



Brief on Bill 64



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SUMMARY

The creation of the Musée national sur l'histoire du Québec announced by Québec Premier François Legault and the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, Mathieu Lacombe, represents a unique opportunity to pay tribute to Quebec's rich history. However, to fully respect the diversity of this history, it is crucial that the bill be amended to include the essential contributions of First Nations to the history of the territory currently known as Quebec (Kepek).¹

The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL), the First Nations Education Council (FNEC) and Institut Tshakapesh welcome the interest in establishing a new museum institution. As First Nations organizations, we believe that this type of institution, particularly when it is aimed at education, is fundamental to the development and transmission of knowledge, and can be a prelude to recognition and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. What's more, we believe that the museum is an invaluable pedagogical tool for the socialization² of society's youngest members; it's an important educational vehicle for Kepek.

¹ "Kepek is the Wolastoqiyik name for **Quebec City**. Situated at the confluence of the St. Charles and St. Lawrence rivers, Quebec City is a natural fortress that dominates this immense expanse of water, which is narrow upstream and widens downstream. The linguistic origins of the name Québec are uncertain, although its autochthony is accepted." (Translation of "Kepek est le nom que les Wolastoqiyik utilisent pour désigner la ville de Québec. Plantée au confluent de la rivière Saint-Charles et du fleuve Saint-Laurent, la ville de Québec, havre, promontoire, constitue une forteresse naturelle qui domine cette immense étendue d'eau qui, à sa hauteur, est étroite en amont pour s'élargir en aval. Les origines linguistiques du nom Québec sont incertaines, bien que son autochtonie soit admise." In Francis, D. A. and Leavitt, R. M. *Peskotomuhkati Wolastoqewi Latuwewakon / A Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Dictionary*. Goose Lane Editions. Fredericton, (2008): 1198 (Gouvernement du Québec. Commission de toponymie, https://toponymie.gouv.qc.ca/ct/ToposWeb/Fiche.aspx?no_seq=451245 Québec.)

"The name Quebec was inspired by an Algonquian word meaning 'where the river narrows.'" In Couture, C. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Ed. May 13, 2008. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/quebec-city>

² "According to Durkheim, socialization is a process by which young people learn shared values and discover the pleasure of saying 'we.'" Translation of "Selon Durkheim, la socialisation est un processus par lequel les jeunes apprennent les valeurs partagées et découvrent le plaisir de dire 'nous'". In Rayou, P. "Socialisation et éducation." In Patrick Rayou, Ed., *Sociologie de l'éducation*, (Paris cedex 14: Presses Universitaires de France, 2015): 5-32, "...work in the sociology of culture and education initiated by Pierre Bourdieu and his colleagues to emphasize that socialization to the arts during childhood has a central influence on the chances of success in the educational system." Translation of "... des travaux en sociologie de la culture et de l'éducation initiés par Pierre Bourdieu et ses collègues afin de souligner que la socialisation aux arts durant l'enfance a une influence centrale sur les chances de réussite dans le système éducatif." In Christin, A. "Le rôle de la socialisation artistique durant l'enfance : Genre et pratiques culturelles légitimes aux États-Unis." *Réseaux*, (2011): 168-169, 59-86. <https://doi.org/10.3917/res.168.0059>

"The school and the museum are two institutions of knowledge and education [...] Both contribute to the education, socialization and integration of individuals into society, in approaches that are specific to each

This brief proposes a number of recommendations to amend Bill 64 to better integrate perspectives from Indigenous people and respect their cultural autonomy. We propose eight recommendations, including:

- Create permanent exhibitions devoted to First Nations in the new museum;
- Review the educational content of the new museum in collaboration with First Nations;
- Consider the five directions (*orientations*) in the museum policy of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications, particularly Orientation 2, *Cap sur l'expertise*.

With the submission of this brief, we invite legislators to work with First Nations governance at Kepek to ensure fair and equitable representation of Kepek history in this major cultural project.

