

RESEARCH MONOGRAPHS IN FRENCH STUDIES 35

The Subversive Poetics of Alfred Jarry

Ubusing Culture in the Almanachs du Père Ubu

Marieke Dubbelboer



LEGENDA

Modern Humanities Research Association and Routledge

THE SUBVERSIVE POETICS OF ALFRED JARRY
UBUSING CULTURE IN THE *ALMANACHS DU PÈRE UBU*

LEGENDA

LEGENDA, founded in 1995 by the European Humanities Research Centre of the University of Oxford, is now a joint imprint of the Modern Humanities Research Association and Routledge. Titles range from medieval texts to contemporary cinema and form a widely comparative view of the modern humanities, including works on Arabic, Catalan, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Yiddish literature. An Editorial Board of distinguished academic specialists works in collaboration with leading scholarly bodies such as the Society for French Studies and the British Comparative Literature Association.

MHRA

The Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA) encourages and promotes advanced study and research in the field of the modern humanities, especially modern European languages and literature, including English, and also cinema. It also aims to break down the barriers between scholars working in different disciplines and to maintain the unity of humanistic scholarship in the face of increasing specialization. The Association fulfils this purpose primarily through the publication of journals, bibliographies, monographs and other aids to research.



LONDON AND NEW YORK

Routledge is a global publisher of academic books, journals and online resources in the humanities and social sciences. Founded in 1836, it has published many of the greatest thinkers and scholars of the last hundred years, including Adorno, Einstein, Russell, Popper, Wittgenstein, Jung, Bohm, Hayek, McLuhan, Marcuse and Sartre. Today Routledge is one of the world's leading academic publishers in the Humanities and Social Sciences. It publishes thousands of books and journals each year, serving scholars, instructors, and professional communities worldwide.

www.routledge.com

RESEARCH MONOGRAPHS IN FRENCH STUDIES

The *Research Monographs in French Studies* (RMFS) form a separate series within the Legenda programme and are published in association with the Society for French Studies. Individual members of the Society are entitled to purchase all RMFS titles at a discount.

The series seeks to publish the best new work in all areas of the literature, thought, theory, culture, film and language of the French-speaking world. Its distinctiveness lies in the relative brevity of its publications (50,000–60,000 words). As innovation is a priority of the series, volumes should predominantly consist of new material, although, subject to appropriate modification, previously published research may form up to one third of the whole. Proposals may include critical editions as well as critical studies. They should be sent with one or two sample chapters for consideration to Professor Ann Jefferson, New College, Oxford OX1 3BN.



Editorial Committee

Ann Jefferson, New College, Oxford (General Editor)
Adrian Armstrong, University of Manchester
Janice Carruthers, Queen's University Belfast
Nicholas Harrison, King's College London
Neil Kenny, Cambridge University
Bill Marshall, University of Stirling

Advisory Committee

Wendy Ayres-Bennett, New Hall, Cambridge
Celia Britton, University College London
Sarah Kay, Princeton University
Diana Knight, University of Nottingham
Michael Moriarty, Queen Mary University of London
Keith Reader, University of Glasgow

PUBLISHED IN THIS SERIES

1. *Privileged Anonymity: The Writings of Madame de Lafayette* by Anne Green
2. *Stéphane Mallarmé. Correspondance: compléments et suppléments*
edited by Lloyd James Austin, Bertrand Marchal and Nicola Luckhurst
3. *Critical Fictions: Nerval's 'Les Illuminés'* by Meryl Tyers
4. *Towards a Cultural Philology* by Amy Wygant
5. *George Sand and Autobiography* by Janet Hiddleston
6. *Expressivism* by Johnnie Gratton
7. *Memory and Survival: The French Cinema of Krzysztof Kiesłowski* by Emma Wilson
8. *Between Sequence and 'Sirventes'* by Catherine Léglu
9. *All Puns Intended* by Walter Redfern
10. *Saint-Evremond: A Voice From Exile* edited by Denys Potts
11. *La Cort d'Amor: A Critical Edition* edited by Matthew Bardell
12. *Race and the Unconscious* by Celia Britton
13. *Proust: La Traduction du sensible* by Nathalie Aubert
14. *Silent Witness: Racine's Non-Verbal Annotations of Euripides* by Susanna Phillippo
15. *Robert Antelme: Humanity, Community, Testimony* by Martin Crowley
16. *By the People for the People?* by Christopher Prendergast
17. *Alter Ego: The Critical Writings of Michel Leiris* by Seán Hand
18. *Two Old French Satires on the Power of the Keys* edited by Daron Burrows
19. *Oral Narration in Modern French* by Janice Carruthers
20. *Selfless Cinema? Ethics and French Documentary* by Sarah Cooper
21. *Poisoned Words: Slander and Satire in Early Modern France* by Emily Butterworth
22. *France/China: Intercultural Imaginings* by Alex Hughes
23. *Biography in Early Modern France 1540–1630* by Katherine MacDonald
24. *Balzac and the Model of Painting* by Diana Knight
25. *Exotic Subversions in Nineteenth-Century French Literature* by Jennifer Yee
26. *The Syllables of Time: Proust and the History of Reading* by Teresa Whittington
27. *Personal Effects: Reading the 'Journal' of Marie Bashkirtseff* by Sonia Wilson
28. *The Choreography of Modernism in France* by Julie Townsend
29. *Voices and Veils* by Anna Kemp
30. *Syntactic Borrowing in Contemporary French: A Linguistic Analysis of News Translation* by Mairi McLaughlin
31. *Dreams of Lovers and Lies of Poets: Poetry, Knowledge, and Desire in the 'Roman de la Rose'* by Sylvia Huot
32. *Maryse Condé and the Space of Literature* by Eva Sansavior
33. *The Livres-Souvenirs of Colette: Genre and the Telling of Time* by Anne Freadman
34. *Furetière's Roman bourgeois and the Problem of Exchange* by Craig Moyes
35. *The Subversive Poetics of Alfred Jarry: Ubusing Culture in the Almanachs du Père Ubu*
by Marieke Dubbelboer

The Subversive Poetics of Alfred Jarry

Ubusing Culture in the Almanachs du Père Ubu



MARIEKE DUBBELBOER



LEGENDA

Research Monographs in French Studies 35
Modern Humanities Research Association and Routledge

2012

First published 2012

*Published by the
Modern Humanities Research Association and Routledge*

*2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA*

*LEGENDA is an imprint of the
Modern Humanities Research Association and Routledge*

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© *Modern Humanities Research Association and Taylor & Francis*

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, including photocopying, recordings, fax or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner and the publisher.

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

ISBN 978-1-907747-98-4 (hbk)

CONTENTS



<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>Note on Citations, Translations and Illustrations</i>	x
Introduction	i
1 Symbolism and Beyond: The Almanacs in Context	6
2 Collage	24
3 Ubu Reporter: News and Newspapers in the Almanacs	68
4 Jarry, the Almanacs and Politics	96
Epilogue	127
<i>Bibliography</i>	133
<i>Index</i>	139

This page intentionally left blank

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Part of the research for this book was done in Paris with a grant from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). This work would not have been possible without the wealth of knowledge and information provided by the Société des Amis d'Alfred Jarry and the Collège de 'Pataphysique. I am also indebted to the resources and helpful staff at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris and the Librairie Municipale de Laval. I thank Jarry experts Henri Béhar, Patrick Besnier, Jean-Paul Morel and Julien Schuh for answering questions. I also thank Liesbeth Korthals Altes and Els Jongeneel who have read and commented on all the early drafts. I am grateful to the editorial staff at Legenda whose comments and suggestions in the final stages of the manuscript proved tremendously valuable. I thank Marte van Dijk, Chris Dickenson, Joke Corporaal, Wokje Abrahamse, Irene Nannenber, Geertje Schuitema, Matthijs Dicke-Ogenia, Stefan Couperus, Femke Hemelaar who all contributed to this book in their own way over the years. For their continuous love and support I especially thank Judith de Groot, and my parents Bonny and Harry Dubbelboer.

M.D., July 2011

NOTE ON CITATIONS, TRANSLATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS



Quotations from Jarry's texts are all provided in the original French, mostly from the Pléiade edition of Jarry's complete works (1978, 1987 and 1988). These are referred to in the footnotes as *OC* (*Œuvres Complètes*) followed by the volume and page numbers. References to other editions are indicated in the text or in the footnotes.

Translations in the texts are my own unless otherwise stated.

Illustrations shown from the Almanacs are all reproduced from the original, first editions.

INTRODUCTION



Jarry, his Work and the *Almanachs du Père Ubu*

Alfred Jarry (1873–1907) is known primarily as the eccentric author of the Ubu plays and the creator of their outrageous hero Père Ubu. Indeed, anecdotes about Jarry's bohemian lifestyle have largely overshadowed the merits of his writing. With the exception of *Ubu Roi* (1896), his texts have tended to remain the preserve of a handful of scholars, amateurs and artists. Jarry made his literary debut at the height of the Symbolist movement and was a contemporary of writers such as Gide, Valéry and Proust, but his work has never lent itself to being easily classified amongst that of contemporary writers or literary movements. Jarry's literary career was made problematic partly by the non-conformity of his writing and partly by his own often provocative and difficult behaviour. Posthumously, Jarry has nevertheless been hailed by many of his admirers as the embodiment of avant-garde experiment and artistic innovation. His work has often been compared to that of other singular authors such as Lautréamont, and labelled as an influence on a new generation of twentieth-century writers and artists, including Apollinaire or Picasso, and avant-garde movements, such as Dada or Surrealism. However, whereas many writers, artists and scholars have claimed him as the spiritual ancestor of many innovations in modern literature and art, few have succeeded in explaining what exactly it was that made Jarry's work so singular in his own lifetime and so inspirational for later generations.

Père Ubu plays an important role in the *Almanachs du Père Ubu*, published in 1898 and 1901. Jarry's physics teacher at the Lycée de Rennes, Monsieur Hébert, had provided the inspiration for this grotesque caricature created by Jarry and his friends Charles and Henri Morin. Jarry transformed the character into a literary figure, and Ubu featured for the first time in his prize-winning literary debut 'Guignol' (1893). On 10 December 1896 Jarry's literary creation took to the stage. The monstrous Ubu, the opening word 'merdre' ('shit' with an added 'r'), the utter disregard for theatrical conventions and the lack of plot left many spectators and critics baffled, if not outraged. *Le Petit Parisien* called the production a 'scatological piece of insanity', and the critic of *L'Événement* needed a shower after the premiere.¹ Some conservative critics, like Francisque Sarcey of *Le Temps* and *Le Figaro*'s Henri Fouquier, perceived the play as a form of anarchist terror. Others, like *Le Matin*'s Henry Céard, were simply amused. Only a handful of critics were supportive, including Henry Bauër, Romain Coolus and Catulle Mendès, all of whom were friends or admirers of Jarry. The Théâtre de l'Œuvre and its director Aurélien Lugné-Poe cancelled the play. Its *succès à scandale* turned both Jarry and his character Ubu into notorious figures.² *Ubu Roi* was followed up by *Ubu enchaîné* (1900) and by *Ubu Cocu*, a largely unfinished

text. The first publication of *Ubu Cocu* was in 1944, but the manuscript had been written prior the *Almanachs du Père Ubu*. Ubu appeared for the final time during Jarry's life in *Ubu sur la Butte*, an abbreviated version of *Ubu Roi*, performed as a puppet play at the cabaret Les Quat'z'Arts in Montmartre in 1901.

The two Almanacs were collective works with Jarry as the main writer and editor. Yet none of the articles are signed by any of the real contributors, which included painter Pierre Bonnard and composer Claude Terrasse. Instead, Père Ubu is presented as the author, editor and central character. The fact that the authorship of the Almanacs is attributed to Père Ubu is striking. Were the Almanacs the work of Jarry, the products of a group of collaborators or written by Ubu himself? This question seems to have been left deliberately unanswered. After the premiere of *Ubu Roi*, Jarry's public and private identification with the figure of Ubu had increased. Ubu appeared to have taken on a life of his own. In the Almanacs Ubu became an autonomous agent, even standing in for Jarry himself.

Despite their connection to the Ubu cycle the Almanacs occupy a rather odd position in Jarry's oeuvre. Even within the eclectic corpus that is Jarry's literary work, they appear to defy genre boundaries and literary norms. They have also escaped scholarly attention. The initial *Almanach du Père Ubu, illustré* was literally forgotten for a long time. Despite its impressive eight volumes, the first-ever edition of Jarry's complete works from 1948 failed to include it.³ For decades the first Almanac was available only in the original first edition preserved in libraries or in private collections.⁴ It was not until some sixty years after its original publication that the first Almanac was finally reprinted, appearing together with the second Almanac and the rest of the Ubu texts in the collection *Tout Ubu*, in 1962.⁵ Both works were also included in the first volume of the Pléiade edition of Jarry's collected works, published in 1972.⁶ Since then they have been included in re-editions of *Tout Ubu* as well as in the latest Bouquin edition of Jarry's works.⁷ Recently, a first annotated edition of the first Almanac has also been published, together with a facsimile.⁸ The second Almanac has received slightly more attention over the years. It was incorporated into the 'complete works' from 1948.⁹ It was also reprinted separately in a facsimile edition in 1949.¹⁰ Jean-Paul Morel included parts of the second Almanac in his edition of Ambroise Vollard's Ubu works.¹¹ In 2006 the second Almanac was published in a facsimile edition.¹²

On the whole, scholarly interest in the Almanacs has been marginal. Even in publications by the Collège de Pataphysique, which have provided a valuable context for Jarry's work, the two works have rarely been discussed. This lack of commentary was already remarked upon when the 1962 *Tout Ubu* edition was published.¹³ Except for the recent annotated edition of the first Almanac, critical commentary of the two works has remained limited to a few scattered observations. In 1974 Noël Arnaud praised the first Almanac, particularly for the 'étonnante série de dessins de Bonnard' [astounding series of drawings by Bonnard] and mentioned some of its themes.¹⁴ Henri Béhar is the only scholar to have devoted an article to an aspect of Ubu's Almanac, but his remarks are part of his more general observations on Jarry's love of popular culture.¹⁵

Arnaud and Béhar adopted a broadly positive or at least neutral approach to the

Almanacs. Others have tended to express unease about the two works. It is telling that in the preface to the 1948 edition of Jarry's work, René Massat grouped the second Almanac together with Jarry's 'divertissements' [entertaining pastimes].¹⁶ Discussing the figure of Ubu, Elke Krumm writes that, compared to the other Ubu works, 'the absurdities dominate' and that 'both Almanacs merely aim to entertain'.¹⁷ Keith Beaumont, the author of an important biographical study of Jarry's work, is also largely dismissive. He labels some parts of the Almanacs 'mildly amusing', while most of the satire and nonsense falls, according to him, 'rather flat.' Ubu is simply a 'would be wit and entertainer.' Beaumont's harsh verdict is that for these and other reasons (though he fails to mention which ones) the two Almanacs must 'rate as relatively minor works.'¹⁸ Others have also felt the need to explain that the Almanacs were written both for financial purposes and for mere amusement. J. A. Cutshall, for example, concludes: 'Why Jarry should have composed this work is not immediately clear, but it probably arose partly as a much needed money-making exercise and partly as a nod to Rabelais.'¹⁹ François Caradec, describing the Almanacs as a form of popular journalism, remarks with some surprise that Jarry appeared to take them quite seriously.²⁰ In what little has been said, scholars have mainly pointed to some of the Almanacs' more obvious themes, such as the political satire.²¹ Ben Fisher compares the Rabelaisian spirit of Ubu's Almanacs to the novel *Gestes et opinions du Docteur Faustroll*.²² As for the Almanacs as a whole, they are often not taken very seriously, considered as nonsense 'made up of stock jokes'.²³

Positive evaluations of the Almanacs are scarce. In his biography of Jarry from 2005, Besnier calls the first Almanac an 'atypical publication', which would have escaped attention of the conventional press'.²⁴ Besnier does not comment on their 'atypical' nature any further, but in the recent facsimile edition he characterizes the second Almanac as a peculiar, collective work, defying contemporary aesthetics.²⁵ He also remarks on its playful subversion of the almanac genre and the liberty of its layout and typography. The most far-reaching appraisal of the Almanacs, however, can be found in an article by Mary Shaw. She briefly discusses the Almanacs as literary representatives of Montmartre's humoristic cabaret culture. Contrary to most scholars, she considers the Almanacs to be 'in certain respects the most radical and avant-garde of Jarry's productions'.²⁶ Shaw believes that the use of Montmartre humoristic strategies in the Almanacs result in a marginal and rebellious aesthetic, similar to the goals of the cabarets. Shaw's comments remain rather general as Jarry is not the main focus of her article. However, her remarks, together with Besnier's observation that the Almanacs defied contemporary artistic norms, call for closer examination of these 'atypical' and 'rebellious' works.

The Almanacs appeared at a point which marks a break in Jarry's oeuvre. The poetics expressed in these two works seem to represent a departure from the Symbolism of his earlier works and a transition to a more singular and more 'modern' aesthetic, possessing many of the features that have made Jarry's work so influential. Scholars have generally been wary when it comes to interpreting Jarry's writing, which is commonly considered to be complex and hermetic. Fisher, for example, writes that it is often difficult to approach this 'apparently unapproachable writer'.²⁷ But what is it that makes Jarry's work supposedly so 'unapproachable'? As I have

already indicated, very little has been written about the two Almanacs, and this study aims to reconsider their importance and place in Jarry's oeuvre, as well as to outline some of the key features of Jarry's poetics which the Almanacs in many ways exemplify. In both works Jarry made use of genres, forms, discourses and themes from a variety of cultural spheres. By combining these elements with his self-created Ubu universe, Jarry advanced new concepts of genre, textual structure, language and authorship, as well as an off-beat perspective on contemporary society. The following discussion of the Almanacs, which combines textual analysis with a cultural historical perspective, seeks to offer greater insight into Jarry's work as well as a more profound understanding of the place he and his work occupy in cultural history.

Notes to the Introduction

1. 'Cette insanité scatophile', *Le Petit Parisien*, 11 December 1896; 'Malgré l'heure tardive, je viens de prendre une douche. Mesure préventive indispensable quand on sort d'un pareil spectacle [Despite the late hour I have just taken a shower. A necessary precaution after leaving that kind of show], *L'Événement*, 11 December 1896, quoted in Keith Beaumont, *Alfred Jarry: A Critical and Biographical Study* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984), p. 101.
2. *Ubu Roi* was staged again in February 1908, just a few months after Jarry's death. This time it was produced by the actor Firmin Gémier, who had played Père Ubu in 1896.
3. Alfred Jarry, *Œuvres Complètes*, préface de René Massat; souvenirs par le Docteur Jean Saltas et Charlotte Jarry, tomes I–VIII (Lausanne: Éditions du Grand-Chêne, 1948).
4. The Collège de Pataphysique for example held the copy that had belonged to Henri de Régnier. Noël Arnaud, *Alfred Jarry: D'Ubu Roi au docteur Faustroll* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1974), p. 430.
5. Alfred Jarry, *Tout Ubu*, édition établie par Maurice Saillet (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1962).
6. Alfred Jarry, *Œuvres Complètes*, I (Paris: Gallimard, 1972).
7. Alfred Jarry, *Œuvres* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2004).
8. *Commentaires pour servir à la lecture de l'Almanach du Père Ubu illustré 1899*, ed. by Henri Béhar, Marieke Dubbelboer, Jean-Paul Morel (Laval: SAAJ; Tusson, Du Lérot, 2009).
9. Alfred Jarry, *Œuvres Complètes*, VIII (Lausanne: Éditions du Grand-Chêne, 1948).
10. Alfred Jarry, *Almanach illustré du Père Ubu (XXe Siècle)*, illustrations de Pierre Bonnard (Lausanne: Éditions du Grand-Chêne, 1948).
11. Ambroise Vollard, *Tout Ubu Colonial et autres textes*, ed. Jean-Paul Morel (Paris: Musée Léon Dierx/Séguier, 1994).
12. Alfred Jarry, *Almanach illustré du Père Ubu (XXe Siècle)*, présentée par Patrick Besnier (Le Castor Astral, 2006).
13. 'Le Tout Ubu ne pouvait pas être une édition critique, mais un jour viendra certainement où un candidat au doctorat ès lettres, ayant choisi l'œuvre de Jarry pour sujet de thèse, éclaircira toutes les allusions qui comportent les deux Almanachs' [Tout Ubu could not be a critical edition, but one day a PhD candidate who has chosen Jarry's work as a thesis subject will no doubt shed light on all the references hidden in the two Almanacs], *Dossiers acénonètes du Collège de Pataphysique*, 20 (1962), p. 72.
14. Arnaud, *Alfred Jarry*, pp. 430–34.
15. Henri Béhar, 'Jarry, l'almanach et le fleuve oral', *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 19/20 (1983), 31–39.
16. 'Ce dernier tome, avec les chansons composées sur les airs de Claude Terrasse, rassemble les divertissements d'un des plus importants et des plus originaux écrivains français' [This last volume, which includes songs written to Claude Terrasse's music, assembles the entertaining pastimes of one of the most important and most original French writers], René Massat in Jarry, *Œuvres Complètes*, VIII, 1948, p. 9.
17. Elke Krumm, 'Die Gestalt des Ubu im Werk Alfred Jarrys' (Inaugurat-Dissertation, Köln, 1976), p. 141.

18. Beaumont, pp. 144–45.
19. J. A. Cutshall, 'Celui qui Dreyfusse: Alfred Jarry and the Dreyfus Case', *Symposium*, 43, 1 (1989), 20–37 (p. 26).
20. 'Jarry semble l'avoir pris très au sérieux' [Jarry seems to have taken it very seriously], François Caradec, 'Alfred Jarry, témoin de son temps', in *Jarry: Colloques de Cerisy*, ed. by Henri Bordillon (Paris: Belfond, 1985), pp. 155–80 (p. 162).
21. Christine van Schoonbeek views the Almanacs as portraying the more 'satirical, classical' side of Ubu, Christine van Schoonbeek, *Les Portraits d'Ubu* (Paris: Séguier, 1997), p. 21.
22. 'Rabelais appears most prominently in the *Almanachs du Père Ubu*, whose creation of comic almanacs derives from the Pantagrueline Prognostication, and Rabelais also comes to the fore in the narrative structure of *Faustroll*', Ben Fisher, *The Pataphysician's Library: An Exploration of Alfred Jarry's 'livres pairs'* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), p. 95.
23. Cutshall, p. 26.
24. 'Cette publication atypique ne pouvait guère obtenir de comptes-rendus dans la presse conventionnelle' [This atypical publication could not really get any reviews in the mainstream press], Patrick Besnier, *Alfred Jarry* (Paris: Fayard, 2005), p. 379.
25. Alfred Jarry, *Almanach illustré du Père Ubu (XXe Siècle)*, 2006, pp. 59–64.
26. Mary Shaw, 'All or Nothing? The Literature of Montmartre', in *The Spirit of Montmartre: Cabarets, Humor, and the Avant-Garde, 1875–1905*, ed. by Philip Dennis Cate and Mary Shaw (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), pp. 111–58 (pp. 150–52).
27. Fisher, p. 207.

CHAPTER 1



Symbolism and Beyond: The Almanacs in Context

Ubu's Almanacs were written at a crucial time in Jarry's literary career. During the 1890s he had worked hard to gain access to Symbolist circles. He had made a fairly successful literary debut in 1893 with the prose text 'Guignol', published in *L'Écho de Paris*, and became a regular contributor to the monthly journal *Mercure de France*. However, Jarry's literary ambitions pulled him in two directions. On the one hand, he desperately wanted to get his work published and to be a success, but on the other, he often refused to compromise on anything to do with his texts. Around the time of *Ubu Roi*'s premiere in 1896, he began to make increasingly intransigent demands when it came to his text.¹ Lugné-Poe described Jarry's constant interference with the production of *Ubu Roi* as tiresome and difficult.² His uncompromising attitude started to complicate the publication of his work. In January 1899, shortly after the first Almanac was published, the *Mercure de France*'s editor in chief Alfred Vallette warned Jarry to write clearly if he wanted to be published.³ Jarry told Vallette that he was not willing to change his work, even if this meant that it would remain unsold.⁴ Alfred Vallette then refused to publish Jarry's novel *L'Amour absolu* and told Jarry that he would stop publishing his novels altogether. Although he would remain personally close to Vallette and the broadly Symbolist *Mercure de France*, by 1900 Jarry had found a more welcoming literary climate elsewhere when *La Revue Blanche* and its publishing house took over publication of his work; this was partly due to its editor, Félix Fénéon, an admirer of Jarry. *La Revue Blanche*, a journal rooted in Symbolism, but open to new ideas, also employed Jarry, who had been free-lancing for the magazine since 1896, as a regular chronicler and critic. This provided him with a much needed source of steady income over the next few years. It was during this period that the second Almanac (1901) appeared and *Ubu Roi* was staged as a marionette play at the cabaret Les Quat'z'Arts in Montmartre.

These changes in publisher and publishing platform also signalled a change in Jarry's writing which is reflected in the Almanacs. Leaving behind the Symbolism of his early writings, Jarry's work took a new direction that had been set in motion with *Ubu Roi*. At the same time Jarry became acquainted with a 'younger' generation of avant-garde writers and artists, who would lay the foundations for a number of early twentieth-century avant-garde movements. Jarry befriended Guillaume Apollinaire, who also wrote for *La Revue Blanche*.⁵ In bars and cabarets he socialized (and drank) with André Salmon and the Bateau Lavoir circle.⁶ Jarry also

met the future founder of Futurism, F. T. Marinetti. The poet André Salmon later recalled the literary banquets organized by *La Plume*, where the 'older' Symbolist writers would mingle with the young members of these future avant-gardes. Jarry presided over one of these banquets, performing as Ubu and mockingly reciting some of his early Symbolist poetry.⁷ Of course, Jarry was not alone in his derision of Symbolism. Both Symbolists and Decadents before them had parodied their own peers and their work, and there had been heated debates about the Symbolist aesthetic among Symbolist writers, some of which appeared in their journals.⁸

At the beginning of the twentieth century representatives of both old and new generations often met and gathered in the same places, exchanging ideas, influencing each other.⁹ However, the members of the future avant-garde, such as Apollinaire, Salmon and Picasso, all expressed a greater appreciation of Jarry's work than many of his earlier literary friends had done.¹⁰ For this new generation, seeking to radically challenge artistic traditions, Jarry became an important role model. Symbolism had provided an inspirational and experimental environment for Jarry in the 1890s and it had helped shape his ideas on literature. He always kept a sincere admiration for many Symbolist artists and writers.¹¹ But Jarry had always demonstrated an unrelenting thirst for new artistic forms and modes of expression, reflected in his notorious reluctance to comply with contemporary literary standards. This search for alternative models and sources of inspiration is clearly visible in Ubu's Almanacs.

Sources of Inspiration: Popular Almanacs, Rabelais, Cabaret Culture

One source of inspiration was the almanac genre. An almanac was generally a small illustrated work, published annually, indicating the seasons, containing a calendar, as well as meteorological and astronomical predictions. In addition, it could include a diverse range of texts and material (anecdotes, practical information or songs) on a variety of themes (history, current events, medicine, cooking, or astrology). In his study of the almanac tradition, Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink distinguishes four sections in popular almanacs: a pragmatic part, containing information about the weather, fairs, religious dates; a calendar part, divided into months, indicating days, saint's names and astrological signs; a historic part, referring to events of the past year in the form of narratives and anecdotes; and a 'varieties' section, containing proverbs, advice, riddles, and fables.¹² In general, almanacs aimed at being an encyclopaedia of the world, a moral guide and a practical handbook. Most almanacs were supposedly written by a legendary, mythical figure, or by 'anonymous' scribes who transmitted their words. Astrological almanacs were particularly successful. They always centred on a well-known figure or astronomer, who provided prophecies on all sorts of matters. *Les Prophéties de Nostradamus*, first published around 1550, is a well-known example. In the early print culture of the Renaissance, almanacs succeeded in reaching a large audience. This made them potentially subversive and a danger to the status quo, but governments also realized their worth as instruments of propaganda. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for example, luxuriously illustrated almanacs were commissioned by the French royals,

glorifying the king and France.¹³ In 1791 the Revolutionary government issued their own *Almanach du Père Gérard*, in which the dialogue between the peasant representative Gérard and village inhabitants helped to popularize Revolutionary principles. In response, the Royalists issued their own anti-revolutionary *Almanach de l'abbé Maury ou Réfutation de l'almanach de Père Gérard, couronnée par la Société des amis de la monarchie*.

The importance of popular almanacs diminished during the course of the nineteenth century as new forms of printing and distribution emerged. But although the almanac's informative function had largely been replaced by newspapers, there was still a considerable range available in France during Jarry's time, with no less than 175 almanacs published between 1891 and 1899.¹⁴ Many of them catered to special interests. Others were still being used as a political tool to reach specific groups in society. Writer and anarchist Émile Pouget, for example, published his *Almanach du Père Peinard, hebdomadaire anarchiste*, in which he addressed French workers in *argot*, from 1889 until 1902. At the other end of the political spectrum there existed the Catholic *Almanach populaire* which emphasized traditional values and warned its readers against socialists and anarchists.¹⁵

Jarry usually spent his day writing and studying in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Not only would he have found plenty of almanacs there, but he could also have read scholarly studies about almanacs. In fact, twenty-eight studies were published between 1891 and 1899.¹⁶ There seems to have been a general, scholarly interest in almanacs and popular culture during these years and Jarry shared such a fascination with popular texts and images with many of his (Symbolist) contemporaries. This had inspired him and Remy de Gourmont to launch the magazine *L'Ymagier*, in 1894, combining popular images with modern works by contemporary Symbolist artists. Both *L'Ymagier* and *Perhindérion* (the magazine Jarry started after he fell out with Gourmont in 1895) testified to Jarry's keen interest in popular traditions. To a certain extent Ubu's Almanacs reflect and continue this interest.

Since almanacs were designed to reach a mass audience, Jarry might have also thought an almanac would serve to popularize his Ubu character and bring him much-needed success. Lüsebrink gives an interesting account of French-Canadian writers who, in the late nineteenth century, used almanacs (and their mass distribution) to disseminate their manuscripts, before they were published as books. In this way they hoped to achieve a bigger profit than they could expect to get from regular publication or publication in newspapers.¹⁷ In the end Jarry's work was largely unsuccessful. It is possible that he hoped that writing an almanac would finally land him a bestseller. However, his unwillingness to comply with contemporary literary conventions, let alone with commercial demands, made such success highly unlikely. It therefore seems more probable that artistic motives, rather than commercial ones, lay behind Jarry's decision to compose the *Almanacs*.

Another great source of inspiration was Rabelais. Apart from owning his complete works, Jarry often quoted the author in his texts and he also collaborated with composer Claude Terrasse on a musical based on Rabelais's oeuvre. Rabelais had of course written almanacs himself, including the satirical *Les Pantagruelines prognostications*, which appeared between 1533 and 1550. There is no doubt that Jarry had

read them and it is highly likely that he had these works in mind when composing his own Almanacs. Again, Jarry was not alone in his admiration. Rabelais was a much cherished author among the artistic bohemia of the fin-de-siècle, especially among those artists who gathered in the cafes and cabarets of Montmartre. This was a milieu that Jarry knew well and from which he also drew inspiration.

The cabarets of Montmartre combined popular entertainment and commercialism with a bohemian counter-culture of rebellion and artistic experiment.¹⁸ These venues had evolved from a number of humoristic artistic groups founded in the previous decades. For example, the writer Émile Goudeau founded the *Hydropathes* in 1878, and during the 1880s a number of such groups came and went, sporting equally irreverent names, such as the *Zutistes* (1883), the *Incohérents* (1882), or the *Jemenfoutistes* (1884).¹⁹

In 1881 Goudeau joined forces with singer Rodolphe Salis to open Le Chat Noir. The cabaret became an instant success. Le Chat Noir also featured temporary exhibitions and published its own journal. This contained satirical articles and cartoons aimed at the Third Republic's political, social and cultural establishment, as well as serious art criticism, literary contributions and poetry. Salis organized poetry readings in the cabaret as well as performances with songs and monologues. He would usually address his audience as 'mon cochon' [my pig] or 'tas de salauds' [bunch of bastards].²⁰ Aristide Bruant, immortalized by Toulouse-Lautrec's poster, adopted a similar style at the cabaret Le Mirliton. He mixed French *argot* with sexual innuendo, and spoke about subjects deemed vulgar by contemporary standards.²¹ In 1893 François Trombert opened Les Quat'z'Arts on the Boulevard de Clichy, which continued the bohemian tradition of cabaret into the twentieth century. It became a favourite hang-out for the avant-garde, including Picasso, Apollinaire and Jarry. Its interior was decorated in pseudo-Renaissance style, with illustrations celebrating the work of Rabelais. Such reference to older, literary traditions or to authors like Rabelais or Villon was part of the cabaret's counter-cultural program. Its name, a pun on the four disciplines of the École des Beaux Arts, reflected the artistic collaboration between musicians, performers, writers and artists that it actively encouraged.²² One of the cabaret's most innovative creations was a wall journal called *Le Mur*, to which all visitors could contribute newspaper clippings, illustrations and writings.

As a patron of Le Chat Noir in the 1890s and later of Les Quat'z'Arts, Jarry was well acquainted with Montmartre's bohemian culture and nightlife. Arnaud notes that Jarry was seen several times in Le Chat Noir in the company of Lord Alfred Douglas in 1896, although the details of their acquaintance remain unclear.²³ The office of the Théâtre de l'Œuvre at 22 rue Turgot was situated virtually next door to Le Chat Noir. It was probably the artistic crowd of *La Revue Blanche* and the *Mercure de France* that had introduced Jarry to Montmartre. Friends like Gustave Kahn, Félix Fénéon and Albert Samain all contributed to the humoristic groups and cabaret culture. Jarry's frequent collaborator, Claude Terrasse, lived in Montmartre and wrote music for the cabarets. The poet Franc-Nohain, involved with Jarry and Terrasse in the Théâtre des Pantins, wrote for Le Chat Noir's journal. Jarry was in fact familiar enough with the area to suggest to Lugné-Poe that the role of

Bougrelas in *Ubu Roi* should be played by a thirteen-year-old boy he knew from Montmartre, 'who is very beautiful, with stunning eyes and long curly brown hair.' This, Jarry writes, would excite the old ladies, scandalize some, attract attention and it would be innovative.²⁴ Lugné-Poe, who was not so keen on Jarry's questionable choice, did not take up his suggestion, but this anecdote shows that Jarry shared with Montmartre's counter-culture a similar spirit of provocation. He knew that a hint of scandal would boost the play's chances of success.

Ubu Roi also reflected Jarry's connection with cabaret culture and popular entertainment in other ways. The actress Louise France was a former cabaret performer and her appearance in *Ubu Roi* as Mère Ubu brought a slice of cabaret culture to the stage. Furthermore, Jarry wrote in November 1896 that he was considering the clown Footit for the role of Bordure. He also spoke of the 'Achras scene' being performed at Le Chat Noir, although this event apparently never took place.²⁵ In any case, the crude language, vulgar subject matter and suggestive songs typical of the cabarets entered the domain of serious theatre when in 1896 Père Ubu uttered 'merdre' and waved a toilet brush. On 27 November 1901 an abbreviated version of *Ubu Roi* was premiered as a marionette play in Les Quat'z'Arts. This rewritten version contained traditional features of both puppet theatre and cabaret performances, including songs and monologues on current affairs. The cabaret version of *Ubu Roi*, later published as *Ubu sur la Butte* (1906), had a successful run of sixty-three performances.

The cabaret's mixture of artistic experiment, popular entertainment and commercialism brought new aesthetic possibilities that seemed to fit Jarry's vision of literature. Most writers and artists participated in this culture alongside but separate from their 'serious' work. Authors such as Allais, Cros or Fénéon were well known, but they were considered humorists or journalists. However, Jarry incorporated elements from this culture into his theatre and his texts to create an innovative, hybrid aesthetic. Many elements of the cabarets' provocative aesthetics resonate in Jarry's work and in the Almanacs in particular.

Artistic Collaboration and Writing Ubu's Almanacs

The first Almanac was written during the second half of 1898 which Jarry spent mostly in Corbeil where, together with Rachilde, Alfred Vallette, Pierre Quillard and other *Mercure* friends, he had rented a summer house. The group had dubbed the house 'Phalanstère de Corbeil', a reference to Charles Fourier's socialist, utopian philosophy. Although the Phalanstère did not aspire to any such political ideal, it was based on a spirit of freedom and communality. Jarry and his friends shared meals and enjoyed outdoor activities, such as fishing, canoeing and cycling.

Large parts of the first Almanac were probably written at the Phalanstère.²⁶ In one of his letters, for example, Jarry asks Quillard about a Latin quotation he had heard from fellow resident Marcel Collière:

Serait-il indiscret de vous demander de nous faire parvenir rue Ballu la reconstitution d'un texte saphique, cité anonymement dans l'almanach, et dont nous ne nous souvenons, d'après le compagnon Collière, que du fragment approximatif: ...*docet matrona pinguis nos circumlambere linguis*²⁷

[Would it be indiscreet to ask you to send to the Rue Ballu the full version of a saphic text, quoted anonymously in the almanac, and of which we only remember, according to comrade Collière, a rough fragment: ... *docet matrona pinguis nos circumlambere linguis?*]

Quillard wrote back the following day with the original quotation,²⁸ and the corrected fragment was published in the Almanac. The first Almanac contains many similar, often personal references to the house, the group's activities, their humour and vocabulary.

However, Jarry's main collaborator for the first Almanac was not a member of the Phalanstère. The painter and illustrator Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947) belonged to the group of young artists who half-jokingly referred to themselves as *Nabis*, Hebrew for 'prophets'. Like his fellow Nabis, Félix Vallotton and Édouard Vuillard, Bonnard illustrated for *La Revue Blanche*. Bonnard had also been employed by the Théâtre de l'Œuvre and had helped design the backdrop for *Ubu Roi*. For the first Almanac Bonnard made twenty pencil drawings.²⁹ He may well have been closely involved with some of the texts as well, since the visual arts are a recurring theme in the publication. In addition, several references are made to Bonnard's work and the names of Bonnard and other Nabis feature regularly in the Almanac. Jarry and Bonnard would continue to work together on occasion, and Bonnard retained his love for the character of Ubu. In 1917 and 1918 he contributed illustrations to Vollard's *Le Père Ubu à l'hôpital* and *Le Père Ubu à l'aviation*. Many years later Bonnard named his dog Ubu.³⁰

Where Bonnard brought the context of the visual arts to the Almanac, the composer Claude Terrasse (1867–1923) brought with him the world of music. Besides composing cabaret music, Terrasse worked as an organist for Montmartre's Trinité church. Terrasse was married to Bonnard's sister Andrée and Bonnard and Terrasse often worked together. Terrasse knew Jarry from the days of *Ubu Roi* when he had offered to write music for the play.³¹ Bonnard, his sister, Terrasse and Jarry had all collaborated in the Théâtre des Pantins, the puppet theatre at Terrasse's house in Montmartre where *Ubu Roi* was staged in 1897. Jarry and Terrasse also collaborated on *Pantagruel*, a life-long musical project which Jarry would never see finished.³² In the previously cited letter to Quillard Jarry refers to the Rue Ballu, which seems to indicate that he was working on *Pantagruel* or the Almanac while staying at Terrasse's house. Considering the fact that Jarry, Bonnard and Terrasse worked very closely together on the texts for the second Almanac, it is very likely that Terrasse contributed to the first as well. Both Almanacs contain numerous references to musicians and composers from Terrasse's circle, many of whom he knew from the École Niedermeyer and the Trinité church.

The *Almanach du Père Ubu, illustré. Janvier, février, mars 1899* was published in December 1898. The tiny, pocket-sized publication (5 x 11 cm.) sported ninety-two pages and twenty illustrations. Jarry reported the event to Quillard in the following terms:

Compagnon,

Nous sommes convoqué [*sic*] par un télégramme de celui qui Terrasse et vos tonneaux ne sont point encore expédiés. La faute en est à l'Almanach (lequel

s'imprime) où vous êtes glorifié. Je ne pourrai guère revenir au Phalanstère avant une semaine, vu la lenteur typographique de celui qui Renaude.³³

[Comrade, we are summoned by a telegram from the person who Terrasses and your barrels have not yet been dispatched. The fault lies with the Almanac (which is printing) in which you are glorified. I shall not really be able to return to the Phalanstère for at least a week due to the typographical slowness of the person who Renaudes.]

In his typically eccentric style Jarry explains how the printing of the Almanac has been delayed due to the 'typographical slowness' of 'celui qui Renaude' [the person who Renaudes]. The latter is the printer Charles Renaudie, who had printed some of Jarry work previously.³⁴ Jarry did not have a very high opinion of the bookbinder either. He wrote to Terrasse that Guyot, whose workshop was next door to Renaudie's, tended to be careless.³⁵ The Almanac seems to have been a true family affair. Charles Bonnard, Pierre Bonnard's brother, is mentioned as the Almanac's sales representative. However, a pink paper slip in which the final publication was later wrapped indicated that he had apparently been replaced by the bookseller Adolphe Thuillier-Chauvin.³⁶ The cover of the first Almanac says 'Janvier-février-mars 1899', suggesting that the almanac was indeed intended to be a quarterly publication. The price for an annual subscription is also indicated: 1 franc 50. One issue cost 50 centimes. Although the cover says 'en vente partout' [on sale everywhere], this was very far from being the case. There is no indication of the print run, but the number of copies must have been small, and most were sent by Jarry as free copies to his literary friends.³⁷ In 1902, the poet André Fontainas received a request for the Almanac from a certain professor Lévi. In his reply to Fontainas, Jarry wrote he had found plenty of unsold Almanacs.³⁸ A slightly sarcastic Jarry also told Terrasse about the scholar's surprising request:

Le palotin Sylvain Lévi, professeur au Collège de France, s'est adressé à moi pour se procurer le 1^{er} petit almanach: je lui en ai fait parvenir un en pur don, et ainsi n'en ai plus que sept cent quatrevingt-dix neuf...et quelques.³⁹

[The *palotin* Sylvain Lévi, Professor at the Collège de France, has contacted me to obtain the first small almanac: I have sent him one as a true gift and so I am only left with seven hundred and ninety nine...and then some.]

One should perhaps take Jarry's assessment of the number of available Almanacs with a pinch of salt, but fact was that most remained unsold.

The first Almanac did receive some press notices, no doubt thanks to the copies Jarry had sent around to his friends and acquaintances. In the book review section of *La Revue Blanche*, Ubu's Almanac is classified under a new sub-section of 'Almanachs':

Les Almanachs

Almanach du Père Ubu, illustré (janvier, février, mars 1899)

Œuvre, évidemment, de MM. Jarry et Bonnard (et de M. Terrasse, s'il eût contenu des notes), grâce à cet almanach on vivra avec délices les trois premiers mois de 1899, l'an 8375 du règne d'Ubu. Une tristesse pourtant: l'éclipse, partielle, de ce monarque et de ce père, les 29, 30 et 31 février. Mais on pourra, et d'après les recettes du seigneur Alexis, Piémontais, se teindre les cheveux en vert, se faire choir les dents, affiner l'or avec les salamandres. On s'émouvra à

une pièce en trois actes et plusieurs tableaux, *L'Île du Diable*, où se voient Ubu, Mme France, le commandant Malsain-Athalie-Afrique, le palotin Clam et ce capitaine Bordure, condamné pour avoir vendu le plan, sur papier pelure, de la citadelle de Thorn et qui ne cesse de crier son innocence. Puis ce sont des prophéties: « Sera représenté pour l'exposition de 1900, *Pantagruel*, pièce nationale en cinq actes et un prologue, que viennent de terminer Alfred Jarry et Claude Terrasse »; et des annonces: « Commerçants, bistros, propriétaires, ivrognes, pour bien clarifier vos vins, demandez la Poudre de Sang inodore de Charles Bonnard, en vente au laboratoire général de Bercy, 7, rue Soulagés ».⁴⁰

[A work obviously created by Mr. Jarry and Mr. Bonnard (and Mr. Terrasse if it had contained any notes). Thanks to this almanac one will live through the first three months of 1899, the year 8375 of Ubu's reign, without a care. One sad thing though: the partial eclipse of this monarch and father on 29, 30 and 31 February. But according to the recipes of Alexis, from Piemonte, one will be able to paint one's hair green, get rid of one's teeth, make gold out of salamanders. One will be moved by a play in three acts and multiple scenes, *Devil's Island*, which features Ubu, Mme France, Major Malsain-Athalie-Afrique, the *palotin* Clam and that Captain Bordure, condemned for having sold the map of the citadel of Thorn on a very thin sheet of paper and who keeps shouting he is innocent. Then there are the prophecies: 'To be staged at the International Exposition of 1900, *Pantagruel*, national play in five acts and a prologue, which Alfred Jarry and Claude Terrasse have just finished'; and the notices: 'Shopkeepers, bistros, landlords, drunks, to really purify your wines, ask for Charles Bonnard's odourless Blood Powder, on sale at the general laboratory in Bercy, 7 rue Soulagés.']

The Almanac was also announced in the *Mercure de France* together with the more expensive *Almanach Hachette* under the heading 'Divers' [Miscellaneous]:⁴¹ The writer and journalist Émile Strauss, a great admirer of Jarry, published an endorsement of the first Almanac in *La Critique* (20 January 1899). In his advertisement Strauss replicates the popular, pseudo-Rabelaisian tone of Ubu's Almanac:

'Achetez, vous y trouverez une matière concrète et compendieuse, idoine à la dilection de votre jéjunum mental; de plus, recettes de cuisine pour préparer coca, cacao, racacahout et l'amer. Y a de quoi bibiter et élender. Ouvrage sapientissime approuvé par S. S. Mgr François Coppée, archevêque in fistulibus de Lapoire-de-Boncrétien et S. E. le cardinal Basile Brunetière, évêque apostolique des deux mappemondes et autres lieux saints [...].'⁴²

[Buy, you will find it contains solid and compendious material, suited to the tastes of your mental jejunum; also, kitchen recipes to make coca, cacao, racacahout and bile. There is plenty to suckle on and to digest. This sapientissime work is approved by S. S. Monseigneur François Coppée, archbishop in fistulibus of Lapoire-de-Boncrétien and by S. E. the Cardinal Basile Brunetière, apostolic bishop of two globes and other holy places.]

The publication of Ubu's first Almanac did therefore not go completely unnoticed, but it was mentioned only in the more avant-garde journals and by people from Jarry's immediate literary circle.

Thanks to the personal recollections of Vollard, Fagus, Terrasse and Apollinaire, we know much more about how and when the second Almanac was written.

Surprisingly little has been said about Jarry's acquaintance with Vollard, even though Vollard's contribution to the Almanac places Jarry firmly in the context of the early artistic avant-garde of the twentieth century. Ambroise Vollard (1866–1939), originally from the island of Réunion, opened his first gallery in Paris in 1893. He organized a Van Gogh exhibition at a time when there was still little interest in him and was the first to exhibit Picasso's work in 1901. His gallery was famous for its cellar, the 'Cave de Vollard'. It served as a dining room, where writers and artists came to eat, drink and discuss.⁴³ Apollinaire described the cellar's bawdy ambiance and guests, mentioning 'a large number of pretty women' and many artists, including Jarry.⁴⁴ Vollard seemed genuinely fond of Jarry, writing that there was no 'nobler man of letters' and describing him as a 'humaniste de première force' [a first-class humanist].⁴⁵ Vollard would continue the tradition of Ubu's Almanacs after Jarry's death.⁴⁶ Jarry had first visited Vollard's gallery around the time it opened. In one of his early art reviews from 1894 Jarry discussed a painting by Pissarro that he had seen at Vollard's.⁴⁷ Vollard was anyway closely connected to Jarry's artistic circle, mainly through the Nabis, and the office of *La Revue Blanche* was right next door to his gallery.

In Vollard's version of events, the second Almanac was written in his basement in three days. He describes the process as a true collaborative effort between Jarry, himself, Terrasse, Bonnard, Fagus and several, unknown, others:

Ce fut dans une des réunions de la Cave — cette Cave dont j'ai raconté l'histoire — que naquit l'idée d'un *Almanach du Père Ubu*. Il faisait suite à l'almanach de poche que Jarry avait fait paraître après les représentations d'*Ubu Roi*. Le nouvel Almanach devait être, d'abord, exclusivement colonial. L'idée en était venue à Jarry en m'entendant raconter les histoires nègres de mon pays. Mais, au fur et à mesure que le texte s'élaborait, d'autres éléments s'y ajoutèrent par les apports de Jarry, Fagus, Claude Terrasse et quelques autres collaborateurs occasionnels. Il suffit de trois jours aux auteurs et à l'illustrateur Pierre Bonnard pour établir cet éphéméride qui s'imposait, en raison du nombre si restreint des almanachs utiles et, surtout, de leurs regrettables omissions.⁴⁸

[It was during one of the get-togethers at the Cellar — I already described its history — that the idea for an *Ubu Almanac* was born. It was a follow-up to the pocket-sized almanac Jarry had published after *Ubu Roi* had been staged. The new Almanac was initially meant to be exclusively colonial. Jarry got that idea when he heard me telling Negro stories from my native land. But the more the text developed, the more elements were added thanks to the contributions by Jarry, Fagus, Claude Terrasse and other occasional collaborators. It took the authors and illustrator Pierre Bonnard only three days to put together this periodical which proved itself valuable, because of the rather limited number of useful almanacs and, above all, because of what they regrettably left out.]

Although he attributes the creative idea for the Almanacs entirely to Jarry, Vollard also emphasizes the collective nature of the writing. Apollinaire supports Vollard's claim to have contributed the 'colonial theme' in the Almanac,⁴⁹ and adds that he was also responsible for the text of the song 'Tatane':

C'est dans la cave de la Rue Laffitte que fut composé le *Grand Almanach illustré*. Tout le monde sait que les auteurs en sont Alfred Jarry pour le texte, Bonnard

pour les illustrations et Claude Terrasse pour la musique. Quant à la chanson, elle est de M. Ambroise Vollard. Tout le monde sait cela et cependant personne ne semble avoir remarqué que le *Grand Almanach illustré* a été publié sans noms d'auteurs ni d'éditeur.⁵⁰

[The *Great illustrated Almanac* was created in the cellar at the Rue Laffitte. Everybody knows that Alfred Jarry wrote the text, that Bonnard did the illustrations and Claude Terrasse the music. The song is by M. Ambroise Vollard. Everybody knows that and yet no one seems to have noticed that the *Great illustrated Almanac* was published without the names of the authors or the editor.]

