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## Canada as an “Extra”: The Story of Canadian Studies in Slovakia

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This article outlines the history of the study of Canada in Slovakia. It explores early writings on Canada and attempts to identify pioneers of Canadian Studies as well as milestones in its development and institutionalization, while also claiming that Canadian Studies remains a marginal academic discipline in Slovakia; indeed, its very existence is dependent on the enthusiasm of a small community of scholars. The final part of the article presents the community, their research interests, activities, and motivations, and attempts to pinpoint the impact of the Canadian federal government’s decision to withdraw its support from funding Canadian Studies abroad.

**Key words:** Canadian Studies; Slovakia; community; history; activities; motivations

The study of Canada does not have a long tradition in Slovakia even though Canada and Slovakia have enjoyed very good bilateral relations for nearly a hundred years. According to the Government of Canada’s website, Slovakia has had diplomatic representation in Canada since 1920, when Czechoslovakia opened its first consular office in Montreal. In addition, Canada is home to a community of about 65,000 Canadians of Slovak origin. It offered shelter to Czechoslovak political refugees during the Communist era and provided opportunities to many Slovaks after 1989. Canada also supported Slovakia’s membership in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Moreover, Slovakia has an active trade balance with Canada, and Canada has been one of the top twenty-five investors in Slovakia in the past decade (*Canada-Slovakia Relations*).

Unfortunately, these facts are not common knowledge among ordinary Slovaks. Not much is taught about Canada in Slovak schools, and Canada receives very little coverage in the Slovak media, too. While the affairs of the United States are covered almost on a daily basis, media coverage of Canada is very sparse. If not for the handsome visage of Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who caused a sensation in a great number of countries (Slovakia being no exception) upon his election, or Canada's national men's hockey team netting the winning goal just two seconds before the end of the match against Slovakia at the 2019 IIHF World Championships, Canada might never have made the papers in Slovakia in recent years in other than a marginal form.

This lack of interest is not new. Historically, this is related to Slovakia's "almost non-existent" contacts with the English-speaking world in the nineteenth century (Djovčoř and Plieřovská 258) and its relative political and cultural isolation from the West for a large part of the twentieth century due to Communist Party rule. Until the 1990s, Canada was regarded as a part of the "corrupt" Western Bloc because, in the eyes of Communist Party ideologists, it was "too closely allied to the Soviet Union's chief political and ideological enemy, the United States" (Otrísalová 214). As a result, it was largely, but, as we will demonstrate, not completely, absent from public and academic discourse during the forty years of totalitarian rule. Although the Velvet Revolution and the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 triggered a wave of revived interest in countries on the opposite side of the ideological gulf, Canada remained in the shadow of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

This also pertained to Slovak universities. The study of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States had an established tradition at university departments focusing on the study of French and English, but the study of other French- and English-speaking countries was marginal or non-existent in curricula at Slovak universities. As a result, when the Canadian Embassy in Prague offered substantial financial support to Comenius University in Bratislava in the hope of jump-starting the discipline of Canadian Studies in Slovakia, there was no readily available community of scholars and teachers with an expertise in the field. Although a small circle of Canadianists gradually formed thanks to Canada's cultural diplomacy and generous donations, Canadian Studies remains a marginal academic discipline in Slovakia; its existence is dependent on a handful of self-motivated scholars who keep it alive despite Canada's recent decision to stop funding the study of Canada abroad.

This article aims to trace the development of Canadian Studies in Slovakia. It identifies the early pioneers in the study of Canada and milestones in the institutionalization of the discipline. In addition, it examines the current community of Slovak Canadianists and seeks to answer several questions: Who are the scholars engaged in Canadian Studies? What are their motivations? What activities do they undertake? What role did the support of the Canadian government (in particular, the Understanding Canada program) play in their motivations and activities? And finally, how has the termination of that support affected the community of Slovak Canadianists?

## Beginnings: Visitors and pioneers

Despite what we said about the historically conditioned lack of interest in the study of Canada in the introduction to this article, Canadian Studies in Slovakia did not arise in a void. Just like any field of inquiry, Canadian Studies had its pioneers: people who published the first articles and books and taught the first courses about Canada.