WHO WE ARE

Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador

The AFNQL was created in 1985. It is composed of the Assembly of Chiefs and an administrative office. The Assembly is composed of the Chiefs of the 43 First Nations communities located in Quebec and Labrador and represents a total of 10 nations: Abenaki, Anishinabeg (Algonquin), Atikamekw, Eeyou (Cree), Wendat (Huron-Wendat), Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet), Mi'gmaq, Innu, Kanien'kehá: ka (Mohawk) and Naskapi. The Assembly meets about four times a year to give mandates to its bureau and to the commissions it has set up. The Chiefs in Assembly elect, for a three-year term, an AFNQL Chief. The AFNQL is part of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

First Nations

Created in 1985, by and for the communities, the First Nations Education Council (FNEC) is one of the first First Nations organizations in Kepek. The FNEC brings together eight nations, including the Abenaki, Anishinabeg, Atikamekw, Innu, Kanien'kehá: ka, Wolastoqiyik, Mi'gmaq and Wendat, for a total of twenty-two communities.

The FNEC represents and advocates for the interests of this collective force by emphasizing the realities of each nation, while respecting its identity, culture, and traditions. Excellence, educational success, cultural pride, and control of education by and for First Nations are at the core of its mission.

and that are often complementary.” Translation of “L'école et le musée sont deux institutions de savoirs et d'éducation [...] Toutes deux contribuent à l'éducation, à la socialisation et à l'intégration des individus dans la société, dans des approches qui sont propres à chacune et qui sont souvent complémentaires.” In Bélanger, C. and A. Meunier. “Une approche muséologique de la visite scolaire au musée.” *Cahier du GREM*, No. 19, (2011). https://www.grem.uqam.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/19_Une-approche-muse%CC%81ologique-de-la-visite-scolaire-au-muse%CC%81e_2011_rect.pdf

With nearly 40 years of experience, the FNEC boasts a dedicated team of nearly 80 professionals to support member Nations' schools in managing education. The FNEC collaborates with various partners, including the Assembly of First Nations, the regional commissions and organizations of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador, the Education Branch of Indigenous Services Canada, the Department of Canadian Heritage, Quebec's Ministère de l'Éducation and the Ministère de l'Éducation supérieur, including the Provincial Round Table on the Educational Success of Indigenous Students and the Secrétariat aux relations Premières Nations et Inuit (SRPNI), as well as CEGEPs and universities.

On July 14, 2022, the FNEC, its twenty-two member communities and the honourable Patty Hajdu, minister of Indigenous Services Canada, signed the Regional Education Agreement. This agreement provides five years of funding to enable communities to implement educational strategies that promote the academic success of students from First Nations. The Agreement ensures that the educational needs of students from kindergarten to secondary school are fully funded based on the models, priorities, and realities of each community.

Institut Tshakapesh

In 1978, the Conseil atikamekw montagnais (CAM) established the Institut éducatif culturel atikamekw-montagnais, a non-profit organization dedicated entirely to the promotion and transmission of the Innu language and culture. The founders' bet was as follows: with the right strategy and the right tools, Innu communities would sustainably reclaim their identity... and consequently their future!

In 1990, when the Atikamekw Nation withdrew from CAM, the Institut continue its activities under its new name: Institut culturel éducatif montagnais. This name was used until 2010, an historic year for Indigenous peoples when the United Nations presented the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in New York.

In the wake of this historic declaration, the organization, already more than thirty years old adopted its current name: Institut Tshakapesh. In Innu culture, Tshakapesh is one of the mythical figures behind the creation of the world. Legend has it that Tshakapesh demonstrated that courage, hard work, and perseverance are the keys to overcoming difficulties.

Today, the Institute pursues its mission to serve member communities and the Innu Nation, working to safeguard and promote Innu-aitun (Innu culture) and Innu-aimun (Innu language); it provides support for cultural heritage conservation, language planning and encourages artistic expression. The Institut Tshakapesh plays a decisive role in education, particularly in the educational success and identity development of Innu youth.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Genesis of the museum project

On April 25, 2024, Premier François Legault, joined by the Minister of Culture and Communications, Mathieu Lacombe, announced the creation of the Musée national sur l’histoire du Québec, an estimated 92-million-dollar project.³ The announcement sparked controversy because of comments made by some members of the government and by one of the project’s consultants, Professor Éric Bédard, which “have painfully revived memories of *terra nullius*, the Doctrine of Discovery.”⁴

Indeed, Premier Legault, in his April 25, 2024, announcement, asserted that the history of the Kepek began with the arrival of the Europeans, insisting on the importance of “starting with Champlain.”⁵ This point of view, which emphasizes the French-speaking minority in North America, was criticized by the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL)⁶ for its lack of recognition of First Nations and their crucial and undeniable role in the history of Kepek. The Premier then reiterated his comments a few days later, adding in English, “and maybe a bit with Jacques Cartier.”⁷