It has been suggested that Vollard was involved in the first Almanac.⁵¹ The original edition of the first Almanac included an advertisement for Vollard's gallery, which was left out in later editions. However, Vollard's involvement in the first Almanac remains uncertain.

Vollard suggests in his memoirs that others contributed to the second Almanac as well. In his diary Terrasse also mentions the presence of the painters Ranson and Odilon Redon at dinners during which the Almanac was conceived, but there is no further evidence of their possible input. Vollard's vague reference to several other mysterious collaborators, whether true or not, might well have been a deliberate mystification. Apollinaire similarly emphasizes the work's collective nature and explicitly points to the fact the Almanac was published anonymously, even though everyone knew the authors. It seems that all the collaborators, and even bystanders like Apollinaire, enjoyed obscuring the exact origins and authorship of the texts. Ubu had become such a well-known character in artistic circles by this point that it seemed he no longer belonged to Jarry, but to everyone. The first Almanac was also published without any mention of Jarry or Bonnard on the cover or the title page. The only names that appear are those of Père Ubu, and the printer, bookbinder and bookseller. Of course, popular almanacs were almost always anonymous or written under the name of a fictional character. Ubu's Almanacs, in which Père Ubu acts as the supposed scribe, playfully continue this mystifying tradition. People in literary circles would certainly suspect Jarry to be author, if only because of Ubu's name, but they might also have also read the names of the contributors listed in the advertisement in *La Revue Blanche*. Jarry perhaps thought that he had created such a powerful figure that he no longer needed to attach his name to the Almanacs: Ubu would sell the works for him. Jarry certainly made a statement by handing over the symbolic, authorial role to such a provocative figure as Ubu. The ambiguous, authorless nature of the project challenged a persistent idea of the author as a solitary genius. It seems that the collective writing of the Almanacs, the often mystifying testimonies by all involved, and the attribution of authorship to the fictional Ubu were deliberate strategies. These features allowed Jarry and his collaborators to play with existing concepts of authorship, to draw texts from incongruous sources, and to combine different artistic media.

Apollinaire writes that Terrasse was mainly responsible for the music of the song 'Tatane' in the second Almanac. However, according to Terrasse's journal, the idea of producing another Almanac actually came from him:

Jarry vient de la campagne sur la demande que je lui fais de reprendre *l'almanach du Père Ubu* pour le compte de Vollard avec illustrations de Bonnard. Nous déjeunons chez Bonnard. Jarry est en train, il raconte mille péripéties du Père Ubu qui est lui, et de son entourage à la campagne.⁵²

[Jarry visits from the countryside because I asked him to take up *Ubu's almanac* again at Vollard's expense with Bonnard's illustrations. We have lunch at Bonnard's. Jarry is on a roll, he tells a thousand stories about Père Ubu, meaning himself, and of his entourage in the countryside.]

Terrasse's personal papers provide the most detailed evidence of the collective writing in Vollard's cellar. On the 11 December 1900 his diary indicates a dinner at Vollard's with Jarry, Bonnard and his fellow Nabi painter, Ranson.⁵³ Terrasse was closely involved in the writing process.⁵⁴ On the 14 December, the men were working together on the Almanac's saints calendar.⁵⁵ Terrasse scribbled a list of sixty saints' names in his diary and several of them ended up in the final version.⁵⁶ On 15 and 17 December Terrasse, Jarry and Bonnard met up at Vollard's again to work on the text.

Terrasse's journal reveals how often the collaborators met up to work together. The total time they spent on it could not have been more than ten days, between the first meeting, on 10 December, and 21 December when Terrasse and Bonnard left Paris to spend Christmas with their family. On 22 December 1900, Jarry writes that he has an appointment with Vollard.⁵⁷ This fits the dates in Terrasse's journal entries and suggests that Jarry and Vollard were left to finish the work between Christmas and New Year. Jarry did the editing and Vollard was in charge of the practicalities. Since the men were probably not working on the Almanac every single day, Vollard's mention of three days might not be that far-fetched.

The least well-known collaborator to the second Almanac was poet Félicien Fagus (1872–1933), pseudonym of Georges Faillet, who was born in Brussels as the son of an ex-Communard. Poet, anarchist and 'fort buveur' [heavy drinker]⁵⁸ during the evening, Fagus had a prosaic day job as a civil servant working at the birth registration office for the Préfecture de la Seine. In addition he was employed as an art critic by *La Revue Blanche* and was the only one to review Picasso's first exhibition at Vollard's gallery. Jarry and Fagus were friends and admired each other's work. Later in life, Fagus warmly recalled his cheap dinners with Jarry, their stimulating conversation and his 'discreet' contribution to the second Almanac:

Je l'ai bien connu, lui, eus même l'honneur d'être son collabo discret pour son second Calendrier du Père Ubu; nous dînâmes ensemble au Tonneau de la rue de Buci, au coin de la rue Grégoire-de-Tours, aux temps où une soupe aux légumes y coûtait 4 sous, un haricots rouges, 6 sous, et le vin 4 ou 6 sous la chopine. Cet autre être de genie: rien qu'à converser avec lui ou plutôt l'écouter, vous enivrait sans avoir bu.⁵⁹

[I knew him well, even had the honour of being his discreet collaborator for the second Calendar of Père Ubu; we dined together at Tonneau in the Rue de Buci, at the corner of the Rue Grégoire-de-Tours, back in the days when a vegetable soup cost 4 pence, a dish of kidney beans 6 pence and wine 4 or 6 pence per mug. A different sort of genius: merely talking with him or rather listening to him would make you drunk.]

When he commemorated Jarry in 'Le Noyé récalcitrant' (1907) Fagus suggested that he also contributed to the first Almanac.⁶⁰ What we do know is that Fagus provided a list of official names used at the birth registration office to be included in the second Almanac's saints calendar, as Vollard recalled:

La tâche nous fut grandement facilitée par le regretté Fagus qui était alors attaché dans une mairie au bureau des déclarations de naissances. À ce titre, il détenait la liste administrative des prénoms autorisés par la loi. Cette nomenclature officielle nous offrait toute garantie. Nous pouvions dès lors y puiser, en toute sûreté, pour composer notre phalange des patrons célestes.⁶¹

[Our task was made considerably easier by the late Fagus who worked for the council's birth registration office at the time. In this capacity he possessed the list of first names authorized by law. This official nomenclature offered us every guarantee. We could then draw from it in all safety to create our order of celestial masters.]

The second Almanac was officially published on the 1 January 1901, and Terrasse noted in early January that he and Bonnard were waiting for the Almanac to arrive.⁶² This Almanac, with its indication 'XXe siècle' [twentieth century], was meant to cover not just the year 1901, but the entire new century. It was larger in size (20 × 28 cm) than the first one and contained seventy-nine lithographs in red and blue. According to Vollard, a thousand copies were printed, but his memory might not be entirely reliable. The *Catalogue générale de la librairie française* indicates that only 200 copies were issued.⁶³ Unlike the first, the second Almanac was at least mentioned in the catalogue and, much to everyone's delight no doubt, was listed among other 'serious' almanacs.

The price of the second Almanac was two francs, considerably more than the 50 centimes of the first one. Twenty-five copies were printed on 'japon impérial' paper, numbered from 1 to 25. Twenty-five copies were printed on Dutch Van Gelder paper, numbered 26 to 50. Copies 1–25 also contained a separate print, in black, on 'japon', of all the illustrations. Vollard's plan to sell them as individually numbered collectors' items failed. Even after the price had been reduced (Vollard eventually tried to sell it as a bargain), the Almanac did not sell well. Some copies carry the mention 'second edition', but this was fictitious and another mystification by the authors, perhaps to raise interest by conveying a suggestion of success.⁶⁴ Equally fictitious was the mention 'on sale everywhere'. Vollard recalled that only one Flammarion bookshop on the Boulevard des Italiens was willing to buy five copies.⁶⁵ Vollard kept a few at his gallery, but most copies remained at the printer's. Years later, after a bookshop had asked for some copies of the Almanac, Vollard went to the printer only to discover that his stock of Almanacs, or 'some idiotic thing written by someone called Père Ubu' according to the printer, had been destroyed.⁶⁶

There was again no reference to Jarry or any of the other contributors, either on the cover or on the title page. However, Bonnard and Terrasse are mentioned in an advertisement that Jarry himself wrote for *La Revue Blanche* in January 1901:

Almanach du Père Ubu pour le XXe siècle (en vente partout)
Revue des plus récents événements politiques, littéraires, artistiques, coloniaux,

par-devant le Père Ubu. Un trait de la silhouette de ce pantin est mis en lumière ici, qui n'avait point servi dans Ubu Roi ni sa contre-partie Ubu enchaîné: nous parlons de la... «pataphysique» du personnage, plus simplement son assurance à dissenter de *omni re scibili*, tantôt avec compétence, aussi volontiers avec absurdité, mais dans ce dernier cas cuisant une logique d'autant plus irréfutable que celle du fou ou du gâteux: «Il y a deux sortes de rats, professe-t-il, par exemple, le rat de ville et le rat des champs; oser dire que nous ne sommes pas un grand entomologiste! Le rat des champs est plus prolifique parce qu'il a plus de place pour élever sa progéniture...» L'almanach est illustré de très synthétiques dessins de Pierre Bonnard et accompagné de musique nouvelle de Claude Terrasse.

Alfred Jarry⁶⁷

[Ubu's Almanac for the twentieth century (on sale everywhere). Review of the most recent political, literary, artistic and colonial events as seen through the eyes of Père Ubu. One aspect of this puppet's figure is highlighted here; something not really used in Ubu Roi or in his counterpart Ubu enchaîné: we are talking about the character's... «pataphysics», or, more simply, his confidence to speak *de omni re scibili* [on everything that can be known], sometimes skilfully, just as gladly in an absurd manner, but in the latter case cooking up a logic just as irrefutable as that of the madman or the dotard: 'There are two types of rats,' he professes for example, 'the city rat and the field rat; dare you say that we are not a great entomologist! The field rat is more prolific, because he has more space to raise his offspring...' The almanac is illustrated with very comprehensive drawings by Pierre Bonnard and accompanied by new music by Claude Terrasse. Alfred Jarry]

Jarry promotes Ubu's second Almanac without directly referring to himself as the author. Vollard's and Fagus's contributions are not mentioned either, and according to Vollard the printer had refused to put his name on the work, owing to the scandalous content that 'we had invented.'⁶⁸ Of course no one in literary and artistic circles, and certainly not in Jarry's in-crowd, would have doubted who the author was, but this mystifying pseudo-anonymity did seem to fool others. The printer, for example, had been convinced that the author was indeed 'someone called Père Ubu'.

The second Almanac was also announced in the *Mercure de France*, claiming (again falsely) that it was 'on sale everywhere.'⁶⁹ In a review of Jarry's novel *Le Surmâle* (1902) the Phalanstère member Quillard later referred to the second Almanac. His review is accompanied by one of Bonnard's drawings for the first Almanac, and in it Quillard praises Jarry's innovative use of language and refers to the importance of the Almanac.⁷⁰

Although neither a commercial nor a large critical success, the Almanacs were known and appreciated among Jarry's literary and artistic circle, which included new arrivals on the scene. In the following years, Fagus and Jarry became regulars at the literary banquets organized by *La Plume*, and when Jarry met Apollinaire at the first banquet, the two men played billiards until three in the morning.⁷¹ They formed a group together with André Salmon, Fagus and the poet Paul Fort. Jarry, Fagus and Fort were regarded as the 'aînés pittoresques' [colourful elders] and they became mentors to this younger generation which included Picasso.⁷² Fagus had written a collection of anarchist poetry in 1898, *Testament de ma vie première*.⁷³ Picasso,

who must have remembered Fagus's positive review of his work, kept a copy of the volume in his atelier at the Bateau Lavoir and later gave it to André Salmon.⁷⁴ In a letter from this period Apollinaire wrote that Fagus and Jarry genuinely liked him and that Jarry was one of his most sincere literary friends.⁷⁵ In October 1903 Jarry contributed to the second issue of Apollinaire's magazine *Festin d'Ésope*.

Jarry acted as a bridge between the Symbolist generation and the new avant-garde forming around Apollinaire. The Almanacs are crucial documents reflecting this transition and they showcase Jarry's distinctive vision of literature. Both publications break new ground in their amalgam of cultural contexts, from high literary Symbolism to forms of popular culture such as the artistic cabarets of Montmartre, and in their mixing of the different artistic spheres of literature, the visual arts and music, all harnessed to an apparently authorless project, provocatively attributed to the unlikely figure of Père Ubu. It was perhaps no wonder, therefore, that the new generation admired Jarry. By means of the Almanacs and their symbolic author, Ubu, Jarry heralded a new, artistic paradigm at the beginning of the twentieth century. Both works foreshadow several new techniques that were about to be introduced in art and literature, not in the least the use of collage and it is to this practice that I shall now turn.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. See Jarry's correspondence letters from 1900 until his death in 1907, *OC III*, pp. 594–95. Many of these letters illustrate his often difficult negotiations with publishers and editors.
2. Aurélien Lugné-Poe, *Acrobaties: Souvenirs et impressions de théâtre (1894–1902)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1931), pp. 159–95.
3. Vallette would only publish his work 'à la condition que le père Ubu consente à être clair' [provided that Père Ubu agrees to be clear]. Letter Vallette to Jarry, 9 January 1899, published in *Cahiers du Collège de Pataphysique*, 26/27 (1956), p. 68.
4. 'Compagnon. J'ai oublié de vous dire hier au sujet de mon in-18 et ce matin je me suis levé beaucoup trop tard pour venir vous en informer, qu'il est bien entendu que même s'il paraît invendable au Mercure, je n'y change rien du tout dans l'ordre des chapitres ni en rien' [Comrade. I forget to say something to you yesterday concerning my in-18, and this morning I got out of bed much too late to come and tell you, which is that even if it appears not to sell at Mercure, I will not change anything in the order of the chapters or anything else], letter Jarry to Vallette, 1899, *OC I*, p. 1075.
5. Michel Décaudin, *La Crise des valeurs symbolistes: Vingt ans de poésie française* (Toulouse: Privat, 1960), pp. 249–54.
6. Picasso's girlfriend Fernande Olivier recalled how she met Jarry shortly before his death and how he and his long-time friend Arthur Cremona would 'often go out drinking together, collecting bottles throughout the course of the evening, which Jarry would take back to his house', Fernande Olivier, *Loving Picasso: The Private Journal of Fernande Olivier* (New York: Abrams, 2001), p. 202. Jarry knew Cremona from his days at the periodical *l'Art Littéraire* in 1893.
7. '...Alfred Jarry dirigeant la cérémonie à la manière du Père Ubu, pas mécontent néanmoins de renifler un peu de l'air du temps où il se voulait poète symboliste' [...Alfred Jarry leading the ceremony in the manner of Père Ubu, rather pleased nevertheless to sniff at the days when he saw himself as a Symbolist poet], André Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940* (Paris: Gallimard, 2004), p. 152.
8. On the debates in the eclectic Symbolist movement see for example Pamela A. Genova, *Symbolist Journals: A Culture of Correspondence*, Studies in European Cultural Transition (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002).
9. See Décaudin, *La Crise des valeurs symbolistes*.

10. On this context see among others Guillaume Apollinaire, *Flâneur des deux rives suivi de contemporains pittoresques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975); Guillaume Apollinaire, *Journal Intime*, ed. by Michel Décaudin (Paris: Éditions du Limon, 1991); John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso. Volume 1: 1881–1906* (New York: Random House, 1991); Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*; Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the avant-garde in France 1885 to World War I. Alfred Jarry, Henri Rousseau, Erik Satie, Guillaume Apollinaire* (New York: Random House, 1968).
11. See Fisher, *The Pataphysicians Library*. Fisher shows how Jarry's literary tastes were rooted in Symbolism.
12. Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, 'La Littérature des almanachs: Réflexions sur l'anthropologie du fait littéraire', *Études françaises*, 36, 3 (2000), pp. 47–63 (pp. 48–49).
13. See Geneviève Bollème, *Les Almanachs populaires aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: Essai d'histoire sociale* (Paris and La Haye: Mouton & Co, 1969).
14. *Catalogue générale de la librairie française 1891–1899* (1900).
15. *Almanach populaire 1899* (Paris and Lille: Desclée, De Brouwer et Cie (Société St-Augustin), 1898).
16. According to the *Catalogue générale de la librairie française 1891–1899*. Examples include Henri Welschinger, *Les Almanachs de la Révolution* (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles, 1884), Victor Champier, *Les Anciens Almanachs illustrés* (Paris: L. Frinzing et Cie, 1886), Savigny de Moncorps, *Bibliographie de quelques almanachs illustrés du XVIIIe siècle (1759–1790)* (Châteaudun, 1891), John Grand-Carteret, *Les Almanachs français 1600–1895* (Paris: J. Alisie et Cie, 1896).
17. Lüsebrink, 'La Littérature des Almanachs', p. 62.
18. See also Bernard Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-garde* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Charles Rearick, *Pleasures of the Belle Epoque: Entertainment and Festivity in Turn of the Century France* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1985); *Montmartre and the Making of Mass Culture*, ed. by Gabriel P. Weisberg (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001); Jerrold Seigel, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life 1830–1930* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 215–41.
19. For an overview of these groups see Daniel Grojnowski & Bernard Sarrazin, *L'Esprit fumiste et les rires fin de siècle. Anthologie* (Paris: Corti, 1990) and also Daniel Grojnowski, *Aux commencements du rire moderne: L'Esprit fumiste* (Paris: Corti, 1997).
20. Rearick, *Pleasures of the Belle Epoque*, p. 46.
21. Weisberg, ed., *Montmartre and the Making of Mass Culture*, pp. 192–97.
22. See Cate and Shaw, eds, *The Spirit of Montmartre*.
23. Arnaud, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 191. See also Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 170 & p. 231. Lord Alfred Douglas was staying in Paris at the time to escape the scandal of the Wilde trial. Douglas and Jarry probably knew each other through their mutual friend Ernest La Jeunesse. Douglas appears as the character Bondroit in Jarry's novel *Les Jours et les Nuits* (1897).
24. 'Voici pourquoi j'ai confiance dans cette idée d'un gosse dans le rôle de Bougrelias; j'en connais un à Montmartre qui est très beau, avec des yeux étonnants et des cheveux bruns bouclés jusqu'aux reins. Il a treize ans et est assez intelligent pourvue qu'on s'en occupe. Ce serait peut-être un clou pour *Ubu*, exciterait des vieilles dames et ferait crier au scandale certains; en tout cas, ça ferait faire attention à des gens; et puis ça ne s'est jamais vu et je crois qu'il faut que l'"Œuvre" monopolise toutes les innovations' [This is why I am confident about the idea of a kid in the role of Bougrelias; I know one in Montmartre who is very beautiful, with amazing eyes and brown curly hair down to his waist. He is thirteen and is pretty intelligent provided one puts him to it. It could perhaps be a star attraction for *Ubu*, would excite some old ladies and scandalize others; in any case it would attract people's attention; also, it has never been seen before and I believe "l'Œuvre" should monopolise every innovation], *OC I*, p. 1050.
25. 'J'ai pensé au Footit dans Bordure car la scène se passant en Pologne, il est urgent qu'il ait l'accent anglais [...] La scène que vous avez bien voulu citer d'Achras sera jouée au Chat Noir' [I thought of Footit as Bordure because, seeing the scene is set in Poland, it is necessary that he has an English accent [...] The scene with Achras that you wanted to cite will be played at the Chat Noir], letter Jarry to Armand Sylvestre, 17 November 1896, published in *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 63/64 (1995), pp. 6–7.

26. Also remarked by Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 379.
27. Jarry to Quillard, 6 December 1898, *OC I*, p. 1073.
28. 'Père Ubu, voici la strophe, saphique seulement par la pensée: Amor ardores extinguis! Doceat matrona pinguis. Vos circumlambere linguus. *Le saule, Le saule*. Si c'est le texte intégral que vous désirez, prévenez-m'en au plus vite: car je vais m'absenter pour quelques jours...' [Père Ubu, here is the verse, saphic in thought only: Amor ardores extinguis! Doceat matrona pinguis. Vos circumlambere linguus. *The willow, The willow*. If you want the full text, let me know as soon as possible: I am just about to leave for a few days...], Pierre Quillard to Jarry, 7 December 1898, *OC I*, p. 1297.
29. Bonnard also made several preparatory sketches. See Antoine Terrasse, *Bonnard illustrateur* (Paris: Biro, 1988), p. 56.
30. Timothy Hyman, *Bonnard* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), p. 40.
31. Philippe Cathé, *Claude Terrasse* (Paris: Éditions l'Hexaèdre, 2004), p. 44.
32. Jarry wrote the libretto to Terrasse's music. *Pantagruel* was finally performed in 1911 at the Opera of Lyon, but never made it to Paris.
33. Jarry to Quillard, 6 December 1898, *OC I*, p. 1073.
34. Renaud had also printed *Les Minutes de sable mémorial* (1894), *César-Antéchrist* (1895), *Ubu roi* (1896), *L'Ymagier* (1894/5) and *Perhindérion* (1896).
35. 'Mon cher ami, L'adresse du brocheur du 1er Almanach est: Guyot, 54, rue de Seine, mais comme c'est un grand brocheur il est souvent très occupé et peu exact' [My dear friend, The address of the binder of the first Almanac is: Guyot, 54 Rue de Seine, but since it's a large workshop he is often very busy and careless], Jarry to Claude Terrasse, 12 February 1902, *OC I*, p. 1076.
36. Jarry, always in need of money, frequently turned to this bookseller to resell books and magazines he had received for reviews. See *OC I*, p. 1206 and *OC III*, p. 932.
37. In 1899 Jarry sent a copy to writer Gustave Kahn and his wife, with the dedication: 'Hommage respectueux du Père Ubu en personne à Madame Gustave Kahn. Cet exemplaire est valable en tant que diplôme de grande dame de l'ordre de la Gidouille' [Respectful homage to Madame Gustave Kahn by Père Ubu himself. This copy is a valid certificate of being a grande dame in the order of the Potbelly]. Quoted in Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 236. The Collège de Pataphysique held Henri de Regnier's copy, with a similar 'homage' from Père Ubu ('Omaje du Père Ubu'), see Arnaud, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 430.
38. 'J'ai retrouvé des tas d'*Almanachs*: je vous en transmets un pour votre ami en pur don; et si vous en voulez d'autres, il y en a encore!' [I have found plenty of Almanacs: I give you one for your friend as a true gift; and if you want others, there are more left!], Jarry to Fontainas, February 1902, *OC III*, p. 559.
39. Jarry to Terrasse, 12 February 1902, *OC I*, p. 1076-77.
40. *La Revue Blanche*, vol. XVIII janvier-février-mars-avril 1899 (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1968), p. 160.
41. It reads: 'Divers. — *Almanach Hachette pour 1899*; 1.50. — *Almanach du Père Ubu pour le premier trimestre 1899, illustré*; o fr. 50.', *Le Mercure de France*, t. 29, janvier-mars 1899, p. 286.
42. Quoted in *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 17/18 (1983), p. 23.
43. Ambroise Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1948), pp. 105-20.
44. 'On peut citer parmi les convives de ces agapes souterraines, tout d'abord un grand nombre de jolies femmes, puis M. Léon Dierx, prince des poètes, le prince des dessinateurs, M. Forain; Alfred Jarry, Odilon Redon, Maurice Denis, Maurice de Vlaminck, Count Kessler, José Maria Sert, Vuillard, Bonnard, K.-X. Roussel, Aristide Maillol, Picasso, Émile Bernard, Derain, Marius-Ary Leblond, Claude Terrasse, etc., etc.' [Among the guests at these underground feasts one can mention first of all a large number of pretty women, then M. Léon Dierx, prince of poets, the prince of illustrators, M. Forain ...], Apollinaire, *Flâneur des deux rives suivi de contemporains pittoresques*, pp. 75-76.
45. Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux*, pp. 122-23.
46. Vollard later wrote the satirical *Père Ubu à l'hôpital* (1917), *Père Ubu à l'aviation* (1918), *La Politique coloniale d'Ubu* (1919), *Père Ubu à la guerre* (1920), *Père Ubu aux pays des Soviets* (1924) and *Réincarnations du Père Ubu* (1925).

47. OC I, p. 1018.
48. Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux*, p. 357.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 360
50. Apollinaire, *Flâneur des deux rives suivi de contemporains pittoresques*, pp. 78–79.
51. Jean-Paul Morel, 'Ambroise Vollard: How & where I met Père Ubu', in *Alfred Jarry: De los Nabis a la patafísica* (Valencia: IVAM–Centre Julio González, 2000), pp. 210–19 (p. 213).
52. Journal of Terrasse 10 December 1900, cited in Philippe Cathé, 'Jarry-Terrasse au travail: Le grand Almanach illustré du Père Ubu d'après des documents inédits', *Viridis Candela (Carnets trimestriels du Collège de Pataphysique)*, 3 (2001), 73–76 (p. 73).
53. *Ibid.*, p. 74. Terrasse noted in his diary: 'Dimanche 9 décembre: minuit trouvé lettre [...] Jarry; lundi 10: « Matinée [...] Jarry, mardi 11: Dîner Vollard [avec] Jarry' [Sunday 9 December: midnight found letter [...] Jarry; Monday 10: Afternoon [...] Jarry, Tuesday 11: Dinner Vollard [with] Jarry']. In his journal of the same day: 'Dîner chez Vollard avec Jarry, Pierre et Ranson' [Dinner at Vollard's with Jarry, Pierre and Ranson].
54. *Ibid.*, p. 76. 'l'*Almanach du Père Ubu* que Pierre a illustré et à la rédaction duquel j'ai aidé Jarry' [Ubu's Almanac that Pierre illustrated and which I helped Jarry to write].
55. *Ibid.* 'Travaillons à l'almanach dans le sous-sol de Vollard rue Laffitte. Faisons la liste des saints du calendrier' [Working on the almanac in the basement of Vollard Rue Laffitte. Making the list of the saints' calendar].
56. *Ibid.*
57. Letter Jarry to Jehan Rictus, 22 December 1901, *OC III*, p. 546.
58. Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*, p. 82.
59. 'Les deux *Almanachs du Père Ubu* (auxquels nous sommes glorieux d'avoir contribué)' [The two Ubu Almanacs (to which we are honoured to have contributed)], Fagus, *Le Divan (50 lettres de Fagus)* 26, 189, (Oct–Nov 1934), 324–25.
60. Eulogy from *l'Occident*, November 1907, later re-published in *Les Marges*, January 1922, quoted in Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 686.
61. Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux*, p. 358.
62. 'Rien au courrier, qui vient apporter une modeste carte de visite, alors que nous attendions tous des lettres. Pierre et moi, l'*Almanach du Père Ubu* que Pierre a illustré et à la rédaction duquel j'ai aidé Jarry' [Nothing in the post, which just brought in a modest calling card, while we were all awaiting letters. Pierre and me, Ubu's Almanac, which Pierre illustrated and which I helped Jarry to write], Cathé, 'Jarry-Terrasse au travail', p. 76.
63. 'Almanach illustré du Père Ubu, pour le XXe siècle. In-40. Vollard. 2 fr. Tiré à 200 exemplaires.' *Catalogue générale de la librairie française, 1900–1905* (1906).
64. A dedication in one copy of the Almanac makes this perfectly clear. It reads: 'À Charles Guérin, hommage du Père Ubu, en lui certifiant que cette seconde édition de l'Almanach en est la première' [To Charles Guérin, homage from Père Ubu, assuring him that this second edition of the Almanac is the first], *OC I*, p. 1211.
65. 'Seul le Flammarion du Boulevard des Italiens se hasarda à prendre cinq exemplaires. Les autres libraires ne consentirent même pas à le recevoir « à condition »' [Only the Flammarion on the Boulevard des Italiens took the risk of ordering five copies. The other book shops would not even agree to take it on 'sale or return'], Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux*, p. 364.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
67. *La Revue Blanche*, vol. XXIV janvier-février-mars-avril 1901 (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1968), p. 78.
68. Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux*, p. 364.
69. 'l'*Almanach du Père Ubu illustré*, pour le XXe siècle vient de paraître sur sept feuilles in-8 carré. En vente partout' [Ubu's illustrated Almanac for the twentieth century has just appeared on seven sheets of square in-8. On sale everywhere], *Le Mercure de France*, January 1901, « Échos », p. 287.
70. 'Dans le mémorable dialogue entre le Père Ubu et sa Conscience que chacun peut lire en achetant l'*Almanach illustré du Père Ubu*, on n'a pas assez remarqué de très importantes paroles' [In the memorable dialogue between Père Ubu and his Conscience which anyone can read when buying Ubu's illustrated Almanac, people have neglected to notice some very important words],

Pierre Quillard, 'De l'imagination et de l'expression chez M. Alfred Jarry', *La Revue Blanche*, July 1902, p. 198.

71. Apollinaire, *Flâneur des deux rives suivi de contemporains pittoresques*, pp. 88–96. Apollinaire, *Journal Intime*, pp. 127/28.

72. Décaudin, *La Crise des valeurs symbolistes*, p. 249.

73. Salmon recalled one particular *La Plume* banquet when an intoxicated Fagus sat behind his piano and sang an anarchist hymn with a chorus full of innuendo: 'Hardi les gars! C'est Germinal qui fera lever les semailles!' [Toughen up chaps! Germinal will flush out the seeds!], Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*, p. 83.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

75. 'On m'aime assez je crois. Mais ceux qui m'aiment le plus sont: Fagus, Alfred Jarry, Charles-Henry Hirsch. Les deux derniers qui sont exquis sont mes amis littéraires les plus sincères' [People like me, I think. But the ones that like me best are: Fagus, Alfred Jarry, Charles-Henry Hirsch. The last two are delightful and my most genuine literary friends], letter from Apollinaire to James Onimus, July 1903, *L'Etoile-Absinthe*, 75/76 (1997), p. 11.

CHAPTER 2



Collage

Although the term collage was never used by Jarry, its technique and its aesthetic principles are clearly in evidence in both *Almanacs*. Collage made its first public appearance in the visual arts with the Cubist ‘*papiers collés*’ in the years before the First World War, after which it became a much used technique and widely invoked principle in twentieth-century art and literature.¹ Picasso and Braque cut and pasted existing materials into their works, breaking with the flat plane of a painting and the unity of composition. Obviously collage in literature differs from collage in the visual arts. Like a collage painting, a literary collage can be visually heterogeneous, juxtaposing texts and image for example. However, it can also be stylistically or grammatically heterogeneous. A rupture in style or grammar can equally indicate the presence of a foreign or extraneous element in a literary work.² The conflict created by the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements varies in a collage text, but the ‘glue’ stays visible, whether on a graphic level or on the level of narrative and stylistic coherence. Despite their new arrangement, the fragments remain more or less recognizable. Collage — and this was certainly the case in Jarry’s time — challenges a concept of the work of art as an organic whole, producing an effect of estrangement while at the same time forcing the reader or viewer to take up an active role in its interpretation.³

A strong philosophical dimension is in fact what separates the use of collage in modern art from the technique itself, which had of course existed for centuries, for example in medieval, iconic art.⁴ The collage procedure was picked up by twentieth-century artists and writers as a subversive aesthetic principle, a ‘conscious act’ designed to rethink pictorial and narrative conventions and modes of representation.⁵ The use of collage in literature, and the way Jarry employs it in the *Almanacs*, can therefore be understood as a provocative tactic. It involves the incorporation of various pre-existent or pseudo pre-existent materials (whether text or image) which results in a heterogeneous and fragmented work, intended to disrupt the unity and coherence of narrative.⁶

Collage in the First *Almanac*

An initial feature that contributes to the collage aesthetic in Ubu’s first *Almanac* is the work’s eclectic mix of genres. At first glance the texts appear to conform to the structure and conventions of the traditional almanac, which always comprised a variety of genres (see Fig. 2.1).⁷ However, the content of the sections in Ubu’s

Table	
Comput ecclésiastique et séculier	2
Fêtes mobiles et immobiles de cet hiver	2
Quatre-Temps	3
Eclipses de la lune et du soleil	3
Eclipses du Père Ubu	3
Grandes marées	4
Calendriers des trois mois	6
Connaissances utiles	12
Variétés. — Exhortation au lecteur	16
Foires	22
L'agronome citadin	23
Traits de probité	35
Ephémérides actuelles : L'Île du Diable, pièce secrète	39
La Fête automobile	52
Nécrologie	79
Primes, conseils aux capitalistes et perd-de- famille	84
Grand Ordre de la Gidouille	86
Prophéties	88

FIG. 2.1: Table of contents
of first Almanac

Almanacs barely fulfil the expectations raised by their conventional titles. The 'useful knowledge' section, for example, has Ubu triumphantly announcing his latest inventions, namely umbrellas, gloves and slippers, information which is neither new nor especially useful. Another example is the section 'Éphémérides actuelles' [Memorable current events]. Its title suggests that this is the traditional news section. However, the subtitle 'Île du Diable, pièce secrète en 3 ans et plusieurs tableaux' [Devil's Island, secret play in three years and multiple scenes] reveals that it is in fact also a drama, starring the protagonists from *Ubu Roi*.

The variety of genres contained in traditional almanacs was partly a consequence of their adherence to short and simple forms. The brevity and simplicity of the different types of text (proverbs or poems for example) were supposed to encourage the reader towards repeated reading, reflection and memorization.⁸ But in contrast to traditional almanacs, which had a practical or moral message to convey, Ubu's Almanac is hardly a coherent, practical handbook or source of wisdom. Instead, the texts toy with genre conventions and reader expectations. The mixing of genres leaves the reader with a fragmented work in which it is hard to detect any kind of unified message. Yet the Almanac does have an overarching narrative framework, namely its discussion of current events.

Lists

This is perhaps best illustrated by a closer look at a very specific genre, the list. Lists are a conspicuous feature in both Almanacs and the one that has the greatest visual impact in the first Almanac is the saints' calendar. It covers the first three months of the year and is spread over six pages in the original edition. The official holy days of the Roman Catholic Church are shown in this calendar as are the saints' days; in fact, the calendar appears to have been copied from the *Almanach Hachette*.⁹ The saints' calendar is an obligatory part of any almanac, which Jarry respects here,

but it is also included because of Jarry's general fascination with lists of all sorts. In this respect his work joins a longstanding tradition of lists in literary and visual culture, recently mapped by Umberto Eco.¹⁰ Jarry's love of lists was not confined to the Almanacs. In *Faustroll* for example we find the twenty-seven 'livres pairs' [books by peers], an inventory of Faustroll's library. Ben Fisher has pointed to the obvious influence of Rabelais on this text, but without discussing the effect of these lists in the narrative.¹¹ Patrick Besnier has briefly addressed the lists in the Almanacs and regards them as 'lists for list's sake'.¹² He believes that they primarily reflect Jarry's love of language and wordplay, but also suggests that the list of names conveys a certain encyclopaedic desire on the part of Jarry to honour his contemporaries and to preserve their names for history. The lists in the Almanac certainly reflect these preoccupations, but in addition they reveal much about Jarry's particular use of language.

The section 'L'Agronome citadin' [the agricultural city dweller] plays with two functions of the traditional almanac. First of all the popular almanac provided tips and information related to the seasons and the calendar. Secondly, its task was to provide an interpretation of the world and of the relationship man has with the world through the calendar and the zodiac. These traditional features enable Jarry to refer to contemporary culture and politics by means of the associations made in the text with each calendar month and its zodiac sign. Thus the section entitled 'Mars' contains an inventory prompted at first by all things 'useful' in the month of March:

Sont bons tout ce mois tous animaux, ustensiles et végétaux cornus, béliers (signe zodiacal du mois), taureaux, escargots, diables, lièvres, fourches, fourchettes, la lettre Y et les racines de crocus.¹³

[Good this entire month are all horned animals, utensils and plants, rams (zodiac sign of the month), bulls, snails, devils, hares, pitchforks, forks, the letter Y and the roots of a crocus.]

The zodiac sign of Aries (a ram) that dominates the month of March guides this enumeration that descends into all sorts of things associated with that sign. A ram of course has horns and the common symbol for this zodiac sign is the letter Y.¹⁴ Every animal, utensil or plant with horns or in the shape of Y is therefore considered 'of use' for this month. Some are listed because of their semantic association with horned beasts ('cornus'), such as bulls, devils, snails, all sporting horns in one way or another. Others share a visual resemblance with the shape of the letter Y: hares, forks, the letter Y itself and the roots of a crocus.

In the Almanac Jarry makes use of closed lists as well as open-ended lists (enumerations).¹⁵ Closed lists are bound by a certain number or a stable logic. The saints' calendar, with one saint for each day of the month, is a good example of this type. But when nothing appears to limit the list, it becomes an open-ended enumeration. The March list could be seen as a hybrid form. It contains a number of logical, limited elements — for example animals which are useful as food in this month — but the other associations form a catalogue to which many other items could easily be added, whether by the author or the reader. Eco might categorize the March list as an instance of 'coherent excess', since there is an underlying principle that guides

Jarry's eclectic enumeration.¹⁶ The items listed are 'bons' because their presence is justified by their linguistic, semantic or visual connection to the sign Mars. That (semiotic) sign steers the writing, in this case the list.

Lists are a good example of the kind of word association that Jarry was fond of. This type of writing characterizes not only the lists of the Almanacs, but virtually all his texts. Jarry's concept of language, more reminiscent of poetry than of prose writing, was rooted in Symbolism. In 'Linteau', the preface to *Les Minutes de sable mémorial* (1894), a collection of prose, essays and poems, Jarry wrote that the literary text should 'suggérer au lieu de dire, faire dans la route des phrases un carrefour de tous les mots' [suggest instead of tell, create a crossroads of all words on the road of sentences].¹⁷ The phrase is clearly inspired by Mallarmé's idea of poetic language as suggestive and ambiguous.¹⁸ In 'Linteau' Jarry further shows his debt to Mallarmé when he refers to words as 'polyèdres d'idées' [polyhedrons of ideas].¹⁹ The term *polyèdre* — literally a 'solid object with multiple surfaces' — acts as a metaphor for Jarry's much cherished ideal of semiotic polyvalence. Jarry emphasizes the polysemic and associative possibilities of language when he writes that 'le rapport de la phrase verbale à tout sens qu'on y puisse trouver est [...] indéfiniment varié' [the connection between the verbal sentence and all the meanings it contains is [...] indefinitely variable].²⁰

In the Almanac, the 'trigger' for the narrative can be a word, a sign, or an image after which Jarry explores all its possible synonyms, homonyms and antonyms. He playfully associates whether on the basis of sound, the resemblances or contrasts between words, or their meaning(s), or even on a visual basis, as, for example, with the Y shape in the March list. Essential and striking in Jarry's use of collage is this play with literal or figurative meanings and phonetic punning.

Wordplay is essential to Jarry's style. This often has comic effects, but many associations are not always as playful or light-hearted as they seem at first. The associations with March are continued in another list. This time however, 'Mars' is understood as the god Mars which triggers a list of figures associated with war, violence, repression and authority in general, to include loyal guardians of the French Republic. The previous list of rather trivial objects, plants and animals now evolves into an enumeration of contemporary figures, cultural life and political events.

Ubu itemizes seventeen of his 'good friends, subjects and notables of Paris' (Fig. 2.2). This is a selection of people from Jarry's inner circle (Roussel, Franc-Nohain), celebrated authors (Hermant, Gandillot) and some movers and shakers of *fin-de-siècle* political life (Scheurer-Kestner, Judet, Freycinet). Again, we are dealing with an open-ended enumeration; others could easily be added. Although the choice for these specific names might not be clear, several were intellectuals who played some part in the Dreyfus Affair. Some reappear at the end of the mini-play 'Devil's Island' later on in the Almanac. Every now and then the list is interrupted by short fragments of dialogue uttered by Captain Bordure, one of Ubu's 'bons sujets' in *Ubu Roi*. While the narrator Ubu records the names, one can picture Bordure standing next to him, asking questions and handing out orders to his 'soldiers' standing in line. Bordure's comments refer to contemporary French army politics and further develop the association between Mars and everything military. His rather

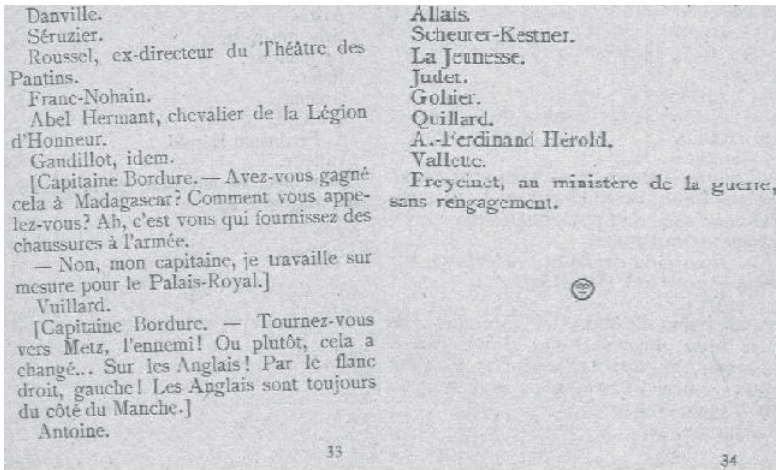


FIG. 2.2: List of names at the end of 'Agronome Citadin. Mars', first Almanac

unexpected appearance here is therefore justified by his status as Ubu's military accomplice.

The fact that the wordplay is hardly ever random in Jarry's texts is perfectly illustrated by the name of Gandillot. His title as 'chevalier' in the Légion d'Honneur connects him to the military theme of this list. This prompts a dialogue intermezzo, in which Bordure asks if Gandillot was awarded this title in Madagascar. Bordure further states that, judging by Gandillot's name, he must have been delivering shoes for the army (see Fig. 2.2). This unflattering observation is almost certainly a play on the *argot* word for shoes, 'godillot', derived from the name of Alexis Godillot (1816–1896) who had been the official shoe supplier for the army. Gandillot then suddenly comes to life as an active participant in the dialogue, as he replies to Bordure: 'Non, mon capitaine, je travaille sur mesure pour le Palais-Royal' [No, Captain, my work for the Palais-Royal is tailor-made].²¹ The dialogue refers first of all to Madagascar, which had become a French colony in 1896. Secondly Léon Gandillot was a highly successful playwright at the time. The phrase 'sur mesure' [literally 'made to measure'] might not just refer to his alleged shoe business. It also seems to comment implicitly on his success as a writer, by suggesting that he delivered plays to order for the Palais-Royal. In addition, a link is made between his commercial successes as a playwright and the French military 'successes' in Madagascar. The other dialogue contains similar hidden references to political events, including the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and the colonial rivalry between France and Great Britain.

The people listed form an imaginary line-up of (cultural and political) soldiers, with Bordure walking up and down the formation, handing out orders. Through this sudden shift from list to dialogue, the reader is alerted to these references to contemporary politics. Each time dialogue is inserted, the text becomes more referential, at least for the informed reader. The dialogues read as a transcription of something overheard, fragments of conversation. Through the shift from list to dialogue, the reader is also made aware of the artificial construction of the text.

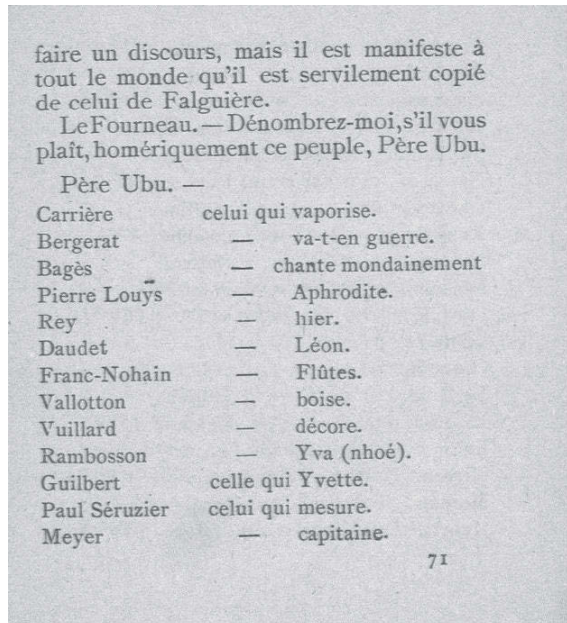


FIG. 2.3: 'Le Fourneau. — Dénombrez-moi, s'il vous plaît, homériquement ce peuple, Père Ubu' [Le Fourneau. — Please count this people for me in Homeric fashion, Père Ubu], first Almanac.

Here, the author directs the reader through the arrangement of (carefully chosen) words, or by means of a sudden switch to dialogue. The word Mars is foregrounded from the start and provides a clue to understanding the text. Other hints, such as 'signe zodiacal' [zodiac sign], 'bélier' [ram] and 'la lettre Y' [the letter Y], point equally to the importance of the sign Mars. The list of names ends with 'Freycinet, au ministère de la Guerre, sans rengagement' [Freycinet, at the Ministry of War, without reinstatement].²² Freycinet had been one of the principal accusers of Dreyfus and he returns several times as a character in the first Almanac. He had resigned in May 1895 but returned to the post of Minister in November 1898. In Ubu's Almanac, however, Freycinet is not reinstated. Moreover, the word 'guerre' [war] connects his name to the name 'Mars' and the text now comes full circle. The list of names also rearranges the cultural canon, as artists and writers of Jarry's circle are mentioned alongside more established ones. By mixing artists with politicians, the different worlds of art and politics are united in an equally militaristic atmosphere: the (avant-garde) artists combat the cultural establishment, while the political and cultural establishments are engaged in fighting their own battles. Through the list of names, puns and dialogue, the collage text implicitly comments on the cultural and military politics of French society, while mocking the establishment, whether cultural or political.

A similar meshing of semantic threads can be detected in many texts of the Almanacs. In several of them meaning is created primarily through (often humorous) associations. So while, on the one hand, the collage text is heterogeneous and its narrative incoherent, on the other hand various layers of meaning do surface when one looks closer at the words, their associations and arrangement.

The third and most visible list in the first Almanac is the astonishing catalogue of 136 names which covers eight pages in the original edition (Fig. 2.3). The list

concludes the section ‘Lettres et Arts — La fête automobile’ [Letters and Arts — The auto-moveable feast], in which Père Ubu and his companion Fourneau tour the city of Paris and discuss current events. They stumble upon a crowd that has flocked to view Rodin’s latest work, a statue of Balzac. The sculpture was commissioned by Zola in his capacity as president of the Société des Gens de Lettres in 1891. However, when it was presented to the public on 29 April 1898, the work was refused by that same Société and heavily criticized in the conservative press. Support was rallied for Rodin, dividing the cultural world in two, which partially explains the odd mix of people grouped together in the Almanac. After seeing the crowd gather around Rodin’s controversial sculpture, Fourneau asks Ubu to ‘count them in Homeric fashion.’ Ubu’s epic enumeration of names reads as a veritable ‘who’s who’ of the French cultural and political world. Each name is followed by an ingenious description starting with the formula ‘celui/celle qui’ [the person who] followed in most cases by a verb derived either from a noun or adjective associated with the person’s activities, or from a pun on their name.

The 136 names correspond in fact to 135 individuals; the two Natanson brothers appear under one name, the writer Henry Gauthier-Villars appears under his two pseudonyms (Willy and L’Ouvreuse) and the composer Bourgault-Ducoudray receives two entries under both Bourgault and Ducoudray. As for its structure, the list is not in alphabetical order and seems to be fabricated *ad hoc*. Every now and then the sequence of names is clearly guided by association. For example, the name of the actress Louise France, who played Mère Ubu in 1896, precedes (and seems to trigger) the name of the writer Anatole France. In Jarry’s linguistic universe, their shared last name obviously calls for a joke. As such, Anatole France re-appears as the son of Mère Ubu (Louise France) later on in the Almanac. A similar imaginative exploration of names is characteristic of the entire list. The choice of names might be justified by their owners’ opinion of Rodin’s statue. However, the logic behind the list might also simply be based on the fact that these people played some role in the lives of the Almanac’s contributors. They reflect Jarry’s diverse roles as journalist, writer and playwright.²³ The mix of artists, musicians, writers and politicians could also hint at the input of Bonnard and Terrasse. Most of the musicians listed were good acquaintances of Terrasse, and Bonnard was familiar with most of the artists that feature here. Considering that the men collaborated closely on the Almanac as a whole, it is not unthinkable that this list was constructed in a similarly collaborative way, with each of them suggesting names.

Again the list replaces the ongoing narrative. The casual dialogue between Ubu and Fourneau on current events ends rather abruptly in this seemingly infinite inventory of names. Dialogue is replaced by this encyclopaedic list of names, as if conventional narrative forms no longer suffice to represent the complex reality of current events. A similar effect is achieved by the use of (pseudo) ready-made text and materials in the Almanacs.

Ready-made and pseudo ready-made elements

The insertion of heterogeneous pre-existent material is, as I have already said, an important aspect of any collage work. In the Almanac it is possible to distinguish

between pre-existent *ready-made* elements, copied and pasted, either unaltered or manipulated, and *pseudo ready-made* elements, which give the impression of being pre-existent and authentic, but which are created by the author(s). The use of these elements reveals, first of all, a new concept of literary creation and a re-evaluation of what is deemed worthy of integration into a work of art. Furthermore, the insertion of these foreign fragments helps to trigger incongruous associations and is yet another source for Jarry's much loved wordplay. The integration of ready-made material also allows the author to create an alternative version of reality by bringing (pseudo-)fragments from that reality straight into the literary work, altering them and distancing them from their original context. Being double-coded, these fragments remain tied to their original context, but they also receive meaning from their new context. Through their strangeness in the new context and the separation or alteration from their original context, the reader is actively made to think about their meaning.

