fondation Béati

The Béati Foundation, an alternative philanthropy model?
Supporting social change by funding it

Summary Report
Nicole Lacelle

Table of contents

Foreword

In recent years, the landscapes of both philanthropy and the community sector have undergone profound changes. The reduced involvement of the state in assuming responsibility and leadership in dealing with social problems raises questions about the role that philanthropic foundations should be playing—questions which, in turn, have important implications for the philanthropic and community sectors.

In their study on the working style and practices of the Fondation Béati—hereinafter the Béati Foundation—conducted in collaboration with the Béati Foundation and the Université du Québec à Montréal community services unit (Service aux collectivités -UQAM), the researchers Sylvain Lefèvre and Annabelle Berthiaume (2016) tried to discern the shape that the relationship between grantee groups and grantmaking foundations is taking and to identify issues currently at stake in the philanthropic sector. This research was conducted between 2014 and 2016, thanks to the generous participation of a diverse range of organizations that have in the past been supported by the Béati Foundation. Many of these organizations identify variously with autonomous community action, the women's movement and the social economy, while some promote socially engaged spirituality.

One study and three separate documents

This study, which examines the practices of the Béati Foundation, can provide insight into some of the issues that characterize philanthropic relationships in general. To help support grantee groups in their deliberations on their relationship to philanthropy, and foundations in their deliberations on their own development in the current context, the results of this study led to the production of three separate documents, which we present in the following paragraphs:

THE RESEARCH REPORT

Béati, un modèle de philanthropie alternatif ?
Accompagner le changement social en le finançant.

2016. Working paper #12. Montreal: PhiLab.

French only *(Béati, a model of alternative philanthropy? Supporting social change by funding it)*

Building on an ethnographic inquiry and combining individual interviews with direct observations, this report helps to identify how the practices of the Béati Foundation borrow or differ from so-called social change philanthropy. The report documents the points of view of both foundation's staff and board members and community groups on their relationship to philanthropy. The **first part** presents the distinctive characteristics of social change philanthropy and philanthrocapitalism, two contrasting philanthropic approaches. The **second part** discusses the relationships of support and capacity-building assistance that foundations engage in with grantees, and raises questions concerning these relationships. The **third part** proposes a reading of the philanthropic sector through the tensions and contradictions that affect it and raises questions about foundations' public stance and positioning.

Béati, un modèle de philanthropie alternatif ?

2016. Summary of Working paper #12. Montreal: PhiLab. French and English version

(*The Béati Foundation, an alternative philanthropy model?*)

Despite the limitations inherent in a synthesis of this type, the summary report captures the essence of the research report. It offers the same structure and main themes developed in the initial report, but presented in a more succinct manner and without the addition of numerous supporting excerpts from comments, tables or bibliographic references.

A TOOL FOR REFLECTION

La philanthropie aujourd'hui au Québec : un enjeu commun ?

2017. A tool for reflection on Working paper #12. Montreal: PhiLab.

French only (*Philanthropy today in Quebec: A shared issue?*)

The purpose of this document is to serve as a tool for reflection for all those wishing to examine the relationship between grantors and grantees, the distribution of wealth in society, and the role of philanthropy and foundations. It uses the case of the Béati Foundation to engage in a broader dialogue among and between grantees and funders. It should be noted that this publication benefitted from the informed input of a readership drawn from the community and philanthropic sectors, from whom we solicited feedback on the research report. We thank them for their contributions.

The Research Framework Committee[1]

Sylvain Lefèvre, professor at the School of Management (ESG), Department of Strategy and Social and Environmental Responsibility of UQAM

Annabelle Berthiaume, doctoral candidate in social work, McGill University

Julie Raby, project manager and head of research and development at the Fondation Béati

Jean Panet-Raymond, administrator at the Fondation Béati

Jacques Bordeleau, executive director at the Fondation Béati

Claire Vanier, community services unit (Service aux collectivités) of UQAM

---

1   Lina Leduc, a master's student in environmental sciences at UQAM, and France Laforge, project manager at the Fondation Béati, were also members of the framework committee until 2016.

I. The Béati Foundation
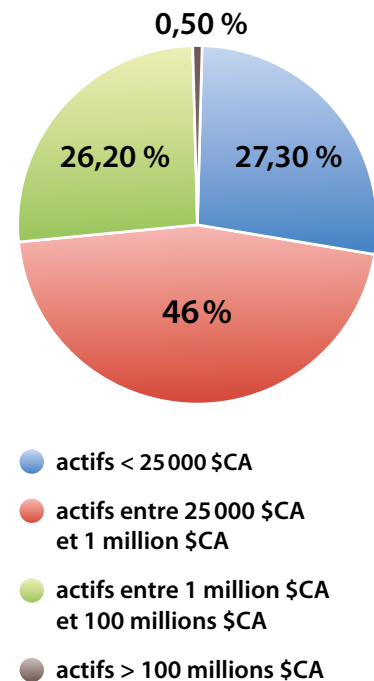## Which philanthropic model?

1. About the foundation scene in Canada

In Quebec as well as across all of Canada, foundations are very heterogeneous both in terms of how they operate and the size of their endowments. The 10,500-some foundations presently active in Canada can be divided into four categories according to the size of their assets: less than $25,000 (about one quarter of them); $25,000 to $1 million (slightly less than half); $1 million to $100 million (about one quarter); and more than $100 million (a handful: 0.5% of foundations).[2]

From 1994 to 2014, the number of private foundations increased by 76%, reaching 5,300 organizations, and that of public foundations rose by 69% to 5,100 organizations. Beyond the number of foundations, it is their assets and therefore the amount of gifts they have received that have exploded. In 2008, 9,000 foundations held $34 billion in assets and distributed $3.6 billion[3]. By 2015, the 10,500 foundations held $70 billion in assets and distributed $5.6 billion. It is mainly the substantial increase in the capitalization of the large foundations that explains this evolution: for example, the MasterCard Foundation, created in 2006, alone held assets of more than $10 billion in 2015.[4]

With an endowment of approximately $12 million, the Béati Foundation ranks among the top quarter of the best-endowed foundations in Canada. Nonetheless, it is far removed from the top 50 or so foundations holding more than $100 million in assets, whereby it is considered to occupy a "middle upper" position. Based on a quantitative balance, Béati's action amounts to considerable financial support. In all, since its establishment, it has awarded nearly $12 million, through grants ranging from $20,000 to $30,000, to more than 700 projects.

0,50 %

26,20 %　27,30 %

46 %

● actifs < 25 000 $CA

● actifs entre 25 000 $CA et 1 million $CA

● actifs entre 1 million $CA et 100 millions $CA

● actifs > 100 millions $CA

2　Kryvoruchko, I. 2013. Three essays in public economics: Flat taxes, foundation operations and giving, A thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy, McMaster University.

3　It should be noted that in North America, the amounts historically allocated to prestigious institutions (large universities, museums, philharmonic orchestras), and serving more of an elite set of beneficiaires than a disadvantaged one, are generally much larger than those allocated to social missions.

