
confondant avec le psychiatre, qu'il est également, tout en luttant contre lui, un peu sans doute comme Freud, comme Julien Bigras tourmentés par le démon de la littérature tout en entendant celui de la psychanalyse.

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Salah Stétié. *Fièvre et guérison de l'icône*, présentation d'Yves Bonnefoy. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale/Éditions UNESCO. 1998. 159 pages. 139FF. ISBN 2-7433-0113-9.

As Yves Bonnefoy writes in his preface to this remarkable yet richly characteristic collection, Salah Stétié's originality lies in his capacity for weaving a vast "tapestry ... of representations that undo themselves in a great continuous stirring of linguistic matter." The "face" of his poetry, like the face of being itself, Stétié perhaps best describes himself when he declares, in *Dormition de la neige*:

Et son visage un peu d'ardente neige
Offerte à toute nuit par toute nuit.

As André du Bouchet has recently written in *Pourquoi si calmes*, in a generalising manner, of course: "lisant, ne cherchez pas à reconstituer, restez sur l'obscurité de cette neige." And, indeed, in slowly reading our way through the swarming poetic meditations of *Fièvre et guérison de l'icône* — on the imbrication of immanence and transcendence, appearance and being, "stone" and "foam," "windy allegory" and the dark mystery of some intuitable ontic "fulguration" — we should be ill-advised to seek the stability of absolutes where, visibly, despite the teeming possible equations our reading mind forms and unforms, no such stability is finally available. Essentially coherent syntax and prosody do, indeed, provide structure and focus, though feverishly image after image, yet both semantic-referential ellipsis and this kaleidoscopic imaging process urge upon us a recognition of the need to resist the temptation of concealing iconic meaning. It is in this way that, whilst not deriding the very representations our language ceaselessly constructs for us, we can "cure" ourselves of any addiction to them. Does this, we might ask, lead to an invalidation of language's constructions? Absolutely not; but what is brought about is the creation of a healthy tension between the at times to readily arrogant pretensions of human symbolic systems and an appreciative, even loving contestation of these same systems. Just as Stétié's language

seems endlessly to intuit feasible interlocking structures of presence and absence, anguish and sacredness, mask and unspeakable truth, so there is, ever present, a will to deconstruct, to relativise, because, undoubtedly, the experience of ontic bedazzlement is so powerfully lived. There is, as Bonnefoy argues, “[dans l’oeuvre de Salah Stétié], une radicalité qui en signifie le caractère fondamental.” Such a radicalness — and rootedness — gives to Stétié’s rich poetic tapestry an iconic value its very mystery urges us to let go of as we lovingly embrace it.

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André du Bouchet. *Pourquoi si calmes*. Saint-Clément-la-Rivière: Fata Morgana. 1996. 55 pages. ISBN 2-85194-416-9. / *Andains*, avec des photographies de Francis Helgorsky. Die: Editions A Die. 1996. No pagination. ISBN 2-908730-32-4.

Two finely characteristic books from André du Bouchet ... The first, *Andains*, accompanied by the wonderful photographs of Francis Helgorsky, offers a dense yet aerated meditation on the experience and the language, simultaneously, of the traversal of place and mind, and is published on the occasion of the sixth *Fête de la transhumance*. Du Bouchet’s text and Helgorsky’s photographs both are wonderfully framed by the poet’s quotation of Littré’s long entry on the word *andain*. A whole textual and visual poetics unfolds of measured land, striding, “going,” through air, space and mind, a poetics of straining towards and inaccessibility or, better, unfinishable rhythmic movement, a poetics at once of immanence and near-immateriality, that of “une parole qui — s’arrachant à elle-même, s’enracinera.” “Figure ayant pied dans sa disparition,” the language of ontic transhumance is caught up in the imbricated logics of withdrawal and revelation as it tacks to and fro horizontally and vertically, bearing up the “broken earth,” “man / with scythe lip travers[ing] what he seeks to say.”

Pourquoi si calmes presents four texts, one elliptically returning to the work of Paul Celan, two of the others constituting, firstly, a homage to Henri Maldiney, the philosopher who has written so tellingly, so intersubjectively, of Du Bouchet’s poetry, and, secondly, a preface to the 1995 catalogue of the Louvre exhibition *Réserves – les suspens du dessin*. Throughout we witness the habitual tensions of very great compaction and critically deployed white space in a work always centred on ontological function and relationships. If the inscription of our traversal of the real and its language(s) is feasible, this does not increase the apprehensibility of either. A singable residue may remain, but its multifaceted paradoxality is ever felt by Du Bouchet: “matière de parole étrangère à la parole;” “poésie — repos et dégageement du terrible dans l’instant même où il se voit énoncé.” It is, however, as with writers such as