Notes

Chapter 1

1. Letter 44, c. 3 June 1886, in L.A., 188.

2. The most complete one is by M. Rose, the first to have covered the field. See also G. Genette, L. Hutcheon (for twentieth-century parody), and C. Abastado, “Situation de la parodic.” Joseph Danes’s Parody: Critical Concepts versus Literary Practices, Aristophanes to Sterne appeared too late for me to take it into account, but it will be clear that I do not accept his premise that a general theory of parody is impossible due to the variety of specific works to which the term is applied and the close relation of each to a given literary and cultural context. His idea of theory as a prescriptive phenomenon, the “originating principles” on which a work is based (25, 205), is misguided; the claim that parody was theorized only in the last few centuries in no way prevents it from applying to works of other periods. A theory which is descriptive and abstract seeks to draw general features from the body of existing works.

3. See M. Riffaterre, Semiotics of Poetry and La Production du texte.

4. Genette and Hutcheon have admirable breadth but do not test their theories over the course of a sustained parodic work.

5. See letter 44 to Kahn (note 1); a jotting among his notes on Baudelaire records the idea behind Salomé as “une Salomé, moderne” (E.P.L. XIII, April 1891, 101); and he describes his Andromède as a more modern version of the ancient princess (letter 121 to Fénéon, 21 September 1886, O.C. 1922, V, 160).


7. See especially “Notes d’esthétique,” Revue blanche XI, 84, 1 December 1896.
8. Laforgue does suggest that the contemporary may be more moving to the contemporary viewer because closer to one’s own ephemeral experience; he also maintains that the function of art lies in advancing the sense organ to which it appeals. But he insists on removing the scale of value for works themselves and judging them on their aesthetic originality, the same grounds on which, in his view, great works of the past are given their place in the “natural selection” of art.


11. Laforgue’s notes record other projects that reflect the modernizing and parodic method of the Moralités: “Une histoire de Jeanne d’Arc—à la lumière de l’Inconscient,” and “Contes pour la jeunesse—prendre les très populaires contes moraux et les raconter avec une psychologie réaliste en les faisant tous rater” (Revue blanche VII, 36, October 1894, 304, and VIII, 49, 15 June 1895, 553).

12. Laforgue’s unsuccessful prose efforts include the early novel Un Raté, for which a collection of notes survives (M.P., 8f. and J. L. Debauve, “Laforgue romancier. Une Tentative avortée: Un Raté”); an untitled one mentioned in a letter to Henry (57, 20 August 1882; O.C. 1986 I, 796); L’Avenycle, noted in his 1883 Agenda (22 September); a late novel, Saison, surviving in fragments (Revue blanche VIII, 49, June 1895, 555–60; Mercure de France 1206, April 1964, 616–23; E.P.L. IV, 22, January 1892; Revue d’histoire littéraire de la France 1964, 667); and some stories of 1885, Histoires de femmes (Revue blanche XI, 85, 15 December 1896, 543–47, and XII, 94, May 1897, 518–24), which D. Grojnowski suggests belong to Saison (Feuilles volantes, 171f.).

13. The alternative titles which Laforgue proposed also communicate his conception of the stories as “de vieux canevas brodés d’âmes à la mode”: “Vieux canevas, âmes du jour,” “Fabliaux d’antan,” and “Sachets éventés,” this last evoking the conventional image of the sachet (cf. Baudelaire, “Le Parfum”) which, broken open, releases into the present a scent preserved from a former time.

14. See J. Pierrot’s excellent section on the importance of legend in the literature and art of Decadence (L’Imaginaire décadent, pt. 2, ch. 3).

15. This is the traditional view, accepted by Hutcheon (26, 44, 51, 68), who equates the mockery of parody with a conservative force.

16. See, for example, Hutcheon (4), who argues that the Romantic aesthetic is responsible for the devaluation of parody: “What is clear from these sorts of attack is the continuing strength of a Romantic aesthetic that values genius, originality, and individuality. In such a context, parody must needs be considered at best a very minor art form.” Laforgue’s case confirms that this need not be so.
17. See letter 109 to Henry, 6 June 1885 (O.C. 1922, V, 128).


19. A. Baju considered the nouvelle appropriate to the Decadent sensibility for these reasons (Le Décadent, 12 June 1886, 1).

20. Laforgue died in 1887, while revising the Moralités for publication. The stories were originally completed as follows: Salomé (July 1885), Hamlet (August 1885), Le Miracle des Roses (June 1886), Lohengrin (July 1886), Persée et Andromède (August 1886), Pan et la Syrinx (November 1886). He worked on four other Moralités, which have not survived (letter 44 to Kahn, c. 3 June 1886, L.A., 188): Marlborough s'en va-t-en guerre, L’Amour de la symétrie, Corinne au Cap Misène, and Incomprise. Nothing remains of the first two; of Corinne we have only a fragment from Laforgue’s “Carnet” of 1884-5, repr. in D. Grojnowski’s edition of the Moralités (354ff.). (Unless otherwise indicated, numbers in parentheses in the text refer to this edition.) Incomprise became Les Deux Pigeons, which Laforgue originally intended for the volume but removed in 1887 for being inconsistent with the rest (repr. in Grojnowski, 312–331). I do not study it here, because it does not follow the same parodic principle of modernization that the others do. It in no way tells the story indicated by the title in a “modern” way; the title functions metaphorically, even allegorically, vis-à-vis the action. Debaube (56) proposes that Laforgue’s original manuscript contained five stories, with Les Deux Pigeons as the sixth. However, in offering his manuscript “prêt et ficelé” to Vanier on 25 December 1886, Laforgue twice specifies that it has six (see letter 32 to Vanier, Debaube, 127) and only later announces that he will add Les Deux Pigeons (letter 35 to Vanier, Debaube, 131). This accounts also for the manuscript title page, where Les Deux Pigeons figures last in the list of seven stories (coll. Bibliothèque J. Doucet, Paris, repr. in Grojnowski, frontispiece).

21. Grojnowski’s theory (xvii) that this derives from a desire on Laforgue’s part to begin and end the volume with a creator, Hamlet, the playwright, and Pan, inventor of the flute, is unconvincing. Many of the characters of the Moralités are creators, notably poets: not just Hamlet and Pan, but also Salomé, Lohengrin, and both the Monster and the narrator Amyot of Persée et Andromède, to name a few. Nor does the hypothesis account for the order of the stories in the volume as a whole.


24. Hutcheon retains genre on similar grounds (19).

25. On the problems posed by the distinction of terms, see Rose, es-
26. Although I cannot do justice to this topic here, I conceive of the basic differences as follows. Forgery aims to deceive by close imitation of its model; it lacks the distortion, the comic element, and the conspicuous self-identification associated with parody. Caricature involves the distortion of physical traits and applies normally to visual forms; like satire and unlike parody, it usually (though not always) targets something in the world, rather than a work of art. Pastiche exaggerates the traits of a given style and, like parody, even calls attention to this, but aims principally at imitation, capturing the spirit of the original text or writer, and places less emphasis on introducing original elements; parody aims rather at transformation, using the original for another purpose, and does not necessarily have the "à la manière de" quality of pastiche. Travesty and burlesque have traditionally designated the comical transposition of a serious work into a low style, as in Scarron's *Virgile travesti* of 1648; the application of a high style to a low subject; or a general inversion of values, such as lowering the gods. They are parodie, but not equivalent to parody, which covers a wider range of methods and effects and puts its comic distortion more directly in the service of a new aesthetic.

27. This conception of parody roughly agrees with what Rose terms general parody (33ff.), which "refunctions" the parodied work for a new audience and thus mirrors the process of composing and receiving texts. It resembles Genette's category of transposition, the transformation of a text (rather than strict imitation) for a "serious," rather than aggressively satirical or purely playful, purpose (36).

28. Cf. the definition of comedy as the representation of inferior men at *Poetics* 2.1448a16–19 and 5.1449a32. See now Janko, *Aristotle on Comedy*.

29. Markiewicz ("On the Definitions of Literary Parody," 1265) maintains that parody in the sense of comic imitation of a serious work is used only by the scholiasts, as the Greeks called parodies of didactic and philosophical poems *silloi*, and parodies of tragedy *paratragodein*. But contrast F. Householder, "Parodia" (8f.), who holds that the earliest usage of *parodia* applied to mock-epic and only later was given a nonhumorous application by the rhetoricians, "under the influence of etymological consciousness" and by the grammarians, who added a word to indicate the presence of humor. Hutcheon (51) seems to misunderstand this and uses it to argue, unconvincingly, against the comic element of parody.


