and Quebec in areas of foreign policy? And how both federal and provincial governments get represented in la Francophonie?
- ❖ Is Canada's increased participation in la Francophonie intended to contain Québec's moves towards an independent international role; or is it used to promote and to protect Canada's national sovereignty and interests?
- ❖ Is Canada using Québec to gain market access and serve its other political-diplomatic and economic interests in francophone community?

## **Hypotheses**

- i) Canada's involvement in la Francophonie using Québec's French identity is a strategic tool to increase its politico-economic influence in francophone world in order to project itself as a leader of the new global order which la Francophonie seems to offer".
- ii) Québec's participation in la Francophonie challenges Canada's sovereignty which in turn fosters Québec's distinct identity internationally

## **Research Methodology**

This study will make an attempt to understand the concept of sovereignty and federalism in the context of nation-states and their constituent provinces. While there are many approaches that highlight what prompts provinces to play a major role in international affairs/ foreign policy, this study emphasises identity/ nation building as the main approach in this particular case of Quebec in Canada.

To realise this research design, a moderate emphasis would be placed on collecting primary reports/ projects and summit/ conference proceedings of the federal government of Canada and the government of Québec. Government websites like that of DFAIT, MRI, CIDA will be consulted to get the details of government involvement abroad. The website of OIF will also be consulted to get the details of its working and Canada-Québec role in la francophonie.

Theses and dissertations by the other scholars on this theme and other secondary source materials would be extensively consulted for a rigorous analysis of the problem under consideration.

## Chapterization Scheme

Chapter 1: *Québec's International Relations and la Francophonie : an*

### *Introduction*

This section will give a brief background of the problem under study and conceptualise sovereignty, federalism and relation between them with a reference to place of Canadian provinces in particular Quebec in Canadian federalism.

Chapter 2: *International Relations Of Québec: Evolution And Direction*

This chapter will talk about evolution of Québec's international relations 1960s onwards. The chapter further talks about the factors which encouraged Québec to demand for autonomous international relations. Further this chapter will try to analyse the causes of its evolution with a focus on international phenomenon like decolonisation and domestic phenomenon like quite revolution. It will also make a brief role of France in Québec's pursuit of internationalism.

Chapter 3: *Institutional Set Up Of Québec International Relations*

This chapter will deal with the evolution of Québec Ministry of International Relations from 1960 onwards. It will also focus of institutional similarity or dissimilarity between federal foreign ministry and the provincial one. This chapter will further try to understand the objectives and functioning of Québec's MRI and Canadian DFAIT.

#### Chapter 4: *La Francophonie: Cooperation or Conflict*

This chapter will deal with the creation of la francophonie and its institutional set up keeping in mind the role of Québec and initiative of Canada to institutionalise it. It will further incorporate Ottawa-Paris-Québec conflict and cooperation inside and outside la francophonie.

#### Chapter 5: *Summary and Conclusions*

Based on the findings in all the three chapters, this part of dissertation will draw the conclusion.



## Chapter II

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF QUÉBEC: EVOLUTION AND DIRECTION

“When two states build up contacts and engage in various exchanges to fulfil their mutual interests”, what results is called international relations and this definition also applies to non-sovereign entities. This definition by Nelson Michaud and Isabelle Ramet is well applicable to Québec, one of the ten provinces of Canadian confederation and the only non-sovereign entity so active in international relations.

With 7 general delegations, 5 delegations, 10 bureaus, 4 trade branches and 2 areas of representation in multilateral affairs (*la Francophonie* and UNESCO)<sup>1</sup> Québec is the only non-sovereign state to have such a vast international presence. As Louis Balthazar points out that “Québec is the most active sub-state” which sits at the “top of 350 federated states”, with a presence over five continents and across 20 countries” (Balthazar, 2003:7) and having concluded almost 712 international accords of which 368 are currently in force<sup>2</sup>.

With such a vast global presence in the forms of offices and international agreements, Québec challenges the traditional nature of international system, which bestows only the sovereign entity the power to conduct itself internationally. It should be mentioned here that Québec is not the only sub-state on international scene but yes it is the most active sub-state. Today, in the age of globalisation, the boundaries between states hold no bar and there is more and more intermixing of domestic and international politics, ‘intermestic’ politics so to say it. Every state or sub-state wants to project and promote its interest in world, be it economic, political, territorial, security (environmental, border as well as social). Québec is also one of them. But for Québec, buck does not stop here as it has broader task of nation building and state building to undertake. In fact Québec involves more and more internationally as it has to fulfil its identity quest in Canada and in world. The domestic nation building project of Québec encourages its international endeavour. To this end, Québec

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/ministere/representation-etranger> viewed on 05.05.13

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/Ententes-et-Engagements/Ententes-internationales> viewed on 05.05.13

follows its doctrine Gérine-Lajoie which says what is in its domestic jurisdiction, Québec will follow that internationally. That is to say, Québec will have autonomous policies on its international relations.

The pronouncement of this doctrine in 1965 followed by participation in international conference of educational minister of francophone countries in Libreville, Gabon, in 1968, mark two important steps towards Québec becoming an international actor. This followed the development of a well organised bureaucracy to undertake Québec's international relations. Although Québec has been active internationally even before confederation days, the profound changes and development in this direction took off in 1960s. A sense of being distinct francophone society in widely Anglophone North America encouraged Québec, back in 1960s, to develop relations with other French speaking countries. The cultural and linguistic dimension gave early direction to Québec's internationalism, which developed to become a *paradiplomatie identitaire*. *La francophonie*, which started as a language movement in French speaking African nations and former French colonies provided a much needed forum for Québec's *paradiplomatie identitaire* and to project and promote its internal distinctiveness in world.

The initial years of Québec's internationalism was further shaped by power dynamic between Canada and Québec, one as the sole representative of Canadian state and other the sole representative of francophone nation in North America, and their respective clash over jurisdiction in international affairs. Various agreements between federal and provincial government gave Québec the status of participating government in *la Francophonie*, one of the biggest multilateral organisation. For Québec *la Francophonie* has been vital for its existence and "in the heart of their lives, *la Francophonie* is a cultural, political and economic reality<sup>3</sup>.

However the international activities pursued by Québec are not without Canada's ire as it challenges Canadian sovereignty in international system. As a result the federal-provincial relations between Ottawa and Québec, and Ottawa and other provinces remain turbulent. Québec, for its part, has kept moving on with its paradiplomacy and its international activities since later half of last century.

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<sup>3</sup> Jean Charest (2008), Francophonie Summit held in Québec.

This chapter studies and examines the evolution of Québec's international relations, its nature, causes and consequences. This chapter focuses chiefly on the period of 1960s which marked the beginning of Québec internationalism and laid ground for its participation in *la Francophonie*. Starting with the distinction between foreign policy and international relations, the chapter seeks to explore the reasons and broader interests behind Québec going international. An attempt is made to identify the broader dynamics of domestic and international contexts and intermixing of the two which marked the new effervescence of Québec international relations.

This chapter argues that Québec's international relations pursue a *paradiplomatie identitaire* to which *la francophonie* is a forum. In other words, the participation in *la Francophonie* is not the outgrowth of Québec's international activity instead *la Francophonie* shaped the outward reach. This is to say that the presence in *la francophonie* is not the end of Québec's international activity but is a mean to this internationalism.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section, while differentiating international relations from foreign policy tries to locate the place of Québec in traditional international system, with a focus on sub-state internationalism. Further this part presents a brief survey of the evolution of Québec's international relations till 1960s. The second section describes the factors behind this evolution. This section deals with domestic factors which encouraged the outward reach. The third section looks into the international factors which nursed Québec's international aspiration. After analyzing these factors at both the level, the chapter evaluates the nature of the evolution with reference to Québec's participation in *la Francophonie*.

### **Québec's Search for a Place in International Relations**

Having a vast global presence of any federated unit like that of Québec is in conflict with Westphalian international system. Further the Realist analyses of world politics assume that "states are only significant actors; that they act as units; and that their military security objectives dominate their other goal" (Nye and Koheane). So the "international system" is state centric in Realist conception. Viewed in this light

one may question the nature of internationalism by federated states; a non-sovereign entity in international system, and the reasons behind internationalism.

The state-centric conception is very true for the period just after end of World War II and at the heights of Cold War when military and security interests were the *raison d'être* of international relations and state the unit carrying out that interest. But this traditional model of world politics has been in question after the emergence of sub-state units on international scene in post-Cold War world and in wake of faltering border because of globalisation.

It should be noted here that what sub-state units follows cannot be called a foreign policy but still it falls in the category of international relations. Most scholars have contended that foreign policy can only be taken in the purview of sovereignty. Since the sub-state unit are non-sovereign, they cannot have a foreign policy but they can have international relations.

The international activities pursued by Québec since the beginning of 1960s is the evident example of sub-state involvement in world politics under aegis of international relations. In fact Québec is, as Louis Balthazar puts, most active case of international activity by any sub-state in world. The international endeavours taken by Québec outside national border are not a recent phenomenon but it dates back to the years of Canadian confederation. But the recent importance that it has garnered is not doubt unprecedented, considering the fact that Québec is not a sovereign entity in world politics.

The development of international relations of Québec needs to be seen in the context of 'structural transformation at two levels; one at domestic level and other at international level.

At domestic level, aspirations of Baby Boom generation led Quiet Revolution in 1960s which saw profound transformation in social norms and political structure of Québec till now marred by *Grand Noirceur* or dark era of conservative Maurice Duplessis regime. Québec opened its arms to modernisation and increased interaction with outside world.

At the international level, the increased interdependence between states (Nye and Keohane) especially in economic sector after Second World War and

decolonisation movement highly influenced Québec to involve itself in internationalism.

Apart from these two factors, the third factor and the main driving force of Québec into international arena is its identity quest; a profound desire to gain recognition as a 'distinct society' in Canada and world. This long cherished dream of nation building; a French speaking nation in English speaking North American continent, has been the gospel's truth and cornerstone of Québec's *politique étrangère* over the years. Québec, through its international activity, "actively wants Canadians and citizens of other countries to take notice" of its unique identity and distinct status using a *paradiplomatie identitaire*.

The 1960s, have been very important in this history of Québec's international relations as that year most French African colonies achieved independence, the Quiet Revolution began out of a new self-consciousness and dynamism. Quebecois became conscious that they are comparatively underdeveloped as compared to Anglophone population and feared it might be permanent unless actions were taken. With a sense of relative underdevelopment and powerlessness as compared to Anglophone North America combined with their declining population made them realise that it's high time to react if they had to maintain their culture and language. Thus began quest for their international emancipation so that they could be emancipated domestically also.

In order to better understand the quest for Québec's international relations and its place in international system, it would be worth looking at the history of its evolution. A brief survey of history of Québec's international relations till 1960s is required here, because present can better be understood in light of past.

**History of Québec's international relations:** Québec was active on international scene much before 1960. In fact, even before confederation in 1867, Québec has, back in 1816, an agency of Lower Canada (as it was called that time) established in London. With France, Québec's mother country the first official *retrouvaille*<sup>4</sup> or reunion, after battle of plains of Abraham or Conquest of 1763, dates back to Second

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<sup>4</sup> Paquin, Stéphane (2006), "Les relations internationales du Québec avant la Révolution tranquille" in Stéphane Paquin and Louise Beaudoin (eds) *Histoire des Relations Internationales du Québec*, Montréal : Vlb éditeur.

Empire i.e. later half of 19<sup>th</sup> century when Napoleon III (1855) sent a warship called *La Capricieuse*, on a trade mission to united-Canada.

Trade and immigration have been two important sectors where Québec has been most active since beginning. Maintaining economy and population have encouraged Québec to undertake international endeavour in the formative years of modern Québec. Following the Confederation in 1867, Québec offered to hold a pan-Canadian conference on immigration in order to precise the responsibility of governments at both levels. Since the BNA Act which created the Confederation didn't mention whose prerogative is foreign policy while talking about separation of power, it was decided in 1868 that a federal immigration office will be opened in Europe, mainly in London to which the provinces can also name their respective representatives. Québec opened an agency in London in 1871 to attract immigrants. In 1882 Québec appointed a representative in Paris, created mission in London in 1908, in Brussels in 1915, opened as office in New York in 1940. A delegation was opened in Paris in 1961, a general delegation was created in London and the mission in New York was upgraded in 1962. Later on offices were opened in Milan, Brussels, Dusseldorf, in other American cities and in many places throughout the world.<sup>5</sup>

Today Québec has 7 General delegations, 5 delegations. 10 bureaus, 4 trade branches and 2 areas of representation in multilateral affairs<sup>6</sup> across world with a massive budget (\$ 118.8m for 2011-2012)<sup>7</sup> devoted to its international commitments. So we see that for the last half century, Québec has constantly pursued autonomous international relations equivalent to any other sovereign state in international system. Does that mean Québec has a foreign policy like those sovereign countries? Michaud and Ramet contends that because of non-sovereign nature of Québec it is difficult to assign it a true foreign policy which is defined by a set of exclusive rights granted to sovereign state by international law like right to conclude and sign treaties, right to place diplomatic agents and to declare war etc<sup>8</sup>. But even then Québec has vast international presence and involves actively in international activity. To this reality of

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<sup>5</sup> Balthazar, Louis, "The Québec experience: success or failure", ?, " *Regional & Federal Studies*, 9 (1).

<sup>6</sup> MRI Québec, <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/ministere/representation-etranger> .... viewed on 17.04.13

<sup>7</sup> MRI: Annual Management Report. [http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/content/documents/fr/RAG2011-12\\_Sommaire.pdf](http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/content/documents/fr/RAG2011-12_Sommaire.pdf) , viewed on 17.04.2013

<sup>8</sup> Nelson Michaud and Isabelle Ramet (2004), "Québec Et Politique Étrangère: Contradiction Ou Réalité? »,

*International Journal*, Vol. 59, No. 2.

Québec, Michaud and Ramet find it legitimate to question the very nature and content of this action which is difficult to be placed under umbrella of foreign policy. To some it is foreign policy, to others it is international relations.

For Claude Morin the evolution of Quebec's diplomacy since 1960 is "l'art de l'impossible," as it's federated-state status has not barred Québec's international development<sup>9</sup>. Now one may question how this "l'art de l'impossible," has been realised? What are the factors that encouraged Québec to overcome traditional sovereignty barrier of international law in order to launch its international relations, if not foreign policy?

Louis Balthazar (2003) identifies four factors at the origin of this new effervescence of Québec's international relations since 1960. According to him, Quiet revolution, international context of that time, proliferation of transnational relations and the particular role of France played a crucial role.

### **Domestic Factors Responsible for Québec's International Relations during 1960s**

Although Québec's presence was 'modest', in the word of Louise Beaudoin, on international scene before 1960 and mainly concerned trade and immigration, its emerging relations with world started taking shape in the beginning of 1960s. This decade marked considerable change in Québec society and change in role of state. The 1960 defeat of Union Nationale government led by Maurice Duplessis by Liberals under Jean Lesage was a decisive turning point in the history of modern Québec. The period is usually referred as beginning of Quiet Revolution which deeply impacted collective psyche of Québec as society, as state and as a nation.

**Quiet Revolution:** As Nossal et al (2011) put "Quiet revolution marked the emergence of greater intervention by Québec state, a desire by French Canadians for greater control over their economy, the coming of age of baby boom generation and decline of roman catholic church, the rise of feminism, the 'national question' and dreams of independence". Thus, from the decolonization era of the 1960s to the current postmodern period, and depending on the sensitivity of their interlocutors,

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<sup>9</sup> Claude Morin quoted in Nelson Michaud and Isabelle Ramet (2004), "Québec Et Politique Étrangère: Contradiction Ou Réalité? », International Journal, Vol. 59, No. 2, p306.