The most numerous among them is a group of chosen or privileged individuals who had the opportunity to travel to Canada despite the severe travel restrictions that were in place in Communist Czechoslovakia and who recorded their impressions, experiences, and observations and explained Canada's particularities to their compatriots. They did so mainly by means of travelogues in the popular press. Several dozen articles of this kind were published by the 1990s. The majority appeared in the 1960s, a decade characterized by a socio-political "thaw" that came with the denouncement of Stalin's personality cult. In fact, 1967, the year of the Montreal Expo, saw an avalanche of travel reports in major newspapers and magazines. With the onset of "normalization," which relied on "reluctant terror" to fulfil the Soviet Union's policy objectives and prevent a return to Dubček's reformism, this number dropped to almost zero (the only exception being a few reports connected with the Summer Olympic Games in Montreal in 1976). A certain revival in travelers' interest in Canada can be seen in the 1980s, especially in the second half of the decade, due to the mood of perestroika in the Soviet Union and the accompanying warming of diplomatic relations between Canada and the Soviet Union, and thus also Czechoslovakia.

Most of the published travelogues commented on Canada's territorial size and the abundance of forests, waters, and mineral resources. Although Voltaire once sneered at Canada being just "a few acres of snow" without any economic value or strategic importance to France, Slovak travelers to Canada were aware of the riches which lie hidden in the country's natural wealth and which are "a magnet for industry" (Fridner 36). No wonder then that many writers spoke of Canada as "one of the most developed countries industrially" (Vondrák 16) and extolled the high standard of living which went hand in hand with its economic prosperity. Slovak travelers seemed to be enthusiastic about Canadian highways and roads, trains, well-equipped households, and readily available services. Most of them probably would have liked to add, "unlike at home," but only one dared say that out loud. Anton Hykisch, the author of a series of travel reports published in *Kultúrny život* in 1967 under the title "Kanada nie je 'kanada'" [Canada is not "a joke"], which he later extended and published in an eponymous book, had nothing but praise for things Canadian. It is no wonder that his open and a rather uncritical praise of Western capitalism and his criticism of the functioning of society under the Communist regime were a thorn in the side of the normalization authorities.

Not all travelers to Canada displayed such enthusiasm as Hykisch. In Ladislav Mikulaj's opinion, the country "lacks a cultural tradition" (3), which he attributed to how it came into existence. Somewhat simplistically, he claimed that Canada was settled by the European working class, in which "ruthless adventurers were more common than enlightened humanists—intellectuals. These immigrants invested

hard work to build their new homeland," fighting Canada's harsh natural environment (Mikulaj 3). Mikulaj presented Canada as a country that for centuries was too busy fighting the elements and trying to "survive" to be able to afford such a "luxury" as producing culture. Apart from time, immigrants also lacked an inner motivation because the number of books a person had read or knowledge of Latin was irrelevant in a country ruled by the almighty dollar (Mikulaj 3).

Some Slovak travelers portrayed Canada as a country divided by internal conflicts. Laco Gross and Vladimír Ščasňár addressed disputes between French and English Canadians. Gross even mentioned examples of open animosity between these groups: "A French Canadian living in Montreal often won't serve an English Canadian, and if he does, at the very least he won't speak to him" (4). Other travelers commented on the separatist efforts of the province of Quebec, which have threatened the territorial unity of Canada since the 1960s (Litvajová, Fridner) but also noted that its territorial integrity was also constantly threatened by the interests of other provincial governments fighting for more territorial autonomy. Fridner ascribed this to the great distances between the provinces and their dramatically different character as well as the great sense of regionalism in the individual provinces.

In addition, Canada was viewed as being divided both socially and economically. Slovak travelers, coming from a country where the right to work was taken for granted and equality was the creed of the day, responded sensitively to high unemployment (eight per cent) and gaps between the rich and the poor in Canada. Ščasňár wrote that in contradistinction to a narrow group of multimillionaires, there was a rising number of Canadians who lived below subsistence level, with indigent population barely scraping along (15; see also Vondrák). Alica Malá was also shocked by the poverty in the back streets of Toronto where "dirty and ragged children used to play, allegedly children of Italians who did not live a good life there" (3). Unaccustomed to begging and homelessness, which was considered a criminal offence in Czechoslovakia (vagrancy) and was punishable by a three-year prison sentence, she mentioned being approached by young men asking her for 25 cents for a plate of soup on a few occasions (Malá 3).

