

Gérald Finley, *George Heriot: Postmaster-Painter of the Canadas*. Toronto. University of Toronto Press, 1983. 310 pp., 93 illus., \$37.50 (cloth)

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héraclitienne qui a précédé la démarche aporétique socratique. Toujours en tête du chapitre 1, Diana Hume George cite en regard une remarque de Freud: «But opposition is not necessarily enmity; it is merely misused and made an occasion for enmity» (p. 29). Pour inattendue qu'elle soit et apparemment pertinente, la juxtaposition ne dépasse pas, je pense, un certain niveau de surface. La conception freudienne de la psyché fait que le mot «opposition» n'a pas du tout les mêmes connotations ni, conséquemment, les mêmes résonances.

Vu le but de ce compte rendu, qui est de comprendre dans la mesure du possible les rapports entre la pensée de Blake et sa production artistique, je ne m'attarderai pas sur ce problème de la légitimité d'une comparaison qui, comme l'affirme le proverbe français, «n'est pas toujours raison». De toute façon, l'intérêt de ce livre pour l'historien d'art me semble être d'inciter à une approche psychanalytique de l'œuvre de Blake plutôt que strictement historique. Ainsi que Freud lui-même l'a tenté à propos de Léonard de Vinci, nous sommes invités à comprendre certains aspects fondamentaux de la représentation graphique blakiste, en tant que récepteurs-observateurs typiques d'un temps particulier de la culture occidentale: la fin du xx^e siècle. Grâce à ce nouveau référentiel, les représentations de Blake acquièrent une nouvelle dimension.

Tenter de résumer le point de vue de l'auteur de *Blake and Freud* n'est pas chose facile vu la complexité de l'argumentation. Je noterai toutefois que l'auteur a tendance à voir chez les deux penseurs une parenté, voire même une complémentarité: Freud, qui applique aux activités psychiques les principes de l'analyse divisionnelle systématique, a besoin, nous dit Diana Hume George, de Blake pour retrouver le sens de la synthèse. Quant à Blake, il a besoin de l'appareil conceptuel freudien pour que sa contribution à la psychologie apparaisse en clair. Le danger du désir de convergence de l'auteur (visiblement plus platoniste à la manière de Blake qu'aristotélicienne à la manière de Freud), c'est que l'on annonce comme «complémentaires» les deux personnages pour la seule raison qu'ils utilisent les deux cadres conceptuels antithétiques – le moniste et le

pluraliste – qui ont nourri la pensée occidentale depuis vingt-cinq siècles. À ce compte-là, Thomas d'Aquin et Karl Marx sont complémentaires. En fait, Diana Hume George reprend tout simplement la *coincidentia oppositorum* blakiste pour sa propre argumentation.

L'auteur n'entre pas dans l'examen des principes de composition utilisés par Blake dans ses créations visuelles. Tout un travail reste donc à faire, à mon sens très intéressant, dans le domaine «Art et psychanalyse»: il s'agirait de prendre comme base le système physique des objets visuels proposés par Blake et de dégager des caractéristiques formelles susceptibles de nous éclairer sur le travail de l'inconscient dans la symbolisation; du point de vue psychologique, le «non-dit» est plus instructif que le «dit». Les thèmes de Los, Orc et Enitharmon sont, à ce sujet, très favorables (cf. *The First Book of Urizen*, 1794). C'est qu'ils mettent en évidence le problème enfant/parents. La lecture du complexe d'Œdipe proposée par George pourrait être utile, tout autant que ses intéressantes observations sur la femme vue par Blake et Freud.

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GERALD FINLEY *George Heriot: Postmaster-Painter of the Canadas*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1983. 310 pp., 93 illus., \$37.50 (cloth).

Gerald Finley remarks at the end of his book that 'since his death George Heriot has not been accorded the attention he deserves' (p. 194). But thanks to this thoroughly researched and elegantly written study, our knowledge and appreciation both of Heriot's watercolour paintings and the late eighteenth-century Canadas in which he took so active an interest are greatly augmented. *George Heriot* is part biography, part art history: it is Finley's skillful integration of these elements that gives the reader a vivid sense of Heriot and his times.

Finley follows a conventional pattern in ten of his eleven chapters

by tracing the chronological development of Heriot's life and art. We are told of his Scottish heritage, his training under Paul Sandby at the Woolwich Royal Military Academy, his somewhat stormy years as head of the fledgling Canadian postal service, and his eventual return to England. Chapter one introduces this account with an admirably lucid discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of Heriot's art: the theory of the picturesque. After setting out the principles of the picturesque as they were formulated in the eighteenth century by Gilpin, Price, and Knight, Finley demonstrates Heriot's practical application of these tenets in the Canadian landscape. The need to observe the theory of the picturesque in action might seem obvious enough, but as the author states, its 'practical importance for the art of landscape painting in the late eighteenth century ... has never been adequately explained' (p. 8).