4　Philanthropic Foundations Canada (PFC-FPC). 2016. Portrait des dons des fondations en 2014, Retrieved from : http://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/2014-Snapshot-FRv4.pdf (English-language version of the document: *Snapshot of Foundation Giving in 2014* http://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/2014-Snapshotv13.pdf)

Located near Montreal, like most Quebec foundations, Béati's scope of action is spread throughout Quebec. It belongs neither to the wave of large anglophone foundations created in the mid-20th century in Canada, nor to the more recent wave of francophone foundations created from the 1980s onwards, following the entrepreneurial successes of what is sometimes referred to as "Québec Inc." (Fondation Coutu, Fondation Bombardier, Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon).

2. Philanthrocapitalism and social change philanthropy

These foundations created in the 1980s illustrate several dimensions of philanthrocapitalism, which situates itself at the point of convergence of two phenomena. On the one hand, it transposes the tools of the world of finance into the social sector by:

- importing the logic of venture capitalism (to produce "venture philanthropy") and seeking a leverage effect to maximize impact;

- calling for a "social return on investment," the systematic benchmarking of best practices, and the systematic monetization of social and environmental factors[5].

On the other hand, it uses the language of "social investment" while:

- promoting actions that target root causes (e.g., education and prevention) in order to prevent future problems;

- forging alliances between governments and foundations, both in North America and at the international level, such as with the programs of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation or, in Quebec, the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation.

The model of foundation philanthropy developed by the Béati Foundation has its roots in the generation of foundations that emerged in the United States in the 1970s that identified with "social change philanthropy" or "social movement philanthropy." The founders of these foundations were often young heirs of industrial empires (e.g., DuPont) or agribusinesses (e.g., Pillsbury) who decided to use their fortunes to create local foundations and support grassroots organizing. Through their foundations, they backed the key social movements of the 1970s, such as the anti-war movement, economic justice and civil rights, migrant rights and environmental justice. As part of this, they explicitly sought to respect the autonomy of grassroots organizations and to increase communities' empowerment.

These alternative foundations also engaged in an in-depth reflection on philanthropy's internal contradictions, and particularly on the intrinsically asymmetrical power structure in the grantor-grantee relationship. To avoid reproducing these contradictions within their own structure, they endeavored to find a means to strip away some of the donor's financial and symbolic power by entrusting the funds allocation process to a committee of activists belonging to the communities they wished to support.

---

5   Pour plus d'informations sur les critères du *retour social sur l'investissement*, voir l'encadré 1 « Sept caractéristiques de la "*venture philanthropy*" européenne » dans le rapport de recherche, p. 24.

This was the case with the Haymarket People's Fund, which sought to "practice what it preached" across the various dimensions of its work as a foundation, such as granting modalities, relations to grantees, working conditions, social and cultural diversity, and limits on donors' power. The Fund sought to address three particularly difficult dilemmas:

1) How can a foundation act as an open collective where people discuss matters freely when this collective is composed of people in asymmetrical relationships (men/women, rich/poor, white/black, grantor/grantee, etc.)?

2) How can the relationship between grantor and grantee be made more horizontal?

3) Whom should foundations fund? It's the "lead/follow" dichotomy that calls on them to decide whether they want to play a role in catalyzing movements or to, instead, follow the lead of already established grassroots movements. (And what to do when social movements peter out, as in the 1980s in the United States?) Should they encourage a broader dispersion of small grants or narrow their focus to a few key recipients? Should they give to the most fragile and marginalized groups and causes, even if they have less chance at achieving strong organizing success and therefore at having a strong impact (e.g., in the areas of domestic violence, homelessness, prison conditions)? What criteria should guide their selection of the organizations to be funded? Up to what point should foundations require the involvement of the people on the front lines of community service and organizing? Should they try to influence other foundations to take part in similar funding practices?

The origins of the Béati Foundation

While there is no direct link between American social change philanthropy and the Béati Foundation, the two emerged around the same time. In the case of Béati, the initial donor, upon inheriting $1 million in 1974, assembled like-minded people around her and set up an organization focused on the issue of worker housing in Montreal, the *Fondation pour la promotion de la famille ouvrière Marie-Valérie*. The donor had received the inheritance thanks to the industrial fortune accumulated by her family in Europe in the early 20th century in the oil and real estate sector. This woman, whose life was entirely given over to faith and social engagement, considered this inheritance as an "excess of money" that should be returned, not "out of charity, but through justice," to those most in need.

Later, at the time of the economic crisis of the 1980s and 1990s, when poverty was again on the rise, this donor received a second inheritance in the order of $10 million. This led to the creation in 1990 of the Fondation Béati, where it was stipulated that the anonymity of the donor be respected. In 2003, she withdrew from the board of directors, where she had previously served as an observer, and has since relinquished any direct influence on the foundation. The origins of the Béati Foundation are therefore characterized less by a particular familiarity with the foundation world than by a very close tie between the spiritual/religious dimension and social engagement, a structured network of personal complicities, the needs of beneficiary communities, and a belief in the power of beneficiary groups and communities to take charge of tackling their own issues.

3. The institutionalization of a particular philanthropic model

The first generation of actors linked to the creation of the Foundation has given way to paid staff and a board of directors that has since been largely renewed. Formal procedures have been put in place at the level of internal governance (working conditions, ethics charter), planning (socio-economic analysis; reflection with external stake-holders such as consultants and academics; internal planning and reflection days on the foundation's orientations) and above all with regard to the allocation of funds. In terms of funding, from its earliest days, the Foundation has supported projects from the community (social sector) and progressive Christian faith groups that are socially engaged or otherwise seeking to imbue their social engagement with spiritual or religious meaning.

Grantmaking procedure

Three requests for project proposals are made throughout the year, with an average of six grants issued per round, each worth $25,000 to $30,000, to be used primarily to support staffing costs. Other "consolidation" grants may also be awarded to allow an extension on previously-funded projects that are taking longer than expected to complete.

In 1991, Béati set up a selection committee to evaluate the various projects of organizations requesting funding and to issue recommendations to the board of directors. Since the creation of this committee, the board of directors has accepted all the committee's recommendations. It is the composition of this committee that makes it possible to realize a particular vision of philanthropy within the very structure of the Foundation. It was decided that the committee would be representative of funded communities rather than be aligned with any political objective, religious orientation, certified expertise or personal proximity to the donor. Reflecting the spirit that brought it into being, the Foundation retains a progressive Catholic bent. The Foundation has also diversified the means of carrying out its mission. Today, these follow four avenues:

- **Funding for projects:** the classic philanthropic role

- **Professional support:** This is not a service that organizations apply to receive alongside their funding application, but rather an intrinsic part of Béati's approach to funding. Support and capacity-building assistance can even be offered independently of any transfer of funds, for example, by offering advice and suggestions about alternative funding options to an organization whose project has been declined for funding by the Foundation. This process, characteristic of the Foundation's relationship with grantees, is in a way the distinctive signature of Béati.

- **Responsible investment:** Occurring across two dimensions: first, by ensuring alignment between the Foundation's mission and how the endowment is invested in the financial markets, and secondly by using a part of the Foundation's capital to issue loans to organizations.

