

Sotirova, Asya

[Yankova, Diana, ed. Canada: a view from without = Canada: un regard d'ailleurs]

The Central European journal of Canadian studies. 2012, vol. 8, iss. [1], pp. 119-121

ISBN 978-80-210-5970-2

ISSN 1213-7715 (print); ISSN 2336-4556 (online)

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/125691>

Access Date: 17. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

barbs through the cloth to a listener who cannot protest because of her own compromised position [i.e. because she cannot reveal her eavesdropping]. Mimicking a child's playfulness, Miss Templeton forces gaiety in her discourse [...] (77). There is more in these books than meets the eye.

Both professorial and student scholars of Canadian social and literary history will benefit immensely from "*As She Should Be*" – *Codes*

of Conduct in Early Canadian Women's Writing. Feminist and post-colonial scholars will also find this work of great value. The work is free of jargon and accessible to all readers, even those without a firm grounding in Canadian literary history. This short book includes an impressive bibliography, and Gadpaille seems to have left no stone unturned in her research. To end with another laudatory cliché: sometimes less really is more.

Diana Yankova (ed.)

Canada: A View from Without / Canada: Un Regard D'ailleurs

Sofia: New Bulgarian University Press. 182 pages. ISBN 978-954-535-469-4

Asya Sotirova

New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria

At last, here it is! A product of hard work and independent studies, *Canada: A View from Without* is the latest contribution to the field of Canadian Studies in Bulgaria. Seen and explored from the viewpoint of "outsiders" who are interested in the vast and diverse culture that makes up Canada, the book carefully leads the reader through the highly varied aspects of Canadian culture. The ever-growing interest in Canadian Studies in Bulgaria seems unstoppable. This volume is another demonstration of that inquisitiveness of Bulgarian professors, lecturers and explorers of the unknown.

Edited by Diana Yankova, professor of Canadian and American Studies at the New Bulgarian University and Vice-President of the Central European Association for Canadian Studies, the book impresses with the variety of topics organized in its various chapters, each written by a different author. The reader

is introduced to subjects such as history, language, religion, new acts and regulations in the political system of the country and, last but certainly not least, literature and its influences and inspirations.

Our attention is piqued quickly at the beginning of the book, in the preface written by the editor. The Introduction ends with one of the subjects taken into consideration and up to be voted in the House of Commons in Canada – "A Mari ad Mare ad Mare" / "From Sea to Sea to Sea". What is this? A resemblance to the original national motto on the Coat of Arms of Canada that reads "A Mari usque ad Mare" / "From Sea to Sea"? No! The editor uses the statement to draw attention and awareness to changes and current issues in Canada. It is not surprising that northern Canadians feel somewhat excluded from the national motto, and thus more or less underestimated. The motto change would not only

acknowledge the geographic reality of a country bordering three oceans, but symbolically would reinforce Canada's sovereignty over the Northwest Passage and other disputed Arctic possessions. The whole outlook of the book reflects such an up-to-date, challenging approach. Each one of the authors shows the same understanding of the discussed topics and uses his/her own methods and personal attitude towards introducing Canada to non-Canadians.

The first article, "The Canadian mosaic: milestones of Canadian multicultural policy", by Tzvetana Guerdjikova, focuses on the historical roots and characteristics of Canada's policy on multiculturalism and diversity. Her attention is focused on the model of multi-ethnic society that Canada presents to the world and how it has been developed and refined throughout its history – an experience that may not be universally achieved but that could be used as an example in the world of differences and divided societies. The volume continues with a topic about immigration in Canada. Galina Avramova's article "Canadian multiculturalism: Bulgarians in Canada" focuses on how and due to what factors Bulgarians have started to immigrate to Canada. Introducing Bulgarian history, she draws attention to the Bulgarian immigrant experience in the Canadian culture and reality.

Widening the horizon and diving deep in the matter of religion, culture and legislative acts, Boris Naimushin and Diana Yankova raise political and linguistic questions that are a part of everyday reality in the country. In "The Holy Scriptures a l'anglais to suit any locale", Boris Naimushin explores the fierce debates that emerged between Bill C-250 and the Bible, and that the latter could be used as "hate literature" while at the same time focusing on free speech and the adaptation of the texts of the Bible for the distinct audience. Di-

ana Yankova continues the topic of legislation and acts in Canada with "En francais s'il vous plait...et plus grand", introducing the disputes on the equality of status, rights and privileges of both the English and French languages in Canada.

The book takes a swift turn and shifts from political subjects to belle lettres. Madeline Danova begins with a nineteenth-century travel writer from America – Henry James. An intelligent observer, Henry James describes and distinguishes the cultural differences between the Old World and the New World, and also between the United States and Canada, managing to capture the distinctive duality of Canadianness. The article "The experience of exile in Eva Hoffman's *Lost in Translation: a Life in a New Language*," by Stefana Rousenova, locates a different point of view. It is an autobiographical journey through the difficult upbringing of the central character, representing the struggle and the complex experience of the protagonist – a young Jewish girl. An immigrant in Canada herself, Eva Hoffman experiences change of culture, language and place. The author depicts the effort of the writer and her perception, viewed through the prism of the immigrant experience.

"Picking through the Pieces: Carol Shields's *Unless*", written by Andrei Andreev, introduces another fine Canadian author – Carol Shields. He acquaints the reader with the work and life of a novelist who brings out the unusual in the ordinary life of her protagonist. In a humorous way Carol Shields offers various important questions for discussion. Not only is the male-female juxtaposition in the writers' world discussed but also the ignorance of journalists, the arrogance of literary critics and the judgment on female writers.

Along with the positively orientated texts, topics like sin, crime, redemption, punishment, personal loss and discrimination sneak



in. This is the direction chosen by Rennie Yotova. Written in French, her article presents Anne Hébert's novel *Les fous de Bassan* and explores the dark parts of the human soul. All these literary articles complete the puzzle of Canada in an interesting narrative, which combines personal experiences with social and communal manners. They not only add a cultural background, but also serve as a tribute to each of the novelists, in admiration of their talent.

At the end of the book are articles suggesting cooperation and mutual help between Canadian knowledge and experience and Bulgarians' first steps on the road to Canada and its vast culture. Tzvetelina Krasteva's article "Du politiquement au grammaticalement correct" reflects the tendencies within Canadian linguistics and compares the language systems and the socio-cultural context in France and in the Francophone countries, and Quebec in particular. Meanwhile, Boyan Alexiev's article "Canadian-Bulgarian Terminology Research Efforts: Common Threads" focuses on more specific terminological research and approaches to terminological management in Canada and Bulgaria. He compares Canada and Bulgaria's governmental structures with a view to the different methods by which terminology is introduced.

Maria Georgieva and Svetlin Stratiev's "Canada Viewed from a Distance" is an article aimed at students interested in Canadian culture. The writers present a syllabus whereby Bulgarian students could become familiar with Canada and Canadian Studies. The course suggests different approaches, research and different principles in teaching and learning, as well as a question paper that could define and examine students' background knowledge about Canada and their determination to continue to participate in the field.

Overall, *Canada: A View from Without* not only provides information about the different aspects of cultural and social life in Canada but also establishes firm ground knowledge for anyone who is (not) familiar with this topic. People are always searching for something new and different to expand their horizons and broaden their knowledge of the world. Canada is a country which allows the opportunity to be rediscovered and explored by all on a quest of new lands and boundaries. This collection of articles presents the unflagging and determined spirit of the Bulgarian and broader Central European community interested in Canadian Studies (not to mention Canadians and Canadianists in general!) to understand and maybe learn from the Canadian knowledge and experience.