³ Tanguay, S. “Un Musée national de l’histoire du Québec verra le jour au Séminaire de Québec” *Le Devoir*, 2024, April 25, 2024, [https://www.ledevoir.com/culture/811637/musee-national-histoire-quebec-replacera-quartier-general-defunts-espaces-bleus?](https://www.ledevoir.com/culture/811637/musee-national-histoire-quebec-replacera-quartier-general-defunts-espaces-bleus?utm_source=recirculation&utm_medium=hyperlien&utm_campaign=corps_texte)

⁴ AFNQL. “Musée national de l’histoire de Québec — The First Nations will not be erased from Quebec’s history” Press release, (2024). <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/musee-national-de-l-histoire-du-quebec-the-first-nations-cannot-be-erased-from-quebec-s-history-804726695.html>

Assembly of First Nations “Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery” 2018. <https://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/18-01-22-Dismantling-the-Doctrine-of-Discovery-EN.pdf>

⁵ Béland, G. “Des propos de François Legault indisposent les Premières Nations” *La Presse*, May 7, 2024, www.lapresse.ca/actualites/politique/2024-05-07/musee-national-de-l-histoire-du-quebec/des-propos-de-francois-legault-indisposent-les-premieres-nations.php

⁶ AFNQL. “Musée national de l’histoire de Québec — The First Nations will not be erased from Quebec’s history. Press release” (2024). <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/musee-national-de-l-histoire-du-quebec-the-first-nations-cannot-be-erased-from-quebec-s-history-804726695.html>

⁷ Béland, G. “Des propos de François Legault indisposent les Premières Nations” *La Presse*, May 7, 2024, www.lapresse.ca/actualites/politique/2024-05-07/musee-national-de-l-histoire-du-quebec/des-propos-de-francois-legault-indisposent-les-premieres-nations.php

The Minister of Culture and Communications then added that it is:

.... ... very respectful of the history of the First Nations themselves, we are different nations and we work nation to nation. They themselves tell us that they want this kind of approach. I think it's important to work with them, but that doesn't prevent us from having a museum about our nation, our Quebec nation. [...] It won't be a museum on the history of the occupation of the St. Lawrence Valley, but a museum on the history of our nation, the Quebec nation.⁸

Terra nullius and the idea of nationhood

The controversial comments⁹ made by Éric Bédard, professor at TÉLUQ's history department and consultant on the museum project, evoking the concept of "prehistory"¹⁰ to describe the history of Indigenous peoples, are problematic and reductive, as they recall a policy dating back to 1850 that fuelled discourses of exclusion of Indigenous peoples from Kepek. Historians, such as Girard and Brisson, have pointed out that these discourses have their roots in policies that justified discriminatory legislation against Indigenous peoples by portraying them as primitive beings.¹¹

His comments run counter to current academic research, as they are based on the widely rejected, postulate, that of the Doctrine of Discovery, or *terra nullius*,¹² which has served as the ideology behind colonization, forced expropriation, and historical violence against First Nations.

⁸ Translation of "... très respectueux de l'histoire des Premières Nations elles-mêmes, on est des nations différentes et on travaille de nation à nation. Eux-mêmes nous disent qu'ils veulent cette posture-là. Je pense que c'est important de travailler avec elles, mais ça ne nous empêche pas d'avoir un musée sur notre nation, notre nation québécoise. [...] Ce ne sera pas un musée sur l'histoire de l'occupation du territoire de la vallée du Saint-Laurent, mais un musée sur l'histoire de notre nation, la nation québécoise" from Béland, G. "Des propos de François Legault indisposent les Premières Nations" *La Presse*, May 7, 2024, www.lapresse.ca/actualites/politique/2024-05-07/musee-national-de-l-histoire-du-quebec/des-propos-de-francois-legault-indisposent-les-premieres-nations.php

⁹ Comments by Éric Bédard: "Quand commence l'histoire du Québec [...] c'est sûr que le peuple québécois partage le territoire avec des nations et il faudra raconter leur histoire et parler de ce contact [...] On dit que l'histoire commence à l'écriture, et avant l'histoire, c'est la préhistoire. Peut-être que les autochtones sont un peu la préhistoire du Québec." In Béland, G. "Un musée national d'histoire sur les cendres des Espaces bleus" *La Presse*, April 25, 2024, <https://www.lapresse.ca/arts/2024-04-25/quebec/un-musee-national-d-histoire-sur-les-cendres-des-espaces-bleus.php>