Quebec officials have tried to craft their interventions in order to be considered as representatives of a nation, a province, a homeland, an economy, a people, a state.<sup>10</sup>

The fundamental characteristics of Québec society changed significantly during the period of Quiet Revolution. The most important feature of this period, as underlined by Brian Young (1988), has been the growing secularization of Québec society as manifested in education, hospital and trade unionism. He further emphasises that this decline in church and conservatism gave new importance to ideologies of social democracy, Marxism and particularly the changing forms of nationalism. In economic sectors, the public ownership of important industries like electrical powers and considerable expansion of educational and social services gave rise to new social group of francophone professionals. This new social group, the petit bourgeois class, came to challenge the church and traditional conservative Anglophone elites. The new working class, employed as teachers, doctors, engineers, demanded full participation in consumer society. The role of women cannot be neglected. The decline in conservative values and loosening of clerical hold over Québec society gave new dimension to women movement. Women also started working in professional and corporate levels and other service sectors. This called for improved facilities for day care and health care, equality before law, removal of forms of sexual violence in home and at work places. The feminism movement led to change in family values.

The new self consciousness generated due to Quiet revolution gave rise to neo-nationalism in Québec which contradicted the traditional notion of self aloofness in order to protect its culture and tradition and called for opening up of Québec frontiers to the world. It is imperative to note here that the nationalist tone of new generation Québécois wanted control over their resources and wanted to shape the future course of action without any federal interference.

The nationalism has always been a predominant trait in Québec's politics since 1837 Patriotes movement<sup>11</sup> which was revived by Quiet revolution. The advent of *Partie Québécois* to power in 1976 further strengthened the bid for self

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<sup>10</sup> Belanger, Louis(2002): The Domestic Politics of Quebec's Quest for External Distinctiveness, *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 32:2, 195-214

<sup>11</sup> Sanguin, A.-L (1984), "The Québec question and political geography of Canada", *GeoJournal*, 8(2).



determination and a possible secession/independence. The core issue has always been the 'identity'; a distinct French identity.

This can be further seen in context of asymmetric relations between Québec and Canada in Canadian federalism. The population of Québec is hardly 26% of total Canadian population which is further declining. From a sociological point of view, Québec is the member of a country whose dominant language and culture is largely integrated with that of an international hegemonic; the neighbouring America. Conditioned by this asymmetry, the political development of Québec since Quiet revolution has given place to a double process of state-building and nation-building<sup>12</sup>.

According to Sanguin (1984):

“Often the state is the political outcome of the nation which precedes it in historical time, as is Québec’s case. The nation of Québec emerged little by little after the French withdrawal of 1760, but the federated state of Québec was not created until 1867- until the birth of a federal Canada. In fact Québec did not properly come about until the Quiet revolution of 1960s. Québec endowed itself with Ministry of Education, nationalized its electricity supplies, created General Delegation (mini embassies) in certain foreign capitals, named its Parliament the National Assembly and controls the planning and development of its territory and social welfare”.

This corresponded with the newly understood role of provincial government, as the only saviour of their linguistic and cultural sovereignty. The enactment of language law, Bill 101 made French the official language of Québec. This action caused ripples in rest of Canada (ROC) and “seemingly set aside the province as national state;<sup>13</sup>” which defends the identity and development of nation and frequent reference were made to State of Québec, instead the Province. For example, in 1962 while inaugurating the Maison du Québec in Paris, the Premier Jean Lesage stressed ‘Québec was not just a Canadian province’ and he spoke of l’Etat du Québec and not the la province du Québec.

Working further in direction of state building, Québec set up a Ministry of Immigration, its own television network; radio Québec, separate from federal network. Since in 1976, Québec has installed its own important state run public

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<sup>12</sup> Therien et al (1994), “La politique étrangère québécoise” in Alain-G Gagnon (ed) *Québec : Etat et Société*, Montréal : Edition Québec/Amérique Inc.

<sup>13</sup> Sanguin, A.-L (1984), “The Québec question and political geography of Canada”, *GeoJournal*, 8(2).

organisation; health services, lotteries, steelworks, oil, forestry, mining and automobile insurance<sup>14</sup>.

The Quiet revolution undoubtedly unleashed unprecedented 'state-building' measures and kindled a new assertive spirit in French Canadians, who began to identify themselves as Québécois; an attribute to notion of nation. This notion was further strengthened by government of Québec which "is not only the vehicle for expression of a given Quebec identity, but one of the principal agents of the development of a very specific conception of what is or should be this identity"<sup>15</sup>; a distinct francophone society. The subsequent Québec government, be it souverainistes *Partie Québécois* or federalist Liberal, adopted a nationalist tone

To foster this distinct identity in Canada and rest of the world, Québec needed a well defined mechanism. It was not that easy to get the internal recognition as all the sub-units in federation are considered to be equal and are at par with each others. Moreover federal government tried to put down all the efforts to marginalise any separatist bid. To its end Québec relied on changes in international system and based on that defended its actions.

The Québec government could take advantage of new transnational realities, of the increasingly blurring of the difference between domestic and external politics, of the developing international role of federated units<sup>16</sup>; intermeshing politics. By doing so Québec could project its domestic quest for distinct identity internationally. In return, it draws from this external recognition and identity its legitimacy as State as well as the legitimacy of its role in Quebec society. In doing so it seek to project a particular image abroad: "that of a vibrant and dynamic French-speaking society wishing not only to maintain its language and culture but to make it grow and flower by opening wide windows on the world at large and by establishing as many international links as possible. In other words, it wanted to become a fully-fledged international actor"<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

<sup>15</sup> Belanger, Louis (2002): The Domestic Politics of Quebec's Quest for External Distinctiveness, *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 32:2, 195-214.

<sup>16</sup> Balthazar, Louis, "The Québec experience: success or failure?," *Regional & Federal Studies*, 9 (1).

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*

Does that mean Québec was aspiring to become independent? According to Claude Morin (cited in Nossal et al, 307) the international activities of Québec were not the result of politicians and civil servants who were quietly plotting independence rather the desire to be active in international politics was a response to domestic determinants of that time. In other words the trajectory of Québec's international policy was a reflection of its deeply felt needs of that time. Two points can be inferred from here; the neo-nationalism; new strand of nationalism that was born with Quiet revolution, was modern, outward looking and concerned opening up its frontiers to the world. Further it sought to break away from traditional nationalism of Union Nationale of Maurice Duplessis, the conservative Premier who ruled Québec for long fifteen years after World War II. Under his leadership, Québec nationalism was backward and inward looking which shut its door for the rest of the world and retreated into isolation. His regime plunged Québec into 'la Grande Noirceur'. The new generation under the influence of Quiet Revolution wanted to embrace the opening, which encouraged Québec to open up to world.

Secondly, the political regime change and shift of power from conservative party to Liberal party in the beginning of 1960s and coming on scene of separatist *Partie Québécois* in the later half of 1960s brought an ideological change as well. Whichever party be in power or whosoever leader ruling the province, the basis of bargaining with federal government over jurisdiction, especially foreign affairs, has always been the constitutional ambiguity of Canada.

**Constitutional ambiguity:** The provision of BNA Act enumerating the division of powers, mainly the section 91 and 92, did not explicitly assign competence in foreign affairs to either the federal or provincial governments. Nor did it deny any possibility to the provinces for an international role. In the absence of any constitutional prohibition, Canadian provinces, especially Québec, tend to project and protect its interests beyond their regional and national borders. This clause was very clearly underlined in Gerin-Lajoie doctrine which continues to be the cornerstone of Québec international relations.

The enunciation of the Gerin-Lajoie doctrine in 1965, named after the Lesage education minister, is another founding moment of Quebec's quest for international recognition. It defined the principles for the Quebec government's international policy. "The doctrine founded the rationale, based on identity and not just

constitutionality, for autonomous international action for Québec”<sup>18</sup>. The minister asserted the idea that members of federation such as Québec should have the right to exercise the rights of a sovereign state, but only in those areas where the province had jurisdiction<sup>19</sup>. He further rejected the federal government’s claim to exclusive rights in international activity and to exercise control over international activity of provinces. This assertion, which came to be known as “doctrine Gerin-Lajoie du prolongement externe des compétences internes du Québec” can be said to be rooted in the constitutional ambiguity of Canadian federalism.

It must be underlined here that although domestic factors have encouraged the international relations of Québec, we cannot ignore the general international context of that time. As Balthazar puts “the building up of Québec’s international relations resides in the general international climate of that period. The Quiet Revolution would not have continued with such success if it had not taken place in such international climate.” (2003:8). As much as the Québec was in transition in 1960s, so was the world outside it. International scenario was perhaps just ripe for Québec to project its interests abroad. This might not have been possible if there had not been any taker. But to the international relations of Québec to take place, her mother country, France, was already prepared to stretch its arms. The coming to power of De Gaulle in France and ongoing transition in socio-political gallery of France benefited Québec and provided the early momentum to its international aspirations.

### **International Factors and Québec’s International Emancipation**

As mentioned above that the international context of the time, alongwith role of France and decolonization movement going on in francophone Africa gave initial direction to Québec’s international relations. The international context dominated by transnational movement by various sub state unit like Flander, Catalonia and Wallonia encouraged Québec to build up international agreement with other sovereign and sub-states. To this end, the role of France has been pivotal. In fact, France has been the "epicenter of Quebec's international relations" (Painchaud: 1997) and Quebec's objectives in France have been fairly consistent from the mid-1960s.

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<sup>18</sup> Belanger,200

<sup>19</sup> Nossal et al, p 308

But it is worth mentioning here that the Québec-France relations have not always been as warm as it became after 1960. It took almost 200 years that Franco-Québécois relations saw a rapprochement after The Treaty of Paris of 1763<sup>20</sup> had almost wiped out Québec from France's list. Although over this long period spanning almost over two centuries, the ties were maintained in the form of several visits by politicians and opening up of Québec agency in France, but the relations were comparatively cold. "The French government never clearly manifested any desire to restore the ties with the government old New-France<sup>21</sup>" and perhaps the other side of Atlantic had also a reserved attitude towards France till Duplessis regime.

If the relations between Québec and France were cold before 1960s, so were the relations between Canada and France. As a partner in strategic Atlantic alliance, Canada was France's ally but its status was similar to any other partner country of the alliance and the Franco-Canada relations were not that warm after WWII. In fact after the devastating World War followed by bloody colonial wars, France was too busy with the task of national and European reconstruction work that it hardly cared what's going on with her American cousins till the beginning of 1960s and coming to power of General de Gaulle.

**Gaullist France:** De Gaulle had a personal interest in what is happening in Québec. After coming back to power in 1958, and before he was firmly in command of the fifth Republic<sup>22</sup> in 1963, De Gaulle made his third visit to Canada in 1960 and second visit to Québec. He has already been twice to Canada as the President of provisional government of French Republic for brief period in 1944 and again in 1945. It was in 1960 visit to Québec that De Gaulle came to understand the ground reality which he failed to see during his last two sojourns. According to his memoir, *Memoirs D'espoir: Le Renouveau 1958-1962*<sup>23</sup>, during his sojourn in Québec he observed that Canada is separated into two radically different ethnic communities and instead of long cohabitation there is just a compromise and not at all a national unity.

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<sup>20</sup> When France lost Québec to British Empire.

<sup>21</sup> \*Malone, Christopher (1974), *La politique quebecoise en matiere de relations internationales: Changement et continuite, 1960—1972*. (Dissertation)

<sup>22</sup> Coup d'etat of 13 May 1958 brought General Charles de Gaulle to power as the head of fifth Republic. In October 1963 he established his presidential supremacy over elected National Assembly.

<sup>23</sup> Referred from Malone, Christopher (1974). *La Politique Québécoise en Matière de Relations Internationales: Changement et Continuité, 1960—1972*. (Dissertation)

This was time when world was divided into communist and capitalist block at the height of cold war and De Gaulle was well alive to the danger of communist Soviet Union. Communist forces in France remained strong and were hopeful of coming to power. During his speeches he expressed “some of his wartime ideas about the fellowship of free peoples defending their liberty against tyrants” (Bosher, 1998:8) and that the peoples of the earth ought to dispose freely of themselves.

So when he came back to Paris, De Gaulle assigned his minister for Cultural Affairs André Malraux to take special interest in Québec because according to him there are things going on in Québec and France should take care of that. When Georges-Emile Lapalme, new minister in the new government of Jean Lesage, went to Paris in 1960 and explained to his French audience that Québec hopes to establish closer links with France, it was suggested by his French counterparts, Andre Malraux to start by establishing Maison du Québec; a sort of cultural office in France. He further informed Lapalme of the increased interest of De Gaulle and the French government’s willingness to respond to Québec’s initiative. He went on to the extent of suggesting Lapalme that Québec should seek an international political or legal status. For Georges-Emile Lapalme, it was more important to break with the “traditional national identity of French Canada and entrench the Quebec identity in the Universalist and modernist cultural shift; also reflective of a vigorous nation-state-which Andre Malraux was advocating in France at the time”. But when France showed interest in recognising an independent Québec in future, it was like a turning point for Québec.

One question must be raised here; why De Gaulle’s France was keen to support Québec’s international quest against the traditional state behaviour which is supposed to act with only sovereign entities in international system? In other words France was impinging into domestic jurisdiction of a sovereign country by promoting and supporting one of its constituent into international system. In fact France did more than just supporting Québec’s internationalism; it instigated Québec to press for more independent identity and gave international dimension to Québec’s domestic quest for identity. The domestic rift between Québec-Canada became more complicated by the increased interest of France under De Gaulle. Canada viewed this interest as the interference in its domestic matter and Franco-Canada ties were strained. The Québec

City-Ottawa-Paris triangle shaped the initial years of Québec's internationalism which was later exported to *la Francophonie*.

As mentioned earlier the third visit of de Gaulle to Canada had a great impact on his policies towards Canada and especially towards Québec. The simple explanation of increased interest of de Gaulle in Canada is not enough to understand the changes in France's policy towards Canada and Franco-Québec rapprochement on 1960. Although statesmen as individuals do play important role to shape up the policies of their respective countries, in this case coming of De Gaulle did play an important role Franco-Canada relations. But the events should be viewed into broader perspective of what had just preceded De Gaulle's ascent to power and what was the contemporary reality of world. It is not all about being touched by ethnic emotions that de Gaulle shared with French community of Canada and changed his heart overnight. There is more to it.

J F Boshier in his book *The Gaullist attack on Canada* identifies following points to substantiate why Québec attracted France in 1960s; anti-Americanism, rationalism, closer post-war relations, common social changes and a shared bureaucratic instinct. France and Québec shared the same societal challenges of modernization without falling prey to English assimilation and domination and wanted to retain their culture and language. Québec adopted French model in field of economy and social services. The French economy has always been a large public sector and government leads, controls and intervenes. All the developmental plans were undertaken by government and were widely admired abroad. Leaders in Québec too imitated De Gaulle developmental plan with more and more state economic intervention.

French support for Québec was further driven by De Gaulle's idiosyncratic search for an independent role of France in Western alliance (Nossal et al, 2011). He was annoyed at the domination of alliance by United States and Britain and had eventually withdrawn from North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1966. With Canada, De Gaulle was infuriated not only by the refusal of the Canadian government to sell uranium, to France in 1950s and 1960s but also by Canada's routine denunciations of French nuclear test in Sahara. He saw Ottawa's nuclear

policy simply as part of a wider Anglo-Saxon effort to suppress France<sup>24</sup>. This was the international happening that provoked de Gaulle to aim at Québec so that France could have a francophone ally in English North America.

The buck does not stop here. The most important factor that eventually shaped the domestic and international affairs in Québec-Paris-Ottawa triangle in the early years of 1960s is the decolonisation movement going on in third world. This was the first time in world history that any third world affairs has so deeply influenced the domestic affair of developed world and marked profound changes in its international outlook.