In the first pages of the first Almanac for example, we find the 'pragmatic section' which includes calculations for holidays, important dates and the Saints calendar. Most of the components in this section appear to have been copied word for word from a popular almanac, most likely the *Almanach Hachette*. But other contemporary almanacs might have been sources of inspiration as well. The typography of the first Almanac also resembles that of the Catholic *Almanach populaire* for example. The 'pragmatic section' in Ubu's Almanac kicks off with a list of six different calendars used throughout history, a common feature of many almanacs. The *Almanach Hachette* from 1899 for example listed a staggering twenty-seven. The following six are mentioned in Ubu's Almanac:

*Articles principaux de l'annuaire pour l'année 1899*²⁴

Année de la période Julienne	6611
Depuis la première Olympiade d'Iphitus (juillet)	2674
De la fondation de Rome selon Varron (mars)	2651
De l'époque de Nabonassar depuis février	2645
De la naissance de Jésus-Christ	1899
Du règne du Père Ubu	8374

[*Main items of the yearbook for the year 1899.*

Year of the Julian period	6611
Since the first Olympiad of Iphitus (July)	2674
Of the founding of Rome according to Varro (March)	2651
Of the era of Nabonassar since February	2645
Of the birth of Jesus Christ	1899
Of the reign of Père Ubu	8374]

The first five all refer to actual calendars.²⁵ However, although Ubu's Almanac is intended to be for the year 1899, the numbers all fit the year 1898 (for the year 1899 they should have been 6612, 2675, 2652 and 2646 respectively). Only the birth of Jesus Christ complies with 1899. This might be a 'correction' on the part of the Jarry, since astronomers argued that the birth of Christ should be situated in the year zero, meaning that the calendar should not therefore start with the year one, as the Catholic Church had decided it should.²⁶ The obvious care with which all

these ‘facts’ have been copied, assembled and even ‘corrected’, is striking. This is also emphasized by the insertion of a completely new pseudo calendar, counting from the start of the ‘reign of Père Ubu’. This dates back a staggering 8374 years, defiantly outdating all the others, as it sets the beginning of Ubu’s reign in the year 6475 BC.

A similar comical procedure of mixing up pre-existent elements and pseudo pre-existent elements is applied to other numbers and calculations in the first pages of the Almanac. There are the traditional elements of a calendar, like the numbers necessary to calculate the dates of Christian holy days such as Easter. Moveable and non-moveable feasts are indicated as well as the start of the seasons. Dates are provided for eclipses and there is a table indicating the exact hours and minutes of the tides for 1899.²⁷ Ubu’s prophetic Almanac even issues rather alarming warnings for ‘several disasters’ caused by the high tides.²⁸ The maritime information also seems to have been copied. The phrasing from Ubu’s Almanac is similar (although slightly revised) to that of a popular almanac. Thus in a random edition of the almanac of *Matthieu Laensberg* one can read ‘on aura remarqué que’ [one will have noticed] whereas Ubu’s Almanac says ‘on a remarqué’ [one has noticed], and ‘par le tableau ci-contre’ [by the opposite table] instead of ‘par ce tableau’ [by this table].²⁹ Such information was usually recycled from one almanac to another and Jarry and his collaborators do the same, simply adapting it to fit with Ubu’s Almanac. This collage of so-called facts suggests that Ubu’s Almanac sticks to its practical function. The solar and lunar eclipses for example comply with those announced in regular almanacs.³⁰ But obviously these facts are playfully undermined by the highly unpractical and imaginary information that sits alongside them. The reader learns, for instance, that a rather unique (partial) eclipse is taking place in the upcoming year:

Éclipse du Père Ubu
Éclipse partielle du Père Ubu, les 29, 30 et 31 février³¹

[*Eclipse of Père Ubu.*

Partial eclipse of Père Ubu on the 29th, the 30th and the 31st of February]

Since the 29th only occurs every four years, and the other two dates not at all, it comes as no surprise that Ubu can barely be seen on these days.

Obviously this collage of facts and pseudo-facts satirizes the supposed practical knowledge provided by almanacs and the randomness of man-made calendars. The standardization of the calendar in the Western World was only relatively recent and by listing Ubu’s calendar among existing calendars the collage emphasizes the subjectivity of man’s conception of time. One might spot the influence of Jarry’s teacher Bergson and his ideas on (the relativity of) time and space here. Jarry attended Bergson’s classes at the Lycée Henry IV in 1891/92 and took extensive notes. In fact one can situate this re-evaluation of time within a general rethinking of ‘objective’ knowledge around 1900 in favour of subjective perception. In line with these contemporary ideas Jarry would write in 1903: ‘la vérité actuelle est celle-ci: l’espace et le temps ne sont que des formes’ [the truth today is this: space and time are nothing but forms].³²

Jarry’s preoccupation with time is revealed in many of his writings. He later

emphasized art's capacity to transcend time in 'Le Temps dans l'art' (1902), a speech he delivered for the Salon des Indépendants. In contrast to literature, a painting could capture a fleeting moment of history in order to suspend it for eternity.³³ Interestingly, this was also an important feature of the traditional popular almanac, which through its heterogeneous, encyclopaedic collection of knowledge, sought to master time and nature. Popular almanacs were considered timeless and worthy to be preserved, and their readers were often explicitly advised to do so.³⁴ Besides satirizing man's fascination with time, the collage of dates and calendars seems therefore also to have the advantage of eternalizing the fragmentary and the fugitive, by fixing a moment in time and then manipulating it. The collage aesthetic and its fragmentary simultaneity appear to be an apt artistic means to achieve these seemingly contradictory aims in literature.

A similar procedure of cutting and pasting selective practical 'information' can be found in the section 'Connaissances utiles' [useful knowledge]. Here the reader finds four very helpful recipes; one for painting one's hair green, one for pulling teeth, one for curing alcoholism, and an alchemist recipe for making gold out of salamanders. Such recipes were a common feature of almanacs, recycled from one publication to another. Three of these recipes are in fact cut and pasted from an outside source and Jarry does not conceal the fact. The subtitle of this section (Fig. 2.4) clearly states: 'recueillies par le Père Ubu, spécialement pour l'année 1899, d'après les Secrets de son savant ami *le révérend seigneur Alexis, Piémontais*' [collected by Père Ubu, specifically for the year 1899, based on the Secrets of his learned friend *the honourable gentleman Alexis, Piemontese*]. The recipes are taken from a popular book of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century recipes written by Alexis Piémontais, a pseudonym of Girolamo Ruscelli, entitled *Les Secrets du seigneur Alexis Piémontais*, which appeared in various versions and was sometimes augmented by other authors. Girolamo Ruscelli was an Italian doctor and alchemist whose pseudo-scientific pragmatic recipes were translated into other languages from the sixteenth century onwards and copied over and over again in Almanacs and other popular publications.³⁵ The pseudonym of Alexis Piémontais was used for the French translation. In Jarry's time the Bibliothèque Nationale possessed 13 versions of the book. The phrase 'le révérend seigneur Alexis, Piémontais' appears to be an exact copy of the phrase from Ruscelli's book of recipes, if we look at the first page from an edition of 1564 (Fig. 2.4).³⁶ The recipes are all inserted with only an occasional small alteration. Sometimes the spelling and the punctuation have been modernized by Jarry. Compare for example the last recipe in Ubu's Almanac ('pour affiner l'or avec les salamandres' [to make gold with salamanders]) with its 'original' taken from *Les Secrets d'Alexis Piémontais* (Fig. 2.5). 'Prens' becomes 'Prends', 'jusques au' is updated to 'jusqu'au', but otherwise the text remains unaltered. The four recipes might have been chosen because they refer ironically to personal details of Jarry's life. They could be seen as 'cures' for several of Jarry's own problems, his alcoholism, his miserable financial situation and his dental problems.³⁷ The recipe 'Pour teindre les cheveux en vert' [to dye hair green] is in fact taken from a supplement to Ruscelli's original book, attributed to 'various authors'.³⁸ Legend has it that Jarry, as a tribute to Baudelaire, really did once dye his hair green.³⁹

While personal reasons might have led Jarry to choose these specific recipes, the collage of recipes has another, more interesting effect. Even though Père Ubu explicitly mentions his debt to the work of ‘his friend’ Ruscelli, the uninformed reader might nevertheless wonder about the exact origins of these four recipes. For someone unfamiliar with Ruscelli’s book or with Jarry’s biography, the recipes included by Ubu might appear utterly random and fictional. At best, they might cast doubt on the originality of all the other texts in the Almanacs. The collage thus blurs the distinction between the authentic texts and these borrowed texts, with the result that their authorship is rendered uncertain.

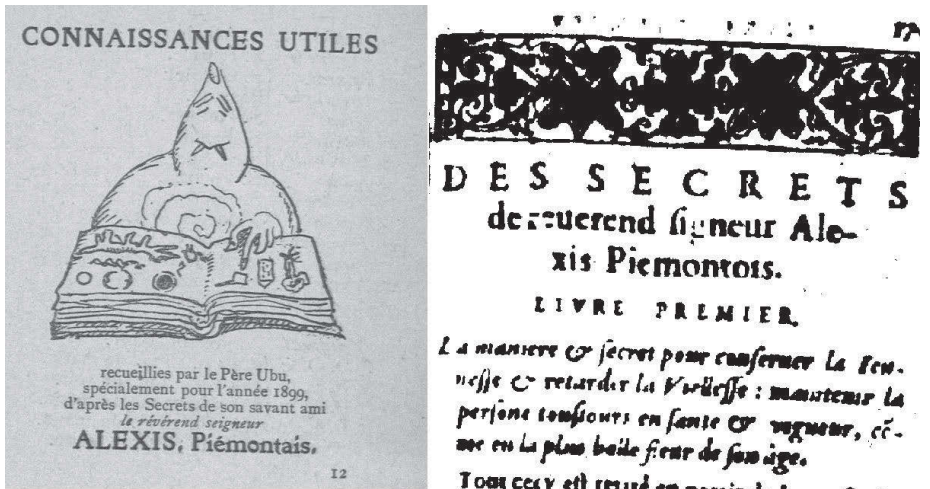


FIG. 2.4: ‘Connaissances utiles’, first Almanac, and excerpt from Ruscelli (1564)

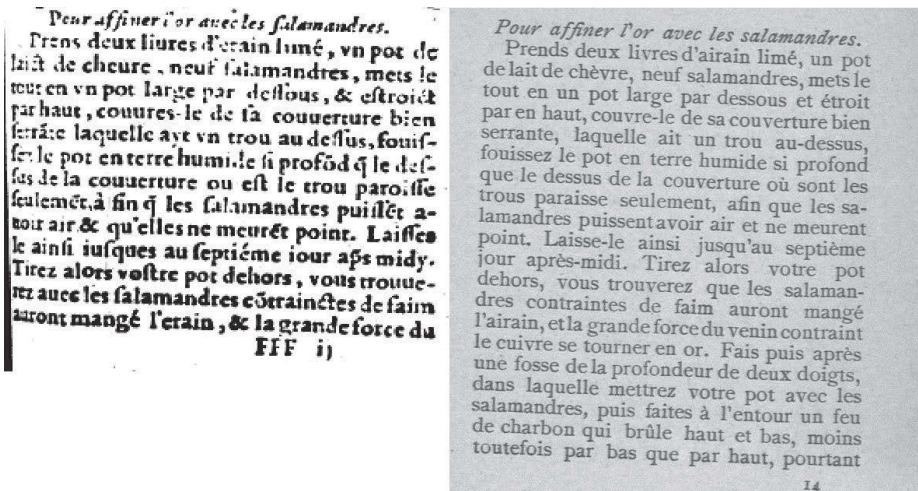


FIG. 2.5: ‘Pour affiner l’or avec les salamandres’, left: Ruscelli (1564), right: first Almanac

The fictitious author of the Almanac, Père Ubu, takes on the role of the medieval *compiler* in this segment. This is of course in line with the tradition of popular almanacs, but set in Jarry's literary context such an authorial role has more profound implications. Although Jarry and his collaborators cleverly use the collage technique already inherent to almanac production, Ubu's Almanacs were intended to be literary works, not popular publications. Jarry mixes popular texts with literary texts in order to challenge the boundaries of literature. The collage in Ubu's Almanac questions a certain literary concept of originality and rethinks the function of the author. The originality of the texts is made less important; they need not be the unique creation of an individual, they can be copied, borrowed to function in a new context. Instead the collage favours a concept of the endless repetition and recycling of texts. Furthermore the literary author is no longer a singular creator of unique material, but a *bricoleur*, someone who carefully selects both authentic and non-authentic material. In the Almanacs authorship is attributed to the fictional Père Ubu. Combined with the collaborative writing of the Almanacs this obscures the sources of the miscellaneous texts, and emphasizes the collage.

Auto-collage

In the section 'Nécrologie' there is another example of recycling pre-existent material. Mallarmé died in Valvins on 9 September 1898 and was buried at the cemetery near Samoreau two days later. Jarry attended his funeral. Many obituaries for Mallarmé of course appeared at the time, such as the one from *Le Temps* (Fig. 2.7). Ubu's Almanac also commemorates this poet. The text (Fig. 2.6) begins and ends with a thick, black line, in common with regular newspaper obituaries.

The obituary starts with quotation marks. The first line reads: 'L'île de Ptyx est d'un seul bloc de la pierre de ce nom...' [The Isle of Ptyx consists of one block of this type of rock...]. Unsuspecting readers might think they are dealing with a quote from Mallarmé's poetry, since this entire fragment is written in a style reminiscent of Mallarmé.

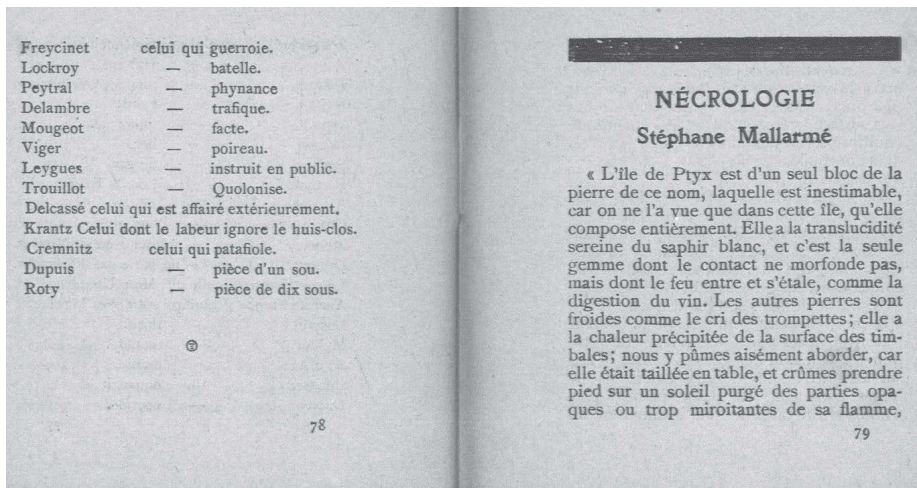


FIG. 2.6: 'Nécrologie Stéphane Mallarmé', first Almanac

NÉCROLOGIE

Stéphane Mallarmé

M. Stéphane Mallarmé vient de mourir. Il souffrait, depuis plusieurs mois, d'une maladie de la gorge qui l'obligeait à suivre un traitement assidu, et il avait dû se retirer définitivement dans son ermitage de Richemur, près de Valrégnis, dans le département de Seine-et-Oise. C'est là qu'il est décédé hier matin, à onze heures, entre sa femme et sa fille. Il achevait là-bas, cet été, son *Hérodiade*, attendu pour l'hiver prochain.

Stéphane Mallarmé, qui était né à Paris en 1842, fut d'abord professeur d'anglais au lycée Fontanes. Il possédait dans ses moindres subtilités la langue anglaise tout aussi bien que notre langue française; et ce fut un éminent modèle, s'exprimant, dans ses leçons et ses conférences, avec une facilité d'élocution, une clarté de méthode et d'exposition qui le faisaient tout particulièrement apprécier de ses jeunes disciples. Ces qualités précieuses se retrouvent notamment dans l'excellente traduction qu'il publiait en 1886 des poèmes d'Edgar Poe. Il est également l'auteur d'une sorte de lexique anglais estimé; mais, en 1893, un décret l'avait brusquement mis à la retraite.

Cependant Stéphane Mallarmé doit plus sa renommée à ses originalités poétiques qu'à ses mérites d'universitaire. Il a publié d'abord d'assez nombreux poèmes dans la *Revue indépendante*, dans le *Parнасse contemporain* et dans un grand nombre de recueils littéraires. Ses principaux poèmes sont : en 1878, *L'Après-Midi d'un faune*, *Hérodiade*, *Prose pour des Esclaves*, les *Fenêtres*, *Automne*, le *Guignol*, etc.

En prose il a écrit notamment la préface à Vatel, des poèmes en prose très remarquables et beaucoup d'articles de critique musicale, artistique ou dramatique qui ont été réunis en un volume de la librairie Charpentier, intitulé *Divagations*. Il avait précédemment réuni, dans un volume publié par l'éditeur Perrin, ses œuvres poétiques.

Stéphane Mallarmé avait, depuis une quinzaine d'années, la coutume de réunir les adeptes de son école littéraire, chaque mardi, en son petit appartement de la rue de Rome. C'étaient d'intéressantes soirées où se rencontraient des esprits cultivés et

FIG. 2.7: 'Nécrologie Stéphane Mallarmé',
Le Temps, 11 September 1898

However, the quoted text is from Jarry's novel *Gestes et opinions du docteur Faustroll*, which was published only posthumously, in 1911, but written mostly in 1898. 'De l'île de Ptyx' is the title of chapter XIX in book III, dedicated to Mallarmé. It is a prose poem which, through the image of the island of Ptyx (a poignant metaphor for Mallarmé's hermetic poetry and status in the literary world), evokes Mallarmé's work. The word 'Ptyx' comes directly from Mallarmé's vocabulary and brings to mind his famous poem 'Sonnet en -yx' and the pseudonym Yx which he used for some of his journalism. The text also contains references to Mallarmé's Tuesday salons, frequently attended by Jarry. Mallarmé is described as the lord of the Island of Ptyx, welcoming his guests: 'Le seigneur de l'île vint vers nous dans un vaisseau [...] sa chaise à bascule hochait ses gestes de bienvenue' [The lord of the island approached us in a vessel [...] his rocking chair shook his welcoming gestures].⁴⁰ Mallarmé usually sat in his rocking chair when receiving guests at his salon.

When reading further, the previously unsuspecting reader is now explicitly made aware of the fact that this is Jarry's text. After the quotation, the title of Jarry's novel is mentioned between brackets and, after the quote from *Faustroll*, Mallarmé himself now appears in the text:

...le vaisseau clair et mécanique recula vers l'horizon de l'île son haleine bleutée,
et la chaise hochante qui saluait adieu. »

(*Gestes et opinions du docteur Faustroll pataphysicien. De Paris à Paris par mer.*)

Mallarmé se réjouit de lire le périple et se leva une dernière fois, la main vers le docteur, du fauteuil à bascule dans le décor de suggestive beauté.⁴¹

[...the bluish breath of the bright and mechanical vessel slowly faded towards the horizon of the island together with the nodding chair that was bidding farewell. » (*Gestes et opinions du docteur Faustroll, pataphysicien. De Paris à Paris par mer.*) Mallarmé was delighted to read about the adventure and, in the setting of suggestive beauty, stood up one last time from his rocking chair, his hand extended towards the doctor.]

This first line is also a quotation. It is a (slightly altered) auto-collage from one of Mallarmé's last letters, addressed to Jarry. Jarry had sent him excerpts from *Faustroll* and other work, and on 16 May 1898 Mallarmé wrote him an encouraging letter, comparing him to Rabelais:

Mon cher Jarry,

La suite des estampes est surprenante—, du Rabelais, dira-t-on, mais ce que ce divin eût écrit originellement tout à l'heure: je ne me suis jamais, moi, sur un décor de plus significative beauté, levé du fauteuil basculant que, cette fois, pour vous presser la main.

S. M.⁴²

[My dear Jarry, the series of prints is amazing—, Rabelaisian one would say, but something this divine being would have authentically written right now: never have I got up from my rocking chair in a more meaningful beautiful setting than now to shake your hand. S. M.]

In Jarry's rephrasing of the letter, Mallarmé's final act before his death was to get up from his chair, offering his hand to doctor Faustroll, as if to confirm his approval and to pass on an imaginary torch to Faustroll/Jarry. The text evolves from a genuine obituary to shameless self-promotion, which was not uncharacteristic of Jarry. Self-aggrandizing and self-mythologizing were inherent to his authorship, both in public and in his texts. Through the quote from Mallarmé's letter, Jarry's work receives a sign of approval from the prince of poets himself. He appears to suggest here that he is being crowned as Mallarmé's rightful successor.

The rest of the obituary evokes the burial at Samoreau attended by Faustroll. Jarry had been very distressed at Mallarmé's funeral according to one eye-witness. He wore an inappropriately casual outfit and shoes he had borrowed from Rachilde at the last minute.⁴³ This might explain why, in the text, Faustroll 'redescendit à l'automne, pieds nus sur la route, vers les arches de Valvins' [went down again in autumn, following the road barefoot towards the arches of Valvins].⁴⁴ On one hand the collage of the chapter from *Faustroll* (already an ode to Mallarmé) and the quotation from Mallarmé's letter convey Jarry's far from modest self-representation as an author. On the other hand it is also as a genuine homage to the poet who had supported Jarry from early on. The rather solemn tone of this section is radically different from the bawdy tone of the other texts in the Almanac. The text's singularity is further emphasized by the fact that the protagonist is the more serious, scholarly Faustroll and not the grotesque idiot Ubu. This is not a generic obituary, such as the one in *Le Temps*. Jarry's feelings towards Mallarmé and his funeral are not conveyed in a personal style as one might expect from an obituary. Instead, and strikingly, they are conveyed through a collage of texts from Jarry's own work and Mallarmé's correspondence.

An encyclopaedic text and the 'sign' of Pisces

The use of pre-existent material in the collage text is not necessarily visible or explicit. The rupture on the level of coherence which takes place in a collage work can also take place on the level of style and syntax.⁴⁵ This is the case in the February section of 'L'Agronome citadin' [the agricultural city dweller]. Here, a sudden break in style triggers the by now suspicious reader to think that this might be a 'foreign' fragment, not completely integrated in its new context. In fact the reader stumbles on a pseudo-extraneous text, a paragraph seemingly drawn straight from an encyclopaedia. To understand the position of this encyclopaedia-like paragraph, one must first take a look at the whole text. At first glance the February text seems to wander off in various random directions, with bits and pieces of text and (seemingly incomprehensible) associations, not allowing the reader to discover any coherence or meaning. However, this small textual collage does turn out to have a carefully constructed, intrinsic logic, once again offering two perspectives: alongside the heterogeneous and associative effects which the text produces, and which complicate the reader's interpretation, one can also discern various simultaneous layers of meaning.

The February text starts with a paragraph narrated by the pompous Ubu in the (royal) first person plural:

Février

Sous le signe des Poissons. Errant un jour (le 30 février prochain) en notre tempomobile par les rues, nous partîmes des hauteurs de Montmartre, et comme un fulgurant météore notre gidouille avançait d'un pas majestueux et lent. Semblable à une sphère roulante, nous dévalâmes la rue Lepic, la rue Blanche vers la Trinité, où les cloches conviaient les fidèles par l'ouverture des portes au moyen des grandes orgues Alexandre Guilmant, suivîmes la rue Laffitte; la rue de Richelieu, le pont des Arts.⁴⁶

[February

Under the sign of Pisces. Roaming around the streets in our tempomobile one day (the next 30th of February), we departed from the heights of Montmartre and like a lightning fast meteor our potbelly moved forward at a majestic and slow pace. Similar to a rolling sphere, we hurtled down the Rue Lepic, down the Rue Blanche towards the Trinité church, where the bells invited the churchgoers through the doors by means of Alexandre Guilmant's great organs, then followed the Rue Laffitte, the Rue de Richelieu, the Pont des Arts.]

On an imaginary day in the future (30 February is also the day of Père Ubu's partial eclipse) Ubu steers his 'tempomobile' through the streets of Paris. The oxymoron of the title 'l'Agronome citadin' [The agricultural city dweller] translates here into Ubu's account of his activities in the city of Paris and in the surrounding countryside later in the text. The future is predicted, not through astrology, as in a real almanac, but by way of Ubu's tempomobile. Obviously, Ubu and his tempomobile transcend the boundaries of time and space in their epic journey through the city. Ubu's descent from Montmartre to the left bank, when visualized on a map of Paris, in fact gives the impression literally of a meteor, tumbling down from the north (Montmartre) to the south (the Quartier Latin and St Germain) of the

city. The phrase ‘under the sign of Pisces’ at the beginning is telling. As was the case with the March text, the word ‘sign’ can again be understood in its broader semiotic sense. Various ‘thematic threads’ are associated with each other and with the sign of Pisces.

One of these threads is the relationship between text and image, explored in this text through the constant play with both the textual and visual capacities of the sign of Pisces. On his majestic ride through the city Ubu suddenly comes to a halt on the Pont des Arts when he sees:

...non pas un rassemblement, c'étaient des passants qui passaient, sans s'arrêter, mais peut-être se seraient-ils arrêtés sans l'intervention possible d'un sergent de ville, il n'y avait pas de sergent de ville, mais il aurait pu venir un sergent de ville, même deux sergents de ville, voire une brigade centrale de sergents de ville, et nous nous sentîmes attirés vers la contemplation de l'eau. Et non sans raison, jugez-en:⁴⁷

[...not a resemblance, there were passers-by passing by, without stopping, but they could have been stopped had it not been for the possible intervention of a police officer, there wasn't a police officer, but a police officer could have showed up, even two police officers, or even a central brigade of police officers, and we felt drawn to contemplate the water. And not without reason, judge for yourself:]

The word ‘rassemblement’ operates as a clue for the polysemic and phonetic wordplay that follows. The passers-by do not stop, but they could have been stopped (in the sense of arrested) without the ‘possible intervention’ of a ‘sergent de ville’ [police officer]. The possible appearance of a ‘sergent de ville’ is not just triggered by the verb ‘arrêter’ [to arrest], but also evoked by the ‘signe des Poissons’ [sign of Pisces] since fish have ‘arêtes’ [scales]. There is also another suggestion made here. In Émile Zola's novel *L'Assommoir* (1877) the character Poissons becomes a policeman. Zola's name is mentioned further down in the February text, perhaps as an extra clue. This sudden intervention of a policeman is, for several reasons, far from coincidental. The ‘sergent de ville’, related to ‘Poissons’, is the reason why Ubu feels the sudden need to contemplate the water.⁴⁸ The story is guided by the polysemic associations made in the text. One sign evokes a referent which then evokes yet another sign. The word association constantly jumps between figurative and literal meaning or between phonetic or visual resemblance. This type of visual association is illustrated in the following fragment.

If the relationship between this fragment and the Pisces sign was not yet clear, the next fragment steers the reader towards a more concrete visual image of the fish, in which bits and pieces (literally) come together in a bizarrely comical, if at first abstract description of a limbless creature in the water:

Un être était immergé [...] sans souci d'aucune pudeur, il était entièrement nu, sans paralysie causée par le froid de saison; sans l'aide de membres artificiels, car il n'avait ni bras ni jambes, il nageait ma foi très bien, un poisson, quoi!⁴⁹

[A creature was immersed [...] not worrying at all about decency, he was completely naked, without paralysis caused by the cold season; without the help of artificial limbs, for he didn't have arms or legs, well he was a very good swimmer, a fish, wasn't he!]

From Ubu contemplating the water, the reader is taken through the abstract image of a limbless creature, to a more concrete and gruesome image of a drowned person ('noyé') and back again to the image of a fish. Then the narrative becomes even more specific, concentrating on a particular species of fish: the 'barbillon', the barb, also known as 'barbeau', which could be found in the Seine. It is here that the reader encounters the insertion of the encyclopaedia-like fragment:

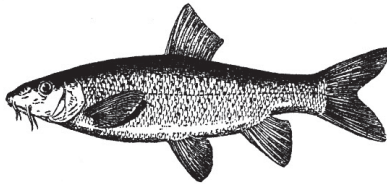
Or le barbillon est un beau poisson, couvert d'écaillés fines qu'à sérieux examen on reconnaît en toile métallique; son nom lui vient de ses amples moustaches moscovites, dont il fouit. Son corps très dense supporte aisément les pressions des grands fonds d'eau où il se plait. On le découvre dans les eaux claires comme un plat d'argent qui vit sur le sable. Il ne boit que de l'eau, mais il est souvent victime de son goût immodéré pour le fromage de gruyère.⁵⁰

[Now the barb is a beautiful fish, covered in delicate scales which on closer inspection look like wire mesh; he gets his name from his large Russian moustache, with which he digs around in the soil. His heavy body can easily take the water pressure of the great depths where he feels comfortable. One can find him in clear water like a silver plate on the sand. He only drinks water, but he is often the victim of his excessive love for Gruyère cheese.]

The matter of fact, descriptive tone constitutes a stylistic rupture with the previous fragments. It might suggest that this piece of information was taken straight from a dictionary or fishing manual. Although altered, the sentences can indeed be traced back to descriptions of the fish in encyclopaedias. Bonnard's illustrative drawing of the barb (see Fig. 2.9) also seems to mimic the illustrations accompanying encyclopaedia entries for the 'barbillon', such as for example the one in the 1898 *Nouveau Larousse illustré* (Fig. 2.8).

BARBEAU

(bo — lat. *barbus*, même sens; de *barba*, barbe, à cause des barbes de ce poisson) n. m. Ichtyol. Genre de poissons physostomes, famille des cyprinidés, dont le nom scientifique est *barbus*. || *Barbeau de mer*, Rouget.
— **Armur.** Partie du fer d'une flèche. (Vieux.)
— **Bot.** Nom vulgaire de plusieurs espèces de centaurées, et particulièrement du bluet: *Les barbeaux fleurissent plus vite dans les blés qu'en bordures dans les jardins.*
— **Adjectiv.** De couleur du barbeau ou bluet: *Habit bleu*



Barbeau.

BARBEAU.
— **ENCYCL.** Ichtyol. Les *barbeaux* sont allongés, en forme de fuseau, avec des écaillés minces, la nageoire caudale fourchue. Deux espèces habitent la France: le barbeau commun (*barbus fluviatilis*), vulgairement: *barbillon*, *barbet*, *barbarin*, qui atteint jusqu'à 1 m. de long, et un poids de 5 à 6 kilogr. (Très vorace, fréquent dans toutes les eaux courantes, il vit solitaire quand il a atteint une certaine taille. D'habitudes nocturnes, les anciens l'avaient consacré à Diane); — le barbeau méridional (*barbus meridionalis*), de forme plus trapue, qui ne dépasse pas 0^m,40 de long. (On le trouve dans le midi de la France, dans l'Europe orientale. Plus de deux cents espèces sont répandues sur le globe.)

FIG. 2.8: 'Barbeau', *Nouveau Larousse illustré: dictionnaire universel encyclopédique*, 1898

The abrupt shift in style and tone suggests that the strange element is not completely integrated into its new context. Whereas the encyclopaedia extract is fitted into the text (typographically or visually it does not stand out), the fragment achieves all the effects of collage through its stylistic difference from the rest of the narrative.

The insertion of this fragment could stem on one hand from a desire to imitate the traditional function of a popular almanac, providing 'practical' information and knowledge. There is an obvious irony in recycling the banal clichés of the description of the barb. On the other hand, and more importantly, it reveals the characteristics of Jarry's writing. Jarry often used information taken from encyclopaedias which he would insert directly into his writings. In a letter written in the spring of 1898 he asked Alfred Vallette to provide him with two lines from the *Larousse* that he wanted to copy in the text of *Faustroll*.⁵¹ Jarry would gather these snippets of information and paste them into his work.

The 'barb' paragraph ends with the word 'gruyère' with which the barb can be captured (an actual fact according to fishing manuals) and this word is the pretext for a similar (and ironic) encyclopaedia-like paragraph about the fascinating specifics of making another cheese, Emmenthal.⁵² Again the last sentence of this 'cheese' paragraph ('on dirait de vastes quartiers de lard' [one would say vast areas of lard]) functions as a trigger for the following segment. Jarry's ideal of words as infinite 'polyèdres' is truly put into practice here. The word 'lard' triggers the name of one of Jarry's (literary) friends. The following paragraph consequently opens with 'M. Pierre Quillard est l'un de nos plus grands poètes' [M. Pierre Quillard is one of our greatest poets]. 'Lard' can also be read as a homonym for 'l'art'. Together with the word 'vers' ('L'Emmenthal est jaune, sans trous, sans vers' [Emmenthal is yellow, without holes, without worms]) in the previous sentence, they also seem to announce the presence of poet and art-critic Quillard in the text.

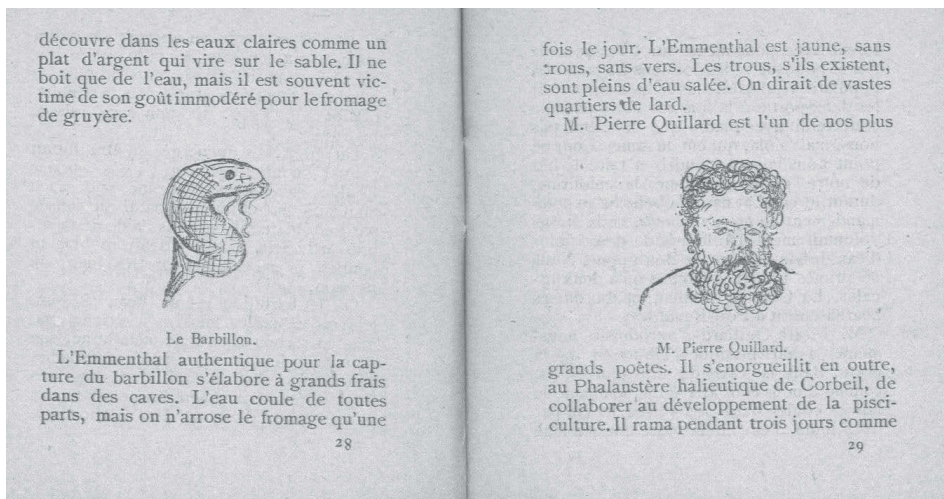


FIG. 2.9: 'Le Barbillon' and 'M. Pierre Quillard', first Almanac

Quillard's presence is further justified by his link to the Pisces sign and more specifically to the barb. Jarry had written to Quillard saying that he had connected him to the fish on the basis of a visual resemblance, because of Quillard's distinctive beard. Those in Jarry's inner circle would know that Quillard was often nicknamed 'Barbeau'. If the analogy is not yet obvious to the reader, Bonnard's sketch of the bearded Quillard, right beside that of the barb on the previous page, reinforces the visual association between the two (Fig. 2.9).

Jarry's biography is in fact another thread running through this text. Quillard is connected to the Pisces sign because of his status as Jarry's drinking buddy and his contribution to the development of 'pisciculture' at the Phalanstère. Ubu's surreal journey through Paris at the beginning of the February text can equally be read as an account of Jarry's own bicycle route from Montmartre, home to Claude Terrasse, to the Left Bank, where his apartment was situated. In Ubu's further explorations as a 'paysan de Paris' the reader can see a mirror image of Jarry in 1898, literally travelling back and forth between Paris and Corbeil. Jarry had a tendency to transform the most mundane details of his own biography into stories of mythical proportions. All of Jarry's apartments for example received legendary names, such as the Chasublerie de Saint-Sulpice (his tiny studio at 7, rue Cassette). It is therefore not surprising that in the Almanac Jarry's daily bicycle tours and fishing trips become epic adventures.

Many of these more personal references would of course be obvious only to Jarry's inner circle. The Pisces sign allows Jarry to relate the memories of the country life he enjoyed at the Phalanstère with Quillard and the other *compagnons*. Jarry had already expressed his love for fishing in the play 'l'Ouverture de la pêche', about a family on a fishing trip, written in 1888, when he was only fifteen. As an adult he shared this passion in his review of Gaston Lecouffe's *Code-manuel du pêcheur et Code-manuel du chasseur*.⁵³ He also had plans to write a fishing manual which he announced in his article 'La Pêche à l'amiral'.⁵⁴ Jarry even wrote to Vallette that Père Ubu was a respected member of the 'Société des pêcheurs à la ligne' [Society of line fishermen].⁵⁵

The 'barbillon', a large fish commonly found in the Seine, was Jarry's favourite. He prided himself on being able to catch it with cheese. For the members of the Phalanstère and others in Jarry's circle, Jarry's special bond with this fish also became legend.⁵⁶ In letters Jarry affectionately referred to the barb as 'Monsieur', as 'Fourneau' or, having caught a small one, as 'celui qui petit barbillon' [the person who is a little barb]:

Malgré nos nombreux travaux, nous pêchons honorablement de dix heures à midi. Et avons capturé ce matin divers poissons, dont le gros gardon et celui qui petit barbillon d'un quart environ. C'est un animal presque comparable à celui qui dindon, quoique moins mélodieux, et dont les écailles sont semblables à de la toile métallique.⁵⁷

[Despite our many jobs, we are doing some decent fishing from ten o'clock to midday. And we caught several fish this morning, among which the fat roach and 'the person who is a small barb' of about a quarter in size. It's an animal almost similar to 'the person who is a turkey', although less melodic, and whose scales resemble wire mesh.]

In Ubu-like manner Jarry compares the barb ('celui qui petit barbillon') to a turkey ('celui qui dindon'). The last line of this letter to Vallette comes straight from a fisherman's handbook and is recycled in the Almanac. The tone is also similar to that of the February text, which shows that the boundary between Jarry's life and his literary works was often very thin.

The rest of the February text continues with an account of Ubu's (Jarry's) and Quillard's fishing trip and traces their route along the rivers Seine and Yonne. He tells us: 'Il rama pendant trois jours comme forçat avec nous-même sur l'Yonne et la Seine pour suivre les poissons frayants' [He rowed with us for three days as a convict along the Yonne and the Seine to follow the spawning fish]. There are other references to the Phalanstère. The name of the real-life village La Cave, for example, triggers the following paragraph about quite a different 'cave':

M. Pierre Quillard s'introduisit, nous-mêmes ayant pratiqué l'effraction de la porte, dans la cave des Emmenthal, et, comme il nous était arrivé fréquemment de laisser couler dans nos verres le vin par trois jours, l'eau coula toute une semaine et s'éleva jusqu'aux voûtes, ouvrant le chemin à des bancs de barbillons monstrueux venus pour dévorer l'Emmenthal.⁵⁸

[M. Pierre Quillard entered the Emmenthal cellar, after we did the breaking and entering ourselves, and just like the wine we often allowed to flow into our glasses for three days, the water poured in for an entire week and rose all the way to the vaults, giving way to shoals of monstrous barbs that came to devour the Emmenthal cheese.]

In his letters, Jarry mentions the Phalanstère's cellar in which the wine and food were stored. In one letter to Quillard, Jarry, left in charge of the stocks when the others were absent, gave him the 'mot de la Cave', the secret code for the lock to the cellar. The fragment contains an obvious reference to the drinking habits of the comrades which could have been a reason for not noticing that the water had reached an alarming level. In reality, the cellar at the Phalanstère was prone to occasional flooding caused by the river. However, in Ubu's Almanac this flooding takes on epic proportions with a nightmarish, hallucinatory image of monstrous fish invading the cellar to devour the cheese.

The February text also contains references to Jarry's artistic and literary context: names of people and places, but also less obvious words belong to a semantic field which evokes this particular thematic layer in the text. On his journey through Montmartre Père Ubu passes the rue Lepic, the rue Blanche and the Trinité church containing, as Jarry puts it, 'Alexandre Guilmant's great organs'. Alexandre Guilmant (1837–1911) was its resident organist and colleague of fellow organist Claude Terrasse. Terrasse's house was situated in the rue Ballu, close to the rue Blanche. Ubu then speeds to the rue Laffitte, home to Ambroise Vollard's art gallery, among others.

It is perhaps not a coincidence that, after Ubu comes to a halt on the Pont des Arts, he witnesses the gruesome image of the limbless creature in the river, which is described in very poetic terms. As I have already said, the words 'vers' [worms/verses] and the 'quartiers de lard' [quarters of lard] (or 'quartiers de l'art [art quarters]) conjure up the poet and art critic Quillard and might generally

refer to the artistic community of the Phalanstère. Quillard's contribution to the 'pisciculture' can also be read in a different way. Jarry chose his words carefully and the word's (convenient) double reference to both fishing and culture in relation to Quillard might have inspired him to use it. Quillard had written one of the first Symbolist plays to be staged, *La Fille aux mains coupées* (1891). He was also the author of an influential essay on Symbolist theatre entitled 'De l'inutilité de la mise en scène exacte', published in the *Revue d'art dramatique* in 1891. Jarry was considerably influenced by this essay and outlined his own dramaturgical ideas in the essay entitled 'De l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre' (1896) which clearly evokes Quillard's piece. The Almanac text also pays homage in a playful way to Jarry's friend and to Quillard's status as one of Symbolism's most prominent theoreticians.

The, partly archaic, naval terms ('ramer' [to row], 'chiourme' [galley slave], 'escale' [port of call], 'tap-en-bouche' [drum beat to row to]) used to describe Quillard and Ubu's fishing adventure are also striking. Apart from emphasizing the epic, Homeric nature of the quest for the barb, these terms also evoke the vocabulary of the play *Ubu enchaîné*, in which Père Ubu is condemned to become a slave on a galley. Jarry finished writing this sequel to *Ubu Roi* in 1899 (published in 1900 by *La Revue Blanche*). Throughout the texts in the first Almanac the reader will find similar references (both implicit and explicit) to Jarry's artistic context and his own work. In contrast to the plays, in which Ubu was merely the main character, the Ubu of the Almanacs has become an independent entity, standing in for Jarry and existing on the confines of fiction and reality.

References to contemporary politics are also made in the text. Quillard, while rowing the boat with Ubu, becomes the pretext for the unexpected mention of Zola. When they approach a lock the 'population qui habite les écluses en ouvrait les deux portes à la fois sur notre passage et déclarait avec pleurs que ce n'était pas nous, mais Zola, qui eût dû ramer' [the population that inhabited the locks opened its two doors upon our passage and declared in tears that it wasn't us, but Zola who should have been rowing].⁵⁹ This sentence appears to contain a veiled reference to the role of Quillard and Zola in the Dreyfus Affair. Quillard was an outspoken defender of Dreyfus in the press and had publicly defended Zola after the latter was convicted and exiled to Great Britain in the wake of the publication of *J'accuse*. The phrase in the Almanac suggests that, with Zola absent, it is now left to Quillard (and Ubu) to do the rowing, hence to fight his battle.

A similar satirical reference hidden in wordplay can be found at the end of the February text. The previous association between a policeman and fish is continued here as Ubu's and Quillard's idyllic fishing trip ends with them being pursued by the fishing guard and a 'gendarme'.

Le gendarme est un être redoutable, non par ses attributions légales, mais parce qu'il est impur. Nous ne rééditerons point les plaisanteries classiques, injustes d'ailleurs, sur son parfum. Nous connûmes un gendarme cul-de-jatte. Le relent nauséabond est, croyons-nous, sauf votre respect, celui de la Loi.

Sous le signe des Poissons, il est utilisable en halieutique, comme amorce de tous poissons de rivière.⁶⁰

[The gendarme is a formidable creature, not because of his legal competences, but because he is dirty. We will not repeat the classic jokes, unfair by the way,

about his smell. We once knew a legless gendarme. The foul stench is, we believe, besides that of your respect, that of the Law. Under the sign of Pisces, he can be used in halieutics, as bait for all river fish.]

The 'gendarme cul-de-jatte' brings back to mind the limbless creature in the water we met earlier on. The 'gendarme' is depicted as a dirty creature with a nauseating odour (the word 'gendarme' also meaning herring in French). The word's double meaning is cleverly used to imply that the Law, and people's respect for it, smell equally unpleasant. The 'gendarme' seems to have been a favourite target. Jarry made a similar link between fishing and the 'gendarme' in *L'Amour absolu* (1899).⁶¹ In Ubu's Almanac the reader learns that the 'gendarme' can also be used as fish bait, conveniently leaving it unclear whether this applies to the herring or to the police officer, or to both. In the final sentence of the February text all associations come together (sign, Pisces, fish, policeman) and the phrase 'sous le signe des Poissons' [under the sign of Pisces] provides the reader with yet another clue regarding the linguistic explorations of this sign.

What is the reader to make of Jarry's mindboggling exploration of a single sign? On the one hand, it could be said that 'it leaves the reader free to experience his own subjective response to the signs', as Rosalind Krauss has argued with regard to visual collage.⁶² But while one can emphasize this openness of meaning in the visual collage, one can also stress the fact that a collage artist selects his material purposefully, both in visual art and in literature. In the Almanac collage text we see that the author, who makes deliberate associations between signs, whether on a semantic, phonetic, or even visual level, uses this as a compositional tool for the text, so as to manipulate the reader's response. The collage of encyclopaedia-like fragments allows the rest of the more personal story of the fishing trip to be included. However, each time an object, name or thing appears in the text, it is invariably not described in a conventional sense, but by means of an ironic, pseudo ready-made informational text. The reader is consequently left hovering between the abstract and the concrete, a narrative relating Ubu's adventures, personal references to Jarry and his circle (only available to insiders), and impersonal, encyclopaedia-like fragments. The narrative is no longer held together by a story or a conventional plot, but by the linguistic signifier. Jarry makes full use of the arbitrariness of signifiers when put in a different context. A word or a sign and its referents trigger by association the next sentence or paragraph. On the one hand, there is polysemy, a dissemination of meanings and free play with the sign. On the other hand, the author leaves clues as to how to read the text and steers the reader's interpretation. The small fragment I have discussed here is entirely characteristic of the texts in both Almanacs and indeed of many of Jarry's other writings. Furthermore, the layers of meaning evoked in this brief text (references to Jarry's biography, to his artistic environment and to current events) also appear in the rest of the Almanac.

Advertisements

Among the 'ready-made' materials used in the many visual collages and in Ubu's Almanac, the use of fragments from newspapers or advertising is particularly striking. Popular almanacs very often contained advertisements, but, like many of

the other texts, the advertisements in Ubu's Almanac seem to have been carefully chosen and exploited. One of the advertisements, bearing the title 'prophéties' [prophecies] (reminiscent of an astrological almanac), announces the fictitious opening performance of *Pantagruel*, a 'national play in five acts' by Jarry and Terrasse at the 1900 International Exposition in Paris. Jarry and Terrasse had been working on the piece in 1898. Their experimental play, with its sixteenth-century language, would hardly qualify as a national play suitable for the prestigious International Exposition. In fact, it remained an on-going project and Jarry did not live to see it performed.⁶³ The title 'prophéties' is painfully appropriate in this light.

Another advertisement in the first Almanac (Fig. 2.10) has a similarly ironic tone and is entitled 'Conseils aux Capitalistes et Perd-de-famille' [Advice to Capitalists and Dads in Debt]. It advertises a number of recently published works by Jarry, Terrasse and Franc-Nohain. Their names are not mentioned and the publishing house is identified by only its address (15, rue de l'Échaudé Saint-Germain). The works were all part of the *Mercur de France's* 'Collection du Répertoire des Pantins', most of them published in 1898. Their works are jokingly advertised as a 'good investment'. This piece of publicity, inserted between more authentic adverts, is a good example of both pseudo ready-made material and the self-promotion that characterize the Almanacs.

Even more intriguing are the 'real' advertisements on the very last pages of the first Almanac. In later editions they have been omitted, probably because they were regarded as mere commercial texts, and hence of no literary significance. However, these advertisements, in their tone and style, resemble the style and tone

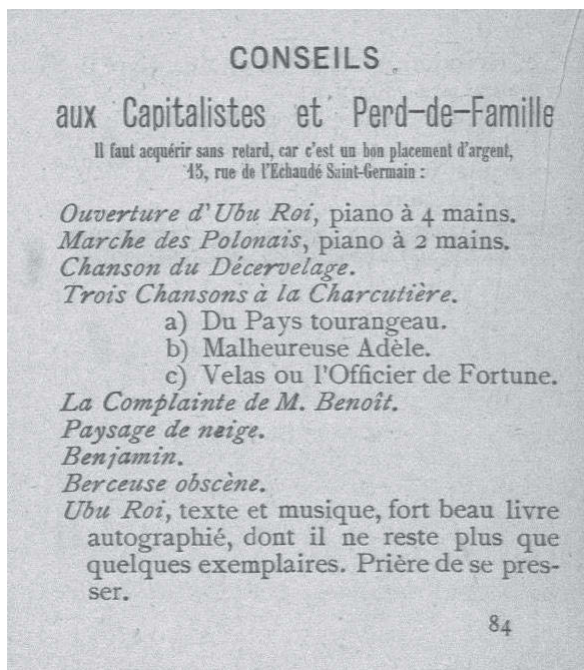


FIG. 2.10: 'Conseils aux Capitalistes et Perd-de-Famille', first Almanac

of the ‘Prophéties’ and the ‘Conseil aux Capitalistes’. In fact, they also appear to have been consciously selected. They also promote works by members of Jarry’s inner circle. Thus we find advertisements for Vollard’s *Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris*, an album of lithographs by Bonnard, and for works by fellow Nabis Vuillard and Denis. There is also an advertisement for the *Revue Blanche*’s publication of *Flûtes*, Franc-Nohain’s collection of poetry, and for the *Mercure de France*’s editions of Jarry’s works. Furthermore, we find two advertisements for *La Critique*, the journal of Jarry’s friend Georges Bans. Yet another promotes *L’Argus de la Presse* which delivered newspaper clippings on demand. At the time of *Ubu Roi* Jarry had subscribed to this service in order to receive reviews of the play after the premiere.⁶⁴ So in one way or another, all of these advertisements are directly related to Jarry, his work and his artistic circle. They also appear to be more manipulated than they at first seem. On the bottom half of page 92 in the original edition (Fig. 2.11) there is an advertisement that stands out. It is not promoting the work of Jarry’s friends, but a very specific chemical product called ‘poudre de sang’ [blood powder]. Derived from cow’s blood, this substance was normally added to wine in order to filter out small particles. The address given is that of an actual street in Bercy, a district in Paris which at the time was home to numerous wine dealers. Whereas this might seem in odd company among the others, the manufacturer’s name explains a lot. Charles Bonnard was Pierre Bonnard’s brother, the director of the Théâtre des Pantins and the original distributor for the first Almanac. Again, the text appears to advertise someone close to the Almanac’s collaborators. More important, however, is the tone of this advertisement, for example in the line ‘Commerçants, bistros,

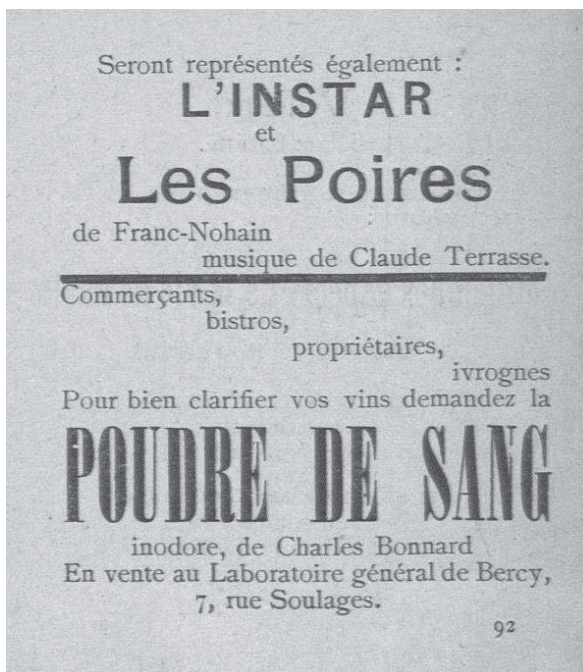


FIG. 2.11: Advertisement for ‘poudre de sang’, first Almanac.

propriétaires, ivrognes' [shopkeepers, bistros, landlords, drunks], clearly alludes to other texts in the Almanac. At first glance many of the advertisements appear to be real, and to come from an outside source, but on closer examination one gets the impression that many of them were written by the authors themselves, not least because reference was made to this particular one in the announcement for the first Almanac in *La Revue Blanche*. Interestingly enough, the advertisements were therefore considered to be an integral part of the work by whoever wrote the announcement (most likely someone well acquainted with the Almanac, if not Jarry himself).