32. Hutcheon (32) maintains that the dual meaning of *para* has been neglected, to the detriment of the "nearness" sense; but this has in fact been noted by several scholars, along with its relevance to the meaning of parody, for example, Lelièvre ("The Basis of Ancient Parody," 66), Householder ("*Parodia,*" 2), and Rose, 33.

33. This is suggested by D. W. Lucas in his edition of the *Poetics* (65) and is consistent with the inverse relation of *parodia* to *rhapsodia* discerned by J. C. Scaliger in his *Poetics* of 1561 (I, 42): "Sic parodia de rhapsodia nata est ... Est igitur parodia rhapsodia inversa mutatis vocibus ad ridicula retrahens." For Scaliger, a parody was a comic version of the epic subject performed during breaks in the epic performance, which set a ridiculous version "praeter rem seriam propositam," that is, parodically, in its etymological sense. Cf. also Householder, "*Parodia*" (8).

34. Genette, 22.

35. On the Formalist concept of mechanization or automatization, see J. Tynjanov, "De l'évolution littéraire" (Todorov, 120–137) and "Destruction, parodie"; B. Tomachevski, *Thématique* (Todorov, esp. 30ff.); and V. Shklovsky, "L'Art comme procédé" (Todorov, 94).

36. Genette, 23.


38. H. Koller ("Die Parodie") implausibly argues that *parodia* originally designates not a noble form applied to absurd content but rather a phenomenon in epic performance: recitation contrary to the usual verse-melody. This view is followed by W. Hempel, "Parodie, Travestie, und Pastiche," 15ff. Koller feels that Aristotle uses it in this sense in the *Poetics* passage already mentioned (1448a12). He cites Athenaeus 9.407a, where Hegemon is described as a reciter of Homeric epic who achieved new effects *like an actor,* and 14.638b, where ridiculous effects are attributed to parodies of hexameters, to argue that *parodia* applied first to a technical innovation in epic performance, and only later, in the scholia, to the comic imitation of another poet, as the term was later understood. Koller bases much of his argument on the fact that the noble form applied to absurd content existed before Hegemon. While this is true, notably in the *Margarites* ascribed to Homer, it does not suffice to make the sense of *parodia* merely recitation or to change the basic elements of parody, for two reasons: (a) Aristotle associates parody with the representation of inferior persons and thus with the comic; (b) actual quotations of Hegemon are known, including comic tags like "the leg of a partridge" (quoted in Lucas, ad loc.), comparable to Aristophanes's famous "lost his bottle of oil" (*Frogs,* 120ff.). This evidence shows that Hegemon's parody had to do not simply with performance, but with comical form and content as well. See now Janko, *Aristotle on Comedy,* 181ff.

40. *Institutio oratoria* 6.3.97: “ficti notis versibus similes, quae parodia dicitur.”


42. *Rhetoric* 3.11.1412a26–36.

43. Hutcheon, 15, 20, 26, 41.

44. *Rhetoric* 3.11.1412a19.


46. This equation is made by Hutcheon, 51.

47. Hutcheon, 60.

48. Markiewicz (“On the Definitions of Literary Parody”, 1269) cites A. Morozov, author of a work on Russian literary parodies from the eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries (*Russkain stikhotvornaia parodia*), who maintains that while the relation of the parody to the parodied work can be humorous, or even friendly and jocular, the parody nevertheless places the parodied work clearly on the plane of comicality.


50. Hutcheon, 65.

51. D. Baguley, “Parody and the Realist Novel,” 96. This article demonstrates in detail the seemingly paradoxical continuity between parody and realism.

52. The view that the pleasure of humor comes from recognition has been held by theorists of the comic since Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 3.10.1410b6–12). However, to maintain that the pleasure in humorous examples of ambiguity, irony, and parody lies solely in our recognition of the cleverness of the author in showing it and our own cleverness in perceiving it (see Rose, 89; W. Booth, *Rhetoric of Irony*, 123ff.; cf. Hutcheon, 32) is inadequate: many jokes are clever, and we are clever enough to understand them, yet we may not take any pleasure in them. We might add a second condition, namely the perception of the relative appropriateness of the mockery to its object. If the humor seems excessive relative to its object, the pleasure is diminished or cancelled altogether. This includes the case where we are ourselves the object, and thus embraces the injurious, which has figured in theories of the comic since antiquity. Aristotle maintains at *Poetics* 5.144.935 that the ludicrous, or the laughable, is never painful or injurious. Plato says in the *Philebus* (48c–49c) that too powerful a character inspires not laughter but fear. Freud, looking at humor and the comic from a very different perspective, held that the release of a strong emo-
tion by a comic situation greatly interfered with and lessened the comic; where feelings and interests are involved, the comic is inhibited (Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious, 289, 293).


54. See the dialogue between the priest and the barber: “— Parece cosa de misterio ésta: porque, según he oído decir, este libro fue el primero de caballerías que se imprimió en España, y todos las demás han tomado principio y origen déste; y así, me parece que, como a dogmatizador de una secta tan mala, le debemos, sin escusa alguna, condenar al fuego. — No, señor — dijo el barbero —; que también he oído decir que es el mejor de todos los libros que de este género se han compuesto; y así, cómo a único en su arte, se debe perdonar.” (Don Quijote de la Mancha, 1, 67).

55. See n. 15. Hutcheon claims that such parody is necessarily conservative, but the Moralités disprove this. However, it is sometimes so, as Priestman has shown in nineteenth-century parodies of Romanticism (“The Age of Parody,” 106ff.).

56. Rose, pt. 2, ch. 3.


58. These remarks apply both to the original on which the parody is based and to its target.

59. Rose, 44.

60. Problèmes de la poétique de Dostoierski, 124ff.

61. Rose, 79ff.

62. R. Poirier (“The Self-Reflexivity of Parody”) discusses the topic in terms similar to Rose’s: parody is self-reflexive in so far as it exposes the process of artistic creation, including that of the parody.

63. Barthes sees parody as an example of “écriture classique,” which merely replaces one code with another and arrests the play of codes characteristic of modern writing (S/Z, 145f.; cf. 52). See my article, “The Reflexive Function of Parody: Self-Criticism and Creativity.”

64. “Para mí sola nació don Quijote, y yo para él; él supo obrar y yo escribir; solos los dos somos para en uno, a despecho y pesar del escritor fingido y tordesillesco que se atrevió, o se ha de atrever, a escribir con pluma de avestruz grosera y mal delineada las hazañas de mi valeroso caballero” (Don Quijote de la Mancha, 11, 1068). The final sentence of part 1, which mentions a third sally to follow, suggests not another version but a continuation, with its famous and ironic result: the pseudonymous Avellaneda took up the challenge before Cervantes had published his own part 2.
65. See my article, “The Reflexive Function of Parody,” which discusses this episode in detail and documents the existence of this self-reflexive feature in a number of parodies of different periods and literatures.

66. So too Hutcheon, 50.


69. See Weisstein (“Parody, Travesty, and Burlesque: Imitations with a Vengeance,” 803); Hutcheon, 94ff.; cf. G. Lee (Allusion, Parody and Imitation) and J. G. Riewald (“Parody and Criticism”).


71. On the role of humor in signalling the intertext generally, see Riffaterre, “The Poetic Functions of Intertextual Humor.” Repetition likewise allows the reader to perceive parody without knowing a specific parodied work: see Riffaterre, “Parodie et répétition,” 87.

72. Here repetition, not being an aspect of the original form, would be a signal of the parody above.


74. See H. Levin, Contexts of Criticism, on the relation of parody to realism in Don Quixote.

75. Priestman’s study of parody among the English fin de siècle aesthetes confirms that this was a function of Decadent ideology generally, and not simply a French phenomenon. See “The Age of Parody,” pt. 3 ch. 5.


79. “. . . luz y espejo de toda la caballería andante” (Don Quijote de la Mancha, I, 21); cf. “flor y espejo,” II, 23.

80. On this term, see n. 35.

81. See A. Michel, “Tradition antique et philosophies de la décadence dans la littérature française autour de 1880,” 57.

82. Rose, 108.

83. Cf. Bakhtin, Problèmes de la poétique de Dostoievski (124ff.); also Tomačevski, “Thématique” (Todorov, 30ff.). Hutcheon (36) rejects the
Formalist concept of "evolution" for its ameliorative implications; however, there is little evidence of this sense in their work. Tynjanov, for example, defines evolution neutrally as change and substitution: "un changement du rapport entre les termes du système, c'est-à-dire un changement de fonctions et d'éléments formels, l'évolution se trouve être une 'substitution' de systèmes" ("De l'évolution littéraire," Todorov, 136).