**Decolonisation:** Indeed, it is impossible to understand developments in the Canada-Quebec-France triangle in the 1960s without referring to the decolonization phenomenon that was at its height during the decade. Although decolonisation occurred over a period of three centuries (Meren: 2011) it was only in later half of twentieth century that it became a global phenomenon. This phenomenon, which marked mainly the underdeveloped global south came to influence and affect the developed global north and north-south relations as well as north-north relations in 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The end of WWII and establishment of UN had great impact on the freedom struggle of colonised and semi-colonised world. In fact it undermined the colonial powers capacity to re-establish its control over overseas territory. In 1945, the Charter of the United Nations proclaimed "the respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples" as one of its basic purposes. Self-determination means that the people of a colony or a dependent Territory decide about the future status of their homeland<sup>25</sup>. UN defines this process by which these Territories exercised their right to self-determination as decolonization. The idea of 'self-determination' was increasingly a force<sup>26</sup> behind decolonization becoming global and led to eventual disintegration of European empire. By 1960s decolonisation had reached its apogee.

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<sup>24</sup> J F Boshier quoted in Nossal et al, 2011, p 309.

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/questions\\_answers.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/questions_answers.shtml) viewed on 04.05.2013

<sup>26</sup> Which started with League of Nations at the end of WWI and consolidated further with UN at the end of WWII which led to gradual emergence of self-determination as an international norm of legitimacy offering new opportunities for opponents of imperialism and colonialism.



In France, the fighting in Algeria came to dominate political life, lead to the collapse of the Fourth Republic, and brought back to power General Charles de Gaulle. The ongoing domestic conflict was transported to international scene as Algeria “rapidly became an archetype of the struggle against Western colonialism, an example inspiring other movements battling (neo-) imperialism and colonialism (Meren: 2011). The boundary between international and internal conflict was even more diluted. The Algerian War eventually came to an end by 1962 Evian peace accords, with de Gaulle at the head of French government.

Earlier France didn't want to let go her overseas territories as they were seen as guarantor of French recovery from war time devastation and its great power status. De Gaulle, back in 1944 Brazzaville Conference called for a more active and enhanced role of the colonial components of French empire but refused to endorse self government. So what made him change his mind by 1960s that he started supporting Québec self-determination, in other word self-government, that too when Québec was not a colony.

At the other side of Atlantic, the examples, ideas, and discourse of decolonization too became increasingly pronounced and figured prominently in the discourse of intellectual club. The metaphors line ‘Québec like colony’ and ‘France like liberator’ became of part of Québec’s intellectuals group which sooner spilled into the province’s political life. The ideas of decolonization and self determination fitted well into the Québec’s anti-imperial tradition. The phrases following Quiet Revolution like ‘Maitres chez nous’ also evoked decolonization with the intended reference to Ottawa’s as coloniser and Québec as colony and called for self determination.

At France’s side, end of Algerian war positioned Paris as a champion of self-determination, decolonization, and development. De Gaulle emerged as liberator and France under him shunned mission civilisatrice to embrace what may be termed a mission libératrice. Both sides of Atlantic referred frequently to decolonization to justify their deeds. The intersection of the idea of Quebec as colony with the reinvention of France as a champion of decolonization at once came to shape the special and privileged relationship between Paris and Quebec City in 1960 which eventually led to the establishment of Quebec’s Délégation Générale in Paris.

Few scholars like Meren (2011) emphasise that there existed a complicated mixing of analogies in the sense that France which once a coloniser now calls herself liberator and Québec by no means equals the plight of colonised population of Global South. Situated in North America with predominantly white population and a high standard of living, Québec can hardly be equated to other colony except the humiliation of being dominated by Anglo-Saxon population. But to a great extent, the decolonization movement came to shape Québec's quest for international emancipation and Québec-Paris-Ottawa triangular relations.

**Conclusion:** the sub-state status of Québec has not come to stall its international involvement. With 712 international agreement and presence over five continents, Québec presents the case of most advanced and active sub state. In the present chapter, an attempt has been made to locate Québec's place in international system while differentiate international relations from foreign policy. It has been found that Québec's international activities falls under purview of international relations not foreign policy as it lacks a sovereign status.

The chapter further looked into the causes of international pursuit of Québec and found that 'identity' quest is most important factor which propels Québec into international domain so that it could project and protect its distinct French identity in Canada and in world. To this end, France has come to support Québec and the complex triangular dynamics among France, Quebec, and Canada in the post-1945 period showed its manifestation in France's efforts to bring Québec into the group of French speaking nations- *la francophonie* which in turn set off trajectory of Québec's international relations.

The chapter has identified other factors which helped Québec to undertake its international relations. These are domestic factors like Quiet Revolution, Constitutional ambiguity in enumerating power divisions and pronouncement of doctrine Gérin-Lajoie. The international factors like decolonisation movement, sub-state trans-nationalism and role of France have been pivotal.

The Québec government moved on to cement the ties between France in order to foster its French identity in Canada and world and Quebec institutionalized the exchanges and programs of cooperation. This quest was further projected into wider

French community, *la Francophonie*, with support from Paris. The various agreements and multiple cooperative arrangements between France and Québec provided substantial support to Quebec's ongoing efforts to secure its distinct French language and culture within Canada and to overcome its sense of isolation within North America. These agreements thus concluded are highly valued by Quebec as it provides symbolic evidence of its ability to act internationally. Over the past four decades Québec has worked hard to transform these symbolic evidences into real and concrete steps which is required to undertake international relations equivalent to stature of a sovereign state by highly institutionalizing its bureaucracy.

The next chapter will look into the institutionalisation of Québec bureaucracy vis-à-vis Canada. The scope and limitations of this institutionalization for Québec will also be dealt in the coming chapter.

## Chapter III

### INSTITUTIONAL SET UP OF QUÉBEC INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Québec is a federated state and a case of most advanced sub-state involvement in international relations. As a member of Canadian federation, it has been invested with the political responsibilities that are in some cases exclusive, like education, culture, natural resources and health care. It manages its own fiscal system and levies its own taxes. Further, it oversees the administration of the courts and most services relating to public security on its territory, and is responsible for selecting immigrants to Québec. There are few other sectors where it shares responsibility with federal government of Canada, but when it comes to international relations, Québec wants to pursue autonomous international policy.

In any given federation there is division of power among federal and state government. That is to say, sovereignty is divisible internally but states are one sovereign entity in international system. That means only sovereign state can undertake foreign policy and not its constituent units. Québec, notwithstanding this traditional notion, has over the years put into place judicial and institutional instruments that allow it to assume the international scope of its responsibilities. It has mandated the Ministère des Relations Internationales to direct the government's international initiatives, coordinate the activities of government departments and agencies in this regard, manage a network of representatives abroad, as well as negotiate and enforce international agreements. In that sense Québec MRI functions as mini foreign ministry, i.e. to Québec MRI is what DFAIT (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade) is to Canada.

As seen in the previous chapter, the reasons for a sub state involvement in international politics ranges from economic issues to environmental issue, security to political influence. In case of Québec its identity quest has been the main motivator behind its outward reach and as Québec's International Policy says "the aim of our policy is to strengthen Québec's international influence". It further affirms that "Because of its special place in the Canadian federation and the need to promote its identity, culture and prosperity, Québec must be present on the international stage".

While asserting its right to maintain its cultural and linguistic sovereignty, the statement underlines that Québec's prerogative to vigorously and independently pursue international initiatives wherever appropriate: whatever falls under Québec's jurisdiction at home falls under its jurisdiction everywhere.

But how does Québec fulfil this? Québec intends to project and promote these interests internationally by participating in the deliberations and meetings of international forums and organizations whose work principally has a bearing on its jurisdiction and interests. Québec has, over the years, developed valuable expertise in relations with international organizations and through its participation in international conferences like that of *la Francophonie*, UNESCO, OECD, ILO etc and has exercised the power and responsibility which is no less than that of a sovereign state.

However active it may be in its international undertakings and initiatives, Québec government maintains that Québec will work as member within Canadian delegation and will defend its interests in the areas under its jurisdiction. Canada as a sovereign country is the only member of international organizations and Québec works under its umbrella as participating government (in *la Francophonie*) and sends permanent delegations to organizations like UNESCO, WTO, OAS, ILO. So whenever there is any agreement with foreign government or international organization that can have a bearing on Québec's interest, Québec demands its representation at negotiation table.

“What we want is to be at the negotiating table with the federal government if the topic being discussed overlaps Québec's jurisdictions. I no longer want the Canadian government to make commitments for Québec without Québec having a word to say”. (Speech at ÉNAP, February 25, 2004, Premier Jean Charest).

Over the decades this has been the constant stand of Québec government, whatever party is in power. For Québécois what is Québec's jurisdiction in Québec is its jurisdiction everywhere. This is what has come to define Québec's aspiration for increased international role over the last four decades. The main occupation of federal government has been to accommodate Québec's aspiration. The whole basis of federalism in Canada revolves around Canada-Québec power dynamics which clearly manifests itself in their international policies.

The present institutional set up and bureaucratization of Québec's international relations is the result of federal-provincial bargaining of jurisdictional claims by Québec, and reinterpretation of Canadian constitution. Over the past few decades, mainly 1960s when Québec started claiming its right, both the level of government has worked upon modalities to finalize or incorporate Québec's interest in federal foreign policy and allow Québec to speak for its interests in international foras.

The present chapter contends that however active Québec may be internationally, it is far from a sovereign entity or an independent player. It always works under the aegis of federal government and defends its interests. The present chapter aims to study the institutional set up of Québec's international relations vis-à-vis federal set up of foreign affairs. The chapter argues that although Québec has its own full-fledged foreign ministry like department, it does not seek to work independent of federal government in international politics. What Québec want is just a representation within Canadian delegation to promote its interest abroad.

The first section of the chapter traces the establishment of Québec's Ministry of International relations (MRI) since the days when it was just a department of intergovernmental affairs. The respective accords with federal government leading its establishment are also being dealt with.

The second section deals with Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), its set up, its mandate and how it evolved over the years from colonial legacy to a fully fledged ministry of foreign affairs.

The third section of the chapter aims to draw a parallel between the two i.e. MRI and DFAIT. It explores at what point MRI and DFAIT converge in terms of its mandates, ideology and direction.

### **Organizing for International Relations: Chronology of Québec's MRI**

There are three major events of 1960s that marked the beginning of institutionalization of Québec international relations. 1961, the opening of Maison du Québec in Paris, the 1964 conclusion of first ever international entente on education

with France and finally the 1965 pronouncement of Gerin-Lajoie doctrine; the base of Québec international action. In fact in case of Québec, the policy pronouncement in international domain precedes the institutional set-up as the founding principle of the institution was pronounced first, in the form of Gerin-Lajoie doctrine, institutionalization followed later.

The present day bureaucratic set up of Québec international relations in the form of *Ministère des Relations Internationales du Québec* (MRI) began its life back in 1965 as an interdepartmental committee, the *Commission Interministerielle des Relations Extérieures du Québec* (inter-ministerial commission of external relations of Québec). The commission grew from a coordinating body into a full-fledged bureaucracy charged with the development of external policy and the administration of a wide range of Québec programs abroad.

In 1967 this commission was absorbed into the *Ministère des Affaires Fédérales-Provinciales* (ministry of federal-provincial affairs). The liberal government of Jean Lesage had created this ministry in 1961 in order to manage relations between government of Québec, its organizations and that of other governments and organizations outside Québec. After the absorption of *Commission Interministerielle des Relations Extérieures du Québec* into the *Ministère des Affaires Fédérales-Provinciales*, the ministry was again restyled as the *Ministère des Affaires Intergouvernementales du Québec* (Ministry of intergovernmental affairs of Québec, MAIQ).

In 1967, the Legislative Assembly of Québec, as the National Assembly was then called, unanimously adopted an act (**Bill 33**) creating the *Ministère des Affaires Intergouvernementales*, also known at the time as the "Intergovernmental Affairs Department."<sup>27</sup> The main motto of this act was to reflect that the mission of this ministry was not only to manage the relations with federal government of Canada but it included also the relations across the world.

Since 1965, *Ministère des Affaires Fédérales-Provinciales* (ministry of federal-provincial affairs, MAFP) used to co-ordinate Québec's external relations. This law creating the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, the precursor of

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/ministere/historique/presentation> .... viewed on 10.06.2013

present day MRI, was passed in order to coordinate the activities of Québec's government departments abroad around a coherent policy.

This newly instituted ministry MAIQ integrated the old MAFP and it was entrusted with three main works: international relations, external cooperation and federal-provincial affairs<sup>28</sup>. This cohabitation of international relations and federal-provincial affairs went on for next seventeen years, till 1984 when MAIQ became ministry of international relations.

Over the period of time Québec has sought to bureaucratize at home in order to institutionalize the support system for its international relations. This bureaucratization is in a way that comes close to being a fully developed foreign ministry.

By the early 1980s, the ministry was the well-developed provincial agency charged with international relations, and in size and structure it was a micro version of External Affairs in Ottawa. The ministry was again reshaped in 1984 and the twin responsibilities were split. The responsibility for federal-provincial relations was given to the *Secretariat aux Affaires Intergouvernementales* and the international activities of the province were assumed by *Ministere des Relations Internationales*.

The interior arrangements and restyling do not stop here. In 1988, by a decree the ministry of international relations became ministry of international affairs (*Ministere des Affaires Internationales*, MAI). Following the integration of federal government's Department of Foreign Affairs and international trade, MAI absorbed the *Ministère du Commerce Extérieur et du Développement Technologique* (ministry of external trade and technological development). Further in June 1994, as a result of governmental reorganization, immigration ministry was also absorbed creating *Ministere des Affaires Internationales, de l'immigration et des Communautés Culturelles* (ministry of international affairs, immigration and cultural communities, MAIICC). This fusion of ministry of international affairs and ministry of immigration and cultural communities was put on hold by the government of Jacques Parizeau in the September 1994. The MAIICC existed only on paper and the old ministries of

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<sup>28</sup> Gouvernement du Québec (2007), *Chronologie 1967-2007: Relation Internationales*, Ministère des Relations Internationales



international affairs and immigration coexisted separately but under the same minister till 1996.

In January 1996 the bureaucracy was again reorganized and the two ministries were officially separated. The trade responsibilities were moved back to the industry, commerce, science and technology portfolio and the old name Ministère des relations internationales was restored.

This short chronology of Québec ministry of international relations shows the various phases in the evolution of Québec's international activities. This evolution is exceptional in Canada and in world as it marks the advent of non central government in international system that too like a sovereign unit. From distance it looks a smooth transition in public policy of Québec and subsequent accommodation of this transition by federal government but the reality is different. It had never been a smooth process and without the ire of federal government. The opening up of Québec internationally has raised the eyebrows of Canadian government since the very beginning. In fact the current institutional set-up of its international relations that can be traced back to adoption of bill 33 back in 1965 was the received with certain reservations and fear of disintegration of national unity by the federal government and rest of Canada.

The text of the bill 33 which created ministry of intergovernmental affairs in 1967, kind of foreign ministry of Québec, gives its minister the right to sign with any other government or body outside Québec any agreement which he deems consistent with the interests and rights of Québec. The federal government firmly restated its claim to exclusive jurisdiction over Canada's external relations. The Prime Minister Pearson made it clear that government stance has not changed since the spring of 1965 when it insisted that Québec cannot deal directly with any foreign government<sup>29</sup>. It should be noted here that government of Québec has signed an educational agreement with France in 1965 followed by a cultural agreement in 1966.