It therefore seems safe to argue that these advertisements were not included solely for commercial motives or to comply with the demands of the almanac genre. The texts of course did promote the work of Jarry and his friends, but at the same time they were clearly intended to be part of the literary work as well. The collaborators appear to have enjoyed blurring the distinction between what was authentic and what was not, as well as mixing up the 'vulgar' discourse of advertising with literary texts.

Mixing media; text and image

The mix of artistic media is crucial to any collage, although it must of course be emphasized that, in Ubu's Almanac, these 'media' all come in the form of textual material. The cover image adheres to the traditional iconography of almanacs. It portrays Père Ubu as an astrologer in his study surrounded by astrological paraphernalia — books, telescope, and globe. Peering out of the window through his telescope, he contemplates the stars. If one compares the cover of Ubu's Almanac to a cover of the *Almanach de Nostradamus* from the sixteenth century (1563), for example, the similarities are striking (Fig. 2.12). The astrological, symbolic imagery is recycled, with Père Ubu taking the place of the astrologer Nostradamus, thus asserting his authority over matters of all kinds.

Bonnard has obviously recycled the iconographic clichés of popular and astrological almanacs, merging them with Ubu's iconography. But the redistribution of such popular, clichéd images within a new (literary) context inevitably transforms them. They gain new visual potential and become a suggestive source for further

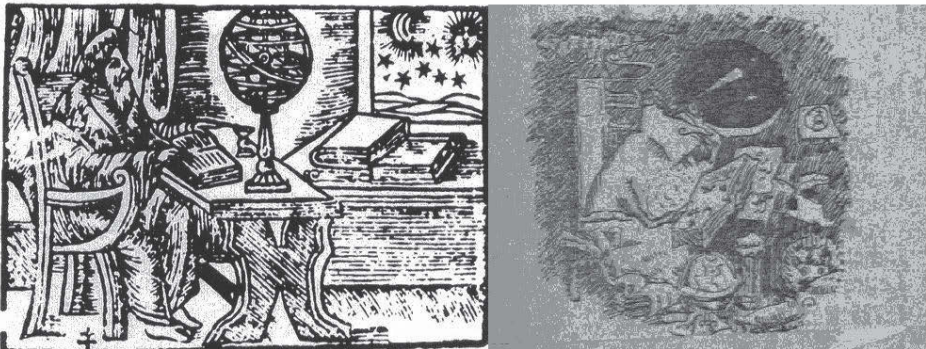


FIG. 2.12: Cover *Almanach de Nostradamus* (1563) and cover first Almanac


allusions. This was the case, for example, in Bonnard's *Larousse*-style drawing of the 'barbillon', a simple generic image that triggered a series of unconventional associations. Throughout the Almanac, Bonnard's images evoke a variety cultural spheres: the iconography of popular almanacs and modern images of the city, spliced with scenes from Ubu's imaginary universe.⁶⁵

Not all of Bonnard's images are strongly rooted in the text. Some simply complement the text, while others, such as that of the barb, are illustrative, pseudo ready-made, but also evoke a new semantic thread. Whereas most of Bonnard's drawings for the first Almanac seem to have a predominantly illustrative function, the combination of text and image does have an effect that is important to a collage work, namely that of simultaneity. In 'Le Temps dans l'art' (1902) Jarry would praise a painting's capacity to show 'un [...] grand nombre d'objets, simultanés, qu'il a plu au peintre d'en rassembler' [a [...] large number of objects, simultaneously, which the painter has chosen to put together].⁶⁶ Jarry envisioned the same for literature by substituting conventional narrative sequence with a simultaneous arrangement of textual and visual signs on the page.

Collage in the Second Almanac

The second Almanac differs from the first in a variety of ways. Its larger format and its luxurious, expensive look contrast with the more traditional features of Ubu's first, pocket-sized Almanac. This was mostly due to Vollard who issued the second Almanac in a lavish style similar to that of the illustrated 'livres d'artistes' [artist's books] he was used to publishing. The second Almanac contains fewer texts, which leaves more room for Bonnard's lithographs, and they are consequently larger and more prominent than the pencil drawings in the first Almanac. This also gives this work a more minimalist look, with text distributed between images and white spaces. However, despite these dissimilarities, the same three aspects we saw in the first Almanac contribute equally to the collage aesthetic in the second: the eclectic mix of genres, the use of (pseudo-)ready-made materials and the use of different artistic media.

The second Almanac contains fewer sections than the first. It also conforms less closely than the first to traditional divisions of popular almanacs. Features such as the calculation of Holy Days or different calendars are absent, although there is a detailed saints' calendar for the entire year. The segment entitled 'Confession d'un enfant du siècle — Commentaire du Père Ubu sur les Événements récents' [Confession of a child of his time — Père Ubu's Commentary on Recent Events] suggests an account of current events which could traditionally be found in an almanac. However, the actual text hovers somewhere between a journalistic interview and a theatrical dialogue. 'Ubu colonial' is a short play starring Père Ubu, Mère Ubu and Fourneau and the section 'Philologie-Examen du Père Ubu au Saint-Sulpice colonial' is also written in the form of a dialogue. Throughout this second Almanac the reader is confronted with an array of textual genres, such as a letter, an 'official' government document or a song. Since the texts are interspersed with many lithographs and white spaces, the impression of fragmentation in this




Calendrier

DU PÈRE UBU

Pour 1901

Approuvé par Mgr St Bouffre

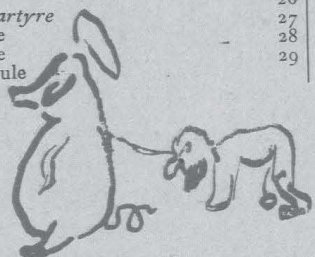


JANVIER

1	M	DÉCERVELAGE
2	M	*St Macaire d'Alex.(1)
3	J	*Ste Bertille, vierge et Vve
4	V	*Ste Oringue, vierge
5	S	St Birbe
6	D	*St Fursy, abbé
7	L	*St Pelade, évêque
8	M	*Ste Goule ou Gúdule
9	M	*Ste Basillisse, vierge
10	J	St Bateau
11	V	Ste Gale, abbesse
12	S	St Poil
13	D	St Sagouin
14	L	*St Hilaire
15	M	St Terme
16	M	Ste Girafe
17	J	*St Antoine, abbé
18	V	*St Léobard, rectus
19	S	Ste Asperge
20	D	St Grumeau
21	L	St Bol
22	M	*St Dimenche, abbé
23	M	*Ste Messaline
24	J	*St Babylas
25	V	REPOPULATION
26	S	*St Profit
27	D	*St Avit, martyr
28	L	St Etronge
29	M	Ste Bardane
30	M	Ste Bourboule
31	J	Ste Touche

FÉVRIER

1	V	Ste Tignasse
2	S	St Schisine
3	D	*St Remezy, évêque
4	L	St Anal
5	M	Ste Delpot, mère
6	M	*St Barzanuphe, sold.
7	J	Ste Gidouille
8	V	COPULATION
9	S	*St Apollon
10	D	*Ste Zuarde
11	L	*St Cémon, chanteur
12	M	*St Vèle, moine
13	M	St Hérold, évang.
14	J	St Ciput
15	V	Ste Crapule
16	S	Ste Soupe
17	D	AÉROSTATION
18	L	*Ste Prépédigne, mart.
19	M	*St Gabin, prêtre
20	M	Ste Marmelade
21	J	*St Pépin de Landen
22	V	*St Abiile, évêque
23	S	SABBAT
24	D	CONCERT LAMOUREUX
25	L	*Ste Valburge
26	M	St Fouquier, apôtre
27	M	*St Galmier, sous-dia.
28	J	FIN DU MOIS
29	J	Hunyadi. STE PURGE



(1) Sont précédés d'un astérisque les prénoms empruntés au livre officiel intitulé : *Prénoms pouvant être inscrits sur les registres de l'état civil destinés à constater les naissances conformément à la loi du 11 Germinal an XI.*

— 5 —

FIG. 2.13: First page 'Calendrier du Père Ubu pour 1901', second Almanac

work is much stronger than in the first Almanac. Once again, lists are a visually striking feature among these texts.

The longest list in the second Almanac is the saints' calendar. It covers every month of the year and occupies six pages. The calendar is accompanied by Bonnard's evocative and provocative drawings in the margins (see Fig. 2.13). In contrast to the one in the first Almanac, this second calendar is an amalgam of real and imaginary figures drawn from various sources. Many of the pseudo-saints were invented by the authors, each collaborator adding a couple to the calendar. Claude Terrasse scribbled sixty names in his notebook, although not all made it to the final list. Other pseudo-saints were borrowed from a comic, popular tradition of fake saints that had existed in France since the Middle Ages.⁶⁷ Jarry might also have borrowed a few of these saints from his beloved Rabelais. Noël Arnaud has suggested a further plausible source for the calendar: in October 1896, the *Mercur de France* had issued the *Almanach des Poètes pour 1897*. This selection of contemporary poetry also included a saints' calendar for each month, featuring saints such as 'Sainte Pompeuse' [Saint Pompous] or 'Sainte Galle' [Saint Gall].⁶⁸ In sum, Jarry and his collaborators did not have to look far for inspiration. The saints of Ubu's calendar can roughly be divided into four groups:

1. Real saints
2. Names and holidays from Ubu's lexicon (Saint Merdre, 1 January 'Décervelage' [Debraining], Saint Phynance), referring to Ubu's Almanac (Sainte Tatane [Saint Nookie]) or more generally to Jarry's work.
3. Imaginary saints or puns on real saints' names, some vulgar (Saint Anal), some borrowed from popular tradition or Rabelais (Saint Andouille, Sainte Nitouche [Saint Don't Touch], Saint Tignasse [Saint Mop of Hair]), others from the collaborators' imagination.
4. Names referring to contemporary society and culture (Saint-Saëns, Saint Anatole F, Saint Bouguereau, Saint Denis, *Maurice*).

Some of the names of real saints have obviously been chosen primarily for their intrinsic humour. They conjure up a comical association by simply adding a word, such as 'Saint Lazare, Gare' [Saint Lazarus, *Station*]. Others have the association built in, such as 'Sainte Messaline', which is the name of a real Saint, but also, conveniently, the infamous heroine of Jarry's novel *Messaline* (1901). The holidays roughly follow the same procedure: some are real, and some refer, as described above, to Ubu's own universe. The French national holiday of 'le quatorze juillet', for example, is replaced by the 'Fête du Père Ubu'. There also holidays that refer to themes and episodes from the rest of the Almanac, for instance 'Répopulation' or 'Examen de Conscience'.

The names chosen for each month are clearly not taken at random. As in traditional calendars, every month is associated with a particular theme, relating to the weather, seasonal activities or the symbolism of its Zodiac sign. March, for example, is governed by the belligerent sign of the god Mars. The Saints of March are all in some way connected to warfare, murder or death, with associations similar to those made in the March segment of the first Almanac. Hence the reader finds names such as 'St Guillotine', 'St Pranzini' (a notorious nineteenth-century serial

killer) or ‘St Chemin-de-Fer, *ass*’ [Saint Railroad, *assassin*], because major train accidents were common at the time. In similar fashion, the Saints of April are all associated with fish and meat (or fishing and hunting). In the first two weeks we find a string of ‘fishy’ Saints, including ‘Ste Truite’ [Saint Trout] and ‘St Barbeau’ [Saint Barb]. Considering the barb’s prominent role in the first Almanac, it is hardly surprising that Jarry would sanctify his favourite fish in the second. The list comes to a sudden halt owing to the new holiday of ‘clôture de la pêche’ [closure of the fishing season] on 14 April, which is followed by a chain of ‘meat’ Saints and the equally new holiday, ‘visite des abbatoirs’ [visit of the slaughterhouses] on 21 April. On this menu of ‘meat’ saints we find ‘St Veau’ [Saint Veal] and ‘Ste Grenouille’ [Saint Frog] as well as less refined waste meat such as ‘Ste Hure’ or ‘Sts Abatis’.⁶⁹ It makes perfect sense of course that this copious and unsavoury list of fish and meat ends with the holiday ‘*Hunyadi, Ste Foire*’ on the last day of April. Hunyadi János was a well-known laxative mineral water at the time and it had already made an appearance in Jarry’s novel *Les Jours et les Nuits*.⁷⁰ The word ‘foire’, meaning diarrhoea, speaks for itself, although it might also refer to the verbal diarrhoea the reader is confronted with on these pages.

Ubu’s calendar is an intricate collage of official names, imaginary popular saints and newly invented ones. Each name or pun creates multiple, humorous associations. However, this list is not an open-ended enumeration but a closed list, as its structure obeys the numerical demands of a calendar. This closed form is reinforced by the fact that the associations have a playful, yet relatively clear, internal logic. The calendar was obviously created with a great eye for detail.

Like the first, Ubu’s second Almanac incorporates (pseudo) ready-made material. Some of the saints’ names in the Calendar are in fact marked with an asterisk, explained in a footnote that runs over the first three pages (Fig. 2.14). It is in fact an official legal text. Fagus, who worked at the birth registration office, provided the fragment along with a list of official names. The judicial text states which names may be given to new-born children. It had been drawn up in the wake of the French Revolution, after exuberant parents had apparently started giving their children names like ‘Liberté’. The authorities quickly decided to restrict the choice to names from official calendars and names they deemed suitable.

Since then the ‘Loi du 11 Germinal an XI’ has prevented the choice of inappropriate names in France. As can be read in Ubu’s Almanac, the law stipulates that:

...les noms en usage **dans les différents calendriers**, et ceux des personnages connus dans l’histoire ancienne pourront seuls être reçus, comme prénoms, sur les registres de l’état civil destinés à constater la naissance des enfants; et il est interdit aux officiers publics d’en admettre aucun autre dans leurs actes.⁷¹

[...only the names used in **various calendars** and those of known figures in ancient history can be accepted as first names in the state’s birth registers; civil servants are not allowed to admit any other names on birth certificates.]

In the Almanac the phrase ‘dans les différents calendriers’ appears in bold. This is a small, but significant alteration of the original text and emphasizes the ambiguity of the phrase. The authors make clear that, since the description is so vague and all-inclusive, Ubu’s calendar could just as easily be included among these ‘various

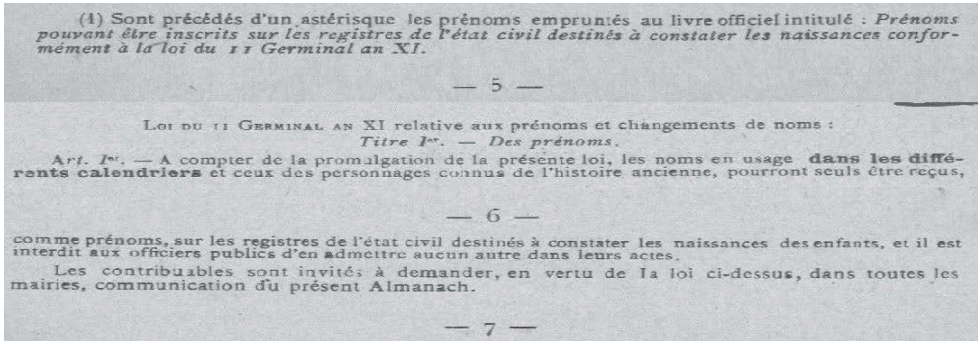


FIG. 2.14: 'Loi du 11 Germinal an XI', second Almanac

calendars'. The effect is twofold. On the one hand, this collage of a legal text humorously questions its original context, introducing an element of confusion and challenging the authority of the official text. On the other hand, set in its new context, the collage fragment playfully legalizes the suggestion for 'official' names made in the Almanac, thus pseudo-authorizing Ubu's alternative calendar.

Other literary texts feature among the (pseudo) ready-made material included in the second Almanac. In the section 'connaissance utiles et inventions nouvelles' (Fig. 2.15) we find a 'confidential letter' from Ubu to the 'Ministry of Biz'Arts' reprinted exclusively in this Almanac. In his letter Ubu triumphantly reveals how he has 'invented' umbrellas, slippers and gloves. The umbrella part is in fact a rewriting of a text by Alphonse Allais entitled 'Une invention. Monologue pour Cadet', written for the actor Coquelin cadet (i.e. Junior).⁷² Several sentences are taken word for word from Allais's text; the rest of the text is a pastiche. Such recycling and rewriting of other literary texts is an important part of the collage aesthetic in the Almanacs, but it is an even bigger feature of the novel *Faustroll*.

Such appropriation and redistribution of existing literary texts was often Jarry's way of honouring writers he admired. Furthermore, it was an integral part of Jarry's concept of writing. Throughout the Almanacs texts from all cultural spheres are recycled, whether these are mundane, popular recipes from Ruscelli, legal texts, or excerpts from Rabelais, Mallarmé or Allais. Authentic or not, every text that Jarry and the collaborators deemed worthy could be included. Their originality is ensured by the author's arrangement and their insertion in a new context.

This applied equally to a slightly altered newspaper text the reader finds in the second Almanac. The rules of admission to Ubu's prestigious 'Ordre de la Gidouille' [Order of the Potbelly] had already been provided in the first Almanac, but the second one features an official list of nominees for his Order (Fig. 2.16). It itemizes thirty-four people who are nominated for a rank in Ubu's prestigious order. The list is based on an outside source, which seems to have been a common procedure for Jarry. In the manuscript files of Jarry's unfinished last novel *La Dragonne* for example, a newspaper clipping was found which listed those admitted to the *École Polytechnique* in 1907,⁷³ and it was no doubt intended for inclusion

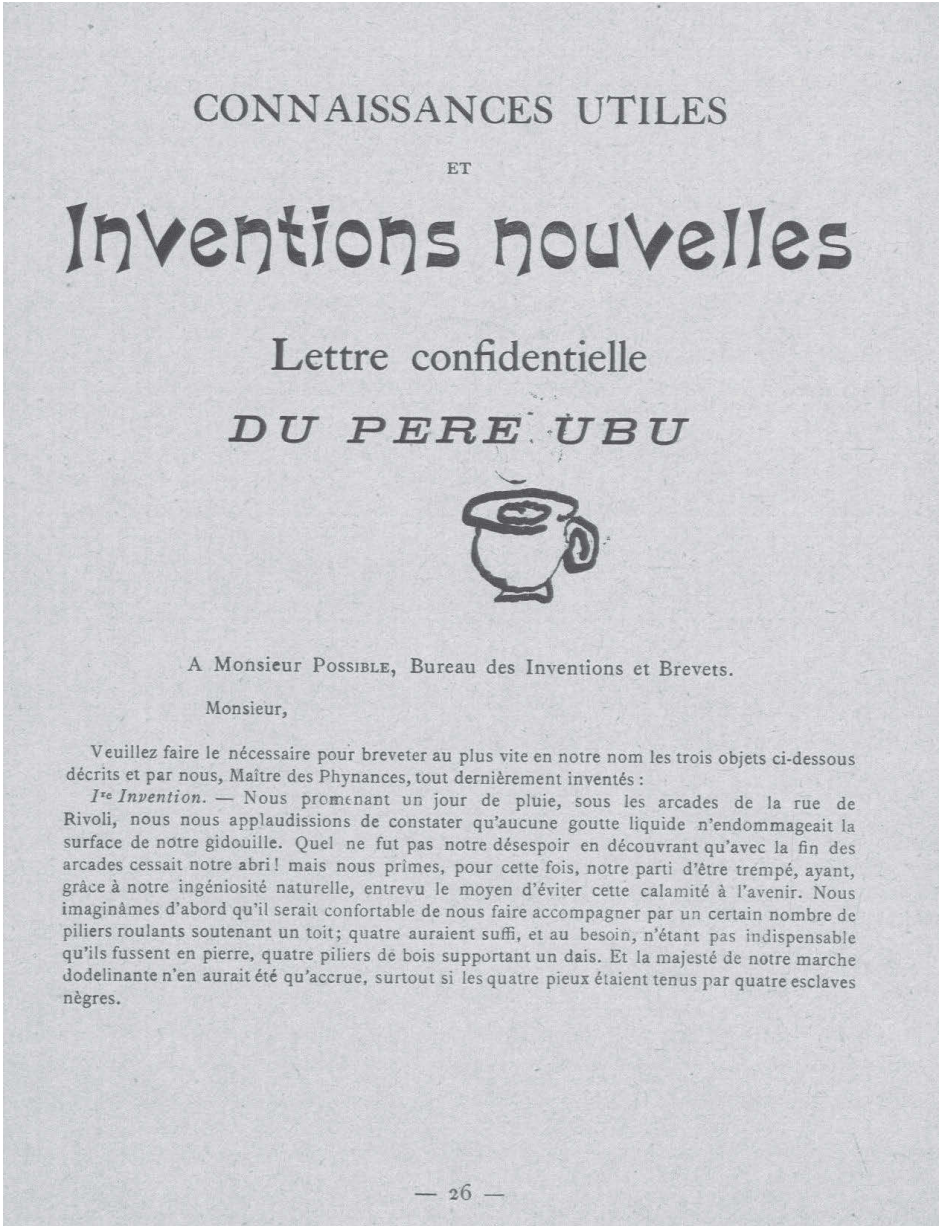


Fig. 2.15: 'Connaissances utiles et inventions nouvelles', first Almanac

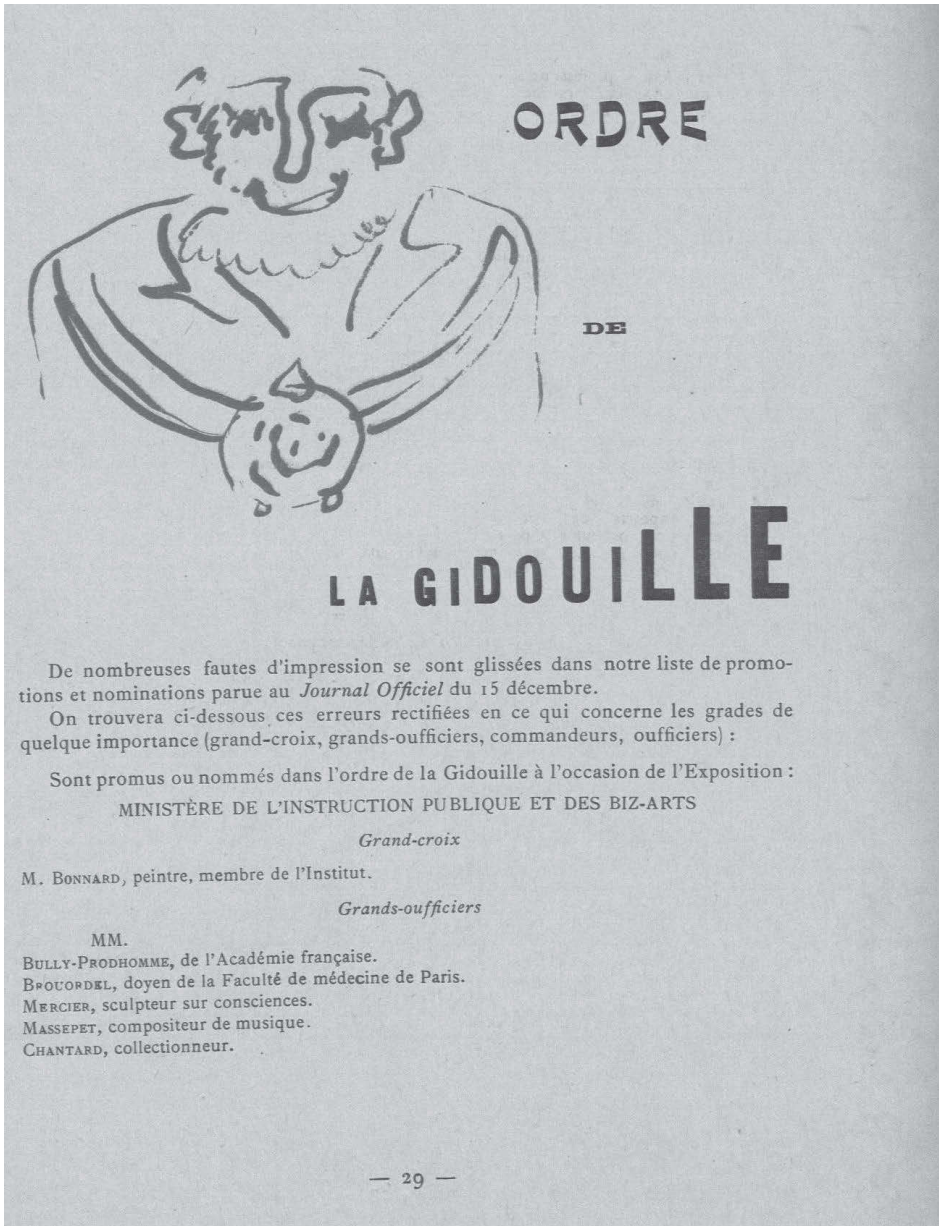


FIG. 2.16: Start of the list of nominees for the 'Ordre de la Gidouille', second Almanac

in his work. The contributors to the Almanac fabricated their list of nominees in a similar fashion.

The fact that this list has been cut and pasted from elsewhere is acknowledged in the text. Ubu's list is presented as a correction of the names published in the *Journal Officiel*, the official outlet of the French government, on 15 December. The original text listed the nominees for the prestigious Légion d'Honneur. It was reprinted in several contemporary newspapers, including for example *Le Figaro* (see Fig. 2.17). Jarry and his collaborators had been busy fabricating their own 'fantasy list'. At a dinner at Vollard's that included the painter Odilon Redon, Terrasse wrote that they were a bit embarrassed by the fact that Redon's father was on the real list:

Dîner chez Vollard avec Redon Odilon, Jarry, Bonnard. *Le Temps* publie la liste des décorés. Bonnat Gd Croix, Massenet Gd officier etc. et parmi les architectes le père de Redon est fait officier. Comme nous procédons à une liste fantaisiste de la gde Gidouille nous sommes tout à coup gênés par le nom du Père de Redon [...] Jarry est très en train. Trop même, il en est fatigant, mais c'est certainement et de beaucoup un des rares hommes vivant exclusivement pour la littérature.⁷⁴

[Dinner at Vollard's with Redon Odilon, Jarry, Bonnard. *Le Temps* publishes the list of those who were decorated. Bonnat Great Cross, Massenet Great officer etc and among the architects Redon's father is made officer. Since we are assembling a fantasy list of the great Potbelly we are all of a sudden embarrassed by the name of Redon's father [...] Jarry is on good form. Too much in fact, he is exhausting, but he is certainly one of the few people who live exclusively for literature.]

In Ubu's Almanac they (naturally) changed the phrase 'Sont promus ou nommés dans la Légion d'Honneur à l'occasion de l'Exposition' [Are promoted or nominated in the Légion d'Honneur for the Exposition] in the original to read 'sont promus dans l'Ordre de la Gidouille à l'occasion de l'Exposition' [are promoted in the Order of the Potbelly for the Exposition]. The French Ministry of Fine Arts and Public Education became the 'Ministry of Public Education and Biz'Arts', the same mysterious institution to which Ubu had addressed his confidential letter. The order of the names follows that of the original list, but the names themselves are ingeniously modified. The painter Bonnat, who was awarded the highest honour, the Grand-Croix, has become Almanac illustrator Pierre Bonnard. Further down the list, the painter Ch. Cazin has been transformed into painter J. C. Cazals, a close friend of Jarry, who once painted his portrait. Other names are altered in irreverent puns on the original. As such Sully-Prudhomme has become Bully-Prodhomme.

The collage is here obviously intended as a satire. Apart from the straightforward wordplay and obvious mockery of a prestigious French institution like the Légion d'Honneur, the list also conveniently substitutes the contemporary cultural elite with Jarry's artistic circle. The effect is the same as in the collage of the legal text in Ubu's saints' calendar. It humorously debunks the validity of the original list of nominees and the importance of the Légion d'Honneur, while providing a pseudo-official validation of Ubu's own, and obviously much more important, Order of the Potbelly.

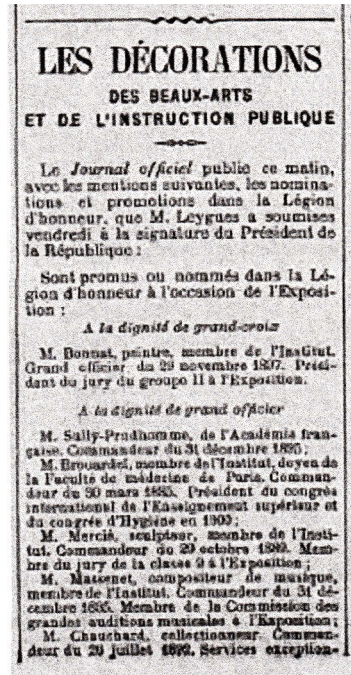


FIG. 2.17: 'Les décorations des beaux-arts et de l'instruction publique', *Le Figaro*, 16 December 1900

In addition, the collage of this kind of newspaper fragment enabled a more direct connection with contemporary reality. Newspapers, through their direct link with the world and as part of that everyday world, were a powerful medium in collage.⁷⁵ In the visual arts their graphic power proved inspirational in itself, but artists could also engage with the content of newspapers and this is what is at stake here in the Almanac. The newspaper fragment is double-coded; it functions as part of the literary work but also continues to refer to an extra-literary reality.⁷⁶ By placing the fragment in its new context, that external reality is questioned and, through the alterations, simultaneously conveys a new and very subjective 'reality'.

Advertisements are once again an integral part of the second Almanac. Many of them promote Vollard's gallery, which is hardly surprising considering his role as publisher. The advertisements for Vollard are followed by a segment (Fig. 2.18), the 'Conseils aux capitalistes et perd-de-famille' [Advice to capitalists and dads in debt]. It is a copy of the one from the first Almanac with some minor additions, including mention of the previous Almanac among the works advertised as a great capitalist investment. The authors' names are still omitted, but the names of the publishing houses of *Le Mercure de France* and *La Revue Blanche* are mentioned explicitly this time, along with some of the prices. Bonnard's drawing of an elephant, an ambiguous symbol for Ubu's 'light-heartedness', accompanies the advertisement. The use of advertising provided Jarry and his colleagues with an opportunity to play with its conventions. At the same time it allowed the authors and the publishing houses a chance to promote their work. Despite its mocking, ambivalent title, this piece of pseudo publicity is an integral part of the Almanac as well as being a real advertisement.

CONSEILS AUX CAPITALISTES ET PERD-DE-FAMILLE

Il faut acquérir sans retard, car c'est un bon placement d'argent :

Au " **Mercure de France** ", 15, rue de l'Echaudé Saint-Germain.

Ouverture d'Ubu Roi, piano à 4 mains.

Marche des Polonais, piano à 2 mains.

Chanson du Décervelage, avec ou sans accompagnement.

Ubu Roi, partition complète avec texte, le tout en fac-simile autographique.

Trois Chansons à la Charcutière :

a) *Du Pays Tourangeau.*

b) *Malheureuse Adèle.*

c) *Velas ou l'Officier de Fortune.*

La Complainte de M. Benoît ;

Paysage de neige ;

Berceuse obscène.

Solfège illustré, le seul qui apprend rapidement la musique aux petits enfants.

Scènes familiales, pour piano.

César-Antechrist.

Les Jours et les Nuits, roman militaire.

L'Amour absolu, roman.

Petit Almanach du Père Ubu.

Symbole de la
légèreté d'esprit
du Père Ubu, ce
qui n'est point
une critique, vu
qu'il entend ne le manifester qu'en mar-
chant sur les pieds.



A " **la revue blanche** " :

UBU ROI
UBU ENCHAINÉ } Réunis en un volume de la collection à 3 fr. 50.

Pour paraître le 22 janvier, en un volume à 3 fr. 50 :

MESSALINE

roman de la Rome impériale.

FIG. 2.18: 'Conseils aux capitalistes et perd-de-famille', second Almanac

The less traditional look of the second Almanac is partially due to Bonnard's prominent illustrations. This prominence can be explained by a difference in material. In contrast to the simple line-drawings of the first Almanacs, Bonnard made lithographs for the second. This accounts for the thick, black lines of the images and their larger size. Bonnard's cover illustration for the second Almanac nevertheless still adheres to the iconography of the traditional almanac. We see a close-up of Ubu carrying a pen, his own Almanac, and a telescope. Again, the cover seems to have been inspired by the iconography of popular, astrological almanacs (Fig. 2.19). Like Nostradamus on the cover of the seventeenth-century *Les Prophéties de Nostradamus*, Ubu is presented as an 'authority' figure and scribe, with attributes symbolizing his omniscience.

Bonnard's drawings are much more cartoon-like in the second Almanac. The thick, crude lines, visible for example in Bonnard's irreverent images of obscene saints (see Fig. 2.14), emphasize their comic character. All of the images in the second Almanac are placed very freely around the text, both inside and outside the margins. Bonnard had illustrated Vollard's edition of Verlaine's *Parallèlement* (1900) in a similar manner. His drawings outside the margins playfully engaged with Verlaine's poems. In a review of *Parallèlement*, Jarry had praised Bonnard's light sketches in the margins as they seemed to match the rhythm of the words.⁷⁷ Unlike contemporaries such as Caran d'Ache, Forain or Steinlen, Bonnard was not particularly well known as a caricaturist. However, much of his graphic work did possess a humorous undertone. Lugné-Poe remembered Bonnard as the 'humorist among us, with a satirical element in his pictures.'⁷⁸ More importantly, Jarry considered Bonnard to be capable of painting both the beautiful and the grotesque, or as Jarry called it 'that other side of beauty'.⁷⁹ Bonnard's images appeared to correspond to a key element of Jarry's poetics and of collage in general: incorporating the incongruous and the unusual, or at least elements that were at odds with conventional ideas of beauty.

Several images in the second Almanac can also be read without direct reference to the text. There is a greater tension between the textual and visual elements here

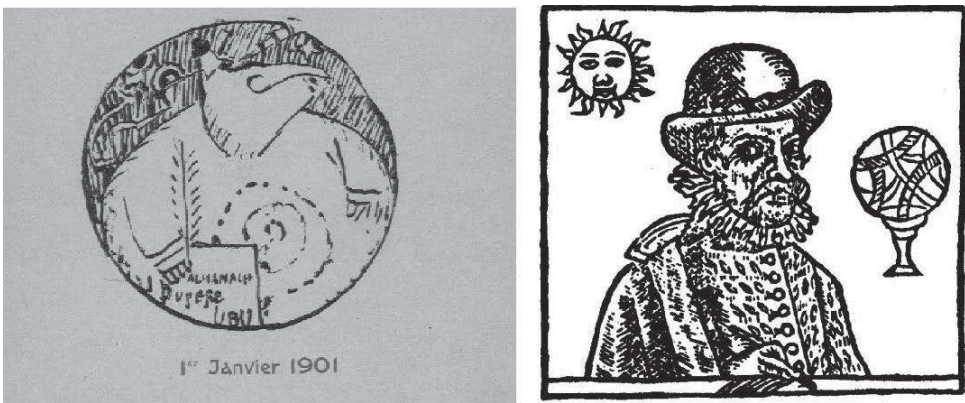


FIG. 2.19: Detail cover second Almanac and cover *Les Prophéties de Nostradamus*, 1644

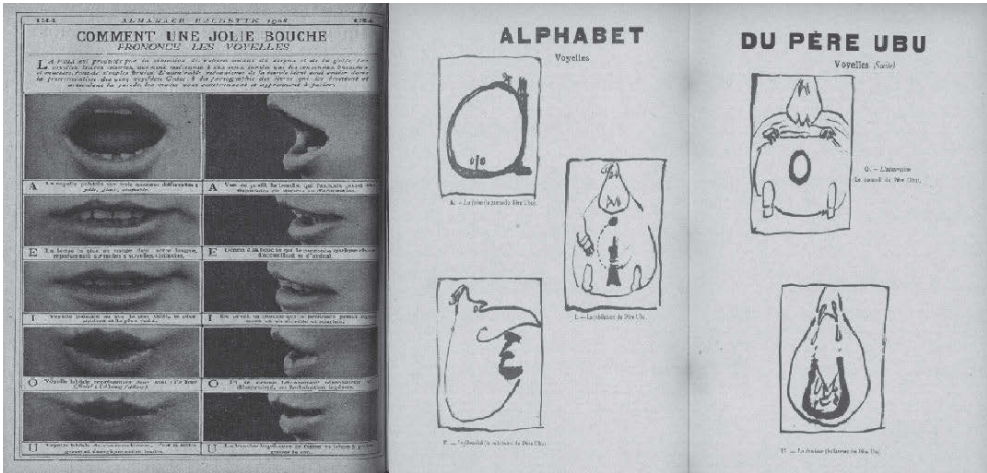


FIG. 2.20: ‘Comment une jolie bouche prononce les voyelles’ [How a pretty mouth pronounces vowels], *Almanach Hachette*, 1908, and ‘Alphabet du Père Ubu. Voyelles; A. — La faim (la panse de Père Ubu); I. — La jubilation de Père Ubu; E. — La férocité (la mâchoire de Père Ubu); O. — L’admiration (le nombril de Père Ubu); U. — La douleur (les larmes de Père Ubu) [Père Ubu’s Alphabet. Vowels; A. — Hunger (Père Ubu’s jaw); I. — Père Ubu’s joy; E. — Ferociousness (Père Ubu’s jaw); O. — Admiration (Père Ubu’s belly button); U. — Pain (Père Ubu’s tears)], second Almanac

than there was in the first Almanac. One example of this is the ‘Alphabet du Père Ubu’, a large-sized lithograph that occupies two pages (Fig. 2.20). It shows Ubu (literally) embodying the vowels of the alphabet. Of course Almanacs traditionally had an educational function and some contemporary almanacs still held on to their civilizing mission. In the *Almanach Hachette*, for example, educational photographs depicting the proper pronunciation of vowels seem to have been commonplace (Fig. 2.20). Considering the fact that the *Almanach Hachette* had served as a source for some of the ‘factual information’ in Ubu’s Almanacs, Bonnard might well have been inspired by these images when he created his ‘educational’ drawings.

However, Bonnard’s illustrations connect the vowels of the alphabet to Ubu’s body parts and primal urges. Thus the letter ‘O’ is linked to the common exclamation of admiration ‘Oh’. Through its form, it also evokes Ubu’s bellybutton (‘O. *L’admiration* — le nombril du Père Ubu —’). The juxtaposition of text and image here serves primarily to enable the polysemic associations so cherished by Jarry. The phonetic and visual punning we saw in the previous texts is again put into practice here, enhanced by Bonnard’s comical images that are full of innuendo. Obviously, Bonnard’s irreverent and obscene images would also undermine any possible educational or civilizing effect.

Besides images, music plays a significant role in the second Almanac. In the last pages we find the lyrics and sheet music for the song ‘Tatane’ [Nookie], composed by Terrasse (Fig. 2.22). Judging from the original edition, it appears that the piece of sheet music was casually added in around the already printed text. It is preceded by several blank pages and one with Bonnard’s equally sketchy images of naked, dancing figures (Fig. 2.21). The song itself, which is part of the section relating

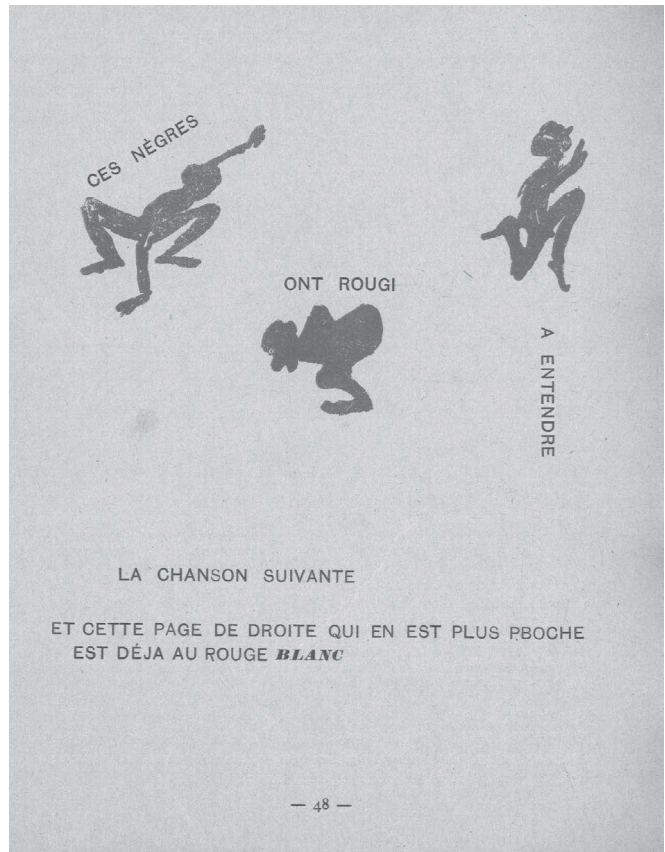


Fig. 2.21: 'Ces nègres ont rougi à entendre la chanson suivante' (these black people turned red upon hearing the following song), second Almanac

Ubu's colonial adventures, is said 'to glorify Ubu and make black people blush.' Bonnard's illustrations of the dancing figures emphasize this quite literally, as the African figures are indeed coloured red in the original edition instead of black. The images also seem to suggest movement and dance. The dancing figures emphasize the rhythm and musicality of the printed sheet music on the following page. The drawings thus complement the notes in the score, attempting to evoke the music. Even the text wanders off in different directions, as if to follow the movements of the figures. Together they form a prelude to the song on the next page. Text, image and music interact in what is almost visual poetry.

At the end of the nineteenth century uniting art, music and literature was an ideal shared by Symbolists, and many other contemporary artists including Jarry and his circle. The production of *Ubu Roi* and the puppet plays at the Théâtre des Pantins were all collective, artistic projects, and we can see this collaborative ideal transposed in these pages of the Almanac. However, contrary to the Symbolist ideal, inspired by the Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which the arts formed a natural symbiosis, the combination of artistic media in the Almanac results in a much more crude, comical and fragmented work. Bonnard's images, for example, give the impression of being preliminary drawings, sketches in the margins rather than well composed illustrations. Jarry's own graphic work, such as the posters he

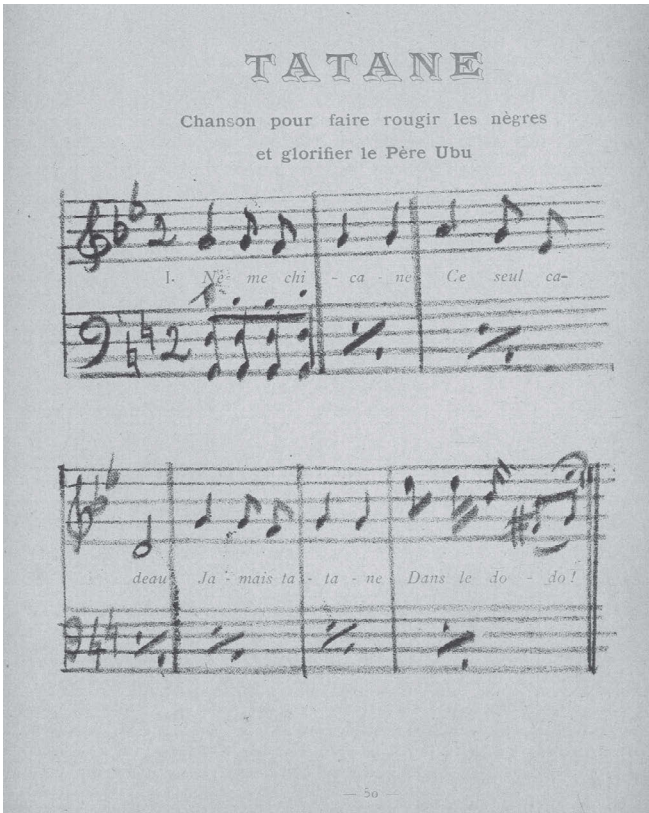


Fig. 2.22: 'Tatane; Chanson pour faire rougir les nègres et glorifier le Père Ubu' [Nookie; Song to turn black people red and to glorify Père Ubu], second Almanac

made for the Théâtre des Pantins, possessed a similar, unsophisticated style.⁸⁰ But Jarry's 'sloppy' drawings were part of his poetic program in which the grotesque was viewed as 'that other form of beauty'. The collage aesthetic reflects these ideas and the crude, disjunctive and heterogeneous mix of artistic media in the Almanacs stands in great contrast to a Symbolist ideal that favoured a harmonious unity of the arts.⁸¹

Re-inventing the Literary Text, the Author and Representation

Several Jarry scholars have linked the notion of collage to Jarry's work. Brunella Eruli has pointed to the collage of classical texts in Jarry's novel *Messaline*. She also relates Jarry's images of monsters to a collage aesthetic in his graphic work, but without discussing the effects on his texts.⁸² Henri Béhar has discussed the collage of popular songs and other elements of popular culture in Jarry's works.⁸³ More recently, Jill Fell has described Jarry's writing as 'a series of layers, superimposed like a collage rather than as a coherent linear sequence', but without developing that observation any further.⁸⁴ However, the collage aesthetic provides an important key to understanding Jarry's writing and poetics as a whole.

Firstly, there is the re-evaluation of what 'makes up a literary text'. This is achieved through the appropriation of extra-literary and 'ready-made' materials, from newspapers, everyday life and popular culture. The recycling of pre-existent,

often incongruous, materials defied concepts of (singular and unique) originality and beauty prevalent in Jarry's time and in this respect Ubu's Almanacs playfully stretched the boundaries that defined a work of literature.

Secondly, the collage practice poses a challenge to a particular idea of authorship as singular creation. The fictional author of Ubu's Almanacs, Père Ubu, collects, cuts and pastes all sorts of materials as he pleases. The originality of the two works lies in the arrangement of those materials. The almanac genre, through its characteristics of anonymity and collective authorship, provides the perfect vehicle for assembling and combining heterogeneous materials. Nevertheless, an unseen author figure is very much at the centre of the work. By carefully cutting and pasting the texts that author — in this case Jarry as the main creator/editor of the text — is visibly pointing attention to the writing process and the text's construction. By combining the materials in a specific way he is visibly steering the reader through the text, inviting him to make certain connections. In Jarry's case, linguistic associations guide the collage text and it is through them that multiple layers of meaning are created.

The third effect of the collage is the re-evaluation of writing itself and with it of conventional modes of narration and of representation. Collage defies homogeneity and narrative coherence and offers a heterogeneous, incoherent work instead. The collage in Ubu's Almanacs is very obviously *about* writing, and about the way a literary work is constructed. The extraneous, not entirely integrated elements emphasize the constructed nature of the text. Conventional representation, which created an illusion of reality, is replaced by what could be considered as another sort of 'realism'. In Ubu's Almanacs reality is documented through bits and pieces taken from that reality, for example newspaper fragments, rather than by *telling* and ordering it through conventional narrative. The reader is then left to question the new, literary context of the inserted fragment as well as its original, extra-literary context.

The multiple authorship of the Almanacs reinforced the collage form, and allowed Jarry to advance the avant-garde potential of his work. Young artists, including Apollinaire, Picasso and the Cubist painters, felt drawn to Jarry's provocative persona, to the subversive qualities of his creation Ubu, and to his unique way of writing. They were familiar with Ubu's Almanacs, and seemed to appreciate that both works presented a radically new set of aesthetics. Jarry proved a visionary; his innovation of the literary form, in particular his ground-breaking use of collage, foreshadowed, if not influenced, many of the techniques and strategies these avant-garde artists would appropriate.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. For an illustrated overview of the collage in modern art and literature see, among others, Hanno Möbius, *Montage und Collage: Literatur, bildende Künste, Film, Fotografie, Musik, Theater bis 1933* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2000); Brandon Taylor, *Collage: The Making of Modern Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004); Herta Wescher, *Die Collage: Geschichte eines künstlerischen Ausdrucksmittels*. (Cologne: M.DuMont Schauberg, 1968).
2. Jean Pierre Morel, 'Collages, montage et roman chez Döblin et Dos Passos', *Revue d'Esthétique*, 3/4 (1978), 213–32 (p. 216).