87. For Laforgue's main devices, see index, *Moralités légendaires*.

88. See n. 71.

89. Rose, ch. 3; wrongly criticized by Hutcheon, 20.


91. Tomachevski compares the process of renewal or refunctioning that parody represents to this kind of quotation: "Le renouvellement du procédé est analogue à l'emploi d'une citation d'un auteur ancien dans un contexte nouveau et avec une signification nouvelle." ("Thématique," Todorov, 301)

92. Riffaterre argues that the epigraph tells us the essential in the work by a double detour: "saying it through another author, and letting it out in the guise of some trivial detail apparently unconnected with the subject, or through a seemingly superficial lexical similarity" (Semiotics of Poetry, 191).

93. This is consistent with the quarrel in *Pan et la Syrinx*, where Syrinx accuses men of needing music to express themselves, and Pan responds that a woman's voice is music in itself; women are endowed with art by nature.

Chapter 2


3. Bourde concentrates on Mallarmé, whom he ridicules for being unintelligible, and Verlaine, toward whom he is considerably more gracious; he also discusses Jean Moréas, Laurent Tailhade, Charles Vignier, and Charles Morice. Laforgue expected his formal novelty to appeal to Bourde, who admired this aspect of the new poetry. But for his article of 6 August, Bourde most likely could not have included Laforgue’s only published volume, the *Complaintes*, since it had just come out in late July. The earliest review appeared on 9 August, and that one written by Mostrailles, pseud. for Trézenik, the book’s printer.

4. Laforgue wrote two reviews of the *Complaintes* and, in the first, calls them the acme of Decadence (see below, 7if.). The seventy or so reviews of his work from 1885 to 1887 reprinted by Debauve (197–269) characterize him as a Decadent, either explicitly or by placing him in the company of the *chefs d’école*, Verlaine and Mallarmé: for example, the *Complaintes* are “un livre fou, plus décadent que les décadents . . . Ô Paul Verlaine, ô Mallarmé, voilà quelle race vous faites!” (*La Revue littéraire et artistique*, Debauve, 211). Whenever possible, I will refer to Debauve’s volume, which makes easily available a large collection of reviews from the *petite presse*. I have found only a couple of articles on Laforgue not included there. Full references to other articles are given in the notes.


6. Michel discusses Laforgue’s use of irony as a way of realizing the philosophical goals of Decadence described in the system of Schopenhauer (“Tradition antique et philosophies de la décadence dans la littérature française autour de 1880,” 67).


8. For a study of these figures as representative of Decadence, however, see Birkett, *The Sins of the Fathers*.

9. Only later did Decadence come to be equated more exclusively with them, when Symbolism was adopted for works of a more serious literary modernism. See below, 35f.

10. For Y. Vadé (“Mythe de la décadence et décadence du mythe”) Decadence was in particular a resistance to the transformation of cultural myths under the influence of science, industrialization, and new social practices.


12. Mallarmé, however, disliked the term *décadence* (*Oeuvres*, 1444).

... en est devenu l'une des deux colonnes ... l'autre est M. Stéphane Mallarmé”; the same relation is cited in Moréas’s Symbolist manifesto (Le Figaro, 18 September 1886, Pakenham, 31), and in many of the critical articles reproduced in Debauve (211, 212, 224, 227, 232, 237, 263). In his review of the Complaintes, Laforgue himself called Baudelaire the “dieu et prophète” of the Decadent movement (Debauve, 193).

14. Minor writers often mentioned include: Charles Vignier, Charles Morice, Laurent Tailhade, René Ghil, Jean Lorrain, and Jean Ajalbert; the Goncourts are occasionally included in the context of style. Laforgue does not think highly of Vignier, Morice, or Ghil. See letters 52 and 23 to Kahn, c. 21 August 1886 and 1 May 1885 (L. A., 214 and 107).


16. Pierrot’s first chapter provides one of the most intelligent and accurate accounts of Decadence available thus far. See also A. E. Carter, The Idea of Decadence in French Literature 1830–1900; N. Richard, Le Mouvement décadent, and A l’Aube du symbolisme; P. Stephán, Paul Verlaine and the Decadence 1882–1890; K. Swart, The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France; R. K. R. Thornton, The Decadent Dilemma; and the classic work on the subject, which after more than half a century remains a standard source, Mario Praz’s Romantic Agony.

17. Le XIXè Siècle, 11 August 1885 (Pakenham, 27).

18. Le Figaro, 18 September 1886 (Pakenham, 31).

19. In his edition of Les Déliterations d’Adoré Floupette (30), S. Cigada notes likewise: “... decadentismo e simbolismo sono termini diversi per designare lo stesso e unico fenomeno.”


21. Seven of the post-September reviews reprinted in Debauve call Laforgue a Symbolist, ten a Decadent. A year later, the naturalist writer Paul Alexis comically cannot decide: “Les décadents (?), pardon, les symbolistes (???), viennent d’perdre un des leurs: M. Jules Laforgue” (Le Cri de Paris, 6 September 1887, Debauve, 249).

22. Debauve, Guêpe, 172. The quotation comes from Zola’s essay on the Goncourts’ Germinie Lacerteux, in Mes Haines. Although Laforgue keeps his distance from Naturalism, which he considered inconsistent with true poetry and relevant only to the novel, the quotation suggests that, in 1877 at least, he had some relation to the Decadent aesthetic that he would later embrace.
23. T. de Wyzewa, “Notes sur la littérature wagnérienne et les livres en 1885-1886,” and “Notes sur la peinture wagnérienne et le salon de 1886,” Revue wagnérienne, 8 June 1886 and 8 May 1886.


26. “Le Symbolisme et l'instrumentation poétique,” Revue de Semaine, Warsaw, 2 February 1887. (A résumé is given in Écrits pour l'art, 4, 7 April 1887.)

27. “Cet idéal et ces procédés se résument en ceci: mysticisme, alexandrinisme, schopenhauerisme et impressionnisme” (Debauve 194). For the quotation from the essay on Impressionism, see M.P., 138.


32. See letter 39 to Ephrussi (9 April 1882, O.C. 1986 I, 767): “il y a longtemps que je pense et dis à qui veut l'entendre que si quelqu'un a du génie parmi nos poètes, c'est Bourget, au-dessus de Sully, de Coppée, de Richepin, etc. Quant au critique, à part les maîtres bien assis, il est encore le plus pénétrant, avec quelque chose de plus qu'eux tous, son âme.” Cf. letters 27 (13 January 1882) and 38 (31 March 1882) to the same, O.C. 1986 I, 744 and 766; 41 to Henry (16 April 1882), O.C. 1986 I, 770; and 93 to Kahn (29 November 1883), O.C. 1986 I, 845.

33. “... ses deux volumes d'Essais de psychologie contemporaine dont on n'a pas assez compris la préface” (Laforgue, “Paul Bourget,” Les Hommes d'aujourd'hui [1886], reprinted in Ruchon, Stéphane Vassiliew, 88).

34. Published by D. Grojnowski, “Un Inédit de Jules Laforgue, ‘Paul Bourget.’” Laforgue never completed the article.

35. For a comparison of Laforgue's usage of this metaphor with the others, see G. G. Rotelli, Due Studi sul simbolismo: la metrica delle poesie di Rimbaud. Il tema liturgico nelle poesie di Laforgue.

36. For the ideas of Taine on Decadence and their influence on Bourget, see Jean-Thomas Nordmann, “Taine et la décadence.”

38. Letters 38 to Ephrussi and 41 to Henry, 31 March and 16 April 1882, O.C. 1986 I, 766 and 770.


40. “Pierrots (on a des principles)” and “Pierrots” II (Imitation); F.B.V XXIII.

41. Le Décadent, nos. 1 and 4, 1886.

42. “Notes sur Schopenhauer,” Revue indépendante II, February 1885, 381.

43. Ibid., 379, 385ff.


46. Laforgue also read the Janet articles, and he quotes them in Tessa. He at least knew about Caro, since in a chronicle for La Guêpe, he notes the opening of Caro’s well-publicized course at the Sorbonne (2 November 1879, O.C. 1986, I, 204).

47. French translations first appeared as follows: Essai sur le libre arbitre, trans. S. Reinach, Paris, G. Baillière, 1877; Le Fondement de la morale, trans. J. Bourdeau, Paris, G. Baillière, 1879; Parerga et Paralipomena, trans. J. Cantacuzène, Paris, G. Baillière, 1880; Pensées, maximes et fragments, trans. J. Bourdeau, Paris, G. Baillière, 1880; De la quadruple racine du principe de la raison suffisante, 1882; Le Monde comme Volonté et comme Réprésentation, trans. J. Cantacuzène, Leipzig, 1886. This edition of Schopenhauer’s principal work was little known and difficult to obtain. A more well-known one by A. Burdeau (Paris, Alcan) was not published until 1888, after Laforgue’s death. He could not have read it in the original German; as he does not explicitly mention having read Schopenhauer himself, it is possible that his knowledge came from secondary sources such as those mentioned earlier and from Hartmann’s Philosophie de l’Inconscient, which refers to it frequently. For a history of Schopenhauer in France during this period, see R. Colin, Schopenhauer en France. Un Mythe naturaliste, and V. Hell, “Schopenhauer et le mouvement décadent en France.”