Some Slovak travelers, especially those who had a chance to stay in Canada for a longer time and meet with their compatriots, also commented on the country's dividedness along ethnic lines. Neil Bissoondath attributed this ghettoization of Canadian society to the policy of multiculturalism, which, in his opinion, did not encourage newcomers to see themselves as part of the Canadian nation. However, some travelers said that it was also due to a certain standoffishness in the Canadian character. Laco Gross writes, "Social life in Canada is very different from ours. Unusual and a bit cold from our point of view. Families do not visit each other as is the custom at home. They live in seclusion" (4). Feeling lonely, immigrants would seek refuge in the company of their countrymen.

Although Canada was on the same side of the frontline at the beginning of the Cold War as the United States, it was not viewed as the arch-enemy of the Eastern Bloc. One of the reasons for this was that even though the relationship of the United States and Canada had been compared to "that of siblings" (Allan xi), one of the siblings had been figured as the victimizer of the other. Canada was regarded as just another victim of the United States' imperialist policy. A 1963 article "Krajina javorového listu" [The land of the maple leaf], which was published in the

popular monthly *Príroda a spoločnosť* [Nature and Society], said that due to Canada's geographic position between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Pentagon looked at the country as "a strategic glacis that must be given a military use" (J.S. 28). Although Canada was putting effort into disarmament, the United States was trying to force nuclear warheads on its bombers and surveillance air force in Europe (J.S. 28). The picture that this article painted of Canada was in compliance with the bleak image that dominated the public discourse in Canada in the 1960s. The article portrayed it as "a vassal state, a perpetual colony, an imaginary nation or non-nation" (Rutherford 279). Its author, only known to us by the initials J.S., viewed Canada as divided between two masters: "Canada must listen at the same time to its former partner – England – and to its neighbor to the south, that is more and more confident in playing its master," but to its credit, the Canadian government was hesitant about turning Canada into no more than "an economic and political appendage of the United States" (J.S. 29). Twenty years later, Vladimír Ščasnár seemed to be more critical of Canada's federal government. In his opinion, it was going against the will of its people in making concessions to the US administration and giving its consent to testing of cruise missiles in the province of Alberta. However, Josef Hotmar, who accompanied the Czechoslovak Prime Minister Lubomír Štrougal on his visit to Canada, emphasized that "despite many political, military, and especially economic ties with the United States," Canada had its own independent foreign policy which found expression in its "interest in dialogue and cooperation with the socialist countries" (11).

Although some travelers and writers provided Slovak readers with interpretations of Canada during the Communist years, Slovak scholars paid very little serious attention to the country. The only exception was Elena Jakešová, a historian from the Slovak Academy of Sciences, who published several scholarly articles and a book about Slovak emigration to Canada *Vystahovalectvo Slovákov do Kanady* (1981), which maps emigration from the 1870s to 1938 and focuses both on its causes and consequences. Jakešová also co-authored *Kanada* (1986), which was the first comprehensive survey of Canada's geography, climate, fauna and flora, history, population, ethnic diversity, languages, regions, culture, and economy.

## Institutionalization

As we have suggested in the introduction and demonstrated in the previous section, in the early 1990s the state of Canadian Studies in Slovakia was underdeveloped and few scholars did any research on Canada. Some Canadian authors were included in the curriculum of the Commonwealth Literature course at Comenius University in Bratislava, but other than that academic institutions did not offer a single course on Canada.

It was in this situation that the Canadian government, as part of its active engagement in "public diplomacy" (Cowan and Cull), approached several universities in Central Europe to help introduce programs in Canadian Studies. In Slovakia, the choice fell on Comenius University in Bratislava, which was the biggest institution of higher education and had the longest tradition as well as necessary infrastructure. The university received financial support from the Canadian government to launch

Canadian Studies in the fall of 1993. As Paul Frazer, the Canadian Ambassador to the Czech Republic and Slovakia, emphasized during his visit in Bratislava that Slovakia might find some of Canada's experience with the building of a competitive, peaceful multi-ethnic state useful in its own efforts to strengthen its democratic institutions and introduce economic reforms ("Kanadské štúdiá..." 1). An elective course on Canada offered to all students at the university was officially opened on October 14, 1993, and it became an immediate success. It was the most popular non-specialty course in the 1993/94 academic year ("Správa o stave..." 2).