- **Commitment to solidarity:** Involvement in relevant collaboratives and working groups, presence at events held by grantee organizations, and a form of political engagement that involves taking a public stance on specific issues.

The evolution of the Foundation's resource base

In parallel with this diversification of the Foundation's means of carrying out its mission, another evolution, likewise a part of the institutionalization process, has concerned the diversification of the Foundation's resources. Recognized for its philanthropic expertise, Béati is increasingly being solicited by religious congregations to fulfill the role of issuing grants and donations in their stead, thus being entrusted with their philanthropic funding envelopes. In 2015, these partner funding envelopes accounted for nearly 42% of all the funds allocated by Béati. The impacts of these partnerships are not only financial but also institutional, insofar as the changes to the Foundation's revenue structure have led the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to reassign its status, namely from that of a private foundation, which typically receives the majority of its funding from one donor or related donor group, to that of a public foundation, which receives its funding from several sources that are independent of one another.

4. Béati, a particular variant of social change philanthropy

The Béati Foundation shares certain features of the philanthrocapitalist current, first of all by its focus on a diverse usage of its capital. This includes its different strategies for using its endowment: grants, loans, and financial market investments according to environmental, social and corporate governance criteria. Another shared feature is its emphasis on offering hands-on support and capacity-building assistance to organizations beyond funding. According to the philanthrocapitalist current, this support and capacity-building assistance can be directed towards the acquisition of skills, participation in a network, or the prescription of a particular program or ways of doing things. In this way, the philanthrocapitalist current seeks to identify, replicate and even franchise best practices. However, the support offered by Béati differs significantly from the tenets of the philanthrocapitalist current by:

1) **Its vision** (both with regard to social justice and social change) and the type of projects supported;
2) **Its way of operating**, in particular the close and complicit relationships that it establishes with grantees;
3) The **absence of any representative from the business world** in its governing bodies and any of the language used by the philanthrocapitalist current.

This photo was taken at the Foundation's general assembly in December 2014. The picture illustrates the four avenues in which the Beati Foundation is involved.

At its annual general meeting, too, the ways in which the Foundation is presented and showcased do not aim for a quantitative demonstration of its philanthropic "production" (i.e., the number of people impacted by a particular organization, etc.). Instead, grantees, rather than the Foundation, present themselves and what they do directly by means of a visual display. This form of "disinterested interest"—insofar as it aligns with their goals without imposing performance metrics on them—is indicative of the activist, grassroots type of bonds which the Foundation maintains with the organizations it funds. These bonds are made possible and effective both through the structure of the selection committee and the profile of the employee team. For example, the staff of the Foundation all look back on their own professional or activist involvement in the sectors that the Foundation supports. They therefore share a number of values, visions and experiences that are specific to these sectors and stand in solidarity with them, despite the tensions that are intrinsic to the mandate of support agent. As a result, the Béati Foundation can without hesitation be understood as being a part of social change philanthropy. Yet, at the same time it has features that set it apart from that movement:

1) The specificity of having both a spiritual and social focus.

2) A foundation like the American Haymarket People's Fund tried to overcome the barriers of class, race and gender within its own collective structure. Béati, by contrast, does not have a heterogeneous board of directors, selection committee or staff composition. On the contrary, although these individuals come from different experiential backgrounds, they have strong intellectual affinities, are mostly Christian or secular in leaning, and are homogeneously white and middle class, although their cultural and social capital often surpasses their economic capital.

3) The absence of donors within the Foundation's organizational structure means that one of the common features of social change philanthropy does not play out at Béati— that is to say, the opportunity and imperative for wealthy donors to work to challenge and subvert their own privilege.

4) The type of projects supported by Béati range from the social economy to collective advocacy to socially-engaged spirituality. Across this spectrum of project types, the range of means embraced is much broader and more diverse than the confrontational organizing tactics that are characteristic of the groups supported by the Haymarket People's Fund.

Supportive relationships at the heart of the practice

1. From individual to collective support

The notion of support and coaching designates above all a relationship between individuals in which one person seeks to support the efforts of the other in her search "to find the answer to her problems and find her own way"[6]. Support and coaching usually implies that each party has distinct roles and expectations, as their initial status is different and unequal.

The provision of individual and collective support has enjoyed increasing popularity as a method in different fields of intervention over the past twenty years, and its strengths and limits are known:

1) Individual support and assistance can become the springboard for naming and modeling practices that help to foster autonomy; at the same time, the practice retains an inherent, unnamed dimension of control over the assisted subject;[7]

2) The individual focus of this practice can obscure or suppress a more comprehensive structural or institutional analysis of social issues and thus encourage a vision of "a society of fragile or injured individuals with varying degrees of disability and who have varying levels of needs for support to overcome obstacles, face difficulties and go through certain stages of life [...]."[8]

Collective support: strategies and empowerment

In looking at the level of participation of people on the receiving end, Collerette, Delisle and Perron point out that collective strategies for support and capacity-building assistance vary: imposition, pressure, consultation, co-management, incentives, suggestion, empowerment (see Appendix A).[9]

This relationship can become more dynamic if it is based on the co-construction of knowledge between people. Going further, the relationship may come to resemble those described by the educator Paulo Freire, who, in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, emphasized developing long-term relationships in which the oppressed are invited to share their experiences, develop critical consciousness and find ways to liberate themselves.[10]. This kind of moral support and capacity-building assistance can thus go so far as to target empowerment (as defined by Ninacs)—whether individual, group or community—characterized by a taking back of power or an increase in the degree of control which individuals, groups or communities have over their own lives and environment.[11]

---

6   Autès, M. 2008. «Au nom de quoi agir sur autrui?», *Nouvelle revue de psychosociologie, 6(2), p. 11-25*. Our translation

7   Divay, S. 2008. «Psychologisation et dépsychologisation de l'accompagnement des chômeurs», *Sociologies pratiques, 17(2), p. 55-66*.

8   Gagnon, É., Moulin, P. et Eysermann, B. 2011. «Ce qu'accompagner veut dire», *Reflets, 17(1), p. 90–111*. Our translation

9   Collerette, P., Delisle, G. et Perron, R. 1997. *Le changement organisationnel : Théorie et pratique. Québec : Les Presses de l'Université du Québec.*

10 Freire, P. 1974. *Pédagogie des opprimés. Suivi de Conscientisation et révolution. Paris : Maspero.*

11 Ninacs, W.A. 1995. «Empowerment et service social: approches et enjeux». *Service social, 44(1), p. 69-93.*

A typology devised by Bacqué and Biewener[12] proposes three patterns of empowerment that can help further characterize the relationship established between foundations and the groups they fund. These model types, presented in Appendix B, are the radical model, the liberal model and the neoliberal model. We describe them as follows.

- **The radical model:** justice, redistribution, social change, conscientization and power exercised by those on the bottom rungs of the social ladder.

- **The liberal model:** equality, opportunities, poverty reduction, good governance, autonomy, freedom and individual choice.