48. From the interview with Challemel-Lacour, Revue des deux mondes, 15 March 1870, 311. Quoted by Bourget in the Dumas essay (296).

49. Translated into French in 1877. Bourget championed Hartmann also, and introduced Laforgue to his work in 1880. The works by Janet and Caro devote sections to his thought.

50. “Les Poètes maudits,” La France libre, 3 October 1885 (Debouye, 208).
51. Pierrot, 159ff. See above, 40.


53. “Complainte des voix sous le figuier boudhique.”

54. “Feuilles,” Mercure de France, April 1964, 618; D.V IV and V. See also “Bobo” (Le Symboliste 2, 15 October 1886), and his notes in Revue anarchiste VI, 1 November 1893.


58. “Paul Bourget,” Revue contemporaine II, 1885, 76. Laforgue approved of this article: “Je trouve que l’étude de Ch. Morice donne une idée très intime de Bourget” (letter 109 to Henry, 6 June 1885, O.C. 1922, 5, 128).


60. See the Goncourts’ Charles Demailly, ch. 58.


64. Le Capitan, 2e année, no. 1, February 1884, 6.

65. For other examples, see Pierrot, ch. 4.

66. La Basoche (Brussels), I, 2, December 1884, 77f.


69. D’Orfer, “La Décadence,” Le Scapin, 1 September 1886. The
themes of Byzantium and the late Empire were exploited à outrance by minor writers, as in the tedious novels of Jean Lombard, *L'Agonie* (1888) and *Byzance* (1890).

70. Baudelaire uses them as such in *Le Peintre de la Vie Moderne* and the *Salon de 1889* (O.C. II, 709, 642). Cf. Bourget's essay on Renan, 43.

71. A. Baju, "Sadités," *Le Décadent* 14, 10 July 1886.

72. Laforgue mentions Nero also in his art notes and the "Complaintes-litanies de mon Sacré-Cœur," where the emperor is a figure for the speaker's heart: "Mon Coeur est un Néron, enfant gâté d'Asie, / Qui d'empires de rêve en vain se rassasie."

73. *A Rebours*, ch. 14. See also G. Kahn, *Symbolistes et décadents*, 313. Laforgue read and admired both the *Tentation* and the *Imitation* (letter 46 to Henry, 12 May 1882, O.C. 1986, I, 778); as we have seen, he revised the latter for the title of his second published collection, and took his epigraph for the *Moralités* from the former.


76. Laforgue specifically links the underwater world with the mystical nirvana of the Buddhists: "A l'Aquarium de Berlin—devant le regard atone, gavé, sage, bouddhique des crocodiles—comme je comprends ces vieilles races d'orient qui avaient épuisé tous les sens, tous les tempéraments, toutes les métagraphiques—et qui finissent par adorer, béatifier comme symbole du Nirvâna promis ces regards nuls dont on ne peut dire s'ils sont plus infinis qu'immuables" (*Revue blanche* VIII, 49, June 1895, 553). He uses this imagery extensively to parody Decadence in *Salome*.


78. "Remords" and "Platonisme."


82. Adam, "Le Symbolisme" (*La Vogue*, 4–11 October 1886).
83. Moreau ("Les Moralités légendaires de Jules Laforgue," 872) cites Barrès's Sous l'œil des barbares (1888) as an example: "Le drame même qui se joue dans notre tête ne nous est plus qu'un spectacle."

84. See Paul Adam, La Vogue, 4–11 October 1886. Cf. the Larousse article of 1887–1890 (second supplement): "la recherche des mots étranges, totalement inusités" and "l'art de donner à deviner au lecteur les plus obscures énigmes"; Morice, Revue contemporaine 2, 1885, 76: "un amour essentiel pour le compliqué, seule expression naturelle d'idées qui ne sont pas simples; le sens de la philosophie du verbe—sons et couleurs; une aristocratie de fond et de forme qui est en exil; une complaisance en toutes les menues délicatesses de style et de métrique, assonances, allitération, etc., la malédiction de la rhétorique, la science des nuances"; "Critique littéraire. Les Déliquescences." Ibid., 266: "Il existe aujourd'hui une école de poésie, formée de jeunes raffinés amoureux de la forme parfaite, abstraite et suggestive; poursuiveurs acharnés du mot rare, précis et nombreux; lanceurs de néologismes"; Wyzewa, "Une Critique," Revue indépendante, n.s. 1, 1886, no. 1, 74: "des poètes nouveaux ont encore perfectionné le vocabulaire musical de la littérature en détruisant les règles surannées de la césure, de la rime périodique, du rythme fixe. Ils essaient une prose rythmée librement, un emploi logique et intermittent de la rime et des alliances sonores des syllabes"; and Pica, "Les Décadents" (Debauve, 212): "Tous ces écrivains byzantins ont en commun une adoration pour la forme parfaite et suggestive et la recherche passionnée des mots rares et pittoresques." For a general discussion of Decadent style, see R. P. Colin, "Les Décadents: nuanceurs ou barbares de l'idée," and P. Dumontheaux, "Les 'Décadents' ont-ils renouvelé la langue?"


86. A. F. Claveau, Le Gaulois, 1886 (Pakenham, 43); Sutter Laumann, La justice, 19 July 1885.

87. The more important second edition of the Déliquescences appeared in July 1885. The Complaintes came out at the end of the same month and were reviewed principally from mid-August to mid-September. J. Lethève demonstrates the extent of the publicity that the Decadent question received in the following year: "D'août 1885 à octobre 1886, les articles deviennent si nombreux que le grand public ne peut plus les ignorer" (Impressionnistes et symbolistes devant la presse, 178).

88. Lutèce 192, 9–16 August 1885 (Debauve, 199).
89. R. Caze, Le Voltaire, 18 August 1885 (Debauve, 201).
90. Paris illustré, 1 October 1885 (Debauve, 207).
91. Ch. Vignier, Revue contemporaine, 1 September 1885 (Debauve, 204).
92. Le Passant, August–September 1885 (Debauve, 201).
Notes


94. Letter to Laforgue, 28 September 1885 (Debauve, 286f.).

95. *La République française*, 31 August 1885 (Debauve, 194).

96. Laforgue's vocabulary in general was considered representative. There are over fifty Laforguian entries in the *Petit Glossaire pour servir à l'intelligence des auteurs décadents et symbolistes* by Adam et Fénéon (Paris, Vanier, 1888).


98. *L'Art moderne*, 8 January 1888 (Debauve, 220ff.).


108. In the first case (*Le Chat noir* 63, 31 March 1883), the national anthem ironically fits a particular type of "infirmite": the deaf man, "Entendez-vous dans les campagnes / Mugir ces féroces soldats"; the armless cripple, "Ils viennent jusque dans nos bras"; the man without legs, "Marchons, marchons," and so on. The second stirs up the fury of tenants against the Concierge (quoted in Richard, *Symbolisme*, 14). The third (*Le Chat noir* 46, 25 November 1882) satirizes Zola and the literary ambitions of the groupe de Médan.


110. 4 February 1882.

111. *Le Chat noir*, 16, 29 April 1882.

112. S. Travers (*Nineteenth Century French Theatrical Parodies*) lists hundreds of such examples which follow the standard pattern of the farces and pantomimes of nineteenth-century popular comic theater.

113. Pia notes this also: "C'est Laforgue qui a donné le la" (*M.L.*, 11).

116. No. 5 of Debauve’s list of copyholders (190). Laforgue read some of Lemaître’s works, presumably his reviews in the *Revue bleue*, and perhaps his verse. In 1877 he praises Lemaître’s article on Flaubert (Debauve, Guêpe, 170). See also letter 24 to Kahn, ca. 11 May 1885 (*L. A.*, 111): “Lis-tu les choses que publie Jules Lemaître, un normalien devenu un mandarin tout à fait charmant?”

117. Other examples include a play on *Don Quixote*, “Dulcinée,” in which Dulcinea reads *Amadis of Gaul* and becomes somewhat “donquichottesque” herself. An early play, “La Bonne Hélène,” (1896), transforms events and scenes from the *Iliad* by following through the implications of Helen’s questionable character: she is a good-hearted victim, and her freely given favors are seen as signs of her kindness. See X. de Courville, “Le Pastiche et la parodie chez Jules Lemaître,” 31ff., and G. Durrière, *Jules Lemaître et le théâtre*.


