

Bernard Vargaftig. *Que ne disent pas les paysages.* Laon : La Porte, 2007.
4 euros.

Poet of ellipsis and compactness, of an immediate thrusting of self and reader into the dizzying ‘thrownness’ of being, as Heidegger might term it, Bernard Vargaftig neither gives us an easy ride, nor does he disappoint. For, if he may be said to be equally a poet of ‘unknowing’, with a profound sense of his own incapacity to write into the experience of being a coherency, a firm and graspable logic, he remains that poet who ever obliges us to immerse ourselves in the honesty of an unending tussle whereby language may be felt to be ever on the cusp of seizure, yet ever slipping away from the attainment and certainty we may be, at times, tempted to credit it with providing, and knowing it to, at least, desire. ‘Qu’il y a de hâte / Comment le consentement berce / Un nom une plongée une dispersion / Où en moi l’horizon continue’: such is a characteristic articulation of *Que ne disent pas les paysages*, an articulation that disarticulates as it leads forth the content of the mind’s hesitations and intuitions, its exclamations, its queryings, its purely substantive, but unsubstantiatable statements, its openness upon its own uncontextualised declarations. But, then, what other context do we imagine there is other than that of our beingness and a language seeking to cling to it, describe it, fathom its meaning? ‘Que prolonge l’explosion, we read as we open this most brief and condensed of books, Éparpillement et récifs se forment / Que ne disent pas les paysages / Que l’intériorité déchire’. Shattering, resulting scatteredness, a terrestrial, more, ontic, landscape not rendered whole by some inner contemplation: hardly Novalis’ broken paradise, though there is no reason to believe the observed, the lived might not have been paradisiacal, were an inner sense of boundness, unifiedness available for Vargaftig. Nor should we imagine that ‘gratitude’ does not exist, even freedom: but the latter, floating free, adrift as it were upon a sea of ‘béance’, gaping beingness, may seem more of a handicap than a blessing, provoking ‘vacillement’, a ‘belonging repeat[ing] / The vacillation of a precipice’. Vargaftig’s world often remains, yet, on its surface, one of precise presence, fragrances and birds calling across the earth’s distances, but there is a nakedness, a minimalness, an ephemeralness everywhere lived, that restore to the experience of presence a silence that does not reassure. If a Pinsonian ‘poetical’ atmosphere hovers about Vargaftig’s work, wrestling with language, unsatisfied with its offerings, seeking yet ever by means of it to attain to some relational worth with self and world, it does not thereby achieve – other than via a pure potentiality, in the form of some residual

virtualness – the coincidence perhaps dreamed and certainly ever fought for. But, the ‘poethical’ gesture is not concerned with absolutes, with firm accomplishments. Its beauties are not of a strictly aesthetic order, nor do they provide sure equivalencies with truth and the good. No, beauty here lies in the continuing effort of engagement with what is, and its fragile terminology, the precarious music of a few black words upon the dazzling whiteness of that defiant Mallarméan page. And this is no small gesture. It is the trace of a poet giving, at least, the hard-won relativities of his ‘accélération nue quand d’un geste / Le sable me reconnaît’. Cerisy-la-salle will seek in July of this year to honour Bernard Vargaftig’s work, and penetrate deep into these finely spun and worthy relativities.

Pascal Commère. *Graminées.* Cognac : Le temps qu’il fait, 2007. 63 pages. 12 euros. ISBN 2-86853-488-0; *Les commis.* Cognac : Le temps qu’il fait, 2007. 63 pages. 12 euros. ISBN 2-86853-489-7.



Auteur d’une œuvre richement originale, difficilement classable, car à jamais au-delà des petites catégories génériques avec lesquelles elle ne fait que jouer, poétique certes, implacablement, désinvolte par moments, mais toujours intense, méditée, plongée dans la contemplation des étranges simplicités qui foisonnent tout autour, et donc dedans aussi, Pascal Commère nous offre ici, après *Chevaux* (1987) et *La vache automatique* (1989), *De l’humilité du monde chez les bousiers* (1996), *La grand’soif d’André Frénaud* (2001) ou *Le vélo de Saint Paul* (2005), deux très beaux textes réédités : les proses compactées, élégantes des *Commis* et les beaux et amples versets de *Graminées*.

Commère est celui qui chante ce minimum que l’on risque de rejeter, d’oublier, mais qui restera, fatalement, maximal, et que retient instinctivement dans les pourtant peu prétentieux méandres de son souffle – ‘poétique’, dirait Jean-Claude Pinson – le fluide mouvement du texte :

*Coquelicots ou chiffons à peine sang séché, j’ignore
quel cambouis rouge a noirci votre cœur, si du tabac
tout au fond brûle. J’oublie
combien dure la joie et si atteint le mur un jour
la balle qui rebondit, mais la poupée
dont saigne la lèvre est votre sœur. – Renversée
parmi les orges, déchirée (Graminées, 28)*