

Heinean Inspirations in Laforgue's Early Literary Journalism

Virtually every commentator on Laforgue's sources mentions Heinrich Heine in vague or general terms, so that the intertextual link between the two poets has become a critical commonplace. Yet none of those critics have attempted a precise, documented examination of the sedimentation of Heine's influence in Laforgue's textual universe.¹ In this study I intend to make a beginning of such an analysis by discussing a group of the poet's early texts, his contributions to two short-lived literary reviews – in light of their Heinean inspirations.

In 1969, J.L. Debaue published a critical edition of the pieces Laforgue wrote for *La Guêpe* and *L'Enfer*, along with a history of the texts

and the reviews in which they appeared.² Debaue, too, points to Laforgue's Heinean 'sympathies,' which the poet himself, moreover, acknowledges explicitly in one of these early texts.³ Before considering some of the individual pieces that comprise the group of twelve poems, twenty-six 'Parisian chronicles' and nine other prose pieces (the twenty-one annotated humorous sketches lie beyond the focus of our discussion), we should note that the poet presented all of them as literary journalism. While only one issue of *L'Enfer* appeared, in the summer of 1879, *La Guêpe*, a 'journal hebdomadaire, scientifique et littéraire,' appeared, though irregularly, from May of 1879 until February of 1880; and Laforgue was one of its principal, perhaps even remunerated, contributors.⁴

Throughout his creative career, the poet was to supplement his work with journalistic writing, such as his *reportages* of the Salon of Berlin in 1883 for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, his articles about the German court destined for *L'Illustration* (published posthumously in the volume *En Allemagne: Berlin, la cour et la ville*),⁵ his contributions to *La Vogue*, *Le Décadent* and *Le Symboliste*,⁶ and finally the seven 'Chroniques parisiennes' written in 1887, shortly before his death, for the *Revue Indépendante*.⁷

The poet who raised literary journalism to an art, and became its unparalleled master, was Heine, who had written his most distinguished contributions to the genre in Paris. Laforgue had easy access to these texts in both the original and French versions. The articles Heine wrote from France from December 1831, shortly after his arrival in Paris, until September 1832 for the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, including his *reportage* of the Paris Salon of 1831, were available in French in the volume *De la France* as early as 1833; and his series of journalistic 'letters' written for the same periodical from 1840 until 1843 were first

¹ Thus, for example, Warren Ramsey in his magisterial *Jules Laforgue and the Ironic Inheritance* (New York: Oxford University Press 1953) limits himself to generalities like the following: 'There is a deep-seated relation between the work of the great German ironist and the verse that Laforgue was preparing to write' (p. 40). J.L. Debaue, in *Laforgue en son temps* (Neuchâtel: Baconnière 1972), points to Heinean affinities, too, in general terms; about the *Moralités légendaires* he says: 'Avec plus de couleur mais moins de causticité, c'est l'esprit de Heine' (p. 224). Leon Guichard, in *Jules Laforgue et ses poésies* (Paris: Nizet 1977), briefly mentions Heine's famous neologisms as a likely inspiration for Laforgue's (p. 95). Ellen Sakari refers frequently to Heine in *Propriété et Piété: Thèmes et attitudes ironiques dans l'œuvre de Jules Laforgue* (Jyväskylä: L'Université de Jyväskylä 1974). Her comments remain mostly general, like the following: 'Aussi Laforgue peut-il avoir recours à la technique du désillusionnement, pour corriger des propos trop subjectifs, procédé typique d'Henri Heine qui se sert de l'ironie pour dégonfler le pathos' (p. 23). She discusses in more detail, however, the Heinean technique, frequently adopted by Laforgue, of the 'queue de poisson' (p. 111), the ironically deflating final line of poems, a technique I shall discuss in the body of this study. Regarding Laforgue's *Des fleurs de bonne volonté* and *Derniers Vers*, she remarks perceptively: 'Il s'agit souvent de l'ironie de soi-même, dont la fonction est surtout autoprotectrice et corrective. *Des fleurs de bonne volonté* et les *Derniers vers* en contiennent des spécimens qui font parfois songer à Heine et qui ont eu des répercussions remarquables dans la poésie du XX^e siècle. Je pense surtout au "Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock" de T.S. Eliot' (p. 209).

² J.L. Debaue, *Jules Laforgue: Les Pages de la Guêpe* (Paris: Nizet 1966)

³ Ibid. 74: 'Les sympathies avouées vont pour le moment à Baudelaire, Banville, Michelet et Heine "qu'aux plus grands je préfère" (il le fera jusqu'à sa mort).'

⁴ Ibid. 45

⁵ Jules Laforgue, *Œuvres complètes* VI, *En Allemagne: Berlin, la cour et la ville*. Ed. G. Jean-Aubry (Paris: Mercure de France 1922; Genève: Slatkine Reprints 1979)

⁶ For a brief summary of these, see Jules Laforgue, *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*. Ed. Pascal Pia (Paris: Gallimard 1979) 29.

⁷ Jules Laforgue, *Chroniques parisiennes, ennuis non rimés*. Ed. M.A. Malraux (Paris: La Connaissance, undated)

published in French in 1844 in the volume *Luitèce*.⁸ The popularity of these two volumes is documented by their many reprintings.⁹

But in connection with Laforgue's earliest products of literary journalism, I would like to draw attention to a less known group of Heine's texts which constitute his own beginnings in the genre, the 'Briele aus Berlin,' written in 1822 for the *Rheinisch-Westfälischer Anzeiger*, and which first appeared in French in 1867.¹⁰ The best-known of Heine's poetry appeared in French in the volume *Poèmes et légendes* as early as 1855; the volume of *Poésies inédites* came out in 1885.¹¹ Laforgue's translation of a fragment from the 'Nachlese zum Lyrischen Intermezzo' shows us that he was familiar with at least some of the German poet's verse in the original.¹²

The two pieces that Laforgue contributed to the sole number of *L'Enfer* are a poem, 'La Chanson des morts,' subtitled 'Fragment d'un poème: *Un Amour dans les tombes*,' signed with the pseudonym 'Ouraphle' and dated 'Paris, février 1878,' and a prose composition, 'Chronique stygienne,' signed 'Ouraphle' and dated 'Paris, 30 juillet 1879.'¹³ The poem constitutes the earliest verse by Laforgue so far known; it is an exercise in the *danse macabre* motif, celebrated in medieval iconography (Amiens, Angers, Dijon, Rouen, Paris) and resuscitated by German Romanticism. It is, therefore, not surprising that Heine should have picked up the topos in one of his earliest collections, the 'Traumbilder' (No. 8) of *Junge Leiden* (1817-1821). The French version of this 'dream vision' is entitled 'Le Cimetière' and forms part of the group of 'Nocturnes' of the volume *Poèmes et légendes*;¹⁴ it is one of the two

poems of this group of ten, moreover, that were translated by a great poet, Heine's friend Gérard de Nerval.¹⁵

Heine's poem, framed by the persona's dream of passing by the cemetery on his way home from his mistress' house toward midnight, is a 'Moriât,' a burlesque morality, sung by the ghost of a wandering street musician sitting on his tombstone and calling forth from their graves the ghosts of six other victims of 'Liebestod.' Accompanied by the player and lead-singer, they first bemoan their common fate together. Then each of them — a tailor's apprentice, a thief, an actor, a student, a rich man's servant, and a hunter — turns 'Bänkelsänger' to tell his story (death by a broken heart, death in jail, suicides, death by hanging, and death by beheading), each tale of horror closed off by the refrain of the other ghosts' happy approbation: 'Da lachten die Geister im lustigen Chor.' But at the stroke of one hour after midnight, the song and dance of the dead ends, and they must scramble back into their graves. The poem is a masterpiece of the genre; one of its most remarkable features is Heine's finesse in the handling of rhythmic shifts, from the ballad-like opening quatrain in couplet rhymes to the increased tempo and free rhythms of the 'Spielmann's' wild song which drives the dead out of their graves:

Bravo! bravo! immer toll!
Seid willkommen!
Habt vernommen,
Daß mein Zauberwort erscholl!