119. *Ibid.* For example, one plays on Musset’s “La Coupe et les lèvres”: “Le coeur d’un homme vierge est un vase profond, mais combien nous préférons, pour déposer les cannes et parapluies, les grands vases japonais du bazar de Yeddo, 68, rue Mogador prolongée. . . .”

120. *Ibid.*; and no. 27, January 1894.


123. *Le Décadent*, 27 November 1886; and 1 January, 1 February, 15 March, 15 May, 1 July, and 15 September 1888.


128. *Lutèce*, 16 August 1885.
Chapter 3

1. Four of the six Moralités have subtitles: *Hamlet, Lohengrin, Pan et la Syrinx*, and *Persée et Andromède, Le Miracle des Roses et Salomé*, as titles, already differ from those of the works parodied. I shall discuss each in its respective chapter.

2. On the history of Hamlet in French literature and art, see H. P. Bailey, *Hamlet in France from Voltaire to Laforgue*, and D. Madsen, "The Figure of Hamlet in Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Laforgue."


4. Cf. "Pierrots" (*L’Imitation*): "Ils ont comme chaton de bague / Le scarabée égyptien."

5. Cf. Bourget’s *Essais*, especially "Baudelaire"; Huysmans, *A Rebours*; and, interestingly, Taine’s essay on Shakespeare in the *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*, which presents Hamlet as one whose overly impassioned imagination exhausts his will.

6. In a note, Laforgue described the categorical imperative as the second of the three Comtean stages of ethical evolution: "toujours les triades de Hegel. les trois stades de l’Inconscient. Il y a eu trois stades de l’éthique—théologique (le Décalogue), métaphysique (l’Impératif Catégorique), positivisté (l’altruisme sociologique)" (E. A. Holmes, "The Poetic Development of Jules Laforgue," Appendix D, 1, 8).

7. The first *Hamlet* appeared in *La Vogue*, November 1886.

8. "Do you not know that in true death there will be no other self alive that can mourn your death nor, standing, mourn you lying there?"

9. "Thus he is indignant at having been created mortal, and he does not see that in true death there will be no other self who, alive, can mourn his own death, or standing, suffer what he feels lying there being lacerated."

10. *Revue blanche* XI, 84, 482. In another note he juxtaposes the Unconscious and the *templa serena* of *De Rerum Natura* II, 8 (O.C. 1986, I, 655).

11. Laforgue translates for himself here, suggesting that he was not using a translation when he wrote *Hamlet*. The epigraphs to *F.B.V.*, quoted in the original English, also indicate this. He does seem to have read *Hamlet* early on in the French translation of Le Tourneur (1779), however, as he mentions it in the *Guêpe* chronicle of 25 September 1879 (O.C. 1986, I, 197).

12. In this, Hamlet again resembles Laforgue’s Pierrot. Cf. "Locutions des Pierrots” XVI (*L’Imitation*): "Je ne suis qu’un viveur lunaire / Qui fait des ronds dans les bassins, / Et cela, sans autre dessein / Que devenir un légendaire."

14. Etching has definite associations with Decadence: the late nineteenth century experienced a well-documented revival of the art; it had macabre and dreamlike associations, as Baudelaire described it vis-à-vis Meryon's etchings of Paris; des Esseintes had a fascination for the etchings of Goya. Laforgue was especially interested in etching: he practiced it himself and championed the works of his friend, the German etcher Max Klinger.


16. By a curious irony of literary history, research in the twentieth century has proposed that Shakespeare based Gertrude’s description of the death of Ophelia (IV,vii) on the drowning of a certain Katherine—or Kate—Hamlet in the Avon in 1580. Laforgue would not have known this anecdote, but would surely have appreciated the coincidence: his own heroine—Kate, alias Ophelia—is truer than he imagined. (See E. Fripp, *Shakespeare Studies*, 1930, i28ff.)

17. The words come from Michelangelo’s *Rime* CXXXIII: “Caro m'e 'l sonno, e piu l’esser di sasso, / Mentre che 'l danno e la vergogna dura. / Non veder, non sentir, m'e gran ventura: / Pero non mi destar, deh! parla basso.

18. The first three of the five passages come, with slight variations, from F.B.V. XLVI, XXXIII, and XXXVII.


20. J.-L. Barrault (*Cahiers Renaud-Barrault*, 92) traces this episode to the temptation scene in Belleforest’s version of the Hamlet story (1570), where a friend of the hero Amleth warns him of Fengo’s trap. But there is no bird (let alone a strangled one) in Belleforest; the friend warns Amleth only “avec certains signes.” In Saxo, this sign is specifically a gadfly (“oestri”) sent with a bit of chaff under its tail, but this is too far removed from Laforgue’s episode to be relevant to it. The texts of both Saxo and Belleforest are reproduced in I. Gollancz, *The Sources of Hamlet*.

titre emblématique: ‘Le démon de la Perversité’, épié ces impulsions irré-
sistibles que la volonté subit sans les connaître et que la pathologie céré-
brale explique d’une façon à peu près sûre.”

22. “Complainte des formalités nuptiales.”

Chapter 4

1. Scholars have generally followed F Ruchon (Jules Laforgue, 107): “Le Miracle des Roses, la plus moderne des Moralités, la seule qui ne soit pas la parodie ou remaniement d’un sujet antique.” Even Pia (M. L., 8) did not distinguish a model: “A l’exception des Miracle des Roses, dont l’héro-
ine n’est pas de haute extrace et dont le décor n’a rien d’irréel, toutes ses moralités se développent autour d’une ou plusieurs créatures d’origine my-
thologique.” In her recent edition of Laforgue’s art criticism, however, M. Dottin mentions in a footnote two Miracle des Roses by Gustave Mor-
eau (Textes de critique d’art, 29).

2. Wyzewa, Nos Maîtres, 238.


4. Letter 44, ca. 3 June 1886 (L. A., 188): “Ces nouvelles sont: Sa-
lomé; Hamlet ou les suites de la piété filiale; le Miracle des Roses; In-
comprise; l’Amour de la symétrie; Persée et Andromède ou le plus heureux des trois; Corinne au Cap Misène; Marlborough s’en va-t-en guerre.
Seules la 4e et la 5e ne sont pas sur vieux canevas.” Le Miracle des Roses figures third in this list. Of the two exceptions, “Incomprise” became Les Deux pigeons, and “L’Amour de la symétrie” did not survive.

5. This was an emblem of the evil eye in both Egyptian and Roman
culture, and a favorite sexual symbol in Decadent art.


7. Liszt’s work (1867) was based on the M. von Schwind frescoes illustrating the life of Saint Elizabeth, painted for the Wartburg castle in
1855. Each section of the oratorio corresponds to one of the six frescoes.

des gens récitaient des chapelets.”

9. Agenda, 26 August (O.C. 1986, I, 898): “—S Sébastien, le capi-
taine—Largartijo (sic) et Frascuelo—Mantilles, éventail—assaut de trains lents. Retour (notes).” Lagartijo and Frascuelo were famous matadors. The notes mentioned do not seem to have survived, although they may have been used for the preliminary version of the story, the Carton manu-
script ([A] in Grojnowski).
10. Laforgue does not mention *Le Miracle des Roses* until June of 1886; however, E. A. Holmes ("The Poetic Development of Jules Laforgue," 331) notes that the earliest manuscript draft is written on the same paper and in the same hand as the early draft of *Salomé*, dating from the spring of 1885. Laforgue seems to have done a first version of *Le Miracle des Roses* around June 1885, and then taken it up again in the spring of 1886.

11. In this it somewhat resembles *Salomé*, based on the "Salomé" episode of Flaubert's *Hérodias*.

12. Cf. Hamlet's "allure traiarde" (24, 28).

13. Ch. 1, 37: "The other seedling behaved rather differently, for it fell in the morning until 11.30 a.m., and then rose, but after 12.10 p.m. again fell; and the great evening rise did not begin until 1.22 p.m." The French translation, *La Faculté motrice dans les plantes*, appeared in 1882. Laforgue does not identify the work, only the author.


15. As others have noted, the town of *Le Miracle des Roses* is modelled somewhat on Baden-Baden, which the court visited annually in the spring (Arkell, *Looking for Laforgue*, 93ff.; Ruchon, *Jules Laforgue*, 107; Ramsey, *Jules Laforgue and the Ironic Inheritance*, 108). The evidence of the 1883 *Agenda* verifies this, for the details noted there reappear in the story: the Greek chapel, the fountain, the melancholy French horn, the local band, the bells in the valley, the *Fête-Dieu* procession, the Hôtel d'Angleterre. See 27 and 29 April, 14 and 24 May, and the Baden-Baden portion generally (O.C. 1986, I, 874–82). However, the fictional town also partakes of another stop on the court's rounds, Hombourg. The description of the festivities in the parody (59f.) matches Laforgue's notes on Hombourg in *E.P.L.* IV, 26, May 1892, 203f.