- **The neoliberal model:** being the captain of one's own fate, making rational choices, empowerment as freedom and individual will.

While Béati identifies itself with the most radical model of empowerment, we suggest that most foundations in Quebec align themselves with the liberal model, and some even with the neoliberal model.

2. Observation of Béati's support practices

The Béati Foundation makes a point of highlighting its "complicit" positioning with the community sector, through the organizations it supports. Beyond a declaration of principle, this is embodied in a number of the practices of support agents who are in direct contact with organizations.

Project selection

Three annual requests for project proposals are made, which are open to all organizations; specific organizations are not singled out by the Foundation and solicited to apply. The application is rather extensive (between 20 and 30 pages, depending on the size of the appendices) and dense, with about thirty questions about the organization and its proposed project, covering the issues addressed, changes targeted, action plan, involvement of the target audience, embeddedness in the community, the organization's funding and financial statements.

Whether at pre-selection meetings, during preparations or on selection day itself, members of the selection committee by and large abide by the same protocol for developing and communicating rationales and recommendations. On the one hand, committee members' analysis of dossiers draws upon a detached professionalism based on experience (knowledge of the issues and the sector) or knowledge of existing precedents (comparison with other funded or rejected applications). At the same time, however, they may engage in a more emotional and open exchange, sharing what they particularly like about a project proposal and how it resonates with their activist sensibilities. On very rare occasions, it may be the financial aspects that weigh more heavily in the reckoning, in terms of the soundness of financial projections or the structure of the financial statements. More often, discussions are focused on the themes of social justice, project feasibility, health of operations, the organization's and the project's embeddedness in the

---

12 Bacqué M.-H. et Biewener C. 2013. *L'empowerment, une pratique émancipatoire.* Paris : La Découverte.

14

community, and degree of control exercised by beneficiaries. By contrast, "deliverables," "social impact," and "financial autonomy" are hardly emphasized here.

It is not unusual to see the selection committee torn between emotional attachments and the rational considerations brought forward by formal selection procedures. Often, committee members or staff, who also participate in the selection, know people from the applicant organization, and they do not hesitate to mention it when this is the case. However, when a member of the selection process is also involved in one of the applicant organization, they will leave the room when that application is being evaluated.

The application form

The Foundation's application form sparked a lot of discussion in the interviews. Indeed, almost all of the respondents mentioned its extensive length, especially when compared to the application forms of other funding bodies or in consideration of the amount of the grant that can be obtained.

- **Benefits:** Approximately half of the groups interviewed indicated that the application provides an opportunity for them to further reflect on and formulate project objectives. Several found that the requirements of the application allowed them to clarify and be more thorough in their ways of presenting their organization. As a result, many respondents said that the completed Béati application can serve as a reference document when applying to other funders.

- **Drawbacks:** Many groups believe that the application could be simplified. Some of them said it was the most onerous application form they have ever had to complete. Indeed, project managers in applicant organizations reported having invested three weeks to a month to complete the form.

Site visits

Following receipt of the application at the Foundation, a support agent from Béati arranges for a pre-selection visit at the applicant's organization, to last about half a day. In the wake of this visit, the group is usually prompted to resubmit a modified version of the application, which generally involves a substantial reworking of the application.

The Foundation's aim to establish a supportive relationship that is "structuring" without being intrusive is put to the test during these visits. Great care is taken to attenuate any inequitable power dynamics, namely by being transparent about the rules of the selection process and the purpose of the visit. Still, it is above all in the way the site visit itself plays out that the potential relationship, intended to be complicit, is negotiated and forged. Whether this be in the way that introductions are made, questions are asked or discussions carried out, both participants seek to avoid a hierarchical relationship and to transform what is objectively an "inspection" into a congenial exchange. They do so by emphasizing shared convictions and by opening up to one another, in this case, in that the host is giving the visitor the opportunity to better understand the project.

The individual and group interviews that we conducted confirmed an existing proximity between the Béati team and representatives of funded organizations. The Foundation's activist slant is also welcomed by the more politicized groups, who feel corroborated and who appreciate the sense of collaborating on the same social project: "We don't have to redefine our orientation for them; we simply state what we stand for and trust that that aligns with the vision pursued by Béati." For several organizations, the Béati Foundation is the first, if not the only, foundation with whom they have worked, which gives the Foundation a special status. Nevertheless, the amount of written and face-to-face work in which which the groups must invest in order to get through the Béati selection process can have a discouraging effect. For example, several groups find the application and selection procedure too demanding. They consider that being turned down earlier in the process—despite its drawbacks— might ultimately be easier to deal with.

The type of support

In terms of financial support, several respondents found the possibility of receiving funding to cover staffing costs to be one of the main attractions of Béati. However, more than half of the respondents were critical of the amounts granted, judging them too small in consideration of the social transformation aims pursued by the Foundation. The small size and short duration (one year) of grants was considered to be one of the major contradictions of the Foundation's style of funding, both by newer organizations and more experienced ones. One respondent also mentioned what seemed to be another major contradiction at Béati: since, by definition, innovation requires a creative space allowing trial and error, the Foundation itself should take greater risks, both in terms of project selection and reporting requirements placed on organizations. For Béati, overcoming this contradiction involves the challenge of aligning its innovation goals with the expectation that grantees deliver a certain output, be it social or financial. For example, to ensure that reporting by organizations is not just an exercise that allows Béati to evaluate a project, or that helps organizations to reflect on how a project went, how might reporting activities (in whole or in part) be made more visible? Could it take a form other than a written report? How could other groups learn about this project and lessons learned in order to draw their own inspiration and make new contacts?

This critical questioning of the concept of innovation also calls on all parties concerned to reconsider what constitutes an innovative project. As one respondent put it: "The fact that citizen action groups are around and continue to believe that another world is possible, and just the fact that we continue to exist, that in itself is innovative. But with Béati, it's as if we have to create a new project to show it. […] Sometimes, what we need instead is funding support for what we do already, for what's already underway, because we don't have enough core funding to properly survive."

The demands of complicity

The overwhelming majority of groups acknowledge Béati's desire to offer tools and a form of structuring support for their work. However, the time and resources that these groups must make available for the day-to-day administration of their Béati-funded project, given the level of the Foundation's monitoring requirements, is a matter of concern for some groups. For many grantee organizations, accountability reporting is a cumbersome exercise that doesn't give them much in return. Others are looking for funding only and told us that they do not need any support nor capacity-building assistance from the Foundation. In fact, most of these groups simply want to carry out a project that has already been elaborated and approved by their community. In those cases, the support offered by Béati is seen as an intrusive element that amounts to a confusion of roles in the project.

Many have also reported that the age of the applicant group seems to greatly influence the experience that it has of Béati's support. According to them, the younger the applicant organization, the more the Foundation's support has helped to organize and structure the project. Given this variation in experience levels, some organizations would like to see a greater willingness on the part of the Foundation team to adapt its procedures. "They should look more at who they are dealing with," said one respondent. Another respondent noted that while Béati's ways of working have their merits, the Foundation needs to do more to meet groups where they are at.