...

Kurzweil kann uns heut nicht fehlen,
Jeder soll hier treu erzählen,
Was ihn weiland hergebracht,
Wie gehetzt,
Wie zerfetzt
Ihn die tolle Liebesjagd.

Laforgue's 'Chanson des morts' is much shorter than Heine's and is unfinished, as its title, 'Fragment d'un poème: *Un Amour dans les*

8 For 'Französische Maler' and 'Französische Zustände,' cf. Heinrich Heine, *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, Vol. IV. Ed. Hans Kaufmann (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag 1961) 297-594; *De la France* par Henri Heine (Paris: E. Renduel 1833) (successive editions by Calmann-Lévy, then Michel Lévy Frères). For *Luitetia*, cf. Kaufmann, *ibid.*, Vol. VI; *Luitèce* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères 1855).

9 *De la France* was reprinted in 1857, 1860, 1863, 1867 and 1884; *Luitèce* was reprinted in 1855 (2nd ed.), 1857, 1859, 1861, 1863, 1866, 1867, 1871.

10 *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 495-558. The French version in the volume *De tout un peu* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères 1867) 1-121.

11 *Poèmes et légendes* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères 1855), reprinted in 1856, 1861, 1864, 1867 and 1886. *Poésies inédites* (Paris: Calmann Lévy 1885), reprinted in 1898.

12 Cf. *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 203.

13 *Les Pages de la Gaieté*, op. cit. 86-9 and 161-3; 'La Chanson des morts,' also in *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 161-4.

14 *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. I, 26-32; *Poèmes et légendes*, op. cit. 153-8.

15 The translator(s) of the other 'Traumbilder' is not known; cf. Heinrich Heine: *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke*, ed. Manfred Windfuhr (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe 1975) Band 1/2, 1009.

tombes, suggests. The subtitle's second half clearly relates the piece to Heine's in linking love and the tombs. The opening frame, moreover, resembles that of Heine: the first-person persona is walking alone in a dark, cold night to arrive, toward midnight, at the graveyard:

Devant moi s'étendait l'immense cimetière...

.....

... Quand je vis tout à coup, légion vagabonde,
Se prendre par la main des squelettes glacés.

On commence, et tandis que tournoyait leur ronde,
Ils glapissent en cœur (sic) l'hymne des trépassés:

The author's suspension points mark the fragmentary state of the poem, but the scene presented to and by the persona surely resembles Heine's: the ghosts (not surprisingly in the form of skeletons in Laforgue, who was so fond of sketching them in his notes!) dancing and intoning their song. In Laforgue, too, a rhythmic and strophic shift sets off the five numbered songs, each of them, too, closed off by a refrain:

Ils hurlent en sifflant et l'ardente rafaie
Emporte les éclats de leur voix sépulcrale.

But Laforgue's dead sing their distress in unison, rather than each telling his own tale of woe. And the theme of love, announced in the title, is never developed in the unfinished piece; instead, the ghosts anathematize all the living that forget them so soon, and the God who allows it. Finally, the Laforguean ghosts, like those of Heine, precipitate themselves back into their graves. And then Laforgue closes the poem with a typically Heinean device, the 'queue de poisson,' the ironically deflating final line which, in this case, undercuts the horror of the macabre scene:

Et moi pétrifié de ces clameurs funèbres,
De mon gosier en feu sort un cri de terreur:
Et je les vis soudain dans l'ombre et les ténèbres
Qui fuyaient en tumulte harcelés par la peur,
Puis tout se tût (sic) bientôt. De nouveau le silence
Commencait à régner, quand j'ouïs tout à coup
L'un d'eux fureter comme un spectre en démeance
Et hurler en pleurant "on m'a volé mon trou!"

In the 'Chanson's' opening, Laforgue employs another Heinean device, the *Doppelgänger* motif; as the persona walks on the lonely street toward the cemetery, he feels pursued by his double:

Derrière moi sans cesse il me semblait entendre
Un pas qui me suivait et des ricanements! ...

Laforgue surely recalled Heine's most elaborate development of this motif in 'Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen,' Caput VI:

Ich schlenderte sinnend die Straßen entlang,
Da sah ich ihn hinter mir gehen,
Als ob er mein Schatten wäre, und stand
Ich still, so blieb er stehen.¹⁶

Thus, Laforgue's earliest known poem appears to be indeed inspired by Heine.

The 'Chronique stygienne' is an obvious parody of the 'Chroniques parisiennes,' a burlesque report from the capital of hell, appropriate for the 'journal littéraire, satirique et diabolique' entitled *L'Enfer*, and very Heinean in tone. The very title of the piece contains one of Laforgue's first neologisms, recalling the older poet's famous examples. The setting of the city of the dead permits Laforgue to indulge in his cherished anachronisms, as the ruling family of Pluto and Proserpina and her lover Acalaphes mix with the English and the Zulus, and an Athenian orator, Isocrates, with a Roman one, Cicero. The poets Boileau and Delille court royalty, like 'sa majesté trop chrétienne,' Louis XIV, while 'François I^{er} ... débauche tout stygienopolis,' and Henri IV is on the lookout for tender young girls, 'les beaux brins de fillettes! ...' Aeneas pleurniche encore ici, and the local playhouse presents 'la *Charogne crépusculaire*, putréfaction en six phases' by Baudelaire (sic), a play much applauded by Napoléon. Lamartine runs a bowling alley, Graziella a tobacco shop, and Demosthenes, still chewing pebbles, is in charge of a merry-go-round!

This early parody of classical mythology foreshadows already the accomplished *Moralités légendaires*, while it also recalls Heine's burlesque revivals of those gone to hell, or heaven. I am recalling here the 'Untertel' poems of *Neue Gedichte*, in which Pluto bemoans his unhappy marriage to Proserpina:

¹⁶ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. I, 449. The French version in *Poèmes et légendes*, op. cit. 217.