16. Laforgue elsewhere described the waltz in similar terms of poignant, autumnal nostalgia: "La poignance lointaine de ces valses, faites de souvenir—on les joue en automne solitaire après les casinos d'été où elles accompagnaient une illusion d'une vie idéale, linge, toilettes, repas fins, demi-saison, tous distingués et oisifs—ou l'année d'après, et ça dit le bonheur d'antan." (*E.P.L.* IV, 22, January 1892, 9)


18. Lawn tennis was a recent invention, formalized by the English in 1877. Cf. Laforgue's notes on Hombourg (*E.P.L.* IV, 26, May 1892, 203): "le Casino et ses toilettes de Boston, et les quadrilles d'enfants sur la pelouse, et un ballon prêt à partir, et plus loin vu de la terrasse du casino la pelouse des lawntennisants"; and also letter 27 to Kahn on 6 August 1885 (L. A., 120): "Je ne suis plus à Coblentz mais à Hombourg, une ville
d’eaux . . . pleine d’Anglais, fleurie de toilettes, encombrée de lawn-tennis, etc."

19. Laforgue witnessed the celebration of this holiday in Baden-Baden with contempt. See above, n. 8.

20. Laforgue left no explicit evidence of having read this work, except for its echo in Le Miracle des Roses; however, he read all Flaubert’s other works, including the two novellas that accompany Un Coeur simple in the Trois Contes trilogy, and parodies them frequently in the Moralités. I consider it certain that he knew it; the parallels are more than coincidental. See below, 124f.


22. All quotations from Un Coeur simple come from the Pléiade edition of the Trois Contes, 621f.

23. The little girls in white are a ubiquitous image in Laforgue, as in D.V. III, IV, and XII.

Chapter 5

1. Laforgue never mentions Lohengrin until after it appears in La Vogue (19 and 26 July 1886). It was probably written and given to Kahn for publication during his visit to Paris (21 June–14 July).

2. Wagner was inspired by Wolfram von Eschenbach and Wolfram by Chrétien de Troyes’ Perceval.


4. The 1883 Agenda notes “Lohengrin” in February (O.C. 1986, I, 866); in April one of its melodies keeps running through his head (Ibid., 876). For allusions in the poems, see “Les Linges, le cygne” (Imitation), and F.B.V. XXV and XXVII.

5. Lohengrin was announced in 1885 as soon to appear at the Opéra-Comique, but protests caused the production to be cancelled; it was given at the Eden Théâtre, 3 May 1887.

6. Revue wagnérienne 6, 8 July 1885 (cf. 8 February and 8 March 1886, and March and 15 May 1887). Laforgue read an article on Lohengrin in the
Revue illustrée (letter to Lindenlaub, 12 April 1886, in Durry, Jules Laforgue, 236).

7. Wagner himself assisted this interpretation by describing the tragic situation of the hero as parallel to that of the modern artist in society. See M. Kufferath, Le Théâtre de Richard Wagner. Lohengrin, 84.


9. Cf. “Un Mot au soleil pour commencer” (*Imitation*), where the same phrase is called the sun’s “vieux prêche” and rejected in favor of the moon.

10. The original text had him returning “vers les altitudes de l'Egoïsme” (172).

11. “[Rimbaud], un des plus farouches décadents” (*Le Figaro*, 24 November 1886, in Debaue, 232). Cf. Huysmans’ Preface to *A Rebours* (see above, ch. 2). Except for the selections published in Verlaine’s *Poètes maudits* (1883), Rimbaud’s poetry was relatively unknown until 1886, when Kahn published the *Illuminations* in *La Vogue*. Laforgue was impressed: see letter 44 to Kahn, 3 June 1886 (*L. A.*, 187), and also his notes on Rimbaud (along with Bourget and himself) as a modern example of the Hamletic character.

12. See Stéphane Vassiliev and the “Complainte du petit hyper­trophique.”

13. In “Jeux” (*Imitation*), Laforgue applies the same image to the moon.

14. Of the key terms of the Mass that Laforgue uses, one finds in Baudelaire ciboire, autel, ostensor, Sainte Table, and encensoir. This aspect of Baudelaire was noted by critics from the first. See, for example, Charbonnel: “Il y eut encensoirs, ostensoirs, autels, hosties et ciboires . . . L’amour fut une adoration ou même une communion de Sainte Table” (Carter, *Baudelaire et la critique française*, 61). For Laforgue’s use of liturgical imagery in his poetry (although not in the *Moralités*), see Rotelli, *Due Studi sul simbolismo*, especially the quantitative tables (77ff.).

15. Cf. the moon of Chateaubriand: the “vierge blanche” of *Les Martyrs*, the “reine des nuits” of *Le Génie du christianisme* and, most importantly here, the vestal virgin of *Atala*, 130: “[La lune] se leva au milieu de la nuit, comme une blanche vestale qui vient pleurer sur le cercueil d’une compagne.” Rotelli (*Due studi sul simbolismo*) notes nine occurrences of Notre-Dame in the Complaintes, all but one of which apply to the moon. See especially “Complainte à Notre-Dame des Soirs” and “Complainte de cette Bonne Lune.”
16. Laforgue used these terms frequently in his poetry, sometimes together. See "États" (Imitation): “Elle est l'Hostie! et le silence est son ciboire.” Rotelli notes seven instances of ciboire and seventeen of hostie (Due Studi sul simbolismo, 80, 82, 96, 98).

17. Cf. the balloon launching in Le Miracle des Roses, and E.P.L. IV, 22, May 1892, 204. In his Guêpe chronicle of 21 August 1879, Laforgue describes the explosion of the great balloon built for the 1878 Paris Exhibition: "Hier encore il se dandinait sur ses amarres, faisant des grâces devant les badauds ou montait crânement dans l'azur avec sa petite cargaison de philistins ébäudis, et maintenant . . . sic transit gloria mundi; traduction: voilà comment s'en va une fortune de 500,000 francs" (O.C. 1986, I, 188).

18. Laforgue used this line from Shakespeare’s Hamlet as an epigraph to “Dimanches” XLIV (F.B.V.).

19. Cf. the Ophélie of Hamlet, who was eighteen; the succulent eyes of Salomé; the sad mouth of Kate.

20. Cf. the words of the lady in D.V. X. Laforgue used the figure of the Sulamite often. See “Complainte des Pianos dans les Quartiers Aisés,” “Complainte de l’Orgue de Barbarie,” “Complainte du Temps et de sa Commère l’Espace”; and “L’Aurore-Promise” (F.B.V. XXXV).

21. Laforgue used the metaphor of the mass for sexual union in the D.V. Cf. the “messes dont on a fait un jeu” and the “Grand’Messe” of IV.

22. This is a frequent metaphor in the D.V. Cf. “Dimanches” IV, “Solo de lune” VII, and “Sur une défunte” XI.

23. Cf. also “Climat, faune et flore de la Lune” (Imitation), which contains many of these, as well as most of Laforgue’s terms and metaphors for Decadence: Immaculée-Conception, nébuleuse, silence, ivoire, ciboires, blême, fontaines de Léthé, étangs, crayeux, nécropoles, crapauds, cygnes, paons blancs, cristal, fleurs fixes, cierges, lys, albes, lait, calme, amours blancs, miroir mort.

24. Cf. Andromède (255f.) and Syrinx (293), who have the same characteristics.

25. Cf. Laforgue’s ironic prose piece on this subject, “Bobo”: “On l’a donc laissée dans la paresse, le miroir, l’esclavage, sans autre occupation que son sexe, sa seule arme et monnaie. Et elle a donc, à force de siècles de serre chaude, hypertrophié son sexe. Et elle est devenue le Féminin, l’éternel Féminin (comme s’il y avait un éternel Masculin!), franc-maçonnerie de faux frères, quoi . . . Ah! nous avons laissé notre petite sœur faire humanité à part. On récolte ce qu’on a semé” (Le Symboliste 2, 15 October 1886).

26. Again, cf. “Bobo” (see previous note): “et c’est les génies qu’elle fait souffrir particulièrement pour leur faire donner des chefs d’oeuvre qui
la renouvellent aussi, la retransfigurent et alimentent la banque de la loterie."

27. Cf. F.B.V. XXXIV: "Je te crierai: 'Nous sommes frères! / Alors, vête-toi à ma manière, / Ma manière ne trompe pas; / Et perd ce dandinement louche / D'animal lesté de ses couches, / Et galopons par les haras!'"

