

Des notes d'une érudition impeccable, une bibliographie monumentale complètent ce volume dépourvu de toute iconographie. Quelques images d'Épinal, le frontispice de quelques oeuvres auraient contribué à rehausser aux yeux du lecteur l'épopée fascinante de cette période cruciale de l'histoire humaine, ardemment soutenue, critiquée ou même combattue par une littérature qui n'a pas livré encore, sans doute, toutes ses richesses et que Krief a l'insigne mérite de nous faire découvrir et apprécier.

Marie-Laure Girou Swiderski, chaliennaise de formation, est spécialiste de l'écriture féminine au XVIII^e siècle. Elle a participé récemment au *Dictionnaire des femmes créatrices* et au *Dictionnaire des Femmes des Lumières*.

Fabienne Moore. *Prose Poems of the French Enlightenment: Delimiting Genre*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2009. x+319pp. US\$99.95. ISBN 978-0-7546-6318-8.

Fabienne Moore proposes her *Prose Poems of the French Enlightenment* as a prehistory to Suzanne Bernard's *Le Poème en prose de Baudelaire jusqu'à nos jours* (1959), tracing the origins of the genre back to the quarrel touched off by the publication of Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque* in 1699. Moore's book thus serves as a companion piece to Jean-Marie Roulin's *L'Épopée de Voltaire à Chateaubriand: poésie, histoire et politique* (2005), which uncovers a previously unrecognized French eighteenth-century epic tradition. Moore bases her study on the identification of approximately sixty lost, miscategorized, underestimated, or forgotten prose poems that can be distinguished by the presence of a "legitimizing preface in defense of elevated prose" and by their "conspicuous" use of traditional poetic figures (5). Rather than providing a comprehensive overview of the genre, like Vista Clayton in *The Prose Poem in French Literature of the Eighteenth Century* (1936), or a cross-century survey, like Christian Leroy in *La Poésie en prose française du XVII^e siècle à nos jours* (2001), Moore initiates us into the intricacies of the eighteenth-century debate about its legitimacy, providing in-depth analyses of the works that, by questioning or defying prior generic restrictions, created the need for a new generic category defined in part by its resistance to categorization. The term "petit poème en prose" was coined, we learn, not by Charles Baudelaire but by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (160). Dubbing the genre "one of the least known 'inventions' of the French Enlightenment" (2), which has previously fallen outside studies of both poetry and prose, Moore undertakes what proves to be an invaluable project of recovery.

Fénelon's *Télémaque* provides the perfect starting point for Moore's study: an unprecedented publishing sensation situated midway between the epic and the *Bildungsroman*, it became the preferred reading material

not only of the Duc de Bourgogne, for whom it was intended, but also of Rousseau's *Émile* and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's Paul. Moore interprets Fénelon's choice of prose as both aesthetic and political, indelibly linking the new genre to the critique of unenlightened despotism and the aristocracy. Rather than grounding her study in a brief yet probing analysis of Fénelon's spiritual convictions (which she reserves for chapter 6) and the generic and political stakes of his work, Moore proceeds to peel the proverbial onion. Juxtaposing Fénelon's work to Louis Aragon's 1922 prose poem of the same name, she reveals the genre's fundamental status as palimpsest, or hypertext: just as Fénelon rewrites the *Odyssey* (and Baudelaire rewrote his own verse poems), Aragon rewrites *Télémaque*. This approach admirably sets up Moore's subsequent focus on prose poems as translations (or pseudo-translations, in the case of Montesquieu) of verse originals, a practice largely responsible for the eighteenth-century development of the genre. Though readers who find themselves backtracking from Aragon's, to Rimbaud's, to Marivaux's response to Fénelon's work in reverse chronological order might prefer a somewhat more top-down approach, the Rousseau-like journey from present time to the posited point of origin alerts us to Moore's primary interest in the reception of Fénelon's work, which served as a model for subsequent forays into the genre. Moore's analysis of the work's reception effectively highlights the shift from an emphasis on form to an emphasis on affect that plays into the changing definition of the genre in the course of the century (2).

After exploring the cultural phenomenon known as "Telemacomania," Moore enters into the complexities of the cultural debate about prose poetry, marshaling ample evidence of the nascence of the genre in the form of neologisms (Rousseau's "prosaïser," Staël's "dépoétiser"), parodies (particularly Chaussepierre's astonishing *Le Roué vertueux*, reduced to little more than punctuation and expletives), and para-texts, four of which are provided in English translation in the appendix, enabling us to savour the "irreverent" tenor of the debate (13). Voltaire characteristically led the onslaught against the "crime of lèse-poésie" (84), presenting arguments in favour of verse that Hugo would later echo when he re-established verse as the language of the theatre in his *Préface de Cromwell* of 1827. As Moore aptly remarks, the arguments of those who championed prose poetry (among them Houdar de La Motte, Rémond de Saint Mard, and Antoine de Rivarol) are best understood in light of the parallel rise of the bourgeois drama, whose proponents eschewed antiquated genres (tragedy, comedy) and forms of expression (verse) in favour of the democratizing influence of prose. Taking the form of philosophical dialogues or conflicting entries in the *Encyclopédie*, the debates remained unresolved through the end of the century, giving rise to an aesthetics of hybridity, or *métissage* with the introduction of Parny and Chateaubriand. While inconclusive, they

nevertheless contributed to the pervasive association of prose with reason, philosophy, and education on the one hand, authenticity, orality, and affect on the other (15).

Moore adroitly situates the little-known and frequently marginalized prose poems of major Enlightenment figures within their oeuvre and the development of the genre, but ultimately what emerges from her study is the transformative impact of four watershed events: Anne Le Fèvre Dacier's prose translation of Homer's *Iliad* in 1711, Robert Lowth's analysis of the Bible as literary text in 1753, which revealed the *mélange* of prose and poetry in the Hebrew scriptures, Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot's and Henri Meister's translations of Salomon Gessner's pastoral prose poems in 1762 and 1774, and Pierre Le Tourneur's translation of the Ossian epics in 1777. The importation of this source material infused French prose poetry with a wealth of cultural references considered "antique" or "primitive" (231). Moore also enables the reader to situate the "crisis of poetry" within the larger context of the crisis and regeneration of the French language through her insightful if somewhat piecemeal allusions to linguistic theories of Rousseau, Rivarol, Saint Martin, and Mercier. The only drawback of her study is that the organizational challenge posed by such an embarrassment of riches occasionally precludes her from pursuing certain tantalizing leads. I would have liked to see more sustained discussion across chapters of the politics, sentiment (melancholy), spirituality, orality, even musicality of prose poetry and of the related genres of the epic, the pastoral, and the ode. Rather than tease out separate narrative threads, however, Moore preserves a vision of the period as a richly woven tapestry that breaks down false dichotomies such as Enlightenment and Counter-Enlightenment, Ancient and Modern, pagan and Christian, civilized and primitive, written and oral, French and Creole, ... poetry and prose.

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José Manuel Losada Goya, ed. *Métamorphoses du roman français: Avatars d'un genre dévorateur*. Louvain: Éditions Peeters, 2010. x+318pp. 45€. ISBN 978-90-429-2201-3.

Cet ouvrage collectif, qui se propose d'aborder le roman français sous l'angle de la mutation et de la transformation, porte un titre et un sous-titre pleinement programmatiques: les *avatars*, ce sont en effet dans la religion indoue les incarnations du dieu Vishnu, qui à chaque fois qu'il descend sur terre reste lui-même tout en devenant autre. L'image est séduisante, à ceci près que le recueil n'a bien évidemment pas la prétention