An Analysis Of The Use Of Parody In Hervé's Le Petit Faust

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF PARODY
IN HERVÉ'S LE PETIT FAUST

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B.M., The University of New Mexico, 1975

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS
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The 19th-century genre of opera known as operetta has been commented upon since its appearance in the early 1830's, and most commentators credit the composer Hervé with the creation in 1848 of a particularly satirical, farcical type of operetta called opéra-bouffe. Hervé's contributions to the genre have not been fully explored, perhaps because Offenbach's contributions were so great. This paper analyzes Hervé's use of parody in *Le petit Faust* in order to add to the meagre coverage of his work.

Hervé creates a "mock epic" in *Le petit Faust* based on the old Faust legend as retold by Goethe and by Gounod's librettists Jules Barbier and Michel Carré. The techniques of parody used by Hervé are techniques used by most opéra-bouffe composers of the period. The models for the parody come not only from Goethe's *Faust* and Gounod's *Faust*, but from the operatic conventions prevalent in contemporary Italian and French opera and from the social mores of Second Empire France.

The parody contained in the libretto of *Le petit Faust* is achieved in two ways. First, the characters and the plot are updated to represent contemporary social types and social life. Second, in the context of the updated plot and characters, specific episodes from both Goethe's *Faust* and Gounod's *Faust* are made to look ludicrous. The method of bringing an old myth or legend into a contemporary setting in order to serve as a backdrop for current social satire is common to opéra-bouffe and demonstrates the relationship of this genre to the society of the Second Empire.

The musical parody in *Le petit Faust* is simple and direct. There are only a few exact quotations from Gounod's opera in which the quoted
material is put in a ridiculous context. The remainder of the parody consists of a mocking imitation of Gounod's melodic inflections and cadences as well as a general spoof of operatic conventions, some of which Gounod used.

Although _Le petit Faust_ was very popular at the time of its production in 1869, it quickly passed into oblivion. The reasons for this may stem from Hervé's technical deficiencies as a composer and the passing popularity of the parodied subjects.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to analyze the use of parody in one of Hervé's most successful works, Le petit Faust. Discussions of opéra-bouffe and operetta invariably devote a large space to the works of Jacques Offenbach. This is not surprising, as the majority of historians and critics consider him the master of the style. A continued examination of these sources brings to light lesser but sometimes quite talented contemporaries. In Paris of the 1850's and 60's, Hervé was perhaps the most prolific and eccentric of these contemporaries. He is repeatedly referred to as the initiator of the operetta. Anton Wurz, in his article on operetta in MGG, asserts that Hervé was the creator of the style Offenbach brought to fruition.\(^1\) Otto Keller calls him the "father" of the style.\(^2\) Alfred Einstein devotes a whole chapter to "Offenbach and the opéra-bouffe;" he mentions Hervé as a predecessor of Offenbach but adds that he later imitated Offenbach's style.\(^3\) Finally, Arthur Pougín is perhaps the most accurate in saying that Hervé first cultivated

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\(^1\) Anton Wurz, "Operette," in vol. 10 of Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik, edited by Friedrich Blume (Basel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1957), col. 93.


the opéra-bouffe but was eclipsed by the superiority of Offenbach's works.4

A composer attributed with the initiation of an operatic genre ought to be dealt with in more than a perfunctory manner. Although many sources mention his musical style, none except Gervase Hughes' *Composers of Operetta* contains any musical examples. This inquiry will begin to improve that situation by examining in depth one of his works. The examination will deal with Hervé's use of parody, which was a very popular form of comedy in the French theater and an outstanding feature of Hervé's style.5 The Oxford Dictionary defines parody as an effort to imitate humorously another's characteristics.6 The parody as a comic form differs from other kinds of comedy in its use of a specific model. In the case of *Le petit Faust*, the multiple models are Gounod's opera *Faust*, Goethe's drama *Faust* (which is the source for Gounod's work), and the society and values of the Second Empire.

The discussion of parody in *Le petit Faust* will be organized along the following lines. The first three chapters will serve as background material in the light of which the parody can be examined. Chapter One deals with the historical, literary and musical evolution of the Faust


5Offenbach's love of and skill in parody have been well documented. The prime example of this skill is his opéra-bouffe *Orphée aux Enfers* (libretto by Crémieux and Halévy), which is a travesty of the Orpheus myth exploited by opera composers from Caccini to Gluck. Hervé seems to have been even more active in parodying existing works and legends. Seymour Travers, in his *Catalogue of Nineteenth Century French Theatrical Parodies* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1941) lists on pages 120 and 122 eleven such works for Hervé and five for Offenbach.

myth. Chapter Three discusses the social and political conditions of
the Second Empire and the origins and growth of opéra-bouffe. Hervé's
output and style are examined in Chapter Four to help illustrate his
individual contributions to the work. The fifth chapter contains an
analysis of parody in both the libretto and music of Le petit Faust.

Sources and Limitations of the Study

In preparing this paper a considerable amount of time has been
spent providing background materials as a point of comparison for the
parody in Le petit Faust. Many sources proved useful in the preparation.

The most informative works were those by 19th-century writers and
critics in essay collections, newspaper articles and theater yearbooks.
Also valuable were Siegfried Kracauer's excellent study on the Paris of
Offenbach and Marvin Carlson's comprehensive work on the 19th-century
French theater. Another source of information proved disappointing;
there appears to be little scholarly work on the opéra-bouffe or on
Hervé in the form of theses or dissertations. However, materials found
in published works on the operetta, particularly Otto Keller's Die
Operette in Ihrer Geschichtlichen Entwicklung and Gervase Hughes' Composers of Operetta, were very helpful. To date there is only one
biographical work on Hervé, which was written by Louis Schneider in
1924. The biography contains no bibliographic references, but Schneider
indicates at the beginning of his narrative that Hervé's son was in

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7Siegfried Kracauer, Orpheus in Paris, translated by Gwenda David

8Marvin Carlson, The French Stage in the Nineteenth Century (New

9Gervase Hughes, Composers of Operetta (London: Macmillan & Co.,
Ltd., 1962).
possession of his father's memoirs and all family papers.  

A few comments concerning the chapter on the Faust myth should be mentioned here. First of all, my discussion of the myth is by no means meant to be detailed. Such a chronicle would take hundreds of pages to complete and is not necessary to my analysis. For a more detailed account of the development of the Faust myth, see James William Kelly's *The Faust Legend in Music*.  

Second, the chapter's look at the works of Goethe and Gounod on the Faust theme includes only items that serve to clarify the parody of *Le petit Faust*. Studies on Goethe are perhaps more numerous than on any other Western writer, with the exception of Shakespeare; and there are several works on Gounod's *Faust* that provide more detail on the creation of the opera.

Similar limitations have been put on the section "The Second Empire and its Forms of Entertainment." Facts concerning the political and social events of the period are included in order to explain the subjects of parody found in *Le petit Faust* and to provide the reader with an insight into the atmosphere of the Second Empire. Marvin Carlson's *The French Stage in the Nineteenth Century* contains an excellent bibliography for the period.

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CHAPTER II
THE FAUST MYTH

The Faust myth concerns the idea of man's struggle to reach the unreachable, to penetrate all the mysteries of life and to gain mastery over them. The idea has been treated through the centuries in verse, drama and music and in texts as divergent as the book of Genesis and Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* (1918).¹ Two of the most important aspects of the Faust myth predate Christianity and deal with the ideas that human knowledge for its own sake is evil and that therefore, in order to solve mysteries and gain power over the universe, it is necessary to enter into a compact with the Evil one. These two ideas recur in stories concerning the Faust figure through the 18th century.

The origins of the Faust idea in antiquity center around the magus myths. The magi, or magicians, thought to be of divine origin, were men revered and even feared by the populace. One characteristic of many of the legendary magicians was their position in society as men of learning. In ancient and medieval cultures, studies in astrology, alchemy and the occult were pursued alongside those in philosophy, religion and the natural sciences. Among the most famous of these scholarly magi were Virgil (70-19 B. C.), Pope Sylvester II (c. 1000), St. Albert the Great

(1193-1280) and Roger Bacon (1214-1292).

Although some magi were respected scholars others had questionable reputations. One of the most infamous was Simon Magus, a Samaritan wizard who was converted to Christianity by the apostle Philip. He is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles\(^2\) and his story developed in various sources to the end of the Middle Ages. Simon's many claims included the incorruptibility of his flesh; the ability to pass through rocks, fly, make himself invisible; and the power to create human life. Perhaps the most serious claim in the eyes of the early Christian community was that he was the Christ and should be worshipped as being greater than God. Simon performed tricks for the Emperor Nero and had numerous confrontations with St. Peter, whom he attempted to subdue with his magic. In the end, while flying, he was dropped by his demon cohorts because of the power of Peter's prayers.

Although there were many such stories handed down through the centuries, there has been one legend that has formed the basis for most of the literary efforts of the past four hundred years. The historical Faust, Dr. Johannes Faust, was born in Knittlingen, Wurttemberg in 1480. There are few facts known about his life, and some of those are mixed with fantasy, but from the testimony of several contemporaries it is apparent that he studied magic at the University of Cracow in Poland. He traveled widely and gained a reputation as a sorcerer, soothsayer and charlatan. For a short period he was schoolmaster in the small town of Kreuznach, but when the town accused him of sodomy, he quickly fled. Another story, from Erfurt, describes Faust lecturing on Homer at the University. He allegedly conjured up the heros in the flesh to entertain his students. In boasting

\(^2\)Acts 8: 9-25.
of his powers, Faust discredited the miracles of Jesus, saying he could perform the same and even better. The legend of Faust's pact with the Devil probably stems from the fact that he frequently referred to the Devil as his Schwager (crony); many believed that he was accompanied by a demon in the form of a little black dog. Churchmen such as Melanchthon and Luther regarded him with horror and condemnation, but many humanists and contemporary demonologists were less impressed by his claims and considered him merely a braggart. The great Benedictine abbot and scholar of Sponheim, Abbot Trithemius, gives his opinion of Faust in a letter to a friend dated August 20, 1507:

"Observe the stupid thoughtlessness of the man! He is carried away with so great a madness that he presumptuously bestows upon himself the title of Source of Necromancy! A man so truly ignorant of all good literature ought to have called himself a fool rather than a teacher! But his wickedness does not escape me. When I returned from Brandenburg in March of last year, I found this very man in the town of Gelnhausen. More silly things which he had quite rashly declared in the town hospice were repeatedly related to me. As soon as he heard that I was present, he fled from the town hospice, and no one could persuade him to present himself to me...Certain priests in the town related to me that he had said in the presence of many: that he had attained such a knowledge and memory of all wisdom that if all the writings of Plato and Aristotle had perished from human memory in their entirety together with their philosophical ideas, he himself by his own ingenuity like another Ezras, the Hebrew, would be able to restore the lot of them with greater elegance."  

The last account of Faust by a contemporary was made in 1540. Later in the century, Hermann Vitekind (pseud. Augustin Lercheimer 1522-1603) provided an interesting description of the life of this magician and his presumed end in his work Christlich Bedencken und Erinnerung von Zauberey (1597):

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He had neither house nor home in Wittenberg or elsewhere; in fact he had no permanent abode anywhere, but lived like a vagabond, was a parasite, drunkard, and gourmand, and supported himself by his quackery...He came at times to the house of Melanchton, who gave him a good lecture, rebuked and warned him that he should reform in time, lest he come to an evil end, as finally happened...He was choked to death by the devil in a village in Wuertemberg...4

One of the first collections of the Faust stories in manuscript was the Wolfenbüttel manuscript, which was completed about forty years after the death of Faust. Although a rough account of his life, it served as a source for other manuscripts or chapbooks (also referred to as Hoellenzwaenge) which contained instructions on how to perform magic feats credited to Faust. During the 17th and 18th centuries magic manuals were very popular and it was not unusual for a publisher to attribute tricks and formulas to Faust in order to increase book sales.

That such a shady character should become a great legend, eclipsing greater contemporaries in the occult arts, is due primarily to the first printed biography of Faust. The biography was based on stories spread by word of mouth and grown to fantastic tales. These stories were especially popular among university circles. The biography came out in 1587, published by Johann Spiess in Frankfurt am Main.5 Its author was anonymous and in many respects it resembles the Wolfenbüttel manuscript.

The title page appeared as follows:

Historia of Dr. Johann Faust, the widely acclaimed magician and black artist, how he pledged himself to the devil for a certain time, what strange adventures he saw meanwhile, brought about and pursued, until he finally received his well deserved wages. Compiled and prepared for the printer in several parts out of his own literary remains, as a horrible example and

4Quoted in Kelly, p. 22.
sincere warning for all conceited, clever, and godless people. James 4: Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Cum Gratia et Privilegio. Printed in Frankfurt am Main by Johann Spies. MDLXXXVII.

The Spiess Faustbuch was sixty-nine chapters long and contained many ideas that would be used in later settings. According to the Faustbuch, the famous magician was born in Rhoda, near Weimar, and has been a divinity student, astrologer, mathematician and medical quack. He enters into an agreement with a devil called Mephistopheles in which, after twenty-four years, he must forfeit body and soul to Satan. This pact is the result of his overwhelming desire to know the secrets of the universe. Another part of the agreement is that the spirit, Mephistopheles, must always appear in the form of a friar with a bell in his hand. The spirit provides Faust with everything he desires except marriage, which is an institution pleasing to God and therefore not acceptable to the terms of the contract. Mephistopheles answers Faust's questions concerning Lucifer and hell, and makes possible for Faust trips to hell, glimpses of paradise, and excursions to ancient civilizations. In addition to Faust's adventures, the book describes his many magical pranks. Toward the end of his twenty-four years he meets the famous beauty of antiquity, Helen of Troy, and makes her his mistress. He has a son by her named Iustus Faustus, but both mother and son vanish when Faust perishes. The book ends with a frightening description of Faust's end:

"It happened that between twelve and one o'clock at midnight, there blew a mighty storm of wind against the house, as though it would have blown the foundation thereof out of its place. The students lay near unto the hall, wherein Dr. Faustus lay, and they heard a mighty noise and hissing, as if the hall had been full of snakes and adders, with that the hall-door flew open: wherein Dr. Faustus was, then he began

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to cry for help, saying, murther, murther; but it was with a half voice, and very hollow; shortly after they heard him no more. But when it was day, the students, that had taken no rest that night, rose and went into the hall, in the which they left Dr. Faustus, where notwithstanding, they found not Faustus, but all the hall sprinkled with blood, the brains cleaving to the wall, for the devil had beaten him from one wall, against an other: in one corner lay his eyes, in another his teeth; a fearful and pitiful sight to behold. Then began the students to weep and wail for him, and sought for his body in many places. Lastly, they came into the yard, where they found his body lying on the horse-dung, most monstrously torn, and fearful to behold, for his head, and all his joints were dashed to pieces.\(^7\)

The Spiess Faustbuch was extremely popular not so much for the moral lesson it contained as for the more sensational events of the story. Within a year, the book had come out in four pirated editions. Soon after it was translated into Low German, Danish, Dutch, English and French and came out in a rhymed edition. There were several more editions that Spiess made and an enlarged account adding more stories from the tradition of Erfurt. George Rudolff Widman came out with a longer biography in 1599. His Faustbuch was filled with instructive commentaries and emphasized the demonic parts of the story even more than previous accounts.\(^8\)

The English edition of the Spiess Faustbuch appeared in 1588 under the title of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Dr. John Faustus. It was from this edition that the poet Christopher Marlowe created his drama The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus (1604).\(^9\) He was the first

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\(^9\)Kelly, p. 33.
great poet to use the subject, and, although he retained the moral tone
of the Spiess book, he introduced some unique ideas of his own. Faust
becomes a full-blown Elizabethan character of heroic dimensions, a
renowned scholar whose hunger for power and knowledge overshadows the
commonplace requirements of the historic Faust. The splendid text of the
drama is not divided in the traditional manner into scenes and acts.
Marlowe added a few touches of his own not found in the Spiess book,
such as the scene between the good and evil angels and the pageant of the
seven deadly sins. There are also several comic characters and scenes
in the Elizabethan fashion. Walter Kaufmann, in his introduction to
Goethe's Faust, maintains that Marlowe's ending to the drama, in which
Faust repents, cannot be considered tragic.

In Marlowe's drama,..., the question of Faust's eternal destiny
is central, and Marlowe's orthodox handling of it, far from
ensuring tragedy, is incompatible with real tragedy. In my
Critique of Religion and Philosophy (section 77), I have argued
that there cannot be a Christian tragedy; and Marlowe's attempt
is a case in point. Mozart was profoundly perceptive when he
called his (and da Ponte's) parallel effort, Don Giovanni, a
'drama giocoso.' There, too, comic and serious scenes
alternate; there, too, the hero is in the end dragged down
to hell; and a final chorus assures us that "this is the end
of one who lived ill." There is a sense of tragic waste,
to be sure, in Marlowe as in Mozart, but that is insufficient
to make the end "truly tragic." It is therefore no accident
that Marlowe's play, as it was performed on the stages of
Europe, was transformed into a comedy. His ending permitted
that; Goethe's Dungeon scene, hardly.

In the decades following The Tragical History's first appearance,
traveling troupes of English actors toured the continent introducing
Marlowe's play as well as others to the courts of Europe. At first these
plays were performed in English, then they were translated, and in
Germany in particular writers attempted their own versions. Since the
Faust legend had always been immensely popular, these plays proliferated.