The English speaking part of Canada saw this development as province's version of External Affairs Department and as Québec's intention to sign further agreements with France, thus a certain breach in Canada's exclusive rights. This legislation was further labeled as controversial. The French press termed the reaction

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<sup>29</sup> Globe and Mail, march 2, 1967

by federal government as that of extreme nervousness<sup>30</sup> and some termed Ottawa as to be prejudiced towards Québec. Some views expressed that it hardly matters as this bill is not going to give Québec any extra right which Québec does not exercise till now. The only change in the appellation of ministry gave birth to so many criticism and controversies.

In the eyes of the Québec government and the in the views of general public, the participation of Quebec in the international system was an integral part of the process of modernization taking place in both social and political areas, as a result of Quiet Revolution. Contrary to federal government views, the government of the era was in no way inspired by secessionist ambitions<sup>31</sup>. In fact, this decision to intervene in foreign policy, from the very beginning proceeded from purely pragmatic consideration. This consideration comes from the fact that the modernization drive on which Québec has just impeded required cooperation from outside world, mainly France. The educational and technological reforms, much required at that time by Québec, sought the necessity to establish a network of communications on a governmental level. Only the cooperation at governmental level could allow the coordination and the transfers of required resources for this vast undertaking, initially in education and technological domains. It was further expanded into various other fields and it was thought to expand the external relations with the countries other than France as well.

As seen in the previous chapter that France gave the early thrust to Québec's international relations. The most famous incidence was the visit of General Charles de Gaulle to Canada in 1967 just after Québec has opened its foreign ministry. De Gaulle gave 'vive le Québec libre' speech in Montreal which made federal government furious and severely strained Franco-Canada relations. France further worked to get Québec included into French speaking world; la *Francophonie* separate from federal government. In 1968, l'Affaire du Gabon, which we will see in more details in next chapter, saw Québec invited for the international conference of education ministers. At the France's behest Gabon issued invitation directly to Québec and left out federal

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<sup>30</sup> La presse, march 3, 1967.

<sup>31</sup> Pinchaud, paul (1997), "Territorialization and Internationalism: The Case of Québec", Publius, Vol. 7, No. 4, Federalism and Ethnicity.

government of Canada, an act perceived by Canada as a “serious threat to integrity of Canada.”

A parallel can be drawn here between the bureaucratization of Québec international relations and that of francophone movement. In fact the development of internal apparatus of bureaucracy in Québec was facilitated by this movement going on in French speaking world. *La Francophonie* which started with the matter of low politics as language, education and culture, turned a platform for high politics for Québec where it could project its national interest. At the same time federal government sought to downplay Québec’s aspiration and project united Canada abroad. To this end various federal-provincial accords were signed in order to outline Québec’s limit and Canada’s superiority in international system.

The evolution of Québec international relations and its institutionalisation is a clear case of sub state participation in international system to the extent similar to any sovereign country. The case of Québec can be understood from the prism of a sub unit but what about Canada; it’s a country but it wasn’t born with the exclusivity in external relations.

### **Evolution of Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)**

Foreign ministry is required by every government to undertake its diplomacy in order to achieve a state’s international policy goals by peaceful means. In Canada such need was felt slowly, it was only in 1906 that a department of External Affairs was established. In 1867 when confederation of Canada was created by British North America Act, a foreign ministry of not even contemplated. Canada was granted a self governing status but only in its domestic and local politics. The international policy of Empire was considered indivisible by both British and Canadians. So till 1909 Canada’s external trade and other international activities were undertaken via Britain. It was a lengthy and fatiguing process, both for Canada and Britain. For example if Canadian government wished to communicate with united states, the cabinet would have to route correspondence through the British governor general in Ottawa, who would then send it to London where it would be processed through the colonial office

and then the foreign office, which would then send it to the British ambassador in Washington for presentation to United States Department of State<sup>32</sup>. Such a lengthy process frustrated bureaucrats, in fact, frustrated by the backlog of Canada-United States issues that occupied much of his time, the British ambassador to Washington, James Bryce, suggested in 1908 that Canada needed a "a sort of Foreign Office."<sup>33</sup>

So Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier agreed to create a foreign ministry and the new Department of External Affairs was created by statute in June 1909. The word external was chosen intentionally because affairs related to Britain and other parts of empire were not foreign. The department came directly under the Canadian Prime Minister.

It had a modest beginning and its resources did not change much till the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939. It transformed the Department of External Affairs. From six missions abroad in 1939, the Department expanded across the globe, encompassing 26 foreign missions by 1946 and more than 93 by 1967. War brought the Department additional responsibilities, opened up opportunities for women within the Department, and prompted Canada to take on new international roles<sup>34</sup>.

This expansion continued even after the War and Canada's commitment to internationalism led Canada to join more than 200 international organisations. The phenomenon of decolonization in 1950s and 1960s which led to emergence of many sovereign states also led this expansion as it was required to establish relations with these newly independent countries. By the end of 1960, as Nossal et al (2011: 234) put it, a complex apparatus for conduct of international policy had developed and bureaucratic landscape has changed greatly. The department of External affairs had undergone a massive transformation, growing in size and complexity: between 1962 and 1967, the department had grown by 50%<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Nossal et al (2011), p229

<sup>33</sup> [http://www.international.gc.ca/history-histoire/photos/foreign\\_office.aspx?menu\\_id=36](http://www.international.gc.ca/history-histoire/photos/foreign_office.aspx?menu_id=36) viewed on 14.06.13

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.international.gc.ca/history-histoire/photos/punching-jouer.aspx?menu\\_id=39](http://www.international.gc.ca/history-histoire/photos/punching-jouer.aspx?menu_id=39) viewed on 14.06.13

<sup>35</sup> Hiliker and Barry quoted in Nossal et al (2011).

With the coming to power of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1968, a wave of changes followed in the department. He came with new ideas about diplomacy and Canada's role in the world and was determined to change the system. His main target was a special position for the DEA and thus he launched a detailed review that put domestic considerations at the centre of Canada's foreign policy and streamlined the government's international operations.

From 1970 to 1983 there were four reorganizations in the DEA under Trudeau. It started with the creation of an Interdepartmental Committee on External Relations (ICER). It was created with an aim to better coordinate foreign operations in order to achieve national objectives. There were no clear lines of authority in this newly created department as it included officials from various departments like Privy Council, Treasury Board, CIDA, Manpower and Immigration, Industry, Trade and Commerce, and Public Works. Undersecretary of state for external affairs chaired ICER. But ICER failed as the envisaged mechanism of coordination and it was allowed to slip into disuse by mid 1970s.

The second reorganization came as a proposal from Allan Gotlieb, then undersecretary of State for external affairs. He proposed to make DEA a central agency so that it could be engaged in broad coordinating role across government, advising cabinet as a whole on range of foreign policy issue rather than running programs.<sup>36</sup>

In March 1980, the process of consolidation began. Under this consolidation, Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce (IT&C), and Employment and Immigration (E&I) were merged with Department of external affairs. Hence under new arrangement the Department was given responsibility for delivering the country's foreign aid and immigration programs abroad.

Two years later, in January 1982, Trudeau announced the creation of one department which later came to be known as the Department of External Affairs and International Trade. Under this restructuring, all departments with an economic mandate were affected. A new central agency, Department of Regional Industrial Expansion replaced the Ministry of state for Economic Development, the department

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<sup>36</sup> Allan Gotlieb quoted in Nossal et al. (2011)

of regional economic expansion and the Industry side of the Department of Industry. It was charged with all foreign trade and traditional foreign-policy functions. The internal organisation had an undersecretary of state for external affairs relations, a deputy minister (foreign policy) and deputy minister (international trade). But sooner it was realised that the new structure has made bigger the already existing bigger structure. In word of James Rusk (quoted in Nossal et al), it was a “large bureaucratic mess.”

Pierre Trudeau's reforms have endured but many of them were short lived. Under the Prime Ministership of Brian Mulroney (1984-1993), a ‘back to basics’ approach was applied to foreign relations. By that time it was realised that the Department has too many overlapping responsibilities and it would be better for the Department and the country to focus just on political and economic affairs. Keeping that in mind some responsibilities were transferred to other department. For example; “responsibility for international exposition was moved to Communication Canada and international sports were transferred to Fitness and Amateur Sport”. Further, in 1992, the Department shed its responsibilities for aid and immigration.

The Liberal government of Jean Chrétien followed the Progressive Conservative government of Brian Mulroney in November 1993. Chrétien took the symbolic step of changing the name of Canada’s foreign ministry. The name of the department was changed from External affairs to Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The word ‘External’ was replaced by ‘Foreign’ on the ground that External no longer fitted the new reality of Canada as Canada was now like other sovereign state in international system; not just a self governing dominion. So by 1994 Canada has a formal foreign ministry. It took almost more than a century to reach to this status.

Two broader realities marked this phase of transition of department from External affairs to Foreign Affairs. Since early 1970s department was facing challenges from budget cuts. Prime Minister from Trudeau to Chrétien, all had the problem of fiscal deficit and they had to curtail expenditure abroad. At one hand, domestic requirement called for budget cuts and on the other hand, change in international system called for more and more engagement abroad. the coming on

stage of more independent countries demanded Canada to establish diplomatic relations with them.

In fact the restructuring of department done under Mulroney was done to compensate the fiscal deficit. Government expenditure in external affairs was cut and many missions abroad were closed. This was further reduced by Chrétien government. His main priority area was deficit reduction and all the departments engaged in international activities bore the brunt of massive expenditure cuts. DFAIT shrunk in size during 1990s as a result of these cut.

The changed reality of 2000s which saw war on terror post 9/11 and newly placed emphasis on “3D” (diplomacy, development and defence) approach to foreign policy called for more and more engagement internationally.

In 2003 when Paul Martin came to power, he announced the disintegration of DFAIT into two separate entity; foreign affairs and international trade. But it did not last long. By the time legislation was ready to be considered by parliament, the 2004 election had reduced the Liberal to minority status. The legislation was defeated.

The Conservative Party of Canada came to power in 2006 elections under Stephen Harper and the bureaucracy remained the same. The main thing it did was to cancel the Martin’s Order-in-Council separating Foreign affairs and International trade. The new department was officially relaunched with the old name “Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade”.

### **MRI vis-à-vis DFAIT: Similarity, difference and overlapping in organizational set up**

The events taking place domestically and internationally during 1960s had profound impact on the evolution of state apparatus for an effective foreign policy. For Québec it was new generation aspiration, encouraged and influenced by Quiet revolution<sup>37</sup> which signalled the shift in policy priorities to outside world. For Canada it was Québec. Québec’s demand for a large international presence began to thrust itself into a more prominent place on Canadian foreign policy agenda. Containing

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<sup>37</sup> Dealt in details in previous chapter.

Québec abroad and defending Canada's exclusive treaty making<sup>38</sup> prerogative came to define the new foreign policy agenda.

**MRI and its working:** Through the institutionalisation of its international relations, Québec wants to project its international activity as legitimate and claim sovereignty over matters of culture and language. According to the mandate on Ministry of International Relations; their mission is to “promote and defend Québec's interests internationally while ensuring respect for its authority and the consistency of government activities”. While taking about interest, MRI identifies nine areas where Québec has a constitutional responsibility or that are of fundamental importance for Québec society. These are; Culture, education, identity, Economic and social development, Labour and employment, Health, Sustainable development and the environment, The information society, Human rights, The status of women, and Native issues<sup>39</sup>.

Ministry of international relations carries out its work through; its knowledge of the international context, the policy advice it provides for the government, its coordination of international government activities, the ties it builds with foreign governments and international organizations<sup>40</sup>.

This implies that MRI is bestowed with the responsibility to advice government of Québec on all the matters concerning international relations. In fact the Ministry of International relations is the '*le maître d'oeuvre*' (apex body) of the international relations of Québec. It is the responsibility of Minister of MRI “to plan, to organise, to lead and to coordinate the international actions of government of Québec”<sup>41</sup>. Apart from that, the decision making process in the international domain also involves;

1. Ministry of Economic Development, Innovation and Exportation in the matter concerning commercial relations, and the promotion of Québec's goods and services abroad.
2. Ministry of executive council

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<sup>38</sup> It should be noted here that Québec had entered into direct agreement with France in matters of education, followed by culture. It was perceived by Canada as infringement on its exclusive right.

<sup>39</sup> Ministry of International Relation (2005), Québec's International Initiatives; Québec in International Forums, No. 1.

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/ministere/mission> accessed on 15/06/13

<sup>41</sup> Nelson Michaud and Marc T. Boucher (2006), « Les relations internationales du Québec comparées », L'Observatoire de l'administration publique.



3. National Assembly of Québec in the matters pertaining to important engagements which needs to be contracted either by government of Québec or government of Canada<sup>42</sup>.

Inside each of these ministries, there is a person who is in-charge of the development in the international relations of Québec. He keeps informed the MRI which in turn coordinates these actions internationally and undertakes the legislative implementation of international agreements. The implementation of Québec's international activities also call for collaboration with various partners like cities, regions, youth organisations, cultural places, educational institutions, professional organization and syndicates<sup>43</sup>.

This is how MRI of Québec functions and partners with various domestic as well as international organizations to undertake its international endeavours which in turns help it to project, protect and promote its interests abroad.

**DFAIT and its working:** as already seen before that the increased demand for Québec's international presence has also caused uneasiness in Ottawa and Ottawa has in turn tried to downplay this claim of Québec to go international. The main reason behind this conflict has been to promote an image of unified Canada abroad.

According to the mandate of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) the aim of the department is to “manage Canada's diplomatic and consular relations and to encourage the country's international trade”. This includes:

1. “Ensuring that Canada's foreign policy reflects true Canadian values and advances Canada's national interests;
2. Strengthening rules-based trading arrangements and expanding free and fair market access at bilateral, regional and global levels; and
3. Working with a range of partners inside and outside government to achieve increased economic opportunity and enhanced security for Canada and for Canadians at home and abroad”<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> ibid

<sup>43</sup> ibid

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.international.gc.ca/about-a\\_propos/index.aspx](http://www.international.gc.ca/about-a_propos/index.aspx) accessed on 16/06/13

To some extent mandate of both Québec's MRI and Canada's DFAIT resembles. Both of them want to promote its interest abroad. In case of Québec these interests being the matter of low politics but in case of Canada these interests are both the matter of low politics as well as high politics like defence. Promotion of trade is the common point and both Québec and Canada want to promote their trade and commerce. But there is a contentious point on which Québec does not agree with Canada and vice-versa. This point is the definition of 'Canadian value'. For Québec, a uniform Canadian value, which federal government wants to promote internationally, undermines their distinct nature and that is why they want to promote their interest themselves. Monique Gagnon-Tremblay, Minister of International Relations, puts "because of its special place in the Canadian federation and the need to promote its identity, culture and prosperity, Québec must be present on the international stage"<sup>45</sup>. This reflects the dissatisfaction with federal government's stance and demand for increased international presence by Québec.

The nomenclature of both the ministries; the ministry of international relations, francophonie and external commerce (MRIFCE) and department of foreign affairs and international trade (DFAIT) reflects the relative importance given to both international relations and trade by both Québec government and Canadian government. In fact it was after the merger of foreign affairs with that of international trade by Canadian government that Québec too merged its trade ministry with that of its international relations ministry. But to put more emphasis on francophonie, Québec placed ministry of francophonie in international relations itself.

At the policy making stage, Prime Minister tend to be central figure in Canadian international policy development. But it should be noted here that the Prime Minister is dominant figure in all aspect of Canadian policy. There are other members of cabinet who may be involved into policy making stage quiet often but have to be always involved at its implementation stage.

The two key ministers at the core of Canada's international policies have been foreign minister and minister of national defence. The foreign minister is responsible for managing Canada's relations with other countries and has statutory responsibilities

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<sup>45</sup> Ministry of International Relation (2005), Québec's International Initiatives; Québec in International Forums, No. 1.

for Canada's development assistance programs, and minister of national defence is responsible for Canadian forces (CF), defence policy, and those parts of Canadian foreign policy which involves the use of CF like international peace keeping, arms control, protection of territory.