3. Combining different levels of support

Béati's support can be likened to a Russian doll, that is to say, a whole formed by the successive layering of different components. At the heart of this support lies the individual relationship between the person giving and the person receiving the support. This relationship is embedded in a second level, where organizations, beyond the individuals who represent them, are also involved in a relationship of support. Finally, a third, more macro-social level enlarges this relationship, namely through the more structural relations between the philanthropic sector and the community sector (or social movements). These distinctions are important because they allow us to better understand what works more or less well from the point of view of funded groups.

- **The individual:** The overwhelming majority of grantee respondents appreciate the excellent interpersonal relationship they have enjoyed with their counterparts from the Foundation. They are able to discuss things openly with them, feel listened to, heard and respected, and maintain a trusting relationship based on a similar vision and values.

- **The organization:** Many are much less enthusiastic about the non-financial support received from the Foundation. Some do not want this support because they feel they do not need it, because it consumes too much time or energy, or because they fear a loss of autonomy. Others, on the contrary, have a relationship of trust with the Foundation that goes beyond the various individuals that make it up.

- **The sector:** Here the relationship is different, because the vast majority of the organizations we met with have strained relations with the foundation sector; in contrast they tend to point out that Béati is not a foundation like any other. At other times, especially when they talk about preparing the application or meeting accountability requirements, they are much more inclined to include Béati in a broader reflection on "funders" that lumps together foundations with providers of public subsidies.

As is the case throughout the entire philanthropic field in Quebec, the Béati Foundation is composed of a small group of people holding a wide range of positions (members of several boards of directors, involved in different collectives and initiatives). This tendency for people to hold multiple positions, when held up to the Russian doll structure of foundation support and capacity-building assistance to grantees, can render these relationships much murkier and more complicated than what might be suggested by the notion of a clear separation between grantor and grantee. At the same time, however, this complexity brings an undeniable wealth to these relationships, primarily through the ability of Béati's staff and administrators to put themselves in grantee organizations' shoes. This capacity makes the philanthropic relationship less unambiguous and offers the possibility for roles to be reversed, especially when one and the same actor is both grantmaker in one setting, as part of the project selection process, and grantseeker in another. These are highly valuable features to give more traction to as philanthropy in Quebec becomes more institutionalized.
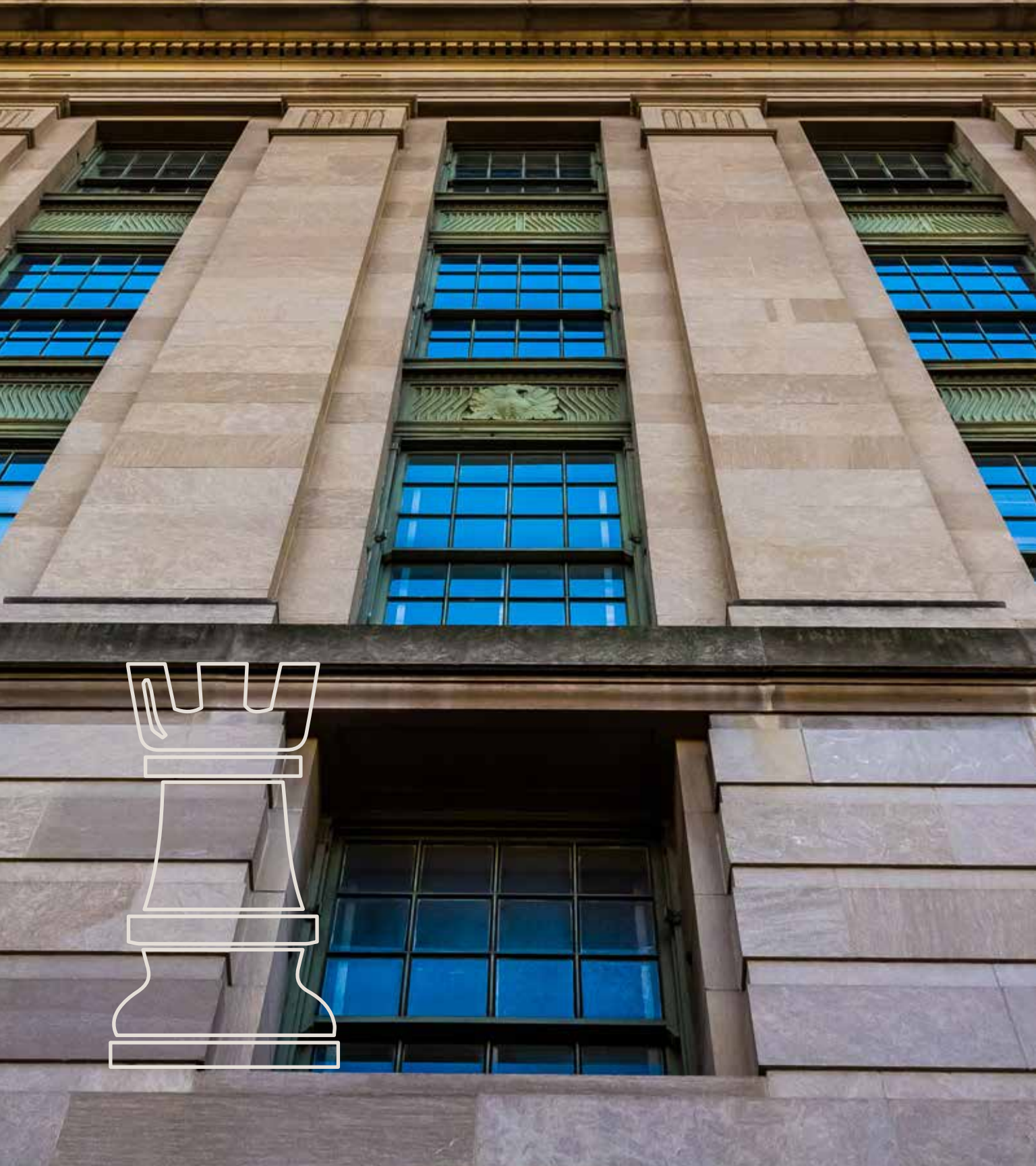
What is Béati's voice today within the Quebec philanthropic field?

III

1. Positioning vis-à-vis the state: principle and reality

The Béati Foundation advocates a government that fully assumes its social responsibilities. The difficulty is that for several decades now the welfare state has been eroded in Quebec, with governments focusing instead on "reengineering the state" or on introducing "austerity" measures. Foundations then find themselves substituting for the state by providing more funding for community-based services, even though they would rather not be compelled to do so. Through this, it is as if the state has in a de facto way entrusted foundations with considerable responsibilities, without spelling this out in a formal policy that is subject to debate, and without giving foundations any say in these matters. In that context, should foundations substitute for the state as it withdraws from certain areas of responsibilities, including when this withdrawal can have devastating effects? Or should foundations refuse to take the place of the state in order to prevent that a situation that is unacceptable in principle becomes livable in practice?