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10Kaufmann, Goethe's Faust, p. 20.
The comic element exploited so successfully by Marlowe began to take on more importance, becoming lengthier and introducing characters such as Harlequin (Hans Wurst in Austria) and Pickelhaering.

These comedies preceded the puppet plays that originated in the late 17th century. The puppet plays were pure farce with only the bare outlines of the Faust story present. A flood of comic characters was introduced, including Wagner (Faust's servant in the Spiess book), Kasperle (Hans Wurst) and the devils Auerhahn, Asmodi and Fitzliputzli. The puppet plays kept the legend alive during the Age of Enlightenment and were probably Goethe's first introduction to Faust.

The next important author to expand the Faust legend was the critic and dramatist Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781). He was a man of keen intellect whose praise of Shakespeare revolutionialized German literature in the last half of the 18th century. Lessing worked on a Faust drama for several years, but it is doubtful that he ever finished it. Only a few fragments and letters from friends survive, but they provide enough information to indicate that Lessing's Faust included a significant change in approach to the legend. Faust is presented as a youth dedicated to wisdom and knowledge. This noble character becomes the target of the devil, but at the end of the first scene a voice from heaven replies, "You shall not win!" Angels put Faust to sleep and create a phantom in his place. Faust dreams everything that happens to the phantom and, when the devils are certain they have won the scholar, the phantom disappears. Faust awakens from his sleep and thanks Providence for the warning. With this drama, Lessing introduced three alterations not used previously to present the legend. First, the pursuit of truth and knowledge is considered man's highest goal and achievement and not a sin
as in the earlier works, Marlowe's included; second, Lessing uses the artifice of a dream to convey Faust's fantastic adventures; and third, this is the first setting of the legend in which the Faust character is not damned.

It remained for Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) to create in his Faust one of the greatest works of world literature. It is a work that defies categories. James W. Kelly attempts to describe it thus:

Goethe's Faust owes much to the spiritual climate of the age, but it is not a direct outgrowth of those upheavals. Nor is it merely a dramatization of the poet's own personal experiences, nor merely the artistic treatment of a historical theme—the life and death of the arch magician Doctor Faustus. It is a colossal drama with humanity as its hero couched at times in cryptic language, portraying events, characters and problems of human life in terms of the cultural and intellectual history of modern times since the Renaissance.11

Goethe's Faust is a series of freely arranged episodes of different lengths, scope and quality, on which the author worked sporadically for sixty years. The drama, more than any of his other works, reflects Goethe's growth as a philosopher and poet and picks up the threads of his thought throughout his life. One of the poet's greatest achievements is that Faust has always maintained a certain amount of mystery; the message of Faust is impossible to condense into one central idea. The grand dimensions the drama eventually attained may be appreciated through a brief look at its development.

Some of the earliest sketches and references to Faust date from about 1771, and the first published Faust came out as a fragment in 1790.12 This contains the story of Part I minus several scenes that appear in the

11Kelly, p. 48.

completed version of Part I from 1808, which contains a total of twenty-five episodes. The added scenes include two opening prologues, "Before the Gate," the scenes of Faust's first meeting with Mephistopheles and the terms of the pact he makes with him, "Witches' Kitchen," and the "Malpurgisnacht" scene. The early Faust, although it contains many gaps, appears more as a contemporary drama rather than a historical setting of the legend and maintains an unrelieved mood of tragedy. It has little in common with the Faust legend beyond the themes of the disenchanted scholar and his temptation by the Devil and a few ideas from the scene "Auerbach's Cellar." J. G. Robertson, in the Life and Work of Goethe, elaborates on the early Faust as a drama of Goethe's own experience.

The Faust he presents to us might be no other than himself voicing his discontent with the dull learning and pedantry of the schools, and seeking to build up for himself a new faith in life, nature, God. Faust here is young as Goethe was young; he has only, as he tells us, been "leading his students by the nose" for some ten years, that is to say, he is in the early thirties. There is no question yet of an elderly greybeard who requires the rejuvenating draught of the Witches' Kitchen that he may play his rôle as Gretchen's lover. This Faust, convinced of the futility of his laboriously acquired learning, turns to his books of magic in the hope that they may help him to solve the riddle of the universe, just as Goethe himself, unsatisfied by the knowledge instilled into him at the university, had sought a deeper wisdom in old books of magic and the Swedish mystic Swedenborg, and had busied himself with alchemic experiments.13

A biting satire on university life is contained in one of the first scenes of the drama, in which Mephistopheles dresses up in the robes and wig of the professor Faust and proceeds to advise a young student coming to the university for the first time.

13J. G. Robertson, p. 80.
Mephistopheles offers Faust diversion through Margarete (a newly created character by Goethe), a simple, naïve country girl who is destroyed by Faust's deceit. The pathos of the last scene, in which Faust attempts to save Margarete from execution for the murder of their child, is increased because no spirit from above descends to save her soul, as in the 1808 version. In this early conception, Goethe's hero, like the figure in the Faustbuch and puppet plays, is taken by Mephistopheles.

Faust in its completed form, however, reflects a change in outlook. Goethe pursues the implications of Lessing's view that the struggle for knowledge is a noble one. It becomes natural for Goethe's Faust to be saved since Mephistopheles is incapable of satisfying his thirst for knowledge. Goethe's general optimism is reflected in the added "Prolog in Heaven" where the Lord expresses the view that "Man errrs as long as he will strive," but "A good man in his darkling aspiration remembers the right road throughout his quest." Salvation for Faust lies in keeping alive the spark of aspiration. Goethe also expands his view of the character Mephistopheles, who becomes perhaps one of his greatest creations. During the first meeting with Faust, Mephistopheles identifies himself as "part of that force which would do evil evermore, and yet creates the good." Although the traditional outward image of the devil is preserved through his malicious tricks and activities, Goethe's Mephistopheles contains a depth not found in previous portrayals. The author's more humane view of his character—Margarete's soul is also saved—finds its way into the portrait of Mephistopheles, who embodies

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14Kaufmann, pp. 87, 89.
15J. G. Robertson, p. 216.
16Kaufmann, p. 159.
a certain side, albeit negative, of human nature. He provides a perfect contrast to Faust's romantic outbursts through his sense of irony. Frank Merkling describes him as the rational counter ego to Faust, a sort of "sardonic Socrates."17

There is a certain amount of abstraction of the characters in the completed version of Part I, but the original drama of Faust and Margarete loses none of its force and power. In contrast to the human tragedy of Part I, Part II, completed shortly before Goethe's death, is a philosophical flight of fancy. It traces the adventures of Faust in the world of politics and economics, at the court of the Emperor Maximilian. Part II also evokes a beautiful image of classical antiquity, clothed in highly symbolic writing, through the episode of Faust's affair with Helen of Troy, an episode that was an element of the legend. Faust and Mephistopheles become symbols of ideas and humanity in general rather than individual characters, and, because of its symbolic nature, Part II has not found its way into settings such as Gounod's Faust, which will be discussed later in the chapter.

Goethe's Faust is symmetrical and concise, but filled with inconsistencies; nonetheless, it contains a delightful variety of every kind of verse, prose and doggerel. It is considered one of the greatest settings of the Faust theme, and it overshadowed the numerous settings of the Faust legend throughout the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

The last literary setting of the Faust theme to be mentioned here is Friedrich Klinger's novel Fausts Leben, Taten und Hoellenfahrt (1791).

Klinger's novel has even less to do with the original Faust legend than Goethe's drama. The Faust of the novel is a poor printer with a family, who sets off with the Devil on his travels to the cities and nations of Europe to seek an understanding of the depths of humanity, and also to aid his struggling family. The novel is Klinger's philosophical statement on the state of contemporary society and reflects the heavy influence of Rousseau in its contrast of the purity of natural, human aspirations against the evils of society.

Goethe's drama, Klinger's novel and related works of other writers found their way to music first in opera. Goethe's concept of the production of his drama supports this development; however, it is not clear whether he intended the whole drama to be set to music.

The first part calls for the foremost tragic actors and actresses, just as later, in the operatic part, the roles must be filled with the foremost singers. The role of Helena cannot be played by one but must be played by two great artists, for it is rare that a singer is also of adequate stature as a tragic actress....(the composer) would have to be one, who, like Meyerbeer, has lived for a long time in Italy and so combines his German nature with the Italian style and manner...The tone of terror, the repulsive and loathsome tone that would have to be a characteristic of it, at least in certain passages, goes quite against the times. The music would have to be in the character of Don Giovanni; Mozart ought to have composed Faust. Perhaps Meyerbeer would be able to do it, but he is not going to get involved in that sort of thing. He has too much to do for Italian theaters. 18


Whatever his projections for the production of Faust, Goethe calls
frequently for music in the text.20

The first composer to set Faust was Ignaz Walter (1759-1822), who
composed a Singspiel in 1797. It was a light affair containing simple
harmonies and pleasing melodies, and the libretto, fashioned by Heinrich
Schmieder after Part I of Goethe's Faust, also contained material from
other versions of the legend.

A more substantial setting of the legend was produced by Ludwig
Spohr (1784-1859), with a libretto by J. C. Bernard. The opera was
first produced in 1816 in Prague and contained two acts with nineteen
musical numbers and spoken dialogue. Spohr provided musical recitative
for the dialogue in 1852, after which the opera achieved some success.
The libretto does not draw on Goethe but rather uses an old folk play
and material from Friedrich Klinger's novel. The score is finely wrought
with excellent instrumentation and choral writing and expressive use of
ornamentation and non-harmonic tones. The vocal line is particularly
difficult and florid, making use of violinistic figuration rather than
a style more characteristic of the voice.21

The next musical treatment of Faust was a melodrama by Beáncourt,
presented in Paris on October 27, 1827. The text by Théaulon and
Gondolier was very poor, perhaps a victim of the many bad translations
of Faust extant in France, and it completely distorted Goethe's drama.
The music was a pastiche of various French operas.22

20 For a detailed account of Goethe's use of music in the text of
Faust see Kelly's The Faust Legend in Music, pp. 82-4.

21 Ibid., pp. 85-90.

22 Ibid., pp. 90-1.
A neglected but interesting opera, *Fausto*, was produced at the Théâtre-Italien in Paris on March 8, 1831. The composer Angélique Louise Bertin adapted her text from Goethe's *Faust* Part I. The opera, described as "semi-serious," was constructed in fourteen musical numbers, with dialogue between them, and a short overture. The piece is characterized by its Italianate writing, and there are instances of the parlando recitative found in *opera buffa*. The composer's imagination in the handling of ensemble is also notable. Despite these assets *Fausto* was not a success.²³

One of the finest renderings of Faust in music was Berlioz' *La Damnation de Faust* (1846). Although occasionally produced as an opera, it is more accurately considered a dramatic cantata; Berlioz called it a 'Dramatic Legend.' *La Damnation* consists of twenty episodes adapted by Berlioz and M. Gandonnière from Gérard Nerval's translation of Goethe's *Faust*. The twenty episodes, divided into four parts, are set for three soloists, chorus and orchestra. Minor characters are missing and elements of the original drama are rearranged, but Berlioz felt that changes were inevitable when converting a dramatic work into a music-drama, and he justified his alterations on the grounds that others before him, including Goethe, had adapted the legend. More than any other composer, Berlioz captured the spirit of Goethe's work in its variety and comprehensiveness. He linked the twenty independent and complete episodes through a series of repetitions of thematic material, ornamentation, rhythms and orchestral timbres. He also associated a particular type of recitative and melody

²³Kelly, pp. 91-4.
with each of the leading characters.\textsuperscript{24}

Schumann's setting of Faust does not display the same continuity. The\textit{ Szenen aus Goethes Faust}, for soloists, chorus and orchestra, demonstrates excellent choral writing and contains some moving and effective sections (see Part III). Like Berlioz, Schumann chose only those sections of the drama he thought best suited to a musical setting. However, the piece does not form a whole and is uneven in quality.\textsuperscript{25}

In addition to vocal scores of the Faust legend, there are two important symphonic works. The\textit{ Faust Overture} of Richard Wagner, written during the winter of 1839-40 and reworked in 1854, is consistently somber in mood, dealing only with the subject of Faust's spiritual struggle. The music of this overture was originally intended by Wagner to be the first movement of a symphony.\textsuperscript{26} Liszt's\textit{ Faust Symphony}, which has an optional final chorus, is regarded as one of his best works and explores the legend from the point of view of the characters of Faust, Margarete and Mephistopheles. Each character is represented in the three-movement piece; Faust and Margarete have their own distinct thematic material and Mephistopheles is portrayed through a distortion of Faust's themes.\textsuperscript{27} Other instrumental workings of Faust consist of pieces for plays, such as Karl Schulz's overture for Klingemann's\textit{ Faust}.

I will conclude the musical discussion of the development of the

\textsuperscript{24}See Hector Berlioz,\textit{ La Damnation de Faust}, in vol. 12 of Complete Works (New York: Edwin F. Kalmus: n. d.), especially scenes XV and XVI.

\textsuperscript{25}Kelly, pp. 136-40.


Faust myth with a look at the opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod, perhaps one of the most controversial settings simply because of twentieth-century attitudes.

Gounod showed a remarkable talent for music as a child and was accepted at the Conservatoire in Paris at the age of seven. His teachers included Lesueur, the aged champion of the Gluck tradition in France and composer of several fine grand operas of the Revolutionary period, Reicha, his teacher in counterpoint and Halévy, one of the most famous opera composers of his day. After winning the Prix de Rome, Gounod spent six years abroad. During his stay in Rome, he became enamoured of the works of Palestrina and J. S. Bach. Also important were his friendships with the singer and intellect Pauline Viardot and with the concert pianist Fanny Hensel, who introduced Gounod to Bach, Beethoven and many German literary classics including the works of Goethe. Next, Gounod spent a year in Vienna where he had the opportunity to hear many performances and have two of his masses performed. Before returning home in 1845, he had the pleasure of meeting Mendelssohn in Leipzig and observing his work with the great Gewandhaus orchestra.

All the influences of his student years, combined with innate talent, provided Gounod with the ideal of fine craftsmanship that was behind all his works. He also developed a hearty dislike for the melodramatic excesses so common in the works of Meyerbeer, Auber and their contemporaries. His earliest stage works bear out these attitudes. Gounod's first opera, *Sapho* (1851), and his incidental music to Augier's *Ulysse* (1852) are marked by their grace, clarity of style, excellent craftsmanship and discreet orchestration. These qualities, stemming from the tradition of Gluck, contrasted sharply with the ideal represented at the Opéra, and the Parisian
public was not ready to accept them.

In Faust, Gounod made a few concessions to the public taste for spectacle (see the Soldiers' Chorus of Act III), but this opera is also noted for its subtlety and grace. The opening overture is perhaps the finest section of the whole opera. Other notable pieces are the waltz and chorus of Act I, the following andantino exchange between Faust and Marguerite, "Ne permetrez-vous pas," which displays a conversational freedom and directness of expression and the quartet and love duet of Act II.

The impact of Faust and its overwhelming popularity in Paris can be correlated with a change of direction in French opera. The Parisian musical life of the first half of the 19th century had been rigid and immobile, dominated by Italian opera and the huge spectacles of Meyerbeer. There was little opportunity for operatic or purely instrumental music to develop; Berlioz, one of France's most gifted composers, was repeatedly rejected by the public, and the symphonic ideas of Wagner and others were greeted with suspicion and hostility. Into such an atmosphere appeared Faust in 1859. It was a turning point in French music from the conventions of the opera in vogue toward a frank, personal and more artistic approach. Faust gained great success with the public at large, and there were a few critics, such as Berlioz, who recognized Gounod's freshness and originality. However, others criticized the opera for its lack of orchestral color and its supposed "Wagnerisms." Gounod unfortunately gave way to the latter opinion, and consequently many of his later works are written in an inflated, grandiose style with stretches of mawkish or bland music. Martin Cooper compares Gounod with Alfred Lord Tennyson in the crises of their later careers.
The gay, finely wrought smaller works of his middle life were forgotten, as Tennyson's earlier lyrics were for a time forgotten. Faust played in Gounod's development the same role as In Memoriam in Tennyson's. The phenomenal success of a single work put both of these great artists on a false trail, so that they spent the rest of their lives pouring their naturally lyrical gifts into epic moulds. Both were excellent craftsmen, but at the end of his life Gounod could have echoed Tennyson's pathetic complaint that 'he was the greatest master of English living and had nothing to say.'

In spite of the fact that Gounod veered away from the mainstream of musical development in later years, he had left France a valuable legacy in Faust and a few other works. He provided French music a national identity through the rediscovery of older French musical ideals and through the force of his personality. Although he had no direct influence on composers coming after him, with the exception of Massenet, he opened the way for a whole new generation of French composers and a Renaissance of French music after 1870.

The controversy concerning Faust comes from its popularity and the fact that many people have been introduced to the Faust legend and Goethe's drama through this opera. Many German critics were appalled at the distortion of the drama. One of the first to make his voice heard was Wagner, who steadfastly refused to listen to the score.

A Parisian composer once more comes to the rescue: without any other ambition, he gets the Goethian poem translated into the effective jargon needful for his boulevard-public; a repellent, sugary-vulgar patchwork, with all the airs and graces of a lorette, wedded to the music of a second-rate talent that fain would bring itself to something and stretches out an anguished hand to everything.