Comenius University had more ambitious plans with regard to Canadian Studies, though. In 1994, it opened the Canadian Studies Center with the aim of disseminating information and knowledge about Canada. University lecturers and Canadian instructors teaching at the university contributed to its activities. It was headed by Dr. Alojz Keníž, a lecturer at the Department of British and American Studies and the department's head. A personality of seminal importance was Stephen Lee, a lecturer from the Department of Political Studies, who liaised with the Canadian government. In April 1995, he helped organize the first meeting between representatives of the European Network for Canadian Studies on the one part and current and aspiring Canadianists from the countries of the former Soviet bloc in Central Europe on the other; this event involved participants from fourteen European countries and sowed the seeds of what was to become the Central European Association for Canadian Studies. According to Steve Lee, participants from the post-communist countries decided that Comenius University would become the regional center for the further development of Canadian Studies in Europe. Its Canadian Studies Center was to receive all European and international scholarly journals on Canada and host guest lecturers from neighboring countries (Lee 6). The course which was provided by the center was to undergo major restructuring and become more multidisciplinary. In the 1995/96 academic year, students were supposed to study Canada's geography, history, politics, journalism, languages, and literature. However, very few of these ambitious plans came to fruition.

Although the Canadian Studies Center received generous financial support to acquire a vast library of titles of Canadian literature, history, politics, economy, ethnic studies, law, feminist studies, and so on, due to some staffing problems and the loss of the Center's original off-campus premises in 1996, its activities were virtually discontinued for the next two years. They did not resume until new office space was provided in the university's main building in Šafárikovo Square in November 1998. The Center was ceremoniously reopened during the visit of Hedy Fry, Canada's Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Minister for the Status of Women. Dr. Mária Huttová, a lecturer from the Department of British and American Studies, was put in charge. Under her baton, the Center prospered. It was fully integrated into the university's structure, receiving financial assistance from both the Canadian Embassy in Prague and the university rector's office. In the following academic year, it started courses in Canadian literature which were taught by Huttová and Marián Gazdík, several students undertook thesis projects in Canadian Studies, and preparations were made for a new course on Multicultural Relations in Canada. The Center also helped organize cultural events, such as a visit of French Canadian writers Denise Brassard and Serge Patrice Thibodeau in April 1999 and a concert by the Canadian guitar player and composer Tim Brady

in December 1999. It also actively worked to disseminate Canadian literature. It helped promote the first Slovak anthology of Canadian short stories, *Tichá hudba*, translated by Keníž and Gazdík, Gazdík translated Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, and Huttová penned an afterword to the novel. Both Gazdík and Huttová also contributed to a Canadian issue of *Revue svetovej literatúry*, a Slovak journal devoted to literature in translation.

Huttová was also involved in the inception of the Central European Association for Canadian Studies (CEACS), which was seminal in bringing together Canadianists from the region and establishing their mutual cooperation. She became a member of the Central European Steering Committee for Canadian Studies, which provided guidance to Canadianists in the region and worked to establish a Canadian Studies association which would be admitted to the International Council for Canadian Studies (ICCS). It was eventually founded in the summer of 2003 and held its first General Assembly in May 2004 in Krakow.

Like in most countries, the first Canadianists in Slovakia were, unsurprisingly, language teaching specialists (seven out of eight founding members of the CEACS Slovak Chapter). Thanks to their command of English and/or French, they could readily access Canadian academic programs and literature. In addition, they taught or studied at departments where area studies had always been a natural part of the curricula, so they faced relatively few obstacles in their effort to introduce new courses on Canada.

Again unsurprisingly, five of the eight founding members of the CEACS Slovak Chapter came from Comenius University in Bratislava. Huttová was successful in attracting and engaging her colleagues and students in Canadian Studies. The Canadian Studies Center team expanded to include Mária Rupprechtová, an interpreting instructor and a naturalized Canadian, who started teaching courses on Canadian culture. In 2008, the team was joined by Lucia Otrisalová (now Grauzľová), who defended the first Slovak PhD thesis on a Canadian topic and who soon introduced courses on Canadian society, culture, history, and literature, including a course on Black Canadian literature and culture, and launched some regular student-focused events and activities, such as Canadian Movie Nights.