The Béati Foundation: a double paradox in its relationship to the state

1) Funding from the Foundation goes to support groups that advocate for more ambitious social policies from the state, all the while seeking to maintain their own autonomy vis-à-vis the state. With this, Béati funding in itself represents a form of substitution of the public sphere by the private sphere, but done so as a means rather than an end, in other words, done in the pursuit of ultimately reinforcing the role of the public sector over the private sector.

2) The Quebec and federal governments have created favorable conditions for philanthropy, at the same time instrumentalizing it. Since the early 1980s, these governments have promoted a lowering of taxes, particularly for businesses and the wealthier segments of the population. This resulted in a drop in public resources and a decrease in the redistributive capacity of the state—taxes on capital and on income historically being the main macroeconomic tools for combating inequalities. Following upon this, particularly during periods of financial crisis, there have been calls by the state for private generosity to compensate for public funding gaps. This is problematic on many levels: political, social and economic.

State and tax justice: a shifting landscape

In Canada, during the 2011 fiscal year, the Department of Finance estimated the tax credits given to individuals making charitable donations to be approximately $2.2 billion.[13] A closer look at the taxation figures for this fiscal year[14] shows that the taxpayers with incomes above $250,000 (212,450 people, or 1.3% of taxpayers) account for 30% of charitable donations, for which they then received 31% of tax credits in return. While one can welcome this massive contribution of the wealthy to the general interest, one can also consider that a mechanism which allows the top 1.3% of the wealthiest citizens to be returned 716 million dollars in taxes they initially owed can hardly be described as a redistributive social measure and that, on the contrary, this runs counter to the ideals of social justice.

With transformations to public funding conditions of community organizations, like it or not the role of a foundation like Béati also changes in the eyes of those receiving funding. For community-based organizations, philanthropic funding is no longer just a supplement to core funding allowing for renewal and innovation, but now serves to provide core funding for their mission and even to ensure the survival of their organization. In this new configuration of roles, many foundations are developing models to maximize their impact using the resources available to them. Moreover, in these days, many are inclined to look to the market for ideas and models. This trend stands in contrast with the distance which the Béati Foundation seeks to maintain from the market.

2. Positioning vis-à-vis the market

A distant relationship

There are no representatives from the business world on Béati's board of directors and various committees. The Foundation adopts a clearly critical discourse on the contemporary dynamics of capitalism. It should be emphasized that, unlike several other actors identified with social change philanthropy, the Béati Foundation does not engage in a critical reflection on the origins of its initial endowment, among other reasons because this would be difficult to do while respecting the anonymity of Béati's original donor.

Structurally, the central problem stems from the fact that the Foundation's revenues depend on the health of financial markets, known to be precarious and volatile, a health that is disconnected from the good health and well-being of our societies. This situation is obviously not specific to Béati. Notwithstanding this structural problem, Béati is already reflecting on and considering actions with regard to its investment policy.

---

13 Ministry of Finance. 2013. *Dépenses fiscales et évaluations 2013*, Retrieved from **https://www.fin.gc.ca/taxexp-depfisc/2013/taxexp1301-fra.asp**

14 Statistique Canada. 2014. *Statistiques sur le revenu 2013 (Année d'imposition 2011), Tableau final 2 pour l'ensemble du Canada*, Retrieved from **http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/stts/gb11/pst/fnl/pdf/tbl2-fra.pdf**

Strong trends

Many foundations make a clear distinction, as reflected in their organizational chart, between the investment of funds in financial markets and the allocation of funding for projects and programs. Their investments are intended to bring in maximum returns for the foundation such that it can maximize the amounts available to grant for social, environmental and political purposes. These financial investments can at times conflict with the goals reflected in the foundations' mission. As a matter of example, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation had considerable investments in different companies (e.g. the fossil fuel industry) considered to be inimical to human health, while itself focusing on human health as its core mission. The Béati Foundation, however, has managed to align its core values with its financial investments through a socially responsible investing policy. In addition, inspired by the community microcredit tradition, it keeps roughly 10% of its endowment funds outside of financial markets and makes it available in the form of solidary loans. Finally, the Foundation is beginning to engage, on occasion, in shareholder activism, which consists of using the shares owned in a company to put pressure on that organization to change its strategy, whether this be through dialogue, by proposing a resolution at the shareholders meeting, or by threatening to divest its shares.

In recent years, shareholder activism has become a very important means of action for some foundations, particularly in the United States, to help advance fossil fuel divestment campaigns. This type of action has mobilized colossal sums of money (nearly 50 billion dollars to date), from the "submerged" part of the philanthropic iceberg, that is, the capital of foundations. The orders of magnitude, and thus the possible impacts, of shareholder activism are infinitely superior to even the most effective use of the 3.5% (in Canada) or the 5% (in the U.S.) of their net worth that foundations must disburse annually for their own programs or in grants. Another option would be to envisage using a part of this 3.5% to finance projects setting in motion this huge "submerged" financial capacity towards the purpose of structurally transforming the market. This type of divestment campaign also draws attention to the collective action accomplished by foundations working together.

3. Positioning with respect to transformations within the philanthropic field

A unique space

Béati is not entirely in control over how it is perceived by grantee organizations or the general public insofar as the associations attached to the philanthropic foundation label can sometimes have more weight than Béati's individual voice. Yet, Béati's positioning within philanthropy is all the more significant as the field in Quebec appears to be undergoing a process of progressive institutionalization. It is a space that has its own set of actors (foundations, professionals, academic experts); its own debates (such as its relations with the state, for-profit corporations or the community sector), its own issues around demarcating its identity (What should fall under the purview of philanthropy? What is the role of policy? What is a foundation legally empowered and politically legitimized to do? When might it step outside of its role?); issues of representation (Who is invited to speak on behalf of foundations in televised debates, government hearings, academic conferences?); and its forums for debate (such as the Institut Mallet or Philanthropic Foundations Canada). It is a space whose perimeter and boundaries have to be continually negotiated and defended, as evidenced in the debates within the Canada Revenue Agency over what constitutes a public or private foundation and what qualifies as charitable or not.

In Quebec, the philanthropic sector contends with its own disparities and even tensions with regard to: foundation size; affinities with different fields of endeavour (religion, politics, community action, sports, medicine); scale of intervention (local, provincial, federal, international); sub-categories with their own networks (the Centraide/United Way foundations, community foundations); size and extent of economic resources (size of endowment, amounts raised by fundraising or through partnerships); social capital (pool of contacts, ability to mobilize other stakeholders, quality of relationships with community, political and religious organizations); and symbolic capital (age/maturity of the foundation, prestige associated with the founder's name, board members' reputation, recognition conferred by awards, testimonials from grantees). Overall, foundations are embedded in a broader ecosystem that supports, constrains and empowers, allocates or removes resources, or sets them up them in relationships of competition or cooperation.

