



### **Canadá. Un estado posmoderno**

(Canada: A Postmodern State)

*Teresa Gutiérrez-Haces* (comp.)

Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Canadienses-

Canadian Ministry of Foreign Relations and International

Trade-Plaza y Valdés

Mexico City, 2000, 578 pp.

Arthur Schopenhauer once commented that some books “are not only useless, but absolutely pernicious,” while others are “good books, with noble aims,”<sup>1</sup> that is, useful and timely.

This still applies to books today. *Canadá. Un Estado posmoderno* qualifies as the latter. However, although some books have outstanding qualities, that does not mean they are without failings. The following is a review of both.

This volume’s compiler is the author of numerous publications on Canada and has presented similar works<sup>2</sup> on different issues concerning a nation which, although not unknown, is studied very little outside certain circles of specialists.

The book includes the work of 33 researchers on Canada from academia and institutions in different parts of North

America. Its objective is to present—to connoisseurs and newcomers alike—a mosaic of essays interpreting contemporary Canadian reality. The subject matter, approached expertly, is divided in six chapters:

- I. Reflections on the Canadian State: From the Postwar Period to Globalization
- II. The Canadian Economy between the Requirements of Free Trade and Structural Adjustment Policies
- III. New Themes and Strategies for North America: Migration and Refugees, Unions, Civic Organizations and Cultural Industries and Professional Services
- IV. Ethnicity, First Nations and Self-Government in Canada
- V. The Redefinition of Canada's Foreign Policy
- VI. Culture and Society in Canada

For readers who wish to delve deeper into certain subjects, 23 pages of basic and complementary bibliographies on Canada from the perspective of different disciplines are included as well.

Although *Canadá. Un estado posmoderno* presents a broad spectrum of studies on a country characterized by its multi-culturalism, the treatment given to different topics is disproportionate. Political, economic and social issues are far more prevalent than cultural questions, an arena

where postmodern manifestations are more evident, such as in literature, music, art, film and architecture.<sup>3</sup>

This is my main criticism of this work—and its title—since it is not only these topics—the socioeconomic, political, commercial spheres and what derives from them—that determine whether or not a state is considered postmodern.

Finally, for readers interested in editorial details, various inconsistencies in the publication hopefully will be corrected in a future edition. **NMM**

Hugo A. Espinoza Rubio

**Staff writer**

Translated by Andrea Martínez

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> “On Reading and Books” in Arthur Schopenhauer, *Reading, Books and Other Essays*, Edmundo González-Blanco and Miguel Urquiola, trans. (Madrid: EDAF ed., 1996), pp. 169-180.

<sup>2</sup> Teresa Gutiérrez-Haces and Mónica Vereá Campos, eds., *Canadá en transición* (Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones Sobre América del Norte, UNAM, 1994).

<sup>3</sup> Todd Gitlin, “To Finally Know What Postmodernism Is,” Mercedes Córdova, trans., *La Jornada Semanal*, no. 82, 6 January 1991, pp. 20-25, and Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or the Logic of Advanced Capitalism*, José Luis Pardo Torío, trans., Paidós Studio Collection, 83 (Barcelona: Paidós, 1991).