¹⁰ Béland, G. "Un musée national d'histoire sur les cendres des Espaces bleus" *La Presse*, April 25, 2024, <https://www.lapresse.ca/arts/2024-04-25/quebec/un-musee-national-d-histoire-sur-les-cendres-des-espaces-bleus.php>

¹¹ Boucher, N. Review of *Reconnaissance et exclusion des peuples autochtones au Kepek. Du Traité d'alliance de 1603 à nos jours*. By Camil Girard and Cark Brisson, Québec. *Études internationales*, 50:2, (2019). 311-313. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1071183ar>

¹² Borrows, J. "The Durability of Terra Nullius: Tsilhqot'in Nation v British Columbia" *UBC Law Review*, 48:3 (2015), commons.allard.ubc.ca/ubclawreview/vol48/iss3/2/

By taking up a 15th-century theory, Mr. Bédard is perpetuating a legal, moral, and political justification for the colonial dispossession of sovereign Indigenous nations denounced by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada and international law.¹³

Recently, Pope Francis himself underlined the “terrible effects of the assimilation policies and the pain experienced by indigenous peoples” and repudiated the doctrine of *terra nullius*, stating that it was no longer “part of the teaching of the Catholic Church,” all the while insisting that it is important to “ask for pardon.”¹⁴

Furthermore, in an April 26, 2024, interview with Radio-Canada’s *Tout un matin*, Mr. Bedard acknowledged the importance of telling stories about Indigenous Nations while making comments that suggest an approach that minimizes their historic role: “If we were to talk about the Indigenous peoples by saying that it’s a love story that begins with [Jacques] Cartier and continues with the peace of the braves [sic], the credibility of the story would be in question. It’s not a question of glossing over obvious facts.”¹⁵

Mr. Bédard’s comments add to a series of vague contradictions from various decision-makers regarding the project’s objectives. On the one hand, he asserts that the museum will not be “nationalistic,” but “national.”¹⁶ However, he considers that Quebec’s history begins with Champlain’s arrival and, a few days later, he added: “There are 11 Indigenous nations, and we’re open to working with them to find ways to promote their nations, but the idea is to show the history of the nation that was French Canadian and is now Québécois, which began with Champlain.”¹⁷ Professor Bédard, for his part, asserted that the history told will not be partisan: “It’s the story of a nation, with many things to be proud of, but also some dark chapters that we’re

¹³ See *Nation Tsilhqot’in Nation v British Columbia*. SCC 44, para. 69, (2014).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada *Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress, Calls to Action, Action No. 49*. (2012).

¹⁴ Press Office of the Holy See. *Dicasteries for Culture and Education and for Promoting Integral Human Development: Joint Statement on the “Doctrine of Discovery.”* (2023).

¹⁵ Translation of “Si on parlait des Autochtones en disant que c’est un roman d’amour qui commence avec [Jacques] Cartier et se poursuit avec la paix des braves [sic], c’est la crédibilité du récit qui serait en cause. Il ne s’agit pas de gommer des faits évidents” Comments by Éric Bédard, from the broadcast *Tout un matin* on Radio-Canada, April 26, 2024, <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/ohdio/premiere/emissions/tout-un-matin/segments/rattrapage/495291/eric-bedard-musee-gouvernement-legault>

¹⁶ Béland, G. Un musée national d’histoire sur les cendres des Espaces bleus. *La Presse*, April 25, 2024, <https://www.lapresse.ca/arts/2024-04-25/quebec/un-musee-national-d-histoire-sur-les-cendres-des-espaces-bleus.php>

¹⁷ Translation of “Il y a 11 nations autochtones, et puis on est ouverts à travailler avec eux autres pour aussi qu’il y ait des façons de faire connaître leur nation, mais l’idée c’est de montrer l’histoire de la nation qui était canadienne-française et qui est maintenant québécoise, qui a commencé avec Champlain” Béland, G. “Legault veut un musée pour « la nation qui était canadienne-française” *La Presse*, May 8, 2024, <https://www.lapresse.ca/actualites/2024-05-08/musee-national-d-histoire-du-quebec/legault-veut-un-musee-pour-la-nation-qui-etait-canadienne-francaise.php>

not going to sweep under the rug.”¹⁸ These statements betray a lack of clear direction as to the museum project’s central concept, suggesting inadequate impartiality and scientific objectivity in its conception and implementation.