Due to the highest concentration of Canadian Studies scholars, Comenius University in Bratislava remains the leading Canadian Studies center in Slovakia. Over the years, it has launched more than a dozen Canadian content courses, produced dozens of theses on Canadian topics, hosted a number of Canadian authors and scholars, and organized various academic events, such as a couple of annual meetings of Czech and Slovak Canadianists, the sixth Triennial CEACS conference in 2012, and the Student Conference on the Americas in 2012, 2013, and 2014. Since all the current instructors of the Canadian Studies Center teach at the Department of British and American Studies, the department's triennial conferences always incorporate a Canadian content section. The scholars closely cooperate with other members of the association and are often invited to give talks at universities in Slovakia and the Czech Republic as well as occasionally in Canada. In October 2013, Otrisalová was invited to present a paper at the Understanding Canada Conference at McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada.

Unlike the Canadianists at Comenius University in Bratislava, the Canadianists at academic institutions outside the capital city work more or less in isolation,

having no centers to back them up. They mostly teach individual courses related to their research interests, give papers at conferences, cooperate on CEACS research projects, and are often active in outreach activities.

## Slovak Canadianists today

The community of Slovak Canadianists has always been small. Even in the years of the Understanding Canada program, which provided a set of grants designed to sponsor international scholars conducting research in the field of Canadian Studies, the number of academics involved in Canadian studies has hardly ever exceeded ten. Based on the results of a 2011 survey performed for the International Council for Canadian Studies, it was expected that the termination of the program would lead to a decline in Canadian Studies abroad because the program provided vital incentives to encourage foreign scholars to do research and teach courses about Canada, and in many countries its effects were indeed serious, if not devastating; however, it had little immediate impact on the Slovak community. The CEACS Slovak Chapter might have lost a member or two as a direct consequence of the Canadian federal government's suspension of its financial support, but the core membership has remained remarkably stable.

One of the reasons for this is that according to a survey that we conducted among Slovak Canadianists, no scholars became involved in Canadian Studies with the primary aim of benefitting from the funding opportunities available through the Understanding Canada program. In fact, about 20 per cent of them never received a grant from the scheme. Although some of them admit having found the generous support from the Canadian federal government "interesting," most were brought to Canadian Studies either by their colleagues and instructors or were motivated by personal reasons (e.g., having lived in Canada or having ancestors who emigrated to Canada).

Personal factors also dominate among the reasons why quite a few Slovak scholars have remained engaged in Canadian Studies even after the Understanding Canada program was terminated. All of them seem to be intrinsically motivated by their deep interest and passion for Canada and things Canadian, and most of them also appreciate close personal and professional relationships within the national and international community of Canadianists.

The majority of Slovak Canadianists are thus passionate and highly self-driven individuals who continue to pursue their work on Canada with nearly zero external support. Although the institutions with which they are affiliated offer full or partial reimbursements for the expenses incurred in connection with things like conference participation (especially if the conference is held in an affordable destination and is likely to result in a publication), none of them have received grants from their institutions to travel to and do research directly in Canada. This is not unusual in the Slovak context. Slovak universities do not have the funds to provide their employees with this kind of support, and they expect them to find the support elsewhere. On the other hand, none of the Slovak Canadianists have faced obstacles when introducing new courses on Canada or incorporating Canadian content into existing courses at their institutions. Although the institutions themselves seldom take the

initiative in fostering the development of Canadian Studies, regarding such courses as "extras," they give their employees the freedom to use their expertise in teaching, especially if their resources are not required elsewhere. All Slovak Canadianists are experts at least in two fields. They are often hired as specialists in British, American, or French Studies or Literatures, and they do Canadian Studies as a side field. The reason is, as Don Sparling explains, that expertise in the field of Canadian Studies is never sought "when university positions are advertised" because Canadian Studies courses are not core subjects (259). In practical terms, this means that the instructors teach Canadian Studies only if they can fit it in their workload or if they volunteer to teach extra classes without compensation.

