

Pierre-Alain Tâche. *L'Inhabité, Poésie est son nom, Celle qui règne à Carona*. Moudon : Éditions Empreintes, 2001. 222 pages. ISBN 2-940133-61-1.

The present volume, prefaced by Christian Doumet, gathers together in a definitive edition the three volumes appearing, respectively, in 1980, 1985 and 1994, *Celle qui règne à Carona* offering a completely new second suite of poems. Pierre-Alain Tâche's writing goes back as far as 1962, with *Greffes* and, with *Chroniques de l'éveil*, also appearing in 2001, constitutes a substantial and major oeuvre of some twenty-five or so collections. That he can allude via epigraphs, to the thinking and creative gestures of poets such as Philippe Jaccottet, André du Bouchet, Gustave Roud, Pierre Chappuis and Yves Bonnefoy, suggests that, in very broad terms, he is drawn on the one hand to an honouring of his experience of the earth, of fugitive but strangely extraordinary and meaningful *presence*, and on the other hand he may have a sense of the relativity of his own gesture whilst deeply feeling its visceral and spiritual pertinence for the self.

Pierre-Alain Tâche's gaze upon, and immersion in, the experience of the earth is thus at once motivated by the visible, the sensory, and conscious of their *leurre*; his "fervour" urges him towards creation, towards "un air pouvant porter semence" (51), yet, though knowing the source within, can generate (self-) doubt and (self-) parody. At the heart of his discreet yet intense poetics there lies in effect a lived tension between the nameable and the unnamed, a simultaneity of impulse that orients towards the now uplifting, now troubling traversal of the real, but equally towards the "uninhabitedness" of being that "fences [everything] in" (69). This tensionality can push poetic voice to the verge of melancholy or critical disenchantment, but the will in Tâche for upliftment is persistent, as is a certain visionary instinct, a continuing sense of meaning beneath (and, at times, despite) the "surface" of being. Pierre-Alain Tâche's quest seeks what he can call a "knotting", a "reconciliation", a kind of immaculate feasibility (cf. 146); and he understands that only the self's experience is, finally, to be believed in: life's meaning is deeply buried far less in rationalised equations than in those of the heart (that leaps beyond what seems to "confine" us [173]), spatially and temporally. If the necessity to speak can be queried, and a sense of the propriety of a certain minimality – Tâche's forms are compact, sometimes terse, elliptic, hesitating between contextualisation and a purer meditation – upheld, the poet knows ultimately that speaking corresponds to a simple unpretentious authentic impulse to use up the source energy that one has, ever available, desirous of its own release.