3. As other scholars have also argued with regard to avant-garde literary collage works, such as Holger Lund, *Angriff auf die erzählerische Ordnung: Die Collagenromane Max Ernsts*. (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2000), and Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 246. Throughout her book Adamowicz also argues that such a creative and subversive strategy is central to Surrealist collage texts. See Elza Adamowicz, *Surrealist Collage in Text and Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
4. Examples of the collage technique range from twelfth-century Japanese calligraphic art to popular postcards in the nineteenth century. See Wescher, *Die Collage*, 1968, pp. 7–19.
5. Louis Aragon, author of the collage novel *Le Paysan de Paris*, also emphasized this when stating that the essence of modern literary collage for him was this ‘acte conscient’ [conscious act], a ‘démarche décidée’ [determined step]. Collage, he says, is a form of quotation, but the primary aim of collage is to question and scrutinize the conventions of literature and art. Louis Aragon, *Les Collages* (Paris: Hermann, 1980), pp. 125–35.
6. Also argued in *Collage et montage au théâtre et dans les autres arts durant les années vingt*, ed. by Denis Bablet (Paris: L’Âge d’homme, 1978), Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment* and ‘The Portrait of the Artist as Collage-Text: Pound’s *Gaudier-Brzeska* and the “Italic” Texts Of John Cage’, *The American Poetry Review* (1982), 19–29.
7. The discussion of the content is based on the original editions, manuscript numbers 90633 (first Almanac) and 17251 (second Almanac), Bibliothèque Municipale de Laval. The reason for relying on the original editions is the fact that in later re-editions of the Almanacs the last pages, which contained the advertisements and the table of contents, were omitted.
8. Lüsebrink, ‘La Littérature des almanachs’ p. 59.
9. See Béhar, Dubbelboer, Morel, eds, *Commentaires pour servir à la lecture de l’Almanach du Père Ubu illustré*, p. 19.
10. Umberto Eco, *The Infinity of Lists: From Homer to Joyce*, trans. by Alastair McEwen (London: MacLehose Press, 2009). The fascination with lists in medieval literature has also been discussed in Madeleine Jeay, *Le Commerce des mots: L’Usage des listes dans la littérature médiévale (XIIe–XVe siècles)* (Genève: Droz, 2006).
11. Fisher, *The Pataphysician’s Library*, p. 96.
12. Patrick Besnier, ‘Dénombrement du peuple: Jarry et les écrivains de son temps’. *Europe: revue littéraire mensuelle*, 59, 623/624 (1981), 9–16.
13. *OC I*, p. 541.
14. Such zodiac symbols were a common feature of popular almanacs and calendars, indicating the months and signs to those unable to read.
15. A distinction recently made in *Versants n°56: Poétiques de la liste (1460–1620): Entre clôture et ouverture*, sous la direction d’Adrien Paschoud et Jean-Claude Mühlethaler (Geneva: Slatkine, 2009).
16. Eco, *The Infinity of Lists*, pp. 279–87.
17. *OC I*, p. 171.
18. ‘Nommer un objet, c’est supprimer les trois quarts de la jouissance du poème qui est faite du bonheur de deviner peu à peu, mais le suggérer, voilà le rêve’ [To name an object is to suppress three quarters of the enjoyment of a poem of which the joy comes from unravelling it slowly, but to suggest, that is the ideal]. Mallarmé in response to Huret, in Jules Huret, *Enquête sur l’évolution littéraire* (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1891), p. 60.
19. *OC I*, p. 173.
20. *OC I*, p. 172.
21. *OC I*, p. 542.
22. *OC I*, p. 542.
23. Besnier, ‘Dénombrement du peuple’, p. 9.
24. *OC I*, p. 527.
25. In the first entry Jarry uses a calendar proposed by Joseph Justus Scaliger, who argued in his *De emendatione temporum* (1583) that ancient history should encompass earlier cultures than Greece or Rome, choosing 4713 BC as his starting point. For further details of these calendars as well as the other numbers and calculations in this section of the Almanac, see Béhar, Dubbelboer, Morel, eds, *Commentaires*, pp. 10–19.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 10–13.
27. The table in Ubu's Almanac is exactly similar to the one in *Almanach populaire 1899*, Paris/Lille, Desclée, de Brouwer et Cie (Société St-Augustin), p. 3.
28. 'Ces marées, surtout celles des 11 février et 13 mars, pourraient occasionner quelques désastres, si elles étaient favorisées par les vents' [These tides, especially those on 11 February and 13 March, could cause several disasters, if they were exacerbated by winds], *OC I*, p. 528.
29. Béhar, Dubbelboer, Morel, eds, *Commentaires*, pp. 17–19.
30. 'Il y aura en 1899 trois éclipses de soleil et deux éclipses de lune. Éclipse partielle du soleil, le 11 janvier 1899, invisible à Paris' [In 1899 there will be three solar eclipses and two lunar eclipses. Partial solar eclipse, 11 February 1899, not visible in Paris], Ubu's Almanac 1899, *OC I*, p. 528. The exact same phrases can be found in the *Almanach populaire 1899*, p. 3.
31. *OC I*, p. 528.
32. 'Livres d'étrennes: Le Calendrier du facteur', *La Plume*, no. 330, 15 January 1903, pp. 141–42.
33. 'Ainsi donc le tableau ou la statue saisit et fixe un moment de la durée' [Thus the painting or the sculpture seizes and fixates a moment in time], 'Le Temps dans l'art', 8 April 1902, *OC II*, p. 637. 'L'homme pourrait-il vivre sans les secours des dates?' [Could man live without the help of dates?], Jarry wrote in *La Plume*, no. 330, 1903, p. 142. Jarry's fascination with time is equally visible in the essay 'Visions futures et actuelles' (*l'Art littéraire*, May 1894, *OC I*, pp. 337–39) and in 'Commentaire pour servir à la construction pratique de la machine à explorer le temps' (*Le Mercure de France*, no. 110, February 1899, pp. 387–96). Signed by Dr. Faustroll, Jarry's manual for building a time machine was inspired by the recent French translation (1898) of H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, by *Le Mercure de France's* journalist Henry D. Davray.
34. Lüsebrink, 'La Littérature des almanachs', p. 48.
35. Béhar, *Les Cultures de Jarry* (Paris: PUF, p. 129). Alexis Piémontais was known in Italian as Alessio Piemontese and in Latin as Alexius Pedemontanus.
36. Girolamo Ruscelli, *Les Secrets du seigneur Alexis Piémontais, divisez en deux parties*, electronic resource BNF/Gallica, Num. BNF de l'éd. de, Cambridge, MA: Omnisys, [c. 1990] (French books before 1601; 77.3). 1 microfilm Reprod. de l'éd. de, Lyon: G. Roville, 1564.
37. Jarry often turned his personal ordeals into literature. In a letter to Rachilde Jarry related his visit to the dentist under the title 'journal dentaire du Père Ubu' [dental diary of Père Ubu], *OC III*, pp. 591–92. In November 1896 Jarry had bought a state-of-the-art racing bicycle on credit, but he never paid off his debt. Bailiffs were continuously harassing him, urging him to pay. One of them, Monsieur Trochon, was immortalized in *Faustroll* as 'Trocon', which translates as 'too stupid'.
38. Béhar, Dubbelboer, Morel, eds, *Commentaires*, note to p. 13.
39. According to an anecdote told by Franc-Nohain, Jarry painted his hair green one day to attract attention. Unfortunately, when he walked into a café, everyone (warned in advance) pretended not to notice it. Arnaud, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 430.
40. *OC I*, p. 564.
41. *OC I*, p. 565.
42. Stéphane Mallarmé, *Correspondance X: Novembre 1897–Septembre 1898*, ed. by Henri Mondor and Lloyd James Austin (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), pp. 190–91.
43. Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 369.
44. *OC I*, p. 565.
45. This idea also closely follows Riffaterre's concept of intertextuality (Michael Riffaterre, *Sémiotique de la poésie* (Paris: Seuil, 1983)) as an 'effet de lecture', in which the intertextual fragment (like the collage of the encyclopaedic fragment here) is identifiable by the reader owing to its semantic, grammatical or stylistic resistance to the receiving text. This creates the text's heterogeneity.
46. *OC I*, p. 539.
47. *ibid.*
48. Jarry would also write one of his 'Spéculations' about the 'sergent de ville', entitled 'La Cerveille du sergent de ville', *La Revue Blanche*, 15 February 1901, *OC II*, p. 277.
49. *OC I*, p. 539.
50. *ibid.*

51. 'En outre, vous serait-il loisible de nous fournir un renseignement fort utile à notre *Faustroll* que nous venons de recopier. Il existe dans le dictionnaire Larousse, au mot *Haha*, deux vers de Piron, qui sont cités et qu'il nous embête de faire le voyage de Paris pour rechercher dans une bibliothèque' [Moreover, would it be possible for you to supply us with a very useful piece of information for our *Faustroll* which we have been editing. In the Larousse, under the word *Haha*, two lines by Piron are cited and we can't be bothered to travel to Paris to do research in a library], *OC I*, p. 1064.
52. In an article about fishing Jarry writes about capturing the elusive barb with Gruyère cheese: 'Que s'il vous est arrivé de mettre à mal, le séduisant au moyen de gruyère préalablement compissé par une jeune vierge, le gros barbeau de quatre à sept livres, vous aurez été ébahi, peut-être, des objurgations et jurons malsonnants que la bête éructe hors de sa barbiche' [Because once you have succeeded in crippling it, seducing the fat barb of four to seven pounds by means of Gruyère previously urinated on by a young virgin, you would have been dumbfounded perhaps by the scolds and offensive swears the animal lets loose from underneath his goatee], 'La Pêche à l'Amiral', *Le Canard Sauvage*, 4–10 October 1903, *OC II*, p. 521.
53. *La Revue Blanche*, 15 September 1900, *OC II*, p. 585.
54. *OC II*, p. 521.
55. 'Père Ubu: ancien roi de Pologne et d'Aragon, membre de la Société des pêcheurs à la ligne de Corbeil' [Père Ubu, ex-King of Poland and Aragon, member of the Society of line fishermen of Corbeil], Jarry to Alfred Vallette, March 1902, *OC III*, p. 561.
56. It led to some colourful, but not very believable anecdotes. Writer Lucie Delarue-Mardrus recalled how Jarry ate the barb raw and straight from the water: 'Invité, comme plusieurs autres convives, à déjeuner à la campagne chez le père du père Ubu, toute la bande et Mirbeau trouvèrent le couvert mis sur un établi. Les assiettes étaient des ronds découpés dans du papier. Au centre, sur une feuille de chou, s'allongeait, pour tout repas, un barbillon cru; car Jarry, qui pêchait beaucoup à la ligne, avait l'habitude de manger le poisson à sa sortie de l'eau, sans même arracher l'hameçon' [Invited, like several other guests, to have lunch in the countryside with the father of Père Ubu, the whole group and Mirbeau found that the table was set on a workbench. The plates were circles cut out of paper. In the middle, on a cabbage leaf, lay a raw barb to serve as the main meal; because Jarry, who did a lot of line fishing, was in the habit of eating the fish straight from the water, without even removing the hook.], Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, *Mes mémoires* (Paris: Gallimard, 1938), p. 141.
57. Letter from Jarry to Alfred Vallette, November 1898, *OC I*, p. 1068.
58. *OC I*, p. 541.
59. *OC I*, p. 540.
60. *OC I*, p. 541.
61. See Jarry's articles 'Psychologie expérimentale du gendarme' and 'Appendice au "gendarme"', *La Revue Blanche*, 1 September and 15 September, 1901, *OC II*, pp. 313–16. In *L'Amour absolu* one reads: 'Le soleil est couché réglementairement, le pêcheur à la ligne, de par le gendarme, rétracte ses tentacules' [The sun has set as prescribed, the fisherman, by means of the gendarme, retracts his tentacles], *OC I*, p. 919.
62. Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Picasso Papers* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), p. 40. A similar argument is put forward by Christine Poggi, in *Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism and the Invention of Collage* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 254. Both scholars point to the free circulation of signs when it comes to the collage work, leaving meaning suspended and open to the beholder. Jarry's use of collage shows that the author can also guide the narrative by this means and use the collage to attract the attention of the reader to the layers of meaning in the text.
63. Terrasse had called upon writer and critic Willy (Henry Gauthier-Villars) to help modernize the sixteenth-century text. Terrasse tried to get it accepted by theatres, but without success. Three other versions followed: a second one, again with Jarry, and a third one in collaboration with Eugène Demolder. The final version of *Pantagruel*, finished by Terrasse, was an 'opéra-bouffe' and performed eleven times in 1911 at the Grand Théâtre de Lyon.
64. Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 276.
65. See also Marieke Dubbelboer, 'L'Écriture visuelle dans les *Almanachs du Père Ubu*: Jarry et

Bonnard', in *Alfred Jarry et les arts*, ed. by Julien Schuh and Henri Béhar (Laval: SAAJ & Du Lérot, 2007), 139–55.

66. 'Le Temps dans l'art', 8 April 1902, *OC II*, p. 637.
67. See Jacques E. Merceron, *Dictionnaire des saints imaginaires et facétieux* (Paris: Seuil, 2002).
68. Arnaud, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 331. Jarry was upset that he had been left out of the collection.
69. *Hure* refers to the severed head of a pig, or of large fish. The words *Abat* and *abattis* (in the calendar the two words appear to have been transformed into one) refer to offal and the legs of birds. Generally these terms apply to slaughterhouse waste.
70. Hunyadi János was a mineral water with a mild laxative quality, fabricated by Andreas Saxlehner, a company located in Budapest. The product was named after the national Hungarian hero who defeated the Turks in the fifteenth century. It was widely advertised in newspapers in Jarry's time.
71. *OC I*, pp. 576–77.
72. Alphonse Allais, *Œuvres anthumes*, 2 vols (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1970), 1, 127–29.
73. Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 9.
74. Journal of Claude Terrasse, 15 December 1900, quoted in Cathé, 'Jarry-Terrasse au travail', pp. 75–76.
75. Möbius, *Montage und Collage*, pp. 237–40.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 240.
77. 'Ses crayonnages légers dans les marges semblent les propres fantômes qui s'évoquent des rythmes à mesure de la lecture, assez diaphanes pour ne point empêcher de lire' [His light drawings in the margins appear as personal phantasms conjured up by the rhythm of reading], *La Revue Blanche*, 15 February 1901, *OC II*, p. 608
78. 'P. Bonnard était parmi nous l'humoriste; sa nonchalance gaieté, son humour s'affirmaient dans ses productions dont l'esprit décoratif gardait toujours je ne sais quoi de satirique [...]' [P. Bonnard was the humorist among us; his nonchalant cheerfulness, his sense of humour were apparent in his decorative works which always kept a certain satirical element], Aurélien Lugné-Poe, *La Parade, t.I, Le Sot du tremplin* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard/Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1930), p. 195.
79. 'Pierre Bonnard est le peintre de la grâce [...] quoiqu'il construise, quand il lui plaît, le beau ou le grotesque, cette autre forme du gracieux' [Pierre Bonnard is the painter of elegance [...] whether he creates, whenever it pleases him, the beautiful or the grotesque, that other form of elegance], *OC II*, p. 608.
80. Pernoud also argues that Jarry's apparently 'amateur doodles' were diametrically opposed to the luxuriously, elegantly crafted lithographs of the period. Emmanuel Pernoud, 'The Art of Facsimile: Alfred Jarry and Reproduction', *Word & Image*, 16, 4 (2000), 352–62 (pp. 355–56).
81. Copeland also contrasts the inherent disjunctiveness of collage to the fusion of elements in the Symbolist *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Roger Copeland, 'Merce Cunningham and the Aesthetic of Collage', *The Drama Review*, 46, 1 (2002), 11–29 (p. 13).
82. Brunella Eruli, 'Le Monstre, la colle, la plume', *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, 203, 3 (1986), 51–66.
83. Béhar, 'Jarry, l'almanach et le fleuve oral', pp. 31–39. Béhar mainly focuses on finding some sources behind the text and remarks Jarry's appropriation of popular culture.
84. Jill Fell, *Alfred Jarry: An Imagination in Revolt* (Madison and Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005), p. 63.

CHAPTER 3



Ubu Reporter: News and Newspapers in the Almanacs

Newspapers occupied a special position in collage works of the early twentieth century. Their direct link to the world made newspaper fragments excellent material for artists seeking to engage with modern life. The years around 1900 are generally considered to be the golden age of the French press.¹ Fewer restrictions on the press, new photomechanical printing techniques, increased literacy: all of these factors had made newspapers more available to an ever-growing audience. By the end of the nineteenth century, popular papers such as *Le Petit Journal*, *Le Petit Parisien*, *Le Matin* and *Le Journal* made up two-thirds of all publications in Paris. Faced with the ubiquitous press, several writers began to reflect on issues of authorship, genre and language.² Jarry's mentor Mallarmé stated with some regret that 'nothing really escapes journalism',³ and argued that literature and poetry were and should be distinct from the (vulgar) language of 'universal reportage'. Although they were often dependent on the press for income and success, many (Symbolist) writers shared Mallarmé's sentiment.⁴ Some even felt the independence of authors was at stake because of a growing pressure on them to become public figures. In the political turmoil of the 1890s, especially during the Dreyfus Affair, writers were frequently drawn into public debates and expected to take on the roles of intellectual and commentator.⁵ Even Jarry, though scarcely a well-known writer or intellectual at the time, could not entirely escape such expectations. In the *Mercur de France* he responded to several questionnaires.⁶ In one of them writers were asked whether a new war between France and Germany would be supported by the public. Jarry answered with sarcastic indifference:

Quant à l'opinion de la jeunesse et du pays, je crois que cette question ne les intéresse pas, moi non plus d'ailleurs, ni la question ni celle de savoir ce qu'ils en pensent.⁷

[As far as the opinion of young people and the country is concerned, I believe they don't care about this issue, I don't care about it either by the way, not about the issue and not about knowing what they think about it.]

Jarry's words can be read as an ironic dismissal of the question, but also of the contemporary expectation that writers should air their opinion on virtually every topic.

Of course, it is important to note that there was no such thing as *the* press. The French press in this period was a complex, dynamic and creative world. Journalism

and literature influenced each other considerably.⁸ The press not only provided job opportunities or a new platform for authors, but it also prompted new modes of artistic expression and new genres. And it is precisely that constant tension between the new opportunities offered by the press and writers' sceptical attitude towards the media that we see reflected in Jarry's work.

Jarry's 'Speculative' Journalism

For a better understanding of the way 'newspaper aesthetics' appear in Ubu's Almanacs, it is worth taking a brief look at Jarry's actual journalism.⁹ Between 1901 and 1904 he wrote chronicles for *La Revue Blanche*, *La Plume*, *L'Œil* and *Le Canard Sauvage*; first under the title of 'Spéculations' [Speculations] and then 'Gestes' [Acts]. Two of his articles were even published in *Le Figaro* under the mundane title of 'Fantaisies parisiennes' [Parisian fantasies].¹⁰ However, Jarry's contribution to this mainstream paper was short-lived.¹¹ His 'Fantaisies parisiennes' were probably a bit too much 'fantaisies' and too little 'parisiennes' for the editors. Despite his efforts to reach a larger audience and to earn money Jarry did not compromise on his style of writing, even, it seems, when it came to his journalism.

Instead of turning his back on journalism, like Mallarmé, or reluctantly working as a journalist out of necessity, as many other contemporaries did, Jarry approached journalism as a creative challenge. There was, for him, no essential difference between his journalistic writings and his literary texts, as he simply refused to adjust his style to contemporary journalistic or literary standards. The title 'spéculations', given to his series of articles in *La Revue Blanche*, already implied the imaginative nature of the articles. The title 'gestes' [acts] brings to mind Jarry's article 'Barnum' (1903), in which he wonders why writers and journalists focus only on 'highbrow' events or topics. In his own view, 'tous les gestes, sont à un degré égal esthétiques, et nous y attacherons une même importance. Une dernière au Nouveau Cirque réalise autant de beauté qu'une première à la Comédie-Française' [all acts are equally aesthetic and we attribute the same importance to them. The latest show at the Nouveau Cirque produces the same amount of beauty as an opening night at the Comédie-Française].¹² In saying this Jarry is justifying his own chronicles and the wide variety of topics he discusses, ranging from contemporary politics to something apparently trivial as new road signs. Towards the end of his life, Jarry was planning to collect all of these articles, which he considered to be an important part of his oeuvre, in one single work. He had first thought of the title *Soloques, superloques, soliloques et interloques de Pataphysique*. After that he imagined publishing an even broader selection entitled *La Chandelle Verte. Lumières sur les choses des temps*. The project was never realized during Jarry's lifetime.¹³ Both titles are significant, however, for they link the articles to Jarry's philosophy of pataphysics. Jarry's self-invented pataphysics, or 'la science du particulier et des solutions imaginaires' [the science of the particular and of imaginary solutions] according to the famous definition in *Faustroll*, focuses on the exceptional and on accidental phenomena.¹⁴ It is obviously a satirical counter-discourse to contemporary, positivist science. But pataphysics also revealed an essential element in Jarry's thinking. It provided

him with a method to question general knowledge, whether this concerned claims made by science, newspapers or other institutions. 'La Chandelle Verte. Lumières sur les choses des temps' [The Green Candle. Some light on the events of the day] reads superficially as a clichéd title for a collection of cultural commentary, but can and should be read in other ways. First of all, 'chandelle verte' is slang for 'snot'. 'Chandelle' is also *argot* for 'bottle' and the 'green bottle' could refer to one of Jarry's favourite drinks, 'la fée verte', the green fairy, absinth. In any case these more banal meanings immediately diminish the validity of the 'light' shed on events. Secondly 'de par ma chandelle verte' [by means of my green candle] was one of Ubu's favourite exclamations, often used to justify his (absurd) statements. The use of this exclamation for the articles equally underlines their distinctly unique perspective.

Considering pataphysics and the ideas expressed in 'Barnum', it comes as no surprise that Jarry often focused on the exceptional and the marginal. He was specifically drawn to the *faits divers*, curious, often sensational news items, such as crimes or accidents.¹⁵ In an article entitled 'Faits divers', Jarry wondered if the *fait divers* was not in fact 'a novel, or at least a novella sprung from the brilliant imagination of the reporter.'¹⁶ Jarry then concludes that 'les faits divers sont le théâtre à côté des grands articles' [the *faits divers* are the theatre alongside the great articles].¹⁷ To him the *fait divers* represented fantasy, spectacle, emphasized by the analogy with the theatre. The reporter of the *fait divers* sought to draw the reader into the event by making it as 'realistic' as possible.¹⁸ In similar fashion the theatre aimed at luring its spectators into the 'realistic' play in front of them. However both, as Jarry appears to argue, created only an illusion of reality. Jarry liked *faits divers* because these often provided a perfect point of departure for infinite 'speculation'. In his chronicles he employed a creative use of language similar to that in the Almanacs. A certain word (inspired by a news item) is singled out and all its different connotations and possible associations are explored. Jarry then often proceeds to debunk and subvert the original news item, while offering a highly original and off-beat perspective on the topic.¹⁹

Jarry was of course not the only one with a critical and humoristic perspective on the news. Irony and satire were inherent to French journalism at the time. There were satirical papers such as *La Vie Parisienne* or *Le Rire*.²⁰ There was also a strong satirical counter-discourse to that of the press among the contemporary avant-garde and in cabaret culture.²¹ Alphonse Allais wrote parodies of the news for Le Chat Noir's journal and mainstream newspapers. Raoul Ponchon was well known for his satirical *gazette rimée*. Jarry's friend, the writer and journalist Tristan Bernard directed the humoristic supplement at *La Revue Blanche*, the 'Chasseur des Chevelures', which sported the subtitle 'moniteur du possible'. Its title shares the idea of 'possible news' with Jarry's speculative journalism. Fénéon had published his *Calendrier de Félix Fénéon*, a subjective 'filter of public events', in *La Revue indépendante*.²² By 1906 Fénéon was writing satirical 'nouvelles en trois lignes' (novels/news in three lines) for newspaper *Le Matin*.

However, none of these contemporary writers mixed journalism with literature to the extent Jarry did. Journalism was an activity that most writers practised on the side, separate from their more serious work. Even though they were much

admired, authors such as Allais and Ponchon were known primarily as ‘humorists’ and their spoofs on journalism and parodies of current events were not considered to be serious literature. When it comes to Jarry’s work, the boundaries between literature, journalism and satirical writing were much less clear. The innovative way in which Jarry mixes journalism and literature in these chronicles, and the fact that his writing style is similar to that of his literary texts, is telling. Writing chronicles was not something he did on the side, and he saw them as an integral part of his literary corpus. Through reconciling the languages of literature and journalism Jarry pushed the boundaries of both. This allowed him to create an alternative, highly poetic form of journalism and opened up new ways for literature to deal with everyday life.

News and Newspapers in the Almanacs

The texts of Ubu’s Almanacs resemble, in many ways, the ‘speculative’ journalism Jarry would write only a few years later.²³ Several central themes in the Almanacs dominated the news between 1898 and 1900: the Dreyfus Affair, colonial politics, spelling reforms, repopulation (a government plan to boost declining birth rates), Rodin’s controversial statue of Balzac, nominees for the Légion d’Honneur, and the 1900 International Exposition.²⁴ Of course, the almanac was a genre which, traditionally, straddled both literature and journalism. This quality alone allowed Jarry and his collaborators to unite the worlds of counter-cultural satirical journalism and ‘highbrow’ literature.

Journalistic genres and styles are employed in the Almanacs as satirical tools. The generic title of the section ‘Lettres et Arts’ for example implies that this is the Almanac’s ‘cultural supplement’. It is in fact a discussion about recent cultural events in the form of a (fictional) walk through Paris. During this walk Ubu casually chats with his companion Athanor le Fourneau. His name is a tautology, as Athanor refers to an alchemist’s oven. The name is also an amalgam of a fictional and a real character,²⁵ one who might be based on the lawyer turned cabaret singer and composer Xanrof, *né* Léon Fourneau (1867–1953).²⁶ Xanrof was an anagram of ‘fornax’, Latin for ‘fourneau’ [oven]. Alphonse Allais apparently had a public feud with Xanrof in 1891 after which he reminded everyone in an article that ‘vieux fourneau’ signified ‘imbecile’.²⁷ A slang dictionary from 1896 provides both this connotation as well as the meaning of ‘vagabond’, explaining perhaps why Fourneau wanders the streets of Paris with Ubu.²⁸ Vagabond/oven/imbecile Athanor Le Fourneau is Ubu’s companion in both Almanacs. Bonnard’s drawings of Fourneau depict him with a head shaped like a triangular oven, including a smoking chimney, and with big gaping eyes. Although his name might imply otherwise, Fourneau’s words often make more sense than Ubu’s. Fourneau acts as the comic sidekick, asking reasonable questions or telling Ubu off and preparing the ground for one of Ubu’s absurd reflections. Whereas Fourneau, although typecast as an absurd figure, acts as the voice of reason, Ubu, presented as an authority in the Almanacs, utters only absurdities no doubt as a parody of the authority role of interviewees or literary commentators.

In 'Lettres et Arts' Jarry makes use of a specific journalistic genre to further emphasize the parody. Chronicles, dialogues and commentaries about cultural events were popular features in the late nineteenth-century Parisian press. Entitled *causeries*, or *promenades*, they were often presented as elegant strolls through Paris. *Le Petit Journal* for example sported a chronicle entitled 'Promenade à Paris', in which the journalist presented himself as a *flâneur* who simply had to walk the streets of Paris in order to find the news.²⁹ Ubu's stroll through Paris, described in the section 'Lettres et Arts', is evidently modelled on this particular journalistic genre, as Ubu is also portrayed as a *flâneur*. Walter Benjamin has, of course, turned the nineteenth-century figure of the *flâneur* into a symbol of modernity in his analysis of Baudelaire and the modern city.³⁰ Ubu's casual stroll in fact becomes emblematic of the style of writing used in the Almanac and also of the way that modern life is transmitted in the text. In his capacity as *flâneur*, the 'Ubu Reporter' of the Almanacs appears as a mirror of the author figure as *receiver* of materials from the outside.³¹ Furthermore Ubu's walk from one place to another mimics the text as it wanders from one subject to another. Ubu is the 'coincidental' recipient of images and impressions of the city. It is from this that Ubu's apparently random commentary on current events develops.

Ubu's walk is not exactly an elegant, casual stroll, but a 'fête automobile' as the section's subtitle indicates. This is of course a pun on *fêtes mobiles* or 'moveable feasts'; holidays which fall on the same day of the week, but of which the date varies. The term is also a metaphor for things changing over time, but the slightly different title of 'auto-moveable feast' in the Almanac overturns that cliché, presenting instead Ubu's hasty, motorized and joyful version of events. The title evokes the random, fragmented nature of the text, with Ubu and Fourneau moving from one place to another and from one topic to another; reflecting perhaps the fragmented way that newspapers transmitted news and information. Ubu's representation of events in the Almanac is superior to that of newspapers. This is made very clear by Ubu in the opening dialogue of the Arts and Letters section:

PÈRE UBU: Monsieur mon ami, vous êtes imbu d'idées absurdes par la fréquentation exclusive des journaux; je vous conseille la cure de votre cerveau par la lecture de notre Almanach, ou mieux, monsieur, la promenade digestive à jeun dans mon Omnubu *Cours-des-Événements — Postérite*.³²

[PÈRE UBU: Sir my friend, you are full of yourself with absurd ideas resulting from the exclusive company of newspapers; I advise you to cure your brain by reading our Almanac or even better, Sir, a digestive morning stroll in my Omnubu *Course-of-Events-in-Reverse*.]

Ubu presents his Almanac — in other words Jarry's literary work or literature in general — as a cure for newspapers, for the benefit of both Fourneau and readers. He invites Fourneau on a healthy 'digestive morning stroll on an empty stomach' in his miraculous 'Omnubu Course of Events in Reverse' to counteract the 'absurdities' propagated by the press.

Ubu's direct dialogue with newspapers is also poignantly illustrated by Bonnard's drawing, which shows Ubu and Fourneau standing somewhat bewildered in front of a Parisian kiosk (Fig. 3.1). The kiosk is the logical starting point for their walk



FIG. 3.1: Ubu and Fourneau in front of a kiosk, first Almanac

through Paris and for Ubu's take of current events. Having stared in amazement at the huge range of papers and magazines on sale, Ubu proceeds to offer his 'truth' as a healthy antidote to the 'absurd ideas' contained in all these publications.

In the second Almanac we find a similar treatment of current events. The section 'Confessions d'un enfant du siècle' [Confessions of a child of his time] sports the subtitle 'commentaire du Père Ubu sur les événements récents' [Père Ubu's commentary on recent events], and is, apart from a jab at Musset, also reminiscent of contemporary newspaper articles written by prominent intellectual figures. Here, Ubu takes on the role of the author as intellectual and authority figure, who is interviewed by his Conscience. Conscience is a recurring character in the Ubu texts. In the early Ubu text 'Guignol' (1893) Jarry had already included a dialogue between Ubu and (his) Conscience. Conscience appeared again in *Les Paralipomènes d'Ubu* (1896) and in *Ubu Cocu* (first published in 1944, but written before the Almanacs). Both in 'Guignol' and *Ubu Cocu*, which includes a rewritten version of 'Guignol', Conscience jumps out of a suitcase dressed as a 'grand bonhomme en chemise' [great fellow in a nightshirt].³³ In the second Almanac Conscience pops out of Ubu's bedside table as a snake-like figure. This tells us much about the nature of Ubu's conscience and about Ubu, who is an untrustworthy, paradoxical character, and literally separated from his conscience. In the Almanac Conscience asks him to reflect on the past and the future. The text is poured into the form of a short theatrical dialogue, complete with introduction of the characters and scenic directions. The dynamic between Ubu and Conscience is similar to that between Ubu and Fourneau in the first Almanac.

The dialogue also has many characteristics of a journalistic interview. Abbreviations are used for example to indicate the speakers, as they would be in newspaper

interviews. The names of Conscience and Ubu are thus conveniently and comically reduced to the vulgar 'CON' [idiot] and 'P.U.' [phonetically evoking the French word for 'stinks']. Both the tone and the style of an actual interview are rigorously maintained in the 'Confessions d'un enfant du siècle', as Conscience probes Ubu on current events. Ubu replies either with his usual illogical logic, or with reluctance at being interviewed:

CON.: Puisque vous aimez à ne rien faire comme tout le monde, vous devez être séduit par la réforme de l'orthographe ?

P.U.: Assez peu, monsieur, et je m'étonne que vous me fatigiez l'esprit à m'interviewer sur cette ineptie !³⁴

[CON.: Since you love doing nothing just like everybody else, you must be captivated by the spelling reform?]

P.U.: Not really, Sir, and I am surprised you would exhaust my mind by interviewing me about this stupid thing!]

Conscience, irritated by Ubu's unwillingness, reproaches him for his absurd comments. He nevertheless maintains his role as a poised journalist, by continuing to ask questions on Ubu's thoughts in a detached tone and interview-like style:

CON.: Père Ubu, vous ne dites que des bêtises. Quelles sont, pour changer, vos dernières absurdités en matière de peinture ?³⁵

[CON.: Père Ubu, you utter only stupidities. To change the subject, what are your latest absurdities on the subject of painting?]

In return Ubu also maintains the rhetoric and techniques of the interview genre in order to give more weight to his absurd arguments. Conscience's interview with Ubu clearly satirizes interviews in general and undermines in particular the position of the interviewee as public figure or intellectual authority, personified here by Père Ubu. It is also easy to see parallels between Ubu's absurdities and Jarry's own ironic answers to journalistic surveys.

The interview was in fact a relatively modern journalistic genre, but it had become quite popular by 1900.³⁶ French newspapers increasingly modelled themselves after American-style journalism. This meant that 'real life' reportage became as important as the chronicles and the intellectual commentaries on the news. Reporters and special correspondents ventured out into the world and sought to tell the stories that befell them.³⁷ The interview was one of the genres that appeared to abolish any mediation between reader and event and, similar to reportage, gave the impression of realism.³⁸ In the Almanacs reality is documented by appropriating journalistic styles and genres. The effect of authenticity sought by journalism is thus suggested in the Almanacs as well.

Similar strategies can be found in some of Jarry's other work, for example in the 'science-fiction' novel *Le Surmâle* (1902). Journalistic reportage is inserted as substitute for the ongoing narrative, providing a supposedly authentic stamp of reality:

Pour plus d'exactitude, nous empruntons le récit de la course dite du Perpetual-Motion-Food ou des 'Dix Mille Milles' à l'un des hommes de la quintuplette, Ted Oxborrow, tel que l'a recueilli et publié le *New-York Herald*.³⁹

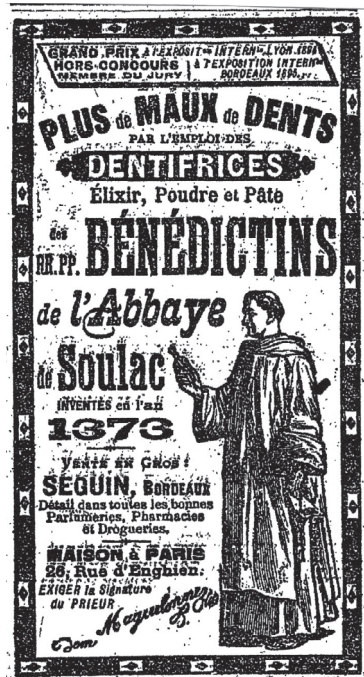
[For greater precision, we shall take our account of this race, known as the Perpetual Motion Food Race, or the 'Ten-Thousand-Mile Race', from one of the members of the five-man bicycle team, Ted Oxborrow, as reported by and published in the *New York Herald*.]

What follows in *Le Surmâle* is a first-person, eye-witness account (by one of the cyclists) of a surreal 10,000 mile long race between a five-person bicycle and a locomotive.

This blurred mix of referential and fictional discourse was also characteristic of a number of newspaper genres at the time of which the 'reportage' was a good example. In it the journalist was often an actor in his own adventure, as is the cyclist in the fragment from Jarry's novel. The stories, seen and experienced by the reporter, included the journalist's personal perception of an event.⁴⁰ Since the personality of the journalist could exercise such an influence on stories in contemporary newspapers, Ubu's role as journalist and commentator in the Almanacs is not that far removed from reality. Within the context of a newspaper, readers were inclined to accept a reporter's account of events, but in the (literary) context of the Almanacs, Ubu's version of events immediately becomes doubtful. The texts of the Almanacs make readers aware of the fact that newspaper language also constructs a reality, just as literary language does. Jarry's text thus comments on the claims of 'realism' made by newspapers, demonstrating that its effects are largely a matter of genre, codes and conventions that determine how readers interpret texts and their representation of reality.

The collage of recipes in the first Almanac can similarly be read as a commentary on advertising. Whereas they might seem humoristic remnants of a distant past,

FIG. 3.2: 'Plus de maux de dents...'
[No more tooth ache...],
advertisement from *Le Figaro*,
10 September 1898



they turn out to be not so distinct from contemporary advertisements. In *Le Figaro* of 10 September 1898 and in *Le Temps*, of 2 February 1898, one comes across upon an advert for miraculous toothpaste able to cure every toothache (Fig. 3.2). On 15 December 1900, around the time the second Almanac was written, the same advertisement appeared again in *Le Figaro*. Many newspaper advertisements from this period promoted (curious) cures and medicines for everyday illnesses, including sore throats, skin diseases and constipation. It is easy to imagine Jarry's Ubu-like interest in these ailments and their miraculous cures, and it may well be the reason why the widely advertised laxative Hunyadi János ended up as a Saint in Ubu's saints' calendar. The *Figaro* advertisement seeks to endorse this extraordinary product by emphasizing its ancient heritage and the fact that it has been made by monks since the fourteenth century. The popular scientific discourse employed here is not that different from Alexis Piémontais's four-hundred-year old recipes. The collage of these recipes in Ubu's Almanac imply that they are just as valid or just as silly as the contemporary 'miracle cures'. In Ubu's Almanac the reader encounters an overall derision of anything or anyone laying claim to an absolute truth, whether it is popular almanacs, miracle recipes, newspapers or modern advertising.

In this respect, Bonnard's drawings also play an important role. Ubu's Almanacs provide the reader with a subjective, alternative reality, in which the Ubu universe blends perfectly with contemporary everyday life. To emphasize this even more powerfully, Bonnard's illustrations situate Ubu and his Omnubu within the everyday reality of Parisian street life. In fact, Bonnard was renowned at the time for his depictions of city life. Just as Jarry saw theatre in the *faits divers*, Bonnard appreciated the 'theatre of the everyday' in the streets.⁴¹ Most mornings Bonnard would walk the streets to find inspiration for his art, seeking to record the particularities of a place or a building. The illustrations to the first Almanac's 'Arts and Letters' section, bear obvious resemblances to Bonnard's other work, for example his lithographs in *Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris*, published by Vollard in 1899, or the *Croquis parisiens*, advertised in the second Almanac.

In the first Almanac one illustration depicts Ubu and Fourneau on the roof of their *Omnubu* (Fig. 3.3). Below, on the horizon, we see an alignment of several major landmarks in Paris, such as the Eiffel tower and the Sacré Coeur. The discussion of current events is triggered by the characters' journey through the streets of Paris and by the city's landmarks. In another drawing Fourneau and Ubu pass the Senate building (Fig. 3.4), which prompts a conversation about politics.

Bonnard's comic drawings of Ubu and Fourneau posing in front of various landmarks capture brief moments in an otherwise fleeting street life. The illustrations work in the same way as the other newspaper genres employed in the Almanacs. They are used to emphasize the 'realism' of the text, as images in newspapers normally do, except that Bonnard's illustrations serve to satirize the truthfulness of illustrations in the press. Furthermore they help to create the alternative universe of the Almanacs in which Ubu effortlessly blends with real life.

Neither in Jarry's chronicles nor in Ubu's Almanacs is news a mere source of satire. News items could also act as exciting, new sources of associations, metaphors and symbols. Let us recall for example the February text of the first Almanac in

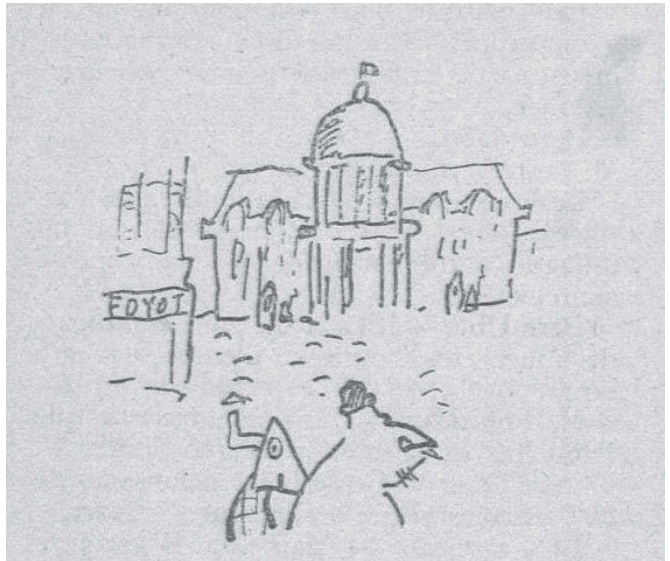
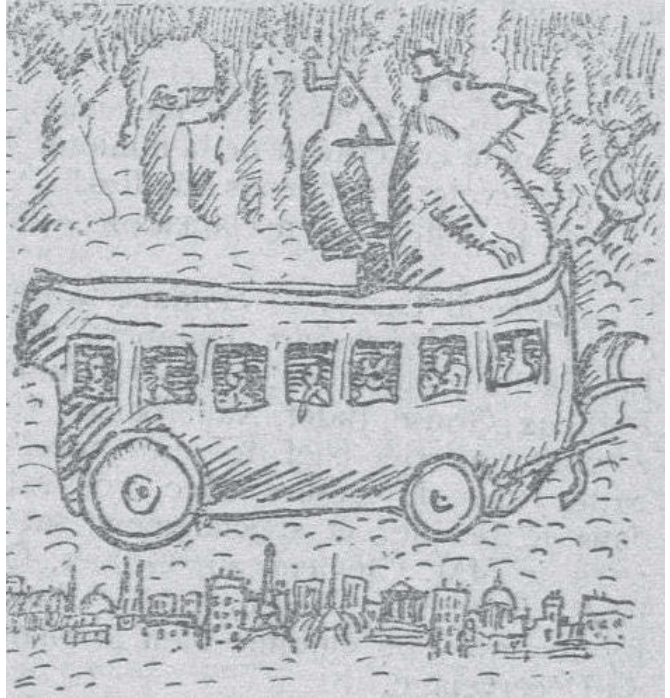


FIG. 3.3 (above): Ubu and Fourné on top of the *Omnubus*, first Almanac.

FIG. 3.4 (below): Ubu and Fourné walk past restaurant Foyot and the Senate, first Almanac

which Ubu saw a limbless figure in the Seine:

...non pas un rassemblement, c'étaient des passants qui passaient, sans s'arrêter, mais peut-être se seraient-ils arrêtés sans l'intervention possible d'un sergent de ville, il n'y avait pas de sergent de ville, mais il aurait pu venir un sergent de ville, même deux sergents de ville, voire une brigade centrale de sergents de ville, et nous nous sentîmes attirés vers la contemplation de l'eau. Et non sans raison, jugez-en:

Un être était immergé, un être luttait contre l'engloutissement, à la surface liquide; sans souci d'aucune pudeur, il était entièrement nu, sans paralysie causée par le froid de la saison; sans l'aide de membres artificiels, car il n'avait ni bras ni jambes, il nageait ma foi très bien, un poisson quoi!⁴²

[...not a resemblance, there were passers-by passing by, without stopping, but they could have stopped had it not been for the possible intervention of a police officer, there wasn't a police officer, but a police officer could have showed up, even two police officers, or even a central brigade of police officers, and we felt drawn to contemplate the water. And not without reason, judge for yourself:

A creature was immersed, a creature was struggling not to be swallowed up, at the liquid surface; not worrying at all about decency, he was completely naked, without paralysis caused by the cold season; without the help of artificial limbs, for he didn't have arms or legs, well he was a very good swimmer, a fish, wasn't he!]

I quote this passage again because it suggests yet another layer of meaning when viewed in the context of the contemporary press. The first impression one gets on reading these lines is that of a more or less human, albeit macabre, creature. The figure implied here in the text is that of the *noyé*, a drowned person. Although the word is not mentioned as such, this is the image conveyed by the description.

The picture seems generally to refer to a particular event. The sensational press often reported gruesome stories about dismembered bodies found in the Seine. In 1876 crowds had gathered at the Seine after the limbless body of Marie le Manach was discovered,⁴³ and *Le Petit Parisien* reported that 3,000 visitors came to the Paris morgue to see her corpse. The words 'rassemblement' and 'passants qui passaient' can be read as a reference to curious crowds gathered on the river bank. The image might have originated from one of the many *faits divers* in the press, or may even have been something witnessed by Jarry himself.⁴⁴ But in fact the above passage in the Almanac seems to have been more directly inspired by a lithograph by Félix Vallotton. It accompanied an article entitled 'Le Noyé' in Octave Uzanne's *Badauderies Parisiennes. Les Rassemblements: Physiologies de la rue* (1896). The book contained commentaries on everyday Parisian street life, in particular the issue of crowds. Several prominent writers, many from Jarry's circle, contributed to it.⁴⁵ Vallotton's distinctive black and white illustrations, thirty in total, accompanied the publication.⁴⁶

The word 'rassemblement' in the Almanac alludes to the title of this book, as does Jarry's 'physiological' description of the 'drowned' figure. The previously abstract description of curious passers-by and the possible intervention of a sergeant take on concrete form when one looks at Vallotton's drawing (Fig. 3.5). The choice of words clearly brings to mind Vallotton's drawing which was in turn partly inspired

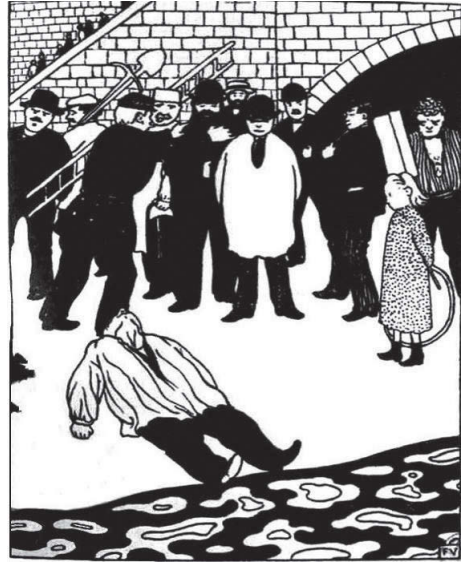


FIG. 3.5: Félix Vallotton, 'Le Noyé', from Octave Uzanne, *Badauderies Parisiennes. Les Rassemblements: Physiologies de la rue*, 1896

by the depiction of sensational events in the press. The illustrated supplement of *Le Petit Journal* for example often sported full-page colour illustrations of gruesome crimes or accidents. Given his predilection for semiotic polyvalence, Jarry would not allow the figure of the *noyé* to be limited to this one reference. The *noyé* was a recurrent figure in Jarry's work, owing partly perhaps to its visual power or to the multiple associations it could induce. In his journalism Jarry showed a particular preference for horrid crime and macabre accidents and it is here that this figure also appeared several times. His article 'Les Mœurs des noyés' [the customs of drowned people] is a pseudo-anthropological study exploring the habits of these mysterious creatures who reside in the water.⁴⁷ A similar analogy with fish is made in this article, although unlike fish, as Jarry explains in deadpan manner, the 'drowned person' only floats downstream and does not travel in groups.⁴⁸ In another article from 1902, 'Communication d'un militaire', there is a similar dehumanizing of the drowned figure, arguing again that it is a species of aquatic animal. The 'noyé' can cast off his limbs in order to escape from people trying to recover his body.⁴⁹ The figure of the 'noyé' returns again in Jarry's last unfinished work, *La Dragonne*.

The drowned figure appears first of all in the Almanac text because of its resemblance to 'fish' (Pisces sign). The phrase 'Repêcher un noyé' [fishing a drowned person out of the water] also links the two 'signs' together. However, 'noyé' is also *argot* for 'a drunk'.⁵⁰ In 'Les Mœurs des noyés' Jarry refers to this meaning by describing the 'noyés' as 'ces intéressants ivres morts de l'aquatisme' [these interesting dead drunks of aquatism].⁵¹ This association establishes a thinly veiled reference to Jarry's own drinking. Apparently the inhabitants of the Phalanstère were also referred to as 'les noyés' [the drunks].⁵² In figurative terms this limbless figure also means someone only just keeping his head above water, and who is therefore in trouble. On the one hand, the words 'engloutissement' [going under/being swallowed up] and 'liquide' [liquid/cash] could be read as biographical

references to Jarry's financial struggles. On the other hand, they refer to a semantic field of water and liquid and are thus tied both to fishing and to drinking. In one short sentence, the biographical thread in the February text and some recurring motifs in the Almanac (art, news, fishing, drinking, money, the Phalanstère) all come together.

This small paragraph alone illustrates the complexities of Jarry's writing and the density of his texts. News items, illustrations, collage material and words appear to have been carefully chosen to suggest a multitude of connotations. Together they are used to create a symbolic and highly subjective reality. Jarry's use and transformation of news enabled him to satirize and critique the contemporary press, as well as to create his own imaginary universe. Furthermore, Jarry provides the reader with alternative perspectives and discourses. As Ubu suggests to Fourneau, the Almanacs could indeed function as an effective antidote to newspapers.

Ubu's Almanacs as a Cure for Newspapers

The idea of Ubu's Almanac as a substitute for newspapers is also explicitly put forward in the editorial foreword of the first Almanac, entitled 'exhortation aux lecteurs' [advice to readers]; an essential text which reads both as a parody and critique of the press and as a sort of manifesto. Ubu, here cast in the role of Editor, addresses his subjects, in other words the readers and potential buyers of his Almanac, in his usual majestic manner:

Grandes princesses et princes, citadins, villageois, soldats militaires, vous tous fidèles abonnés et acheteurs de cet Almanach de notre astrologie et nos bien-aimés sujets et sujettes, vous n'aurez point à lire de journaux cet hiver. Ô quelle économie d'argent. Le journal d'un sou chaque matin, cela fait bien près de quatre francs, dix, onze ou douze sous tous les trois mois. Je ne parle pas de ceux qui achètent des journaux à trois sous; car plus on vous fait payer cher des faussetés, plus qu'on vous vole. [...] Notre almanach trimestriel (*quarterly*, disent les Anglais) est un terme payé d'avance dans le rond, solide, confortable, à l'image de notre Gidouille, immeuble terrestre; vous êtes assurés de vivre encore trois mois, tout un an les abonnés des quatre fascicules des saisons, pour cinquante centimes ! Cornegidouille! Quel élixir !⁵³

[Great princesses and princes, townsmen, villagers, military soldiers, all ye faithful subscribers and buyers of this Almanac of our astrology and our beloved subjects, men and women, you won't have to read any newspapers this winter. Oh what a way of saving money. The penny newspaper every morning, which makes about four francs, ten, eleven or twelve pennies every three months. I am not talking about those who buy three-penny newspapers; for the more they make you pay for lies, the more they steal from you. [...] Our three-monthly Almanac (*quarterly* as the British say) is a term paid in advance in a round figure, solid, comfortable, mirrored after our Potbelly, a great asset on earth: you are guaranteed to live another three months, a whole year if you subscribe to the four seasonal booklets, for fifty centimes! Hornbelly! What an elixir!]