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This attitude has been the basis for most of the disdain the opera has encountered in the 20th century. Alfred Einstein in his *Music in the Romantic Era* underscores the same opinion:

The French and Italian composers—Berlioz, Gounod, and later Boito—in fashioning the Faust material were in a somewhat different situation from that of the German musicians, who might not lay hands on Goethe's hallowed text. Gounod's librettists, in making very superficial use of the material, resolved it into its original elements and reduced it to the love-story of Faust and Gretchen. What does this Faust have to do with Goethe's superman! What does this theatrical devil with his hocus-pocus have to do with Mephistopheles! What does Mademoiselle Marguerite have to do with Goethe's Gretchen! It is but decorative Romanticism, or Romantic decoration. Similarly, Gounod's music, replete with excessively soft lyrical passages, aspires to nothing more lofty than the achievements of many lucky song-writers.  

If one assumes that Gounod's *Faust* is a direct treatment of the Goethe drama, then the comparison becomes absurd, and Einstein's indignation is understandable though perhaps misguided in its application to Gounod's music. However, more careful analysis indicates that the opera is usually regarded from the wrong point of view. A brief examination of the librettists' motives may illustrate the point.

Paul-Jules Barbier (1825-1901) and Michel Carré (1819-1872) were known both individually and as a team of successful dramatic writers. Their fame rested on numerous librettos for the lyric opera genre and for "boulevard comedies." The opera librettos were written in the standard "number opera" format in three or five acts and reflected the tradition of Scribe in style.

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31 The Barbier-Carré team was responsible for most of Gounod's librettos including *Romeo et Juliette* (1867) and wrote the librettos of *Mignon* (1866) and *Hamlet* (1868) for Thomas and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (1881) for Offenbach.
Augustin-Eugène Scribe (1791-1861), the most influential playwright of the 19th century and the creator of "le livret bien fait" (the well-made libretto), was remarkable not for his abilities in verse or character development, but for his skills in story planning. He was capable of organizing the most complex plots in a manner that could be easily grasped by the audience and could make the most out of every theatrical moment or effect. Scribe librettos (many were written with a team of collaborators) literally dominated the stages of the Opéra and Opéra-comique from approximately 1830 to 1860, and hundreds of his comedies, vaudevilles and dramas filled the other theaters of Paris. Although most of his works are no longer in the operatic repertory, the effects of his approach can be seen in works written during the 19th century that are still performed today, such as L'Elisir d'amore, Un Ballo in maschera and Don Carlo.32

In Faust, as in many of their librettos, Barbier and Carré adhered to the Scribe formula. Love is the central ingredient in this formula and the heroine, Marguerite, is the most important character. But unlike Scribe, Barbier and Carré concentrated more on character depiction than on a complex plot. Consequently their numerous adaptations were not attempts to be true to the original; rather the authors took what they thought was necessary from Goethe in order to create a colorful background to the love story. This practice had precedent in Scribe and the earliest Romantic operas of the late 18th century.

Gounod's interest in the Goethe drama dates from his Prix de Rome

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32 Scribe's influence is even more far-reaching, affecting works into the 20th century. Wagner did not escape this influence either. His notion of "Gesamtkunstwerk" had its origins in Grand Opéra. For an interesting discussion of this see Chapter 14 of Patrick J. Smith's The Tenth Muse, A Historical Study of the Opera Libretto (New York: Schirmer Books, 1970), pp. 207-232.
days. He as well as Barbier and Carré were introduced to it through the translation of Gérard de Nerval (1808-1855). Nerval's translation of Part I of Faust came out in 1828 and Goethe's reaction was enthusiastic. Goethe's editor, J. P. Eckermann, describes the poet's initial feelings about the translation.

"Curious thoughts go through my mind," he said, "When I consider how this book has achieved standing in a language in which Voltaire exercised his rule fifty years ago....Goethe praised the aforementioned translation by Gérard calling it very successful, although it is written largely in prose. "I do not like anymore to read Faust in German," he said, "but in this French translation it appears fresh again and new and lively."33

The Nerval translation is uneven in quality; the prose is generally its strongest point. In the preface to Nerval's translation, Henri Clouard states that in an effort to avoid any obscurity in the text, Nerval often sacrificed the profundity of Goethe's work.34

Gounod's reaction to this translation also was extremely enthusiastic; he found Part I particularly appealing and sympathized strongly with the character of Marguerite, so that for years he thought of setting Part I to music. Several early musical ideas from the 1840's later found their way into the opera, but it was not until 1855 that Gounod, with the encouragement of Jules Barbier, decided to start work on an opera.

Barbier's excitement over the prospect of an operatic setting stemmed from the success of Michel Carré's drama, Faust et Marguerite, performed at the Gymnase in 1850. Carré's work was a three-act "Drame fantastique"35


meant as an adaptation of the love story in Goethe's Faust. This adaptation, rooted in the French theatrical aesthetic of Scribe and going farther back to the principles of Racine and Corneille, did away with the reflective scenes of Goethe's drama and concentrated on a very tightly knit, logically planned love story. The action and characters were clearly portrayed and the subplots closely connected to the main plot. While the main sequence of events remained the same, Faust's disenchantment, his pact with the devil, the seduction of Margarete, the murder of Valentin, Margarete's death and salvation—Faust is not saved in Carré's version—the motives of some of the main characters as well as the functions of a few minor characters changed. Faust's disenchantment arose not from his unsatisfied thirst for knowledge but from a longing for lost youth. Siebel, a drunken reveller in Goethe's scene, "Auerbach's Cellar," became in Carré's work a student of Faust who had fallen in love with Margarete. The insertion of Siebel satisfied the Scribean requirement of the love triangle, found in many contemporary boulevard comedies. The character of Valentin was also expanded to provide more dramatic conflict and tension. These changes, wrought to bring about a dramatically unified piece, were accepted by the public and the work achieved a great deal of success.  

Because of his already considerable work on the Faust story, Carré did not greet Barbier's request for collaboration on an opera libretto with much enthusiasm. He did, however, grant Barbier permission to exploit his prose text and wrote the verse for Mephistopheles' "Chanson du veau d'or."

Barbier first approached Meyerbeer with the idea of setting the libretto, but was turned down because Meyerbeer, who knew Goethe's work in its original language, felt himself unequal to the task. When he found Gounod willing to undertake the music, Barbier set to work immediately on the libretto. He drew up a plan for the work and submitted it in 1855 to Alphonse Royer at the Opéra. The scheme was rejected but accepted a year later at the Théâtre Lyrique by Leon Carvalho. By the end of 1856, Barbier had finished his libretto for an opéra-comique.

Barbier's libretto, although patterned on Carré's drama, is a compromise between the rigid structure of his drama and the freely arranged episodes of Goethe's work. Barbier adds several scenes from Goethe not found in Carré: an ensemble of soldiers, burghers and maidens before the city gate in Act I, Wagner's song of the rat in Act I, Mephistopheles' taunting serenade to Margarete in Act III, and the Walpurgis night scene (melodrama) of Act IV. Barbier's additions weakened the unity of Carré's work, and indeed, the bland characterizations have been the source of much criticism. This difference in characters between the opera libretto and Goethe's work is the central theme of Frank Merkling's article "The Fall of Mephistopheles."

Gounod's librettists did violence to the characterizations, especially that of Mephistopheles. Their efforts were aimed, of course, at the praiseworthy target of condensing the unwieldy, many-scened drama into something that would have unity and coherence on the operatic stage;...the significant Prologue in
Heaven, Faust's soul-searching soliloquies, his trenchant conversations with Mephistopheles — was blithely omitted. . . . The exact role played by Mephistopheles depends, quite naturally, on that assumed by Faust, . . . Goethe's view of his protagonist, . . . is summed up in a single famous line, Es irrt der Mensch so lang er strebt — as long as man strives, he errs. The view of Gounod's librettists, much like that of the early Faust books and puppet plays, would probably substitute "presumeds" for "strives." It is a simpler view, one that has made up — and closed — its mind. And the part Mephistopheles plays changes accordingly. Throughout the opera he is rakish and "evil" in a conventional, Victorian sense, but little more. He is essentially Faust's servitor, and in the light of what the opera concerns itself with, this amounts in large part to his performing the office of pander. Goethe's Faust was a tortured, disillusioned man of great breadth of soul; Gounod's is an old man who wishes he were young. In the opera there are none of the marvelous conversations, outbursts, and brush-strokes of characterization that run all through the drama. 36

In addition to the loss in depth of characters, Goethe's powerful prose has been replaced almost entirely by weaker, sentimental text. Even with these problems, the opéra-comique version of Faust was stronger than later adaptations of the opera.

The importance of the spoken dialogue in opéra comique is revealed whenever Bizet's Carmen is correctly performed, but it is even more essential in a work like Gounod's Faust. Gounod was persuaded to inflate his work for the stage of the Opera, but its first incarnation, with spoken dialogue, brings out better the characterizations of all three principals and ties the work securely not to the world of Goethe but to the world of Sedaine and Scribe. 37

In its evolution from an opéra-comique to an opera, Faust went through many changes. First, there was a delay in its production at the Théâtre Lyrique of more than a year due to the appearance of another Faust at the Port Saint Martin in 1857. This Faust, a lavishly produced


37 Patrick J. Smith, The Tenth Muse, pp. 290-1.
melodrama written by Dennery, starred the famous tragedian Frédéric Lemaître in the role of Mephistopheles. It enjoyed a short-lived success of six months and was parodied in a burlesque called Faux Faust, produced at Hervé's Folies nouvelles, 1858.

Second, when it finally went into rehearsal in 1858, Gounod's opera-comique suffered numerous alterations at the hands of Léon Carvalho, who felt his sure instincts about the theater would guarantee Faust's success with the public. The original score was four hours long and Gounod was forced to make some substantial cuts. One whole scene was dropped in addition to the duet of Margarete and Valentin in Act I and one of Valentin's arias. The premier finally took place on March 19, 1859, and, although it was not an overwhelming success at first, it had had fifty-nine performances at the end of a year.

The next changes occurred in 1860, when for Faust productions in Germany, Gounod added musical recitatives in place of the spoken dialogue. This second edition, published by Choudens, who had obtained all publishing rights in France and Belgium, contained approximately 447 bars of new music. In the third edition of Faust, which was first issued in 1861, Gounod made more additions, cuts, and rearrangements of numbers in the score. The apparent dissatisfaction he felt for the first edition of Faust was characteristic of the way he dealt with all his operas, and they also underwent considerable changes after first productions.\footnote{Cecil Hopkinson, "Notes on the Earliest Editions of Gounod's Faust," in Festschrift for the 80th Birthday of Otto Erich Deutsch (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1963), pp. 245-49.} In 1859 and 1860 Faust was performed in Germany, Belgium,
Italy and England. It became immensely popular and appeared in dozens of published editions. As Faust's popularity grew, directors weighted it down with elaborate scenery and interpolated ballets. Finally, in 1869, Gounod worked his last changes into the opera by adding his own ballet to Act IV, "Walpurgisnacht."

It is in this last state that most critics judge Faust today. Many judgements are justifiably harsh, and there can be no doubt that the dramatic unity of the libretto suffered as a result of the numerous changes it underwent. However, enough of the original vitality of the work has survived to account for Faust's tremendous success as part of the established opera repertoire. Faust has been performed thousands of times in Paris alone and translated into twenty-four different languages.39

When seen in the perspective of this whole chapter on the evolution of the Faust myth, the Barbier-Carré libretto seems to follow a trend. As the story or myth is handed down from author to author and artist to artist it changes in accord with the writer's vision or contemporary values. The subject Barbier and Carré chose to work with, which is the love story of Faust and Margarete, is the creation of Goethe and does not belong to the original legend. Goethe himself was no slave to historical authenticity; when criticized by the poet Byron for borrowing material from others, Goethe replied that it didn't matter whether he got his ideas from his own experience or a book, but that what was important was that he used them well. It is a matter of conjecture whether Barbier and Carré were prudent in their use of Goethe's material. It must be remembered that Gounod's talents were in setting lyrical

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themes, especially love. He excelled in intimacy and nuance. Donald Grout puts the subject in an interesting perspective:

The libretto prepared for Gounod by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré is based only on Part I of Goethe's drama—damnation being a more fascinating subject in the theatre than salvation—and consequently the Germans rightly insist on calling this opera Margarete, after the name of its heroine. It is well that the subject was limited in this way, for it is hardly conceivable that Gounod could have risen to an appropriate treatment of the second part.40

The importance of Gounod's Faust in 19th-century France is reflected by the number of theatrical parodies that appeared after its first production. Between 1866 and 1913 there were no fewer than eleven parodies of the opera.41 The metamorphosis of the work from an opéra-comique to a grand opera provided ample material for parody. However, the music itself may offer a clue to its popularity as a subject for satire. Saint-Saëns carried out his own travesty of Gounod's Faust at the Conservatoire and once commented, in an observation of Gounod's style, that the elegance of his music was a surface elegance that sometimes concealed a basic vulgarity.42 In addition, Gounod's melodic lines, although very flexible and free, occasionally take on a preciousness, later becoming an annoying mannerism in Massenet and other disciples, that was a trademark for Gounod in others' parodies of his style.

The same year Faust appeared at the Opéra, 1869, there premiered another, smaller Faust at the Folies-Dramatique. Le petit Faust by Hervé


41Seymour Travers, p. 52.

was a parody of Gounod's work in a genre flourishing from 1855-1870 called "opéra-bouffe." A favorite technique of opéra-bouffe composers and librettists was to take well-known myths and turn them into contemporary parody. The next chapters will explore the origins and characteristics of this genre and the social environment in which it grew, as a backdrop from which to examine the parody found in *Le petit Faust.*
CHAPTER III
SOCIETY AND ITS FORMS OF ENTERTAINMENT

In order to understand the parody of opéra-bouffe, and in particular the references made in Le petit Faust, it is necessary to understand the social and political environment from which it sprang. Also, the environment of mid-19th-century Paris produced other forms of entertainment that were as popular as opéra-bouffe and influential to its development.

French Society from 1830 to 1870

The social problems of the Second Empire and the forms of social satire that accompanied them can be traced back to the Revolution of 1789 or even earlier. A lengthy discussion of the subject would not be within the scope of this investigation; therefore the discussion will be picked up from a later date, 1830, from the time of the parliamentary monarchy that preceded the Second Empire.

France, like other European nations of the 19th century, experienced rapid industrial growth that it was unprepared to deal with. In addition, it was plagued with political instability that increased economic problems. The rise of a wealthy bourgeois class added yet another political faction to a chaotic situation. No regime seemed capable of satisfying a majority of interests, be they republican, royalist or working class. The Revolutions of 1830 and 1848 were joint ventures of the bourgeois and working classes, and both times it was the bourgeois which made gains.

The July Monarchy, so-called for the Revolution of July 1830,
suffered from a lack of imagination. Charles X, Bourbon heir to the throne, abdicated to his cousin Louis-Philippe who had been placed in power by government ministers. The ministers, wealthy bankers and businessmen, effected this change of power because of their alarm at the growing violence in the streets.

... the spectacle of licensed disorder, not repressed by the Prefect of Police or the Minister of the Interior, frightened the real victors of July, the upper middle classes. They found their man in Casimir Perier and, with him, the policy of "resistance" was begun. For the lesson, the apparent lesson of July, was being learned by the discontented in Paris and in other cities. Barricades could be erected against more powerful tyrants than Charles X; the workers of the great cities were beginning to ask for more than "freedom," to protest against more wounding privileges than those of the old nobility.¹

Louis-Philippe, nicknamed the "Citizen King" and representative of the "new ruling class" (the wealthy bourgeoisie), attempted to appease the spirit of the people by creating a special image. Part of this image was his bourgeois apparel, complete with round bowler hat and umbrella. He also removed the fleur-de-lis from his coat of arms.² More substantial changes, however, were not forthcoming. The king, his ministers and the parliament pursued a policy of maintaining the status quo or the "juste milieu" (golden mean).

The period between 1831 and 1848 was a time of great industrial expansion when many quick fortunes were made. In addition, thousands of new inventions transformed France into a modern nation. The results of this growth were reflected in a philosophical movement that swept intellectual circles; Saint-Simonists believed in unhindered industrial


²Ibid.
growth and society conforming to the interests of industry. To those who felt that industry would cure the ills of all, Saint-Simonism was a religion. (A similar attitude, formulated earlier in the century by Jeremy Bentham in England, became the basis of Utilitarianism.)

It soon became apparent to Saint-Simonists and the rest of society that industry created as many, if not more, problems than it solved. The extremes of commercialism touched every aspect of life. Speculation reached dizzying proportions, with stocks and shares quoted on the Bourse tripling in the space of a few years. People found Bourse quotations more fascinating reading than the scores of novels and poetry being published.

Another result of the booming capitalism was the commercialization of the press. Hitherto restricted circulation became unlimited through the use of advertisement as a means of revenue. However, editorial freedoms were sacrificed to big money interests.

The commercialization of sex posed one of the greatest threats to the middle-class values of family and marriage. The former "grisette," pictured in Bohemian life as the little seamstress who toils for some student or artist in return for his love, became known as a "lorette." The "lorette" accepted money for her services; and, with the possibility of wealth and a climb up the social ladder, the only such opportunity for a woman not born or married into wealth, her numbers multiplied. The women at the top of their profession, whose clientele were financiers and the leading men of society, were referred to as "cocottes." Although they came from the lower classes ("demi-monde"), they were as isolated from their own class as they were from the aristocratic classes.