The minister of foreign affairs is responsible for setting up position of Canadian government on international question, through his decisions and statements. He is also charged with defining broad orientations, central concepts, and future priorities of Canada's international policy.<sup>46</sup> Nossal et al further explores the structural tensions that exist between foreign minister and Prime Minister in Canada. According to them international policy requires both the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister to 'share the territory' as both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister is required to take the lead in developing policy positions and to built up person rapport with as key representative of state at international forums like international summits, conference and state visits. As a result, the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister needs to go on well personally as well as professionally. If not it may reflect in the policy position and functioning of the ministry.

The complexities of international policy decision making does not stop here. The minister of foreign affairs too has a complex relationship with minister of national defence. In no way, the minister of national defence is subordinate to minister of foreign affairs but he needs to adjust with the policy objectives embraced by Foreign Affairs. This is because the CF is one of the main tools of Canada's international policy. So both the ministers very often counter difficulties coordinating their respective policies. The minister for *la Francohonie*, the post formally institutionalized in 1982, also plays only a limited role in international policy bureaucracy. The post was created to "assist" the secretary of state for external affairs in the conduct of international relations and has limited influence. It seems it was created mainly to appease French Canadians and prove that federal government is involving more francophones in the cabinet. The other minister, the minister of international trade has been there since 1983, after the merger of international trade with that of foreign affairs. Till 1980s minister of international trade was considered a subordinate position; a position that was created to assist Foreign Affairs minister in

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<sup>46</sup> Nossal et al (2011)

trade related issues. But after free trade agreements with US this position became more important.

All the major international policy decisions by Canadian governments are generally put before cabinet for discussion and resolution. The cabinet members deliberate and have diverse point of view depending on their portfolios, region of the country they represent and their own political orientations. However, prime minister and ministers directly responsible for the international policy decision making are likely to exert the most influence in major decisions affecting Canadian foreign policy.

**Conclusion:** The institutional set up of international relations of Québec has evolved considerably from the early days of Quiet revolution. It has seen profound changes in the decision making process as well as bureaucratic structure. Québec has come to formalize this decision making process as well as structure vis a vis international policy making so that it could respond to the changed domestic and international reality.

The contemporary journey of Québec international relations can be traced back to 1967 when Ministry of International Affairs was created. It was the first ministerial authority charged with international relations. The creation of this ministry marked the desire of Québec government to consolidate its visibility internationally. This structure remained in place till 1984 when a restructuring of ministry created a ministry of international relations to take care of international activity of Québec. In 1988, by a decree the ministry of international relations became ministry of international affairs which was further absorbed ministry of trade. In June 1994, immigration ministry was also absorbed creating ministry of international affairs, immigration and cultural communities, MAIICC. In January 1996 the bureaucracy was again reorganized and the two ministries were officially separated. The trade responsibilities were moved back to the industry, commerce, science and technology portfolio and the old name Ministère des relations internationales was restored.

In terms of resources, Québec is the federated state which spends most in the domain of international relations. As compared to other provinces of Canada, Québec has highly centralised its international efforts in the form of its Ministry of International Relations. Other reason for this increased international presence is

Québec's francophone identity which it takes very seriously and tries to engage more and more with francophone world.

This increased claim for engagement with francophone world is one of the reasons why Canada too involved into reorienting its international policy, mainly after 1960s. In fact the decision making structure for international policy had also evolved considerably. The origin of Canada's foreign ministry can be traced back to 1909 when a sort of foreign ministry was established in the form of small Department of External Affairs. It expanded considerably with the outbreak of the Second World War, in September 1939. By the end of war, in 1945, the Department had embraced an active internationalism which came to define Canadian foreign policy for a generation. Throughout 1970s and 1980s DEA saw much reorganization.

In March 1980, the Department was given responsibility for delivering the country's foreign aid and immigration programs abroad. Two years later, in January 1982, DEA and international trade were merged and the Department of External Affairs and International Trade-charged with all foreign trade and traditional foreign-policy functions was created.

Pierre Trudeau's reforms have endured, though not without controversy. The government's deficit-fighting policies under Prime ministers Brian Mulroney (1984-93) and Jean Chrétien (1993-2003) constrained the Department's operations and obliged it to focus on its core functions. In 1992, the Department shed its responsibilities for aid and immigration, a return to basics that was partly reflected in its decision to change its name, in 1993, to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. In 1995, Parliament recognized this change.

If MRI of Québec and DFAIT of Canada is compared in terms of structure and functioning, it can be said that MRI is mini DFAIT although it undertakes the same way as DFAIT does; make international policy and promote international trade. That means Québec's MRI is similar to any sovereign state foreign ministry in terms of resources and institutional set up.

Does that mean Québec itself claims to be sovereign in international relations? Or the presence of such an institutionalized structure in the domain of international

policy making implies that Québec is as independent in international system as Canada and has the right to undertake foreign policy like any other sovereign entity?

It should be noted that there exist a difference between international activities of Canada and Québec. The only and the main difference which distinguished Québec's activities from that of Canada's international activities is the fact that these activities are restricted to the matters of low politics which includes culture, language, education, technology. This restriction on MRI is due to sub-state status of Québec; it is not a sovereign country and therefore it has international relations not foreign policy. Québec is a federated unit; although very active internationally as a result of changes in international system and globalization which calls for participation by government at various levels.

Other thing that should be noted here is that Québec does not want an independent or sovereign status abroad. Québec wants to be free to express its point of view as a full member of Canadian delegations conducting negotiations in areas of Québec jurisdiction or that may have an impact on its interests.

As seen in previous chapter, the Canadian Constitution is silent over the issue of shared jurisdiction in matters of international relations. Québec bases its international initiatives on, among other things, the 1937 ruling by the Judicial Committee of the Privy that the federal government cannot implement international agreements in areas of jurisdictions attributed to the provinces in the Constitution.

The ministry of international relations (MRI) of Québec document titled *Québec's International Initiatives: Québec in International Forums* released in 2005 clearly outlines what Québec does and what Québec wants in international domain. According to this document, the government of Québec recognize that it is Canada, as a sovereign nation, that is a full member of international governmental organizations. Québec must thus act within Canadian delegations or use the Canadian government as an intermediary when it wishes to maintain official relations with international organizations operating in its areas of its jurisdiction.

It further points out that Québec wants to be a full member of Canadian delegations and freedom to appoint its own representatives to such delegations. It also demands the right to speak for itself at international conferences and organizations

and Québec's right to consent before Canada signs or declares that it is bound by a treaty or agreement must be recognized.

Whatever Québec demands in the form of these rights form today's reality. The reality which shows that the very nature of international relations has undergone profound changes during the 20th century and federal system of governance must reflect these changes. There are many example of active involvement of non sovereign entity in international system. In the words of Jean Charest, Québec premier, Canada should take inspiration from such example and recognise the legitimate role of non-sovereign entities in international relations and to institutionalize the rules for their international activities.

What appear from far regarding the very nature of Québec engagement abroad is certainly not true. Québec may be a very advanced case of non-sovereign entity involvement in international relations and scholars might talk about a post-sovereign world, the reality is that whatever Québec does abroad, it is still a federated unit, dependent on federal Canada in the matters of international relations. It might have institutionalized so much, but it still has to go international via Canada and within certain limits.

The institutionalization of Québec draws its parallel from institutionalization of *la Francophonie* which is the matter under study in the next chapter. The next chapter tries to look into development of *la Francophonie* as a language movement to *la Francophonie* as highly institutionalized multilateral organization in world politics, in particular context of Québec.

## Chapter IV

### ***LA FRANCOPHONIE: COOPERATION AND CONFLICT***

*La Francophonie* is a cultural, political and economic reality for Québec (Jean Charest), and has been vital for its existence. The relations with francophone world are like oxygen for Québec (Daniel Johnson) and must be pursued. The relative importance of *la Francophonie* is not only evident in political discourse of Québec but also in the conduct of its international relations vis-à-vis francophone world. Québec actively participates in all assemblies of *La Francophonie*, including summits, ministerial conferences, permanent councils and four commissions<sup>47</sup>. *La Francophonie* is the only multilateral government organization in which Québec is a full-fledged member and its membership gives Québec the leverage to assert its international personality in the worldwide French-speaking community.

According to Québec's Ministry of International Relations (MRIFCE), Québec is one of the five major donors of *la Francophonie* and is considered one of its most active members. In 2012, Québec provided \$15 million to support the implementation and operation of the programs of *la Francophonie*'s institutions. Apart from that the Québec's initiatives in *la Francophonie* revolve around the core areas of the organisation. These core areas of activity are: Peace, democracy and human rights, Sustainable development, French language, cultural and linguistic diversity, Education, and training.

With so much activities going on in the organisation, ranging from education and training to promoting peace, democracy and human rights, one may question the nature of this organisation which started a language movement and expanded subsequently. Not only that the participation of Québec in *la Francophonie* to such extent can also be questioned because of its sub-state status. The uniqueness of this organisation lie in the fact that it incorporates not only sovereign states but also other non-sovereign entities and provides a platform for cooperation among its members.

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<sup>47</sup> <http://www.mrifce.gouv.qc.ca/en/francophonie> accessed on 25/06/13



The mission of this organisation is to embody the active solidarity between its 75 member states and governments (56 members and 19 observers), which together represent over one-third of the United Nations' member states and account for a population of over 890 million people, including 220 million French speakers<sup>48</sup>. *La Francophonie* is not the only organization of its type as there already existed several francophone cooperative movements like *l'Association des Ecrivains de Langue Française* (association of french language authors); *Union Internationale des Journalistes et de la Presse de Langue Francaise* (international union of journalist and french language press); *Association des Universités Partiellement ou Entièrement de la Langue Française* (association of universities partially or entirely of French language), etc. *La Francophonie*, in the aftermath of the Second World War, made its first great strides as a movement and in its scope offered new potentials and directions to overall French language movement.

*La Francophonie* came into existence as a result of initiative taken by newly independent French colonies of Africa which wanted to maintain linguistic and cultural ties with métropole France. Although France greeted this idea with initial reluctance, Canada got involved by the virtue of its French speaking province; Québec's (inter)nationalism. Since the beginning of this movement, France-Canada-Québec triangle has come to shape its events.

From the founding of ACCT in 1970, *la Francophonie* has evolved in its organization and mission over the past four decades. What started as a language based movement has increasingly come "to act as a powerful French-speaking voice in defence of both French culture and language and in advancing French-speaking nations multiple global, political and economic interests"<sup>49</sup>. The linguistic goal of the organisation is primary but with the changes in international system, it has incorporated politico-economic dimension to its existence.

*La Francophonie* holds different significance for different players. For Québec, *la Francophonie* came to be a platform to project its distinct francophone image and undertake its autonomous international relations. Canada sought to downplay this claim of Québec in *la Francophonie*. For newly independent French

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<sup>48</sup> <http://www.francophonie.org/Welcome-to-the-International.html> accessed on 27/06/13

<sup>49</sup> Neathery-Castro, Jody and Mark O. Rousseau (2005), "Does French Matter? France and Francophonie in the Age of Globalization", *The French Review*, Vol. 78, No. 4.

Africans, *la Francophonie* offered a tool for uniting francophone Africans and forging closer France-Africa relations. For France, *la Francophonie* became a source of criticism. Because of its initial reluctance to this idea of multilateral francophone cooperation, France was criticised by some of being racist. Others criticised France of neo-colonialism. In other words, *la Francophonie* is a platform where cooperation and conflict of interests among its members defines its existence.

The present chapter aims to study the evolution of *la Francophonie* from a language movement to the francophonie institution with a focus on Québec's international relations. *La Francophonie* forms an important link to outside world for Québec and its quest for identity. In this context, the present chapter contends that *la Francophonie* gave initial impetus to Québec's international relations. With the evolution of *la Francophonie*, the international relations of Québec also evolved and *la Francophonie* gave it the much required legitimacy.

The first section of the chapter traces the beginning of *la Francophonie* movement. This part tries to theorize *la Francophonie* and tries to explore what it came to signify for the different players involved in this movement.

The second section of the chapter studies the institutionalisation of *la Francophonie* vis-à-vis Québec's international relations. This section also tries to explore the France-Canada-Québec triangle in the commencement of institutionalisation drive of *la Francophonie* with the creation of ACCT.

The third section of the chapter aims to study *la Francophonie* as platform for cooperation and conflict among various actors. This section studies the nexus of Québec-Ottawa relations leading to the creation of francophonie summit, the institutional head of *la Francophonie*. The role of France as well as other French African nations will also be looked into.

### **Origin of *la Francophonie***

Francophonie is generally referred to the group of French speaking people around the world. These speakers may be having French as their mother tongue or the language of use. French geographer Onésime Reclus, used this word as a linguistic

category to classify the French speaking zone of world. “Francophonie names multiple regions marked by the French language rather than a specific nation or theory<sup>50</sup>” and it “defaults to France, and to a postcolonial map of discrepant French-speaking communities<sup>51</sup>”. For some scholars, francophonie is a concept “ambiguous”<sup>52</sup> and to some it is a “polysemic notion”<sup>53</sup> which has linguistic, geographic, spiritual and institutional meanings. To others, *la Francophonie* is not only linguistic and institutional concept, but it is cultural, economic, political and above all popular concept (Michel Têtu quoted in Mounia Benalil). François-Pierre Le Scouarnec, covers these notions while classifying *la Francophonie*, one with capital ‘F’ ; *la Francophonie* and other with small ‘f’ ; *la Francophonie*. The first one refers to what political scientists call a ‘regime’ and the second one refer to a group of linguistic, cultural, sociological and geographical notion, widely spread and very real. Hence, *la francophonie* precedes *la Francophonie*; the regime<sup>54</sup>. The focus of present chapter is *la Francophonie*..

*La Francophonie* may mean differently to different people but majority agrees to the fact that it started as a language movement in world politics and over the years gained political and economic dimensions to provide for a multilateral cooperative platform for French speaking population throughout the world. It has come to include about one hundred different societies, clubs, national, governmental, nongovernmental and intergovernmental bodies, the most important constituents are nongovernmental organizations and subunits of governments. With the enormity of participation from across the five continents, *la Francophonie* transcends all other barriers to become the unifying force on linguistics ground. It is clearly the case where language is more than a language.

The purely linguistic goals of Francophonie, as put by Brian Weinstein, are “to strengthen the French language by maintaining a standard variety; to modernize its words through indigenization of English neologisms or the invention of their own; to

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<sup>50</sup> Apter, Emily (2005), “Theorizing Francophonie”, *Comparative Literature Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 4, *Between Languages* (2005). P;297

<sup>51</sup> *ibid*

<sup>52</sup> Tardif, Jean (1984), “Francophonie institutionnel”, *Revue Québécoise de Droit International*.

<sup>53</sup> Benalil, Mounia (2006), “La place de *la Francophonie* au sein du questionnement postcolonial : discussion théorique”, *Dalhousie French Studies*, Vol. 74/75, *Identité et altérité dans les littératures francophones* (Spring-Summer 2006), pp. 99-109.

<sup>54</sup> *ibid*

insure that the language is used in all areas of communications, science, literature, interstate relations and organizations; and to remind or convince people of its noble qualities". These goals need to be understood in the context of declining importance of French language on world stage after WWII because of relative increase in the power and influence of English speaking United States. All the members of this organisation share a common threat from the increasing American influence and want to strengthen French language so as to solidify their place in world.

