

CRBC Projects (2012-2015)

This presentation of CRBC projects and activities was written for the AERES experts who visited the University of Western Brittany on November 10, 2010.

Between 2012 and 2015, CRBC projects will prolong ongoing activities dealing with the issues surrounding the “Periphery” and the “dynamics of identity” within the context of the general scientific policies adopted by the University of Western Brittany. These approaches will also be compatible with the axes of research defined by the MSH Brittany beginning, in particular, with the “Armorican and Atlantic Worlds” and, secondly, the axis of “Governance”. Although the concept of cultural “identities” will be studied, the focus will also be on territorial and geographic dimensions as well as social and sociological approaches to these subjects and related questions.

Discursive strategies

The study of discourse is a discipline which falls not only within the domain of linguistics but also the fields of Celtic and literary studies, ethnology and all periods of historical studies.

The *Bretagne linguistique* seminars will be continued (at a rate of 3 per year) exploring languages and language varieties as well as the treatment of literary subjects and questions concerning the contexts and the social stakes surrounding the use of oral and/or written language. These subjects can lead to regular collaboration with partners at the national and international levels as well as publications in the *Bretagne linguistique*.

These activities are directly related to study projects and bilingual publications of hitherto unedited autobiographical or biographical Breton texts (Nelly Blanchard, 20th century; Ronan Calvez, 18th-19th centuries). These annotated publications highlight themes such as the ebb and flow of cultural and linguistic forces, but also questions relating to creativity (cf. “The Periphery”, “Creative Space”). They are also linked to the continuation of sociolinguistic research (Ronan Calvez, Gary German) or contemporary Breton literature (Nelly Blanchard, Mannaig Thomas). Translation studies also fit within this perspective (GREI, Jean-Yves Le Disez).

Similarly, the “Wales-Brittany” programme will be renewed and expanded: “When paths cross and separate”, initiated within the framework of the EGIDE partnership (Daniel Le Bris, Anne Bryce-Hellegouarc’h, Gary German), will lead to seminars on both sides of the Channel (cf. “Political Mediation”, “The Periphery”, “Creative Space”). The intention here is to explore divergent and convergent evolutionary tendencies regarding language and literature in widely diverse political and sociocultural contexts.

The historical dimension of these interrogations on language, discourse, and literature also concern the *Histoires des Bretagnes* research group and seminars (Hélène Bouget, Jean-Christophe Cassard, Magali Coumert, Hélène Tétrel). Inaugurated in 2008 and structured around three annual seminars, the first publication came out in 2010 and will continue in 2011 and will include an international conference dedicated to Geoffrey of Monmouth and Europe (continued throughout 2011, 2012 and 2013). This event marks the creation of a solid, long-lasting research group on the mediaeval literatures and their diffusions throughout Europe. The group already includes British, German and Scandinavian researchers. Starting with medieval texts on the origins of Brittany and Wales (“Founding Myths”; cf. “Political Mediation”, “Construction of Identities and Heritage”), this research axis also explores

contacts and exchanges as well as the crystallization of identity, or affirmations of otherness (cf. “Domination and Otherness”). Furthermore, the University of Western Brittany will be putting a digitalized database of Breton sigillography online (which will be eventually extended to other regions). This tool will allow researchers to have alternative viewpoints concerning an object, a source or an element of discourse belonging to the medieval period (Jean-Christophe Cassard).

The anthropological dimension will be continued thanks to a programme exploring the place of Brittany in ethnological research (cf. “Literary Contacts”). To this end, a colloquium will be held on the musical heritage of Brittany (Jean-François Simon).

This domain will also be explored in conjunction with the work on oral heritage currently undertaken by the ANR BEROSE programme, which will also be extended (Fañch Postic; cf. “Creative Dynamics”, “The Centre and the Fringe”).

The colloquium on René-Yves Creston will complete a series of colloquia dealing with material and immaterial heritage that will continue an ongoing exchange with Canadian Universities: Montreal, Québec, Nova Scotia (Jean-François Simon; cf. “Construction of Material and Immaterial Heritage”).

These thoughts on heritage studies also partially cover Nicolas Meynen’s work and deal with the second research axis of our programme which focuses on “Contacts and Exchanges” (“Political and Military Aspects” and “Technical aspects”).

Contacts and exchanges

The second axis of research concerns two major fields: “mobility” and “maritime realities”. The first field deals with human mobility and migration confronting Brittany and other geographical spaces.

A research project is in the process of being created with the UNAM and Mexico around the theme of “Migration, Acculturation and Syncretism” (Elsa Carrillo-Blouin).

On a narrower scale, the aim of geolinguistic research is to determine local boundaries of dialectal and cultural territories (Daniel Le Bris, Gary German; cf. “Material, Human and Linguistic Mobility”).

The theme of mobility is also pertinent to the circulation and evolution of flora. In line with a colloquium on the “heath” which took place in 2008, another colloquium, to be co-organized jointly with the National Botanic Conservatory of Brest, will concern the invasions and the rooting of plants and their repercussions (Philippe Jarnoux; cf. “Material, Human and Linguistic Mobility”).

The circulation of ideas reinforces cultural concepts of identity; recent changes in Catholicism in Brittany can also be partially understood in this context of contacts (Yvon Tranvouez, “Mobility and Social and Cultural Transformation”) and the CRBC will also explore similar questions concerning the First World War (cf. “Mobility and Social and Cultural Transformation”).