In the midst of all the prosperity, the conditions of the working
class had not improved; in fact, they grew worse. Political dissent, and especially Republicanism, grew in intensity. The new idle rich of the bourgeois and many aristocrats, perhaps disillusioned by the results of their prosperity, turned to different forms of entertainment as a distraction, as well as a means of avoiding boredom.

A popular source of entertainment for the upper class was the salon. Music, a central part of the evening in a salon, attracted every aspiring young musician. The salon provided a stepping-off point to a career as concert artist and virtuoso. Siegfried Kracauer describes the artistic tastes of this circle of society:

They developed innumerable sentimental enthusiasms. Young poets were permitted to pose as geniuses even in the most aristocratic salons. Groups of young men and girls met to read the plays of Victor Hugo and the novels of George Sand and invariably showed themselves supremely affected by the experience.³

Kracauer goes on to explain the significance of these pursuits:

This cultivation of somewhat facile emotionalism throws a light on the tremendous importance that music came to assume in the eyes of society. Its function, like that of romantic literature, was to compensate bourgeois youth, without embarrassing it politically, for the emptiness and meaninglessness of the atmosphere in which it lived—the atmosphere of the Golden Mean.⁴

Offenbach began his career in the salons, for which he wrote many sentimental ballads. He gained valuable contacts, and his observations of this segment of society found their way into future musical bouffes.

The middle classes enjoyed several entertainments. The "cafe-concerts" were indoor, outdoor establishments that provided refreshments, music, dancing and occasional comedy skits. They ranged from modest places to the luxurious gardens of the Jardin Turc on the Boulevard du

³Siegfried Kracauer, p. 53.

⁴Ibid.
Temple. The summer season at the Jardin Turc featured a musical extravaganza with fantastic lighting effects under the direction of a very handsome and charismatic conductor, Jullien.5

The vaudeville remained popular and followed the current fashion of using newly composed songs to be performed in an operatic manner, instead of the old music-hall songs. Pascal et Chambord, one of these vaudevilles with music by the young Offenbach, was premiered in 1839 but failed to arouse public interest. It was, however, a forerunner of the opéra-bouffe.

Dancing was an outlet for all classes of society. During the reign of Louis-Philippe, Paris was a city of dance. For the rich in society there were balls held in exclusive drawing rooms and at the Opéra, as well as at the more fashionable café-concerts. Waltzes and quadrilles represented the most popular dances. The quadrille had become famous at the court of Napoleon I and was a type of square dance containing five movements in different tempi. Jullien's quadrilles were particularly famous for their lavish settings.6

The smaller theaters of Paris hosted balls that had a carnival flavor. They featured a dance that swept Paris and became the symbol of social decadence. The cancan knew no social barriers and was danced by aristocrat and poorman alike. It was made famous at the Théâtre des Variétés under the direction of Napoléon Musard, and every evening masked dandys, actresses, students, prostitutes and the poor entered the theater to enjoy the utter confusion that ensued. In order to understand

5Kracauer, p. 39.

the cancan and its significance as a symbol of social turmoil, a brief description of it would be helpful.

The cancan had its origins in North Africa and was subsequently brought to the working class taverns on the outskirts of Paris by soldiers from Algeria. The idle rich found its wild and vulgar movements much more exciting than the waltzes and rounds they were used to. A horrified foreigner gives his description of the dance:

The couples dance it indecently close together, so close that even involuntary movements are almost inevitably improper...But when one sees with what gestures and movements of the body the masked men approach the masked women, press close to them and actually throw them backwards and forwards between themselves to the accompaniment of continual acclamation and laughter and ribald jokes, one can only be filled with disgust;...The beat of the music is hastened, the dancers' movements become more rapid, more animated, more aggressive; and finally the "contredanse" evolves into a great gallop, in which the dancers form into double pairs, four in a row, and gallop madly round the floor...The music gets quicker and quicker, until one finally sees masked women, like ecstatic mænads, with flushed cheeks, breathlessly heaving breasts, parched lips, and half-undone, flying hair, careening round the room, less on their feet than being dragged along bodily, until with the last chord they collapse breathlessly on the nearest seat.7

At the height of this confusion, Musard, a short figure in black, would jump down from the conductor's podium, throw down his baton, pull out a revolver and fire a shot into the air.

In the cancan the French satirical spirit was once more displayed. Aristocrat as well as revolutionary worker participated, the former to show his contempt for the bankers in power, the latter to scorn the social conventions of the regime and the inequities of the economic system.

When the government collapsed in the Revolution of 1848, the social

7Kracauer, pp. 30-1.
problems that had plagued it and the forms of entertainment that expressed it did not disappear. The Revolution was again the joint effort of the workers and middle class, but when it became apparent that the interests of the bourgeois were threatened by the demands of the proletariat, a class struggle ensued. The Parisian workers were brutally put down, and once more the bourgeois denied its own principles of freedom. The stupor that settled on Paris after the fighting was over provided the chance for power Louis Napoléon had been seeking. He had the rare fortune of being the right man in the right place at the right time. The heir to the Napoleonic claim to the throne could capitalize on the growing popularity of the Napoleonic legend. For years the image of the glories of the Empire had been gaining a foothold among the peasants and the army. The clearest reflection of this nostalgia were the ballads of Béranger. His most famous tunes, "L'Honnête homme," "La Bonne Cathérine" and "Le Suffrage universel," were sung throughout France by young people, old war veterans and audiences at the café-concerts.

In the elections that followed the Revolution, Louis Napoléon gained an almost unanimous victory for the post of President of the new Republic. Besides his strong base of support among the peasants and the army, the workers voted for him to head off the success of a bourgeois candidate, the Royalists supported him because he was not Republican and the bourgeois gave him their vote in the belief that a strong man was needed to protect their interests. From here it was a small step to a coup d'état, and in December 1851 the Prince-president achieved a successful coup with the help of his half-brother the Count de Morny and a handful of willing ministers. Troops were released on the city and there was shooting of innocent citizens, but the general mood of Paris was apathetic.
The new Emperor was an intelligent, well-educated man of the world, and, although he is described to have had a genuine sympathy for the working classes, he had a tendency to act on romantic impulses that destroyed some of the good he achieved. Napoléon III, as Louis Napoléon called himself, instead of implementing needed social and economic reforms, went about building the illusion of empire and prosperity that would keep him in power. Under the direction of the architect Baron Haussmann, the Emperor sponsored a huge public works project to rebuild Paris. Old streets were destroyed to make way for long, wide boulevards; monuments were erected, and buildings went up with magnificent facades. A new opera house was under construction and the Palace of Industry was built to house a universal exhibition modeled on the Great Exhibition of London. This remodeling provided many jobs and the country experienced a temporary economic boom, but eventually borrowing and lavish spending led to bankruptcy.

In other activities in the economic sphere, the Emperor lifted trade restrictions, opening up the French market to other nations and forcing French industry to modernize. While this was beneficial to the economy, wild speculation continued to go on producing many unstable investments.

More immediate problems, such as improving conditions for factory workers or providing political stability through the granting of more civil liberties, were ignored. After the coup, newspapers were put under the control of the government and the theaters were heavily censored. In addition, in an effort to increase the image of empire for the populace, Napoléon III became involved in costly, meaningless wars in the Crimea, Italy and Mexico. Government corruption increased as officials vied for imperial favor. Both the Emperor and the bourgeoisie in their
flight from reality sought more splendor, pomp and frivolity. The bourgeoisie turned to their entertainments and the Emperor tried to build up the splendor of his court. The glitter at court grew in proportion to the increasing problems of the country. This magnificence, however, did not completely hide the parvenu quality of the new court. The Habsburg, Archduke Maximilian, recorded his impressions: "There is something amateurish and theatrical about the whole thing, and the various roles are played by officials who are not very sure of their parts." 18

Not a lover of music, Louis-Napoléon appreciated its power to create illusion. There were countless opportunities for grand spectacle in which music played a central role. The Empire was alive with military reviews, royal weddings and christenings, special celebrations such as the birthday of Napoléon I complete with ceremonial cantatas by Auber and others, grand exhibitions and endless balls and receptions. In the article "Music Mirrors of the Second Empire—Part I & II," Frederick H. Martens chronicles the development of music as a reflection of the Empire and explains how Napoléon III used it.

To Louis Napoléon music was a talisman whose effect upon others than himself he had gauged by repeated experiment. He estimated from experience the power of "the song of the street;" knew that good regimental bands maintain soldierly spirit, professional pride and smartness on parade,...He was aware of the dual role—intoxicant and sedative—the music of the dance plays in social life. He realized that his appearance at one of the more popular houses, the Bouffes or Opéra-Comique, inclined to him the hearts of audiences whose tastes he seemed to share. And he knew how, as the living voice of the scenic splendors of the Grand-Opéra, music lent soul to the magnificence of his imperial box; that, indirectly, it stressed the visualized glory of the sovereign and his Court. 9

18Quoted in Krakauer, p. 186.

9In Musical Quarterly 16 (1930): 419.
Just as the society of the July Monarchy produced forms of entertainment, so the society of the Second Empire had its own entertainment, opéra-bouffe. The heyday of opéra-bouffe fits within the reign of Napoléon III, 1851-1870. Its relationship to society was no accident, for the corruption, hypocrisy and grand delusions of the period were material for these operatic parodies and burlesques. This relationship to society took on two seemingly contradictory functions. The opéra-bouffe served an important function as one of the few outlets for social and political criticism. Despite the heavy censorship of the theaters, these satirical pieces were tolerated by the regime, which considered them harmless forms of entertainment. But they had the added function of representing a mirror of the period, because the everyday life of the society of the Second Empire, especially that of the elite, became increasingly close to that in a comic opera.  

The irony of the situation is illustrated by the fact that government officials were engaged in the writing of librettos.

The remarkable fact that Morny, one of the leading statesmen of his time, and Halévy, a high Government official, collaborated in writing librettos for operettas throws light on the Second Empire spirit of frivolity. This frivolity did not just consist in drowning reality by delirious pleasure-seeking; its true essence was seen when reality was plainly recognized, as it was by Morny, but treated frivolously all the same.

Opéra-bouffe was not only a popular form of entertainment but an operatic genre, and a discussion of its operatic origins and characteristics may help explain the nature of its parody.

The History and Development of Opéra-bouffe

Nineteenth-century opera is perhaps the most difficult type of music

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\[10\] Carlson, p. 133.

\[11\] Kracauer, p. 203.
to divide into genres. The difficulty lies in the blurring of distinctions between both "serious" and "comic" opera in the first half of the century. By 1800, the opéra-comique in France had taken on many qualities of serious opera and serious opera had acquired some romantic qualities from the opéra-comique. At mid-century, the official categories of opera, although still rigid, had widened to include lighter forms such as the operetta. It is to this lighter form of opera that opéra-bouffe belongs.

Many writers, in their discussion of operatic genres of the 19th century, use the word "operetta" to refer to "opéra-bouffe." The term "operetta" was first used by the Italians in the 18th century to describe the type of light comic opera that grew from the "intermezzi" and that came to be called "opera buffa." In the 19th and 20th centuries, the term was still associated with comic opera definitions such as Otto Keller's. He maintains that the purpose of this art form is not to reach the highest goals of musical drama, but to amuse through wit and humour in text and music. He sees operetta in its classic form as a flight from the norm of life and the seriousness of art. A more recent commentator, Gervase Hughes, gives "operetta" a broader definition in describing it as opera of small dimensions and unpretentious aims.

In his book Composers of Operetta, Hughes attempts to point out some qualifying characteristics of the form.

It would be misleading to claim that operetta is a form of entertainment derived from opera but designed to amuse an audience rather than to stir its emotion: one of the best operas ever written, Verdi's Falstaff, is "low comedy" almost throughout, whereas humour is noticeably absent from Messager's charming operetta Madame Chrysanthème. Nor is the calibre of the music

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12 Keller, p. 35.
13 Hughes, p. 1.
a safe criterion. Operas can be commonplace or trivial (many are); operettas can be scholarly and distinguished, though anything pretentious involves disqualification, and it would be fair to stipulate that the composer's approach should be light-handed.¹⁴

Opéra-bouffe can be seen as a specific type of operetta limited to a short span of time from about 1851 to 1870, but it is distinguished from the operetta both before and after it by its satirical intent, its humor and its relative proximity to reality.

Although the opéra-bouffe grew in response to the atmosphere created by the society of the 1850's and 60's, there are antecedents of its style and the style of the operetta that can be traced back to the late 17th-century vaudeville performed at Parisian fairs and carnivals. The vaudeville provided the French with one of their favorite pastimes, to satirize and parody contemporary conventions and traditions. The vaudeville of Saint-Germain and Saint-Laurent, two of the most famous fairgrounds on the outskirts of Paris, were comedy sketches, farces and spoofs of the operas of Lully and Quinault which contained popular songs and tunes taken from the operas. They were eventually called "comédies mêlées de chant" or "opéras rendus comiques" and from 1715 were placed under the direction of the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique.

During the 18th century, vaudeville underwent several changes. First, they began including specially composed songs. In 1740, Charles-Simon Favart followed this practice and called these productions "comédies mêlées d'ariettes."¹⁵ Second, the Italian "intermezzi," introduced to France around 1752, began influencing the "comédies mêlées d'ariettes."

¹⁴Hughes, p. 1.

These early Italian comic operas, similar to the French vaudeville in their use of burlesque and farce, contained music of a higher quality than the vaudevilles and were written by one composer. The efforts of French composers to incorporate Italian techniques into their "comédies mêlées d’ariettes" produced the first "opéra-comiques," one of the earliest of which was Le Devin du village (1752) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Third, as the opéra-comique flourished under the pens of Duni, Philidor, Monsigny, Grétry, Dezède and Dalayrac, the musical elements in them took on more importance. Simple popular song forms were mixed with Italian aria forms, and more concerted numbers, mostly in the form of duets, were added. In addition, the comic plots included more romantic, sentimental elements.

By the end of the 18th century, the variety of subject matter for the opéra-comique expanded and fell into several different categories. The "opéra-comique bouffon" resembled the Italian comedies of Goldoni, but unlike Goldoni's comedies contained characters that were more puppet-like than human. The "opéra-comique larmoyant" was the most frequently encountered type after 1750. It was sad and maudlin rather than comic, and a great deal of time was spent describing characters through long narratives in the text. These pieces were especially admired during the Revolution. Another type of opéra-comique, the "larmoyant perilleuse," lasted until 1820 and was the prototype for the "rescue opera" and the "mélodrame." The heroine of these sentimental pieces went through countless dangers, usually at the hands of a wicked noble, and was wiser than all the other characters and the situation of the plot would warrant. The last type of opéra-comique appeared in the early 19th century as the

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16 Longyear, p. 170.
bourgeois comedy." It usually had a contemporary setting, in contrast to the historical backdrop given the three previous types, and dealt with bourgeois subjects, emphasizing bourgeois virtues such as thrift, sobriety and respect for one's heritage.17

The development of opéra-comique and later forms of comic opera like the operetta and opéra-bouffe was intimately connected with trends in other forms of theater, because the same writers were employed for all. The predominant dramatic form of the first two decades of the 19th century was the melodrama. Most of its features found their way into the operas of the period, stock characters, plots filled with high adventure, spectacle, emphasis on subjects form the past; and of course they had in common the use of musical accompaniment.

True Romanticism in the French theater was short lived, and there were many elements that changed the direction of theater and of opera too. The strong tradition of classicism in France overshadowed romantic tendencies and the French love of satire tended to destroy romantic illusions.18 In addition, there were theatrical movements such as Ponsard's école de bon sens, which represented reactions against the excesses of romanticism. And finally, the total dominance of the French theater for several decades by Eugène Scribe effectively crushed most competition.

Important parallels to the opéra-bouffe of the second Empire were the plays of two dramatists of the same period, Alexander Dumas fils and Emile Augier. They represented a realistic offshoot of the école de bon

17Longyear, p. 173.

18Seymour Travers in his Catalogue of Nineteenth Century French Theatrical Parodies lists the records of over 1200 parodies between 1789 and 1914.
sens and the Romantic movement. Their plays, described by Marvin Carlson in *The French Stage in the Nineteenth Century*, "depicted the salons and drawing rooms of the well-to-do bourgeoisie" and their social concerns, financial speculation, and adultery. The plays were full of Scribean devices and melodramatic turns and provided the audience with a mirror of their own society in customs, dress, language, and surroundings.¹⁹

The 18th- and 19th-century musical trends that lead to the operetta and opéra-bouffe began to take root in the 1830's. For several decades into the 19th century, there had been no significant challenges to the operatic guidelines set up by the two theaters of opera, the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique. Then attempts were made by several Frenchmen to revive the lighter form of opéra-comique, exemplified in the works of Grétry, with traits from the vaudeville. The first of these composers, Adolphe Adam (1803-1856), was a student of Boïeldieu at the Conservatoire whose lyrical talents were well suited to music for vaudevilles and one-act curtain raisers at the Opéra. His most successful works, with the exception of the ballet *Giselle*, were *Le Chalet* (1834) and *Le Toréador* (1849) in which he combined the light forms of the music-halls with opéra-comique. These works are considered the first "operettas,"²⁰ or unassuming works of small scale.

Following Adam's lead was Louis Clapisson (1808-1866). A violinist and capable composer, he unfortunately tended to use poor libretti, and many of his prodigious number of works were written, one per year, in a routine and mechanical fashion. Two of his best works are *Figurante*

¹⁹Carlson, p. 6.