Stets vergeblich, stets nach Frieden
 Ring ich. Hier im Schattenreich
 Kein Verdammter ist mir gleich!
 Ich beneide Sisyphus
 Und die edlen Danaiden.¹⁷

The Danaides became Laforgue's favorite mythical figures. But Heine's most elaborate poetic assembly of famous dead occurs in *Atta Troll's* 'Wild Hunt.' And the most memorable ghosts of this procession are three beautiful women, the classical Diana-Artemis, the Celtic fairy-princess Abunde, and, above all, Herodias, who inspired so many Symbolist writers, from Laforgue to Mallarmé.¹⁸

Before turning to the 'Chroniques parisiennes,' we must consider Laforgue's verse contributions to *La Guêpe*, the first of which was 'Idylle,' a twenty-six line satirical piece in alexandrines and *rime plate*, celebrating the then popular comic soldier figure, Dumanet, and his love, Justine.¹⁹ Though the little poem – 'Vrai! Coppée en ferait une bonne peinture!' – is obviously anchored in the contemporary French intertext, the theme of low-life soldier love recalls such poems by Heine as the 'Lied der Marketerin,' or the Second Song of 'Wünnebergade,' a mock-heroic 'Heldengedicht in zwei Gesängen.'²⁰

Laforgue appropriately dedicated his second poem for *La Guêpe*, 'Excuse macabre,' to 'Hamlet, prince de Danemark,' as its persona addresses the skull of 'Margaretha, ma bien-aimée' in a burlesque pastiche of Hamlet's monologue to Horatio about 'poor Yorick.'²¹ Does 'Margaretha,' the germanization of 'Marguerite,' which was the name of the poet's first love,²² merely pay tribute to German romanticism and

its legacy of Shakespeare enthusiasm; or might it possibly reflect an echo from Heine's 'Shakespeares Mädchen und Frauen?'²³ The text, which Heine wrote in 1838 for an art editor to accompany a series of engravings of these heroines, is divided into 'Tragödien' and 'Komödien,' and among the former, the most charming of the twenty-four brief essays is devoted to 'Ophelia (Hamlet),' whose memory the poet addresses as that of a lovely and magical friend of his own Wittenberg student days. The other pieces tend to be merely descriptive, and two of them are devoted to the dark woman Laforgue might have remembered: 'Margareta (König Heinrich VI, Erster Teil)' and 'Königin Margareta (Heinrich VI, Zweiter und Dritter Teil).' Suffolk's lover, Henry's adulterous queen, is painted in the most macabre colors, and Heine's portrayal of the Shakespearean Margareta might well have helped inspire Laforgue's burlesque rendition of the macabre Shakespearean monologue:

Margaretha, ma bien-aimée, or donc voici
 Ton crâne. Quel poli! l'on dirait de l'ivoire.
 (Je le savonne assez, chaque jour, Dieu merci,
 Et me permets d'ailleurs fort rarement d'y boire.)
 Te voilà! ... Dans ces deux trous, deux beaux yeux jadis,
 Miroirs de ton âme enhumée,
 Révaient ... Las! où sont tes belles tresses d'or, dis,
 Margaretha, ma bien-aimée?

'La Femme est une malade,' under the epigraph '(Michelet)'²⁴ owes nothing to Heine but the ironic narrative mode in which it alludes to Michelet's *La Femme* of 1859; and the theme, like that of the preceding poem, is one congenial to the young misogynist.

'Au lieu de songer à se créer une position,'²⁵ the fourth poem Laforgue contributed to *La Guêpe*, under the epigraph 'Oh! fi fi de ce monde. (Hamlet),' is a mock *Sturm und Drang* piece, celebrating the theme of evasion – into cosmic spheres – from bourgeois constraints such as suggested in the title. With its lugubrious evocation of a blond-tressed lost love named Lotte, it intimates the sorrows of the young Goethe

¹⁷ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. I, 304; French version in *Poésies inédites*, op. cit. 215.

¹⁸ Ibid. 397-404; French version in *Poèmes et légendes*, op. cit., 51-7. For the evolution of the Herodias myth in the nineteenth century, cf. Helen G. Zagora, *The Legend of Salomé and the Principle of Art for Art's Sake* (Paris: Minard 1960).

¹⁹ *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 83-4; *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 165.

²⁰ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. II, 405 and 283-7; the 'Lied der Marketerin' is in the French version 'La Chanson de la vivandière,' *Poésies et légendes*, op. cit. 401-2.

²¹ *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 84-5; *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 168-9.

²² Ibid. 364.

²³ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. V, 459-88; in French, *Les Héroïnes de Shakespeare* in *De l'Allemagne* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères 1867).

²⁴ *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 85-6; *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 166-7.

²⁵ Ibid. 89-91; ibid. 172-3.

rather than those of Heine, but in the latter's manner: '... la tombe d'Ivoire/Où, depuis quinze jours, — si j'ai bonne mémoire, — /Pourrit la bien-aimée aux longues tresses d'or./ — Pauvre Lotte! Ah! misère! — ...' (p. 90).

In the following poem, 'Ce qu'aime le gros Fritz,'²⁶ Laforgue caricatures his own infatuation with things German, from the soul to the stomach, the first of the four quatrains evoking Hegel, the second, again Goethe, the third Heine, and the last one sauerkraut and beer! I have elsewhere discussed Laforgue's intertextual links with German philosophy;²⁷ we know that he was familiar with Hegel's *Ästhetik*, available in French before 1875, but that he did not concern himself with the bulk of Hegel's philosophy. Rather, the Hegelian traces in his poetry, to begin with the poem under discussion, reflect both Schopenhauer's anti-Hegelianism and Heine's frequent mocking allusions to his former teacher. Our poem's opening stanza:

Oui, j'aime à promener ma belle âme allemande
À travers l'Esthétique et les brouillards d'Hegel;
Un nuage en bouteille est tout ce que demande
L'âme éprise de vague et d'immatériel,

recalls Heinean poetic utterances like the following that might have helped inspire it:

Ich rief den Teufel, und er kam,
Und ich sah ihn mit Verwundung an.

....
Blass ist er etwas, doch ist es kein Wunder,
Sanskrit und Hegel studiert er jetztunder.²⁸

The first line of the third stanza of 'Ce qu'aime le gros Fritz' echoes the poem's opening, as we pass from fat Fritz's German *Schöngeistigkeit* to his German hearing, from Hegelian fogginess to the 'gothic ac-

cents' of the organ of Cologne cathedral, which arouses the old legend of the Willis' dance in his (German) heart:

J'aime à charmer aussi mon ouïe allemande
Quand l'orgue de Cologne, aux gothiques accents,
Éveille dans mon cœur quelque vieille légende
Où passent des Willis dans des rayons flottants.

The choice of Cologne cathedral is certainly not coincidental, as it recalls Heine's frequent allusions to the edifice which had remained unfinished since the Reformation. Heine never tired of mocking the efforts that were made in the first half of the nineteenth century to complete the cathedral, as in 'Bei des Nachtwächters Ankunft zu Paris' of *Neue Gedichte*,²⁹ or his most lengthy and outspoken attack on the project in 'Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen,' Caput IV.³⁰ The dance of the Willis — the ghosts of brides that died before their wedding night — on moonlit country roads at midnight is a legend of Austrian folklore, retold and resurrected by Heine in his *Elementargeister*;³¹ he also mentions the Willis in the second of the *Florentinische Nächte*.³² The closing stanza celebrates fat Fritz's beloved sauerkraut and beer, not without alluding, moreover, to the French clocks which the Germans had confiscated in the Franco-Prussian war.³³

Laforgue's 'gros Fritz' is a caricature in the best of Heinean satirical manner, and the young poet pays explicit homage to the Master in the following poem, whose very title, 'Épicurisme,'³⁴ announces the early-Heinean theme of this-worldliness and contempt for the hereafter. The mocking scepticism of its opening lines,

²⁹ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. I, 322-3; *Poèmes et légendes*, op. cit. 190

³⁰ Ibid. 443 and 444; ibid. 212

³¹ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. V, 321; French version entitled 'Traditions populaires' in *De l'Allemagne II* (first published by Michel Lévy Frères in 1835) 60.