In partnership with the *Musée départemental breton de Quimper*, the relations between Brittany and the English-speaking world are explored in a series of colloquia and expositions. The first of a series of international conferences focus on Cornwall and will be held in 2012 (Jean-Yves Le Disez; cf. “Mobility and Social and Cultural Transformation”).

Maritime studies are one of the pillars of the University of Western Brittany’s scientific policy. The CRBC will participate in extending its participation with the GIS National Maritime History and developing a number of projects. In the context of the extension of the current ANR Navigocorpus (of which the CRBC is a partner; Pierre Pourchasse), the laboratory is participating in the programme on the “Sund accounts” (cf. “Commerical and Economic Aspects”) and is considering joining the Mercator network which

links universities working on history and linguistic minorities (Friesland, Catalogna, Wales, Sweden, Hungary). Two substantial collective publication projects will be carried out in the following quadrennial period (2015-2019?). The first investigates maritime Brittany during the 17th century (in collaboration with researchers from Rennes and Paris) and second deals with an unedited manuscript on 18th century shipbuilding techniques (in collaboration with ISHS and PAHST in the University of Western Brittany, the François-Viète Centre and the CRHIA of Nantes and the BNF in Paris; Philippe Jarnoux; cf. “Political and Military Aspects” and “Technical Aspects”). This programme will be extended thanks to the publication of digitalized of a corpus of texts.

In addition, the CRBC will participate in a research programme on the navy, arsenals, and financial and maritime power from the 17th to the 19th centuries. This programme was initiated by the Universities of Swansea and Pampelune (Spain) so as to shed light on the attitudes of the three Atlantic powers regarding their maritime policies (Pierre Pourchasse). A colloquium on maritime realities during the revolutionary period is also envisaged (Anne de Mathan).

Domination and Otherness

The question of naval power leads directly to the third section of the CRBC, “Confrontation and Domination”. This question will be explored in different ways through the Breton language and its literature. These will be treated in the *Bretagne Linguistique* seminars that were mentioned above but also in a colloquium on the perceptions, representations and images of the people in Breton-language literature. This question is also pertinent to sociolinguistics (Ronan Calvez; cf. “Active Accommodation” and “Project”).

We encounter this question of complex accommodations not only in research on politics but also in social and cultural studies. The study on the Chamber of Economic Affairs of Brittany, which was begun during the preceding quadrennial period, will be extended and finished (Philippe Jarnoux; cf. “Active Accommodation”), whereas another collective study on the Provincial States of France before the French Revolution should begin around 2011-2012 (in collaboration with the Universities of Lille, Dijon, Montpellier, Pau...); Anne de Mathan’s research on the Girondins and “federalism” during the revolutionary decade also shed light on the complex modalities regarding the centre/periphery and on the internal dissensions of the periphery (cf. “Dissensions and Division”). The programme entitled “Body, Gestures and Clothing in the Ancient World: a Historical and Anthropological Reading”, co-directed by Valérie Huet (Professor of Ancient History) in conjunction with the UMR 8210 ANHIMA, CNRS, EPHE, Paris 1, Paris 7) also falls within this category. It will permit the thorough exploration of everything dealing with the human body in the ancient world: artifices and finery unveiling an individual’s character, identity, gender, status and group identity. Within the context of the CRBC, it is the question surrounding the rapport with the “other”, with the “savage”, that will be addressed; on one hand, through the themes of accommodation, adaptation and, on the other hand, singularity and resistance. In this third section, we can reintroduce questions evoked above concerning migration and acculturation or the cases of domination to which they are sometimes bound.

Organized according to the three axes proposed by the CRBC, a number of future undertakings will reinforce this tripartite structure thus attesting to the coherence of the overall project. Thus, a colloquium on the Vikings in Brittany, planned for 2013, will simultaneously concern the observation of a form of domination, an ensemble of exchanges and population movements and an analysis of the discourse concerning the Viking presence in Western Europe (Jean-Christophe Cassard). Another international colloquium entitled

“Languages, Schools and Society from the Middle Ages to the present”, will also encompass the three axes (Jean-Luc Le Cam).

The transformations which Brittany has undergone since the Second World War (Christian Bougeard) will be broached in the context of a large international colloquium. This is perhaps the best example of the complex interweaving of the three axes. It will deal with economic realities (agriculture, industrialization), social changes (urbanization), religion (the spectacular decline of Catholicism), politics (the movement of Brittany to the political left since the 1980s) and the linguistic situation (the abandoning of the Breton language) and questions concerning the views on these changes. This colloquium thus reflects the multidimensional interests and themes uniting the CRBC, all the more so if one compares Brittany with other nations or regions which have been subjected to similar changes such as Venetia, Québec or Ireland.

The intention here is that a number of the projects evoked above under the form of colloquia will lead to more in-depth research programmes similar to Égide, PEPS, Interreg, ANR or PCRD) for which CRBC researchers, in collaboration with outside research groups with whom they regularly collaborate, will present dossiers. The very nature of the calendar and the bids for the period extending from 2012-2015, which are unknown, obviously implies that not all of these projects can or will be developed in the framework of this report. Nevertheless, our ambition is to extend the actions already undertaken in this direction and, in this way, seize the opportunities which will present themselves to the extent that they encompass our areas of competence.