²⁰Hughes, p. 12.
and *La Fanchonnette*.

Marvin Carlson sets the emergence of the operetta as a genre a little later than Adam's *Le Chalet* and with a different composer.

Operetta is generally considered to have emerged as a distinct genre, separate from comic opera or vaudeville, in 1848 when Florimond Rongé, known as Hervé, presented at the Palais-Royal a one-act parody of the Italian grand opera called *Gargouillada*. Many of the elements associated with the operetta were first combined in this work—the mixture of sung and spoken elements, the fantasy, the almost grotesque buffoonery, and most important of all, the basic irreverence of subject and treatment. Not the least of the attractions of this popular work was the first performance in a theatre of the notorious cancan.21

The works of Hervé are perhaps more accurately associated with a specific type of operetta, that is, the opéra-bouffe (1855-1870), rather than the earlier operetta examples of Adam or even the type of operetta that flourished after 1870.

The early works of Hervé and Offenbach, those composed before about 1856, were not referred to as opéra-bouffes, but went by various names: "vaudeville-opérette," "tableau-grotesque" (Hervé's *Don Quichotte et Sancho Pança*, 1848) and "cannibalistic musical" (Offenbach's one-act *Ovavaye ou la Reine des Iles*, 1855). As the genre developed in the years after 1856, it began to display certain common features in the libretto and score.

As the titles indicated, the plots were crazy, incredible tales which became more absurd by the minute, although the sequence of events unfolded in a logical manner. The subjects ranged from medieval tales to stories of contemporary life in Paris (Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne*). Greek myths, legends and other epics were favorite subjects of the opéra-bouffe and provided the librettists and composers with the opportunity of a two-fold spoof, to make fun of the revered classics and also poke fun at

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21 Carlson, p. 131.
contemporary society. Patrick J. Smith in The Tenth Muse describes the method used to create these 'mock-epics.'

The method that the librettists used was to take an accepted myth-tale and update it with a vengeance. By doing this, they not only satirized the "tragédie lyrique," with its insistence on subjects drawn from myth, but also used the myth to poke fun at current figures in the news while hiding them behind fictional characters such as Achille and Ménelas. The general tone of burlesque was directly aimed not only at French society of the fifties and sixties but also at the pretensions and charades of the court of Napoléon III, and a good many of the specific thrusts have been lost to history. They were not tied to political and social satire; they also took on additional elements which continue to be universal (vanity, lust for power, love)....

This treatment of human vice and folly served to make the characters of the opéra-bouffe more human, in spite of their farcical makeup, than those of the opera and may explain the tremendous popularity of the genre.

An excerpt from the libretto of Offenbach's Orphée aux Enfers, the first speech by Public Opinion, indicates the type of humour and parody of the opéra-bouffe at its best.

Who am I? In the ancient theater I perfected the chorus; I am public opinion, a symbolic character that is supposed to have good sense. The ancient chorus confidentially took it upon itself to explain to people things of which they were already cognizant if they were intelligent. Me-I do better than that; I act. And taking part in the play, I distribute palms or anathema. Take care, oh ye wives, who would be unfaithful to your husbands; and take care, husbands, who would do likewise to your wives!-I speak only to the actors!-rest assured! Here comes our Eurydice. I'll leave now, but I am always around, ready to come out from the wings like a 'deus ex machina!'

The direct comment addressed to the public concerning infidelity is skillfully surrounded by the outrageous fun made of theatrical conventions of the ancient Greek theater. This kind of spoof was tremendously funny to

22Smith, p. 294.

the Parisian theater-going public of the 1850’s, who were well versed in
the classics. Jules Janin and other critics were upset by the irreverent
way in which the classics had been used, but Kracauer suggests that they
were more disturbed by the image they saw of their own society in Orphée.²⁴

Many other features of a non-musical nature are manifest by opéra-
bouffe. In the libretto, the quality of verse is noticeably inferior
to the prose. This difference in quality, however, was present in most
opera librettos from the beginning of the 19th century. Another aspect
of the libretto was the numerous jokes, puns and contemporary slang
contained in the text, which the actors delivered in a rapid-fire fashion.
The dialogue contained the bulk of the humour and the action, and only
in the case of talented composers like Offenbach did the music remain on
an equal footing with the libretto.

In opéra-bouffe the singing actor was more common than the acting
singer. Many of the stars of opéra-bouffe had been ballad singers of
the café-concerts like Berthelier and Judic or comédiens of the Comédie
Française and vaudeville as Bache, Léonce and Désiré. Perhaps the most
famous of these artists, Hortense Schneider, created the rôle of the
Grand Duchess of Gerolstein. She had been performing with a traveling
troupe in the provinces before coming to Paris, and when Offenbach dis-
covered her she was about twenty-two; her voice, although untrained,
was a strong and “admirable mezzo-soprano.”²⁵ Hortense performed many
Offenbach rôles and also premiered Hervé’s La Belle Poule in 1875.
However, her fortune was not made as an actress of the opéra-bouffe but

²⁴Kracauer, pp. 175-77.

²⁵Camille Saint-Saëns, École buissonnière, notes et souvenirs
rather as one of the leading courtesans in Paris. The life she led on stage was not very different from her life off stage, for many of the characters she and other actresses of the bouffes played were care-free ladies of easy virtue, the cocottes of society. Much of the success of these female actresses, who were by no means all cocottes themselves, rested on their sex appeal and their skills in playing innuendo. Hortense, in addition, was a fine comedian skilled in improvisation. She relied on a close rapport with the audience in which, "she could exchange quips with them or even pause to laugh at a good sally from the house without creating the impression of a break in the performance."26

One of Hervé's favorite actresses in the late 60's was Blanche d'Antigny. Her portrayal of Marguerite in Le petit Faust and Frédégonde in Chilpéric added considerably to the success of his first full-length opéra-bouffes. As Marguerite, d'Antigny's feigned innocence was particularly appealing, and the parallels to the career of Hortense Schneider increased her popularity; she also started her career as a cocotte, a beginning which enabled her to realize her desire to become an operetta star. An energetic actress with a buxom, robust physique, she was notorious for her swearing and extravagant spending.27

Musical elements of the opéra-bouffe contributed to its popularity as a genre as much as witty librettos and notorious actresses. The most characteristic feature of these works was their tunefulness, due in part to the great gifts of both Offenbach and Hervé in this area. Some of the tunes became so famous that they were heard all over Paris, and indeed the world, in arrangements for music halls and balls.

26Carlson, p. 132.
27Kracauer, p. 293.
Engaging rhythms were just as important to the success of these pieces as memorable melodies. The majority of the musical numbers, whether solos, ensembles or pantomimes, were based on some sort of dance rhythm such as the waltz, polka, quadrille or cancan.

The formal design of the opéra-bouffe remained simple due to the predominance of spoken dialogue. The solos were generally song forms from the vaudeville and included romances, ballads, and the pervasive couplet, which consisted most of the time of a straight strophic form but occasionally occurred as an alternation of strophe and refrain in a variety of combinations such as ABA or AB AB. There was light coloratura writing, especially in passages mocking Italian operatic traits (see the "Duo du Concerto" between Orpheus and Eurydice in Offenbach's Orphée). Choruses, ensembles and instrumental music such as overtures and music for melodramas alternated with solos and occurred as separate entities in "number opera" fashion.

Harmonic progressions and modulations were also simple and direct, with excursions into contrapuntal writing rare. Some opéras-bouffes, like Offenbach's La Belle Hélène, were well crafted, but many displayed bland or trivial stretches of music inevitable because of the speed at which they were turned out.

The orchestration of opéra-bouffe differed from composer to composer. The resources at hand were usually modest; between twenty and thirty instruments was not an unusual available group. After 1870, many revivals of opéra-bouffes resulted in enlarged scores through the addition of ballets and the resoring of original editions. The majority of Offenbach's scores provided the exception to the rule, because the orchestration was adeptly handled and colorful.
In spite of the small-scale musical treatment, the three theaters of opéra-bouffes, the Bouffes-Parisiens, Folies-Nouvelles and Variétés, mounted lavish productions. Offenbach, in particular, spent a fortune keeping the extravagance of his costumes, sets and theater up to the expectations of his audience. The audience consisted of industrialists, financiers, journalists, trend-setters of the boulevards and even on occasion the Emperor himself. Elegantly coiffed and bejewelled women including the most notorious courtesans of the day attended these events. And they were fashionable events, as reflected in the reviews of newspapers, the majority of which consisted of gossip accounts of the audience. The tone of the performances was high-spirited, clever, sometimes vulgar and always aimed at entertaining the audience.

The continued development of opéra-bouffe must be credited to the efforts of Jacques Offenbach and his two librettists Henri Meihlac and Ludovic Halévy, whose keen gifts of observation of their society and satirical wit brought the genre to unparalleled perfection. However, not all Offenbach’s efforts produced fruitful results. Many of his works suffered from defects such as an excessive use of four-bar phrases and tonic-dominant harmonies, which seems remarkable for so fertile and skilled a composer. This may have been the result of the breakneck speed at which he turned out stage works to fulfill public demand.

The mass of work that Offenbach took upon himself made it inevitable that he should turn out a large number of hasty sketches. Some of his operettas are merely the equivalent of musical journalism. The facility with which he created reinforced his inclination to satisfy the great demand for his work in summary fashion. Saint-Saëns observed that his scores swarmed with microscopic little notes, like flies’ feet, and out of sheer hurry barely touched the paper. There was a connection between the hastiness of Offenbach’s work—that is, on those occasions when it is evident—
and the bond that tied him to the surface of life. 28

There were other inherent weaknesses in opéra-bouffe that signalled its decline. The most significant weakness was the source of its initial success, its ties to the society of the Second Empire. As society became increasingly decadent and extravagant, the content of opera-bouffe followed suit. A brief description of the close ties between society and the opera-bouffe theaters may illustrate this point.

It could plausibly be argued that when the coffers overflowed at the Bouffes-Parisiens and the Théâtre des Variétés artistic merit had little to do with it, for these resorts were fulfilling much the same purpose as an exclusive maison tolérée; it was common knowledge that many a stall-holder attended solely in the expectation of a later and more intimate rendezvous with one of the charming creatures on the other side of the footlights. This in turn led to an uprush of splenetic jealousy between the established actresses and the established courtesans, for many versatile young ladies regarded temporary success in either profession as the stepping-stone to a more lucrative and permanent engagement in the other. 29

After the defeat of the French army in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the Empire collapsed, and with the change in the social and political climate came a change in the tastes of the theater-going public. The political targets of the opéra-bouffe's satire were gone so that the central purpose and interest in these productions was also gone. In order to replace the loss of biting satire, producers and composers began to rely heavily on spectacle to keep the public entertained. An example that illustrates what happened to opéra-bouffe after 1870 is the revival of Offenbach's Orphée.

The libretto for the revised version of Orphee was once more the work of Crémieux and Halévy. It consisted of four acts and twelve tableaux, and characters sprouted in dozens

28Kracauer, p. 162.

29Hughes, p. 31.
where there had been one before. Lavish stage-effects completely buried the plot, while innumerable ballets stifled the satire and the wit. There was a dance of Orpheus' pupils, a Ballet of the Hours on Olympus, a dance of the flies in the underworld. Ballets were introduced at every point on the slightest pretext.

The pantomime was duly produced on February 7, 1874. The first night of this new Orpheus called forth sad comparisons with that of 1858. The latter, in spite of the slender orchestration, had been a fashionable event that touched the ruling classes to the quick. The Orpheus of 1874 was an attraction for the masses, padded out with chorus girls' legs and spectacular tableaux, and was remote from all reality. 30

Le petit Faust, the subject of this analysis, displays similar tendencies. Emily Soldene, who played the part of Marguerite in the 1870 London production describes her costuming for the rôle:

Marguerite: well, she was "a girl of the period," and wore all sorts of outré costumes. One was made of satin, striped, a short skirt, and so narrow you could scarcely walk; it had immense panniers. With this went a tiny hat, upon which sat upright a large squirrel, with bright shining eyes and a bushy tail. But the first dress was the traditional Gretchen of Goethe, and I much fancied myself in it. Cut à la Princesse, and fitting pretty snug, mine was, as the Americans say, like the paper on the wall. 31

One gains an idea of what the production must have been like from Soldene's description of the chorus in the first schoolroom scene.

But the girls, the school girls—Faust kept a Board school... such girls, every size, sort, shape and colour, plump and petite, and blonde and brunette, cheeky and modest, forward and retiring, and all and every one of them pretty—so pretty; you should have seen and heard the school-room scene, such chatter...And what a high old time that arch impostor Faust had when we all went up to get "two slaps" for insubordination, "telling a funny story," and other iniquities. All the girls wore short frocks and pinafores tied at the shoulders with ribbons, broad sashes, and open-work socks, and baby shoes with straps...we had slates and pencils, and the girls would pick off Jack, or Percy, or Bert, or Reggie in the stalls, and made some really most original studies. 32

30Kracauer, pp. 321-323.

31Emily Soldene, My Theatrical and Musical Recollections (London: T. Seale Clark, 1898), p. 82.

32Ibid., p. 83.
As the opéra-bouffe quickly declined, another type of operetta rose to take its place. These works, represented at their best in the operettas of Charles Lecocq, were a more sentimental breed, an outgrowth of the earlier efforts of Adam and Clapisson and more directly tied to the opéra-comiques of the late 18th century. A theater critic J. Brander Matthews describes the situation in the Paris theaters during a visit in the 1870's.

The visitor to Paris during the last Exhibition, who was also a visitor during the Exhibition of nine years before, could not but be struck by the difference of tone in the programmes presented for his consideration by the theatres of Paris. The form of entertainment which seemed so abundantly and so accurately to reflect the folly and the extravagance of the imperial days, opera bouffe, was almost wholly invisible to those who have accepted the invitation of the Republic. During my stay of four weeks in Paris, not a single opera bouffe appeared on the bills of any Paris theatre. H. Offenbach's "Orphée," it is true, was revived at the Gaite as a spectacular piece a few days after I left. The Bouffes, as its name indicates, the home of opera of this type, was closed. At the Renaissance the successful "Little Duke" of MM. Meilhac and Halevy, the authors of the "Grand Duchess," was avowedly an opera comique, and M. Lecocq's music was altogether within the limits set by Auber and Herold. At the Folies Dramatiques the even more successful "Chimes of Corneville" had, as we know in New York, far more of the characteristics of the opera comique than of its extravagant younger sister. Whether this change, a real reform, was due to the advent of the Republic and of a consequent austerity of manners or not, it was welcome; and, although the "Timbale d'Argent" and a few other outrageous indecencies have come into existence since the fall of the Empire, it seems as though the play-going Parisian public had experienced a change of heart.33

Hervé's opéra-bouffes, like Offenbach's, were written for the public, and they suffered the same decline after 1870. During the heyday of the genre, however, Hervé, Offenbach, and others produced works of vivacious social and musical commentary.

CHAPTER IV
HERVÉ (FLORIMOND RONGER)
(1825-1892)

Biography and Output

The unique qualities of Hervé's musical personality took shape at an early age. He was born Florimond Ronger in Houdain near Arras, the son of a French police sergeant and a Spaniard from Madrid. At the age of ten his father died and his mother took him to Paris, where he entered the choir of the church of Saint-Roch. There he learned the rudiments of singing, organ and harmony. Perceiving the boy's enthusiasm and talent for music, the mother took him to the Conservatoire, and, armed with a letter of recommendation, had him accepted to take harmony lessons with Elwart. It is not known how long these lessons lasted, but in 1840, on the recommendation of Elwart, Florimond studied composition with Auber. He was introduced to three- and four-part counterpoint and Auber remarked that his work exhibited spirit and verve and that he possessed talent. Unfortunately, his lessons ceased after a few months when Auber became director of the Conservatoire. ¹

In 1839, Hervé became organist at the church of Bicêtre. At fourteen he displayed the tremendous energy that was characteristic of his whole career. In addition to his full duties as organist for the church, he continued his studies of French, history, philosophy, piano and singing.

¹Louis Schneider, Les Maîtres de l'opérette française; Hervé, Charles Lecocq (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin et Cie, 1924), p. 3.
During the next six years at Bicêtre, Hervé became interested in the theater. An amusing story, one of many, is associated with this interest and reflects the composer's unusual sense of humour. The apartment given to him and his mother as part of his salary at the church faced the courtyard of the fifth division of the mental hospital of Bicêtre. Hervé, fascinated by the inmates, followed their activities daily in the courtyard below. He noticed that his music had a soothing effect on them and soon obtained permission from the headmistress, Madame Carrey, to give lessons in singing, solfège and elementary harmony to some of the more functional patients. This was a great success, with the result that he decided to produce a musical comedy in which they could participate. The comedy he chose was a vaudeville by Scribe and Saintine called L'Ours et le Pacha, to which he wrote new music replacing the traditional tunes of Caveau. The production was modest, with sets and costumes designed by staff and inmates and a ten-piece orchestra consisting of doctors, attendants and other amateurs. Hervé conducted at the piano and occasionally entered a scene as a character to help out. The production was such a success that he continued to put on small productions at the Bicêtre hospital and also took acting roles in several theaters on the outskirts of Paris.

Hervé's duties at Bicêtre came to an end in 1845, when he received the post of organist at Saint-Eustache. He kept this post for eight years and continued to play at various churches throughout his life. He wrote several sacred compositions, primarily for Saint-Eustache, that included two short masses and various hymns and canticles.

