

CEACS President's report, 2024 – Katalin Kürtösi

At the end of my second term, I wish to mention the main activities as President of CEACS during the past six years (the general meeting in the fall of 2021 took place online, with only about 20% of members following it). First of all, I wish to underline that – in spite of the abolishment of the Understanding Canada programme – I ‘inherited’ from Diana Yankova an association that could keep most of its members. Now that I am passing the function on, membership numbers are still solid – special thanks go to the country representatives and all of you for keeping the spirit of CEACS up. Communication within the association was smooth and fluent, thanks to our outgoing assistant, Denisa Krásna.

During these six years, my priorities were to be fully transparent so that members are updated about news and to carry on with the international representation of the association. I attended three conferences of the Association for Canadian Studies in the German-speaking Countries (GKS) in Grainau (2019, 2020, 2024) as well as the AGM of the International Council for Canadian Studies (ICCS), 2019, 2023, 2024 in person, 2020, 2021, 2022 online. (I participated in each in-person event covering all my costs from my own personal budget.) After each ICCS AGM I made a point of sending to all members a short summary about issues discussed. At the ICCS AGM held in Ottawa in 2019 I was chosen to give a presentation on how to include research findings in teaching. Last year the ICCS President asked me to phrase a letter to the Senate Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada explaining why the support of international Canadian Studies is important: it was well received and forwarded to higher levels, but finally the Minister did not support it.

However, the international recognition of CEACS members is impressive: Professors Petr Kylaoušek and Jason Blake were awarded the ICCS Certificates of Merit (2020 and 2022 respectively) while the Pierre Savard Award for a book in a foreign language went to István János Molnár in 2019 and Jana Marešová received the Best Doctoral Thesis award in 2023. The annual country reports can be seen as a convincing illustration of the many-sided activities our members pursue – besides organizing conferences and guest lectures, our publications cover a wide area of Canadian Studies. Comparing our annual report submitted to ICCS with those of other associations we can take pride in an impressive list.

After the Covid period, ICCS went through a radical re-shaping – the office moved to Toronto, hosted by the Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies at York University; the staff was reduced to a part-time secretary. Besides regular communication with the Executive Committee of the ICCS and circulating its Newsletter, I arranged that our members receive the Newsletter of the Association Internationale des Études Québécoises so that they get more information about current events related to Québec Studies.

Regional events: many national chapters organized conferences where CEACS members from other countries were welcome – e.g. in Brno in 2020, the annual end-of November conferences in Budapest, conferences by the Serbian Association for Canadian Studies (SACS) in Beograd (2022, 2024), the American Studies Association of Croatia in Rijeka (2023), while the 9th CEACS conference took place in Budapest (2022).

Regional action: initiatives honouring Margaret Atwood on her 80th birthday (2019) and Alice Munro on her 90th birthday (2021), both documented by Fruzsina Kovács. In each case, several events were organized by each national chapter (including a translation contest, library meetings, quizzes for students, special issues of journals, etc.). These initiatives received high appreciation from the Presidents of the ICCS member associations – and my thanks go to all organizers and participants.

CEACS Executive Committee meetings took place twice a year online and in person after the conference in 2022, together with the country representatives: minutes were made available to all members.

The lack of support from the Canadian government and Covid had a negative impact: no new regional research project could be arranged – but other projects and special issues involved members, e.g. the migration project led by Balázs Venkovits, or special issues of the scholarly journal *ELOPE*.

On the informal scene, I made a point of sending Christmas/NewYear greetings that represented a cross-section of culture in Canada: paintings by Tom Thomson, Adrien Hébert, the Inuit artist Kananginak Pootoogook, Cornelius Krieghoff and Marian Dale Scott.

Finally, my thanks go to all of you for having elected me President of the CEACS – it was a privilege and joy representing you and working with you. I congratulate my successor and wish him a fruitful Presidency.