This text is, first of all, a pastiche of the prologue of Rabelais's *Pantagrueline Pro-nostication*, which allows Ubu to launch his tirade against contemporary newspapers. Secondly, the foreword brings to mind a specific journalistic genre, since in Jarry's

time a similar type of editorial foreword or comment often appeared in newspapers.⁵⁴ These editorials were frequently intended to denounce other newspapers in favour of their own, with the newspaper editors claiming that their reports and their insights were the only reliable ones. Ubu takes up the role of the editor here, promoting his Almanac as a trustworthy source of news. He then continues his rant by scolding the reading audience for their gullibility: ‘car vous entendez les vedettes d’un autre journal crier, ou lui-même confesse ses menteries de la veille, pour avoir la gloire d’informer le premier qui ment’ [because you hear the headlines of another newspaper shout, or that paper confesses yesterday’s lies, to have the honour of being the first to say who is lying].⁵⁵ Ubu warns readers that they are being manipulated with false information. In fact, he states, newspaper readers are unable to recognize truth when it does happen to appear, and even if they do recognize it, they are not interested since it is not entertaining (‘Et quelque vraie, authentique information égarée par hasard, ça vous est égal, parce qu’elle n’est pas drôle’ [And a piece of real, authentic information that gets picked up accidentally leaves you cold, because it’s not amusing]).⁵⁶ Ubu describes newspaper readers as ‘lecteurs des feuilles à chute quotidienne’ [readers of daily, falling leaflets], combining a reference to the expression ‘feuilles qui tombent’ [falling leaflets] with a pun on ‘chute du jour’ [end of the day]. Here one reads ‘chute quotidienne’ and this particular phrasing translates more or less as ‘daily fall’ or ‘daily devaluation’, whereas the double meaning of ‘quotidien’ [daily newspaper] helps to emphasize the link with the press.

Ubu’s foreword is an explicit counter-discourse aimed at the press, alongside the more subtle parodies of journalism elsewhere in the Almanacs. The strategies of newspapers are turned against them. Newspapers presented themselves as simple reflections of the world and journalists claimed to present a truthful and coherent view of the world. With the Almanacs Jarry calls into question these claims, pointing to the fact that the press, like literature, was perfectly capable of constructing its own reality.

Ubu presents his Almanacs (and hence literature) as a cure for newspapers, but what does he claim to offer the reader in return? He argues that the Almanacs provide true value for money, using economic and commercial arguments commonly found in newspapers. However, unlike newspapers, the Almanacs do not just report the present or the past, as they can also predict the future:

Nous, Père Ubu, vous ouvrons notre savoir de toutes les choses passées, plus vraies que de n’importe quel journal, parce que: Ou nous vous dirons ce que vous avez lu partout ailleurs, le témoignage universel vous assurera ainsi de notre véracité: ou vous ne trouverez nulle part la confirmation de nos dires: notre parole s’élèvera donc en sa vérité absolue, sans discussion. Et au moyen de notre Tempomobile inventée par notre science en physique afin d’explorer le temps [...], nous vous dévoilerons toutes choses futures. Acquérez donc notre Almanach; les journaux dont vous vous encombrâtes naïvement, contrôlez dans ce bréviaire s’ils sont conformes à notre infaillible opinion; les journaux qui paraîtront demain, notre savoir en météorologique [...] vous les rend inutiles par avance.⁵⁷

[We, Père Ubu, will reveal to you our knowledge of all things past, truer than any other newspaper, because: either we will tell you what you have read

everywhere and elsewhere, the universal testimony will assure you of our truthfulness: or you will not find any confirmation of our words anywhere; our word will then elevate itself as the absolute truth, without debate. And by means of our Tempomobile, invented by our physical science in order to travel through time [...], we will unveil all future things. So buy our Almanac; check in this breviary if the newspapers you naively clutter up your mind with conform to our infallible opinion; our knowledge of meteorology [...] renders tomorrow's newspapers useless in advance.]

Ubu is capable of travelling through time. Ubu's 'Tempomobile' is further evidence of Jarry's general fascination with time, similar to Ubu's miraculous 'Omnubu Course of Events in Reverse' in the 'Arts and Letters' section. In addition, time-travel represents a domain in which the Almanacs can not only compete with newspapers, but can also outdo them. Time-travel implies the ability to foresee the future, hence the realm of imagination, and can be read as a metaphor for (literary) imagination and creativity. Applying his usual logic, Ubu continues to explain that his version of the past and the present is superior to any story to be found in newspapers. Either people will find proof of Ubu's words elsewhere, which will simply emphasize the truth of what he says, or else people will find no confirmation of his assertions, in which case nobody will challenge Ubu's claims, and his words will logically be the only and the absolute truth. Ubu's reasoning is, as always, irrefutable. In this foreword the Almanac is presented by Ubu as more than an imaginative and superior cross-over between literature and journalism, for his rant seems also to convey certain ideas about the place of literature and of the writer in society.

Scholars have argued that the increasing professionalization of different fields of work in the nineteenth century robbed writers of several domains which had previously belonged to the realm of literature.⁵⁸ Specialized historians now claimed history, sociologists tackled society, and journalists took on the present. Some aspects of life were no longer exclusively the domain of writers and this made some reconsider the place of authors and literature in society. 'Predicting the future' was one domain that was left and one that could bridge the gap between literature and life,⁵⁹ and this led to a prophetic model of the writer. The author was thought to have a message that breaks with the established order, and he could intervene in society, by providing alternative viewpoints.⁶⁰ The writer was thought to have an original vision of the future which others did not possess. Ubu's claim to be able to predict the future in his Almanac seems to attribute precisely such a status to the writer. Ubu not only reclaims the journalistic domain, but he also emphasizes the 'prophetic' powers of his Almanac, with implications for literature more generally. He employs a quasi-religious discourse to get his 'message' across, claiming his word as the absolute truth, and describes his almanac as a 'bréviaire', a prayer book. This religious terminology emphasizes, with a good dose of humour of course, the image of the writer (symbolized by Ubu) as a prophet.

Of all the texts in the two Almanacs, this foreword is the one most directly aimed at the reader, using aggressive speech, a semi-prophetic discourse, and blatant self-promotion. By engaging in such a direct dialogue with readers, Ubu reveals the aim of his Almanac, but he also seems to be expressing a view about literature's place in

society. Ubu's Almanac (literature) is the only reasonable alternative for the 'journal d'un sou'. Ubu's second Almanac was of course advertised in *La Revue Blanche* as a 'Revue des plus récents événements politiques, littéraires, coloniaux, par-devant le Père Ubu' [Review of the most recent political, literary, artistic and colonial events as seen through the eyes of Père Ubu].⁶¹ So the Almanac had been, part mockingly no doubt, and part seriously perhaps, but nevertheless very explicitly presented as competition for the press.

In fact Ubu's Almanac renders all other publications superfluous, since it is comprehensive and absolute. It appears that Ubu is looking to reach a potentially very large audience, in order to educate them. Education was after all traditionally an important goal of the almanac genre. As the omniscient Ubu states with aplomb: 'Les journaux qui paraîtront demain, notre savoir en météorologie...vous les rend inutiles par avance. [...] N'êtes-vous pas à présent certains, Messieurs, que l'Almanach du Père Ubu fera la pluie et le beau temps?' [Our knowledge of meteorology ... renders tomorrow's newspapers useless in advance [...]. Do you not realize now, Gentlemen, that Ubu's Almanac is calling the shots?].⁶² Ubu's Almanac controls the course of events, past, present and future, as well as the weather. In other words, the Almanac sets the tone for everyone. The 'Tempomobile' is a product of Ubu's 'science en physique' which links the foreword to Jarry's philosophy of pataphysics. Pataphysics can be read as a plea for the superiority of the imagination over other (rational) domains in life, such as science, as well as a method for scrutinizing received ideas. Ubu's Almanacs, as vehicles of pataphysical knowledge, allow Ubu to speak out on every possible subject and to deliver his absurdist view of the world.

In 'Le Temps dans l'art' (1903) Jarry praised the ahistorical, atemporal nature of the work of art. Ubu's Almanac is presented as having a similar advantage over newspapers. It is topical as well as atemporal, a quality that no newspaper possessed. Jarry's choice of the almanac genre is telling in this respect. Unlike the disposable newspaper, the almanac was traditionally a publication meant to be kept; it contained valuable tips and important life lessons. This seems to be the argument made by Ubu in the foreword as well. In the 'Arts and Letters' section Ubu recommended the reading of his Almanac to Fournieu as a cure for newspapers. A similar vocabulary is used in the foreword, offering the Almanac (and no doubt literature in general) as an 'élixir', as a miraculous cure for the absurdities found in the press, for the stupidity of the reading public and for life in general.

Art and Mass Culture

In order to get this important message across, Ubu also employs some aggressive publicity techniques and a shamelessly self-promotional discourse. 'Acquérez donc notre Almanach!' [So buy our Almanac!], Ubu exclaims for example, like a vendor selling his newspaper in the street. This does raise another question: how do the Almanacs relate to contemporary forms of mass culture? And more generally what is said about art's position with regard to this culture and everyday life?

The emergence of mass culture and its relation to (avant-garde) art has been a complex and heavily debated subject throughout the twentieth century until the present day. Mass culture raised concerns about the fate of autonomous art, as

critics feared a declining status for the literary work and the author. Benjamin, for example, described the loss of the aura of the work of art in modern times, although he also regarded mass culture as a potential democratizing force. The Frankfurt School, in particular Adorno and Horkheimer, would critique the uniformity, banality and hegemony of the 'culture industry'. In recent decades, especially under the influence of cultural studies, this attitude has in turn been criticized, spurring discussions about what exactly defines 'high' and 'low' culture. An elaborate historical overview or theoretical discussion of this complicated issue lies beyond the scope of this book. What I would like to argue, though, is that, although Mallarmé and many Symbolists shared an anxiety about mass culture, the attitude among many writers and artists was always highly ambiguous, as that same culture was also the source of new creative possibilities. This is clearly manifest in Jarry's work.

The attitude towards mass culture, as it emerges from between the lines in Ubu's Almanacs, is neither straightforwardly optimistic nor unambiguously negative. Let us take a further look at the pseudo-advertisement 'Conseils aux capitalistes et perd-de-famille' [Advice to capitalists and dads in debt] of the first Almanac and the way the works are promoted:

CONSEILS AUX CAPITALISTES ET PERD-DE-FAMILLE

Il faut acquérir sans retard,
car c'est un bon placement d'argent
15, rue de l'Échaudé-Saint-Germain

Ouverture d'Ubu Roi, piano à quatre mains.

Marche des Polonais, piano à quatre mains.

Chanson du Décervelage.

Trois Chansons à la Charcutière.

a) Du Pays tourangeau.

b) Malheureuse Adèle.

c) Velas ou l'Officier de Fortune.

La Complainte de M. Benoît.

Paysage de neige.

Benjamin.

Berceuse obscène.

Ubu Roi, texte et musique, fort beau livre autographié, dont il ne reste plus que quelques exemplaires. Prière de se presser.

Sollicitudes.

Romance des Romances.

Ubu Roi, texte seul, format de poche, édition imprimée avec des caractères spéciaux et dont il reste à cette date 14 exemplaires.

Chanson du Porc-épic.

Ronde des Neveux inattentionnés.

Ce qu'on entendait le soir dans les rues de Gênes.

Le Triangle orgueilleux a dit.
Histoire de la vieille dame très dévote.
Pied de Saint-Pierre, cantique.
Les Pédicures.
Propos de bain.
Solfège illustré, le seul qui apprend
rapidement la musique aux petits enfants.
*Scènes familiales pour piano.*⁶³

[ADVICE TO CAPITALISTS AND DADS IN DEBT

Buy quickly,
 for it is a sound investment
 at 15, Rue de l'Échaudé-Saint-Germain

Ouverture d'Ubu Roi, piano duet.
Marche des Polonais, piano duet.
Chanson du Décervelage.
Trois Chansons à la Charcutière.
 a) Du Pays tourangeau.
 b) Malheureuse Adèle.
 c) Velas ou l'Officier de Fortune.
La Complainte de M. Benoît.
Paysage de neige.
Benjamin.
Berceuse obscène.
Ubu Roi, text and music, very beautiful, autographed
book with only a few copies left. Please hurry.
Sollicitudes.
Romance des Romances.
Ubu Roi, text only, pocket sized,
edition with special lettertypes and now with only 14 left.
Chanson du Porc-épic.
Ronde des Neveux inattentionnés.
Ce qu'on entendait le soir dans les rues de
Gênes.
Le Triangle orgueilleux a dit.
Histoire de la vieille dame très dévote.
Pied de Saint-Pierre, hymn.
Les Pédicures.
Propos de bain.
Solfège illustré, the only method that teaches
small children music quickly.
Scènes familiales for piano.]

This advice to capitalists ('buy quickly, for it is a sound investment') discloses an essential ambiguity towards advertising. Books, poetry and music are linked to money and commercial values. The phrases 'conseils aux capitalistes et perd-de-famille' and 'c'est un bon placement d'argent' reveal an unmistakable sarcasm.

Jarry's own feelings towards the economic values that many felt dominated art, were no less sarcastic. In 'Prix Divers', an article written for *Le Canard Sauvage* in 1903, Jarry reflected on the system of awarding prizes, and he compares the work

of art to a stuffed crocodile. In other words, he felt that works of art were being reduced to mere entertainment deemed valuable solely for their ornamental status and their rarity:

L'objet d'art, par définition, est le crocodile empaillé. « Curiosité agréable à suspendre au plancher d'une chambre », a dit Molière. Les temps ont marché depuis, mais restent de l'argent toujours. L'objet d'art moderne est une curiosité agréable à suspendre au « clou ». ⁶⁴

[The work of art is by definition a stuffed crocodile. 'Charming curiosity to be hung up from the ceiling of a room', Molière once said. The times have moved on since, but are still ruled by money. The modern work of art is a charming curiosity to be hung up on a 'nail'.]

Jarry's observation reveals a rather cynical view of the modern work of art as a mere economic commodity in a world ruled by money. The underlying sentiment of course is a desire to tear that ornamental artwork down from the wall so that art might regain a more meaningful position in society.

Jarry's words reflect the anxieties that writers and artists felt towards the increased commercialism and to the role the press played in this trend. Throughout the nineteenth century, publishers had started to sell 'authors' instead of just books.⁶⁵ Readers began to buy books based on the name of the author. Successful or prize-winning authors became good investments, whereas unknown authors had difficulty selling their work. Since most avant-garde authors stood outside of the commercial literary market, they created their own forms of publicity, journals and support to generate income and recognition. Regardless of his obvious reservations about market values, Jarry was well aware of the fact that commercialism and success often went hand in hand. At the time of his involvement with the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, he wrote to Lugné-Poe for example:

Reçu une lettre d'une dame de mes amies qui demande deux places, payantes bien entendu, si on reprend *Peer Gynt*. Il sera plus politique *sûrement* de les lui donner, car il y en aura dix autres très riches qui s'abonneront et peut-être à des loges.⁶⁶

[Received a letter from one of my lady friends asking for two seats, paid of course, if *Peer Gynt* is reprised. It would *surely* be more strategic to provide them, because there will be ten other very rich people who will subscribe, perhaps even to box seats.]

Although the tone in this letter reveals a disdain for the 'very rich' and their money, it also shows a Jarry aware of the necessity to woo potentially lucrative subscribers to the theatre.

A similar ambivalence characterizes the advertisement in the Almanac. The discourse of commercialism and capitalism is ridiculed, but simultaneously used to promote and sell the work of the authors of the Almanac. The limited, luxury edition of *Ubu Roi*, for example, is described as a must-have, cleverly making use of the scarcity principle common in marketing. The reader is told that it is a 'really beautiful autographed book, with only a few copies left'. Potential buyers are therefore urged to hurry ('Prière de se presser'). Here the idea of an artwork as a 'curiosity', which Jarry had so eloquently dismissed in his article, is part-mockingly

and part-seriously employed to sell his own work. A similar tongue-in-cheek selling strategy can be found in a puff Jarry wrote for his novel *Messaline* (1901), in which he bombastically stated: ‘La forme de ce roman est nette, éclatante et définitive, comme un camée ou une médaille de ces temps anciens’ [The style of this novel is neat, dazzling and definitive, like a cameo or a coin from ancient times].⁶⁷ This text, deemed somewhat hyperbolic by the journal’s editors, was never published in *La Revue Blanche*, but it does illustrate how Jarry was willing to promote himself and his work, often to quite absurd extremes.

Vollard remembered how Jarry had told him that the Almanac was destined for a large audience and should therefore not contain anything implausible.⁶⁸ If the anecdote is true, the irony of Jarry’s words is obvious, since the Almanac could hardly be said to appeal to a wide audience. The anecdote also hints at a recurring ambivalence in Jarry’s career: his desire to reach a large audience on the one hand, and his uncompromising disdain for the general public on the other. There was a similar ambiguity regarding the potential readers of Ubu’s Almanac. Vollard decided (or so he writes) to launch it as bargain, for one franc, hoping this would turn it into a financial success. But when buyers stayed away Vollard suspected it was *because* of the Almanac’s low price and he raised the price to two francs. Desperately wanting to boost sales, he marketed the work as a rare luxury product — exactly as Jarry had described the status of the modern work of art. In the end, the second Almanac remained a limited-edition publication, which made it available primarily to readers of the cultural elite. It was set in the contemporary trend of the *livre d’artiste* or *beau livre*, luxuriously illustrated books, printed in limited editions by small, often avant-garde, publishing houses. Such publications aimed at preserving the elevated status of the printed work and the trend was partly a reaction against mass-produced images and books. In addition, it was often an effective selling strategy. The sumptuously illustrated works published by Vollard are a good example of this. Jarry and De Gourmont’s magazine *L’Ymagier* can also be situated within this trend.⁶⁹ Unfortunately, when it came to Ubu’s Almanac, Vollard’s marketing strategies proved to be entirely unsuccessful.

Owing to their work’s marginal status, Jarry and his collaborators were not likely to reach a large audience, or in any case not the kind of mass audience that newspapers and most other popular almanacs catered to. Nonetheless, the appearance of the second Almanac was (akin to the first) made to resemble a widely read periodical. This included fictional mentions such as ‘on sale everywhere’ and ‘second edition’ on the cover, as a mock selling strategy. Jarry, Vollard and the others created a luxurious limited edition, while simultaneously trying to market it as a popular publication. Had the initial thousand copies sold better, it would have no doubt become a more commercially successful publication. Vollard and Jarry never intended for the Almanac not to sell at all. The underlying ambiguity, mocking advertising and mass culture while simultaneously employing publicity strategies and self-promotion, was in fact characteristic of many contemporary avant-garde artists, especially within the circles of Montmartre cabaret culture.⁷⁰

A similar attitude is also embodied by the double role Ubu plays in the Almanacs. In his walk through Paris with Fourneau, as well as in the interview with



FIG. 3.6: A crowd gathered around Rodin's new work, first Almanac

Conscience, Ubu's role is twofold. At times, he seems to voice popular opinion. At other times, he poses as the ironic bystander, that of the *flâneur*, observing everyday life from a distance. This semantic field of the *flâneur*, which I discussed earlier as emblematic of the process of writing, also raises the broader issue of the attitude toward modern, everyday life.

The poet-*flâneur* was separate from the crowd, with a detached, observing gaze. The illustration in the first Almanac of Ubu and Fourneau on top of their *Omnubû* (see Fig. 3.3), displays in the background a sort of frieze with an anonymous crowd of people, men, women and children. Ubu and Fourneau are literally and symbolically above and separated from the crowd. A similar dandy-like detachment from society can also be discerned in the rest of the text and images. At one point Fourneau asks, 'Quel est ce grand peuple en rumeur?' [Who are these noisy people?], as they watch the crowd of people flocking round Rodin's recently revealed statue of Balzac (Fig. 3.6). Another poignant example of this disconnected contemplation of the crowd can be found in the Almanac. Here Conscience asks Ubu if he has been to the International Exposition. Ubu resents the question and, with dandy-like contempt, compares the masses visiting the pavilions to trapped mice, '[des] myriades de badauds capturés dans cet enclos comme en une souricière. Si mon désir eût été d'observer des passants, je les aurais bien vus en liberté, sur leur boulevard natal' [myriads of onlookers stuck in this enclosure like trapped mice. If I had wanted to observe passers-by, I would have seen them walking freely on their native boulevard].⁷¹ Ubu's attitude, as a sort of biologist observing the masses in their natural habitat, underlines his detachment and superiority towards the public.

The use of the word *badaud* [onlooker] is telling, for this figure had become a contemporary symbol of mass culture.⁷² Between 1906 and 1908 the satirical weekly *l'Assiette au beurre* ran several issues criticizing the mass press and mass audiences, showing images of the *badaud*, with a gaping mouth, astonished by everything he sees.⁷³ The perceived threat posed by crowds was also expressed in contemporary

scientific studies such as Gustave Le Bon's *Psychologie des foules* (1895). Octave Uzanne's *Badauderies Parisiennes* (1896), to which the figure of the 'noyé' [drowned person] in the Almanac text indirectly referred, was another example of *fin-de-siècle* preoccupations with the masses. The figure of the *badaud* represented a loss of individuality and uniqueness. Crowds were seen as a threat, as impressionable and violent, organizing rallies, provoking mass hysteria, causing riots, going on strike. The International Exposition was of course the place *par excellence* where curious crowds gathered, in awe of the objects on display. Referring to the Exposition in the Almanac, Ubu proclaims, as a true *fin-de-siècle* aesthete, that 'the most beautiful art object becomes banal in the hands of the many'. This is, as Ubu states, the reason why he is not in the habit of 'lire des manuels vulgarisateurs, vêtir ma gidouille sinon sur mesure, ni de prendre l'omnibus' [reading popular handbooks, wearing anything else but tailor-made clothes around his belly, and taking the omnibus].⁷⁴ Ubu embodies an attitude common among many contemporary Symbolist and Decadent writers. They discarded anything related to the masses, whether journalism or politics, much of which they also regarded part of the realist and naturalist movements in literature.

Ubu's disdain for the banality of everyday life is however somewhat improbable coming from the prototype of everything vulgar, obscene and banal. The Père Ubu of the Almanacs, as was the case in the other Ubu plays, regularly fills his speech with crude language and obscene innuendo, talking about money, sex, food and violence, or reducing important subjects to the level of obscenities. Whereas Ubu might happily express a dandy-like view of society, symbolizing anxieties towards mass culture felt among the cultural elite, this position is simultaneously ridiculed when transmitted through the grotesque and paradoxical figure of Ubu. While Ubu embodies the refined *fin-de-siècle* aesthete at times, he is also its antithesis.

Ambiguities towards mass culture are not limited just to Jarry's work, but can also be observed in his public persona. His uncompromising attitude often stood in the way of commercial success, even if this did not prevent him from making clever use of self-promotion and publicity strategies to create a specific media image or spectacle. Jarry's public and private identification with Ubu, playing the part of (grotesque) dandy and the bohemian eccentric, has been seen as a publicity stunt, and a provocation or, from a psychological point of view, as a way to cope with the world by constructing an alter-ego.⁷⁵ The future avant-garde movements, with their poetic agendas, Dada and the Surrealists in particular, would completely identify Jarry with his characters and applaud him for it.⁷⁶ André Breton fitted Jarry into Surrealist and Freudian thought. For Breton, Jarry transgressed the boundaries between the real and the imaginary in his fusion of art and life.⁷⁷ Seeing his life as the ultimate work of art, several critics have also focused less on his work and more on the gun-toting Jarry, in other words on details and anecdotes from his personal life.⁷⁸ Others, working within a more text-centred tradition, have tried to liberate Jarry from this mythical identification with his characters, which, as some felt, distracted from the merits of his work.⁷⁹ Changing conceptions over what authentic literature should be or how the writer relates to his work have, as might be expected, determined how scholars have looked at Jarry's life and work.

However this has often distracted critics from examining Jarry's own ideas about literature and how his literary works might relate to his public appearances.

As his texts were all so carefully constructed, it seems logical — and this has been somewhat overlooked — that Jarry's public performances were an equal part of his poetic strategy. This often included the fabrication of a (media) spectacle. Part of the whole controversy surrounding the opening night of *Ubu Roi* was created by Jarry, who had invited some friends to cause a stir.⁸⁰ He intentionally set out to provoke and create publicity, whether negative or not. If the media did not promote him, Jarry would do it for them. In similar fashion, everyday details of Jarry's life received grand and imaginative names and entered his literary work. On the one hand there was the author Jarry in private, the aspiring author, well immersed in the literary world, the loyal friend, and the passionate fisherman.⁸¹ On the other hand, there was the public figure of the author Jarry who spoke like Ubu, and in Ubuesque fashion boasted about his drinking, fired his gun and recited his poetry at the banquet of *La Plume*.⁸² This Jarry was, like his literary characters, created by himself.

André Salmon later claimed that Jarry had appreciated his own effort to merge his life with art, and his art with life:

Il y eut Alfred Jarry m'assurant que je choisissais la bonne route et si charmé quand je lui confiai mon désir de mettre ma vie dans l'art, l'art dans la vie, tout en pratiquant un certain art de la déception, ce que bientôt approuverait Max Jacob à son tour.⁸³

[There was Alfred Jarry who assured me I had chosen the right path and was delighted when I told him about my desire to put my life into art, art into life, while practising a certain art of deception, something which Max Jacob would also approve of later.]

A 'certain art of deception', as Salmon called it, certainly played a role in Jarry's merging of art and life. However, it was not simply intended to deceive, nor was it part of a commercial strategy or a means of provocation (although these were all equally welcome side-effects). His literary works, as well as his dandy-like pose were an integral part of a poetics that sought to bring art closer to life. Jarry used media and commercial strategies both for personal gain and for satirical ends, but over and above that, they also provided him with new ways to unite art with life.

New Bonds

The consistency and the carefulness with which Jarry constructed his texts and his public persona suggests an artistic practice in which life and art ceased to be completely separate entities, and in which the notion of art and its place in society were re-evaluated. Jarry transgressed the boundaries between art and life, perhaps to ensure that art was not limited to being a merely decorative and over-prized 'stuffed crocodile'. The way for art to regain a more prominent role in life was for it to be more engaged with modern everyday life and with its forms and expressions. Setting aside all its ambiguities, the Almanacs attempt, precisely, to reconcile literary language with the language of modern, everyday life. Towards 1900 there

was an increasing aesthetic valorization of the everyday among artists and writers and Jarry's own circle was no exception. Painters such as Bonnard and Vallotton found inspiration in modern, street life. Toulouse-Lautrec, associated with the Nabis, depicted contemporary Parisian nightlife. The Nabis were especially known for restoring art's decorative value in society.⁸⁴ Bonnard himself declared that a painting must, above all, be put to practical use, instead of hanging in a museum, and he later recalled how 'our generation always sought to link art with life. At that time I myself envisaged a popular art that was of everyday application: prints, fans, furniture, screens.'⁸⁵ One of the ideals of the Nabis and their circle was to make an applied art, an art which would be seen in the streets and which would bring artistic beauty into everyday life. In other words the everyday was aestheticized. The writer Remy de Gourmont viewed the commonplace as the union between the banal and the absolute. In his vision the banality of everyday life could lead to universal beauty and truth.⁸⁶ In *L'Ymagier* De Gourmont and Jarry had put this union of mass-produced popular imagery and art into practice. Trivial *Images d'Épinal* were accompanied by poetic texts, which elevated these clichés to a level of artistic beauty. These images served, in true Symbolist fashion, as vessels for a higher artistic and symbolic existence. In his review of Gustave Kahn's book *l'Esthétique de la rue*, Jarry had also praised Kahn's poetic appreciation of the street and the city:

Il appartenait à un poète, inventeur de rythmes, de codifier l'art de la rue: car qu'est-ce que la rue, sinon un vers multiforme écrit par les allées et venues de l'humanité, jusqu'à réaliser ces poèmes, les villes?⁸⁷

[It is the task of a poet, inventor of rhythms, to codify the art of the street: for what else is the street if not a multi-faceted verse written by the comings and goings of humanity, which in the end create cities or in other words poems?]

Jarry incorporated everyday aesthetics in the Almanacs as well, but at the same time he defied Symbolist standards of beauty with the text's obscenities, the disruptive collage aesthetic and 'in your face' language and humour. The trivial elements cannot be said to have been elevated to universal beauty and truth, at least not the kind of higher, symbolic truth and beauty that De Gourmont was writing about. This does not mean that Jarry aimed at debunking art or reducing it to more popular forms of expression. But unlike many of his contemporaries, he did not try simply to elevate everyday life to contemporary standards of art and literature. With the Almanacs Jarry broke with a specific Symbolist concept of aesthetic autonomy and concepts of beauty, specifically through the incorporation of forms and expressions from everyday life. Mass culture offered material for the collage as well as new and rich sources of imagery. It also enabled Jarry to question the aesthetic conventions of mass culture as well as contemporary, literary conventions, while challenging concepts of organic and autonomous art. Jarry's ambiguous position with regard to mass culture transmitted through the persona of Ubu, is reflected in the Almanacs, and quite aggressively so in Ubu's foreword to the first Almanac. Ubu passionately dismisses the vulgarity of mass culture and argues in favour of the supposedly prophetic powers of literature. One can clearly read echoes of *fin-de-siècle* concerns about the autonomous work of art faced with mass culture in the text. At the same time that attitude is also ridiculed by means of the irony and humour inherent in

Ubu's persona and language. In addition to the ambiguity towards mass culture, the embrace of everyday life, and of forms and expressions of mass culture in the Almanacs, is very striking. In Jarry's work, mass culture seems to be considered as a challenge and not simply as a threat. Jarry's incorporation of mass culture into the Almanacs announced important changes in art and literature. First of all, it marks a shift in aesthetics, by allowing these new forms and materials into the work of art, creating new forms, genres and forms of representation (e.g. collage). Secondly it is indicative of a shift in the politics behind those aesthetics, aimed at bringing art closer to life through this use of everyday materials.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. See Claude Bélanger, *Histoire générale de la presse française. Tôme III 1871–1940* (Paris: PUF, 1976).
2. Marie-Eve Thérénty, *La Littérature au quotidien: Poétiques journalistiques au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 2007), p. 20.
3. Stéphane Mallarmé, *Œuvres complètes II* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003), p. 82. On Mallarmé and journalism see also Dina Blanc, 'Mallarmé on the Press and Literature: "Étalages" and "Le Livre, instrument spirituel"', *The French Review*, 71, 3 (1998), 414–24; Stacy Pies, 'Un fil visible: Poetry and Reportage in Stéphane Mallarmé's "Un spectacle interrompu"', *French Forum*, 29, 2 (2004), 1–18.
4. On the complex relationship between literature and journalism see Christophe Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels' 1880–1900* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1990); Micheline Cambron and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, 'Presse, littérature et espace public: De la lecture et du politique', *Études françaises*, 36, 3 (2000), 127–45.
5. See among others Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels'*.
6. For Jarry's 'réponses a des enquêtes', *OC I*, p. 1028.
7. *OC I*, pp. 1030–31.
8. Thérénty, *La Littérature au quotidien*.
9. I borrow this term from Weiss, who devotes a chapter to 'newspaper aesthetics' in avant-garde art. Jeffrey Weiss, *The Popular Culture of Modern Art* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1994).
10. For more on Jarry's journalism see also David F. Bell, '*La Chandelle Verte* and the *Faits divers*', *L'Esprit créateur*, 24, 4 (1984), 46–58; Caradec, 'Alfred Jarry, témoin de son temps'.
11. Also noticed by André Salmon, who writes that 'la collaboration de Jarry au *Figaro* dura à peine une saison, sans qu'on sache trop bien qui le premier s'est lassé de l'autre' [Jarry's contribution to the *Figaro* did not even last a season, and we don't really know who left the other first], Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*, p. 556.
12. 'Barnum', *Le Canard Sauvage*, 1903, *OC II*, p. 332. Jarry makes these observations after having seen an impressive show by the American circus showman, P. T. Barnum, which was touring France.
13. It would be another sixty years before the first comprehensive collection of Jarry's journalism was published by Maurice Saillet, with the title *La Chandelle Verte*, in 1969.
14. '...la pataphysique sera surtout la science du particulier, quoiqu'on dise qu'il n'y a de science que du général.
Elle étudiera les lois qui régissent les exceptions et expliquera l'univers supplémentaire à celui-ci; ou moins ambitieusement décrira un univers que l'on peut voir et que peut-être l'on doit voir à la place du traditionnel, les lois que l'on a cru découvrir de l'univers traditionnel étant des corrélations d'exceptions aussi, quoique plus fréquentes, en tous cas de faits accidentels qui, se réduisant à des exceptions peu exceptionnelles, n'ont même pas l'attrait de la singularité. DÉFINITION: *La pataphysique est la science des solutions imaginaires, qui accorde symboliquement aux linéaments les propriétés des objets décrits par leur virtualité*' [...pataphysics will be, above all,

- the science of the particular, despite the common opinion that the only science is that of the general. Pataphysics will examine the laws governing exceptions, and will explain the universe supplementary to this one; or, less ambitiously, will describe a universe which can be — and perhaps should be — envisaged in the place of the traditional one, since the laws that are supposed to have been discovered in the traditional universe are also correlations of exceptions, albeit more frequent ones, but in any case accidental data which, reduced to the status of unexceptional exceptions, possess no longer even the virtue of originality. DEFINITION: *Pataphysics is the science of imaginary solutions, which symbolically attributes the properties of objects, described by their virtuality, to their lineaments*], *OC I*, pp. 668–69.
15. Jarry shared this fascination with other French writers who used these news items to gain insight into everyday life and the human mind, or to subvert their contents. See David H. Walker, *Outrage and Insight: Modern French Writers and the 'Fait Divers'* (Oxford and Washington, DC: Berg, 1995).
 16. '...mais le fait divers est-il autre chose, sinon qu'un roman, du moins qu'une nouvelle due à la brillante imagination des reporters?' [...but isn't the *fait divers*, if not a novel, at least a short story sprung from the brilliant imagination of reporters?], *OC II*, p. 518.
 17. *ibid.*
 18. Kalifa describes how the *fait divers* at the end of the nineteenth century aimed at creating an 'effet de réel', to tell and show reality as it was. Dominique Kalifa, 'L'Écriture du fait divers au 19e siècle', in *Presse et événement: Journaux, gazettes, almanachs (XVIIIe–XIXe siècles)*, ed. by Jean-Yves Mollier and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink (Bern: Lang, 2000), pp. 297–311 (p. 304).
 19. See Marieke Dubbelboer, 'Rewriting the News: Journalism and Literature in fin de siècle France. The Case of Alfred Jarry (1873–1907)', in *Form and Style in Journalism: European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880–2005*, ed. by Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), pp. 157–75.
 20. Bélanger, *Histoire générale de la presse française. Tôme III 1871–1940*, p. 385.
 21. Richard Terdiman, *Discourse/Counter-Discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1985). Terdiman describes the emergence of this counter-discourse towards the press in the second half of the nineteenth century.
 22. Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*, p. 555.
 23. Since the Almanacs have received so little critical attention, this has gone somewhat unnoticed apart from some scarce remarks. Beaumont for example dismissed the Almanacs as 'a mixture of parody, pastiche, satire and plain nonsense, with the occasional fragment of serious information', apparently holding the works up to a journalistic standard. Oddly enough, he did recognize the Almanacs as forerunners to the articles in *La Chandelle Verte*, considering Père Ubu of the Almanacs simply as a sign of Jarry's 'obvious satirical talents'. Beaumont, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 145.
 24. I consulted issues of *Le Temps*, *Le Figaro* and *La Croix* between 1898 and 1901 at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. The Dreyfus Affair and Zola's trial dominated the front pages almost every day in 1898, as did the International Exposition in 1900.
 25. 'Fourneau' was also used by Jarry as a synonym for 'barbeau' or 'barbillon'. On an April fool's card sent by Jarry to Vallette, there is a drawing of a gigantic fish devouring a man. The accompanying text reads: 'Mossieu le Fourneau retiré en ses appartements ingurgitant une modeste partie de son frugal repas' [Mister Fourneau in his quarters swallowing a modest part of his frugal meal], *OC III*, pp. 559–60. Rachilde wrote: 'Tout à coup, le père Ubu s'écrie d'une voix féroce: "Le fourneau!" et il tire de l'onde mystérieuse et perfide un superbe barbillon' [All of a sudden, Père Ubu shouted 'le fourneau!' in a ferocious voice and from the mysterious and treacherous wave he pulled a superb barb], Rachilde, *Albert Jarry ou Le Surmâle des lettres* (Paris: Grasset, 1928), p. 20.
 26. Suggested by Jean-Paul Morel in Volland, *Tout Ubu Colonial et autres textes*, p. 63.
 27. François Caradec, *Alphonse Allais* (Paris: Belfond, 1994), p. 416.
 28. See Georges Delasalle, *Dictionnaire Argot–Français & Français–Argot*, préface de Jean Richepin (Paris: Ollendorff, 1896).
 29. Gregory Shaya, 'The *Flâneur*, the *Badaud*, and the Making of a Mass Public in France, circa 1860–1910', *The American Historical Review*, 109, 1 (2004), 41–78 (p. 51).
 30. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1997).

31. See also Michel Décaudin, 'Collage et montage dans l'œuvre d'Apollinaire', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur (Beiheft 7)*, Apollinaire (1980), 31–36 (p. 36).
32. *OC I*, p. 552.
33. *Les Minutes de sable mémorial*, *OC I*, p. 183, *Ubu Cocu ou l'Archéopteryx*, *OC I*, p. 498.
34. *OC I*, pp. 586–87.
35. *OC I*, p. 591.
36. Bélanger, *Histoire générale de la presse française*, p. 277.
37. Vanessa R. Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin de Siècle Paris* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 26–40.
38. Kalifa, 'L'Écriture du fait divers au 19e siècle', p. 304.
39. *OC II*, pp. 218–19. Translation taken from Alfred Jarry, *The Supermale: A Modern Novel*, trans. by Barbara Wright (London: Jonathan Cape, 1968), pp. 48–49.
40. Thérenty, *La Littérature au quotidien*. In chapter three of her book Thérenty discusses the hybrid forms of literature and journalism in newspapers (fait divers, reportage, even the interview) and the fact that boundaries between fiction and non-fiction were often very ambiguous in nineteenth-century journalism.
41. Hyman, *Bonnard*, p. 50.
42. *OC I*, p. 539.
43. Shaya, 'The *Flâneur*, the *Badaud*, and the Making of a Mass Public'.
44. Jill Fell for example has interpreted the figure of the 'noyé' from a psychological perspective, suggesting it could be a traumatic image haunting Jarry's imagination. Fell, *Alfred Jarry: An Imagination in Revolt*, p. 164.
45. Vallotton's illustration accompanies the article 'Le Noyé', written by Victor Barrucand, in Octave Uzanne, *Badauderies Parisiennes. Les Rassemblements: Physiologies de la rue* (Paris: Henri Floury, 1896), pp. 50–54. The book also contains contributions by Tristan Bernard, Fénéon, Léon Blum, Gustave Kahn, Ernest La Jeunesse and Thadée Natanson; all of whom wrote for *La Revue Blanche* and many of whom were friends of Jarry.
46. On Vallotton's graphic work for this book see also *Vallotton: Graphics*, ed. by Ashley St James (London: Ash & Grant, 1978).
47. *OC II*, p. 357.
48. *OC II*, pp. 357–58.
49. *OC II*, pp. 360–61. As Jarry explains in this article, this relates to a bizarre historical fact. There were rewards for recovering bodies out of the water and oddly enough pulling a dead body out of the water was rewarded with more money than rescuing a person drowning who was still alive. This could be an incentive for dubious practices (see *OC II*, Notes to pages 360–61).
50. See Delasalle, *Dictionnaire Argot-Français & Français-Argot*. 1896.
51. *OC II*, p. 357.
52. *OC II*, p. 861.
53. *OC I*, p. 535.
54. Kalifa, 'L'Écriture du fait divers au 19e siècle', p. 304.
55. *OC I*, p. 536.
56. *ibid.*
57. *ibid.*
58. Among others Bourdieu, *Les Règles de l'art: Genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (Paris: Seuil, 1992); Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels'*; Gisèle Sapiro, 'Forms of Politicization in the French Literary Field', *Theory and Society*, 32 (2003), 633–52.
59. Sapiro, p. 638.
60. *Ibid.*
61. *La Revue Blanche*, 1 January 1901, *OC I*, p. 1211.
62. *OC I*, p. 536.
63. *OC I*, pp. 566–67.
64. *OC II*, p. 495 and p. 911 (note 2). Probably from memory, Jarry quotes Molière, *L'Avare*, act 1, scene 2: 'Plus, une peau de lézard, de trois pieds et demi, remplie de foin, curiosité agréable pour pendre au plancher d'une chambre' [Furthermore, a lizard skin, three and a half feet long, filled with hay, charming curiosity to be hung from the ceiling of room].

65. *Marketing the Author: Authorial Personae, Narrative Selves and Self-Fashioning 1880–1930*, ed. by Marysa Demoor (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 5.
66. Letter to Lugné-Poe, 17 November 1896, *OC I*, p. 1057.
67. *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 17/18 (1983), p. 16.
68. 'Jarry m'avait écouté, visiblement intéressé. [...] Mais n'oublions pas que notre *Almanach*, s'adressant au grand public, ne doit pas contenir l'ombre seulement d'une invraisemblance' [Jarry had listened to me, clearly interested. [...] But let's not forget that our *Almanac* is aimed at a large audience and must not contain even a hint of improbability], Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux*, p. 363.
69. For a more detailed discussion of *L'Ymagier* in this particular tradition, see Juliet Simpson, 'Symbolist Illustration and Visual Metaphor: Remy de Gourmont's and Alfred Jarry's *L'Ymagier*', *Word & Image*, 21, 2 (2005), 150–68.
70. See also Joan Gibbons, *Art and Advertising* (London and New York: I. B. Taurus, 2005); *Modern Art and Popular Culture: Readings in High and Low*, ed. by Kirk Varnedoe and Adam Gopnik (New York: Abrams/Museum of Modern Art, 1990); Weiss, *The Popular Culture of Modern Art*.
71. *OC I*, p. 586.
72. See Shaya, 'The *Flâneur*, the *Badaud*, and the Making of a Mass Public in France', p. 49. See also Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, 1997. Benjamin, basing his observations on nineteenth-century definitions of these two emblematic figures, makes a similar distinction between the *flâneur* and the *badaud*.
73. Shaya, p. 67.
74. *OC I*, p. 586.
75. C. A. Hackett, *The Writer and his Other Self* (London: Grant & Cutler, 1995), pp. 91–107. Hackett situates Jarry in a tradition of writers and their other selves who speak through their literary alter-egos.
76. 'Jarry a mis tout son génie dans sa vie' [Jarry put all his genius into his life], Philippe Soupault wrote in 1923 in his preface to Alfred Jarry, *Gestes et opinions du docteur Faustroll, pataphysicien* (Paris: Stock, 1923), p. 7.
77. See for example André Breton, *Anthologie de l'humour noir* (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1966), pp. 271–74.
78. Seigel for example devotes several pages to how Jarry merged art and life in Seigel, *Bohemian Paris*, pp. 310–22. However he focuses solely on biographical details and anecdotes. He also relies on Rachilde's very subjective 'biography' of Jarry, *Le Surmâle des Lettres* (1926), in which she had assimilated Jarry completely with his literary alter-ego. Shattuck, in *The Banquet Years*, discussed Jarry's merging of art and life from a more psychological point of view. They and others are right in saying that Jarry turned his life into art, but the focus on his eccentricities almost turn Jarry into a character himself, whereas none of them really addresses Jarry's poetics or his texts in relation to his public persona.
79. Members of the Collège de Pataphysique in the 1950s and 1960s tried to focus on his work and less on the myth. Scholars like Noël Arnaud and Michel Arrivé for example were writing within a text-centred, structuralist tradition. As such, they were less concerned with the historical and biographical context of Jarry's texts.
80. Jill Fell, *Alfred Jarry* (London: Reaktion books, 2010), p. 93.
81. Jarry emerges as much more human and down to earth in Besnier's biography (*Alfred Jarry*, 2005) than in many of the previous studies. However, Besnier does not really discuss the apparent contradictions between Jarry's public and private behaviour.
82. Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*, p. 52 and p. 158.
83. Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*, p. 89.
84. See *Beyond the Easel: Decorative Painting by Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis, and Roussel, 1890–1930*, ed. by Gloria Groom (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2001).
85. Quoted in Hyman, *Bonnard*, p. 29.
86. Remy de Gourmont, 'Les Mots et les Idées' (1900), quoted in Henri Dorra, *Symbolist Art Theories: A Critical Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 300–05.
87. 'Gustave Kahn, *l'Esthétique de la rue*, Bibliothèque Charpentier', *La Revue Blanche*, 1 March 1901, *OC II*, p. 612.

CHAPTER 4



Jarry, the Almanacs and Politics

Jarry's dandy-like attitude towards society resembles that of many of his *fin-de-siècle* contemporaries. To Jarry, literature remained aesthetically autonomous, and distinct from forms of mass culture. This can be inferred from the disdain — or at least the ambivalence — expressed towards that culture in his work. Ubu, albeit ironically, presented his Almanac as the only, and superior, alternative to newspapers. As I have argued, Ubu's extraordinary prophetic skills might be read as metaphor for the imagination of the writer. At the same time, the Almanac seemed to express a desire to attribute a more significant place to literature in society, as is implied by the incorporation of newspaper aesthetics, snippets from the news and scraps of everyday life.

Ubu's Almanacs were written at a highly politicized moment in French cultural life. The Third Republic was plagued by political scandals during the 1890s, and by ever-changing governments. The Dreyfus Affair was at its peak in 1898 which was the year of Emile Zola's *J'accuse*. The political turmoil had led many writers to take on the role of public intellectual, intervening in political and national debate more frequently than before.¹ Jarry's feelings towards this role were ambiguous, to say the least. Fears about compromising his artistic integrity and independence seem to lie at the heart of his ironic refusal to give straight answers to questionnaires for example, and he appeared to be particularly hesitant with regard to the high-profile public commitment of writers like Zola. However, current political events play a remarkably important role in the Almanacs and their very presence might suggest that Jarry's position was not as detached as his public responses implied. It is with Jarry's oblique and ambivalent comment on contemporary political issues that this chapter will be concerned.

The Dreyfus Affair

The focus on the Dreyfus Affair in the first Almanac was inspired by recent events and fuelled by Jarry's direct literary and social environment. Quillard, who appears so prominently in the Almanac, was an active supporter of Dreyfus. He was a friend of Zola and had joined the *Ligue des droits de l'homme*, founded in 1898. There must have been discussion about the Affair among the 'compagnons' of the Phalanstère. Unlike Quillard, Rachilde sided with the anti-Dreyfusards. Jarry's frequent conversations with Quillard when he was writing the first Almanac influenced the text, reflected in Ubu's fishing trip with Quillard. The political

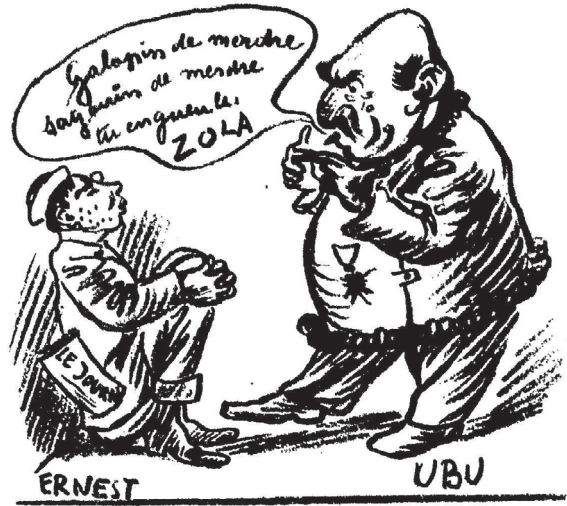


Fig. 4.1: 'Galopin de merde sagouin de merde tu engueules ZOLA' [Shitty scoundrel dirty piece of shit you are getting ZOLA into trouble], *Omnibus de Corinthe*, 18 January 1898

undertones of the Almanac might also owe a lot to the politicized (and mostly Dreyfusard) environment of *La Revue Blanche*. After Vallette had ceased to publish Jarry's work in 1897, Jarry had found a new home at *La Revue Blanche* and received the support of its editor Fénéon and the Natanson brothers who were all well-known Dreyfusards.

Earlier in 1898, Ubu had already been associated with the Affair in a drawing by E. Couturier in *l'Omnibus de Corinthe* (Fig. 4.1). Ubu, in a much more human form than in Jarry's own work, is seen here scolding Ernest Judet, director of *Le Petit Journal* and responsible for a violent campaign launched against Zola and other supporters of Dreyfus. Here Ubu symbolizes the Dreyfusards.²

Unlike some of his contemporaries Jarry hardly spoke publicly about the Affair, at least as far as the documented record shows. Only once, in 1901, did he refer to his own position in a review of the book *Pour la justice et pour l'armée*, by Georges Duruy, and wrote:

Quant à Dreyfus, on sait bien qu'il est innocent, c'est même notre opinion personnelle: nous allons jusqu'à penser qu'il est le type du soldat et du bon officier subalterne, tout discipline et loyauté. La trahison implique un esprit délié, c'est travail de bureau et de grade supérieur.³

[As to Dreyfus, we know very well that he is innocent, that's our personal opinion: we would go so far as to believe that he is the typical soldier, the good subordinate officer, all discipline and loyalty. Treason requires a loose mind; it's the work of administrators and the higher ranked.]