Hervé's desire to write for the stage prompted him to adopt a pseudonym. This decision was the result of urging from friends who
thought Ronger (which means to pick at) a rather peculiar name for a man of the theater. In addition, he wished to avoid losing his job at the church while composing for the stage; so he took the name Hervé. Later, he wrote several works under two other pseudonyms, Jules Brémont and Louis Heffer, but most of his stage works were written under the name Hervé.

Between 1847 and 1854, Hervé obtained his first important opportunities in the theater. In 1847, Désiré, who later played the part of Jupiter in Offenbach's Orphée aux Enfers, asked Hervé to write a short one-act playlet for two characters to be performed for a benefit ball at the Montmartre Theater. The result of this commission was Don Quichotte et Sancho Pança, an apt choice as Désiré was short and fat and Hervé, who played opposite him, tall and thin. The piece, described as a grotesque tableau in one act (the word "opérette" was not yet in use), was a sentimental romance filled with broad farce and lively music. Adolphe Adam subsequently engaged it as part of the 1848 season at his National Opera, with Joseph Kelm playing the role of Sancho Pança.

Although the Revolution of 1848 disrupted the routine of many theaters, Don Quichotte et Sancho Pança managed to find numerous performances. Its success was long-lived and several of the numbers that had become "hits" were performed in vaudevilles and revues of the period. Louis Schneider considers this piece the first real "operetta."

Hervé's next opportunities came as musical director at the Odéon Theater, and in 1850 at the Palais-Royal. At the Odéon, he encountered opposition to his light, farcical works because the theater had been traditionally the home of large, historical, romantic drama and Italian

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Schneider, p. 15.
operas. His first work at the Odeon, *Les Gardes françaises*, produced in 1849, was a gay piece in which Hervé played the part of a country yokel. The musical plans for two further works were not used; *Parisien en voyage* consisted of a five-act, twenty-tableau revue, and *Une Nuit blanche*, a sketch that parodied the black despot of Haiti, Faustin I, and his court, contained a satire of the Prince-president Louis Napoléon.

At the Palais-Royal Hervé produced a fantasy for which he wrote both words and music, *Passiflor et Cactus*, and two more one-acts, *L'Enseignement* and the parody *Roméo et Mariette*. The most significant work of this period came out in 1853. *Les Folies dramatiques*, the joint effort of Dumanoir, Clairville and Hervé, was an attempt to parody all the leading theatrical genres then popular, the comédie, vaudeville, drame, tragédie, ballet and Italian opera. Hervé's act on Italian opera, entitled *Gargouillada*, was particularly successful. The comedians of the Palais-Royal mimicked the mannerisms of leading singers of the opera, who were notorious for their meagre acting abilities. The subject was burlesqued by assigning gestures that would directly counter the sense of the text; for example, the soloists and chorus remained completely immobile at the most dramatic moments. The text of Dumanoir and Clairville was a crazy mixture of French and Italian. News of the piece spread and the Count de Morny viewed a rehearsal. At his request, *Les Folies dramatiques* was premiered on March 1, 1853 for the imperial family and court at the Tuilleries. As a result of its success Hervé obtained a license to open his own theater.

The next phase of his career centered around the activities in this theater. Hervé chose the Folies-Mayer, which had been previously run as a hall for dances and café-concerts. After a remodeling, it was reopened
in 1854 as the Folies Concertantes and in 1855 was changed to the Folies Nouvelles. Under the terms of his license, Hervé was permitted to write one-act comedies with two speaking characters. Restrictions on genre and the number of theaters allowed to open had been in effect since the reforms of Napoléon I in 1806.

Hervé, like Offenbach and others, worked around the restrictions. For instance, Un Drame en 1779 contained a singing corpse, and in Agamemnon ou le Chameau à deux bosses (Agamemnon, or the Camel with two humps) the required chorus of soldiers was painted on the backdrop and the real chorus sang behind it. The speed with which Hervé turned out works for the Folies Nouvelles exceeded the speed of the prolific Offenbach. In the next two years, 1854-6, Hervé produced approximately fifty of his own bouffes and pantomimes. Many of the bouffes contained texts by the composer. The best works of this period include Vadé au Cabaret, le Compositeur toqué, la Fine Fleur de l'Andalousie, la Perle de l'Alsace and la Belle Espagnole. He also premiered the works of other composers, notably Delibes' Deux sous de charbon (1855) and Offenbach's Oyayeye ou la Reine des iles, a piece in one act about a double bass player captured by cannibals. Hervé's duties as manager, composer and musical director were augmented by his activities as a performer. He was evidently quite appealing as a performer, good-looking, with a light tenor voice, which was adequate but not pretty, and a clear speaking voice that could deliver the most incomprehensible lines in a cool and imperturbable way.

His feverish activity at the Folies Nouvelles took its toll, and in 1856 illness forced him to resign his management of the theater. The fortunes of Offenbach had risen by that time, and from 1855 until 1867 his works overshadowed those of every other contemporary operetta composer.
During these years Hervé was engaged in many different enterprises. In 1857, he went on tour with Joseph Kelm to present his repertoire in the provinces. Kelm, a life-long friend, was an accomplished singer as well as a fine comedian. He possessed a lovely tenor voice and sang at the Opéra-Comique and the Renaissance theaters where he created the rôle of Gilbert in *Lucie de Lammermoor*. His real fame, though, was achieved as a chansonnette singer. While in the provinces, Hervé also performed light tenor roles from *Pré-aux-Clercs*, *Mousquetaires de la Reine* and *Lucie de Lammermoor*.

After his return from the provinces, Hervé became director at the Délassesments-Comiques, a garish little theater which produced mainly fantasies. This was followed by engagements at the Palais-Royal and the Théâtre des Variétés, whose managers, the Coigniard brothers, commissioned several operettas. The best of these works, *Le Joueur de flûte*, portrayed a more serious fantasy with text by Moinaux. It received approximately 100 performances and was favorably reviewed. Hervé also appeared as conductor, composer and performer at the Porte Saint-Martin and at the Eldorado, a theater for café-concert entertainments, for which he wrote songs for the leading chansonnette singers (Teresa and others), skits, and dance music. In the midst of all this activity, he made a trip to Cairo with his son where he served as director of a small theater and conducted open air concerts.

In 1866, Hervé followed Offenbach’s example and expanded his one- and two-act operettas to three and four acts. Beginning with *Les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde*, he turned out several of his most popular opéra-bouffes, *L’œil crevé*, *Chilpéric* and *Le petit Faust*. *L’œil crevé* contained a farcical text by Hervé and received an illustrious audience.
of ministers and journalists. It reached over 300 performances, and the reason for its success rests in part on the score, which contains several delightful tunes and quadrilles. Chilperic also contains a libretto by Hervé. It was an historical parody on a mythological king, and, although it did not reach many performances in France, its popularity with the Prince of Wales encouraged Hervé to produce it in 1870 along with **Le petit Faust** at the Lyceum theater in London.

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**Le petit Faust** first appeared on April 23, 1869 at the Folies-Dramatiques, and in the months that followed it received very favorable reviews in the press. M. Jouvin in *Le Figaro* praised both the score and the libretto, singling out the ballad of the "Four Seasons" as perhaps the best number in the score. It was filled with so many pleasant tunes that shortly after the opening the editors of the *Ménestrel* printed and sold copies of the overture waltz, Valentin's couplet, Méphistos' rondo and several other numbers. Hervé himself led the cast as Faust, with Mlle. Van-Ghel as Méphisto, M. Milher as Valentin and Blanche d'Antigny as Marguerite. The first production of **Le petit Faust** was very stylish and the score provided several numbers for chorus girls and colorful dancing crowds such as the finale to Act I, the ensemble of the "Three Choirs," the 'Waltz of the Nations" and the "Bacchanale."

The London production of 1870 was close to the scale of the original, but considerable changes were made in the score by H. B. Farnie, who adapted

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3 Schneider, p. 65.

4 *Le Figaro*, April 26, 1869, p. 2.

5 *Le Figaro*, May 1, 1869, p. 3.
and translated it into English.

...the guarantee given by Faust's friends of the attractions of his young bride, to say nothing of the avowal made to her husband by the just-wedded Marguerite, would have, doubtless, proved too highly spiced for the simple palate of an English theatrical audience. But we fail to see any reason for the wholesale changes introduced by Mr. Farnie. Many new characters are employed, some being quite unnecessary; many harmless and amusing incidents are left out; many others, apparently uncalled for, brought in; while several pieces of music are made to change places without any obvious design.  

The next revival took place at the Port Saint-Martin in Paris, 1882. The changes to the original version were not as extensive as those for the London revival. Besides the expanded character of Siebal, two ballets were added. One concerned the struggle between wine and beer. ("Wine or beer, beer or wine," are the opening lines to the Kermesse scene of Gounod's Faust.) Edmond Stouliig in Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique, 1882, describes the ballet as a frenetic galop in which sixteen female dancers are dressed in delicious ruby costumes adorned with clusters of golden grapes. The second ballet was entitled "The Procession of the Seven Capital Sins."

Three more revivals were presented: in 1890 at the Port Saint-Martin under the direction of Duquesnel, in 1897 at the Variétés and in 1907 at the Folies-Dramatiques.

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6The Daily Telegraph, April 20, 1870, p. 3.


8Schneider, pp. 84-5.
Hervé's association with London theaters begun by Le petit Faust lasted until the end of his life. From 1870 until his death in 1892, Hervé divided his time between Paris and London. He produced about one operetta a year and still relied heavily on the element of farce in his works, although the public taste was changing in favor of a more serious, sentimental type of operetta. Many of Hervé's late works would more aptly be described as vaudeville and were written with the talents of Anna Judic, the famous café-concert singer and vaudeville artist, in mind.

One of the best of the vaudevilles of this period, Mamzelle Nitouche, was presented at the Théâtre des Variétés in January 1883. It was a partially autobiographical piece centering on the life of a convent organist, Celestin, who leads a double life as an operetta composer, Floridor, and a young convent girl, Denise, who secretly aspires to become an actress and member of the demi-mondaine. It is the only work by Hervé which is occasionally performed today. In addition to writing vaudevilles, the composer became director of the Empire Theatre in London, an establishment similar to the Eldorado. The works of this last period also included a few ballets and a composition for the Promenade Concerts sponsored by Covent Garden. Hervé served as conductor of the concerts and composed a heroic symphony for chorus, soloists and orchestra entitled The Ashantee War.

**Style**

During the course of such an active and prolific career, certain stylistic features recur in the works of Hervé. Most commentators agree with Arthur Pougis's statement that Hervé's style changed very little.9

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This can be seen in his sense of humour as well as his music.

Hervé's comedy is usually highly farcical, even more so than Offenbach's. His eccentric plots are full of 'cock-and-bull' stories and he was particularly fond of using stretches of confusing conversation for their comic effect. He believed that it was better for the music and the text to come from the same source because the genre required a special kind of prosody that very few librettists understood.¹⁰ As a result, he wrote many of his own libretti, most of which were not successful. Many critics like Théodore de Banville thought Hervé a great clown; there were others, especially the dramatist and Wagnerite Catulle Mendès, who held a different view. In L'Art au Théâtre, Mendès claimed that Hervé's texts conformed too strictly to the rules of vaudeville. He added that Hervé attempted to make the audience believe that his humour was spontaneous; it was not really fanciful, however, but a premeditated, studied kind of insanity bereft of the genius of parody.¹¹ Still others felt that Hervé spread himself too thin in composing both score and libretto.¹²

His music seems to support this statement, and it must be admitted as well that Hervé's musical abilities were uneven. I will include a brief analysis of Le petit Faust here to illustrate Hervé's general style.

Le petit Faust, like all opéra-bouffes, contains spoken dialogue. It is constructed in three acts with twenty-four musical numbers, and the

¹⁰Schneider, p. 52.


¹²Schneider, p. 68.
numbers fall into several different categories. The first category constitutes purely instrumental music. The score's opening overture contains several waltz tunes that appear later in the opéra-bouffe in the "Waltz of the Nations" (exs. 1-3).\textsuperscript{13}

Ex. 1

Ex. 2

Ex. 3

The third waltz tune is not Hervé's own but rather a popular air entitled "The Carnival of Venice." Other instrumental pieces include the introductions

\textsuperscript{13}Hervé, \textit{Le petit Faust}, words by Hector Crémieux and Jaime Fils, piano-vocal score (Paris: Heugel, 1869), pp. 2-4. All other examples in this paper will be quoted from the same source.
to Acts II and III, a polka and the music of the soldiers' chorus respectively, which also recur elsewhere in the score. Several scenes contain short instrumental passages that describe some physical action; the passages are usually between four and twelve measures and demonstrate Hervé's fondness for pantomime. Unfortunately most of these passages become repetitious because they invariably outline a dominant seventh or a V-I progression. Only one scene is set entirely to music, "The Duel Scene," and this contrasts with Offenbach's practice of including several lengthy melodramas in his opéra-bouffe scores.

The second category, vocal solo and ensemble pieces, makes use of forms that contain small-scale repetition schemes, such as waltzes, polkas, romances, couplets, cancans and a very popular song form at the time, the tyrolienne, which was often used to parody German culture. This last form was similar to the ländler, outlining dotted rhythms and displaying a vocal line of wide skips executed in a yodeling manner on nonsense syllables. A very funny example of a tyrolienne is the "Trio du Vaterland," on page 106 (ex. 4).

Ex. 4
The last category covers those pieces that display a through-composed format such as No. 18, "The Duel Scene," and the trio of No. 23 (this number contains a few repetitions of individual lines). Other numbers that exhibit an overall repetition plan, the strophic "Air of Faust," No. 12, and the "Trio du Vaterland," No. 16, become varied
through the addition of passages of recitative.

The orchestration is simple but adequate and never obtrusive. The winds provide obbligato passages and frequently double the voice lines, and they are also employed to present the numerous dance themes throughout the score. The most elaborate wind solo in the score is this variation for flute in the introduction to Act II, page 63 (ex. 5).

Ex. 5

The orchestral accompaniments are so frequently broken-chord, "bompah," arrangements outlining the same harmonies, that they become tedious. Gervase Hughes' comment that many of Hervé's accompaniments are fatuous is amply supported by this score. In addition, some

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14 Hughes, p. 72.
part-writing is very weak. The duo of No. 5 displays directionless stretches and repeated intervals of a fourth (ex. 6, page 39).

Ex. 6
To do justice to the score, however, it is necessary to mention an "idylle" like 'The Four Seasons,' which exhibits some harmonic interest (ex. 7).

Ex. 7

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L'Éternité? Quatre saisons!
Quatre saisons?—Écoute!

N° 15.

LES QUATRE SAISONS.

IDYLLE.

MÉPHISTO.

PIANO.

Moderato.

mystérieusement.

Dans l'ombre d'un rêve

Moderato.

le-ve-Prin-temps de l'a-

la voit un jour, Soleil qui se levé-

rinf:

dim.

-mour. Le rêve se change en réa-

Hautb.

Dans
This short analysis of Hervé's *Le petit Faust* reveals far more weaknesses than strengths in the composer's style. He was gifted melodically, which is demonstrated not only in the score of *Le petit Faust*, but in two other bouffes, *L'oeil crevé* and *Chilperic*. Hervé was capable of writing graceful and even saucy melodies, but more often than Offenbach he lapsed into the common and trivial.

Hervé's simple, energetic rhythms, based almost exclusively on dance forms, are also a delightful quality in his work, but his harmonic vocabulary is limited and often bland, hovering around IV, V and I chords. Arthur Pougin presents a cogent analysis of Hervé's style by describing his ideas as short, elegant and well-suited to the short musical sketches he produced earlier in his career. His knowledge of form was inadequate with the result that he was incapable of developing his ideas for a larger framework. His ambition exceeded his artistic training, and he neglected to acquire the skills he lacked; therefore his music remained "musiquette."\(^{15}\)

Despite musical inadequacies, the parodies of Hervé reflect prevalent procedures of opéra-bouffe parody. These procedures are mixed with Hervé's own individual contributions.

\(^{15}\)Fétis, pp. 469-70.
CHAPTER V
PARODY IN THE SCORE AND LIBRETTO
OF LE PETIT FAUST

In this last section of the study I will examine the parody in Le petit Faust as it occurs in both music and libretto concurrently on four different subjects: the parody of Gounod's Faust, the parody of Goethe's Faust, the satire of political and social issues and the parody of operatic conventions.

Parody in the Libretto

Much of the success of Le petit Faust derived from the efforts of its two librettists, Hector Crémieux (1828-1892) and Adolphe Jaime (1824-1901). Both men wrote numerous vaudevilles, dramas, comedies and operetta librettos, alone and in collaboration with various other writers. Crémieux's fame was the product of his work with Ludovic Halévy on Orphée aux Enfers, for most of which Crémieux is responsible, and the majority of his operetta librettos were set by Offenbach or Hervé. Jaime's works received musical scores from Offenbach, Delibes, Hervé and Paul Vasseur, and, in addition to pieces for the stage, he wrote several novels.

The parody in Le petit Faust can be identified on the first three of the previously mentioned subjects by briefly discussing the plot and characters. A table of examples of parody follows this discussion. The libretto is divided into three acts and four tableaux and each act confines itself to one locale. Act I takes place in a schoolroom, Act II in the Forget-me-not Park, Act III in a bridal chamber and the last
tableaux occurs after Act III in the Devil's Palace.

