

conquest, which can be set against the European conquests on the New World (especially in the eighteenth century), differed from the colonial endeavors of other European countries as the state and its government carried it out, not by individuals or special institutions.

Khodarkovsky's book of the Russia's expansion in the early modern period is an excellent and extremely important work. The author managed to present the story from both sides of the frontier, showing us how complex the process was. We learn not only about the military campaigns but also about the struggle to retain self-identity and customs by the conquered peoples and the concepts and politics applied by the imperial government. Better understanding of the ways of the steppe peoples allows the reader to learn more about the actions of the Russian government. Last but not least, the book is very well written and is a fascinating read.

Marc Fumaroli. *The Poet and the King: Jean de La Fontaine and his Century*. Translated by Jane Marie Todd. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002. vii + 536 pp. \$49.95. Review by E. JOE JOHNSON, GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY.

A former student of mine, solid enough in my language class and a rather brilliant pianist, once angrily criticized one of my colleagues for thinking he was "all that." Although wondering how much of my student's own pride was involved, I diplomatically advised him to strive to respect my colleague's credentials and to remember the necessity of passing one's core classes. The discord between the artist and authority is certainly a Romantic trope, yet that trope is grounded in the reality of disparity of power, regardless of the given artist's articulate expression of his dissent. That trope is at the center of Marc Fumaroli's detailed, erudite account of the conflict between one of France's greatest lyric poets, La Fontaine, and its grandest monarch, the Sun King. Louis XIV, "the last prince of the Renaissance and the first modern head of state" (469), had

ample cause to believe that he was indeed “all that” and in his arrogance required that Art serve to glorify the State; La Fontaine, the “last poet of the Renaissance” (445), resisted but at a price.

In a book that began, and at times still reads, as a series of lectures at the Collège de France, Fumaroli, a member of the Académie Française and author of numerous books and articles on the seventeenth century, takes on several goals. On the one hand, he attempts to refute the notion given life by such figures as Tallemant des Réaux and Voltaire that La Fontaine was simply a lazy, libertine, daydreaming *bonhomme* not quite deserving of a place in the glorious Pantheon of French writers. Such critics would seem to be blindly echoing the snubs of the Sun King, who long held up La Fontaine’s eventual election to the Académie Française (ironically to take up the seat of Colbert, another nemesis). Nor does Fumaroli find La Fontaine’s immortality as the author of *Fables* a sufficient riposte for historical sleights. Indeed, argues Fumaroli, as a result of the *Fables*’ charm, accessibility, seeming timelessness, and universality, La Fontaine seems to disappear.

In a risky, yet ultimately successful strategy, Fumaroli sets about recreating the moral, political, cultural, and intellectual context in which a profoundly engaged La Fontaine wrote. Establishing this context results in the reader losing sight of both king and poet for many pages. Making only partial use of biography and textual analysis in this book, as Orest Ranum notes in a 1997 review of the original *Le Poète et le Roi*, Fumaroli “nous fait entrer dans le fors intérieur de son roi, et à peine dans celui de son poète. Louis XIV et La Fontaine semblent avoir été pour lui moins des sujets de réflexion et d’analyse que des données” (“Marc Fumaroli on La Fontaine and Louis XIV.” Review of *Le Poète et le Roi*, by Marc Fumaroli. *Orest Ranum’s Panat Times* (1997). 20 Jan. 2004, <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Pranum/OARpg19.html>). In droves of subchapters delving into La Fontaine’s social and literary circles, Fumaroli touches on the ferment occasioned by Protestantism, the Jansenist Port Royal, their ultimate repression, and church leaders such as Bossuet and Fénélon. The author

expands on social and poetic codes dictated by notions of friendship, loyalty, nobility, and charm. Fumaroli also gracefully explicates the sway of classical, medieval, and Renaissance models and that of contemporaries, such as D'Urfé, Tallemant des Réaux, Voiture, Paul Pellisson, Guez de Balzac, Tristan L'Hermitte, Saint-Évremond, La Rochefoucauld, Mme de Lafayette, Mme de Sévigné, Corneille, Racine, and Molière. In short, Fumaroli restores La Fontaine to his time, meanwhile revealing the many things that La Fontaine rejected in his age, not the least of which was the official state culture promulgated by Louis XIV and his ministers. Indeed, because La Fontaine's *Contes* and *Fables* were widely popular despite the lack of royal imprimatur, their success was practically an affront to the Crown.

Because of his marginalization, La Fontaine was obliged to seek support in Parisian circles outside of Versailles. However, according to Fumaroli, the greatest lyric poet of the age might well have become a court poet but for his connections with the wealthy *surintendant des Finances* Nicolas Fouquet, who fell victim to the Mazarin-like machinations of Colbert and the enmities of royal ego. Fouquet's spectacular fall from royal grace following the (in)famous *Nuits de Vaux* is the heart of this book. Unjustly tried for embezzlement and treason, even risking capital punishment, Fouquet was "spared" lifelong exile by royal magnanimity and ended his days in life imprisonment. Although it would cost him at the court, La Fontaine would ever remain faithful to his patron and would appeal in his poetry for royal clemency for Fouquet. Arguing that La Fontaine saw his patron as an antithesis of Richelieu, Mazarin, and Colbert, Fumaroli paints the *surintendant* as a talented, Maecenas-like figure akin to the great, princely Renaissance patrons such as the Médicis. Popular with Parnassus, Paris, and a Fronde-tainted nobility, despite his own loyalty to the Crown during the uprisings, Fouquet embodied for La Fontaine all that France might have found under a different, less arrogant king: peace, prosperity, and a new Renaissance.

It should be noted, finally, that Jane Marie Todd's translation of the 1997 *Le Poète et le Roi* (Paris: Éditions de Fallois) was a finalist for the French-American Foundation's 2002 Translation Prize. It was a well-deserved honor both for her graceful rendering of Fumaroli's text, as well as the translations of the many citations from La Fontaine and other writers.

J. Douglas Canfield. *The Baroque in English Neoclassical Literature*. Delaware: University of Delaware Press; 2003. 252 pp. \$47.50. Review by SUSAN B. IWANISZIW, INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR.

J. Douglas Canfield categorizes the paradoxical elements of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century poems and the few plays and novels he discusses in this volume as exemplars of the "baroque." He considers baroque paradox the means by which authors subverted prevailing codes of neoclassical rationality, asserting that paradox and conundrum offered sites for popular resistance to the status quo—whether resistance addressed classical literary form, sexual morality, politics, religion, or even publishing. He names each manifestation of baroque paradox in separate chapters: the mysterious, metaphysical, material, mischievous, reflexive, paradoxical, cryptic, ventriloquistic, parasitical, metaphorical, mocking, surrogate, eccentric, and absurd. A coda for each chapter emphasizes Canfield's claim that baroque paradox traduced neoclassical expectations—in short, that "[i]n the baroque neoclassical, despite the will to order, things fall apart and the center cannot hold" (188).

The book incorporates a number of his essays published between 1975 and 1995, and Canfield's early work on Milton was evidently determinative. Building upon an essay published in 1975 about the paradox of God's "mysterious terms" seeming "best" in *Paradise Lost*, Canfield augments his argument for intentional paradox with theoretical readings (from Derrida, Deleuze, and Foucault) and cultural, historical and material context. If memory serves, throughout his distinguished career Canfield has revealed a