Current research and museum policy at the Quebec’s ministry of culture and communications, especially in chapter 4 in the second policy direction, *Cap sur l’expertise*,¹⁹ underscore the importance of maintaining a distance between government decision-makers and museum institutions, so that the latter can deploy their expertise autonomously. Historian Martin Pâquet, professors of museology at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) Anik Meunier and Yves Bergeron²⁰ as well as members of the Assemblée nationale du Québec have expressed similar concerns.

The contribution of First Nations as stakeholders in museum activities

In light of this information, the lack of academic autonomy in the vision of this museum project risks perpetuating a fragmented and incomplete vision of the history of Kepek. The evolution of relations between the State and the museum sector shows that the State plays—and must play—a secondary role in cultural and educational directions.²¹

As stipulated in the *National Museums Act*, there is no ministerial authority concerning museum programming.²² Professor Jonathan Paquette notes that:

“... the museum policies of recent decades have seen the emergence of a more distant relationship, in which the State is positioning itself as a facilitator and manager of the conditions that will enable the sector to evolve and take responsibility for itself. The museum is gradually being framed by the State as a

¹⁸ Translation of “C’est l’histoire d’une nation, avec beaucoup de choses dont on doit être fiers, mais aussi des zones d’ombre qu’on ne va pas mettre sous le tapis.” Comments by Éric Bédard, from the broadcast *Tout un matin* à Radio-Canada. April 26, 2024. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/ohdio/premiere/emissions/tout-un-matin/segments/rattrapage/495291/eric-bedard-musee-gouvernement-legault>

¹⁹ Ministère de la Culture et des Communications. *Vivre autrement... la ligne du temps*. Politique muséale. Gouvernement du Québec. (2000).

²⁰ “For example, Professor Yves Bergeron explained: ‘A museum is a cultural institution, which must not be politically instrumentalized. If we want this to develop normally in the museum ecosystem, which is based on democracy and openness, this is for me the most fundamental thing.’” Translation of “Par exemple, le professeur Yves Bergeron explique : “Un musée est une institution culturelle, qui ne doit pas être instrumentalisée politiquement. Si on veut que ça se développe normalement dans l’écosystème des musées, qui repose sur la démocratie et l’ouverture, c’est pour moi la chose la plus fondamentale.” In Sirois, M.-A. “Rassembler ou polariser : telle est la question !” *La Presse*. May 27, 2024. <https://www.lapresse.ca/dialogue/chroniques/2024-05-27/musee-national-de-l-histoire-du-quebec/rassembler-ou-polariser-telle-est-la-question.php>

²¹ Paquette, J. (2019). “Les politiques muséales au Québec : trajectoire historique et politique d’un service public” *Politique et Sociétés*, 38:3, (2019): 129-146. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1064733ar>

²² *National Museums Act*, CQLR c. M-44.

sector to be managed. At least, this is what the objectives of the [Kepek]'s recent museum policies suggest (emphasis added).²³

Moreover, the museum policy of the Ministère de Culture et des Communications states that “Quebec’s museum institutions now have the instruments of their autonomy. It’s up to them to set their own priorities and establish their own action plans (emphasis added).²⁴

We believe that the museum must reflect a history of the Kepek that includes the invaluable and intrinsic contribution of the First Nations to the Quebec identity. Neglecting this reality would be a serious mistake, since, as curator Jacques Viens explains:

regardless of the angle from which they are examined, we can confirm without fear of error that relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are a complex mosaic of policies, legislative measures, and human relationships. Relations that, alas, have all too often been mishandled and that still translate today into a lack of understanding and a feeling of mutual distrust that is fertile ground for racism and systemic discrimination²⁵. (p. 95, Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress Final Report, 2019, https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_clients/Rapport/Final_report.pdf)

Furthermore, the bill does not mention the concept of the *land* for First Nations, and does not respect the principles of approach, consultation, co-development, and cultural safety, going back on the recommendations of the briefs for Bill 32, the Charter of the French Language and the conclusions of the Viens Report.²⁶