The opéra-bouffe begins in Faust's classroom at a boarding school. His students are restless and uninterested in their teacher's lessons on anatomy, Nostradamus and the microcosm. Hervé's Faust is a frustrated and puritanical old teacher, whereas Goethe's Faust experiences disillusionment not through the inattention of his students, but because he feels his learning useless in answering the riddles of life. The first two scenes of Le petit Faust are written in quick one-line exchanges with frequent references to the importance of appearances in the makeup of the social mores of Second Empire society.

(At the moment of the dispute, Aglaé [a girl] goes over to the boys' bench, and stands between Siebel and Altmayer.)

Faust. Silence! To your places. We shall simply study the mysterious book of Nostradamus. (To Aglaé) What are you doing there, you? why are you on the boys' side?

Aglaé. I don't know. It's natural.

Faust. It's natural! (To the Public) evidently it's natural, absolutely and divinely it's natural, but socially I cannot support it. (He takes up the cat o' nine tails.)

Ah! it's natural is it! (Aglaé runs away.) Aglaé, here!

The next scenes contain the soldiers' chorus which spoofs the soldiers' chorus of Gounod's Faust, with its hollow praise for the glories of war and a military career. The verse of Crémieux and Jaime makes the soldiers look extremely ludicrous and their careers rather empty. Valentin, the brother of Marguerite, will soon leave with the regiment and must find a place to leave his sister. Unlike Gounod's Valentin, the opéra-bouffe character is not particularly devoted to his sister and does not hold an idealized view of her virtue. He decides to leave her in the care of

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1Hector Crémieux and Adolphe Jaime, Jr., Le petit Faust, music by Hervé, libretto in French and English (New York: Metropolitan Printing and Engraving Establishment, 1870), p. 5.
Faust at the boarding school, but gives Faust a stern warning regarding any violation of her virtue, for appearance's sake. Marguerite describes her own virtue in the couplet "Fleur de candeur," and it is apparent that, far from the virtuous, naive Marguerite of Goethe and Gounod, this Marguerite is a cocotte. The view portrayed in the parody is that women are either virtuous and chaste or not, an attitude that is centuries old, and the last lines of the third scene reveal the real double standards at work in the society. Here woman is looked upon as a chattel.

Valentine. I shall put her to board with you. How much do you charge?
Faust. Does she eat much?
Valentine. Some days; that depends on her appetite.
Faust. And she has no—defects?
Valentine. A girl—one can't know.
Faust. How old is she? You know the rule.
Valentine. Sixteen and a half; but she is well formed.
Faust. Has she ever been at school?
Valentine. Oh! at the Mutual.
Faust. Does she know a little of astronomy?
Valentine. I think not. Some times she looks up in the air. I don't know if it is to see the moon.²

In scene five, Marguerite causes a disturbance and must be disciplined by Faust. Corporal punishment with the cat-o'-nine-tails is in order, but Faust finds he cannot punish her because he has become aroused by her beauty. This scene and the comic monologue that follows reveal Faust as a sexually repressed old man who regards sex as synonymous with the Devil.

The Devil, called Méphisto and played by a woman, appears and tempts Faust with the prospect of gaining the favors of Marguerite, in addition to obtaining youth and wealth. Méphisto is a cross between Gounod's wicked panderer and Goethe's witty character. This spirit collects souls through the small-scale wickedness of adultery, "convinced that a fool

²Crémieux and Jaime, p. 9.
is worth more than a villain. Méphisto acts as a counter-figure to Faust, as in Goethe's drama, but Faust in the opéra-bouffe is a stupid fool, which makes Méphisto's wit that much funnier. Faust becomes a mouthpiece for social conventions; Méphisto sounds out the realities beneath the conventions. Scene six closes with a spoof on the pact between Faust and Méphisto and some typically caustic remarks concerning society.

Méphisto. What do you offer me, as I have given you the desire, to give you the power.
Faust. What power?
Méphisto. That of being happy; that is to say, youth and beauty.
Faust. Youth!—beauty!—let's see. Will you take my stills? my old books? do you want my class of adults? will you have my monitors?
Méphisto. I am a generous prince. I want nothing but the crimes you commit.
Faust (aside). Crimes! he will be robbed. (Loud.) All right, your paper.
Méphisto. What paper?
Faust. The contract the devil always has signed.
Méphisto. An old game. In other times it was good; to-day everybody gives themselves [sic] to the devil without papers.

The rest of Act I contains a merry galop danced by Marguerite and the other scholars, 'Vive l'amour.' They are in open revolt, but not the same revolt as the Gods of Olympus in Offenbach's Orphée aux Enfers. The students wish only to indulge themselves in gay amusements akin to those the society of the Second Empire used for escape.

Act II begins with a delightful parody of Gounod's opening chorus at the Kermesse, which comes from Goethe's scene "Before the Gate."
Goethe's scene outlines an Easter celebration and Gounod's scene a carnival, but the participants are basically the same, burghers, students, maidens,

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3Crémieux and Jaime, p. 14.
4Ibid., p. 15.
soldiers, in a 16th-century German town. The action in Le petit Faust takes place in Forget-me-not Park, a place patterned after the Nabille, the site of a fashionable outdoor ball that most foreigners frequented in Paris. Hervé's Faust describes it as "a deplorable place of amusement, where married men who fly from their wives, look for distractions. Where married women who shun their husbands, find shame and dishonor." The characters of the three choirs that open this scene come straight from the boulevards and consist of cocottes, rich old men and students.

The next few scenes parody the life of the cocotte. All the former female students of Faust at the boarding school have run away to live lives of pleasure, and Méphisto now seeks their help to divert the unhappy Faust, who has been unsuccessful in locating Marguerite. Many of these former students, both male and female, carry the names of various characters from Goethe's Faust, such as Siebel, Lischen, Brander, Altmayer and Wagner. The female students agree to help Méphisto when they find out that Faust is rich. Their efforts fail, however, and Faust almost gives up hope of finding Marguerite when she arrives with an entourage, singing and dancing the cancan.

Lisette. She comes from London, where she has been to teach the Islanders the national dance of France.
Aglaé. She has in her train an escort of Anglo-Saxons.
Lisette. Do you know why she is called Marguerite the washwoman?
Aglaé. It is because she has rinsed those gentlemen, probably.6

The following is an excerpt from the cancan where Marguerite expresses the mood of many during the 1850's and 60's.

5Crémieux and Jaime, pp. 25-6.
6Ibid., pp. 21-2.
I am queen, don't be displeased,
I've travelled far, o'er lands and seas,
The dance Strauss, each winter leads,
Is eminently French.
Ask Mr. Prudhomme
What he thinks of my talents,
He will answer you: that on the whole,
My dance is the sign of the times.

(Spoken.) Well! what a sign of the times, certainly! The
can-can is the barometer of ridicule. I ridicule everything,
and myself first.

Pif! Paf! Pan!
Etc., etc., 7

Méphisto takes Marguerite aside and explains that there is a rich cocodes
(male cocotte) who adores her. She agrees to meet him. As Faust's last
wish, Méphisto presents Marguerite to him. There is a direct quotation
of lines from Gounod (the music to these lines is also used), "Ne
permettrez-vous pas,"8 and the couple falls into each other's arms singing
a tyrolienne. Parodies of German nationalism were very popular at this
time; barely a year later, 1870, France was at war with Germany. The
first verse of this love duet indicates the French attitude.

Liebe, liebe Freundin!
Ich bin mit dir! ich bin!
Trou la la, la la, vaterland, 8 vaterland!

Überall vo Wir sind
Da ist das Vaterland!
Trou la la, la la, Vaterland, 8 Vaterland!9

The scene ends with Faust and Marguerite deciding to run off together.

Faust goes to find a coach and chances upon one which is carrying
Valentin home from the wars. When Valentin sees that his sister is

7Crémieux and Jaime, p. 22.

8Charles Gounod, Margarete (Faust), critical new edition by Fritz

9Dear, dear friend! I am united with you! Tra la la, fatherland,
oh fatherland! Everywhere we are, that is the fatherland! In Crémieux
and Jaime, p. 24.
running away with Faust, he challenges Faust to a duel. Valentin has a short, incoherent monologue in which Clotaire VIII and a soldier's honor are mentioned, and then he draws his sword. Everyone is on stage for the duel, contrary to the scenes in Gounod and Goethe. Valentin's death is treated humorously, for he becomes the victim of a silly trick called the snuff-box thrust.

Méphisto. (To a bye-stander as the combat goes on.)
Do you know the snuff-box thrust?
Altmayer. No, but I am curious to know it.
Méphisto. I is very simple, when you have a spite against any one you take advantage of a duel, like this one, you approach him politely and say to him—(he approaches Valentine) Sir, do you sniff?
Valentine. (Stopping.) With pleasure. (He takes a pinch of snuff, at which time Faust gives him a tremendous sword-thrust.)
Méphisto. That's it. The trick is finished. (Valentine falls.)
All. Ah! Bravo! 10

As he lies dying, Valentin gives his sister Marguerite advice concerning the vices of men, saying that when a girl is young and pretty she is sought after, but when she becomes old she is left lonely. The chorus responds sarcastically:

Chorus. Oh, great truths! Brilliant precepts! The veil is torn away from the eyes of the dying!
Valentine. (Spoken) Ah, I do not know what I feel.
I think it is a need of change of air.
Thus as all things commence, all must end,
I am going to find Monsieur Palisse. (He sneezes and falls.) 11

Monsieur de la Palisse was famous for his truisms and a popular song grew up around him called la Palissade.

The entire last scene of this act can be seen as a giant spoof on

10Cremieux and Jaime, p. 29.
11Ibid.
Gounod's death scene and on the death scenes of many romantic operas. As Faust and Marguerite leave in the coach, the chorus dances a wild gallop into which they drag Valentin. Valentin resumes his position on the floor after the dance is concluded. This practice of making light the subject of death was common in opéra-bouffe (recall the singing corpse mentioned in Un Drame en 1779, for example).

The last act takes place in a bridal chamber. Faust and Marguerite have just been married and Marguerite sits alone at the spinning wheel dressed in what is described as the "traditional costume of Goethe's Marguerite, in white."12 She uses the spinning wheel rather clumsily and remarks that she prefers the sewing machine, which was a relatively new invention, and then takes up the ballad of the King of Thuné, a vulgar parody of the simple ballad of the King of Thule in Goethe and in Gounod.

A chorus of young maids and men arrives to fulfill a custom to take Marguerite's bridal bouquet and bring Faust a big tureen of wine soup. Méphisto, disguised as a student, sings a song of congratulations to Faust on behalf of the young men of the city.

Without considering her gentleness
She possesses to a charm
Qualities of tenderness.
That each one of us know,
Marguerite, it is notorious,
Has a heart very generous,
Friend, you may believe us,
You will be a happy man!13

The ghost of Valentin angrily tells Marguerite that Faust has gained his wealth from the Devil. Faust replies that he has given away all his

12Crémieux and Jaime, p. 30.
13Ibid., p. 32.
money in order to be worthy of Marguerite. Marguerite, robbed of the wealth and position she hoped for, rejects Faust and runs away with the ghost of her brother. Valentin proclaims her saved, while Faust moans he is lost. The line "she is saved" occurs in the prison scene of both Goethe and Gounod and comes from heavenly voices before Marguerite is taken by angels to her salvation. The line in Goethe constitutes one of his most important statements of optimism concerning the forces of good and evil.

The final scene takes place in the Devil's Palace, where Mephisto conducts a ball for the Capital Sins and the Daughters of Hell. The figure of Musard seems appropriate in place of Méphisto for this cancan.

Laugh! dance! some day all will finish!
At the rate that virtue goes in the world,
The time is near when Satan will say to you
Rest yourselves, there is nothing more to do.
It is I who give the signal,
Demons in a drunken folly,
Room for the farandoles,
It is Mephisto who conducts the ball.14

The scene ends when Faust and Marguerite are summoned by Mephisto and condemned to stay with each other and dance through eternity.

From this discussion of the libretto of Le petit Faust it is apparent that Crémieux and Jaime do not follow closely the story line of Barbier and Carré or Goethe, but use isolated episodes and the rôles of the characters as sources of parody. The transformation of the characters is particularly interesting, in view of the changes made by Gounod's librettists for their version of the Goethe drama. The complex, noble figure of Goethe's Faust becomes almost a secondary character to Marguerite in Gounod's opera. He provides a love interest to the story, but little

14Crémieux and Jaime, p. 38.
else. The opéra-bouffe exaggerates the erotic side of the Faust character, which was emphasized by Gounod’s librettists, but also ridicules the scholar of Goethe. Instead of appearing to be in control of his destiny, he is portrayed as a complete fool, the only such character in the story. For Marguerite the situation is entirely reversed. She now becomes the deceiver rather than the deceived, a delightful change, although her character is a bit vulgar. Méphisto represents perhaps the most successful use of character. The opéra-bouffe devil retains the rôle of panderer found in Gounod’s opera and possesses some of the marvelous ironic humour of Goethe’s Mephistopheles.

In addition to the parody of Goethe and Gounod, the libretto is permeated with references to political personalities and social attitudes. The setting of the Faust story provides a screen behind which the real purpose of the burlesque functions. In this way Le petit Faust conforms to the practices discussed in chapter three for the opéra-bouffe.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act 1 classroom</th>
<th>Hervé’s Le petit Faust</th>
<th>Goethe’s Faust</th>
<th>Gounod’s Faust</th>
<th>Political and Social Parody</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scenes 1,2</td>
<td>Students bored with Faust’s lessons on anatomy, Nostradamus and microcosm. Faust is pedantic old teacher and philosopher, not a magician.</td>
<td>Faust is respected scholar and magician (episode 1, p. 93), evokes Spirits of the macrocosm and the earth (episode 1, pp. 97-105)</td>
<td>Students of Hervé’s Faust are prototypes of the fun-loving elite of Second Empire society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 3</td>
<td>Soldiers’ chorus, called ‘Valentin’s Warriors’</td>
<td>Soldiers’ chorus, Act III, scene 4</td>
<td>Makes fun of the pomposity of the French military and the martial spirit encouraged by Napoléon III</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 4</td>
<td>Valentin shows mock concern for sister Marguerite. Marguerite describes herself as a cocotte</td>
<td>Margarete is a pious, virtuous young girl (episode 7, pp. 257-263)</td>
<td>Valentin’s mock concern spoofs the importance of maintaining a front of respectability in society</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 5</td>
<td>Faust sexually aroused by Marguerite, feels guilty about it</td>
<td>Faust exhibits uninhibited sexual desires</td>
<td>Faust exhibits uninhibited sexual desires</td>
<td>Faust is a victim of traditional social values regarding sex, sex is sinful</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Scene 6</th>
<th>Hervé's <em>Le petit Faust</em></th>
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<th>Political and Social Parody</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Méphisto captures souls through adultery, makes a verbal pact with Faust</td>
<td>Mephistopheles captures souls through any means, requires Faust to sign a pact in blood (Episode 4, p. 185)</td>
<td>Mephistopheles is more a matchmaker although he engages in other forms of magic, requires Faust to sign pact in ink (Act 1, scene 2)</td>
<td>Méphisto's pact with Faust is a satire on the ease of engaging in corruption such as financial speculation and adultery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Scene 7 | Students rebel against dullness of school, sing and dance cancan, 'Vive l'amour' | 'Vive l'amour' is parody on frivolity of society and its flight from responsibility |

| Act 2 Forget-me-not-park Scene 1 | Chorus of the "Three Choirs," Méphisto's Song of the Flea | "Before the City Gate" (episode 2, p. 125) Mephistopheles' Song of the Flea, political allusions, pp. 127, 193, 209 | Chorus at the Kermesse 'Vin ou biere' (Act 1, scene 5) | Characters in 'The Three Choirs' are types from the Paris boulevards Song of the Flea—satire on Napoléon III and corruption at court |

| Scene 2, 3, 4, 5 | Cocottes help Méphisto, Marguerite is the most successful cocotte of all | Description of the Second Empire courtesan and her interest in money and social position |

<p>| Scene 6 | Meeting between Faust and Marguerite, the 'Trio du Vaterland' love duet | First meeting of Faust and Marguerite, she rejects Faust's advances (episode 7, p. 257) | First meeting, Marguerite rejects Faust's advances (recitative from Waltz, Act 1, scene 7, pp. 77) | &quot;Trio du Vaterland,&quot; parody of German nationalism |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene/Act/Scene</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scene 7,8</td>
<td>Duel between Faust and Valentín, Méphisto uses the &quot;snuff box thrust&quot; trick on Valentín, Valentín dances galop and dies</td>
<td>Duel between Faust and Valentín, Méphisto makes Valentín's arm lame, Valentín dies (episode 19, p. 43)</td>
<td>Duel, Méphisto makes Valentín's arm lame, Valentín dies (Act 3, scenes 8 and 9)</td>
<td>Duel Scene is a spoof on the melodramatic death scenes found in the 19th century theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 3 Bridal Chamber Scene I</td>
<td>Marguerite sings vulgar &quot;Ballad of the King of Thuné&quot; dressed in the chaste white costume of Goethe's Gretchen</td>
<td>Margarete (Gretchen) sings folk song &quot;Ballad of the King of Thulé&quot; (episode 8, pp. 269-271)</td>
<td>Marguerite sings folk song &quot;Ballad of the King of Thulé&quot; of Napoléon III (Act 2, scene 6, p. 105)</td>
<td>&quot;Ballad of the King&quot; of Thuné&quot; is parody of &quot;Ballad of the King of Thulé&quot; of Napoléon III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 3</td>
<td>Adolphe's couplet</td>
<td>Méphisto sings an insulting serenade beneath Margarete's window (episode 19, p. 347)</td>
<td>Méphisto sings an insulting serenade to Marguerite (Act 3, scene 7, p. 196)</td>
<td>Adolphe's couplet hints at Marguerite's true profession as a cocotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 5</td>
<td>Faust gives away all his money, Marguerite leaves Faust, ghost of Valentín proclaims his sister saved</td>
<td>Margarete rejects Faust and Méphisto, angels proclaim her soul saved, (Dungeon scene, p. 421)</td>
<td>Margarete rejects F. and N., angels proclaim her soul saved, (Apotheose, p. 269-70)</td>
<td>Marguerite is interested only in Faust's money, she wishes to be saved from a dull marriage, would rather be cocotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tableau 4 Ball at the</td>
<td>Faust and Marguerite are condemned to stay married and dance through eternity</td>
<td>Walpurgis Night is scene of wild orgy in the heart of the Harz mountains, p. 359, both Faust and Margarete find salvation</td>
<td>Walpurgis Night Act 4, scene I Marguerite saved Faust lost</td>
<td>Walpurgis Night supports belief that social mores are irrevocable laws, theme found in many social dramas of the period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Musical Parody

Hervé's work also reflects techniques that were currently in use in the composition of opéra-bouffe and that were very successfully employed by Offenbach in particular: spoofs on real works and satire of general operatic procedures, using direct quotation or the travesty of a style. The musical parody of Le petit Faust takes these two approaches, using direct quotations from the score of Gounod's Faust and simulating a particular style through the use of contrasts or exaggerated mannerisms.