³² *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. IV, 158. 'Les Nuits florentines' were published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in April and May of 1836.

³³ Cf. *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 366

³⁴ *Les Pages de la Gaieté*, op. cit. 92-3; *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 178-9

²⁶ Ibid. 91; ibid. 177

²⁷ Cf. my 'Laforgue and His Philosophers, or the "Paratext" in the Intertextual Maze,' forthcoming in *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*.

²⁸ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. I, 122; In French, in *Dramas et fantaisies* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères 1886) 246; in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (octobre 1863).

Je suis heureux gratis! – Il est bon ici-bas
De faire, s'il se peut, son paradis, en cas
Que celui de là-haut soit une balancoire,
Comme il est, après tout, bien permis de le croire,

echoes Heine's:

Freilich, ein ungläub'ger Thomas,
Glaub ich an den Himmel nicht,
Den die Kirchenlehre Romas
Und Jerusalems verspricht.³⁵

But epicureanism, while suggesting a hedonistic ethics, fundamentally points to pleasures intellectual; it is these that the persona, whom one cannot fail to identify with Laforgue, enumerates:

À la bibliothèque ensuite je me rends.
– C'est la plus belle au monde! – Asseyons-nous. Je prends
Sainte-Beuve, et Théo, Banville, Baudelaire,
Leconte, Heine, enfin, qu'aux plus grands je préfère,
"Ce bouffon de génie", a dit Schopenhauer,
Qui sanglote et sourit, mais d'un sourire amer!

These lines reflect Laforgue's life in Paris around the time he composed the poem, evoking the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, both of which he visited assiduously at that period. One of his poems, 'Derniers Soupiers d'un Parnassien',³⁶ is even signed 'Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, 21 avril, 1880,' and another, 'Memento Sonnet triste',³⁷ is signed 'Jules Laforgue - Mouni.' Our Buddhist monk lived his ascetic existence in the two great libraries in which he frequented his German friends: Heine, Schopenhauer, and later von Hartmann. Laforgue had read Schopenhauer's remark on Heine, quoted in 'Épicurisme,' in Paul Janet's article on the philosopher,³⁸ in a paragraph which also reinforced his opinion about Hegel:

Revenons à ses jugements (Schopenhauer's) sur les philosophes ou les écrivains plus ou moins célèbres de son temps. Il disait de Heine: "Heine est un bouffon, mais un bouffon de génie ... " ... de Feuerbach: "Quelle machine grossière et brutale! ... Voilà le fruit de l'hégéliatrie" (*die Hegeler*), ... (p. 283).

Laforgue's reference to Théophile Gautier ('Théo') recalls that poet's friendship with Heine, documented by his essay on the German poet which prefaced the 1856 edition of the famous *Reisebilder Tableau de voyage* and all its successive reprintings. Of all the writers mentioned, it is Heine who receives the greatest tribute here, by a young poet for whom he outshines even Baudelaire!

The following two pieces from the group of twelve poems in *La Guêpe*, entitled 'Intérieur (I)' and 'Intérieur (II)',³⁹ are exercises in Realism whose irony does not hide the most abject human misery.⁴⁰ The ironic tone of these poems, the first a tableau of city, the second of country life, recalls Heine. Laforgue wrote a third 'Intérieur' which was published posthumously,⁴¹ in exactly the same form as 'Intérieur (I),' but whose underlying social criticism is more pronounced, again recalling Heine. Both the tone and the final line of that piece are incorporated into the final stanza of 'Soleil couchant (II)' of the group from *La Guêpe*.

'Soleil couchant (I)' and 'Soleil couchant (II)'⁴² both paint exotic sunsets, the first taking us to Africa, the second to Egypt. Each picture is then totally deflated in the poem's ending by a brusque shift to the contrasting banality of a Parisian scene. Thus, the superb African lion's captured mate is 'Dans sa cage à Paris exposée aux badauds./Et qu'un bourgeois, peut-être, avec son parapluie/Taquine...' In the second poem, we leave 'les rives du Nil' at sunset for a more familiar world:

... à Paris, tout en prenant le thé,
À sa fenêtre ouverte, un gros propriétaire,
Repu, rit du bohème au jabot lesté,
Tourne béatement ses pouces – et digère.

This final quatrain recalls one by Heine, about the bourgeoisie of Hamburg:

39 *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 93-4; *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 174 and 180

40 Cf. *ibid.* 366 for a discussion of the contemporary French intertext.

41 *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit., 175

42 *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 94-5; *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 182-3

35 *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. I, 317; *Poésies inédites*, op. cit. 304

36 *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 202

37 *Ibid.* 181

38 Paul Janet, 'La Métaphysique en Europe depuis Hegel, un philosophe misanthrope,' *Revue des Deux Mondes* 21 (1877) 269-87

Sie essen gut, sie trinken gut,
 Erfreun sich ihres Maulwurfglücks,
 Und ihre Großmutter ist so groß
 Als wie das Loch der Armenbüchse.⁴³

Laforgue's social criticism found its most unambiguous expression in the last, untitled, poem which he contributed to *La Guêpe*,⁴⁴ under the epigraph of a quotation from Chamfort which sounds as if it could have been written by Heine: 'La société peut se diviser en gens qui ont plus de diners que d'appétits et en gens qui ont plus d'appétits que de diners.' The 'vaincus d'ici-bas' are painted in the manner of a Baudelairean 'tableau parisien,' their misery not even clothed in irony, so that in this final text of the group it is not the manner, but the message that recalls the young Laforgue's favorite poet.

* * *

In his twenty-six 'Chroniques parisiennes,' which appeared in *La Guêpe*⁴⁵ from May 4 to November 23, 1879, the nineteen-year-old Laforgue reported to his home town almost exclusively on the capital's literary, theatrical and art news, with an occasional reference to the (bad) weather, or the awkward British tourists invading the city deserted by its own during the summer months. The twenty-four-year-old Heine⁴⁶ had addressed his reports from the Prussian capital to the readers of his native Rhineland in the form of three long Letters, dated January 26, March 16, and June 7, 1822, which the *Rheinisch-Westfälischer Anzeiger* published in ten installments.⁴⁷ The range of coverage of the 'Briefe aus Berlin' is much wider than that of the 'Chroniques parisiennes,' as Heine aimed at giving as comprehensive an image as possible of the cultural and social life of Germany's newest and largest metropolis. His Letters which, in contrast to Laforgue's Chronicles,

Heinean Inspirations in Laforgue's Early Literary Journalism / 363

addressed themselves to the general readership of an established paper, deal with the Prussian court, Berlin society and its amusements, the city's newest buildings, its theatre and opera, its university, its finest restaurants, and also its literary novelties. The young poet, who was already gaining recognition, participated, moreover, in the life he described, while Laforgue, barely out of the *lycée*, was still an outsider to the literary Paris on which he reported for a very limited audience of young readers.