Finley's consideration of the picturesque exemplifies one of his book's great strengths, its attention to European (in which I include British) artistic conventions as they were applied – and inevitably transformed – in a new context. George Heriot was trained in England and formed to a large extent by conventions of taste current in late eighteenth-century London. He possessed a vision of a 'Canadian Arcadia' (p. 196), and in his best watercolours achieved an appropriately grand execution. Finley accounts for Heriot's aesthetic and social expectations by examining his British background and associations. This is the only way, it seems to me, that we can adequately understand what was new about Heriot's painting in Canada and thus claim him, as we do, as one of the premier early Canadian artists.

Heriot was accomplished as an artist, an administrator, and as a writer. He wrote passable poetry in both English and Latin to accompany his landscapes, and more importantly, published the illustrated *Travels through the Canadas* in 1807. Though some literary ability was expected in the class of British gentleman to which Heriot belonged, his abilities and ambitions exceeded the norm. The *Travels*, as Finley emphasizes, is a seminal document on this country's history and art history. It describes and



FIGURE 4. George Heriot, *Partridge Island, Bay of Fundy*. Finley, pl. 56.

visualizes early nineteenth-century life, and 'must be one of the earliest books to examine the North American landscape almost entirely from

a picturesque point of view' (p. 88). While Finley does discuss the genesis and final state of the *Travels*, he could, I think, have

taken the connection of word and image in Heriot's work much farther. In the illustrated travel books that were so popular at this time, the text very much controls our response to what we see. In Heriot's poems and books, picturesque theory as it is presented in writing governs our 'reading' of the landscapes. The best known example of this relationship between text and image – and one with which Heriot could have been familiar – was Turner's infamous 'Fallacies of Hope,' the lines of poetry which he often appended to his exhibition pictures.

George Heriot is precisely the kind of book that invites further interest in its subject. It is scholarly as well as a pleasure to read. Finley has provided an invaluable check-list of Heriot's work as well as numerous illustrations. (Unfortunately, as the author notes, all of these are black and white.) The book is, in short, a needed and welcome contribution to the art history of Canada.

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LIVRES COMMUNIQUÉS / BOOKS RECEIVED

BAEYER, EDWINNA (VON) *L'histoire du jardinage au Canada. Bibliographie provisoire / A Preliminary Bibliography for Garden History in Canada*. Ottawa, Direction des lieux et des parcs historiques nationaux, Parcs Canada, Environnement Canada, 1983. 24/26 p., gratuit (broché).

COLLARD, ELIZABETH *The Potters' View of Canada: Canadian Scenes on Nineteenth-Century Earthenware*. Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983. 194 + x pp., illus., \$29.95 (cloth).

GREY, ABBEY WEED *The Picture is the Window: The Window is the Picture*. New York, New York University Press, 1983. 100 + xvi pp., illus., \$20.00 (cloth), \$9.95 (paper).

HENNESSEY, WILLIAM J. *Russel Wright: American Designer*. Cambridge (Mass.) and London, MIT Press, 1983. 96 pp., 51 illus., \$15.00 (paper).

HERDEG, KLAUS *The Decorated Diagram: Harvard Architecture and the Failure of the Bauhaus Legacy*. Cam-

bridge (Mass.) and London, MIT Press, 1983. 125 + vii pp., illus., \$22.50 (cloth).

KALMAN, HAROLD and JOHN ROAF *Exploring Ottawa: An Architectural Guide to the Nation's Capital*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1983. 216 + vii pp., illus., \$10.95 (paper).

KARSH, YOUSUF *Karsh: A Fifty-Year Retrospective*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1983. 191 pp., illus., \$47.50 (cloth).

KUHNS, RICHARD *Psychoanalytic Theory of Art: A Philosophy of Art on Developmental Principles*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1983. 169 + xi pp., \$25.00 (cloth), \$11.50 (paper).

MUSCHAMP, HERBERT *Man About Town: Frank Lloyd Wright in New York City*. Cambridge (Mass.) and London, MIT Press, 1983. 214 pp., 10 illus., \$15.00 (cloth).

NOPPEN, LUC et MARC GRIGNON *L'art de l'architecte*. Catalogue de l'exposition (Musée du Québec, Galerie

nationale du Canada, Royal Ontario Museum). Québec, Université Laval/Musée du Québec, 1983. 300 p., illus., 6.00 \$ (broché).

PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, ALBERTO *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science*. Cambridge (Mass.) and London, MIT Press, 1983. 400 + x pp., illus., \$30.00 (cloth).

SHEEHAN, CAROL *Pipes That Won't Smoke: Coal That Won't Burn: Haida Sculpture in Argillite*. Calgary, Glenbow Museum, 1981. 214 pp., 232 illus., \$19.95 (paper).

WACKERNAGEL, MARTIN *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist: Projects and Patrons, Workshops and Art Market*. Translated by Alison Luchs. Princeton (NJ), Princeton University Press, 1981. 447 + xxx pp., \$37.50 (cloth), \$14.50 (paper).

WIEBENSON, DORA (ed.) *Architectural Theory and Practice from Alberti to Ledoux*. Exhibition catalogue (Yale University, Columbia University, University of Virginia), 1982. No pagination, illus., \$25.00 (paper).