The quest for "philanthropic impact"

Lester Salamon advocates for a new conception of the philanthropic field that: (1) integrates a multitude of financial sector players alongside foundations; (2) embraces a diversified usage of financial capital (gifts, loans, various financial securities); and (3) expands the range of potential recipients of funding or investment to include not only non-profit organizations but also social enterprises, cooperatives and even "traditional" private enterprises, while continuing to exclude the state.[15] Through this, Salamon is proposing to revamp the underpinnings of philanthrocapitalism by placing the private sector and the third sector on equal footing. However, this symbolic "coup de force" is largely contested, notably by Michael Edwards, who points among other things to issues concerning impact measurement and the selection bias applied to eligible organizations and projects.[16]

---

15   Salamon, L. 2014. *Leverage for Good*. New York: Oxford University Press.

16 Edwards, M. 2014. « Part A : Who Loses ? », dans Salamon, L. (dir.) *New Frontiers of Philanthropy. A Guide to the New Tools and Actors Reshaping Global Philanthropy and Social Investing*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 539-549.

This is all the more resonant in the light of more recent trends, such as:

1) Social impact bonds. In the form of a contract, a private investor finances a social, environmental or health program managed by a non-profit organization. If the program achieves the outcomes it has set for itself, the government reimburses the investor, with interest. If the program does not achieve its outcomes, the investor loses her or his money.

2) New forms of coalition around common issues, such as the recent initiative of the Collective Impact Project (CIP), launched by Centraide of Greater Montreal, with a presumed emphasis on outcomes measurement.

Beyond these trends of the moment, the discussion around collective impact is part of a deeper trend towards "proceduralizing" foundations' collective action. These procedures are often defined, implemented and evaluated by consulting firms that operate within a new marketplace of participatory engineering.

Béati: Where is its place within the philanthropic landscape?

Three elements characterize the Béati Foundation in this space:

- **Its particular position**, given its proximity to the community and religious sectors, and its relative distance to other fields of activity (politics, medicine, administration).

- **The greater relative importance of its social capital in relation to its economic capital**, embodied in the strong reputation that the Foundation has within the community sector (at times much greater than that of foundations with much bigger endowments) and in its capacity to mobilize other foundations, including those with the most significant financial resources.

- **Its unique contribution to the empowerment of the philanthropic field in Quebec.** The Foundation works to deepen the dialogue between foundations by inviting them to speak on their own behalf on the issues that concern them.

On the one hand, these transformations within the philanthropic field reflect favourably upon the Foundation's positioning. On a number of levels, they are aligned with Béati's own orientations, whether these be its commitment to foster dialogue between foundations (rather than subscribing to an individualist, "to each his own" philosophy), its framing of its own action in terms of collective mobilization (rather than acts of private generosity), its emphasis on a diversified usage of financial tools that is consistent with its mission (rather than a strict separation between endowment investing geared toward maximum returns and charitable giving in alignment with the foundation's mission), or its explicit offer of support to grantees. On the other hand, the Béati Foundation is out of step with the shifts in the broader philanthropic sector, whether it be by its framework of reference (progressive Christianity), its privileged relations with the community sector, the emphasis it places on strong state-provided social protections, or its distance from the business world. These broader shifts have made way for a strain of philanthropy that is closer to the business world to take the lead in redefining what philanthropy is. In essence, this divide, or discrepancy, between Béati and a major part of the philanthropic field is rooted in differences in their respective visions of social transformation. Béati's more radical notion of empowerment is far removed from the neoliberal interpretation of this term. Instead, Béati seeks to create room for exploring and expressing other ways of doing and for questioning established positions with regard to the state, the market or philanthropy. Yet, this type of public positioning implies that the Foundation must clearly define who or what it represents.

When Béati speaks,
who is speaking?

The different components of Béati are what make up its identity, yet each has different implications for whom and what Béati represents.

1. Who is not speaking?

The voice of Béati's original founder does not make itself heard through the Foundation. One of Béati's particularities lies in the composition of its selection committee. And yet, the anonymity of this committee's makeup means that this particularity cannot be made visible to the outside world.

2. Who could be speaking?

…religious congregations?

If contributions from religious congregations continue to grow, are they not likely to gain influence over the choice of projects, be it directly or through the selection committee, who might more or less consciously incorporate certain predilections of those congregations? Moreover, the social change philanthropy-type model subscribes to core principles such as a transparency in the funding process, a frank and direct exchange between the recipient and donor, and a clear identification of expectations in both directions. How would these principles continue to be expressed and reflected by Béati? The Béati Foundation, for its part, grapples with the same challenges as any recipient with regards to its donor(s): maintaining autonomy, developing stable lines of communication, and the difficulty of finding funding to cover the costs of certain activities. What line in the sand would have to be crossed for Béati to refuse a partnership proposal? To what degree must the source of income align with the Foundation's mission? Or, conversely, to what extent do the Béati Foundation's actions implicate donor religious congregations?

…the foundations' stakeholders?

When the Foundation takes a position publicly (i.e., in the media, in parliamentary committees), who does this position informally engage? The board of directors? The selection committee?

…grantees?

To what extent does Béati's public voice indirectly engage grantee organizations? The rather enthusiastic reaction of these groups to a letter published in *Le Devoir* in March 2015[17] demonstrates that there is indeed an impact, even if this does not mean that these groups necessarily feel directly implicated by the position taken by the Foundation. Is there any way that Béati's public voice could be more engaging for grantee groups? For example, such that groups could somehow sense that when the Foundation commits itself to a public position it is channeling their own expression? If the Foundation is only perceived as a means of financial support, most likely not. But if the relation between the Foundation and grantees was to feature an explicit complicity, groups might be more inclined to feel this way. This channeling of the grantee voice could possibly be achieved by orienting the Foundation's role even more towards serving as a convener and networking agent for grantees, something that has been explored in reflections both on the Foundation's side and among grantee groups. Therefore, it appears that Béati's role is changing from one of simple funder to one of builder of collective space.

…of Béati's leadership?

A final way of exploring this issue is to return to a dilemma that was identified in the aforementioned case study of the Haymarket People's Fund (HMP) and which has had an impact on what HMP funds, on what it does and, ultimately, on what it is: the dilemma of "supporting versus initiating."

In the United States in the 1980s, in the face of the neoconservative revolution, social movements underwent a period of relative withdrawal and quiescence. HMP decided that it should try to revive these social movements, not only by defining orientations for them but also by reaching out to stakeholders, by building coalitions, by concentrating funding on a few key issues rather than allocating a greater number of smaller grants—in short, to proactively work to catalyze a movement rather than wait for its possible resurgence, by engaging in what they referred to as "strategic grantmaking." The role and identity of the HMP was thus transformed from that of a simple funder of a pre-existing movement to that of a key player, catalyst and stakeholder in a movement being forged.

For the Béati Foundation, this dilemma between supporting or catalyzing a movement is also raised with respect to its historic support for progressive spiritual and religious groups, whose numbers are dwindling today. This dilemma could also apply to many emerging issues, such as global warming or the international refugee crisis. **Should the Foundation wait for a movement to form before itself beginning to act?** Or can a foundation with a social change focus seek to catalyze a movement? But, would this not break with its heritage, with a community of actors bound together by a complicity and a certain homogeneity? Is there not a risk here of drifting away from Béati's historical roots? Conversely, might not this long-established complicity and homogeneity create a closed, self-referential dynamic?