As can be seen, the existence of Canadian Studies in Slovakia is dependent on the enthusiasm of a handful of individuals who, given the circumstances, do excellent jobs. One third of the respondents have published ten to twenty articles in the field, and one respondent reported having published over twenty papers with Canadian content. Several book-length publications have been produced: Katarína Labudová's book-length chapter on Canadian postmodern literature in *Postmodernism in Literatures of the English-Speaking Countries* by Jaroslav Kušnír, Katarína Labudová, and Patrícia Rojtášová (2007); Zuzana Malinovská's *Cartographie du roman québécois contemporain* (2010); Oľga Slobodníková's *Regionálna geografia Kanady* [The regional geography of Canada] (2012, 2014); and Jana Javorčíková's textbook in North American Studies, which was published in October 2019, are all worthy of mention.

The scope of the research interests of Slovak Canadianists is wide, but literature seems to be predominant. All Canadianists at Comenius University in Bratislava are literary scholars by training: Mária Huttová specializes in the Canadian novel and drama, Marián Gazdík in the Canadian short story, Lucia Grauzľová in Black Canadian literature and history and the reception of Canadian literature in Slovakia (although she also teaches courses on Canadian history, society, and culture), and Jana Truhlářová deals with French Canadian and Quebecois literature. Katarína Labudová from the Catholic University in Ružomberok is a Slovak expert on Margaret Atwood, who she has published widely on. Besides Canadian literature and its reception, Jana Javorčíková from Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica has also done research into some cultural phenomena and Slovak emigration to Canada. Jaroslav Mazurek, who is currently employed at the University of Žilina, is interested in Canadian history and politics, and Marica Mazureková, who works for the same institution, studies Canada's tourism and competitiveness. French Canadian and Quebecois literature are researched by Zuzana Malinovská and Ján Dregubiak at the University of Prešov.

There are currently at least six academic institutions in Slovakia that offer courses with Canadian content, which to a large extent is related to the instructors' research interests. Albeit not regularly, Comenius University in Bratislava, whose Canadian Studies Center is closely associated with the Department of British and American Studies at the Faculty of Arts, offers a relatively rich selection of courses: Introduction to Canadian Literature, Modern Canadian Drama, the 20th Century Canadian Short Story, Canadian History and Culture, Contemporary Canadian Society and Culture, Black Canadian Literature and Culture. Some Canadian content is also part of a few courses at the Department of Romance Studies. A course in Canadian Studies is also provided at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. Besides basic content

on Canada, according to Michael Byram, it also offers some exposure to Canadian literature. Canadian postmodern literature and Margaret Atwood are taught at the Catholic University in Ružomberok. Courses on Quebecois culture and literature are an integral part of the curriculum at the Institute of Romance Studies at the University of Prešov. Some courses on economy, tourism, and cultural heritage at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Žilina incorporate Canadian content. Canadian courses are also offered by the Center for North American Studies at the University of Economics in Bratislava.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of our survey, it may seem that Canadian Studies in Slovakia is far from doomed. Only one respondent in our survey reported that they dealt with Canada less than before due to the termination of the Understanding Canada program. The CEACS Slovak Chapter has nine academics and two students, and there are others who produce work on Canada although they are not members of the association.

However, this does not mean the Canadian government's decision to end its financial support for Canadian Studies abroad has had no impact at all on the Slovak community of Canadianists. It certainly has; for instance, there has been a substantial decline in travel to Canada for research. Due to limited access to quality research materials, some Slovak Canadianists have reoriented their research to topics that can be studied from home. As a result, there has been an increase in scholarship, for example, on the reception of Canadian literature in Slovakia. Furthermore, meetings have become scarcer. While Canadianists used to meet in person several times when working on research projects, now they usually have only one meeting to agree on the essentials and then work separately. This may affect negatively the execution of the work and the scholars' motivation to complete it. However, the most important impact, which is not yet clearly visible, is the lack of generational renewal of the community.

It can be expected that without the financial assistance that made research trips to Canada or designing new courses with Canadian content possible, it will be increasingly difficult to attract young scholars to Canadian Studies. As Stephen Brooks writes in a publication on the promotion of Canadian Studies abroad, "These were financial incentives that, in some cases, kindled a researcher's or teacher's initial interest in Canada or that enabled him or her to build on existing work" (243). With these gone, "the intergenerational transfer of interest and knowledge" that Brooks mentions is unlikely, and we may see the few Canadian Studies courses that are currently taught at Slovak universities vanish along with the retirement of the instructors.

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