28. "Tu t'en vas et tu nous quittes / Tu nous quitt' et tu t'en vas. / Si tu t'en vas, paye un litre / Paye un litre si tu t'en vas."


Chapter 6

1. Letter 109 to Henry, 6 June 1885, O.C. V, 128. Salomé was the first moralité that Laforgue wrote, not, as is commonly alleged, Le Miracle des Roses. Salomé is the first to be mentioned by name in his correspondence (letter 107, mid-May 1885, O.C. 1922, V, 124), and the first one completed. (Le Miracle des Roses contains older material and was initially drafted at the same time as Salomé but was finished a year later. See ch. 4, n. 10.) The theme interested him from early on; in 1882 he mentions working on a Salomé in verse (letter 56 to Henry, 5 August 1882, O.C. 1986, I, 795).

2. For example, Carlo Dolci and Paul Delaroche.


5. Laforgue knew the relevant works of all these artists. For other Salomés, see Décaudin, "Un Mythe 'fin de siècle': Salomé"; and J.-P. Reverseau, "Pour une étude du thème de la tête coupée dans la littérature et la peinture dans la seconde partie du 19e siècle."

6. A Rebours, ch. 5.

7. Laforgue never mentions one of the most famous examples, Mallarmé's Hérodiade, two parts of which were not published during his lifetime. He did not meet Mallarmé until late October of 1885, and thus for Salomé he cannot have had access to Mallarmé's unpublished works. (A letter to Mallarmé from Kahn of 18 October 1885 asks permission to present Laforgue at one of the following Tuesday soirées; the meeting probably took place on the 27th. [coll. P. Pia, Vanderbilt University]). He may have read the "Scène" portion (1871), though this is uncertain (cf. letter 28 to Kahn, 10 November 1885, L. A., 127). Huysmans quotes Hérodiade's invocation to her mirror in A Rebours (ch. 15, 219f.). There are some connections between the two heroines: Hérodiade, like Salomé, is associated with the night; she is narcissistic and claims to be committed to chastity,
while admitting at the end that she has been lying; the jewels of her hair are likened to stars; the poem is concerned with her nascent sexuality. But these can also be found in other works of the Salomé genre, as we shall see. If the language, themes, metaphors, even ideas of Salomé remind us of Mallarmé's, it may be because they reflect and parody those of Decadence, and Mallarmé, as we have seen in chapter two, was considered with Verlaine one of the two “pillars” of the movement.

8. Laforgue read Salammbô and alludes to it frequently. L’Imitation de Notre-Dame la Lune, written at about the same time as Salomé, is dedicated to her.


10. Laforgue will work a variation on this headdress connection by also giving Salomé one of Salammbô’s headdresses, but not the mitred one; rather, the peacock feather one that she wears at the end of the novel as she watches Mâtho die, before dying herself.


14. Letter 44 to Kahn, ca. 3 June 1886, L. A., 188.

15. I have not succeeded in tracing the epigraph. Denis Jourdain (1811–1871) served in the Société des Missions Etrangères in Indochina and wrote a Grammaire franco-annamite (Saigon, Imprimerie du gouvernement, 1872).

16. Laforgue added “sept” to the final version; the original one had merely the unspecified “symbolismes d’Etat.”

17. The sea is appropriate to the Decadent ideal of the Isles. Cf. Hamlet’s revery (9).


20. The love of Salomé for the Baptist belongs to a popular tradition, according to which he repulses her advances, and she thus asks for his head. (Heine used it in Atta Troll.) Laforgue alters this, however; Iaokanann most certainly, and fatally, does not resist.

21. Cf. Laforgue’s description of the Prussian military in Berlin, O.C. 1922, VI, esp. ch. 2. He equates the imperial regime with the bourgeois generally, whose values he satirizes here.

23. Laforgue uses it in the “Complainte du pauvre chevalier-errant”: “Au fond de chapelles de mousseline / Pâle, ou jonquille à pois noirs, / Dans les soirs, / Feu d’artificieront envers vous mes sens encensoirs!”

24. Salammbo indeed wears a “tunique jaune” (Salammbô, 747).

25. Most commentators mention Salomé’s peculiar costume but do not discuss its significance. Ruchon describes it as a “costume aussi saugrenu que l’âme de l’être qu’il revêt et qu’il pare” (Jules Laforgue, 102). Only R. Schaffner, in an aside, notices any relation between it and her narcissism: “Der Abscheu vor banaler Wirklichkeit ist der Grund für narzisshaft (jonquille) esoterisches Wesen” (Die Salome-Dichtungen von Flaubert, Laforgue, Wilde und Mallarmé, 100).

26. The Aquarium section of the story comes from Laforgue’s prose piece, “L’Aquarium” (La Vogue 6, 29 May 1886). Grojnowski reprints Ruchon’s line-by-line comparison of the two versions (346ff.). Laforgue always viewed the Aquarium in terms of the Unconscious and the mystical nirvana of Buddhism. See ch. 2, n. 76.

27. Laforgue associated the Aquarium with the womb explicitly in the “Complainte du foetus”: “Adieu, forêts d’aquarium qui, me couvant, / Avez mis ce levain dans ma chrysalide!”


30. “Dans un palais semblable à une basilique d’une architecture tout à la fois musulmane et byzantine”; and “le palais . . . ainsi qu’un Alhambra” (A Rebours, ch. 5).


32. “Litanies des derniers quartiers de la lune” (Imitation).

33. Cf. Salammbô (O.C. I, 718): “chevelure poudrée d’un sable violet”; “une chaînette d’or entre ses chevilles”; “une bouche rose comme une grenade ouverte”; “lyre d’ébène”; “une coiffure faite avec des plumes de paon étoilées de pierrières” (988); with Salomé: “[cheveux] saupoudrés de pollens inconnus” (223); “ses pieds . . . chaussés uniquement d’un anneau aux chevilles” (225); “les lèvres découvrant d’un accent circonflexe rose pâle une denture aux gencives d’un rose plus pâle encore” (223); “une petite lyre noire” (221); “une roue de paon” (223).
34. "Comme elle était très lourde, ils la portèrent alternativement.

35. She is also obliged to alter it, changing the original "eo" (referring to opium) to "ea," consistent with its feminine antecedent, "Grande Vertu Curative"; "dormativa" is simply wrong (it should read "dormitiva"), and one wonders whether the mistaken vowel was conditioned by the preceding "curative" and "palliative," in a manner typical of Salomé's ludicrous assonantal speech. Editors have always emended the "a" to "i," but the manuscript versions reprinted in the Grojnowski edition read "dormitiva." This is unlikely to be a mistake on Laforgue's part, for the cognate French word preserves the "i," "dormitive." For the joke, see Le Malade Imaginaire, 3e intermède.

36. Laforgue's play on Poe's La Vérité sur le cas de M. Waldemar in Persée et Andromède ("La Vérité sur le cas de Tout") originally figured as the tetrarch's Bible in Salomé. See below, ch. 7, n. 9.

37. The Baptist and Orpheus legends are related by the motif of the severed head, specifically, one that retains its powers even after it has been cut off. The likeness between Moreau's paintings of the two figures was perceived by Gautier: "Sur la grande lyre aux cornes rouges repose la tête d'Orphée, comme celle de Saint-Jean Baptiste sur son plat d'argent aux mains d'Hérodiade" (Moniteur universel, 15 May 1866, quoted in Reverseau, "Pour une étude de la tête coupée dans la littérature et la peinture dans la seconde partie du XIXè siècle," 177). Laforgue discussed the Salomé and Orpheus paintings in his art criticism (Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1 August 1883, and Le Symboliste, 4, 30 October 1886).


Chapter 7

1. Laforgue had written a draft of Persée by early June 1886; he then revised it substantially in late July, precisely at the time he was making the important transition from the stilted syllabic meter of the Fleurs de bonne volonté to the more supple free verse of the Derniers Vers. The prose reflects his new manner: it abounds with repetitions, vocatives, independent descriptive phrases, and lyrical rhythms, and has many images and themes in common with the last poems, such as the sunset of part 3.


3. "Le Plus Heureux des Trois" was first performed at the Palais Royal in 1870, and restaged in 1875. Laforgue moved to Paris in 1876. He
knew Labiche's plays and devoted a long chronicle to them in *La Guêpe* (18 May 1877, O.C. 1886, I, 169f.), where he mentions the eight volumes of Labiche's *Oeuvres complètes* just published.

4. "Le Meunier, son fils et l'âne."

5. Cf. the opening of *Persée et Andromède* with the passages on the sea in *Stéphane Vassiliev* (1881).

6. Cf. *Hamlet*: "(qui n'a entendu parler de ses étonnants yeux d'hirondelle de mer?)" (11); and *Le Miracle des Roses*: "... ses yeux, tantôt aigus comme ceux des inapprivoisables oiseaux des Atlantiques" (75).


