

Témoignage sensible à l'inévitable communion des cultures, Shalom rappelle à quel point fragiles sont ces croyances, que l'on souhaiterait immuables, au contact d'autres convictions tout aussi légitimes. Militants de nationalismes ethniques, s'abstenir. Il faudra sans contredit approfondir ce roman des plus intrigants, si ce n'est que pour la richesse des paradoxes qu'il met en scène, dont celui qui définit le Juif comme "quelqu'un qui cherche ce qu'il est." (p. 20) n'est certes pas le moindre. À lire.

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Marie Étienne. *Anatolie*. Paris: Flammarion, 1997. 191 pages. 98FF. ISBN 2-08-067413-7.

Since 1977, with *Blanc clos*, Marie Étienne has given us a steady diet of modally diverse and discreetly ethically centred poetry or poetic *récits* — her latest work includes *Éloge de la rupture* (1991), *Katana* (1993) and the present substantial volume *Anatolie* — mixed intermittently with writings either overtly on the theatre or, as with *La Face et le lointain*, more subtly and creatively interwoven with her theatrical fascinations and experience.

Anatolie is seen by its author as a book of reiteration, reinscription, yet involving endless, and continuing (from earlier writings) modification and (self-) reinvention. "Moi aussi," she tells us, "je raconte une histoire — le voyage, la guerre, la rupture, l'exil — je la raconte en

prose ou en décasyllabes, ou en quatrains rimés, sans craindre de recommencer, sachant que comptent seules les variations, les improvisations à partir d'un unique thème — ou de plusieurs, mais inchangés. Comme au théâtre où les mots sont donnés par un texte initial, mais où la mise en scène ajoute et interprète avec des différences qui constituent tout le plaisir du spectateur." If the fifteen texts of *Anatolie* can be gripping, they are strangely so. Étienne's depicted world, with its *parade sauvage* of "nightmares," "murderers," its *Danseuse de Pina*, its "Jeune Fille aux rats," its "instructions pour pleurer," constitutes a disturbing, chaotic, "jerky" theatrical gathering of the multiple fragments of a consciousness — a gathering, however, unable to attain to a totality, caught merely in the quest for an "impossible coherence." Horror, ambivalence, even "[une] beauté enfoncée dans l'inconnu du sens" — all abound, disturb and bizarrely, eerily enchant, like the penultimate text, "Nazar le voyant."

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Salah Stétié. *La Parole et la preuve*. Sain-Nazaire: M.E.E.T. 1996. 189 pages. 130 FF. ISBN 2-903945-27-6.

The work of the great French-Lebanese poet, Salah Stétié, dates back more than twenty-five years to books such as *La Mort Abeille*, *Les Porteurs de feu* and *L'Eau froide gardée*, and, from the

outset just as today with volumes like *Un suspens de cristal*, *Seize paroles voilées*, and the present *La Parole et la preuve*, always manifest is, not only the surging, swirling, often enigmatical and metaphysically coloured creativity of his poetry, but also the conscious meditation constantly generated upon his own creative act, as well as that of both contemporaries and many great writers of bygone ages and diverse cultures. *La Parole et la preuve* gives us twelve interviews with a wide range of critics and writers — from Michel Orcel and Jean-Marie Le Sidaner to Olivier Apert, Richard Millet and Béatrice Bonhomme. That Salah Stétié's observations move continually back and forth between his own praxis and that of poets and mystics such as Mallarmé, Gibran, Du Bouchet, Djelal, Michaux, Silesius, Nerval, Parmenides, Hölderlin, Hakim, and that he is concerned more with meaning and ontology than with structure and style — none of this should surprise us. Poetry, for Stétié, remains the "obscure servant." The specificities of its articulations, along with its oppositions and paradoxes, tend to dissolve and leave us with a strange sense, a transcendent sense, one might say, of the relativity of utterance — despite its beauties and pertinences —, a sense of a unifiedness, a "purity" even, beyond specification yet buried deep within that "truth" which, as Hallaj put it, "I am." It is little wonder, then, that, for Stétié, form and void may be perceived as identical, and that poetry is ideally placed to encourage this perception. Mind, spirit, as

Stétié quotes Djelal as reminding us, "is the bird of vision and does not come to rest in signs." Inner and outer realities, too, may thus achieve fusion at the same time as an awareness dawns, via the poetic, of their fragile, airy, oddly empty, absent ontic modes. No wonder, either, that for Stétié, there is no definable path, no common way of being: even though we all explore the interrelated, half-shared secrets of "the difficulty of birth and being, the dazzlements engendered within us by the soul and through love, the terrors attached to illness, aging and death," uniqueness reigns supreme. "I am the Truth," the blinded and expectant, brilliant and obscure, caught — yet free — within the reciprocal validations of word and world we endlessly spin.

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Denise Le Dantec. *Les Campagnes heureuses.* Vénissieux: Paroles d'Aube. 1996. 84 pages. 85FF. ISBN 2-909096-64-5.

1975 saw the publication of Denise Le Dantec's *Le Jour* with the Éditions des femmes; 1985 brought to *Les Fileuses* d'étope the Prix de poésie de la Société des gens de Lettres; the 1990's have given us a fairly extraordinary range of fascination and voice, with *Le Journal des roses*, *Suite pour une enfance*, *Emily Brontë*, *Splendeurs des jardins de Paris*, *Opuscule d'Oeussant*. The slim but elegant *Les Campagnes heureuses* helps