In the opening of the first two Letters, Heine addresses himself directly to the editor of the paper for which he is writing, recalling personal memories and friends, and thereby stressing his own integration into the social environment for and about which he writes. Then he raises the question of what, or rather on what not, to report, as he will omit material — such as news about the theatre, or what a Spontini wore at some social event — with which his readers are already familiar from other journalistic sources. In this he is already pointing to one of the major themes of the 'Briefe,' the politically loaded Spontini-Weber quarrel. And one of the most fundamental differences between Heine and Laforgue's early journalism becomes manifest: Heine's is already *engagé*, while Laforgue's is politically innocent. Then Heine explains his method, or rather, his lack of method: 'Nur verlangen Sie von mir keine Systematik; das ist der Würgeengel aller Korrespondenz. ... Assoziation der Ideen soll immer vorwalten.' Heine's characteristic 'impressionistic technique' is already taking shape: he will not 'paint,' but merely 'intimate,' the inner and outer life of Berlin, 'nur andeuten, nicht ausmalen. Aber womit fange ich an bei dieser Masse von Materialien? Hier hilft eine französische Regel: *Commencez par le commencement*.'⁴⁸

After these preliminaries, the first Letter assumes the form of a *flânerie*, a stroll through the city. Laforgue places his first Chronicle in a similar form, except that he begins his 'Revue parisienne' of May 4 in *medias res*, as it were: 'C'était l'autre soir. Je vaguais par le boulevard avec les allures qui me caractérisent.'⁴⁹ Eight o'clock strikes from the Sorbonne, and Paris bathes in the light of a new moon, which intrigues the future poet of *L'Initiation de Notre-Dame la Lune*, but, 'Bah! ... tout le monde a ses petites manies à la lune ...' And then the lunar reverie is brusquely interrupted as three breathless harbingers almost run the *flâneur* down with 'Zola! ... la Brochure! ... Zola! ... Revue réaliste! ...'

43 *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. I, 286; *Poèmes et légendes*, op. cit. 183

44 *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 96; *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 184

45 *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 97-155

46 Regarding the ambiguities surrounding Heine's birth date, cf. Jeffrey L. Sammons, *Heinrich Heine: A Modern Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1979) 11-15.

47 Cf. Note 5, and *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe*, op. cit. 364.

48 *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 496; *De tout un peu*, op. cit. 3-4

49 *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 97

Zola! Hugo!... dans le Voltaire!,' brimming over with the news: Zola's brochure, *La République et la littérature*, an event in the evolution of Naturalism, which fills the first Chronicle. At its conclusion, the reporter salutes his reader: 'Le ciel vous tienne en joie!'⁵⁰

Heine gradually shifts from addressing his editor, to the reader to whom he continues to speak directly and whom he takes along on his city walk: 'Wir stehen auf der Langen Brücke. Sie wundern sich, "Die ist aber nicht sehr lang?" Es ist Ironie, mein Lieber.' And a few steps farther, 'Wir können durch das Schloß gehen und sind augenblicklich im Lustgarten. "Wo ist aber der Garten?" fragen Sie. Ach Gott! merken Sie denn nicht, das ist wieder die Ironie. Es ist ein viereckiger Platz, der von einer Doppelreihe Pappeln eingeschlossen ist.'⁵¹ Irony characterizes not merely the style of the 'Briefe,' but the very world they describe! Heine leads his reader through famous streets, to the stock exchange – 'dort schachern die Bekenner des Alten und des Neuen Testaments' – then to the university whose fraternities had just been outlawed by the government, and to the 'Brandenburger Tor' with its Victoria – 'die gute Frau hat auch ihre Schicksale gehabt' – finally into the famous 'Café Royal,' meeting place of elegant and cultivated society, where we meet E.T.A. Hoffmann and other famous literary figures of the day. Then, at the end of this first Letter, Heine resorts to the device of the (fictional) 'Kammermusik,' that strange little chamber musician who will supply him with all the news Westphalia might want: 'Nicht wahr, der Kammermusikus, der weiß Neuigkeiten! An den wollen wir uns halten. Er soll Westfalen mit Neuigkeiten versorgen, und was er nicht weiß, das braucht auch Westfalen nicht zu wissen.'

Heine's 'Briefe' are indeed much more complex, not merely in coverage, but also in technique, in reader manipulation and strategy, than Laforgue's brief 'Chroniques.' The constant, barely veiled, political allusions are but a part of this complexity.⁵² Laforgue approaches a political subject only once in his twenty-six Chronicles, but drops it immediately and turns to other matters. This occurs in the second para-

⁵⁰ Ibid. 99

⁵¹ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 497ff.; *De tout un peu*, op. cit. 4ff

⁵² Yet, many of the political allusions might easily escape the hasty reader. For a recent assessment of Heine's mastery in manipulating these, cf. Jost Hermand, *Der frühe Heine: Ein Kommentar zu den "Reisebildern"* (München: Winkler Verlag 1976) especially 22-42, 'Briefe aus Berlin.'

graph of the twenty-third report, where he mentions the Russian ambassador and foreign minister: 'Le prince Gortschakoff... Ah! pas de politique. Gare à l'arnement!'⁵³ Here we also see Laforgue addressing his reader directly in the Heinean manner, more so than in most of the other installments. And in this particular Chronicle, he succeeds, moreover, in creating the effect of the 'décousu,' the rambling, free association of ideas-topics that gives Heine's *reportage* its light and entertaining allure. Thus Laforgue continues: 'Mais vous me faites perdre le fil de mes idées. Ne m'interrompez plus. Le Palais-Royal vient de donner sa revue de fin d'année.... P. Alexis, un jeune, a débuté cette semaine au Gymnase.... À la Comédie-Française, deux fois par semaine, vers minuit – l'heure de crimes! – Hernani et Doña Sol.... Émouvant, très émouvant, le chapitre de faits divers....' and then he relates a spectacular contemporary crime of murder and dismemberment of the victim. Heine, too, intersperses his *reportage* with this type of information, in passing to other, frequently literary, news; thus toward the end of the first Letter: 'Der Junge, der seine Mutter mit dem Hammer totesgeschlagen hat, war wahnsinnig. Die mystischen Umtriebe in Hinterpommern machen großes Aufsehen. Hoffmann gibt jetzt bei Wilmanns in Frankfurt unter dem Titel "Der Floh" einen Roman heraus, der sehr viele politische Sticheleien enthalten soll.'⁵⁴ *Meister Floh*, in fact, lost entire paragraphs through censorship before it could be published;⁵⁵ and Heine's 'Zweiter Brief' was itself mutilated by the censors.

Heine opened his second Letter by answering his own editor's reprimands about having too freely named certain public figures – 'Ihr leis angedeuteter Wunsch, bestimmte Persönlichkeiten nicht zu sehr hervortreten zu lassen soll in etwa erfüllt werden'⁵⁶ – before turning to the central episode of the 'Jungfernkranz.' This *reportage* about the all too popular song from Weber's *Freischütz*, sung by all Berlin, and driving the poet mad, brings to mind Laforgue's fifteenth Chronicle, in which he complains about the immoderate vogue of the 'Marseillaise,' heard everywhere in Paris.⁵⁷ But Heine's development of the theme

⁵³ *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 138

⁵⁴ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 509; *De tout un peu*, op. cit. 27-8

⁵⁵ Cf. *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe*, op. cit. 413

⁵⁶ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 510; *De tout un peu*, op. cit. 30

⁵⁷ Here one also recalls Laforgue's complaints years later about the continual pi-

is much more elaborate than Laforgue's; it had, moreover, already been foreshadowed in the first Letter in which Spontini was mentioned, and it was to be echoed in the third, where his operas would be referred to again.

