

more necessary. One does not easily turn one's back on Ruskin's remark that an employer is just only as he deals with a subordinate 'as he would with his own son'. And his conclusion 'that such paternalism is a mirror of the basic paternalism of the natural order' presses the question to what extent Christianity, with its talk of a Father and of the Body of Christ, is not, of its very nature, always committed to some kind of *organic* hope or intention for society.

Although the chapters on Ruskin and Morris are good, Miss Chandler leaves her best wine until last—and then it is only half a glass. Her concluding chapter on the failure of the medieval ideal, as it affected the life of the American, Henry Adams, ought to bring the implications of her argument to a head. Adams began by believing that the Middle Ages was the time when 'man held the highest idea of himself as a unit in a unified universe'. But, on his return to the United States, he discovered that this was merely the form taken by his love affair with Europe, and with a Europe already dead: modern man's conception of the First Cause was not merely 'mechanical' and self-determining, it was of a meaningless and uncontrollable force, which in its social and political form implied the inevitable decay of small and democratic institutions. This fear of bigness became more typical of Adams as he grew older; and it is associated with his vision of a megalopolis, in which degradation, not progress, is the law of history. It was Faith

alone that supported the Gothic Arch, and, 'if Faith fails, Heaven is lost'. This is what happened to Adams in the Land of Opportunity. Will it happen inevitably to us all?

The maxim—'increase the size and the quality of life goes down'—certainly seems to apply without exception—to breweries as much as to car factories. Yet we never seem to be more than 'on the way' to ensuring a higher quality of life. Are we any nearer a solution, therefore, than when Coleridge, writing in 1820 on the conflict in Scott's novels, identified 'the two great moving principles of social humanity', as 'religious adherence to the past... the desire and admiration of the permanent... and the passion for the increase of knowledge, instincts of *progression* and *free agency*'? One hundred and fifty years later a Soviet poet speaks of himself as 'like a train / rushing for many years now / between the city of Yes / and the city of No'. Does an 'age of transition' have to be forced to come to an end, therefore; or were the dreamers of order right, and 'transition' is the wrong metaphor?

Yevtushenko's answer is that I live only as I
 'let my nerves be strained
 like the wires
 between the city of No.
 and the city of Yes'.

JOHN COULSON

WINCKELMANN, by Wolfgang Leppmann. *Victor Gollancz Ltd*, London, 1971. 312 pp. £3.

The jacket claims that this is the first biography in English of Johann Winckelmann (there are some dozen in German), and it is a pity it is such a poor one. It fails in the first place as a biography of 'the father of archaeology as we know it' (p. viii); while there is much discussion of Winckelmann's development and work as an art historian (and most of what is good in the book is devoted to an exposition of Winckelmann's methods and conclusions in dealing with Greek and hellenistic sculpture) there is no systematic attempt at all to demonstrate that this in fact entitles Winckelmann rather than, say, Schliemann, to be rated 'father of archaeology as we know it'. In fact the author excuses himself the task of dealing with this question in the foreword where he says (p. vii) 'even the most enterprising among those [scholars] that deal with classical

antiquity, the archaeologists, tend to be forgotten nowadays unless they also excelled at something else, as Schliemann did at making money'. Not only is Schliemann in fact primarily remembered because he was a scholar, and one whose methods were much more closely related to present-day archaeological techniques than were Winckelmann's (who never actually did any field archaeology at all), but there is here, and throughout the body of the book, an insistence upon a dichotomy between a person's 'character' and 'work' which is both unsound and often positively irritating. This dichotomy (the second great weakness of the book) reveals itself in two ways. Firstly there is the avowed attempt to rescue Winckelmann from the obscurity due to 'incrustations of dead scholarship' by showing that, scholar though he was,

he had as interesting a life as 'Columbus, Michaelangelo, Napoleon, Galileo, and, yes, Casanova too' (p. vii), or there is for instance the desperate filling out of the years of Winckelmann's youth, for which there is virtually no evidence, with descriptions of town and university life of the early eighteenth century in Prussia. Secondly there is the unhappy style of the book as a whole, which tends to hover unconvincingly between apologetic scholarship and contrived and often infuriating concessions to 'popular' conventions which take the form of expressions such as that on page 147 where we hear of Winckelmann's wise choice of domicile in the artists' quarter of Rome where Salvator Rosa lived around one corner and Piranesi around the other, 'in the building that now houses Eleanora Ganett's boutique in Via Sistina'... or alternatively (p. 22) in the midst of a serious discussion of the Prussian monarchy the author attempts to lighten the tone of the passage by informing us that Frederick the Great was responsible for the transformation of 'Prussia, the real, pre-Hitler and pre-Hollywood Prussia'. Furthermore, since a popular biography is not, apparently, complete without an account of the sex life of the subject, and since Winckelmann was singularly inactive in this respect, the author has in the appropriate contexts either to remind us (e.g. p. 32) that we know nothing, or, more frequently, to insist with boring regularity that Winckelmann was (quite probably; but not proven by the author) a homosexual.

On the positive side, however, this book does contain some very thorough and interesting discussion of Winckelmann as a scholar, and moreover deals with most of his major works individually. There is a good bibliography which lists available editions of Winckelmann's writings and a selection of general works (mainly in German) on subjects relating to him. There are thirty-one plates; apart from two portraits of Winckelmann and perhaps the engravings and paintings of places he lived in, the rest can be criticized on the same grounds as the text. The 'tone-setters', portraits of Frederick William I, Frederick the Great, or Augustus the Strong, for instance, serve only to illustrate the background material in the text, and occupy space which could more valuably have been devoted to photographs

of works of art discussed by the author, the vast majority of which are not illustrated; while of those pictures that are provided of sculptures and excavated objects from Pompeii, several are superfluous or irrelevant to Winckelmann's work.

It comes as a surprise, having read this book, to return to the foreword and find that the author thinks the justification for writing about Winckelmann today is that he paved the way for modern archaeology (not proven), and secondly, even more insistently, that because he was 'this idealist who mastered the harshest facts of everyday life, this non-believer in the Vatican, this self-made man in an unegalitarian age, this homosexual in a century dominated by women, this republican in the *ancien régime*, and this educator who hated schools' he is 'in essence more modern than many a more recent writer' (p. viii). On the contrary, the impression one gets of Winckelmann as drawn in this biography is precisely that discounted in the foreword as the least justification for writing about him—namely that he was one of the initiators of the 'Greek Revival'—a movement which the author admits is quite foreign to us now. In fact, to be honest, it is an impossible task to justify a study of Winckelmann himself or his scholarship on the grounds that it is 'relevant' today. As a person he is less accessible than many of his contemporaries, and his method of art criticism proceeded by laying down absolute standards of beauty and proportion (always in Winckelmann's case, we are told, the proportions of the nude male figure as sculpted by what he thought were the classical Greeks) against which all other art was to be measured. Thus for example Michaelangelo's sculpture was by his standards condemned for its 'overpowering force, achieved at the expense of grace and beauty' (p. 196). One would find it hard to justify this style of criticism now. In the end, this book only serves, despite its purpose, to demonstrate that Winckelmann was in fact first and foremost a scholar, and the accretions of personal detail and wealth of background information about his contemporaries add very little to his historical importance while doing nothing to disguise the remoteness of his scholarship from ours. At its price this book can hardly be recommended.

DAPHNE NASH