The first approach is centered almost exclusively around the parody of Gounod's opera. Hervé uses three quotations from Gounod. Two measures of the soldier's chorus, "Gloire immortelle de nos aieux," (ex. 8, p. 175), are ineffectually used to introduce Herve's number entitled 'Valentine's Warriors,'" (ex. 9, p. 18), and also as a comic introduction to Valentin's reprise in No. 22, (ex. 10, p. 152). The weakness of this parody stems from its predictability and lack of connection with the musical material around it.

Ex. 8
Another quotation comes from "The Grand Chorus of the Kermesse," (ex. 11, p. 34), and appears in Hervé's opéra-bouffe in the ensemble of "The Three Choirs," (ex. 12, p. 69). The first two measures of the Burghers' song are inserted into the song of the Old Men. Unlike the previous use of material from the soldiers chorus, Hervé manages to achieve the element of surprise in the song of the Old Men, producing a very comic effect.
Ex. 11

Bürger
nor Bourgeois pp

Nichts macht sonntags größeres Vergnügen,
Auz jours de di-manche et de fi-te,

Ex. 12

rull.
Clar:

fréquententres de moisi-sel-les, Nous vous vous pas-ser les gau-dins

rull.

The last quotation consists of two measures from the recitative "Ne permettrez-vous pas" of the waltz in Act I, (ex. 13, p. 77). These two measures are used in the recitative at the beginning of the "Trio du Vaterland" (ex. 14, p. 104).

Ex. 13

Faust (Margarete ansprechend, die die Bühne überquert)
(abordant Marguerite qui traverse la scène)

Gern hätte ich ge-wußt, o schönes ed-le Fräu-lein,
Ne permettrez-vous pas, ma bel-lo de-moi-sel-le,
Ex. 14

FAUST.

Ne permetrez pas, Charante de moissel le, Qu'ou vous off, fre la

There is one more type of direct quotation, which is not obtained from Gounod's opera. It serves as a political parody in the 'Waltz of the Nations.' Two well-known songs, an air from The Carnival of Venice and "God Save the Queen," are treated in a burlesque style (exs. 15 and 16, pp. 84-85. These two songs appear in a mock version of their original languages.

Ex. 15

ITALIENNES.

 Trouveras-tu l'onde da yo yo yo yo sonu Mara-


 ri-ta la per-la d'Ita-li-a Mara-
Ex. 16

ANGLAISES.

-paraissiez, belles divinités.

O Marga-

RET I AM, MARGA RET IS ma y-name is ma y-name; O Marga-

FAUST.

RET I AM, MARGA RET IS ma y-name La mienne, ne vous déplais-

MÉPHISTO:

N'était pas une anglaise. Peut-être dans ce groupe-là Retrou-

Cordes.
The more frequent approach to musical parody in Le petit Faust is found in the imitation of a style by mimicking or exaggerating its outstanding features, or by contrasting it with another style. Hervé chooses not only Gounod's Faust for parody but concerns himself with operatic conventions of all kinds.

The best examples of this sort of parody on Gounod's opera are No. 3, the couplet of "Valentine's Warriors," and No. 10, "The Three Choirs." In "Valentine's Warriors" Hervé has amusingly captured the same melodic and rhythmic contours of the Soldier's Chorus of Faust (ex. 17, pp. 18-19).

Ex. 17
VALENTIN, TENORS ET BASSES (à l'unisson)

(TOUS)

G de flute.

mf Vaillants guer-

-riers, sur la terre étrangère. Combat tre est un plai-

ss Tamb:

G. Caisse.

-sir! Les ennemis y mor dront la poussière,

Pour finir ils frappent du pied en disant en mesure: un! deux!

Et ça les f’ra mourir!

FIN.
The ensemble of "The Three Choirs" is arranged in the same fashion as Gounod's opening chorus at the Kermesse. Each group at the Habille, cocottes, old man and students, is presented with its own melody and the melodic lines and orchestral accompaniment make fun of the sequences and scalewise movement of Gounod's lines. In Gounod's work, the ending chorus forms five- and six-part polyphony at times, with one melodic line remaining intact and the others acting as counterpoints to it; but Hervé's much simpler chorus keeps all three melodic lines intact (ex. 18, pp. 66-73).

Ex. 18
ÉTUDIANTS (BASSES)

Ex. 18 (cont.)

Et nous soufflent nos belles.

Enfants de Cuivres.

Cordes.

l'Université.

Buvez, chantez, culottons nos pipes.

Et défendons

ici-pes!

Vivent la chope et
Ex. 18 (cont.)

la liberté!

Dessus.  

Ténors.  Co - co - tes de tous les Pa - ys

Basses.  Nous-nous som - mes les vieux no - geurs C'est

En - tants de l'Uni - ver - si - té, Bu - vons, chau -

guerre aux ma - ris! La - re - tes ou bi - che, Nous som - mes tou - jours l'esteu -

ne - tre bourse qui ré - ga - le, Nous mourons, é - ter -

tons, cu - lot - tons nos pi - pes, Et dé - feu -
Several other instances of parody should be mentioned. The "Complaint of the King of Thuné" outlines the opening motive of Gounod's "Song of the King of Thulé" and remains in the same key, Am. It is a short, fourteen-measure couplet repeated three times with a comic, dramatic cadenza at the end. The first theme of Marguerite's air 'Fleur de Candeur' contains a very graceful and wonderfully flexible melody in the manner of Gounod, though the accompaniment is rather bland. No. 2 and No. 5, part 1, also mimick melodic contours and even cadences from Faust (ex. 19, Gounod's Faust page 8 and Herve's Le petit Faust pages 15, 16 and 35).

Ex. 19a

Da-sein, durch ihn meistre ich selbst mein Los!
va-ge, Le seul maître de mon des-tin!

Ex. 19b

(ergiebt den Inhalt des Flüschen in eine Kristallschale. Als er sie an den Mund führen will, lässt sich von draussen der Gesang junger Mädchen vernehmen.)
(II verse le contenu de la fiole dans une coupe en cristal. Au moment où il va porter la coupe à ses lèvres, des voix de jeunes filles se font entendre au dehors.)

(Point d'orgue comique et à la Coda la 2e fois.)
ment Te faire le cours du mi.
J'ai

vrais je révéle

vous sauriez

Aucune

Basson.

ECOLIERES.

Grâ ce! Grâ ce! grâ ce!

Pour remercier le cadavre!

Votre in-grait-de-mé
Ex. 19 (cont.)

plus lent.

l'auge! Mon cœur s'agit dans mon sein — Et l'arme

Moderato. LES ÉCOLIERS.

tombe de ma main! — Son cœur s'agit dans son sein Et

Moderato.

FAUST. presséz.

l'arme tombe de sa main. — Sortez tous, sortez, mes eu-
'The Duel Scene' is an amusing travesty of its counterpart in Faust.

The soloists carry on the action in serious declamatory exchanges, while the chorus punctuates these with gay, satirical remarks. Valentin's vocal line during his dying speech to Marguerite is full of repeated notes and dotted rhythms, and both he and Marguerite sing a motive that resembles the 'Marguerite, Sois maudite' motive in Gounod's scene. The motive consists of an upward skip of a second followed by a descending interval (ex. 20, Gounod, pp. 218-19; Herve, pp. 118-121).

Ex. 20
Ex. 20 (cont.)

V.

geh zur Hölle! Dort wird dir Lohn
Sois maudite! La mort t'inténd

cresc. ff dim. pp

V.

für böse Tat, ich sterbe durch dich, doch als brave Soli
sur ton grabbat! Moi, fumeurs de ta main... et je tombe en sol-

(or stirbt)
(l'expire)

V.

dat... dat. CHOR Sopran
Herr, nimm in Gnad den ihn auf und vergib ihm die Schuld!
Tenor Que le Seigneur ait son âme et pardonne au pécheur.

Herr, nimm in Gnad den ihn auf und vergib ihm die Schuld!
CHŒUR Bajo Que le Seigneur ait son âme et pardonne au pécheur.

Adagio Andante

Andante
Ex. 20 (cont.)

VALENTIN.

— Bab! Je te le dirais,

tu ne me croiras pas. Mais écoute-moi, Margue-

—rite, Je n'ai qu'une minute à te donner,

(Le VALENTIN peut déclamer ces vers au lieu de les chanter. Les violons joueront le chant.)

—titie: L'honneur est comme une fleur —

Timbri
Ex. 20 (cont.)

_pée_ et sans bords; Quand on n'est plus de dans,

plus lent.

c'est qu'on en est de hors—L'homme est eu général un

plus lent.

suivez la voix.

ici seulement Valentin peut cesser
de déclamer, et reprendre le chant.

pressez.

amants vois-tu bien, c'est comme les petits pois, Quand le premier paraît, tous

pressez.

Basson.
Éclatants! Voi-le qui se déchire au regard des mourants! (on parle) Ainsi que tout commerce, je ne sais pas ce qui me prend... il me semble que j'ai besoin de changer d'air.

Monsieur de la Pa...
Operatic practices, a favorite subject of musical parody in opéra-bouffe, are spoofed throughout *Le petit Faust*. Since Gounod was not above using operatic conventions, this parody would again include his work. One of the most frequently burlesqued practices of grand opera was the use of coloratura passages where they had no particular dramatic purpose other than providing the leading singer with the opportunity to show off her voice. Hervé's opéra-bouffe demonstrates this in several places. Faust's first aria, No. 2, contains an exaggerated passage of coloratura right in the middle of a scolding he gives to his pupils. The aria also contains a trivial little coda, sung gaily, which makes sport of the cabaletta ending of many arias in the grand operatic style (exs. 21 and 22).

Ex. 21
EX. 22

CODA. Allegro.

FAUST (gaiement)

Que l'on remportez que l'on remporte, que l'on remporte, que l'on remporte le cadavre!

TOUS AVEC FAUST.

Que l'on remporte que l'on remporte le cadavre!
In the "Waltz of the Nations," Méphisto and Faust have some extensive vocalises and Hervé employs a common device in having the voice imitate another instrument.

Ex. 23

The recognition recitative of the "Trio du Vaterland" displays a very melodramatic exchange between Faust and Marguerite (ex. 24, pp. 105-6). Marguerite is referred to here in the diminutive form used by Goethe.

Ex. 24
Another satirical device employed in many opéra-bouffes constitutes the juxtaposition of passages of pathos or elegance with bouncy dance tunes. Examples of such treatment may be found in the "Fleur de Candeur" couplet where a graceful opening section is followed by an angular, yodeling tyrolienne. A quite amusing example occurs in "The Duel Scene" at the end of Act II. Valentin has just been murdered, Faust and Marguerite run off in a hack and the chorus dances a frenetic cancan. Faust's plaintive air, No. 12, beginning with a subdued arioso passage in minor leads into a quick polka in the relative major key (ex. 25, p. 80).
The overture points up the use of contrast, although a parody may not have been intended. Its idyllic, simple polyphonic introduction is followed by a simple popular waltz tune (ex. 26, pp. 1-2).
Ex. 26 (cont.)

The previous examples of parody in the score of Le petit Faust serve to illustrate Hervé's approach to Gounod's score. It is a rather superficial use of material, going only as far as general melodic contours and the quotation of phrases and cadences from Faust. Hervé was apparently not interested in or capable of incorporating other aspects of Gounod's style such as harmonic structures or orchestration. In the area of operatic conventions, Hervé's parody is sometimes successful, sometimes ineffective. Gervase Hughes believes he did not share Offenbach's abilities for musical burlesque, and this may have been heightened by Hervé's limited formal training and exposure to operatic techniques. The following table summarizes the examples of parody found in Le petit Faust (see pp. 114-16).

When Hervé wrote his three full-length opéra-bouffes between 1867 and 1870, Offenbach's popularity was already waning. The limited success that Hervé's works achieved at this time may be attributed to the highly farcical nature of his comedy. The audiences during this period of political and social transition found Hervé's farcical satire, which was the product of his extremely eccentric personality, much more acceptable than Offenbach's often more direct wit. Hervé's satire followed the

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16 Hughes, p. 72.
tradition of most French vaudeville in its topicality, hence his works lost their effect with the passage of time. Offenbach's satire by comparison was universal in content, in addition to having a current fashionability. Like other masters of satire, for example Jonathan Swift or Mark Twain, Offenbach and his librettists Meilhac and Halévy were great observers of human folly.

The real character of Hervé's parody as it has been examined in Le petit Faust is summed up by Siegfried Kracauer's comparison of his comedy with that of Offenbach.

When Hervé jested, he merely drew on the contents of his own chaotic, protean, kaleidoscopic personality, of which his humor was an echo. Not that it was undirected; but it did not spring from a native insight into human sensibilities and was merely the reflection of his own baroque temperament. By comparison, Offenbach's humor had a positive, almost an objective purpose, the exposure of "phantoms inflated with wind and noise." Unlike Offenbach's creations, which were penetrated with intelligence and wit, Hervé's outpourings were completely untamed. Both made brilliant jests, and both were oddities; but the gaiety of Offenbach was as unrestrained as that of a bird.\footnote{Kracauer, p. 139.}
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<td>pomposity of some</td>
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<td>dance of ridicule, Faust's</td>
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<td></td>
<td>students rebel by dancing</td>
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<td>the cancan</td>
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1Examples quoted from the following sources: Cramieux and Jaime, *Le petit Faust*; Fritz Oeser's edition of Gounod's *Margarete* (*Faust*).
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<td>Makes fun of the melodramatic excess in death scenes at the Opéra and in the drama of the period, ends with cancan</td>
<td>Refusal to treat death seriously reflects society's refusal to deal realistically with its problems</td>
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<td>Act III</td>
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<td>The cancan is used again to show that society is extremely frivolous and irresponsible, many believed the society of 1850's and 60's was going to the devil anyway</td>
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CHAPTER VI
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND CONCLUSION

Despite his technical shortcomings, Hervé's active imagination and eccentric wit had an impact on the development of the opéra-bouffe. An investigation of this impact would provide the basis of an interesting study. The most critical period of development encompasses the early one-act works of Hervé written between 1848 and 1855, before Offenbach opened his Bouffes-Parisiens. Since devices used in these early musical playlets found their way into the later full-length opéra-bouffes of Offenbach, an analysis of Hervé's early works would establish his real contributions to the genre as well as his influence on Offenbach. Only a few of Hervé's early works appear in the Library of Congress catalogues, but many are listed in the catalogue to the Bibliothèque Nationale and some of the more obscure works may be found in other libraries in Paris.

The popularity of Le petit Faust is indicative of the tastes and attitudes of the society for which it was written. The audiences who frequented the theaters of opéra-bouffe were not so interested in the quality of the music they heard as the extent to which they were entertained by it. This attitude was prevalent to some degree in 19th-century audiences of all French opera and of the other branches of the French theater. Composers such as Meyerbeer and Auber and playwrights such as Scribe succumbed in varying degrees to the public demand for spectacle and entertainment.
These demands were great during the Second Empire and Hervé and others unashamedly tried to satisfy them. The public he wrote for was basically a vulgar and extremely frivolous one, which may explain the vulgarity and triviality of many opéra-bouffes. It also explains public enthusiasm and acceptance of technically inferior but perhaps very entertaining works such as Le petit Faust alongside the classics of the opéra-bouffe genre such as La Belle Hélène or La Vie Parisienne.

The popularity of the type of social parody found in opéra-bouffe, and exemplified in Le petit Faust, is the most revealing sign of social attitudes. Although many may have been aware of the social decadence and hypocrisy surrounding them, they chose merely to laugh at themselves rather than disturb the system. This laughter served as a temporary safety valve for social tensions, but did not prevent the eventual collapse of the Empire.
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Musical Scores