Jarry's belief that Dreyfus was innocent seems mainly rooted in a general contempt for the army as an institution. Dreyfus is portrayed as a typical, ignorant 'good soldier' duped by cleverer, higher officers. Two years later he referred to the Affair

again in the article *l’Affaire est l’affaire* (April 1903), published in *Le Canard Sauvage*. The wordplay in this article is typical of Jarry’s writing and his irreverent treatment of serious issues. The opening line reads: ‘Les Affaires sont les Affaires, au théâtre et de par le grand talent de M. Octave Mirbeau. Mais à la Chambre [...] il n’y a, n’y eut et n’y aura qu’une Affaire, une !’ [Affairs are affairs, in the theatre and by means of the great talent of M. Octave Mirbeau. But in Parliament [...] there is, was and will be only one Affair, one!].⁴ The Dreyfus Affair, which dominated headlines again in 1903, is linked here to Mirbeau’s play *Les Affaires sont les Affaires* which had successfully premiered that same month.⁵ This analogy is perhaps not so surprising since Jarry had already turned the Dreyfus Affair into a play in the first Almanac.

The short play ‘L’Île du diable, pièce secrète en trois ans et plusieurs tableaux’ [Devil’s Island, secret play in three years and multiple scenes] is the most straightforward representation of the Dreyfus Affair in the Almanac.⁶ The title refers to Devil’s Island, to which Dreyfus was banished, whereas ‘en trois ans’ indicates the time that had passed since the original trial in 1895. The adjective ‘secrète’ clearly brings to mind the army’s cover-up. The phrase ‘plusieurs tableaux’ could be interpreted as the various conflicting testimonies and versions of the Affair. For insiders the title alone already steers the play towards the side of the Dreyfusards. The characters from *Ubu Roi* take on the roles of several main players in the Affair: Ubu’s former accomplice Captain Bordure now represents Dreyfus and Père Ubu acts as the incarnation of the French army and government. The plot of the play revolves around the initial accusation of Bordure/Dreyfus, his subsequent sentence and the disputes between both sides. The Affair’s transformation into an Ubu play and its setting in this grotesque, comic context convey an idea of the Affair as spectacle. In view of Jarry’s analogy between the *faits divers* and theatre that we saw in Chapter 3, this comes as no surprise, but in any case the Affair had in reality taken on quite spectacular proportions.

The first scene of Jarry’s play immediately evokes the injustice and conspiracy behind Bordure’s (Dreyfus’s) indictment and sets out the plot of both the real Affair and the Ubu play:

L’Île du diable
Pièce secrète en 3 ans et plusieurs tableaux
 Acte premier
Le Palais du Roi
 Scène première
 Père Ubu, Mère Ubu, *en dame voilée*

PÈRE UBU: Madame France, Mère Ubu, veux-je dire, vous avez raison de vous cacher la figure, voilez votre laideur et vos larmes: notre bon ami, le capitaine Bordure, est accusé d’un crime. Notre palotin Bertillon a mesuré la trace de ses pas sur les dalles de marbre de notre cabinet de nos affaires secrètes. Il a vendu la Pologne pour boire.

MÈRE UBU: Ha, père Ubu

CONJURÉS ET SOLDATS: Nous voulons sa mort.

NOBLES ET MAGISTRATS: Nous voulons sa mort.

PÈRE UBU: Notre fils Malsain Athalie-Afrique est le vrai coupable, mais il est l’héritier de notre savoir théologique et de nos études au séminaire de

Saint-Sulpice; il s'est confessé de son crime à notre Chanoine, il en été absous, il n'est plus coupable, il ne l'a jamais commis.⁷

[Devil's Island
Secret play in three years and multiple scenes

First Act
The King's Palace
 Scene One

Père Ubu, Mère Ubu, *as veiled lady*

PÈRE UBU: Madame France, I mean Mère Ubu, you are right to hide your face, cover up your ugliness and your tears: our good friend, Captain Bordure, has been accused of a crime. Our *palotin* Bertillon has traced the trail of his steps on the marble slabs of our office of secret affairs. He has sold Poland for drink [*or for a tip*].

MÈRE UBU: Ha, père Ubu.

CONSPIRATORS AND SOLDIERS: We want him dead.

NOBLEMEN AND MAGISTRATES: We want him dead.

PÈRE UBU: Our son Malsain Athalie-Afrique is the real culprit, but he is the heir to our theological knowledge and to our studies at the seminary of Saint-Sulpice; he has confessed his crime to our Chanoine, he has been absolved, he is no longer guilty, he never committed the crime.]

The characters from *Ubu Roi* merge with the actual 'characters' of the Dreyfus Affair. This happens in the stage direction in which Mère Ubu is described as appearing 'en dame voilée'. The *femme voilée* was a character in the real Affair. Major Charles-Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy was brought to trial in January 1898 on suspicion of being the real author of the *bordereau*, the handwritten document with classified, military information which Dreyfus was accused of having provided to the Germans. During the trial, a mysterious veiled woman was frequently invoked by Esterhazy, whenever he wanted to obscure a situation that might compromise him as the real author of the *bordereau*. Esterhazy claimed to have had secret encounters



FIG. 4.2: 'Ephémérides actuelles', Mère Ubu *en dame voilée*, first Almanac

with this 'very elegant, worldly lady' who had supposedly warned him that he was being framed by the Dreyfus family.⁸ Bonnard's illustration in Ubu's Almanac (Fig. 4.2) portrays Mère Ubu as the veiled, albeit distinctly less than elegant woman. She stands in front of Ubu, surrounded by what appear to be caricatures of clerics on the left and army officials on the right.

In a similar confusion of character, Père Ubu starts off the scene by mistakenly addressing Mère Ubu as 'Madame France'. This is in fact a double reference. First Ubu's slip of the tongue refers to the actress Louise France, who played Mère Ubu in the premiere of *Ubu Roi* in 1896. In the epic list of people at the end of the 'Letters and Arts' section in the first Almanac she is also referred to as 'celle qui Mère Ubu' [the person who Mère Ubu]. France's identification with Mère Ubu is continued when, later on in the play, Bordure is referred to as Ubu's 'fils adultérin, ou de Mme France votre épouse' [adulterous son, or of his wife Madame France]. Apart from being an inside joke, the pun also functions on another level. 'Madame France' can be read as a reference to the French nation. In this sense Mère Ubu and Père Ubu become the very unlikely couple 'M. and Mme France', and Bordure (the Jew Dreyfus) as their adulterous son is also the bastard child of France (and hence a second-class citizen). The phrase 'Madame France, you are right to hide your face, cover up your ugliness and your tears' then takes on another meaning, apart from being a recurrent motif in *Ubu Roi* commenting on Mère Ubu's unflattering looks. It is a clear reference to the French nation's way of dealing with the Affair. Jarry employed a similar writing strategy in his later chronicles by which wordplay, over and above its comic effects, becomes a tool for social commentary.⁹

The characters from *Ubu Roi* are continuously identified with those of the Affair. *Palotin* Bertillon has found traces of Bordure in Ubu's 'office of secret affairs'. The 'palotin' [sidekick] is one of Ubu's three mindless, mechanical servants and loyal accomplices from *Ubu Roi*. They do Ubu's dirty work, including torture and executions. Bertillon is the name of the police chief who, in 1894, wrote the *rapport* in which Dreyfus was first implicated as the author of the *bordereau*. The words 'affairs' and 'secrets' sustain the impression of cover-up and secrecy.

Other actors from the Affair are not transformed into *Ubu Roi* characters but their names are transformed through puns. Ubu reveals for example that 'Notre fils Malsain Athalie-Afrique est le vrai coupable [...] Il s'est confessé de son crime à notre Chanoine, il en été absous' [Our son Malsain Athalie-Afrique is the real culprit [...] He has confessed his crime to our Chanoine, he has been absolved]. Here, the word 'Chanoine' refers not only to the title of a Catholic cleric, but also (and hence the capital c) to the real-life general Chanoine. He became Minister of War in September 1898 and indicted Picquart for pointing the finger at someone other than Dreyfus. Like 'Madame France', Jarry's economical use of the word 'Chanoine' and its connotations serves to critique both the Catholic Church and the army. The name of Ubu's son Malsain [Unhealthy] Athalie-Afrique is a transformation of Walsin-Esterhazy. It is typical of Jarry's associative wordplay and 'undressing' of words. Pronounced as 'Esterasie' in French, it could also be spelled as Esther-Asie. Through association the names are then replaced by the name of another female figure from the Old Testament (Athalie) and the name of another

continent (Afrique). Another explanation for the association between the two names is the fact that *Esther* and *Athalie* are two plays by Racine. The transformation of the heroic queen of Persia Esther into the not so heroic Biblical queen Athalia, also hints at Esterhazy's two-faced role in the Affair. Athalie-Afrique is the real culprit but, because he is the filial inheritor of Ubu's theology (a good Catholic opposed to the 'adulterous son' Bordure, the Jew Dreyfus), he is absolved. The scapegoat Bordure/Dreyfus is accused instead of having sold Poland (Ubu's kingdom) for drink or for a tip. The 'conjurés' [conspirators] join the soldiers, nobles and magistrates to demand Bordure's execution.

The opening segment of this short play highlights the constructed and economical nature of Jarry's writing. The satire on the Affair is achieved not only through the transformation of the plot of the Affair into the plot of an Ubu play, but also on the level of language itself. As the Almanac text uses wordplay to ridicule the army, the church and the state, it implicitly expresses a Dreyfusard point of view. The mix of elements from *Ubu Roi*, allusions to the real Affair and personal references, characterizes the entire text. Ubu's *palotins* claim that they hold proof of Bordure's crime on a 'papier pelure d'oignon' [tracing paper] which contains a detailed plan of the city of Thorn. This paper obviously refers to the infamous *bordereau*, whereas the city of Thorn refers to a location in *Ubu Roi*. In the second scene the *palotin* Clam makes an appearance. The real-life Colonel du Paty de Clam (whose name offers a perfect pretext for a pun) was the principal accuser of Dreyfus from the beginning of the Affair. He appears here as Ubu's servant, his name suggesting 'clamer' [to shout out]. Ubu's Conscience is extended to 'notre Conscience nationale et militaire' [our national and military Conscience]. Further on, after Conscience objects to Ubu's behaviour, Ubu refuses to listen to it, 'malgré les picquartements de vos reproches acérés' [despite the stings of your sharp reproaches]. Major Picquart was the army official who objected to Dreyfus's conviction, as he had proof that Esterhazy was the real culprit. He was court-martialed by the army for this 'betrayal'. The entanglement of his name with the verb 'piquer' [to sting] in the neologism 'picquartements' alludes to Picquart's uncomfortable position in the army.

The Ubu play then takes a grisly, Grand Guignol turn. Together with Clam, Ubu proceeds to torture Bordure with some of his favourite methods, including 'torsion du nez' [twisting of the nose] and 'enfoulement du petit bout de bois dans les oreilles' [the sliding of a little piece of wood in the ears]. All of this takes place 'à huis clos' [behind closed doors]. Again the choice of words evokes an atmosphere of secrecy, which of course had its counterpart in reality. Dreyfus's hearing before the military tribunal in 1895 took place behind closed doors; not even his attorney was allowed to be present. In the Almanac, Ubu explains to Bordure: 'il n'y a que notre Conscience qui vous ait entendu, elle ne le répétera à personne' [only our Conscience has heard you, she won't repeat it to anyone]. In one sentence the injustice of the real trial is made explicit, with Ubu and his unreliable conscience as the symbolic incarnation of the military tribunal. The bias that led to Dreyfus's conviction is also made obvious by the use of Jarry's characteristic absurd logic. After Bordure has been de-brained (Ubu's favourite punishment in *Ubu Roi*), general Lascy (also from *Ubu Roi*) cries out in the third and final act: 'Justice est faite! Le capitaine était bien

coupable, puisque le Père Ubu, en son omniscience, l'a décervelé' [Justice has been served! The captain was really guilty, because Père Ubu, in his omniscience, has de-brained him]. In Ubu's reversed universe, the sentence precedes the verdict. In similar fashion Ubu adjusts the evidence to fit the defendant.

The religious and military discourse employed in the text implicates and simultaneously ridicules two pillars of French society, the church and the army. Ubu himself reveals his love for the military: 'Ha, messieurs, nous aimons l'armée, il n'est rien que nous ne fassions pour elle' [Ha, gentlemen, we love the army, there is nothing we would not do for it]. Ubu continues his militarist monologue in pompous and majestic style by praising his young son Freycinet. In reality, Minister of War Charles de Freycinet was appointed in October 1898. As usual, Ubu's speech ends in utter absurdity: 'c'est à lui que nous remettons publiquement le commandement de nos estafiers et le grand-cordon de l'ordre de la Grande-Gidouille, bien qu'il ne soit âgé (car, plus l'on approche du siècle plus l'âge diminue) que de treize mois' [it is to him that we publicly hand over the command of our footmen and the grand-cord of the order of the Potbelly, even though he is (because the closer we get to the turn of the century the younger the age) only thirteen months old]. Minister of War Freycinet not only heads Ubu's infamous Order, but has also become a thirteen-month-old baby (the real Freycinet was seventy years old). In his address to the people Ubu then praises God and the Truth, followed by an aggressive call for battle:

Grâces soient rendues de tout au Seigneur. Nous entendrons un beau *Te Deum* en notre église de Notre-Dame [...] Réjouissons, messieurs, du triomphe de la vérité et de la lumière. Tudez, décervelez, coupez les oneilles !

TOUT LE PEUPLE, *par acclamation*: C'est clair !

LE GÉNÉRAL LASCY: Soldats, sabre au clair ! Chefs des chœurs, Humbert, Meyer, Bec, Méline, Zurlinden, Mercier, Drumont, Pellieux, Gonse, Judet, Xau, Barrès, Gyp, et vous, guerrier chef de notre musique, battez tous la mesure avec vos sabres dans le peuple et spécialement sur les têtes de MM. Clemenceau, Gohier, Quillard, Pressensé, Rochevoort, Anatole France, que l'on entonne bien la chanson du Décervelage.

*Musique. Rideau.*¹⁰

[Let us all give thanks to the Lord. We shall hear a beautiful *Te Deum* in our Notre-Dame church [...] Let us rejoice, gentlemen, at the triumph of truth and light. Kill, de-brain, cut off the ears!

ALL THE PEOPLE, *cheering*: It's clear!

GENERAL LASCY: Soldiers, draw your swords! Choir chiefs, Humbert, Meyer, Bec, Méline, Zurlinden, Mercier, Drumont, Pellieux, Gonse, Judet, Xau, Barrès, Gyp, and you, warrior chief of our music, all of you beat the rhythm into people with your swords and especially on the heads of MM. Clemenceau, Gohier, Quillard, Pressensé, Rochevoort, Anatole France, so that everybody will start singing the De-Braining song.

Music. Curtain.]

Towards the end, vocabulary belonging to the semantic field of music is added to the religious and military discourses. Ubu's soldiers (anti-Dreyfusards) and the enemy soldiers (Dreyfusards) engage in a battle, but they are described as a choir imposing their beat on the opposing party. A similar choir of conspirators, soldiers,

noblemen and magistrates had already appeared earlier in the play. This time the names refer to actual historical figures. The group of Ubu's soldiers is made up of well-known anti-Dreyfusards.¹¹ Military men such as Mercier and Gonse join ranks with newspaper directors like Meyer and Xau and the writers Barrès and Gyp. A link is established here between the expressions 'chefs de chœurs' [choir chiefs], 'chefs militaires' [military chiefs] and 'chefs de journaux' [newspaper chiefs]. This musical metaphor, which relates to the previous pun on 'clam' and 'clamer', is used to allude to the shrill debates surrounding the affair, with each party trying to shout louder than the others. The references to these journalists and editors reflect the dominant role of the press in the Affair. The fact that the military and the press are linked is not coincidental; most anti-revisionist newspapers were supported or even subsidized by the military. The Dreyfusard press was constantly harassed by the authorities and outnumbered (or out-shouted in the Almanac) by the mainstream, reactionary press. In the Almanac text, the opposing, Dreyfusard chorus, beaten down and outnumbered by the first, consists of Jarry's friend Quillard and other eminent Dreyfusards such as Clemenceau and France.¹² The scenic directions 'Music/Curtain' then close the curtains on this cacophonous and spectacular final battle between Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards.

On the one hand this short play takes the side of the Dreyfusards. Ubu symbolizes French authorities and the injustice, and the anti-Dreyfusards are portrayed as a violent, fanatic bunch. Captain Bordure bears a close resemblance to Dreyfus and embodies the individual, faced with the powers of the army and authorities. On the other hand there is also a constant ironical distance towards the Affair, ridiculing both sides and the media spectacle it had become. This distance is created by situating the Affair in the world of Ubu and by the wordplay Jarry uses. The protagonists are not flesh and blood characters, and the reader does not establish any emotional connection with them; Ubu is a mere puppet symbolizing the state, while Bordure also functions as a pawn to serve the purposes of the text, symbolizing a fairly anonymous victim. The play's ending of course emphasizes this detachment even further. The battle between the two opposing parties culminates in a musical, quasi-operatic finale. The text mainly illustrates the Affair's theatrical qualities, ridiculing the real-life spectacle it had become in French society. It also belittles the importance of intellectuals and public figures and the value of their opinions on the Affair. The musical analogy made in the last part of the text creates the impression of choruses of different voices (aligned with different opinions) battling it out with each other. The play thus creates a perspective in which the reader appears to become a bystander who observes an entertaining spectacle from the sidelines.

The ambiguous commentary on events is largely due to the character of Père Ubu, who switches sides and personalities from one text to the other. Both as narrator and as character Ubu remains untrustworthy and elusive. Since it is impossible to identify with any of the characters, the reader's commitment with regard to the text is also complicated. Yet Ubu's cruel execution of justice is too brutal to be understood as mere irony. Regardless of the cynical and detached display of the Affair as a spectacle, the gravity of the theme alone implies a form of commitment or a position. For readers aware of the historical details, the text is

at least thought-provoking and makes for an uncomfortable read. The text appears to implicitly side with the Dreyfusards, not only through the excessive brutality attributed to Ubu and his band of anti-Dreyfusards, but also through puns on the names of authority figures.

Bonnard's drawings serve equally to blend Ubu's literary universe with the reality of the Affair, many of them being obviously inspired by the 'iconography' of the Dreyfus Affair. The Affair inspired a vast quantity of images.¹³ Even at the time the numerous visual representations of the Affair did not go unnoticed.¹⁴ Popular merchandising also appeared on the market: paper fans, postcards, even an adult board game, based on 'Jeu de l'Oie' (Mother Goose board game), provided entertainment and contributed to shaping opinions on the Affair. Jarry's cynical portrayal of the Affair as a spectacle was not that far removed from reality.

The humiliating public ceremony in which Dreyfus was stripped of his military ranks was described and depicted numerous times in newspapers. A well-known visual representation of this event, entitled 'the traitor', appeared for example in the illustrated supplement of the anti-Dreyfusard newspaper *Le Petit Journal* (Fig. 4.3). Bonnard must have had this event and its many representations in mind when drawing his picture for the Almanac (Fig. 4.4). Just as Dreyfus looks small and bland compared to the general, Bordure appears disproportionately small and unimportant

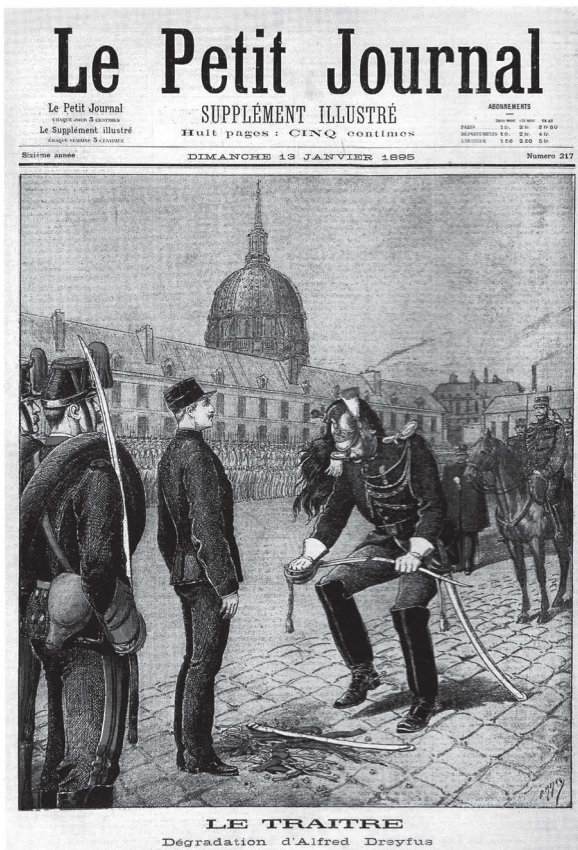


Fig. 4.3: 'Le Traître. Dégradation d'Alfred Dreyfus' [The Traitor. Dishonourable discharge of Alfred Dreyfus], *Le Petit Journal*, supplement illustré, 13 January 1895

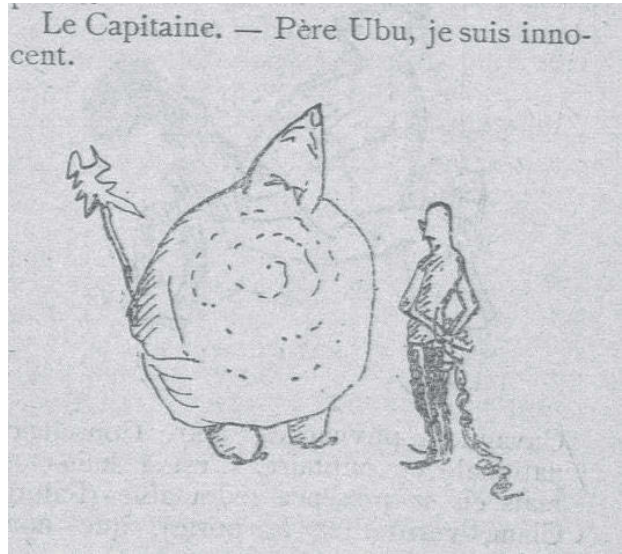


Fig. 4.4: 'Le Capitaine. —
Père Ubu, je suis innocent'
[The Captain — Père Ubu,
I am innocent], first Almanac

compared to Ubu's larger than life stature. Like Dreyfus, Bordure stands erect and has to look up to his superior, emphasizing the hierarchical relation between the two. Both Dreyfus and Bordure are portrayed rather plainly, robbed of all military ranks and attributes, looking anonymous. As in the cover illustration, where the reader's gaze is aimed at the general, the focus of the picture is on Ubu, thus emphasizing Ubu's position of authority and power. Ubu's power is also symbolized by the fact that he is wearing his 'tyrant' outfit with the pointed Inquisition-like hat.

Bonnard's drawing is not just a representation of the real event, but also a representation of the representation of that event in newspapers. Bonnard's drawing questions the (ideological) codes and conventions guiding those representations, by situating his interpretation in the grotesque and absurd context of Ubu. The real-life illustration in *Le Petit Journal* was equally designed to steer its readers' responses. The small, vile traitor is opposed to the proud, powerful grandeur of the French army. Bonnard's drawing does the same, but by re-painting the event as an Ubu scene, the bias behind the Affair and the ways it was depicted is powerfully highlighted.

The theme of the Affair also appears, albeit less explicitly, in other texts of the first Almanac, for example in the 'Arts and Letters' section. Ubu and Fourneau's ride in their *Omnibus* takes place mostly in the 6th arrondissement, judging from the names and landmarks mentioned in the text, which include the Église Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the Odéon, the Sénat and the École des Beaux-Arts. Bonnard's drawing of the fountain where Ubu allows the horses of his *Omnibus* to 'baptiser l'estomac' [baptize their stomach] clearly resembles the fountain ornamented by lions on the Place Saint-Sulpice. The setting is partly autobiographical since Jarry lived in this quarter in the rue Cassette, behind the Place Saint-Sulpice. Furthermore the quarter was and is known as a real-life 'republic of arts and letters'. Home to numerous bookstores, galleries, academies, students, artists and writers, it functions as the perfect backdrop for the Almanac's 'Arts and Letters' section.

The geographical locations guide the dialogue on current events in the text. Ubu's casual stroll as a *flâneur* through the quarter inspires an associative and seemingly random and non-linear dialogue, triggered by his surroundings. Thus the Odéon spurs a discussion about theatre and music. In similar fashion, the Senate, irreverently referred to as an 'asile des vieillards' [old people's home] and one of Ubu's charities, triggers political commentary. So when Ubu and Fourneau stumble upon an army barracks, they mention the Dreyfus Affair:

LE FOURNEAU: Mais cette caserne que j'aperçois et ces nombreux guerriers?

PÈRE UBU: Ce sont les défenseurs de la Patrie, ceux qui détiennent Picquart.¹⁵

[LE FOURNEAU: But what about these barracks I see and all these warriors?

PÈRE UBU: They are the defenders of the Country, the people who are detaining Picquart.]

The Cherche-Midi barracks (situated in the rue de Tournon, close to the rue du Cherche-Midi) was home to the French Republican Guard, but also prompts Ubu to mention the name of Picquart. Further along in the conversation, Fourneau mentions the names of these 'défenseurs de la Patrie' [defenders of the Country], the anti-Dreyfusards Déroulède, Pellieux, Gonse, Billot, Drumont, Marinoni, Xau 'et autres soldats militaires' [and other military soldiers].¹⁶

Fourneau tells Ubu that these people have been persecuting M. Gohier. Urbain Gohier, Dreyfusard and anti-militarist, was put on trial for his book *l'Armée contre la nation* in 1898, but acquitted. In 1905 he was summoned to court again and this time sentenced to one year in prison for being a member of the 'Association internationale anti-militariste'. Ubu, however, has no pity for Gohier, because 'Urbain Gohier, c'est un nom de pape ou de templier, cet homme, de par ses ancêtres, mérite le bûcher' [Urbain Gohier, that's the name of a pope or a Templar, this man deserves the stake because of his ancestors].¹⁷ The connotation of his name seems to determine his fate. Punning on a real person's name in order to express an opinion about that individual also occurs when Fourneau asks: 'Pourquoi pas Boisdeffre, ou Billot, comme Panurge, pour cuire ses moutons, brûlait les grosses souches pour en avoir les cendres?' [Why didn't Boisdeffre or Billot, like Panurge did to cook his sheep, burn the large roots to get their ashes?]. Panurge is of course Rabelais's character who starts to throw his sheep into the water after which the others blindly follow. The analogy is made through a pun on the name of general Le Mouton de Boisdeffre, who, in the Dreyfus Affair, blindly followed his superiors.¹⁸

Shortly after this exchange, during their stop at the fountain, Ubu decides to see whether 'la pêche est fructueuse dans les rues de Paris' [fishing is fruitful in the streets of Paris]. Not only does he manage to catch three horses and two stray dogs, but he also fishes Maurice Barrès out of the fountain.¹⁹ However, public figures from the Dreyfusard camp receive a similar irreverent treatment as Barrès. Having run into Mme France, Fourneau politely enquires: 'et son fils Anatole? Anatole France?' [and her son Anatole? Anatole France] to which Ubu replies: 'Il fait des choses merveilleuses et dreyfuses dans un journal anti-dreyfusard' [he does extraordinary things and dreyfuses in an anti-Dreyfusard newspaper]. Anatole France was a prominent intellectual in the Affair who had co-signed *J'accuse*. France

more or less held the position of official writer of the Third Republic, and Benoît Denis calls him the 'écrivain engagé du juste milieu' [the committed writer from the right background].²⁰ France was also a prominent critic and not always favourable to the innovations of the more avant-garde writers. Not surprisingly they often targeted established writers such as France, and this is also the case in the Almanac. Ubu's words refer to France's employment at the newspaper *L'Écho de Paris* whose anti-Dreyfus campaigns were particularly notorious.²¹ The ironic portrayal of the pro-Dreyfus France, who worked for a newspaper that did not share his opinions, mocks his role as a notable public figure and casts doubts on his integrity.

In the Almanac, the satirizing of the Dreyfus Affair and the political establishment evolves into a satirizing of the cultural world. In the 'Arts and Letters' section for example, both the politics and the artistic integrity of the illustrator Forain, who together with his fellow illustrator Caran d'Ache founded the short-lived anti-Dreyfusard paper *Le Sifflet*, are questioned. Ubu declares that Forain is working primarily for 'phynance'. Both Forain and Caran d'Ache were two highly successful and well-paid illustrators at the time, which partially explains this sneer. The implication is that both their work and their political allegiance could be bought. Such a claim could be seen as reflecting the avant-garde's general resentment (or perhaps envy) towards artists who had made it and who publicly committed themselves to politics. Jarry's text questions the sincerity of their political commitment *and* their work. Indeed, the suggestion seems to be that only an artist who is independent and not corrupted by money or other ties can express genuine views and commitment.

Similar allusions are made in the list of 136 names at the end of the 'Arts and Letters' section. The list also contains many very active Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards. In the text these people are gathered around Rodin's statue of Balzac who, miraculously, 'monte sur un banc pour faire un discours' [climbs on a bench to deliver a speech]. Ubu remarks that it is merely a copy of Falguière's statue, which refers to a real-life controversy. After the Société des Gens de Lettres had refused Rodin's sculpture for its unfinished look and disrespectful representation of its subject, it had commissioned sculptor Falguière to make a more appropriate statue. Zola remained supportive of Rodin throughout. Interestingly, this controversy came to parallel the heated debates around the Affair. Progressive (pro-Rodin) and reactionary (anti-Rodin) views became entangled with respectively Dreyfusard and anti-Dreyfusard opinions.²² Fagus, who contributed to the second Almanac, recalled having taken up his 'first weapons' when he defended Rodin's work in the number of a magazine devoted to the artist. His words illustrate the extent to which artistic battles were fought by means of an increasingly politicized discourse during this period.

The 'name dropping' in Ubu's enumeration of the crowd gathered around Rodin's sculpture also bears witness to the increased public role adopted by cultural figures. Petitions, manifestoes, open letters in newspapers often contained names of prominent people from the world of arts and letters. Just as 'L'Île du Diable' ended with the chaotic battle between the choruses of Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards, the 'Arts and Letters' section of the Almanac ends with an eclectic list of names,

who are labelled by Ubu as 'ce grand peuple en rumeur' [these great noisy people], and are reduced to a set of talking heads. In this list the previously mentioned Forain becomes 'celui qui siffle' [the person who whistles]. But the Dreyfusard side is not spared either. Henri Ibels, illustrator and Nabi, founded the Dreyfusard magazine *Psst!* to counteract Forain's paper. He is equally comically reduced to 'celui qui Psst' [the person who goes Psst] in the list. The ideological battle between the two men is reduced to a mere utterance of opposing sounds, just as the opposing choirs at the end of 'Île du Diable' ended in a musical cacophony.

In other texts in the Almanac, references to the Affair are even less straightforward, often hidden in wordplay. In the January text, for example, we encounter suggestions for a nice dish with 'dinde' [turkey], which should be accompanied by a salad, later referred to as 'salades nationales [qui] se blanchissent aux vibrations des musiques' [national salads [which] are whitewashed to the vibrations of musical pieces]. This seems first of all to be a copy from the recipe of the month from the Almanac Hachette.²³ Again, Ubu's Almanac partly fulfils its 'pragmatic' function. However, the choice of words, that is of a silly person or idiot (the other meaning of 'dinde') who is accompanied by complicated national affairs ('salade', in its other meaning), suggests other possible references. Furthermore the word 'blanchir' [to whiten/laundry/whitewash] emphasizes the idea of a cover-up, whereas the phrase 'vibrations des musiques', is reminiscent of the musical metaphors discussed above. In 'Trait de probité', also in the first Almanac, we find Ubu, Fourneau and Captain Bordure in the garden, in what largely resembles a moralistic fable, as they speak about geese, a fox and hunting. Set in the context of the Affair the use of animal metaphors takes on a more specific symbolic meaning. In fact such particular metaphors were not uncommon in Dreyfusard discourse. Dreyfus was regarded by his defenders as a sitting duck hunted down by a crushing majority. There are no doubt more hidden references to be found to the Affair throughout the first Almanac, perhaps clear for insiders, but more difficult for the present-day reader to grasp. Combined with the constant paradoxical position of Ubu, this very indirect way of writing about the Affair further complicates the reader's understanding of the position or commitment expressed in the Almanac.

The reluctance to express an unequivocal position also emerges with regard to anti-militarism. In 1897 Jarry had published his first novel *Les Jours et les Nuits*, with the telling subtitle *roman d'un déserteur*. This semi-autobiographical account, based on Jarry's own experiences in military service in 1894 and 1895, relates the story of Sengle, a sensitive individual who is faced with the brutality and uniformity of the military regime. Similar anti-militaristic views can be found in the Almanac, where the army is a constant target and part of a general satire on authority of different kinds. In the first Almanac the repeated pleonastic labelling of the anti-Dreyfusards as 'soldats militaires' [military soldiers], whether they were actual military officers, journalists or writers, portrays them as simple puppets of the army. However, in his review of 'Pour la justice et pour l'armée' Jarry portrayed Dreyfus as an equally 'loyal soldier'. Jarry seemed to view the army primarily as a threat to individuality and personal freedom. As an institution the army was a source of mockery and contempt because, as Jarry wrote, 'avec combien de faussaires l'armée reste-t-elle intègre?' [just how many forgers does it take for the army to keep its integrity?].²⁴

However, Jarry's behaviour in public was often in complete contrast to the sentiments expressed in his work. He had a well-known fascination with weapons (guns and swords) and he confessed to Salmon that he loved reading military stories. Jarry reportedly once said to Salmon that he 'loved the army passionately', although Salmon's memoirs should not be taken at face value.²⁵ Elements of a fascination with army life can be detected in *Les Jours et les Nuits*, alongside Jarry's rejection of the institution. Like the character of Ubu in his work, Jarry's own positions or opinions in public life were often deeply contradictory.

The Second Almanac: Anti-Colonialism

A similarly contradictory position applies to the colonial theme featured in the second Almanac. Between 1880 and 1914 France had embarked on a new wave of colonization. At this time French colonial politics relied on the official doctrine of the *mission civilisatrice*, based on the idea that France had a natural obligation to bring the ideals of the Republic to other nations. In 1895 the French government decided to implement a policy of 'constructive exploitation'. Civilization should be achieved not by force but by exporting culture and economy.²⁶ The French 'civilizing mission' was thus aimed at improving living conditions in the colonies and replacing 'primitive' and 'barbaric' African customs with French ideals of progress, democracy, reason, respect for private property and morality. In return France could take from the colonies what it needed. While the government sought to promote and justify its colonial policy, accounts of abuse and cruelty by European colonials started to reach France. Atrocities in the Belgian Congo, for example, made headlines at the beginning of the twentieth century and caused heated debates about European colonial politics. Socialists, anarchists, writers and artists joined forces in an active anti-colonialist movement, expressing their indignation in cartoons, pamphlets and public rallies.²⁷

Jarry's friend Pierre Quillard was among those who publically denounced colonial misconduct. He spoke out during a protest rally organized by the *Comité de Protection et de défense des indigènes* and the *Ligue des droits de l'homme* in 1905. In his speech Quillard apologized, 'on behalf of a so-called superior and evolved race' to his 'brothers of a different colour' for the crimes committed against them:

Tout à l'heure on nous disait qu'il y a dans la presse française une indifférence pour les choses coloniales, une indifférence pour les crimes qui se commettent au Congo ou ailleurs. Il n'y a pas d'indifférence, il y a quelque chose de pire, il y a l'apologie, il y a la glorification de ces crimes [...] c'est en tant qu'homme d'une race soi-disant supérieure et évoluée, que je voulais ici faire [...] une sorte de confession publique et demander à mes frères d'autre peau et d'autre couleur, de bien vouloir nous pardonner les crimes que nous avons commis envers eux.²⁸

[Just now they said to us that the French press is indifferent to colonial matters, indifferent to the crimes committed in the Congo and elsewhere. It isn't indifference, it's something much worse, it's a defence, it's a glorification of these crimes [...] as a man from a so-called superior and evolved race I take this opportunity to make [...] a sort of public confession and to ask my brothers with a different skin and of a different colour to please forgive us for the crimes we have committed against them.]



Le capitaine Bourgreles a couché avec la reine de Madagascar
Colonel Ubu. Par ma chandelle verte, vous aurez
trente jours d'arrêts forcés, capitaine, avec le motif:
"a essayé de détourner, à son profit, une colonie française."
C. Bourgreles - dre, Colonel Ubu, allez au diable.
Colonel Ubu - Vous irez vous-même, voilà!

FIG. 4.5: 'Le capitaine Bourgreles a couché avec la reine de Madagascar. Par ma chandelle verte, vous avez trente jours d'arrêts forcés, capitaine, avec le motif: "a essayé de détourner, à son profit, une colonie française". C. Bourgreles —dre, Colonel Ubu, allez au diable. Colonel Ubu — Vous irez vous-même, voilà!' [Captain Bourgreles has slept with the queen of Madagascar. By my green candle, you will be suspended for thirty days, Captain, for: 'having attempted to hijack a French colony for his own profit.' C. Bourgreles — Sh.t, Colonel Ubu, go to hell. Colonel Ubu — Go there yourself, there!], *Omnibus de Corinthe*, 18 January 1898, p. 44

Quillard rejects the idea of European (and French) superiority propagated by the government of the Third Republic. In literary and artistic circles Quillard did not stand alone in his anti-colonial sentiments and it is not surprising that the theme is taken up in the Almanac. The texts were also greatly influenced by Vollard's childhood experiences. Having grown up on Réunion, Vollard's knowledge of the Creole language and culture came in handy. The collaborators of the second Almanac probably shared Quillard's anti-colonial position. However, Jarry's interest in the colonial theme should probably also be seen in the light of his poetics and his challenging of artistic and cultural values, rather than as a heart-felt commitment to the issue.²⁹

Ubu had been dressed up as a colonial explorer before in an issue of *l'Omnibus de Corinthe*. Here we find Ubu and Bourgreles (his son from *Ubu Roi*) in Madagascar in a drawing by André Ibels. 'Colonel' Ubu accuses captain Bougreles of having 'slept with the queen of Madagascar' and of using a French colony for his own profit (Fig. 4.5). It is striking that both themes associated with Ubu in the cartoons of this last issue of *l'Omnibus de Corinthe* were picked up in the first Almanac (the Affair) and the second Almanac (colonialism) respectively. Perhaps the contributors to Ubu's Almanac sought to continue the political satire of this short-lived periodical after its demise. It also shows that Ubu had already become a powerful, symbolic figure in artistic circles during Jarry's time. The second Almanac equally confronts

its readers with a satire of European colonial politics and attitudes, most notably in 'Ubu colonial' and 'Examen du Père Ubu au Saint-Sulpice colonial'.

In 'Ubu colonial' Ubu has just returned from Africa and narrates his colonial adventures to Fourneau. Ubu tells his friend how he regrets that slavery has been abolished and that he had been forced to employ the African people as 'free labourers', like workers in Parisian factories. Nevertheless, Ubu states with a brutal irony, emphasizing his 'enlightened' colonial attitude, he did have a responsibility to take care of them and keep them happy:

Désireux de faire leur bonheur à tous et de les maintenir dans le bien, nous leur avons promis, s'ils étaient bien sages, de leur octroyer, incontinent après dix ans de travail libre à notre service, et sur un rapport favorable de notre garde-chiourme, le droit d'être électeurs et de faire eux-mêmes leurs enfants.³⁰

[Wanting to make them all happy and to ensure their general welfare, we promised them that if they were very good we should grant them forthwith, after ten years of free labour in our service and with a favourable report by our galley-sergeant, the right to vote and to produce their own children.]

Not only does the text call into question the freedom of the colonial labourers, it also establishes a link with the supposed freedom of French factory workers, questioning the conditions of the domestic working class. The fact that the workers are kept in check by a 'garde-chiourme', a person guarding slaves on a galley, says it all. Ubu's attitude, representing contemporary colonialist efforts to 'educate' and 'enlighten' the Africans, clearly derides the hypocrisy behind the Republic's so-called democratic policies and the doctrine of the *mission civilisatrice*.

While it would have been easy to identify with Quillard's humanist speech and tone, identification with the Almanac is more difficult because of the text's cynical distance and Ubu's elusiveness. Ubu represents European colonial power and the French Republic, but at other times, as we have seen previously, he also represents the outsider and the bystander. Identification with Ubu or what he stands for is constantly made difficult by his ambiguity and lack of character. The reader would expect from the opening lines that the text continues to counterpose the European colonialist Ubu and the poor, oppressed African. However the text wanders off into the obscene, proceeding with wordplay and jokes on a number of subjects often associated by Europeans with 'primitive' cultures: promiscuous sexuality and cannibalism, as well as shameless nudity and toilet habits.³¹ Ubu's colonial Africa represents a very Western vision, an Africa which was considered exotic and fascinating, noble in its primitiveness, but also condemned for its immorality or barbaric ways. The text should therefore not be read simplistically as a satirical, political pamphlet against colonialism or as a humanistic defence of the rights of the African people, even though it does also contain these aspects. Africans in this text are no more or less grotesque than Ubu himself. Ubu might be his usual crude, obscene and cruel self, representing universal abuse of power; but the Africans he encounters are neither poor oppressed people nor naïve and pure 'noble savages'.³² The text ennobles neither Europeans nor Africans, but calls into question the morals and motives of humankind in general.

That being said, the text does appear to mock a specific Western fascination

with the perceived primitiveness and authenticity of African cultures. Ubu's song 'Tatane' [Nookie], which ends the text about Ubu's sexual escapades in the colonies, is said to make even the black people blush. Their obvious shock at Ubu's blatant sexuality implies that titillating stereotypes about Africans were mainly the fruit of European imagination. The text scrutinizes negative Western prejudices, but also supposedly positive, yet equally stereotypical assumptions about the supposed lack of sexual inhibitions among indigenous Africans. Jarry often employs dominant or prejudiced discourse and pushes it to such absurd extremes that it undermines this type of language. In his interview with Conscience, Ubu wonders: 'à quoi bon faire tant d'enfants si on nous les tue à mesure au Transvaal?' [why produce so many children if they kill them for us on a regular basis in Transvaal?]. If the reader were to expect a heartfelt appeal denouncing violence and war after these words, he is of course thoroughly mistaken. For Ubu makes an even more gruesome proposal:

C'est peut-être du bon commerce de livrer des enfants massacrables à vingt ans d'échéance, mais ce n'est pas la peine d'attendre, ni de les envoyer si loin. On peut les tuer aussitôt et sur place, moyennant un escompte, et en tout cas on économisera leurs souffrances et aussi quelques frais pour nous, et même ils seront plus frais, pour les amateurs anthropophages [...] Et puis, si on ne veut pas les manger, il n'y a qu'à pas faire d'enfants du tout.³³

[It might be good business to supply children for slaughter twenty years before their due date, but it's not worth the wait, and it's not worth sending them so far away. One could kill them straight away and on the spot, in return for which one gets a discount; besides, it will save suffering on their part and it will also save us some money, and they will even be fresher, for those who enjoy anthropophagy [...] And then, if nobody wants to eat them, the only thing to do is not to produce any children anymore.]

Such absurd exaggeration and reversal of logic is typical of Jarry's satire. A similar approach characterizes Jarry's examination of European prejudice in 'Paris black colony', published in *La Revue Blanche* only shortly after the second Almanac in 1901. The article was inspired by a news item about a black man wanted by the police for assaulting a waiter and leaving a bar without paying:

M. Girard, commissaire de police de Belleville, recherche activement, dit-on, un nègre qui, après avoir absorbé diverses consommations dans un café de la rue de Palikao, se serait enfui sans payer, et en renversant, d'un coup de tête dans le ventre, le garçon de l'établissement. Que nos fonctionnaires prennent garde de traiter comme un vulgaire filou ce noir, en qui nous n'hésitons pas à reconnaître et à saluer un explorateur, que tous ses actes dénotent émule admirable, encore qu'un peu trop servilement fidèle, des Stanley, des Béhagle, des Marchand! Il dégustait, dans l'intérêt de la science africaine, les produits de notre sol [...] Nul doute que, si on ne l'eût interrompu, il n'eût pas tardé à planter quelques drapeaux, brûler des monuments choisis et emmener plusieurs personnes en esclavage.³⁴

[People say that M. Girard, police commissioner of Belleville, is actively searching for a black man who, after consuming several drinks in a café in the Rue de Palikao, ran off without paying, knocking down the establishment's waiter with a punch to the stomach. Our civil servants should be careful not to treat this black man as a vulgar thief; we recognize and greet him as an explorer

whose deeds reveal an admirable, albeit perhaps a bit too slavishly faithful emulation of people like Stanley, Béhagle and Marchand! He was trying out our home-grown products in the interests of African science [...] If he had not been interrupted he would have no doubt planted a couple of flags, burned down a few chosen monuments and taken several people as slaves.]

Jarry puts an entirely different spin on the story. In Jarry's version the black man is no longer an uncivilized criminal (as he was portrayed in the papers). He becomes a colonial explorer who, like European explorers in Africa, discovers and takes foreign treasures, without knowing he has to pay for them. Jarry transforms the original news item not so much into a defence of the black man, but into a satire of European colonial politics. By stating that the man in question would have planted some flags, burned some monuments and taken slaves if he had not been interrupted, Jarry clearly draws attention to the behaviour of 'explorers' in the colonies.

In 'Philologie' or 'l'Examen de Père Ubu au Saint-Sulpice colonial', the role of the Catholic Church in the colonies is also targeted. The text is a short play or dialogue in which the décor of the Saint-Sulpice church in Paris is now relocated to the colonies. In 'Paralipomènes d'Ubu' Jarry had already explained that Ubu studied at the 'séminaire de Saint-Sulpice'.³⁵ As Jean-Paul Morel argues, some of Volland's own school experiences with the Catholic 'frères' of Réunion probably inspired this text.³⁶ Whereas 'Ubu colonial' portrayed Ubu as a colonial entrepreneur and administrator, this text depicts Ubu as a reluctant schoolboy unwilling to learn. The aptly named Frère Ignorantin puts Père Ubu's knowledge and education to the test. To confront him with his utter lack of writing skills, Frère Ignorantin introduces Ubu to the native African child, Zozo. The name means 'oiseau' [bird] in children's language and is synonym for idiot in Creole. He pops up like a jack-in-the-box, which startles Père Ubu (Fig. 4.6).

'Zozo-in-the-box' recites his lesson in a docile manner. Excelling in his knowledge of the French language, Zozo seems to make for a better Frenchman



FIG. 4.6: Ubu, Frère Ignorantin and Zozo, second Almanac.

than Père Ubu, according to Frère Ignorantin's standards. Of course the demeaning portrayal of the child as a jack-in-the-box presents him as a mindless puppet, moulded by the Catholic mission and robbed of his own identity. Again, the absence of any human emotion or reality in any of the three characters prevents any identification either with them or with the plot. It is through humour and wordplay that the reader is challenged to rethink established values, educational, religious, cultural, and so on. The colonial theme in the second Almanac has of course little to do with Africa itself. Like most of his contemporaries Jarry knew Africa only from newspapers. He could have caught a glimpse of these 'dark cultures' at the Paris International Exposition in 1900. The Exposition showcased the wealth and exoticism of the colonized territories to a curious and avid European audience, while celebrating the colonial expansion of the French Republic.

The 'colonial' texts do not aim at any sort of authentic representation of African people or life in the colonies, but primarily poke fun at contemporary European values. They do so with bawdy humour, juxtaposing vulgar puns and Creole language with a 'rational' European colonialist discourse. This is reinforced by Bonnard's suggestive images. The spelling lesson at the colonial Saint-Sulpice is interspersed with a sort of strip cartoon showing Ubu and a black woman engaging in sexual activities (Fig. 4.7). In the last of these four sketches, in which the sexual act is distinctly explicit, the drawing becomes conveniently blurred.

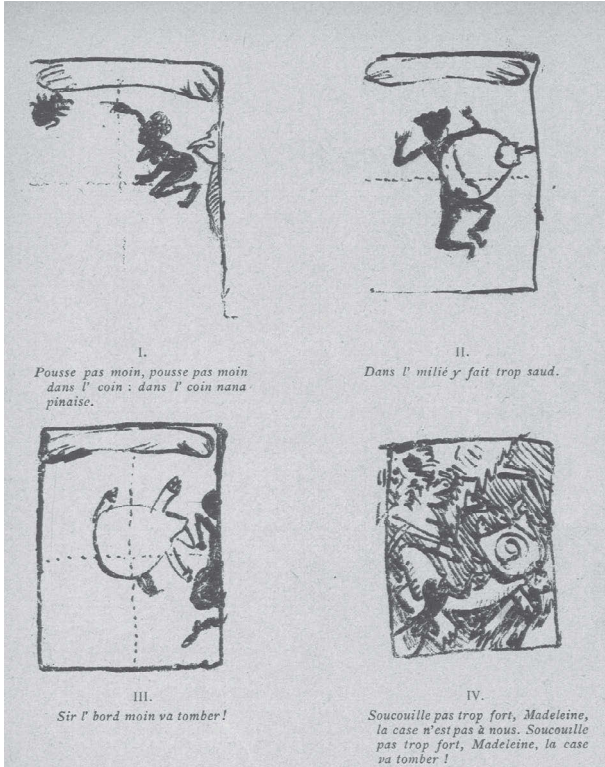


FIG. 4.7: 'I. Pousse pas moin, pousse pas moin dans l' coin: dans l' coin nana pinaise. II. Dans l' milié y fait trop saud. III. Sir l' bord moin va tomber! IV. Soucouille pas trop fort, Madeleine, la case n'est pas à nous. Soucouille pas trop fort, Madeleine, la case va tomber!'

[I. Don't push me, don't push me in the corner: in the corner licey bird. II. In the middle it's too hot. III. On the edge I will fall! IV. Don't suck too hard, Madeleine, this box isn't ours. Don't suck too hard, Madeleine, the box will fall apart!], second Almanac

accompanying the raunchy drawings is full of sexual innuendo, made up of lines that were apparently borrowed from popular songs from the isle of Réunion.³⁷ Whereas Ubu, Zozo and Ignorantin continue their very serious spelling lesson, Bonnard's images counteract this lesson by depicting Ubu's erotic adventures. Within the multi-layered collage text, Bonnard's drawings often create further dimension, independent of and juxtaposed to the words. This was also the case in Bonnard's lithography of acrobatic and dancing black figures following the text who literally dance across two pages. Bonnard portrayed these Africans as the ultimate antithesis of white Europeans and European culture.