²³ Unofficial translation of “... les politiques muséales des dernières décennies voient émerger un rapport plus distant dans lequel l’État se construit comme un accompagnateur et comme un gestionnaire des conditions qui permettront au secteur d’évoluer et de se prendre en main. Le musée est graduellement problématisé par l’État comme un secteur à gérer. C’est du moins ce que les objectifs des récentes politiques muséales du [Kepek] communiquent.” Paquette, J. “Les politiques muséales au Québec : trajectoire historique et politique d’un service public” *Politique et Sociétés*, 38(3), 129-146 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.7202/1064733ar>

²⁴ Unofficial translation of “les institutions muséales québécoises possèdent maintenant les instruments de leur autonomie. Il leur revient de décider de leurs priorités et d’établir leur plan d’action” in Ministère de la Culture et des Communications *Vivre autrement... la ligne du temps*. Politique muséale., Gouvernement du Québec. p. 51. (2000).

²⁵ Viens, J. *Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress Final Report*, p. 95. (2019). https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_clients/Rapport/Rapport_final.pdf

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Report on the Committee on Institutions—Special consultations on Bill 32, *An Act to establish the cultural safety approach within the health and social services network* <https://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/travaux-parlementaires/projets-loi/projet-loi-32-43-1.html>

What is more, Premier Legault, in a solemn declaration to the Assemblée nationale in October 2019, apologized to First Nations and Inuit for the harm caused by laws, policies and public services poorly adapted to their reality. Now, the government is backtracking on what was said at the time, namely that “... the Quebec state is not doing enough and [that] this situation is unworthy of Quebec society.”²⁷ It had also recognized Québécois’ lack of understanding of Indigenous realities, which was seriously harming relations between the two nations, and this action had made it possible to put into practice the first recommendation of the Viens Commission Report.²⁸

Some Quebec historiographical trends celebrate the origins of the Quebec nation while ignoring the complex geopolitical and intercultural reality of the First Nations within the national historical narrative.²⁹ It’s clear that the government’s conception of historical relations with First Nations and Inuit is woefully lacking in depth and nuance.

Neither the announcement of the museum’s creation nor the wording of Bill 64 suggest any recognition of systemic issues or the principle of equal recognition, which are essential to the process of reconciliation with First Nations and Inuit. What’s more, the discourses associated with this new institution treat First Nations as a mere category of Québécois,³⁰ perpetuating discriminatory behaviours and systemic racism, which have been exposed in numerous documents such as Joyce’s Principle, publications by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) and the Viens Commission.³¹

Report from the Committee on Culture and Education—Special consultations and public hearings on *Bill 96, An Act respecting French, the official and common language of Québec*

https://www.assnat.qc.ca/Media/Process.aspx?MediaId=ANQ.Vigie.Bll.DocumentGenerique_177861&process=Default&token=ZyMoxNwUn8ikQ+TRKYwPCjWrKwg+vIv9rjij7p3xLGTZDmLVSmJLoqe/vG7/YWzz

²⁷ Crête, M. “Réconciliation : le Québec repentant” *Le Devoir*. October 3, 2019. <https://www.ledevoir.com/politique/quebec/563897/francois-legault-presente-les-excuses-du-quebec-aux-autochtones>

²⁸ “Make a public apology to members of First Nations and Québec’s Inuit for the harm caused by laws, policies, standards and the practices of public service providers”. In Viens, J. (2019). *Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress*, p. 217. https://www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_clients/Rapport/Rapport_final.pdf

²⁹ Gettler, B. “Les autochtones et l’histoire du Québec : au-delà du négationnisme et du récit « nationaliste-conservateur »”. *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, 46(1), 7-18. (2016). <https://doi.org/10.7202/1038931ar>

³⁰ Coulthard, G. S. *Peau rouge, masques blancs : contre la politique coloniale de la reconnaissance*. Lux Éditeur. Montreal. (2021). 368 p.

³¹ Viens, J. *Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec: listening, reconciliation and progress*. Joyce’s Principle. 2019. https://principedejoyce.com/sn_uploads/principe/Joyce_s_Principe_brief__Eng.pdf (in French: https://www.atikamekwsiipi.com/public/images/wbr/uploads/telechargement/Doc_Principe-de-Joyce.pdf) Laforest, J., Maurice, P. and Bouchard, L. M. *Rapport québécois sur la violence et la santé*. Montreal. Institut national de santé publique du Québec. 2018.