Spontini, patronized and protected by the Prussian king, served the regime with his noisy 'grand spectacle' productions. But despite the strong 'spontinische Partei,' Karl Maria von Weber, his rival, took the public by storm with his new Romantic operas, the greatest of which, *Der Freischütz*, had its debut in 1821. And Heine reflects its immense success in his 'Jungfernkranz' episode:

...Haben Sie noch nicht Maria von Webers "Freischütz" gehört? Nein? Unglücklicher Mann! Aber haben Sie nicht wenigstens aus dieser Oper das "Lied der Brautjungfern" oder den "Jungfernkranz" gehört? Nein? Glücklicher Mann! ... aber der "Jungfernkranz" ist permanent; ... aus allen Häusern klingt er mit entgegen, jeder pfeift ihn mit eigenen Variationen; ja, ich glaube fast, die Hunde auf der Straße bellen ihn.⁵⁸

The poet's point is, of course, that even the king of Prussia cannot dictate public taste. But as he, Heine, is a 'Laie im Gebiete der Tonkunst,' he will merely relate what the two parties, 'die spontinische Partei' and the 'anti-spontinische Partei,' say about the matter. For the former, the composer (Spontini) is 'ein großer Mann, er ist ein Genie, er ist ein Gott!' For the latter, 'der größte Teil sieht in seiner Musik nur Pauken- und Trompetenspektakel, schallenden Bombast und gespreizte Unnatur. Hierzu kam noch der Unwille vieler' .⁵⁹ And it is at this point that Heine's 'Zweiter Brief' was cut by the censors.⁶⁰ Bearing in mind that Heine is reporting not a political but rather an artistic subject, in Prussia too politically loaded, nevertheless, for free public discussion, one realizes that his 'Briefe aus Berlin' are indeed much

ano playing that pursues him relentlessly through the Paris streets; cf. the 'Complainte des pianos qu'on entend dans les quartiers aisés' of *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 33-5; or the 'Dimanche' poems of *Des Fleurs de bonne volonté* in *L'Initiation de Notre-Dame la Lune Des Fleurs de bonne volonté* (Paris: Gallimard 1970) 98-9, 127, 156-7.

⁵⁸ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 512 and 515; *De tout un peu*, op. cit. 34-5 and 40-1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 518; *ibid.* 45-6.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe*, op. cit. 422-3, for background material on Prussian censorship of criticism of Spontini's work.

less innocent than most of their contemporary readers had understood them to be. The young poet's irony had already developed well beyond a mere literary strategy to capture and entertain the reader; Heine was already beginning to forge a weapon.

Laforgue's 'Chronique IV,' which deals, after all, not with some air from a contemporary opera, but with the French national anthem, is almost boisterous in tone, and its irony still lacks the suavity that conceals the Heinean edge. Its opening paragraph is, moreover, indebted to Heine for more than the style:

Si ce brave Rouget de Lisle n'est pas à pourrir depuis trente-six ans dans son coffre, comme c'est mon opinion, mais qu'au contraire sa grande ombre se promène au Paradis ou aux Champs-Élysées, ou dans tel autre lieu de délices inventés par ces farceurs qui, selon le mot d'Hegel, ont besoin de croire qu'ils auront après leur mort un pourboire pour n'avoir pas empoisonné leur frère et avoir soigné madame leur mère dans sa dernière maladie, j'imagine qu'il doit prendre depuis quelques temps des airs d'importance parmi la foule des ombres. Jamais, je pense, l'hymne qui a fait sa réputation n'a obtenu une telle vogue.⁶¹

Laforgue is indebted to Heine for this 'mot d'Hegel,' which he could have read in *De l'Allemagne* II,⁶² or in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* where Heine's 'Geständnisse' appeared under the title 'Aveux de l'auteur' in 1854. Reminiscing some twenty years later (in 1854 when he wrote his 'Geständnisse' for the volume *De l'Allemagne*) about his student days in Berlin where he had attended some of Hegel's colloquia, during the very period in which he had written the 'Briefe aus Berlin,' Heine recalls his famous teacher:

Eines schönen hellgestirnten Abends standen wir beide nebeneinander am Fenster, und ich, ein zweiundzwanzigjähriger junger Mensch, ich hatte eben gut gegessen und Kaffee getrunken, und ich sprach mit Schwärmerei von den Sternen und nannte sie den Aufenthalt der Seligen. Der Meister aber brümmelte vor sich hin: "Die Sterne, hum! hum! die Sterne sind nur ein leuchtender Aussatz am Himmel." – "Um Gottes willen" – rief ich – "es gibt also droben kein glückliches Lokal, um dort die Tugend nach dem Tode zu belohnen?" Jener aber, indem er mich mit seinen bleichen Augen stier ansah, sagte schnei-

⁶¹ *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 131.

⁶² *De l'Allemagne* II, op. cit. 293-4.

dend: "Sie wollen also noch ein Trinkgeld dafür haben, daß Sie Ihre kranke Mutter gepflegt und Ihren Herrn Bruder nicht vergiffet haben?"⁶³

In his thirteenth Chronicle, Laforgue reports in a very Heinean tone on the prizes of virtue awarded by the French Academy:

Ce n'est pas non plus la revue des prix de vertu décernés par l'Académie française qui pourra nous distraire. ... Je me suis toujours demandé ce que cela pouvait bien rapporter, la vertu, ici-bas ou ailleurs. Enfin, chacun prend son plaisir où il le trouve, n'est-ce pas?⁶⁴

And this subject leads him to Gautier – Heine's friend, we recall – with whose doctrine of the separation of art and morality he is in full agreement: 'place aux *Fleurs du mal*, à *Mlle de Maupin*...'; and then the poet interpolates some lines from a Gautier poem before passing on to the project of the erection of a monument to honor the poet:

À propos, on parle d'élever une statue à Gautier. ... Quant à moi, je suis prêt à *laver* avec enthousiasme ce qui me reste de livres classiques pour contribuer à l'érection d'un monument à l'un des écrivains qui ont le plus fait pour la langue française.

Heine devotes several paragraphs of the second Letter to a similar project, the city of Frankfurt's attempt to erect a monument to Goethe by subscription. The poet had already written a sonnet expressing his unambiguous contempt for the enterprise, which he inserted in the 'Brief':

O laßt dem Dichter seine Lorbeerreiser,
Ihr Handelsherrn! Behaltet euer Geld.
Ein Denkmal hat sich Göthe selbst gesetzt.⁶⁵

Yet, Heine does not hide his ambiguous attitude toward the great man; in the young poet's opinion, Goethe owed at least some of his fame

⁶³ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. VII, 126

⁶⁴ *Les Pages de la Gaîté*, op. cit. 127

⁶⁵ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 523-4. Heine had published the poem, entitled 'Das projektierte Denkmal Göthes zu Frankfurt am Main' in 1821; it was later included in 'Vermischte Gedichte,' *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. II, 295-6.

to compromising with the aristocratic regime: 'Göthe ist ein grober Mann in einem seidenen Rock'; but then he applauds him wholeheartedly for having put a stop to the Frankfurters' not entirely disinterested efforts:

Der große Mann machte, wie bekannt ist, allen Diskussionen dadurch ein Ende, daß er seinen Landsleuten mit der Erklärung, "er sei gar kein Frankfurter", das Frankfurter Bürgerrecht zurückschickte.

Lezteres soll seitdem – um Frankfurtsch zu sprechen – neunundneunzig Prozent im Werte gesunken sein, und die Frankfurter Juden haben jetzt bessere Aussicht zu dieser schönen Akquisition.

Again, the most severe socio-political criticism is barely hidden under the light ironic cover; and this confers upon the 'Briefe aus Berlin' a dimension totally lacking in the 'Chroniques parisiennes.'