Brian Weinstein further puts that the non-linguistic ends of *la Francophonie* are less clear. He argues that, since *la Francophonie* englobes various distinct societies, having different cultures, the only exception being their adherence to French language and some aspects of its culture. This makes *la Francophonie* as very diverse organisation. Although this diversity is the source of strength for this transnational movement, it also diversifies its goal. Since the movement has no centralized direction, there is great latitude for different parts of it to define the goals of Francophonie in very different, even contradictory, ways.

But Jean-Philippe Therien contends that *la Francophonie* cannot be limited to cultural co-operation, however, because it has become increasingly difficult to isolate culture in general from political and economic activity. This is evident from the fact that *la Francophonie* first arose from a sense of belonging to a common language, with language comes the culture, and the co-operation it fosters. Although erected on this foundation, it covers an ever-widening range of social activities like agriculture, energy, culture and communications, technical and scientific information, and language-related industries. Other area co-operation like: the environment, health, the economy, human rights, and judicial co-operation have been subsequently added.

*La Francophonie*, as a multilateral organisation whose raison d'être stems from language and culture, is in many ways a unique political initiative. There are few more international organisations which owe their allegiance to culture, like UNESCO, but the sole international institution to which *la Francophonie* can be seriously likened is the British Commonwealth. But their similarity does not come from the use of linguistic criterion as founding principle (case of *la Francophonie*) but from their allegiance to former imperial power; France in case of *la Francophonie* and Britain in case of commonwealth. At the beginning of *la Francophonie*, its precursor President

Leopold Senghor of Senegal first forming Commonwealth '*à la française*' to designate the grouping of French speaking population. President Bourguiba of Tunisia also recommended that all French-speaking countries in Africa become associated in 'un Commonwealth *à la française*' with common political institutions. He spoke about a sort of commonwealth, a community which respects the individual's sovereignty and harmonises everyone's effort.

**Origin:** Brian Weinstein underlines that French elites deny they had anything to do with the beginnings of Francophonie: they claim the Africans and Quebecois initiated it. This is quite evident from the fact that initially France was reluctant for any multilateral francophone cooperation. The French government officially declared that it would not become involved in any venture which could lay it open to the charge of imperialism as certain countries like Algeria and Morocco denounced it as neo-colonialist trick. Apart from that France already had bilateral relations with most of its former colonies, so a need for multilateral platform was not felt, rather it was perceived to weaken the position of France vis-à-vis these former colonies.

But after the initial reluctance, France gave in to the demands to create *la Francophonie*. Two points bear significance to this change in attitude of France towards *la Francophonie*. First being the realisation of France's role in the new world order and the traditional importance of cultural factors in the French perception of their national interest. Second being the reality of declining French influence in world. The relative decline in the instrumental value of French language would mean they would be cut off from useful information; that French would be a poor vehicle for the expression of their own ideas and discoveries; and that it would be an inadequate qualification for employment<sup>55</sup>. Hence the loosing face of French to English encouraged France to take up this project hitherto advocated by French Africans.

France was not alone in its concerns for language and power. In Canada, Quebec Province too began to be conscious of declining French value in Canada and North America. By the end of 1950s and beginning of 1960s, Québec started to emerge from the isolation and underdevelopment in which it has been for over a century. By 1960 when most French African colonies achieved independence, a Quiet

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<sup>55</sup> Weinstein, Brian (1976), "Francophonie: A Language-Based Movement in World Politics", International Organization, Vol. 30, No. 3. P 487.

Revolution started in Québec which made the Québécois conscious of their comparative material and educational underdevelopment as compared to Anglophones. A relative powerlessness in English-speaking North America was felt combined with a relative decline in population and immigrants preferring to learn English. This threat posed by English encouraged Québec to demand for the recognition of the French language as one of the official languages of Canada, and made French the only official language in Québec. They further demanded the recognition of Québec as a distinct francophone society in Canadian federation, if not, a possible secession.

This was the time when Québec started looking outside for economic and cultural assistance. They looked at France, considered as mother country, for the required assistance as well as psychological support. Hence Quebec Delegation General or liaison office, equivalent to embassy, was opened in France in 1961. While inaugurating it, the Canadian Prime Minister Jean Lesage said that contacts with French-speaking countries would provide Quebec with a necessary "oxygen," giving it an international identity and providing new sources of cultural and economic support. Gaullist France was too happy to encourage these independent initiatives by Québec as by this time France had renounced *mission civilisatrice* and was on the path of *mission libératrice*; General de Gaulle had already attained status of African statesmen and father of decolonisation. French support for Québec independence has reached its apogee in 1967 with General de Gaulle's "Vive le Quebec Libre" speech in Montreal. The newly developed Québec-France cooperation was projected into the formative years of *la Francophonie*.

Apart from French and Québécois who were concerned about the relative decline of French language as compared to English, there were other French-speaking minorities as well who shared the same concern. These were the French speaking minorities in Switzerland, Belgium, northern Italy, Louisiana, and New England. The Walloons, who formerly dominated Belgium, were also equally concerned. It should be noted here that these French speaking minorities also shared the same ethnicity. At the same time, other French speaking groups of world like Jurassians<sup>56</sup>, Valdôtains<sup>57</sup>,

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<sup>56</sup> The Jurassians are a French-speaking linguistic minority who live in the Jura region of the otherwise predominantly German-speaking Swiss canton of Bern. The region consists of the districts of Porrentruy, Delémont, Franches Montagnes, Moutier, Courtelary, and Neuveville. The Jura region

and Louisianians, the Haitians, Africans, Lebanese, and Southeast Asians did not consider themselves ethnic French, but shared the same concern in the face of losing French influence and wanted to protect it. French Africans too felt the danger of domination by the powerful Anglophone state, like Nigeria.

By this time it became evident that French-speaking people throughout the world sensed their minority status within states. Some minorities in Africa, Haiti, and Lebanon wished to defend their privileged positions against those counter-elites clamouring for power while others, in Belgium and Canada, wished to assert their identities and rights against dominant majorities.

Most of the newly independent states shared some kind of bilateral agreement with France. Many belonged to the franc currency area, and some others to regional organizations like UAM; Union Africaine et Malgache (which later became OCAM; Organisation Commune Africaine et Malgache). In 1966 it proposed new ties between France and Africa after both Leopold Sedar Senghor and Habib Bourguiba had called for a Francophone commonwealth. In fact, Francophonie was born during the state visit of President Bourguiba to Senegal in November 1965.

President Bourguiba was the prime mover of the francophonie formula, and President Senghor was too enthusiastic to adopt it and began to 'sell' it to other African countries, and to France<sup>58</sup>. The various countries of French Africa reacted differently to this new idea, for example, Mali was apparently cool but not downright hostile, while the members of OCAM readily supported francophonie (Cameroon being, however, somewhat reluctant, as it is officially bilingual), Morocco and Algeria declared it incompatible with Arab solidarity<sup>59</sup>. Guinée denounced it in very violent terms as a neo-colonialist plot. Paradoxically, Paris went on to raise the same objection; the French government officially declared that it would not become involved in any venture which could lay it open to the charge of imperialism.

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borders France and has a total French-speaking population of about 1,235,000, constituting about 19 percent of the Swiss population as a whole

<sup>57</sup> Francophone minority inhabiting the Aosta Valley, semi-autonomous region in northwestern Italy

<sup>58</sup> Pierre Alexandre (1969), "Francophonie: The French and Africa", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Colonialism and Decolonization.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid*

In July 1966, the OCAM meeting in Niamey approved a report on the organization of francophonie. Presidents Senghor and President Diiori of Niger Republic were instructed to consult all French-speaking states in Africa regarding the proposed organization. President Senghor visited Canada and President Diiori visited the African capitals. In September 1966 they submitted the final draft to President de Gaulle. This draft provided for a three-layer concentric organization:

“(a) an inner core, comprising France, the OCAM states, Tunisia, and possibly Mali, Mauritania, Guinee, and Haiti, would organize a close network of multilateral co-operation in the fields of culture (with a common education system), economy currency, and relations with international organizations, especially UNCTAD.

(b) a second layer, to include Algeria, Morocco, the former Indochinese colonies, and possibly Lebanon, whose links with the inner core would be primarily cultural and, to a lesser degree, economic.

(c) finally a third layer - Canada, Switzerland, Belgium, and Luxembourg-whose links with the other French-speaking states would be chiefly cultural.<sup>60</sup>”

Having submitted the report, the response from the France was non committal. To the disappointment of President Senghor, it was less than approval and he went on to declare; 'Well, if need be, we'll build up francophonie without France.' The first conference of Foreign and Education Ministers was tentatively scheduled for December 1966 either in Dakar or in Abidjan, but could not be convened. Francophonie sans la France did not seem a workable proposition.

### ***Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and Québec***

From this time in 1966 till 1967 Montreal outburst of de Gaulle, where he (in)famously gave ‘*vive le Québec libre*’ speech, public opinion changed in the favour of *la Francophonie* in France as well as in French speaking world. ‘*Vive le Québec libre*’ speech was a landmark event both in the history of Québec international relations and institutionalisation of *la Francophonie* as a multilateral cooperation organisation. It was after this visit of de Gaulle to Canada that he developed a

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<sup>60</sup> *ibid*



personal interest in Québec nationalism and demand for autonomy domestically as well as internationally. This support from France to the Québec's aspiration added woes to federal government sitting in Ottawa. So when Québec signed bilateral agreements with France on education and culture, and showed interest in developing ties with francophone world, Canada started looking to this part of world so as to contain Québec over there.

As discussed in 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter that de Gaulle had person reasons to support Québec's independence, the change in his attitude towards *la Francophonie* can be attributed to his involvement in Canada's domestic affairs and promote Québec cause internationally and garner support of its independence. Even after de Gaulle France's stance vis-à-vis Québec did not change much and French President Pompidou went on the extent to declare that "we are creating francophonie for Québec and it would be completely ridiculous to do it with Canada and without Québec"<sup>61</sup>. The Paris-Québec-Ottawa triangle came to influence and to shape the institutionalisation of *la Francophonie* movement and the first and the foremost evidence is Gabon incidence of 1968.

**L’Affaire du Gabon:** For a long time now, the government of Quebec has been asserting its right to represent French Canadians internationally, thereby challenging federal exclusivity in foreign affairs which in the federal view, posed a threat to Canada's national unity. When they came to know about the existence of a permanent structure of education minister of France and French African countries, and their upcoming meeting in Gabon, Québec showed its willingness to attend this conference independently. By this time Québec-France relations were strong and France was all in support for Québec, Québec thought it would be better to ask France for help in getting independent invitation from Gabon, without any federal channel<sup>62</sup>. This resulted in the first overt confrontation between Québec-Canada, emerging from Québec's desire to participate autonomously in international conference, when Québec received invitation from Gabon's government to participate in conference of

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<sup>61</sup> Frédéric Bastien quoted in Paquin, Stéphane (2006), « La relation Québec-Paris-Ottawa et la création de l'organisation internationale de *la Francophonie* (1960-2005) », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 3(223), p. 31-47.

<sup>62</sup> Paquin, Stéphane (2006), « La relation Québec-Paris-Ottawa et la création de l'organisation internationale de *la Francophonie* (1960-2005) », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 3(223), p. 31-47.

Educational Ministers from French speaking countries scheduled for February 1968. At franc's behest, federal government of Canada was left out of the invitation and only Québec was invited to participate 'as peer of sovereign states'.

The prime minister of Canada, Pearson wrote to Québec premier Johnson suggesting him to finalise modalities between federal and provincial governments with respect to Québec's participation in *la Francophonie* and other international conferences. Pearson suggested for the full Québec participation in all Canadian delegation (to *la Francophonie*). He further suggested that "conference of a more general nature or in realm of external aid would be attended by Canadian delegation headed by minister for External Affairs, although Québec could be promised a stronger representation. In however, conferences dealt with specific questions such as education and cultural exchanges, and then a Québec minister could be a member or even the head of Canadian delegation<sup>63</sup>."

Showing a non-committal stand to Ottawa's proposition, Québec went on to attend the conference, without replying to Ottawa. Between 5-10 February France, Québec and fifteen independent francophone states met in Libreville. It had a symbolic meaning for Québec as its importance was recognised internationally. This also led to flag war between Canada and Québec as the Canadian flag was replaced by Québec's flag during the proceedings of the conference. Further the diplomatic protocols meted to Québec delegation were equal to that of any other sovereign state members. Federal government of Canada reacted by suspending all the diplomatic relations with Gabon. It was a clear indication from Canadian side that how seriously they have taken infringement on their authority. Canada could have also went on to sever ties with France by calling back its ambassador, but it did not do that as this step have left Québec to fill this void through its Delegation Generale in Paris. The next meeting was scheduled for April, in Paris.

The federal government again tried to enter into negotiation with Québec government to find out modalities for Québec's participation in international relations. Ottawa maintained that only federal government can have upper hand in foreign policy and tried to persuade Québec for an agreement. Pearson again wrote to

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<sup>63</sup> Extracts of letter from Pearson to Johnson, quoted in Don Munton and John Kirton (eds), *Canadian Foreign Policy: selected case*, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada.

Johnson saying that Québec's independent participation in Paris conference reconciles bad for the survival of Canada as international entity. He proposed that Educational Minister Council of Canada; an interprovincial organism, whose member is Québec, meet to elaborate the recommendation for the composition of Canadian delegation to this conference<sup>64</sup>.

Meanwhile, Québec Premier received a letter from the premier of New Brunswick showing willingness to join the various educational conferences of francophone countries, but under the Canadian delegation. This letter was received in Québec as a federal government ploy to downplay its claim to represent all Francophone Canada using New Brunswick. Once again Québec found itself in dilemma; whether to go alone on board to represent francophone Canadian internationally using French support or go ahead under federal umbrella along with other francophone population outside Québec. If Québec decided to go ahead with the second option, that would mean it has laid down its international claims and bowed to federal government claim that only it has the exclusive jurisdiction in international affairs (including matters under provincial jurisdiction like education), thereby compromising with its constitutional status. Apart from that this step could cost Québec losing its international allies, especially France. Leaving behind everything, this time also Québec attended the meeting alone. At the end of the Paris session, Québec affirmed that it would open direct relations with French language countries in Africa as Québec felt itself better suited to handle French cultural ties with these states than Ottawa. At Paris conference, it was decided to hold the next conference at Kinshasa, Zaire.

**Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT):** Québec has been successful to garner an independent place in international educational conference with the help of France, a prerogative of sovereign state. The newly attained recognition was put in peril with the idea emanating from various African countries to create a multilateral cooperation institution involving wide range of issues, not just education. The envisaged institution was to unite several French speaking sovereign countries and whose mandate was to involve broader issues, not covered under Québec's

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<sup>64</sup> Paquin, Stéphane (2006), « La relation Québec-Paris-Ottawa et la création de l'organisation internationale de la Francophonie (1960-2005) », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 2006/3 n° 223, p. 31-47

competence. In such case, Ottawa will exercise its authority and Québec might not find a place.

Moving ahead with the idea, the ACCT was created in 1970, to unite francophone countries under initiative of president of Sénégal, Léopold Senghor, president of Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba and president of Niger, Hamani Diori. ACCT was the end product of two conferences, held between 1969-1970 known as Niamey I and Niamey II.

Between Niamey I and Gabon affair, Kinshasa conference was held in January 1969 in Zaire (as it was called that time). It should be noted here that *l'affaire du Gabon* of 1968 gave a boost to the orientation of Canada's foreign policy towards French speaking Africa. This incidence was taken as politically threatening for Canada. Federal government went ahead to create a new pro-African image in French Africa and equations were altered by the time of Kinshasa conference. This time federal government of Canada was invited to attend the conference by the president Mobutu. Domestically, there was regime change, both at centre and at provincial levels. New Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and the new Québec premier Jean-Jacques Bertrand concluded an agreement. Under the terms of Trudeau-Bertrand agreement Québec was to participate under Canadian delegation and Ontario and New Brunswick was to be equally present. This conference was provided the dress-rehearsal for Naimey I; a single Canadian delegation comprising members from Québec attended the conference. Meanwhile Canadian government, in order to increase its influence in Africa increased its aid programs through CIDA. Canada sent Chevrier Mission; special economic cooperation mission, to French Africa. Its aim was to investigate methods of improving and expanding Canadian aid programme in francophone Africa. The main aim underlying such initiatives by Canadian government was simply to demonstrate that Ottawa was greater source of aid than Québec could ever become. This financial aid was, however, not for countries sympathising with Québec.