Moreover, over the years, First Nations have developed recognized museum expertise that can serve as inspiration for the new museum. In addition to the Musée de la Civilisation, several communities have created museums showcasing First Nations history, the best-known of which are the Musée Huron-Wendat, the Musée ilnu de Mashteuatsh, the Musée des Abénakis and the Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute.³² The approaches adopted by several institutions, including the McCord Stewart Museum, should inspire the creation of the Musée national sur l'histoire du Québec. According to its curator Jonathan Lainey, who is Huron-Wendat, the McCord Museum “is recognized for [its] initiatives involving Indigenous cultures and history. [Its team] works with Indigenous communities, collaborates and [...] creates with Indigenous individuals to include them in the discourse and telling of their history.”³³

According to McCord Museum curator, Mr. Lainey: “... requests [come] from universities, but also other institutions, for example, from Nova Scotia or Ontario. They want to know how we do it, how we go about telling Indigenous history. They come to us a little to draw inspiration from our practices.”³⁴ Whether they are Indigenous or not, the museums must reflect the complexity, richness, and diversity of Kepek’s history.

Over the past few years, the FNEC has been working to meet the growing need for pedagogical tools in Kepek’s education sector. *The Voices from the Land* thematic portal, unveiled on September 11, 2024,³⁵ contains content validated by specialists in Indigenous education. The creation of a new museum institution must harmonize with First Nations educational initiatives such as *Voices from the Land*.

This brief’s analysis reveals that Bill 64, as proposed, does not respond to the recommendations for consultation and co-development with First Nations, nor does it tie in with the principles of reconciliation or recognition of systemic issues. For the AFNQL, the FNEC and Institut Tshakapesh, museums must be places of socialization and education that accurately reflect the history of the Kepek, including that of First Nations, who inhabited these territories long before the arrival of Europeans, and who have safeguarded and protected them since time immemorial, right up to the present day.

The creation of a museum of Kepek’s history presents a unique opportunity to pay tribute to the province’s rich historical and cultural panorama. However, this initiative will only be successful if it fully and respectfully integrates First Nations perspectives and contributions. The AFNQL, the FNEC and Institut Tshakapesh hope that Bill 64 will be amended to reflect an inclusive, fair, and equitable vision of Kepek history, as recommended in this brief.

³² <https://museehuronwendat.ca> ; <https://museeilnu.ca> ; <https://museeabenakis.ca> ; <https://creeculturalinstitute.ca/>

³³ Roy, J. “Une jeune Autochtone en mission au Musée McCord Stewart” Radio-Canada, August 9, 2024. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/rci/fr/nouvelle/2095095/autochtones-yellowbird-lainey-musee-mccord-stewart-expositions>

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ First Nations Education Council. *Voices from the Land*. Press release, (2024).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Bill 64, *An Act to establish the Musée national de l'histoire du Québec*, sets out in Chapter I the new museum's functions, namely "to make known and promote the history of Québec, its culture and its distinct identity and to bear witness to the evolution of the Québec nation and to the contributions of the communities that have shaped its path and territory."³⁶

This chapter also includes amendments to the *National Museums Act*, establishing the Musée national sur l'histoire du Québec. Chapter II contains provisions amending various statutes to integrate this new institution into the provincial museum network. Finally, Chapter III sets out transitional and final provisions concerning the creation of the institution's board of directors and management, as well as the transfer of records and other documents currently managed by the Musée de la Civilisation. It should be noted that articles 8 and 9 stipulate that the expertise and experience profiles for the appointment of the first members of the board of directors and the first director general would not apply.

Recommendations

In light of the above findings, the AFNQL, the FNEC and Institut Tshakapesh propose the following recommendations.

Recommendations for Chapters II and III of the bill:

1. Integrate Indigenous narratives, contributions, and perspectives into all the exhibitions, with sections managed directly by First Nations.
2. Take into consideration the five directions (*orientations*) of the ministère de la Culture et des Communications' museum policy, in particular *Orientation 2, Cap sur l'expertise*.
3. Respect First Nations' cultural protocol for the conservation and presentation/display of First Nations artifacts.
4. Recognize the educational and pedagogical approaches of First Nations concerning history, by valuing First Nations expertise.
5. Organize regular consultations with First Nations members and experts to guarantee fair and respectful representations, including a review of the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications' cultural policy and museum policy. This involves collaboration with First Nations and Inuit organizations, such as those represented at the Provincial Round Table on the Educational Success of Indigenous Students, in the new museum's decision-making structure.³⁷

³⁶ Bill 64, *An Act to establish the Musée national de l'histoire du Québec* 43rd leg., 1st sess., 2024.