Toward the end of the second Letter, Heine reports on Berlin's social life and the various professions' elegant balls, as well as those of the Prussian court, all modeled after the Parisian ones. The most outstanding of these is the masked 'Operball,' which may be watched by the common people for a small entry charge: 'Die niedrige Volksklasse bezahlt ein kleines Entree und kann, von der Galerie aus, auf all diese Herrlichkeit herabschauen. In der großen königl. Loge sieht man den Hof, größtenteils unmaskiert....'⁶⁶ This topic was taken up again in the third Letter, whose central theme is a royal wedding, that of Princess Alexandrine and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

Laforgue does not describe anything similar in his 'Chroniques parisiennes,' but he was to describe almost exactly the same thing(s) a few years later, when he had himself become part of the Prussian court as the French reader of the Empress Augusta. In his articles about Berlin, la Cour et la ville,' destined for *L'Illustration*, he devotes, among others, special reports to 'La Cour,' 'L'Empereur,' 'L'Impératrice,' 'a Bal de gala,' and 'Le Bal de l'Opéra.'⁶⁷ Between the 1820s – Heine's Berlin – and the 1880s – Laforgue's – the city had been transformed from a royal to an imperial residence, and, according to the poets' accounts, the dominant Prussian military and aristocratic society had become even more oppressive. As Heine had described the 'niedrige Volks-

⁶⁶ Ibid. 534-5; *De tout un peu*, op. cit. 76

⁶⁷ *En Allemagne: Berlin, la cour et la ville*, op. cit. 'Bal de gala,' 78-9; 'Le Bal de l'Opéra,' 94-104

klasse' paying to see some of the annual glamor of the 'Opernball,' so Laforge describes the poor people, some sixty years later, outside the 'Bal de l'Opéra':

Comme en toute occasion semblable, dans ce bon Berlin où l'on respire le petit état de siège, les alentours de l'Opéra sont, ce soir-là, soigneusement balayés par la police à cheval, et, comme toujours aussi, on retrouve au bord du trottoir cette haie de pauvres gens, au teint hâve, aux cheveux blond filasse, regardant bouche bée et ne songeant pas à se permettre le moindre mot, la moindre gouaillerie.⁶⁸

But to return to his early reports to *La Guêpe*, in his fifth Chronicle, of June 19, 1879, after deploring the absence of the Comédie-Française (on tour in London) and the closing of the theatres for the summer months, Laforge turns to the art critics, the sometimes powerful and frequently poorly qualified judges of the *Salons*:

Il est vrai que des gens qui n'ont jamais fait d'études spéciales se mettent avec un fabuleux aplomb à coucher par écrit leurs opinions sur nos artistes. Il n'est si mince conscript des lettres qui n'ait au moins un Salon sur la conscience, et tel ne s'est jamais occupé que de faire marier Arthur et Denise au cinquième acte de ses vaudevilles, qui se dit un beau matin en passant son pantalon: si, moi aussi, je commettais mon petit *Salon*!⁶⁹

Journalistic art criticism was of special interest to Laforge who, in 1881, was to take Taine's courses on Aesthetics at the École des Beaux-Arts and visited the museums as assiduously as the libraries.⁷⁰ Shortly before leaving for Berlin, he became part-time secretary to the director of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Charles Ephrussi, who helped him obtain the position at the Prussian court. To write *Salons* was one of Laforge's ambitions,⁷¹ and we find his earliest attempt in the genre, a

68 Ibid. 96

69 *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 109

70 Cf. *Les Complaintes et les premiers poèmes*, op. cit. 18.

71 Cf. his letter to Ephrussi of May, 1882, from Baden, in which he says: 'Je vois que je ne suis pas encore capable d'écrire un article d'art, et qu'avant de songer à faire un *Salon*, je devrais en faire d'abord un ou deux pour moi seul comme étude. Et dire que si l'an dernier on m'avait offert un *Salon* à faire dans une feuille, j'aurais effrontément accepté.' *Jules Laforge Œuvres complètes* IV, *Lettres*-1 (1881-1882), ed. G. Jean Aubry (Genève: Slatkine Reprints 1979) 158.

humorous version, in *La Guêpe*, to which he contributed under the heading of 'Variétés' a 'Salon de 1879' (in May, one month before the above Chronicle).⁷² The witty brief *reportage* is indeed a very unorthodox *Salon*, as its author fails to mention a single painter or work represented, but concentrates instead on some of the visitors he encounters: 'Allons visiter le Salon, car que faire à Paris au mois de mai, à moins qu'on ne visite le Salon? ... Entrons. — Que de types!⁷³ Of this 'atroupement,' the funniest is 'le digne M. Romuald, suivi de sa nombreuse et très honorable famille,' a kind of Gumpelino-and-family who recalls Heinean portrayals of the 'bourgeois gentilhomme.'⁷⁴

Heine did not include art criticism in his 'Briefe aus Berlin,' but he was to write his own *Salon*, the series of articles on the 'Gemäldeausstellung in Paris 1831,' published by Cotta in the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände* from October 27 to November 16 of that year.⁷⁵ This was Heine's first journalistic production after his arrival in Paris, and it is not surprising that the former student of Schlegel and Hegel should be interested in this self-imposed assignment; that he was, moreover, not unqualified for it is evident from the product.⁷⁶ Heine republished these articles, with a few modifications and a 'Nachtrag' under the title 'Französische Maler' shortly afterward, and as they appeared in French as 'Salon de 1831' in *De la France* in 1833,⁷⁷ it is almost certain that Baudelaire, Laforge's other Master, had read them by the time

72 *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 157-60

73 Laforge published a piece similar to the 'Salon' article of *La Guêpe* under a more appropriate title, 'Le Public des dimanches au salon,' in *La Vie Moderne* in the May 21, 1881 issue. In 1883, he contributed a long article on the *Salon de Berlin* to the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (pp. 170-81). Laforge contributed five other articles on art to this journal from 1882 to 1886.

74 The Marchese Christophoro di Gumpelino, alias Christian Gumpel, is one of the principal characters of *Die Bäder von Lucca*, a caricature of the Hamburg banker Lazarus Gumpel, who travels in Italy to study art and become a gentleman. *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, 273-355; French version, 'Les bains de Lucques,' *Reisebilder Tableaux de Voyage*, Vol. II (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères 1856).

75 *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. IV, 297-344; *De la France*, op. cit. 324-83, *Salon de 1831*

76 Cf. Michael Mann's edition of these articles in *Heinrich Heine Zeitungsberichte über Musik und Malerei* (Frankfurt: Insel-Verlag 1964); especially 185-97, for an excellent discussion of the 'Gemäldeausstellung in Paris 1831.' This volume also includes reproductions of twelve of the paintings Heine discussed.

77 Cf. Note 8

he wrote his own first *Salon* in 1845. In that text, moreover, Baudelaire discusses works by four painters, some of whose pictures Heine had discussed in his 'Salon de 1831' (Decamps, Delacroix, Schnetz and Verne). And in one instance he even quotes Heine: 'Les tableaux de M. Borget nous font regretter cette Chine où le vent lui-même, dit H. Heine, prend un son comique en passant par les clochettes, — et où la nature et l'homme ne peuvent pas se regarder sans rire.'⁷⁸ It is not unlikely that Laforgue's ambition to distinguish himself in the genre was nourished by those two masters, Heine and Baudelaire, the latter having himself been inspired by the former.