8. *Exorciser* is a Laforguian expression for sexual union. Cf. "aller chez sa maîtresse, aller s'exorciser" (*Dragées*, 56); and *E.P.L.* IV, 26, May 1892, 198: "pourquoi suis-je fou d'elle et non d'une autre? ... Pourquoi est celle qui doit m'exorciser"

9. *La Vérité sur le cas de Tout* originally figured as the title of the Teetrarch's Bible in *Salomé*, where it made sense not only as the Unconscious truth that governs the island, but also as the source of Salomé's postmortem experiments on the Baptist's head in part four. Laforgue seems to have considered using "Incidents de la vérité sur mon cas" as the title of *F.B.V.* (letter to Lindenlaub, ca. 17 April 1886, in *Durry, Jules Laforgue*, 240).

10. The poem may be compared, in language and theme, to Laforgue's own outline of this philosophy in *L'Art moderne en Allemagne* (*Revue blanche* IX, 56, 1 October 1895, 293).


12. The most famous usage of the parodic nature of the pumpkin is Seneca's satire on the deification of Claudius, the *Apoploecyntosis*, or "Pumpkinification."

13. Cf. the vulgarization of the sun from plenipotentiary monarch to dying animal in "L'Hiver qui vient":

Soleils plénipotentiaires des travaux en blonds Pactoles
Des spectacles agricoles,
Où êtes-vous ensevelis?
Ce soir un soleil fichu gît au haut du coteau
Gît sur le flanc, dans les genêts, sur son manteau,
Un soleil blanc comme un crachat d’estaminet
Sur une litière de jaunes genêts
De jaunes genêts d’automne.

...Et il gît là, comme une glande arrachée dans un cou,
Et il frissonne, sans personne!...

The more spectacular bloody sunset of D.V. II, “Le Mystère des trois cors,” is also described in terms of death and compared ironically to vitriol and poison. “L’Hiver qui vient” associates the “Adieu paniers” refrain with the barrenness of oncoming winter and the proximity of death. Cf. also Le Miracle des Roses, in which the phrase occurs just after the procession and before Ruth awakens to proclaim the “miracle.”

14. In a note, Laforgue paraphrases Hartmann’s discussion of mysticism as “la désagrégation, l’abandon, la dissolution, la dilution du moi dans l’Absolu ou de l’absolu dans le moi... Annihilation de la conscience dans l’inconscient, sauf un soupçon de quoi jouir de son annihilation—une agonie perpétuelle.” Mystical pleasure can be had not in total annihilation, but in near annihilation which preserves enough consciousness to enjoy it. (Repr. ms. in Ruchon, Jules Laforgue, 49. Cf. Philosophie de l’Inconscient, 1, 402f.)

15. Jean-Aubry (M.L., O.C. 1922, III, 314) likens Laforgue’s epilogue to Les Nuits espagnoles of the popular Second Empire novelist Joseph Méry (1854, repr. 1881). In this work, a group of society people meet nightly to hear a story told by one of them; the stories generally have some relation to the stars. Besides this similarity, however, there is little other resemblance between the novel and Laforgue’s epilogue, in theme, subject, detail, or even general technique. The narrator is usually conspicuous in Méry’s story, unlike Laforgue’s who appears unexpectedly at the end. The link between the stars and the individual tales in Méry’s book is often so tenuous as to be meaningless, unlike the direct relation between the constellations of the epilogue and the Moralité. It is possible that Laforgue knew this work; Pia, though sceptical, observes that Méry’s works were easily available on the quais, a favorite haunt of Laforgue’s (M.L., 243). Whether Laforgue knew the work or not, Les Nuits espagnoles play no role at all in the epilogue.

16. Cf. Laforgue’s play on this word at the end of Salomé (see above, 167.)

Chapter 8

1. In 1882, Laforgue stated his intention of writing a “Complainte de Pan” (letter 67 to Henry, 2 December 1882, O.C. 1986, I, 810). The evi-
dence suggests that he wrote *Pan et la Syrinx* slightly earlier than is generally thought, probably in October and early November 1886. On an envelope addressed to him in Leah’s handwriting and postmarked 5 October from London, he scribbled a line from its first page, along with some ideas for revisions of *Salomé*: “Immortel et jeune, Pan n’avait pas encore vraiment aimé comme je l’entends” (see Jean-Aubry’s edition of the *M. L.*, O.C. 1922, III, 306 and 309). Moreover, the story has many affinities of language and theme with the *Derniers Vers* written around October, “Simple Agonie” (VI) and “Solo de lune” (VII). In “Simple Agonie,” one finds Pan’s *sanglot d’amour*, his concern for expressing “la chose qu’est la chose,” and the sustained association of love with art. With “Solo de lune,” the story shares the themes of regret and nostalgia, the physical and emotional warmth of the summer season in which both are set (particularly the summer night of heightened sensation), the hero’s concern for reconciling his soul to the Present, the image of the primitive deep forest, and even the “solo de lune” of the title (“la vallée inondée d’un mémorable solo de lune,” 283). The poems written in November—D.V. IX, X, and XI—also have echoes in the story but to a lesser extent.


3. Laforgue developed this theme in his later works, including his notes on art. “Il faut dire qu’une description porte la note de votre cœur—et le moment où vous avez votre cœur, c’est non pas devant la chose crue, encombrante, mais quand plus tard, songeant, seul, nostalgique, vous évoquez l’éphémère . . . Ce n’est que dans le souvenir qu’on a son cœur, et qu’on tamise la chose avec son cœur, c’est-à-dire avec art durable—sur place, vous êtes aveuglé, objectif, vous avez le pied dans le plat. Une chose n’a son existence d’art, sa poésie, son existence en somme (puisque la réalité passe) que dans la poésie du souvenir” (“Carnet 1884-1885,” 430). His interest in the role of memory at this time was possibly inspired by his reading of Baudelaire, who expresses similar ideas, notably in “L’Art mnémonique” (O.C. II, 697ff.).


5. All the heroines of the *Moralités* have large eyes and diminutive breasts. Cf. also the long legs of Andromède and Elsa, Kate’s “moue” (37), and Ruth’s “cheveux d’ambre roux massés sur le front” (69–71).

6. In his notes, Laforgue refers explicitly to “cet amour de l’Idéal qui
mène le monde,” and describes the attainment of happiness as a contradiction in terms (E.P.L. II, 10, January 1891, cf.). Cf. Revue blanche VII, 36, October 1894, 300: “Le bonheur—tous nous le voyons réellement dans l’avenir et nous en rappelons réellement des échappées dans le passé, on n’a jamais entendu personne, nul n’a jamais pu se dire—le voici, j’en ai, en ce moment, dans le présent.”


8. The Grojnowski edition reads “le bonheur est sans la poursuite de l’Idéal,” clearly a mistake. The earlier editions all have dans, the only reading which makes sense in the context.

9. Pia (M.L., 241) argues that the poems sung by Pan are the last that Laforgue wrote. Jean-Aubry implies likewise by noting that they resemble some of the F.B.V., but reworked according to Laforgue’s new free-verse manner. This suggests that Pan’s verses are the sort that Laforgue intended to include in his last volume, which he never completed but to which the D.V belonged.

10. Cf. D.V. V: “Etalées et découvrant vos gencives comme un régail, / Et bâillant des aisselles au soleil / Dans l’assourdissement des cigales!” (li.20–22). Cf. also D.V. III: “Mon corps, ô ma soeur, a bien mal à sa belle âme,” with Pan: “Mon corps a mal à sa belle âme, / Ma belle âme a mal à son corps” (285); and “Et ce n’est pas sa chair qui me serait tout / Et je ne serais pas qu’un grand cœur pour elle, / Mais quoi s’en aller faire les fous / Dans des histoires fraternelles!” with Pan: “Ce n’est pas sa chair qui me serait tout, / Et je ne serais pas que le grand Pan pour elle, / Mais quoi aller faire les fous / Dans des histoires fraternelles!” (285).

11. See above n. 8.


13. This is the traditional interpretation. See Panofsky’s alternative in “Et in Arcadia Ego.”


16. At least Pan gets the character of the goddess right. Cf. Salammibô: “Les épouses hurlent ton nom dans la douleur des enfantements! Tu gonfles les coquillages! Tu fais bouilloner les vins! Tu putrifies les cadavres! Tu formes les perles au fond de la mer! Et tous les germes, ô Déesse! fermentent dans les obscures profondeurs de ton humidité” (Ibid., 748).
Conclusion


4. *L'Art moderne*, 8 January 1888 (Debauve, 22ff.).