---

17 On March 10, 2015, nine foundations signed an open letter in the "Idées" section of the newspaper *Le Devoir* entitled "Les risques de la rigueur budgétaire" (The risks of budget austerity). The contents of the letter were then widely taken up by the media, including in interviews with the executive director of the Fondation Béati, the collective's designated spokesperson. For more information on this collective, see Berthiaume, A. & Lefèvre, S. 2016. *The Collectif québécois des fondations sur les inégalités sociales. An exploratory case study of collaboration between Quebec foundations.* Working Paper #11. Montréal: PhiLab

3. Within this shifting of tectonic plates, what voice might Béati have in promoting a other way for philanthropy?

So far, Béati has followed a coherent and well-executed trajectory: funding projects embodying the values of the Foundation, carried out by organizations with sound vision and innovative qualities, in the hope of bringing about some sort of social change. The Foundation's success is measured by the quality of the relationships maintained with its grantees, defined more by complicity than by an unequal power dynamics. For Béati, deciding on and committing to this path means accepting certain rules of the game that considerably limit and constrain its range of philanthropic possibilities. On the one hand, there are state regulations that draw boundaries between charitable activities and political activities, as well as longstanding policy orientations leading governments to withdraw from their own social protection obligations and pass on responsibility to foundations for proving funding support to community organizations—yet without giving these foundations any say in this arrangement. On the other hand, there are the rules of the market, which push foundations to work with tools of financial speculation that are known to wreak havoc, and even to adopt and adapt attendant semantic devices, such as the term "return on social investment."

Another path would be to try to transform these rules of the game, insofar as keeping them unchanged would undeniably stall social change as well, reinforcing a form of powerlessness felt by many actors, even those able to demonstrate the aspired qualities of *innovation, resilience* or *excellence*, to use the established terms. The movements of the state or the market, whether it be withdrawal of the former or advances into philanthropic terrain of the latter, like it or not have implications for the Foundation. Indeed, they significantly transform the conditions under which the whole field of philanthropy operates. Any intervention seeking to change these rules of the game requires some sort of public engagement on the part of the Foundation. Given the scale of the challenges, the Foundation has very little chance of overcoming them on its own. As a necessary precondition, the broader philanthropic field would need to be mobilized around these issues. This for Béati could be a worthy stake in and of itself, in order to demonstrate that another philanthropic path and voice exists. Moreover, the Foundation could also avail itself of widely-used yet vague buzzwords, such as *support and capacity-building assistance, impact, partnership and empowerment*, and appropriate them to convey meanings suited to its own purposes. Indeed, given its experience, and especially its relationships with grantees, it is well-positioned to engage in this semantic battle over the meaning and usage of these terms.

In this capacity, Béati has something to say and to contribute to debates within the philanthropic field regarding the best approaches to providing support and assistance to community organizations. In reflecting on their own practices of providing support, foundations are called upon to recognize both the power dynamics and the closeness and proximity that characterize relations maintained with grantees. However, this choice, and opportunity, to make its voice heard comprises a challenge for the Foundation in a number of ways. For one, it runs counter to its own history in which the original donor chose to stay out of the public eye, and based on which the Foundation has given voice to grantees rather than stand in the spotlight itself. In some ways, this orientation also contradicts the tradition of social change philanthropy, wherein foundations reject the plutocratic bias of giving voice to actors on the basis of their financial weight. Lastly, this orientation puts the Foundation to the test insofar as it forces it to question its own legitimacy to intervene in the public space, to define exactly in whose name and for what it speaks and, ultimately, to expose itself to criticism—something that the more conventionally discreet foundations are habitually spared and that is often countered with the argument that "private generosity" is not accountable to anyone.

Strategies of support in an organizational change process[18]

Support strategies	Characteristics
Imposition	The objectives, means and scenario for implementation are not subject to discussion. Beneficiaries are informed of decisions made by the change agent.
Pressure	The objectives, means and scenario for implementation are decided by the change agent, who then tries to convince the beneficiaries of the project.
Consultation	Beneficiaries are invited to share their views on the project (objectives, means or scenarios), but the project officer remains the sole decision-maker.
Co-management	The decision-making power in relation to objectives, means and scenarios is shared equally between the two partners. They must agree before implementing the change (otherwise the project will not take place).
Incentive	The project officer has no formal power to guide the objectives, means and scenarios chosen by beneficiaries. However, she or he has enough influence to convince them to adopt a different approach.
Suggestion	The project officer can make suggestions to the beneficiaries in terms of objectives, means or scenarios.
Empowerment	The beneficiaries hold most, if not all, of the decision-making power regarding objectives, means and scenarios. The project officer has resources that can be used by beneficiaries in the decision-making process.

---

18 From Collerette, P., Delisle, G. & Perron, R. 1997. *Le changement organisationnel : Théorie et pratique.* Québec : *Les Presses de l'Université du Québec*, p. 132.

Three models of empowerment [19]

Radical model

The radical model builds on theories of social transformation like those of Paulo Freire, the most radical branch of the feminist movement or some grassroots and community organizing movements. From this perspective, the main issues regarding empowerment concern the recognition of oppressed or marginalized groups as a first step to put an end to their stigmatization, self-determination, redistribution of resources and political rights. The objective of individual and collective emancipation leads to a project of social transformation which, in the most radical approaches, is based on a questioning of the capitalist system.

Corollaries: justice, redistribution, social change, conscientization and bottom-up power.

Liberal model

The liberal model […] is distinct from economic liberalism based on laissez-faire and the law of the market in that it legitimizes the role of the state and public policy to promote civil rights and reduce social and economic inequalities. The model articulates the defense of individual freedoms with a focus on social cohesion and the life and well-being of communities. This socially liberal model may take into account the socio-economic and political conditions of the exercise of power, without going so far as to structurally examine social inequalities. It incorporates some feminist positions, for example, by advocating for women's integration into the labour market as a contribution to economic development.

Corollaries: equality, opportunities, poverty reduction, good governance, empowerment and choice.

Neoliberal model

Finally, the neoliberal model corresponds to a political rationality that "puts the market first" but that "is not only—and not even primarily—centered on the economy; rather, it extends and disseminates market values to social policy and to all institutions. This conception does not imply a disappearance of the state. On the contrary, neoliberal policies […] are more about putting the state at the service of the market and managing it according to entrepreneurial values than about eliminating the state. […] The concept of empowerment is invoked within a logic of managing poverty and inequality, in order to allow individuals to exercise their individual capacities and to make "rational" decisions in a market economy context. In this sense, having access to power means being integrated into the world of labour and consumption, finding one's place in the market economy, and being an "entrepreneur of one's own life."

Corollaries: ability to steer one's fate, make rational choices, empowerment as liberty and individual will

---

19 Adapted and translated from the typology by Bacqué M.-H. & Biewener C. 2013. *L'empowerment, une pratique émancipatoire.* Paris: La Découverte.

Another path would be to try
to transform these rules of the game,
insofar as keeping them unchanged
would undeniably stall social change.

fondation
Béati