**Niamey I** Having made its stance very clear that Canada will not tolerate if any country supports Québec's aspiration for a separate place in such conferences, Canada looked forward to Niamey I (February 1969) although amid tension over Canada's representation in this conference. Canada again wanted to have a single delegation, as it had in Kinshasa. On the other hand, France was again trying to secure that only Québec is invited. Niger found itself caught into two conflicting interests; Canada has

already made its stance clear and hence Niger was afraid that Canada would cut off aid worth 2 800 000 CAD to it. On the other hand France offered to compensate the loss on occasion of a single invitation to Québec and threatened to boycott the conference if only Canada is invited. At the end, both Ottawa and Québec were invited and again an agreement, like that of Kinshasa, was reached between Ottawa and Québec. Premier Bertrand conceded that Québec would go to Niger under Canadian delegation while retaining representation of Québec on matters of education and culture. The Canadian and Québec delegations co-existed rather uneasily together within the common delegation, with two sets of flags and with each government assuming the travel and related expenses of its delegation<sup>65</sup>. Niamey I saw the establishment of an agency for technical and cultural cooperation among French speaking states on 20<sup>th</sup> of February 1969 and Jean-Marc Leger, Canadian journalist, separatist and advocate of Québec's international personality, was chosen the provisional executive secretary. He was to assist president Diori in establishing a secretariat, preparing the constitution and defining the organisation's future plans, which would be the agenda for the next conference. It was also announced that Canada, along with Ontario, New Brunswick and Québec had agreed to 30% of the agency's budget.

**Niamey II** the sovereign francophone states met once again in Niamey in 1970 to sign the convention which formally established the new transnational agency with its permanent secretariat and budget. This gathering was further devoted to the examination and adoption of the statutes and programs of ACCT. This time also federal government of Canada wanted only one invitation, addressing the federal government, to be sent to Canada. By this time, the French African attitude seemed more towards Canada than Québec. Probably they have come to understand that Canadian government can spend more than that of Québec government. This was also supported by the report of Jean-Marc Leger, provisional executive secretary of ACCT that Canada would be more useful to development of Africa than Québec. France, on its part, was also trying hard to mobilize the support for extending the invitation to Québec, not Canada. Instead of pressure from France, Diori sided with federal

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<sup>65</sup> Munton, Don and John Kirton (1992), *Canadian Foreign Policy: Selected Case*, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada, Inc.

government of Canada, which only got the invitation. Finally Canada and Québec agreed upon certain points in order to attend the conference under one invitation.

While negotiating its place in *la Francophonie*, Québec outlined four points;

“Québec must be able to speak in its own name and enter into commitment of its own in the areas within its jurisdiction. Secondly, Québec’s presence and activity must be adequately identified; thirdly, the voting procedure must reflect this duality by providing for mandatory abstention in the event of disagreement on matters within Québec’s competency. Finally, the statutes of the ACCT must be based on the same principles and allow for direct participation by Québec in the activities of the agency”<sup>66</sup>.

Québec also sought co-chairmanship of the delegation. Québec was allowed to speak on its own name on any subject within its constitutional competence. However, instead of co-chairmanship it was granted vice-chairmanship as the conference was to be purely international in nature and matters discussed would go beyond those of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. As far as abstention was concerned it was agreed that delegation would abstain only if there was disagreement on the matters relating to exclusive domestic competence of the provinces.

Finally, Canada participated as a whole in institutionalized and international francophonie, like it participates in commonwealth. The status of Québec in francophonie was yet not clear. Both France and Canada had conflicting views as to how Québec should be accommodated in the agency. France suggested every government having competence in the matters subject to present convention can sign the charter. This proposition was rejected as various African countries too felt that it might open the door for any non sovereign authority and they sided with Ottawa. After much of debate, a compromise between French and Canadian governments was reached and inserted into the charter of ACCT. according to the new provision; non sovereign governments can participate in the activities of ACCT with the approval of their sovereign authorities and according to the modalities worked upon between them. So finally representatives from 21 states and governments signed the convention creating l’Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT) on 20<sup>th</sup> march in Niamey.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p 167

The new agency thus created on the basis of common language, was charged with the responsibility to promote and diffuse the culture of its member states and intensify the cultural and technical cooperation between them. The Niamey convention assigns ACCT with the duty to be a forum to express new (francophone) solidarity and bring together people through permanent dialogue between civilisations<sup>67</sup>. The establishment of the ACCT helped to solidify the cultural identity of the francophone community.

This project has considerably developed since the creation of ACCT in 1970. What started as a language movement increasingly got institutionalized and came to address various issues under its aegis but not without having problem of conflicting interests. In fact, the possibilities of francophone co-operation could not be fully exploited so long as the movement failed to derive its leadership and legitimacy from the highest political authorities.

### **Francophonie: Cooperation and Conflict**

The first conference of the ACCT was scheduled to take place in Canada in October 1971 at the end of Niamey II. But everything was not as smooth as it seemed to be. Since its initial days, francophonie has been marked by conflicting interests between its various actors. The same trend continues and once back to the country, the Canadian government made its stand clear that only Canada as a sovereign state can be the full member of *la Francophonie* thereby denying Québec the membership of *la Francophonie*. Québec government conveyed that it wanted the status of 'participating government' in ACCT and emphasised that as it has already participated in Niamey I and II so there is nothing to negotiate and the they should stick to the previous agreement<sup>68</sup>. To support its stand, Québec referred to Article 3<sup>69</sup> of ACCT charter but Canada refused by saying that this article was imposed on them

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<sup>67</sup> Capiou, Suzanne( ?), *L'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)*.

<sup>68</sup> Agreement regarding its participation in *la Francophonie* that it had with federal government before Niamey II conference.

<sup>69</sup> It provides for the participation of non sovereign government in the activities of ACCT.

illegitimately<sup>70</sup>. The conflict between federal government of Canada and provincial government of Québec was still looming high when the date of first conference of ACCT to be held in Canada approached. It called for an urgency to resolve this issue as Québec already threatened to boycott the conference if it is not granted its due position in *la Francophonie*.

Finally an agreement was reached between both the levels of government which formalized Québec's status in that organisation. The Québec-Ottawa agreement of October 1971 gave Québec the status of a participatory government. It should be noted here that this status was granted by ACCT but by Canada as, under ACCT, non sovereign entity can participate only with the approval of their sovereign government. Under article 16, Québec was given a wide scope, even an exceptional opportunity, to act within ACCT; but it was charged with keeping Ottawa informed of its activities within the organization<sup>71</sup>.

In the mid-1970s, president Senghor put forward the idea of a summit meeting of the leaders of French-speaking countries. Although this initiative was unanimously welcomed, at the official level remained in limbo for several years because of a conflict between Canada and Quebec over the nature of the latter's possible participation. The coming to power of sovereigntist *Partie Québécois* in Québec in 1976 marked a considerable departure from federal-provincial cooperation and Québec-Ottawa relations reached its low. This election of *Partie Québécois* and the subsequent hardening of Ottawa stand vis-à-vis Québec impacted the institutionalisation of *la Francophonie*.

For Pierre Trudeau this idea of summit meeting involving country's head provided another opportunity to reinforce Canada's exclusivity over matters of foreign relations. He supported Senghor and declared that Québec cannot be invited in such meetings as it is going to be reserved only for sovereign countries heads. He affirmed "Canada which will decide who will speak on her name abroad." Many African statesmen including Senghor supported this Trudeau's position and the

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<sup>70</sup> Paquin, Stéphane (2006), « La relation Québec-Paris-Ottawa et la création de l'organisation internationale de *la Francophonie* (1960-2005) », *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 3 (223), p. 40.

<sup>71</sup> Munton, Don and John Kirton (1992), *Canadian Foreign Policy: Selected Case*, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada, Inc. p 170



proposed the formula that Québec be represented in Canadian delegation. But for Québec it was unacceptable as its presence in Canadian delegation does not conform to the nature of things and to the reality that Québec exercise sovereignty in several constitutional matters.

As usual, France sided with that of Québec and went on to declare that it would boycott the summit if Québec is not invited. On the other hand the Canadian government was trying its best to exclude Québec from the new multilateral organization, even from its preparatory meetings, and asked France not to interfere in its domestic matters. The triangular conflict continued and it did not seem feasible to arrive at any conclusion regarding status of Québec in the new organization. This wind of uncertainty changed its direction with the government change in France and Canada. In France, socialist government of Francois Mitterand came to power in 1981. This government was more pro-Canada than pro-Québec and Mitterand shared a good rapport with Trudeau. He assured Trudeau that 'with us it would not be like Gaullist. We will respect your constitution'. The French president reaffirmed his interest to create francophone institution and it was proposed from France to divide the future francophonie summit into two parts; the first dealing only with heads of sovereign states and second regrouping the heads of non sovereign governments, like Québec. But this proposition was unacceptable for Québec as it would place it on the same footing as that of other province of Canada.

The victory of conservative party in 1984 federal election opened door for new Québec-Ottawa negotiation on former's participation in *la Francophonie*. The new Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, of Canada had a soft stand on Québec's international aspiration. He even declared to French prime minister that he did not see anything bad about maintaining direct and privileged relations between Québec and France. It was during this time that a new agreement was struck between Québec-Ottawa so that *la Francophonie* could be institutionalized. The 1985 Québec-Ottawa agreement regarding Québec's participation in *la Francophonie* concluded that Québec cannot be represented directly and in Canadian delegation under the designation of Canada-Québec. It was further agreed that the summit will be divided into two parts; the first part dedicated to political and economic issues of the world where only federal government can intervene and the second part dedicated to matters of cultural and development where other governments, like Québec, can intervene and have their say.

Finally, it was only in February 1986, at Versailles, that the first summit of *la Francophonie* could take place, just a few weeks after this agreement on the province's role had been hammered out between Québec and Canada. It involved forty-two participants. This summit was followed by Quebec City (1987) summit, which gave full recognition to the province of Quebec. With the commencement of summit meeting, *la Francophonie* embarked on a new stage of institutional set up and expansion involving political leader from various French speaking countries.

**Francophone Summits and Institutional Changes:** Francophonie summits, which are undertaken every two years, are the top authority of the organization. With each subsequent summit meetings, starting from 1986, the working of *la Francophonie* got more institutionalized in terms of its structure, mandate, and membership. These structural changes were the reflection of broader changes in geo-political structure of international system.

The Dakar Summit (1989) which was held just a few months before the fall of the Berlin Wall was mainly devoted to questions of education and training. The Summit's Final Declaration had education and training described as "domaine stratégique d'intervention"<sup>72</sup> (strategic domain of intervention). To fulfil this declaration, the *Université internationale francophone Senghor* of Alexandria was created, which for the first time, was a different step than the traditional bilateral or even multilateral conception of development aid to individual members. By this time it was realised that only development aid is not enough for the overall development of African states. Educational and technical assistance could be of more help.

The Paris (Chaillot) Summit of 1991 had been scheduled to take place in Kinshasa, but the venue was hastily changed due to international pressure resulting from human rights abuses under the Mobutu regime. This Summit established a *Conseil permanent* (permanent council) whose duty was going to be to organise the biennial *Francophonie summits*, and a *Conférence ministérielle* that would meet annually and provide strategic direction<sup>73</sup>.

The Mauritius Summit (1993) made a significant modification to the Charter of *La Francophonie* that would have far-reaching effects. At this Summit the

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<sup>72</sup> : From the Postcolonial to the Post-Cold War Eras, p 22.

<sup>73</sup> *ibid*

definition of members of the Movement changed from, “having in common the use of French”, to those “sharing French language”. This justified the admission to full membership of the certain countries, like Bulgaria, Cambodia and Romania which were not Francophone per se but shared some element of French language and culture. The Mauritius Declaration further introduced the notion of cultural and linguistic diversity which was to play important role in the politics of *La Francophonie*. The new notion thus introduced broadened the base of francophone membership and was a sign of the developing political intention of *la Francophonie*, as expressed in the Cotonou Summit (1995) Final Declaration ““Our renewed commitment is to strengthen Francophonie as an instrument of dialogue and of multilateral cooperation by giving it the legal, material and human resources to the extent of its political ambition, mainly by creating a General Secretariat of the *la Francophonie*<sup>74</sup>”.

Following these lines, the Cotonou Declaration called for institutional reform of the Movement and provided for a revision of the Niamey charter of ACCT in a new charter of *la Francophonie*. At the Hanoi Summit (1997) a new structure, the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF) was created. The Final Declaration of this Summit underlined the universal dimension of *la Francophonie* and the new challenges emerging from globalisation. A new unified Secretariat would combine the functions of coordinating the permanent council of *la Francophonie* and those of the *Agence de la Francophonie* dealing with aid and cultural programs. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who had been supported by France, was appointed the first permanent Secretary General of the francophone movement. *La Francophonie* confirmed its intention to increase its political visibility in the post-Cold War world with the institutional changes that it undertook over the years.

According to the Charter of *la Francophonie*, adopted in 2005 à Antananarivo, the objective of *la Francophonie* is to respect the sovereignty of states, their language and their culture, in order to help;

1. “Instauration and development of democracy, prevention, management and regulation of conflicts and support for human rights
2. Intensification of dialogues between cultures and civilisations.
3. Bringing together people via their mutual understanding

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid p 23

4. Strengthening their solidarity by multilateral cooperation to promote their economic growth.
5. Promoting education and training”<sup>75</sup>.

Today the International Organisation of *La Francophonie* represents one of the biggest linguistic zones in the world. Its members share more than just a common language. They also share the humanist values promoted by the French language. The French language and its humanist values represent the two cornerstones on which the International Organisation of *La Francophonie* is based.

**Functions:** according to Article 2 of francophonie charter, there are three authorities to the organization; francophonie summit, permanent council and ministerial conference. At institutional level, the highest authority of *la Francophonie* is the Summit meetings, where every two years the Heads of State and Government of member countries meet in order to establish guidelines for cooperation, updating objectives and strategies. The summit decides on the granting full membership or observer status to applicant countries

The Ministerial Conference is held annually with the objective of ensuring continuity in terms of policy among the summits. Its foreign ministers are called to oversee the implementation of decisions taken in previous summits and to check the working agenda of the next summit.

The Permanent Council of *La Francophonie*, which is made up of the ambassadors of the member countries, is responsible for planning meetings between political leaders and coordinating the work of operational agencies. It is presided by the secretary general of *la Francophonie*. The most important is the Francophone University Agency (AUF), which is responsible for the implementation (or application) of cooperation programmes adopted at summits. The Secretary-General is elected every four years by the Summit and acts as the political spokesman for the organization and its official representative in international forums.

To complete the institutional framework, there is a Parliamentary Assembly of *La Francophonie* which was created in 1967 in Luxembourg as the International Association of French-Speaking Parliamentarians (AIPLF), which has been recognized as having the role of an advisory organization. The Francophone

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<sup>75</sup> Charter of *La Francophonie*.