Laforgue's remaining contributions to *La Guêpe* all deal with literature; for example a 'Revue bibliographique,' of August 21, reporting on Charles Cros who had just been awarded the 'prix Juglar' by the Académie Française for his *Coffret de Santal*. In November, Laforgue contributed three rather conventional essays devoted to Émile Zola, Alphonse Daudet, and Henri Martin. With the reservation that 'ce n'est pas en quelques lignes que l'on discute une théorie aussi controversée que le *Naturalisme*,' Laforgue clearly professes his admiration for Zola, 'un critique d'une sincérité convaincue,' some of whose traits could apply to Heine: 'Il se "moque des grands siècles", c'est-à-dire de tout dogme littéraire, de tout idéal en matière de critique. Qu'une œuvre soit la manifestation d'une forte personnalité, qu'elle vive largement de la vie de notre âge.' And he adds, 'Tout le monde est aujourd'hui d'accord là-dessus, fors messieurs les bourgeois. Mais on renvoie messieurs les bourgeois à leur digestion.'⁷⁹

It was a major document in the development of Naturalism, we recall, that was reported in the first 'Chronique parisienne,' and that literary movement constitutes the *matière* also of two of three open letters Laforgue published in *La Guêpe* in October under the heading 'Du Naturalisme,' numbered from I to III. The first two are addressed to 'M. Ego,' the other is subtitled 'Réponse à M.F. Lacoste.'

In the first piece, of October 2, Laforgue responds to an article entitled 'Du Naturalisme,' signed 'Ego,' which had appeared in *La Guêpe*

Heinean Inspirations in Laforgue's Early Literary Journalism / 373

on September 25. Needless to say, the poet opposes the views expressed in the article; what interests us, however, is not so much the ensuing argument, as Laforgue's polemical manner, apparent in the opening paragraph:

Votre article *Du Naturalisme* a renversé toutes mes idées sur cette théorie si discutée. Et comme je ne veux les abandonner que lorsque de plus légitimes que celles que vous nous présentez me paraîtront pouvoir être substituées, je me hâte de vous soumettre mes objections, dans l'espoir que, prenant à cœur ma conversion, vous réparâtes avec de meilleurs armes.⁸⁰

This invitation to armed journalistic combat again recalls Heine, whose most notorious challenges to fight by pen (and sometimes arms!) were almost as famous as his poetry. We recall here but three of the best-known incidents, his attack on the poet Graf August von Platen-Hallermünde in *Die Bäder von Lucca*,⁸¹ his essay 'Über den Denuzianten' challenging Wolfgang Menzel,⁸² and his most famous — and also most controversial — and extensive polemical text entitled 'Ludwig Börne, Eine Denkschrift.'⁸³ I surely do not intend to compare Laforgue's rather youthfully boisterous and harmless open letters against 'M. Ego' with Heine's weighty and dangerous combats. But the young poet's polemical tendency manifest in these texts might well have been nourished by the example of his favorite writer. In both writers, moreover, the weapon owes its edge to irony, as in the conclusion of Laforgue's first letter:

... Vous avez voulu rire, n'est-ce pas? Avouez-le, allons. Ou bien ai-je mal interprété votre pensée. Prenez alors la plume et pulvériser les objections de votre serviteur.

The second letter, Laforgue's response to 'M. Ego's' answer to his first letter, continues in the same tone. In 'Du Naturalisme III,' Laforgue

⁸⁰ Ibid. 166-7

⁸¹ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. III, especially 325-54; *Reisbilder* *Tableaux de voyage*, op. cit., Vol. II, 'Les bains de Luccaues.'

⁸² *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. V, 388-405; 'Le Dénouciateur,' *Henri Heine, satires et portraits* (Paris: Calmann Lévy 1844; first edition, 1868) 206-37

⁸³ *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, op. cit., Vol. VI, 83-220; *Satires et portraits*, op. cit. 1-205

⁷⁸ *Baudelaire: Curiosités esthétiques, l'art romantique*, ed. Henri Lemaître (Paris: Classiques Garnier 1962) 67. The quotation is annotated as follows: 'Henri Heine, *Die romantische Schule*, III, 1, 1. Une traduction de ce texte avait paru en 1833 dans *l'Europe littéraire*, sous le titre *État actuel de la littérature en Allemagne*; autre traduction dans les *Oeuvres* de Heine, publiées par Renduel en 1835 (tome VI, 5^e partie). Baudelaire avait pu lire l'une ou l'autre.'

⁷⁹ *Les Pages de la Guêpe*, op. cit. 173-4

responds to M.F. Lacoste, who had published in *La Guêpe* an article on the subject in verse (90 alexandrines!), by a lengthy quotation from Zola's *Mes Haines*,⁸⁴ a most appropriate choice in this journalistic squabble about the most controversial literary movement of the day.

* * *

It has been the purpose of this study to demonstrate to what extent these earliest of Laforgue's texts were inspired, if not directly influenced, by the poet whom he admired the most at the time he wrote them. For, although the importance of Heine's poetry, especially his early cycle 'Lyrisches Intermezzo,' in the development of Laforgue's poetry has been generally – if vaguely – recognized, the echoes of Heine's prose in that of Laforgue have so far been overlooked. But our reading of Laforgue's contributions to *La Guêpe* and *L'Enfer* in the light of Heine's 'Briefe aus Berlin' should redress the imbalance, as it has shown us how not merely Heine's poetry, but his prose, too, influenced Laforgue who, like his Master, was to distinguish himself as journalist and prose writer as well as poet. And while a consideration of Heine and Laforgue as prose parodists – for example, the *Reisebilder* and the *Moralités légendaires* – would exceed the scope of the present discussion, it has thrown light on Laforgue's aspirations to succeed in a genre which Heine had revolutionized. Thus we find Laforgue's earliest contributions to literary journalism both illuminated and overshadowed by the rich heritage from which they drew.

Grand Valley State College

Partisan Culture in the Thirties: *Partisan Review*, the Surrealists and Leon Trotsky*

1 TROTSKY'S LEGACY AS A MAN OF LETTERS

On 21 December 1937, Leon Trotsky wrote a letter to a member of the American section of the Trotskyist political organization, the Fourth International. This was three years before Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico, and five years after he had been deprived of his Soviet citizenship. The letter represents the first published evidence that Trotsky wanted to arrange for the sale of his 'archives' in the United States, to 'an American scientific Institute.'¹

At the time of writing Trotsky stipulated that the sale should be made with 'some conditions,' the major one being that 'certain documents should be guarded with all the necessary guarantees especially against the Stalinists and their agents and so on.'² He added that

it would be absolutely unreasonable to preserve these documents here in our home. To place them in a safe place would signify permanent expense. It is from every point of view preferable to sell them immediately under the above indicated conditions.³

The documents were finally sold to Harvard University in 1940, although both the Hoover Institution and the University of Chicago

* This paper is dedicated to Jean van Heijenoort (1912-1986). He died in Mexico City in March, 1986. His encouragement and his comments on this paper have been invaluable.

I want to acknowledge the generous assistance of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the cooperation of Mr. Rodney Dennis and staff at the Houghton Library, Harvard University.

1 George Breitman, ed., *Writings of Leon Trotsky: Supplement II* (1934-40) (New York: Pathfinder 1979) 749-50

2 Breitman, 750

3 Ibid.