³⁷ Comité de suivi des appels à l'action de la Commission Viens. *État de la mise en œuvre du rapport de la Commission d'enquête sur les relations entre les Autochtones et certains services publics : écoute, réconciliation et progrès (Commission Viens) depuis sa parution en septembre 2019*, (2021): 227, https://www.uqat.ca/telechargements/commission-viens/Rapport_suivi_CERP2021.pdf.

6. Develop educational programs in collaboration with First Nations to raise awareness among the public about their history and contemporary issues.
7. Train staff, members of the board of directors and members of the museum's expert committee about Indigenous cultures to avoid stereotypes and historical errors.
8. Include exhibitions that highlight the contemporary contributions of First Nations, providing a platform for Indigenous artists and leaders.

Proposed amendments

In addition, the AFNQL, the FNEC and Institut Tshakapesh propose the following amendments:

Proposed amendment no. 1: Differentiating the contribution of the First Peoples of Kepek from that of other ethnic and cultural communities.

Since the intent of the bill is to “promote the history of [Kepek]”, including “the contributions of the communities that have shaped its path and territory,” the AFNQL, the FNEC and the Tshakapesh Institute believe that the linguistic, cultural and philosophical richness and distinctiveness of the territory's First Peoples should be central to Bill 64.

We therefore recommend amending section 2 of Bill 64 by adding an additional function as follows:

“24.2. The functions of the Musée national de l’histoire du Québec are:

(1) to make known and promote the history of Québec, its culture and distinct identity, and to bear witness to the evolution of the Québec nation and the contributions of the communities that have shaped its history and territory;

(2) to recognize the constitutive and fundamental contribution of the First Nations and Inuit, through their knowledge, languages and culture, as well as their distinct systems of governance, to the history, territory and contemporary society of Quebec;

(3) establish links with the Quebec museum network and ensure Quebec's presence in the international museum network through acquisitions, exhibitions, and other outreach activities.” (Emphasis added.)

Proposed amendment no. 2: Ensure that members of the board of directors of the new museum institution have skills and expertise in Indigenous history, education, and culture.

To ensure that board members have the skills and experience required for this new museum institution, and that the board is representative of “Québec society, including by ensuring the presence of persons from a variety of communities,”³⁸ the AFNQL, FNEC and Institut Tshakapesh recommend that the government take into account Indigenous knowledge and

³⁸ *National Museums Act*. CQLR, c. M-44, sec. 10.

ensure Indigenous participation in appointments, in consultation with First Nations and Inuit.

We therefore recommend amending section 8 of Bill 64 by adding the following:

“8. The provisions of paragraph 4 of section 7 of the National Museums Act (chapter M-44) relating to the competence and experience profiles of the members of the board of directors appointed on the recommendation of the Minister do not apply to the appointment of the first members of the board of directors of the Musée national de l’histoire du Québec.

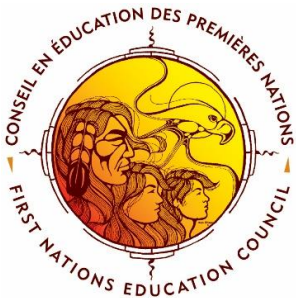
However, when making this appointment, the government must ensure that the members collectively possess the appropriate competence and experience in the following areas:

1. the history of Quebec;
2. museum management;
3. heritage real estate management;
4. information resource management;
5. financial management and accounting;
6. human resources management, labour relations and organizational development;
7. governance and ethics;
8. audit or risk management;
9. communications, marketing or business development;
10. law;
11. **the history of First Nations and Inuit in Kepek.** “(emphasis added)

CONCLUSION

The AFNQL, the FNEC and the Tshakapesh Institute remain available to collaborate with legislators to ensure that the voices of First Nations are and respected in this historic process. Taking these recommendations into account, we believe that this new museum could serve as a means of recognizing systemic issues, and, as such, a path towards reconciliation. We believe that this brief will enrich the debate and foster a better understanding and recognition of First Nations in building the collective identity of Kepek.

Migwetc, Mikwetc, Niá: wen, Tiawenhk, Tshinashkumitin, Wela'lin, Wliwni, Woliwon



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