Parliament is based in Paris and brings together representatives of national assemblies and local governments of member countries and states, once a year in a plenary session. On the basis of reports submitted by its commissions, the Parliamentary Assembly expresses opinions and makes recommendations to the Summit, the Ministerial Conference and the Permanent Council in all areas of activities relating to the francophone space. Alongside the Parliamentary Assembly of *La Francophonie*, there are four direct operators responsible for implementing the programs decided at the Summits. The four direct operators are: the Academic Agency of *La Francophonie*, TV5Monde, the International Association of Francophone Mayors and The Senghor University of Alexandria.

## Conclusion

*La Francophonie* started as a language based movement. Although its antecedents can be traced back to 1926 with the creation of l'Association des écrivains de langue française (Adelf)<sup>76</sup>, it was only in 1970 that *la Francophonie* took a formal shape in the form of Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT). Over the past few decades, the organisation has come to institutionalize its structure and functioning so as to provide a platform for cooperation between French speaking countries. Starting with cooperation in language and cultural field, *la Francophonie* embarked on more and more political issues conforming to the realities of world. Its aim and objective involves not only promotion and cooperation on linguistics ground but it also aims at promoting democracy, peace, human rights, education and sustainable development throughout francophone world.

This chapter has tried to locate the origin of *la Francophonie* movement and its subsequent institutionalization. Drawing upon international relations pursued by Québec vis-à-vis *la Francophonie*, the chapter found that although the movement started at the behest of former French colonies, the Québec-Canada conflict largely shaped its direction. The role of France in Québec-Canada conflict vis-à-vis *la Francophonie* further marred its trajectory. The Québec-Ottawa-Paris triangular conflict came to shape the formative years of *la Francophonie*.

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<sup>76</sup> Association of writers of French language

Canada as well as Québec, both have their interest in *la Francophonie* and the friction between them regarding later's participation in *la Francophonie* had stalled initial institutionalization of the organization.

Canada's interest in *la Francophonie* took deeper roots after 1968 Gabon incident. This incident sparked a long-lasting row over the constitutional division of powers in external relations. Canada contended that a sovereign country cannot have two foreign policies; the Quebec government maintained that it had the right to extend abroad those areas of jurisdiction assigned to it by the constitution, notably education and culture. This clash of views became so serious that it almost derailed the establishment of the ACCT. After various negotiations, in 1985, an agreement was finally worked out between Ottawa and Quebec City under which Québec could take part in the francophone summit as participating government, subject to certain restrictions regarding the discussions on the world economic and political situation.

Canada has always favoured a highly institutional set up for *la Francophonie*, in the form of summit meetings of heads of state as it gives it leverage over Québec. Canada has always tried to exclude Québec from such forums and contain its international aspirations. In order to be effective in doing so, Canada oriented its foreign policy towards French speaking Africa, neglected till 1960s. Canada projected an image in French Africa that Canada can help them more as compared to Québec in terms of finance.

France on its part has always supported Québec's international aspiration till coming to power of socialist government of Mitterand in 1980s. The change in government in Québec, France and Canada in 1980s led to softening of stand on Québec's participation in *la Francophonie* and finally the first summit of francophonie took place in 1986. Since then francophonie summit meet every two years at various francophone capital to decide on the working of the organisation and fulfil its mandate. Over the past three decades, the mandate of *la Francophonie* has also modified and it has come to include various issues of global relevance.

At its inception in 1970, the francophone movement had twenty-two members; this figure has now increased to 75 member states and governments (56 members and 19 observers). There not only sovereign states but also francophone non sovereign governments like Québec, New Brunswick, Wallonia. From 1970 until the late 1980s,

that is, from the post-colonial era to the post-Cold War world, the members of *La Francophonie* were traditionally all French-speaking or at least French was either an official or significant language of its member countries. But with changes in membership pattern and embarking on political dimension of this language movement, it has enabled a number of countries which are not normally thought of as French-speaking in any traditional way to join the Movement in recent years: Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldavia, Poland, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Slovakia.

With the expanding membership there are various emerging issues. Since this movement started on French language and cultural lines, a crack in Francophone solidarity seems to emerge when the ethnic French complain about being lumped together with Africans and when they complain that too much aid is being given to Africa, Haiti, and Lebanon.

On the other hand, *la Francophonie* has been accused of representing the interest of its wealthier and more economically powerful member states; like France and Canada, as its policies and financial resources come mainly from them.

A forum of cooperation, as *la Francophonie* was intended to be, is not without elements of conflicts. In fact, *la Francophonie* was created on the conflicting lines of interests. It came to give direction to the Québec international relations and a new orientation to Canada's foreign policy which was mainly oriented towards Anglophone world.

## Chapter V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In a global context dominated by forces of globalisation and withering away of boundaries, it has become very common to say that nation-state is in mortal danger. Scholars have already underlined the advent of a post-Westphalian world where sovereignty of a state is destructible and shared within various levels of government; as in federal set up of government, and decisions, especially international, are taken depending upon various domestic and international factors. The capacity of a state has been severely eroded by the forces of globalization, regional integration, supra-national organizations and most importantly, coming on stage of constituent units of state; provinces, to fulfil their aspirations. The claims and counter-claims are evident on international forums where both the levels of government; central and non-central, vie to project and protect their interest. Economic interests are mainly the focus of these conflicting interests but for some, like Québec, the interest is mainly identity quest.

Québec, with its highly institutionalized bureaucratic apparatus like Ministry of International Relations (MRI), presents the case of most advanced international involvement by a non-sovereign state. Its presence on international scene irks Canada which claims to have exclusive prerogative in conducting foreign policy. Notwithstanding such opposition, Québec undertakes its international relations, through its MRI and maintains relations with international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Québec participates in various international organisations, like that of UNESCO, ILO, OECD, OAS and WTO, to name a few. The most important international organization to which Québec is deeply associated is *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*. Created first and foremost to meet cultural needs, *la Francophonie* provides Québec with the required impetus to maintain the contact with francophone world by institutionalising its mechanism.

The development of Québec's international relations has been marked with Québec-Canada rift, so is the development of *la Francophonie* as an institutionalized multilateral organization with the added French angle to it. In fact the Québec-Paris-



Ottawa triangle has shaped the initial years of *la Francophonie* and transformed the intended platform of cooperation into a platform of conflict at various levels. This reality still hold high as *la Francophonie* has been criticised as promoting the interest of its powerful members and neglecting the actual motive behind its creation. With the change in geo-political scenario, *la Francophonie* has also embarked on issues of high politics.

Keeping in mind these broader realities, this project “Québec and its Participation in *la Francophonie*” aimed to study the nature of Québec’s international relations from 1960s onwards. Québec’s participation in *la Francophonie* has been the main variable of this study. A parallel has been drawn between the evolution of Québec international relations and that of *la Francophonie* since the beginning of 1960s. To undertake this, the study has been divided into three main parts, excluding introduction and conclusion.

The first chapter titled “*Québec’s International Relations and la Francophonie: an Introduction*” briefly introduces the theme of the research proposal. Based on review of the literature available on themes like foreign policy, international relations, francophone movement, Québec-Canada relations and Québec-Paris-Ottawa triangle, the chapter raises few research questions which this proposal aims to answer. The chapter gives the definition, rationale and scope of study of the theme under consideration. While hypothesising the proposal, the chapter briefs the methodology to be used in order to undertake the research project.

The second chapter titled *International Relations of Québec: Evolution and Direction* focuses on the factors that led this French-speaking province of Canada to become internationally active, mainly by the mid-1960s. While trying to differentiate international relations from foreign policy, this chapter tried to look into the international and domestic context like divided world on ideological ground, decolonization, Quiet Revolution, constitutional ambiguity and role of France, which led to the rise of Québec’s transnational relations. A good number of these factors are pertinent to the general rise of transnational relations during the same period as well as other motivations that are common to many non-sovereign international actors, like economic interdependence. Based on the vast network of Québec’s international presence in the form of international offices and agreements, one may say Québec

challenges the traditional notion of sovereignty. But if the nature of its international activities are closely analysed, it is mostly related to its nation building project through 'paradiplomatie identitaire' within the limits of its constitutional prerogatives in the fields of education, culture, language as well as on its other strategic interests such as health, labour, trade, sustainable development, the environment and human rights. *La Francophonie*; the multilateral cooperative organisation based on linguistic ground, has served as a platform for Québec in order to protect, project and promote its interest. In fact, a parallel was found between development of Québec's international relations and that of the creation of *la Francophonie* institutional. Québec's participation in *la Francophonie* is not the end product of its international relations; rather Québec's international relations took its initial shape from francophonie movement. It was France and francophonie which gave Québec the initial thrust to come out of its isolation and develop its relations with other francophone community.

The third chapter named *Institutional Set up of Québec International Relations* dealt with the bureaucratic apparatus that Québec designed for itself in order to efficiently carry out its international relations. Québec has, over the years put into place judicial and institutional instruments that allow it to assume the international scope of its responsibilities. It has mandated the Ministère des Relations Internationales to direct the government's international initiatives, coordinate the activities of government departments and agencies in this regard, manage a network of representatives abroad, as well as negotiate and enforce international agreements. The present institutional set up and bureaucratization of Québec's international relations is the result of federal-provincial bargaining of jurisdictional claims by Québec, and reinterpretation of Canadian constitution. Tracing the genesis of Québec's MRI and that of Canada's DFAIT, it becomes clear that MRI is mini DFAIT in structure and scope. One can say that Québec have a sort of foreign ministry, uncommon for any federated unit of world, yet it cannot be said to conduct an autonomous foreign policy. What Québec does abroad is international activity within the purview of federal government. What Québec want is not independent conduct but representation on board Canadian delegation to various international organizations. In that ways, sovereignty of Canada as a state is not challenged. The modalities formalized between Québec and Canada as a result of various agreement

between them, allow Québec to participate in various international organization, like *la Francophonie*, without infringing on federal jurisdiction of high politics. The domain of international relations, especially *la Francophonie* where both the Canadian and Québec government participate, is an area of conflict between the two although they cooperate to a great extent there.

The fourth called *La Francophonie: Cooperation and Conflict* analyzed *la Francophonie* as a place of cooperation and conflict among its three main participants; Canada, Québec and France. The study found that *la Francophonie* which started at the behest of former French colonies, mainly African nations like Senegal, Tunisia and Niger, became a preferred place of conflict signifying differently for different players. For French Africans, it provided for an opportunity to foster cooperation between Francophone countries and maintain relations with métropole France. For Québec it became a place to project an image of distinct French nation in vast North America and garner support for its recognition such aspiration. For Canada, *la Francophonie* meant to be platform to contain Québec's aspiration and project its bicultural and bilingual image in French community. With these conflicting interests these countries came together to establish ACCT, the first step towards institutionalization of francophone movement. Over the four decades that followed, *la Francophonie* has been highly institutionalized and came to incorporate various global issues to which language and culture is just a part. The study also found in this chapter that although the movement started in global north, the event of global south came to define it and give it required direction. The Ottawa-Québec-Paris triangle mainly shaped it. Further, the domestic conflict in Canada-Québec relations and Québec's international aspiration deeply impacted the development of *la francophone* from a language movement to multilateral organization of highly political nature. A parallel was found between institutionalization of *la Francophonie* and that of Québec's international relations.

The present chapter, chapter fifth titled *Summery and Conclusion*, while summarizing the research proposal seeks to conclude the work undertaken. Based on the above findings, the chapter argues that:

Québec's participation in *la Francophonie* is the starting point of Québec's international relations. *La francophonie* gave initial impetus to Québec's

internationalism and encouraged Québec to come out of isolationism and build up relations with other francophone community. Hence Québec's involvement in *la Francophonie* precedes its formal international relations.

The international activities pursued by Québec and its relations with other state or sub-states fall into the category of international relations and not foreign policy. The sub-state status of Québec restricts it to undertake foreign policy but this restriction has not impeded Québec's international endeavour. In fact, Québec has 7 general delegations, 5 delegations, 10 bureaus, 4 trade branches and sends representation in multilateral forum like *la Francophonie* and UNESCO. Québec is the only non-sovereign state to have such a vast international presence spreading over five continents and across 20 countries. It has concluded almost 712 international accords of which 368 are currently in force.

The ambiguous nature of Canadian constitution enables Québec to go so far in its international pursuit. The Canadian federal system, like any other federal system, is based upon a division of sovereignty. But like other federation, Canadian constitution does not clearly mention whose prerogative is foreign policy and does not restrict its component to undertake international activities. The constituents units called provinces have been vested with certain legislative powers that even the parliament cannot replace. These powers include domestic jurisdiction in field of education, culture, language, health and labour. As far as jurisdiction in international competence is concerned, the silence of constitution (BNA and CA) has been interpreted as giving legitimacy to provinces in international relations. That is to say, whatever is the domestic jurisdiction of provinces is also their international jurisdiction. Québec is the foremost proponent of this position and undertake its own international relations.

But that does not mean Québec can go to any extent while undertaking its international relations. The federal government allows it to play an international role as long as this does not threaten the interests of the former and the image they wish to project abroad. That means, Québec cannot go against wishes of federal government while undertaking its relations with other countries. It cannot speak on the matters of high politics and has to restrict itself mainly to the matters under its jurisdiction, which are generally the matters of low politics like education, culture, health etc. It

can be inferred here that there exists a balance between Québec's international aspirations and federal government accommodation of these aspirations, which is seldom at the cost of national interest.

The international aspirations of Québec came to dominate federal-provincial relations during 1960s. There are two set of factors leading Québec into international domain; domestic and international. Domestic factors like Quiet Revolution, constitutional ambiguity over foreign policy, Gerin-Lajoie doctrine and the distinct French identity quest encouraged Québec's international aspiration. At the international level, decolonization movement, Québec as colony metaphor, role of Gaullist France and Québec-Ottawa-Paris triangle triggered international emancipation of Québec, to which *la Francophonie* is an integral part. Both *la Francophonie* and international relations of Québec developed side by side, each influencing the other.

*La Francophonie* started as a language based movement and provided a platform for Québec to undertake its *paradiplomatie identitaire*. Through its *paradiplomatie*, Québec wants to promote its distinct francophone character in Canada and in world. *La Francophonie* owes its singular character to the use of a linguistic criterion as its founding principle and first arose from a sense of belonging to a common culture. But over the years it has come to cover an ever-widening range of social activities like promoting democracy, peace and prosperity, human rights, supporting technical and educational training, developing sustainable development cooperation.

In the years since 1986 the biennial summits meetings have been organized and have been attended by the leaders of French-speaking countries, thereby giving a strong political impetus to the francophonie movement. Created first and foremost to meet cultural needs, francophone multilateral co-operation steadily expanded to include, first, the problem of Third World development and, eventually, all aspects of international relations.

Over three-quarters of the members are developing countries; on the other, France and Canada together have a gross national product equal to 80 per cent of that of all the French-speaking countries. To their end, *La Francophonie* offers the advantage of being an institution in which the exercise of power is concentrated

largely in the hands of France and Canada whose control of *la Francophonie's* budget also gives them political control. But that does not mean either France or Canada can wholly dictate its programs and decisions owing to its multilateral nature.

Multilateralism is the most important credo of *la Francophonie*. This means that within organizations whose membership comes from several countries, any one country cannot dictate programs. Further, it means that in relations between sub-units of government or even in relations between governments, the national interests of one country, be it France or Canada, will not overwhelm the decision-making process. Further *la Francophonie* provides the potential for trans-nationalism which is evident from the presence of non central government like Québec, Wallonia, Flanders in *la Francophonie*. Québec government participate in *la Francophonie* as a 'participating government' under Canada-Québec delegation. It does not participate independently in this multilateral organisation.

However Québec be active internationally, it pursues its goal under Canadian banner, thereby no posing any serious threat to Canadian sovereignty. In this globalized age, it is not possible to undertake foreign relations, especially in federal countries like Canada, without taking onboard its constituent elements. Canada came to understand this fact in the wake of change in global context and intermestic politics define its conduct, Québec being the most active part in this politics.

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