From our contemporary perspective, these images represent a Western perception of African cultures and people which is just as misguided as the European colonial policies criticized in the Almanacs. Nevertheless, set in its historical context, this celebration of primitivism, freedom and crude forms, apart from satirizing European culture, was new and radical in terms of artistic and cultural values. Bonnard's images signal a rupture with contemporary aesthetic ideals and foreshadow the avant-garde's embrace of primitive forms, for example in the Cubist movement and in Picasso's sculptures.³⁸ The text and images of the Almanac challenge the values of the Third Republic, in which the idea of civilization was still tied to a concept of mastery of nature and the human body, over instinct and over ignorance by means of the qualities that the French were assumed to possess and other people to lack.³⁹

Jarry, the Almanacs and Politics

As we have seen, the texts in the Almanac comment on contemporary issues, but their commitment to these issues is often indirect and ironic, and reveals Jarry's own detached position when it came to politics. This might also have been due to the turbulent and increasingly politicized context in which the works were written. Disguising social and political commentary in the literary context of the Ubu texts, in the complex puns and humorous wordplay or in the Creole language of the colonial texts may have served a practical purpose, namely that of escaping censorship. The political climate could be repressive, despite the liberal and democratic foundation of the Third Republic. Censorship laws sometimes led to literary trials or to the banning of plays and performances. Jarry and his collaborators had recently experienced this when the Théâtre des Pantins was shut down by censors in March 1898 after just three performances.

Censorship was particularly focused on morals and politics; anything to do with the Revolution or anti-militarism, for example, was punishable. The theatre especially was under strict surveillance.⁴⁰ This was one reason why the opening word of *Ubu Roi*, 'merdre', had the extra 'r' to avoid the moral scrutiny of the censors. Jarry had got away with 'merdre' in 1896, but only a year later he would not. A small, independent amateur theatre like the one at Terrasse's house in Montmartre was almost immediately under suspicion, because of the potentially subversive audience it might attract. Before *Ubu Roi* was staged as a puppet play at the Théâtre des Pantins, the censor wanted the word 'merdre' removed; the extra 'r' no longer sufficed. Jarry first suggested replacing 'merdre' with the neologism

'sangsurdre', which was rejected, then simply with 'dre', also declined, and finally with nothing.⁴¹ Jarry would refer to the infamous word and the changes forced upon him by the censors through Père Ubu's conspicuous 'silence' in the opening lines of *Ubu enchaîné*. Ubu is almost tempted to say the word, but quickly utters another 'M word', Mère Ubu:

Père Ubu s'avance et ne dit rien

MÈRE UBU: Quoi ! Tu ne dis rien, Père Ubu. As-tu donc oublié le mot ?

PÈRE UBU: Mère...Ubu ! Je ne veux plus prononcer le mot, il m'a valu trop de désagréments.⁴²

[*Père Ubu steps forward and says nothing*

MÈRE UBU: What! You don't say anything, Père Ubu. Have you forgotten the word?

PÈRE UBU: Mère... Ubu! I no longer wish to say the word; it has caused me too many inconveniences.]

The Montmartre cabarets might have enjoyed some artistic freedom in the early days, but their success and their setting in an 'anarchist' quarter had also led to scrutiny. When *Ubu Roi* was staged at Les Quat'z'Arts Jarry had to rewrite the final scene. The play ends with Père and Mère Ubu setting off for France, at which point Ubu recites a poem about the supposed joys of the country. In line with the satirical tradition of the cabaret, Ubu simultaneously pokes fun at the supposed grandeur of France and at censorship:

La France réunit pour nous tous les attraits:
Il y fait chaud l'été, l'hiver il y fait frais,
Les institutions sont mises sous vitrine:
Défense de toucher au clergé, la marine,
Au sceptre immaculé des gardiens de la paix⁴³

[France appeals to us in every way:
It's warm in the summer, cold in the winter
Its institutions are put on display
No touching the clergy, the navy,
The immaculate sceptre of the guardians of peace]

The Almanacs, unlike these other Ubu works, appear to have escaped censorship. There could be several reasons for this. First of all the Almanacs were not widely available. Even within the avant-garde, they only catered to a small elite. Moreover, by 1900 the censors could simply no longer cope with the sheer number of plays being produced, let alone with all the other publications that were appearing.⁴⁴ All the elements for which a book or a play would have been under investigation are present in the Almanacs; anti-militarism, critique of the Third Republic, obscenities, and a 'revolutionary' and 'anarchist' tone. However, the innovative form and language of the Almanacs also serves to blur the social and political commentary. Their politics are less clear. The puns, whether to avoid censorship or not, would have masked the potentially provocative content of the Almanacs for non-insiders.

Writers were often thought to have ties to radical political movements. The Paris Commune (1871) was still in everybody's minds and the 1890s were a decade of

ongoing social unrest, strikes and demonstrations. Police surveillance increased in the wake of the assassination of President Sadi Carnot (1894) and several anarchist bomb attacks. This also affected literary society.⁴⁵ Subversive literary work was often believed by authorities to go hand in hand with a potentially dangerous political agenda. Many artists, especially in Symbolist and avant-garde circles, were in fact sympathetic to anarchist ideas. Some, such as Félix Fénéon, were even actively involved in the anarchist movement.⁴⁶ Anarchist thinkers underlined art's revolutionary potential. Kropotkin for example had argued that the true artist would reject the bourgeois system and, as a forerunner of the future, had an important role in changing society. These ideas were well received by some artists. Ideologically, avant-garde artists and writers felt a kinship with the movement's resistance to the establishment. For example the writer Paul Adam wrote: 'Ce que l'anarchie veut prouver par la violence, c'est que la minorité intelligente et audacieuse devient une force contre le nombre stupide et féroce' [What anarchy attempts to prove through violence is that the intelligent and courageous minority becomes a force against the stupid and ferocious masses].⁴⁷ Moreover, there was a geographical link between anarchism and the avant-garde. They gathered in the same venues in Montmartre and in the bars of the Quartier Latin.⁴⁸ Not surprisingly many writers contributed to anarchist publications. *La Révolte* for example, edited by Jean Grave, counted known authors such as Octave Mirbeau, Alphonse Daudet, Anatole France, Pierre Loti, Leconte de Lisle, Mallarmé or artists such as Signac and Pissarro among its contributors. Émile Pouget's anarchist *Almanach du Père Peinard*, whose title brings to mind Ubu's Almanac, also had close connections to the literary world. Among its contributors were writers from Jarry's circle, such as Mirbeau, Fénéon, Laurent Tailhade and Paul Adam. *La Revue Blanche* and *La Plume* frequently wrote about anarchist topics.

In the aftermath of the murder of President Carnot, in June 1894, the subscription list of *La Révolte* was seized by the police. The recently founded Théâtre de l'Œuvre also became a target of surveillance. A police informer called it an 'anarchist literary society'.⁴⁹ The archives of the Préfecture de Paris contain many reports on the theatre's activities. In one of them, from 1894, Jarry is mentioned as the possible editor of an 'anarchist publication' and as a 'literary anarchist':

There is a question of launching an anarchist publication in the genre of *La Revue Libertaire* [...] It is at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre that there has been question of that publication for which one foresees a considerable number of subscribers. They will have as principal editors: Louis Lormel, Alfred Jarry, Leon-Paul Fargue, and other literary anarchists of the Latin Quarter.⁵⁰

Artistic venues, and even the homes of suspected anarchists, had to endure police surveillance for years. The police had assembled individual files on Pierre Quillard, Urbain Gohier, Félix Fénéon and the inhabitants of the Bateau Lavoir, including Picasso.⁵¹ Jarry was also included in a list of suspects for the simple fact that he lived next door to a noted anarchist: police agents had reported 21 February 1904 that the anarchist Zanetta lived next to Jarry at no. 6, rue Cassette.⁵²

Artists and writers protested against this repression through petitions and letters. After Jean Grave's arrest in 1894, 124 writers signed a letter of complaint which was

published in the left-wing journals *La Petite République* and *La Justice*. Jarry, plus friends including Léon-Paul Fargue, Paul Fort, Paul Léautaud and Félicien Fagus, also signed. In fact these petitions are among the few public displays of Jarry's political commitment. In 1893 Jarry had already signed a protest opposing the ban on Gerhart Hauptmann's play *Les Âmes solitaires*. Its production at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre had been shut down by the authorities. Hauptmann's translator, Alexander Cohen, a Dutch-Jewish writer and journalist of *La Revue Blanche*, was expelled from France on suspicion of anarchist leanings. The subscribers protested against Cohen's expulsion which had been carried out 'pour ne savons quelle raison' [for who knows what reason] and against the equally 'random' ban on the play which was justified neither 'by its intentions, nor by its audience'.⁵³ Around the time they were working on the second Almanac, Fagus and Jarry had also signed a letter of support for Belgian writer and friend Georges Eekhoud. He was put on trial for his novel *Escal-Vigor*, published in 1899 by the *Mercure de France*, because of the novel's homosexual theme. No less than eighty writers and artists signed the petition which appeared in *Le Mercure de France* on 29 September 1900.⁵⁴ They advocated 'la liberté de l'Art et de l'Idée' [the freedom of Art and Idea]. Both Jarry and Fagus would sign a similar appeal for their colleague Laurent Tailhade, who was sentenced to one year's imprisonment for one of his supposedly anarchist articles. Tailhade's controversial article was re-published in *La Plume* together with the signatures of his supporters.⁵⁵

All these petitions demanded freedom of expression above all else, but writers made sure they distanced themselves from any ties to political radicalism. Many were indeed more preoccupied with artistic freedom than with politics, while others were forced to keep a low profile owing to the oppressive climate, in which any explicit defence of a supposedly anarchist cause could prompt criminal investigation. Some, such as Fénéon or Zo d'Axa, were outspoken anarchists, but the majority of writers sympathized with anarchism for its philosophy of freedom and individuality which they shared, while trying to stay clear of its more violent and political repercussions. They expressed their politics in the form of a symbolic resistance to an increasingly repressive atmosphere. Their attitude was part of a broader range of cultural politics that was challenging the establishment.

This also becomes evident in the Almanacs. The radical tone, the attack on political, religious and cultural icons, use of popular slang, could all be interpreted as 'anarchist' in spirit. In 1898, the year of the first Almanac, Fagus, one of the collaborators on the Almanac, had published his collection of anarchist poetry, *Testament de ma vie première*. He blended his political views with his poetics, rejecting bourgeois, academic art in favour of the avant-garde painters, as in this excerpt from his poem 'Variation autre sur le vieux thème':

Tu fais pleuvoir aux éventaires
Des petites marchandes de fleurs,
De si adorables horreurs
Que le bourgeois pris de coliques
Croit voir les splendeurs hérétiques
De van Gogh et Pissarro
Et recommande avec terreur

En passant devant les boutiques
 Des petites marchandes de fleurs
 Sa pauvre âme à Notre Seigneur
 A Notre Seigneur Bouguereau!⁵⁶

[You make rain on the baskets
 Of the little flower-sellers,
 Such lovable horrors
 That the bourgeois takes colic
 Thinks he is seeing the heretical splendours
 Of Van Gogh and Pissarro,
 And commends with terror
 Passing before the stalls
 Of the little flower-merchants,
 His poor soul to Our Lord,
 To Our Lord Bouguereau!]

The bourgeoisie and their artistic God, academic painter William Bouguereau, are opposed to the ‘heretics’ Van Gogh and Pissarro. In the first Almanac Bouguereau is similarly mocked as the representative of established art and perhaps this fragment owes something to Fagus’s text. In Ubu’s Almanac, the avant-garde counterpart of Bouguereau is said to be Gauguin, founder, according to Ubu, of ‘Haitian [*sic*] academic art’. His disciples are the Nabi painters Vallotton and Vuillard.⁵⁷ Although the text pokes fun equally at artists from Jarry’s own circle, the critique of academic and established art comes over as much less forgiving. In the second Almanac, Père Ubu casually remarks that he has stopped giving advice to M. *Bougrereau*, mixing his name with Ubu’s cherished ‘bougre’ [bugger].⁵⁸

When the actual issue of anarchism is discussed in the first Almanac, the position is, as usual, detached and ironic. As Ubu and Fourneau approach the Senate building, Fourneau remarks:

LE FOURNEAU: C’est pourtant de là, m’ont appris mes lectures journalières,
 qu’est partie la fameuse bombe Scheurer-Kestner.

PÈRE UBU: Dans un pot, je sais, monsieur notre ami, au restaurant Foyot.

LE FOURNEAU: Vous brouillez les histoires, Père Ubu. Ce n’est pas là que fut
 tailladé notre camarade par la jeunesse anarchiste?⁵⁹

[LE FOURNEAU: Still, I have learned from my daily newspaper readings that the
 famous Scheurer-Kestner bomb went off at that place.

PÈRE UBU: In a pot, I know, our gentlemen friend, in restaurant Foyot.

LE FOURNEAU: You are mixing up your stories, Père Ubu. Is that not the place
 where our friend Tailhade was slashed by anarchist youth?]

In a typical Ubu-esque confusion of bawdy humour and word association, real and symbolic bombs are combined in just a few sentences. In 1893 the anarchist Auguste Vaillant had planted a bomb in the Chambre des députés. Scheurer-Kestner was a member of parliament who had declared Dreyfus innocent in 1897. The symbolic bomb he set off eventually cost him his vice-chairmanship of the Senate in 1898. Close to the Senate building was the fashionable restaurant Foyot which had been the target of a bomb attack on 4 April 1894 — the explosives were apparently hidden in a flower pot. In an ironic twist of fate, the only victim was Jarry’s

friend Laurent Tailhade, an anarchist sympathizer. Jarry's future editor Fénéon was arrested and charged with the attack. He was imprisoned for several months and put on trial during the infamous Procès de Trente at the end of 1894, together with other anarchists and artist sympathisers. In the end most of the cultural figures, including Fénéon, were acquitted for lack of evidence.⁶⁰

A certain anarchist spirit can certainly be attributed to Jarry's work, especially where his aggressive and irreverent attitude towards society's institutions and authorities is concerned. Jarry labelled Ubu the 'perfect Anarchist', because of the infinite possibilities he offered as a character and his elusive, provocative nature.⁶¹ But this had little to do with the political ramifications of anarchism. Jarry himself expressed unease when it came to militant anarchism and the active support of some of his close friends for the movement. In *Visions actuelles et futures* (1893) Jarry said the following:

Vous traquez les anarchistes en bloc, je frappe la bourgeoisie en bloc, disait Émile Henry. Apparente logique éblouissante de potaches, absurdité guerroyant contre l'absurdité [...] Aveugles pour aveugles...⁶²

[*You hound the anarchists en masse, I strike the bourgeoisie en masse*, Émile Henry said. Clearly brilliant schoolboy logic, absurdity battling absurdity [...] The blind leading the blind...]

In these remarkably straightforward lines, Jarry derides anarchist ideology by equating it to another 'absurdity', the bourgeoisie, and stating that it is 'absurdity battling absurdity, the blind leading the blind', based on nothing but a 'schoolboy logic.' Jarry seemed interested above all in challenging any ideological framework that claimed to be the truth, whether that of bourgeois values or of anarchism, and those who blindly followed them. In a review of Augustin Léger's *Journal d'un anarchiste* from 1896, Jarry mockingly wrote that the book 'tendrait à démontrer que les "overriers" anarchistes sont des mauvais littérateurs' [would seem to prove that anarchist 'workers' are bad writers].⁶³ In other words, it would seem that for Jarry politics and literature were a bad mix.

Many of his contemporaries, such as Zola, Anatole France or friends like Pierre Quillard and Félix Fénéon, spoke out publicly as intellectuals and were politically active. But, for the most part, Jarry kept an ironic distance from most political issues in public, as is illustrated for example by his response to the Alsace question. In the Almanacs, contemporary displays of extra-literary engagement are clearly mocked, as is the figure of the intellectual. Prominent intellectuals associated with the Dreyfus Affair such as Zola, France, and Barrès, are ridiculed, comically reduced to fishing bait or a cacophonous chorus. Did Jarry therefore remain a sort of dandy and bohemian *pur sang*, refusing to become involved with politics at all?

This is of course only partly true, as we have seen. In his journalism, published in *La Revue Blanche*, he did on occasion, albeit always in his own paradoxical way, address 'hot' issues. Furthermore, like his contemporaries, he signed a number of petitions. Of all his literary works, the Almanacs engage the most extensively and directly with contemporary issues. Seen in the historical context, the choice of the almanac genre is a striking one. Through this genre, and through their form and themes, both volumes venture into the domains of journalism and politics. Jarry's

commitment is expressed through his texts, as an integral part of his subversive poetics, not just through subject matter, but through formal innovation. Combining literature with journalism in Ubu's Almanacs enabled Jarry to challenge the premises of both domains, and in particular the representation of politics and events in the press. The almanac genre, unlike any other contemporary literary genre, allowed Jarry to comment on social and political reality by appropriating journalistic strategies and discourse, but without succumbing to journalistic values.

Gisèle Sapiro has distinguished four types of committed writer that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century: institutional writers who sought to preserve the social order through their writing; aesthetes who were committed, but guarded the independence of their literary work; avant-garde authors, who advanced the subversive, politically radical dimension of art; and writer-journalists, who related their work to current events, writing mainly in minor journalistic genres.⁶⁴ Obviously these positions could be fluid, but it is interesting to situate Jarry in this context. The Almanacs differ from the 'aesthete' position of contemporary writers (including many Symbolists), for whom their literary work was separate from any political convictions they might have in real life. The Almanacs are also distinct from committed literature, such as the *roman à thèse*, in which contemporary writers such as France or Barrès articulated political ideas and possible solutions to society's problems.

The Almanacs express a position in which the transgression of artistic norms also implies the transgression of social and political norms, thus underlining art's subversive potential. The paradox and the constant irony are in fact inherent to, if not a condition of this position, since they avoid taking sides or giving allegiance to any political view. This explains why Jarry's attitude towards anarchism was ambivalent, if not dismissive. In the end, all doctrine, however attractive it might seem, had to be excluded from his work. In real life, he also refused to commit to any set of (radical) politics. That stance is also expressed through the ambiguous figure of Père Ubu, who represents every single political viewpoint and none at all, at the same time. Despite the serious themes of the Almanacs, which seem to call for an unequivocal point of view, it often remains unclear what sort of ethical or political position is being expressed in the text. Identification with the character or commitment with regard to the themes on is therefore problematic for the reader, not least because of the text's grotesque comedy.

The informed reader is nevertheless left to rethink the facts as they are presented in the press or in public debate on certain issues. In 'L'Île du Diable', Ubu's ruthless brutality and the cruelty of the verdict suggest a judgement of the procedures of the actual Dreyfus Affair. They challenge the details and stories surrounding it. The texts also imply a defence of universal values such as justice and individual freedom, as the hypocrisies of certain groups and people in society are clearly attacked. The presentation of this perspective is more paradoxical and ambiguous than in other contemporary works, but this may also be seen as a condition for the text's own type of commitment. Literature could only keep its subversive dimension if it was free of actual political affiliation. The anarchist spirit often attributed to Jarry's work has its roots in a much broader philosophy of individuality and freedom, which Jarry

expressed through pataphysics, both in his work and in his public life. By signing petitions, he primarily challenged the restrictions placed by the contemporary political and cultural establishment on freedom of expression, whether for political figures (for instance Jean Grave) or writers and artists (such as Georges Eekhoud).

On the one hand the Almanacs can certainly be read as committed, or political; on the other hand they represent the uncomfortable relationship between art and politics. They articulate a desire for art to have a social impact, but at the same time recognize that this cannot be achieved without — in Jarry's eyes, at least — compromising artistic autonomy. The political context and the possibility of censorship might have played a part in the ironical distance expressed in the Almanacs, but it is more likely that Jarry's need for independence was the main reason behind his indirect and ambiguous commentary on contemporary issues.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. Benoît Denis, *Littérature et engagement: De Pascal à Sartre* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), p. 219. I am well aware of the complex notions and practices surrounding the issue of engagement, but my primary aim in this chapter is to situate Jarry and the Almanacs in their historical context and within contemporary literary concepts of commitment.
2. The fact that Père Ubu appealed to all sides is also illustrated by the fact that the notoriously right-wing and anti-Semitic author Gyp used an illustration of Ubu in her work *En balade* of 1897. See Schoonbeek, *Les Portraits d'Ubu*, p. 72.
3. *La Revue Blanche*, 1 October 1901, *OC II*, p. 626.
4. *OC II*, p. 425.
5. The Dreyfus Affair was subject of debate again in parliament in April 1903. At that time, two other affairs also made headlines: the Thérèse Humbert Affair, and another which involved an ancient tiara that had been purchased by the Louvre, but eventually proved to be a forgery. Jarry combines all these affairs in his article.
6. Cutshall, in his article on the Dreyfus case in Jarry's work, considers this the 'most important and original part of the *Almanach*', no doubt because it is the most accessible and straightforward text, but he seems to ignore the fact that the theme also appears, albeit less explicitly, in other texts of the Almanac. Cutshall, 'Celui qui Dreyfusse', pp. 26–27.
7. *OC I*, pp. 545–46.
8. *L'Affaire Dreyfus*, ed. by Michel Winock (Paris: Seuil, 1998), p. 44.
9. Rather than being just meaningless 'formalist wordplay' as Pollack seems to believe and for which she criticizes Jarry's treatment of the Affair in the Almanac, in Pollack, *Pataphysik, Symbolismus und Anarchismus bei Jarry*, p. 252.
10. *OC I*, p. 551.
11. Alphonse Humbert was the director of *L'Éclair*, known for its violent anti-Semitic campaigns; Arthur Meyer was the director of *Le Gaulois* and anti-Dreyfusard although of Jewish origin; Jules Méline, Prime Minister in 1898, instigated action against the Dreyfusard camp; General Zurlinden was appointed Minister of War on 5 September 1898, but resigned on the 17th; Mercier, a general and very briefly Minister of War, was one of Dreyfus' initial accusers. Édouard Drumont founded the anti-Semitic paper *La Libre Parole*; General de Pellieux led the investigation against Esterhazy, but exonerated him; General Charles-Arthur Gonse, in a famous exchange of letters about Esterhazy with general Picquart, maintained Dreyfus's guilt; Director Ernest Judet of *Le Petit Journal* campaigned against Dreyfus and Zola. Fernand Xau was director of the anti-Dreyfusard *Le Journal*; writer Maurice Barrès was an active anti-Dreyfusard and member of the nationalist *Ligue des Patriotes*; the writer Gyp was the author of numerous anti-Semitic articles.
12. Politician, journalist and future French president Georges Clemenceau was editor in chief of *L'Aurore*, the paper that published Zola's *J'accuse*; the journalist, lawyer and activist Urbain

- Gohier wrote for *l'Aurore*, although he would become anti-Semitic later in life and collaborated in World War II; Francis de Pressensé was a politician and pacifist and defended Dreyfus after Zola's trial; Rochevoort was the pseudonym used by Henri Dagan for the single issue paper he launched on 25 November 1898, *Le Transigeant*, which counteracted the anti-Dreyfusard newspaper *L'Intransigeant* led by Henri Rochefort. Dagan continued his campaign in *La Revue Blanche*; Anatole France wrote for *Le Temps* and co-founded the *Ligue des droits de l'homme* in 1898.
13. For a catalogue of these visual documents see *The Dreyfus Affair: Art, Truth and Justice*, ed. by Norman L. Kleeblatt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).
 14. Such as John Grand-Carteret, *l'Image et l'Affaire Dreyfus*, 1899.
 15. *OC I*, p. 555.
 16. *Ibid.*
 17. *Ibid.*
 18. Boisdeffre resigned from the army in 1898 after the revelation that the document on which the accusation against Dreyfus was based was forged by Colonel Henry. 'Les moutons de Panurge', the sheep of Panurge, has of course become a common expression for someone blindly following the herd.
 19. This passage also seems to refer to a drawing by Steinlen which depicted Barrès in front of Toulouse-Lautrec's poster 'Aristide Bruant dans son cabaret', accompanied by Bruant's monologue 'Les Quat'Pattes', *Le Mirliton*, no. 113, 9 June 1893.
 20. Denis also labels Barrès as an 'écrivain engagé', since many of his *romans à thèse* expressed his nationalist, conservative views. Denis, *Littérature et engagement*, pp. 210–21.
 21. *L'Écho de Paris* was one of the two newspapers (together with *L'Éclair*) that Zola had openly accused of supporting the conspiracy against Dreyfus in *J'accuse*.
 22. 'Jamais on n'a eu l'idée d'extraire ainsi la cervelle d'un homme et de la lui appliquer sur la figure' [Never has anyone thought of extracting a man's brain and sticking it to his body], anti-Dreyfusard Henri Rochefort wrote in *L'Intransigeant* (1 May 1898), mocking the sculpture's rough features.
 23. Béhar, Dubbelboer, Morel, *Commentaires pour servir à la lecture de l'Almanach du Père Ubu illustré*, p. 27.
 24. 'Georges Duruy: Pour la justice et pour l'armée', *OC II*, p. 626.
 25. Salmon, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940*, p. 161.
 26. Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa 1895–1930* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 11.
 27. See for example Charles-Robert Ageron, *L'Anticolonialisme en France de 1871 à 1914* (Paris: PUF, 1973).
 28. Pierre Quillard, *Les Illégalités et les crimes du Congo (Comité de protection et de défense des indigènes—Meeting de protestation 31 octobre 1905)*, 54–57, quoted in: Patricia Leighton, 'The White Peril and L'Art nègre: Picasso, Primitivism, and Anticolonialism', *The Art Bulletin*, 72, 4 (1990), 609–30 (p. 620).
 29. Leighton, in 'The White Peril and L'Art nègre', also pays attention to Jarry's anti-colonialism in the Almanac, which she links to Picasso's celebration of the primitive. She is right in pointing to Jarry's subversion of colonial politics and prejudices, but her textual analysis remains somewhat limited, since she relies on the English translation of the section 'Ubu colonial', and not the entire Almanac. She claims that 'Africa had long been a special preoccupation of Jarry' (p. 621), but apart from the Almanac and one article, there is no evidence for this. The Almanac's colonial texts were greatly influenced by its other contributors. Jarry's preoccupation with the colonial theme appears to originate primarily from his overall anti-establishment position rather than from a profound connection with Africa.
 30. *OC I*, p. 601.
 31. Apart from Leighton's remarks on Jarry's anti-colonialism in the Almanac and its avant-garde context, Jean-Paul Morel has been the only one to tackle the 'colonial' texts. In Volland, *Tout Ubu Colonial et autres textes*, he provides some enlightening notes. The colonial references in the second Almanac, the puns, the use and function of Creole language in the texts and the song, as well as this text's specific relationship to other contemporary texts with a colonial theme or colonial discourse could, in my opinion, still do with some further and more in-depth (textual)

- analysis. Since this exceeds the specific argument of this chapter, it remains a suggestion for future research.
32. Leighton also argues that whereas many modernist artists and writers were anti-colonialist in their opinions, their artistic celebration of African primitivism and the perceived 'noble authenticity' of these cultures often revealed an equally Western (mis-)understanding of Africa. Leighton, 'The White Peril and L'Art nègre', pp. 609–30.
 33. *OC I*, p. 589.
 34. *OC II*, pp. 287–88.
 35. *OC I*, p. 468.
 36. Morel, in Vollard, *Tout Ubu Colonial et autres textes*, notes that the entire text is a children's story that Vollard told to Jarry. Morel bases this assumption on Vollard's memoirs. But Vollard's memoirs were written long after the Almanac and they, like most ego documents, are not always the most reliable source. Since there is no other evidence about who wrote what, the specific origins of this story, as of the other texts, remain a source of speculation. This probably would have pleased the 'author' Père Ubu and the 'anonymous' collaborators of the Almanac.
 37. Vollard, *Tout Ubu Colonial et autres textes*, p. 107.
 38. As is also argued by Leighton, 'The White Peril and L'Art nègre'.
 39. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*, p. 5.
 40. On censorship in theatre and popular entertainment see F. W. J. Hemmings, *Theatre and State in France, 1760–1905* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 204–26.
 41. Alfred Jarry, *Ubu* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), p. 453. In their notes to this edition, Arnaud and Bordillon discuss the censorship files on the *Ubu* plays, including that of the Théâtre des Pantins. Whether Ubu's Almanacs were also subjected to censorship, is still unknown. No files or information have been recovered, as far as I know.
 42. *OC I*, p. 429.
 43. *OC I*, p. 651.
 44. Hemmings, *Theatre and State in France*, p. 224.
 45. Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels'*, p. 111.
 46. On the connections between anarchism and the French cultural world around 1900 see for example: Pierre Aubery, 'L'Anarchisme des littérateurs au temps du Symbolisme', *Le Mouvement social*, 69 (1969), 21–34; Joan U. Halperin, *Félix Fénéon: Aesthete and Anarchist in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988); Patricia Leighton, *Re-Ordering the Universe: Picasso and Anarchism, 1897–1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); Dieter Scholz, *Pinsel und Dolch: Anarchistische Ideen in Kunst und Kunsttheorie 1840–1920* (Berlin: Reimer, 1999); Alexander Varias, *Paris and the Anarchists: Aesthetes and Subversives during the Fin de Siècle* (New York: St Martin's, 1996).
 47. Charle, *Naissance des 'intellectuels'*, p. 114.
 48. Richard Sonn describes this 'symbolic space' of Parisian anarchism in: Sonn, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp. 79–94.
 49. Hyman, *Bonnard*, p. 27.
 50. Archives de la Préfecture de Paris, B/a79, 25 May 1894, quoted and translated in Sonn, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France*, p. 77.
 51. Leighton, *Re-Ordering the Universe*, p. 71.
 52. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
 53. *OC II*, p. 576.
 54. *OC II*, pp. 584–85.
 55. Besnier, *Alfred Jarry*, p. 467.
 56. F. Fagus, *Testament de ma vie première*, Paris, 1898, p. 11, quoted and translated in Leighton, *Re-Ordering the Universe*, p. 52.
 57. *OC I*, pp. 558–59.
 58. *OC I*, p. 591.
 59. *OC I*, pp. 554–55.
 60. In the first Almanac's list of 136 names Fénéon is described as 'celui qui silence' [the person who silences/keeps silent], partly, no doubt, because for the rest of his life he kept notoriously quiet about his involvement in this bomb attack.

61. 'Les Paralipomènes d'Ubu', *La Revue Blanche*, 1 December, 1896, *OC I*, p. 467.
62. *OC I*, p. 337.
63. *OC I*, p. 1013.
64. Sapiro, 'Forms of Politicization in the French Literary Field', p. 643.

This page intentionally left blank

EPILOGUE



Jarry, the Almanacs and the *avant-garde*

Jarry's work can be characterized as playful, elusive, paradoxical and provocative. Whether challenging literary and artistic conventions or dissecting social and political issues, Jarry's non-conformist attitude was at the heart of his literary texts and determined his outlook on the world. Nowhere does this become clearer than in the two Almanacs. Although long overlooked, they are in many ways exemplary, if not the most radical expression of Jarry's poetics.

Several phases of Jarry's career and aspects of his work appear to come together in the Almanacs. They combine Jarry's early Symbolist influences of *Les Minutes de sable mémorial* (1894), his love for images from *L'Ymagier* (1894/95), the cycle of Ubu plays, the erudite and innovative novel *Gestes et opinions du Docteur Faustroll* (1911[written 1898]), his satirical journalism, the more accessible, titillating nature of novels such as *Messaline* (1901) or *Le Surmâle* (1902), the light-hearted playfulness of the librettos he wrote for Terrasse's operetta's, such as *Le Moutardier du Pape* (1903), and pataphysics. Jarry's first published prose text 'Guignol' (1893) briefly introduced Ubu's pataphysical knowledge to the world, but the absurd logic, crucial to pataphysics, characterizes both Almanacs. It shows in Ubu's ability to speak out on every subject, in the focus on ridiculously trivial details to comment on important events of the year, in short in a constant re-evaluation of accepted cultural values or institutions. Both Ubu and pataphysics function as provocative tools that challenge not only contemporary literary aesthetics, but contemporary sensibilities in general.

Symbolism provided an inspirational environment for Jarry in the 1890s and helped shape his ideas on literature. However, around the time of the first Almanac (1898), Jarry's career witnessed several changes in publisher and platforms that also signalled a transformation in his writing. His texts were now being published by the more progressive and more politicized *La Revue Blanche*, whose editors were more willing to accept Jarry's uncompromising attitude when it came to his texts. Jarry's work left Symbolism behind and embarked on a new direction that had been set in motion with *Ubu Roi* (1896). From 1900 onwards and around the time of the second Almanac (1901), Jarry also became acquainted with a new generation of avant-garde writers and artists, on whom he would have a considerable influence. The Almanacs were inspired by aspects of the artistic counterculture found in the cabarets of Montmartre and by popular tradition, cultures that operated on the margins of contemporary art and literature. Jarry's collaborators on the Almanacs, the painter Pierre Bonnard, the composer Claude Terrasse, the poet Félicien Fagus and the art dealer Ambroise Vollard, also brought with them a range of different cultural and

artistic vistas. By drawing on these cultural spheres and on the conventions of more popular genres Ubu's Almanacs are able to hover between journalism, literature, popular culture and artistic counterculture. For Jarry, this aesthetic indeterminacy gave him the tools to play with prevailing notions of art and literature.

Jarry's ideal text was heterogeneous, polysemic, fragmentary, inclusive of other artistic media and non-literary texts, and not restricted by genre boundaries or narrative conventions. Collage allowed him to challenge and push the boundaries of established conceptions of authorship, representation and literary creation. Jarry's inventive use of collage is closely related to his economical and highly associative use of language. His texts are consequently very carefully constructed, dense and almost poetic, evoking an intricate web of different thematic elements and semantic threads. The collage aesthetic in the Almanacs, and the re-evaluation of existing modes of representation, prefigures the experiments of the early avant-garde movements of the twentieth century, such as Braque and Picasso's 'papiers collés' and the work of writers surrounding these painters, such as Apollinaire. These artists all knew and admired Jarry and his work. Picasso apparently owned the manuscript of *Ubu Cocu*, which he seemed to know by heart and which inspired his play *Le Désir attrapé par la queue*.¹ Being familiar with Ubu and Jarry's work, it is highly likely Picasso that knew of the Almanac, if only through Vollard or Apollinaire. Jarry's work influenced this new generation, as Jarry's literary experiments were in turn influenced by others before him. One could for example cite Lautréamont, a favourite poet of Jarry, whose *Poésies* (1870) were filled with borrowed texts and are often claimed to be collage poems *avant la lettre*.² Other influences might include the experiments in the artistic cabarets, such as the wall journal *Le Mur*.

Jarry's use of collage in Ubu's Almanacs fits the mindset of the period and reflects paradigmatic changes taking place in contemporary art and literature. By 1900 man's perception of the world was under scrutiny. Positivist claims to a universal truth or reality were being re-evaluated and contradicted. Modern life seemed to demand new ways of representing and perceiving the world. Philosophers such as Nietzsche questioned man's awareness of the world and himself. Theories of the relativity of time and space could be found in the works of philosopher Henri Bergson, popular among artists and writers in Jarry's day. Jarry himself attended Bergson's classes at the Lycée Henri IV during 1891 and 1892. His theories about (the relativity of) time and space influenced Jarry and many other writers of his generation who were exploring representation in their work. Jarry was certainly one of the first to practise collage, but as the artistic expression of broader cultural developments it was certainly 'in the air'.

Newspaper fragments play an important role in Jarry's use of collage, while journalism in general provided him with a rich source of creativity. Both Almanacs prefigure the tone and style of Jarry's chronicles, in their innovative juxtaposition of journalism and literature. In Jarry's work, mass culture seems to be considered as a challenge and not simply as a threat to art. This was not, in itself, radically new, since many of his contemporaries, both writers and artists, looked to everyday life or popular forms for inspiration. Yet, in the Almanacs, Jarry radically defied contemporary literary standards of beauty, through wordplay, bawdy humour, the

crude and disruptive collage aesthetic, and the reinvention of literary form. Jarry did not of course aim to debunk art as such or to level it down to more popular forms of expression; he also refused to simply aestheticize popular culture in order to raise it to contemporary artistic standards. Instead, Jarry chose to create a more hybrid form. With regard to pre-World War I collage works Marjorie Perloff has argued that avant-garde artists were 'quick to accept the world of commodity production and of the mass media as a challenge rather than as a threat',³ and this certainly applies to Jarry's Almanacs. Jarry's poetics announced a paradigmatic change in the arts, which involved a new dialectic between avant-garde and mass-culture. Apollinaire would, somewhat later, find poetry in the morning's newspaper, as he wrote in his poem *Zone* (1910), allowing his poetry to reflect the dynamics of modern life, through form as well as content. The composer Erik Satie began his musical career as a cabaret pianist and drew on those experiences for his later musical works. Popular forms were, as he said, highly evocative and natural materials for modern artistic expression.⁴ Other artistic experiments with forms of popular entertainment such as the ballet *Parade* (1914) are also evidence of this new dialectic. The Almanacs are exemplary of these new, yet ambiguous, bonds emerging between art and mass culture at the beginning of the twentieth century. By allowing these new forms and materials to enter the literary work, Jarry created new structures, genres and modes of representation, such as collage. Furthermore, the use of everyday materials made it possible for Jarry to bring literature closer to everyday life, but without bowing to the demands of mass culture.

Jarry's earlier texts largely ignored current events, but with the Almanacs Jarry decisively broke with that trend. They provide an off-beat perspective on French society around 1900 and Jarry emerges as a much more committed author than has previously been acknowledged. Jarry's innovative use of language is employed to question society's discourses and values. Collage and wordplay become tools for social commentary. Ubu's excessive cruelty and lack of conscience or moral centre have obvious comic effects, but it is precisely the combination of this dark comedy with the very real and serious issues addressed in the texts, including anti-Semitism, racial prejudice, abuse of power and colonial exploitation, that make for an uncomfortable read. Without pointing explicitly to one specific ethical position, the brutal reality behind these issues is nonetheless made evident. However, whereas the Almanacs seem implicitly to side with the pro-Dreyfus camp and with the anti-colonialist movement, their most striking feature is the overall challenge posed to the cultural and political establishment. The humour, playfulness and paradox of the texts (in form and content), in conjunction with their absurd, pataphysical logic, provided the means for the subversive anti-establishment position Jarry embodied, whether in his public persona or in his work. This independent, detached attitude prevented Jarry from becoming caught up in institutionalized politics and joining the ranks of contemporary intellectuals, while still confronting and exposing serious issues in his texts.

The artistic and satirical qualities of Ubu and pataphysics which are so prominent in both Almanacs proved inspirational. In Jarry's own time Ubu had already acquired a certain legendary status. In 1899 Gauguin wrote how impressed he was

by the 'dirty bug' Ubu who personified every vile human being in history:

Ubu Roi is a dirty bug who goes to war after his subjects, always suffering from strange colic. I won't say the play was a success; it was a scandal, because one does not like to see one's own race ridiculed and degraded to such a degree. However a new type had just been created. Any politician who shows himself in a cowardly or base light is now called an Ubu. Any individual who wipes away from his snout the spittle aimed at him and whose trousers are a urinal for anything that raises a leg to piss is an Ubu. From now on, Ubu belongs to the dictionary of the Academy; it will designate human bodies with the soul of a bug. Let us give thanks to Alfred Jarry.⁵

Bonnard, Terrasse, Vollard and Fagus all loved the character of Ubu. And so did many others. Georges Bans had made use of Ubu's satirical qualities in his magazine *Omnibus de Corinthe*. Even an unlikely writer like Gyp used a drawing of Ubu in her work *En balade* (1897). A group of Belgian artists and industrials who met in Brussels around 1900 called themselves 'les Ubus', and one of its members, the decorator and architect Henry van de Velde, named himself Henry van Ubuvelde.⁶

When Vollard wanted to publish his first satirical *Ubu* work, he was accused by Fasquelle, the publisher of *Ubu Roi*, of copyright infringement and of acting against the wishes of Jarry's next of kin. Vollard replied that he used Ubu quite 'naturally, since I collaborated with M. Alfred Jarry in an almanac [...] in which I was in charge of the colonial part.'⁷ In the end Vollard prevailed over the editor; he paid him off. But Apollinaire defended Vollard's use of Ubu, saying that Vollard, who was a friend of Jarry and who printed the second *Almanach du Père Ubu*, chose Ubu to 'pay homage to Jarry's genius'.⁸ Apollinaire had admired both *Almanacs* and owned a copy of the first one. When the Futurist painters Soffici, Papini and others published their *L'Almanacco purgativo* in 1914, a yearbook that accompanied the first Futurist exhibition, Apollinaire believed they had taken Jarry's *Almanacs* as models and stated that 'Alfred Jarry eut décerné aux auteurs le grand cordon de l'ordre de la Gidouille' [Alfred Jarry would have awarded the authors the grand cord of the order of the Potbelly]. According to him, they had Jarry to thank for Futurism and he thought they should have acknowledged this publicly.⁹ Apollinaire's claim is perhaps exaggerated, and the Futurists never denied that Jarry had been an inspiration.¹⁰ *Ubu Roi* and the character of Ubu had already inspired Marinetti's *Le Roi Bombance* (1909). The anecdote illustrates the nature of contemporary appreciation of Jarry's work. Apollinaire blamed Fasquelle for being overly protective of the 'interests of an always welcome new edition of *Ubu Roi*.' Vollard's book, Apollinaire wrote, would simply 'help popularize the name of a character that is to become as proverbial as Gargantua, Panurge, Pantagruel, Gulliver or Robinson Crusoe.'¹¹ Other writers shared this idea. The poet and long-standing admirer of Jarry, Laurent Tailhade, wrote that Ubu 'n'appartient plus à son auteur, mais bien à la littérature universelle. Comme Faust, comme Pierrot, comme Don Quichotte, il est entré dans l'Humanité. Son nom devient commun' [no longer belongs to his author, but to universal literature. Like Faust, like Pierrot, like Don Quixote, he has entered Humanity. His name becomes commonplace].¹² Ubu had become a formidable literary archetype and the *Almanacs* undoubtedly played an

important role in bringing this about. André Breton later saw the character as a proto-Surrealist, and the incarnation of black humour and Freudian unconscious desires.¹³ Ubu has also been cast as the incarnation of tyranny, of the bourgeoisie, of the grotesque and the vulgar; even as an anticipation of twentieth-century dictators or a symbol of the South African Apartheid regime.¹⁴ The numerous interpretations Ubu has received over the years are nothing if not proof of his strength as a character. The character continues to inspire writers and artists to this day, whether in works of art, children's literature, or comic books.¹⁵

To a lesser extent, but in similar fashion, pataphysics continues to inspire as well. The best-known example of its legacy is of course the Collège de Pataphysique, founded in Paris in May 1948 at Adrienne Monnier's bookshop 'Amis des Livres' by Irénée-Louis Sandomir and other admirers of Jarry, Maurice Saillet, Jean-Hugues Sainmont and Mélanie Le Plumet. The Collège soon attracted other like-minded artists and writers, including Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst and Ionesco, all of them inspired by the philosophy of pataphysics and the absurdist and independent attitude it implied. To this day the Collège has branches in several countries.

The surprisingly vibrant after-life of pataphysics and of the character Ubu in literature and art, as well as in comics and pop culture, shows that Jarry's work and ideas found their way into the twentieth century and remain influential to this day. In examining the Almanacs, it becomes even clearer that Jarry's subversive poetics foreshadowed many innovations — collage in particular — that would take place in twentieth-century art and literature. He emerges as a key, transitional figure between the Decadents and Symbolists, humoristic groups (such as the *Hydropathes*), and the artistic cabarets of the late nineteenth century and the avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century. Jarry's pivotal role in the twentieth-century avant-garde is especially palpable in the two Almanacs. Apart from affirming Ubu's status as a provocative, literary archetype, the two works incorporate innovative techniques and strategies that constitute the most radical aspects of Jarry's writing.

Notes to the Epilogue

1. *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, vol. 41/42 (1989), p. 32.
2. See Aragon, *Les Collages*, p. 132. In 1891 Remy de Gourmont had published extracts of Lautréamont's *Poésies* in the *Mercure de France*, which Jarry had read. Lautréamont's *Les Chants de Maldoror* is also one of the *livres pairs* in Faustroll's library and references to Lautréamont's poetry can be found throughout Jarry's work.
3. Perloff, *The Futurist Moment*, p. 74.
4. Mary E. Davis, 'Modernity à la mode: Popular Culture and Avant-Gardism in Erik Satie's *Sports et divertissements*', *The Musical Quarterly*, 83, 3 (1999), 430–73 (p. 464).
5. Published in *Sourire* in Tahiti in 1899, quoted and translated in Morel, 'Ambroise Vollard: How & where I met Père Ubu', p. 217.
6. Schoonbeek, *Les Portraits d'Ubu*, p. 72.
7. Vollard to Fasquelle, 6 April 1917, quoted and translated in Morel, 'Ambroise Vollard: How & where I met Père Ubu', p. 214.
8. Apollinaire, 27 April 1914, *Europe Nouvelle*, from Apollinaire, *Chroniques d'art 1902–1918* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), pp. 541–42. The translation is taken from *Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews 1902–1918*, trans. by Susan Suleiman, ed. by Leroy D. Breunig (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), pp. 462–63.

9. Quoted in Franco Vazzoler, 'Marinetti et Jarry', in *Présence de F. T. Marinetti*, ed. Jean-Claude Marcadé (Lausanne: L'Âge d'homme, 1982), pp. 134–40 (p. 134).
10. The painter Soffici responded to Apollinaire by saying that a certain flair for mockery and wordplay was certainly inspired by Jarry. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
11. Apollinaire, *Apollinaire on Art*, p. 462.
12. 'Préface inédite de Laurent Tailhade aux *Réincarnations du Père Ubu*', cited in Vollard, *Tout Ubu Colonial et autres textes*, p. 55.
13. Breton, *Anthologie de l'humour noir*, pp. 272–73.
14. See for example Jane Taylor, *Ubu and the Truth Commission* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1998).
15. For an iconographic history of Ubu in art see Schoonbeek, *Les Portraits d'Ubu*. For examples of Ubu in contemporary comic books see Barbara Pascarel, 'Du docteur Festus à Homoblicus: Jarry en bandes dessinées', in *Alfred Jarry et les Arts*, ed. by Henri Béhar and Julien Schuh, *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 115/16 (Paris: SAAJ; Tusson: Du Lérot, 2007), pp. 172–96.

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Works by Alfred Jarry

- Almanach du Père Ubu, illustré. janvier, février, mars 1899*, first edition, number 90633, Bibliothèque Municipale de Laval
- Almanach illustré du Père Ubu (XXe siècle)*, 1^{er} janvier 1901, first edition, number 17251, Bibliothèque Municipale de Laval
- Œuvres Complètes*, préface par René Massat; souvenirs de Jean Saltas et Charlotte Jarry, tomes I–VIII (Lausanne: Éditions du Grand-Chêne, 1948)
- Almanach illustré du Père Ubu (XXe Siècle)*, illustrations de Pierre Bonnard (Lausanne: Éditions du Grand-Chêne, 1949)
- Tout Ubu*, édition établie par Maurice Saillet (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1962)
- Peintures, gravures et dessins d'Alfred Jarry*, préface et commentaire des œuvres par Michel Arrivé (Paris: Collège de Pataphysique, 1968)
- Œuvres Complètes*, I (Paris: Gallimard (Pléiade), 1972)
- Ubu*, publiés sur les textes définitifs établis, présentés et annotés par Noël Arnaud et Henri Bordillon (Paris: Gallimard, 1978)
- Œuvres Complètes*, II (Paris: Gallimard (Pléiade), 1987)
- Œuvres Complètes*, III (Paris: Gallimard (Pléiade), 1988)
- Tout Ubu*, édition établie par Maurice Saillet; préface, commentaires et notes de Charles Grivel (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2000)
- Ubu Roi* (Paris: Gallimard (Folio), 2002)
- Gestes et opinions du docteur Faustroll, pataphysicien*, préface by Philippe Soupault (Paris: Stock, 1923)
- Gestes et opinions du docteur Faustroll*, rédigé par Sylvain Goudemare, préface par Denis Levant (Paris: Éditions Cartouche, 2004)
- Œuvres* (Paris: Robert Laffont (Bouquins), 2004)
- Almanach illustré du Père Ubu (XXe Siècle)*, facsimile, présenté par Patrick Besnier (Paris: Le Castor Astral, 2006)
- Almanach du Père Ubu illustré*, facsimile (Laval: SAAJ; Tusson: Du Lérot, 2009)

References

Publications by the Collège de Pataphysique

- 1950–1957 *Cahiers du Collège de Pataphysique*
1956–1965 *Dossiers acénonètes du Collège de Pataphysique*
1966–1974 *Subsidia Pataphysica*
1975– *Organographes du Cymbalum Pataphysicum,*
 Monitoires du Cymbalum Pataphysicum,
 Viridis Candela. Carnets trimestriels du Collège de Pataphysique

Research done by the Société des Amis d'Alfred Jarry is published in *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 1979–present

- ADAMOWICZ, ELZA, *Surrealist Collage in Text and Image* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
- AGERON, CHARLES-ROBERT, *L'Anticolonialisme en France de 1871 à 1914* (Paris: PUF, 1973)
- ALBERSMEIER, FRANZ-JOSEF, 'Collage und Montage im surrealistischen Roman', *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*, 12, 46 (1982), 46–63
- ALLAIS, ALPHONSE, *Œuvres anthumes*, 1 (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1970)
- APOLLINAIRE, *Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews 1902–1918*, trans. by Susan Suleiman, ed. by Leroy C. Breunig (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972)
- *Chroniques d'art 1902–1918, Collection Folio essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960)
- APOLLINAIRE, GUILLAUME, *Flâneur des deux rives suivi de contemporains pittoresques* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975)
- *Journal Intime*, ed. by Michel Décaudin (Paris: Éditions du Limon, 1991)
- ARAGON, LOUIS, *Les Collages* (Paris: Hermann, 1980)
- ARNAUD, NOEL, *Alfred Jarry: D'Ubu Roi au docteur Faustroll* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1974)
- 'Jarry à son ombre même', *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, 203, 3 (1986), 97–127
- AUBERY, PIERRE, 'L'Anarchisme des littérateurs au temps du Symbolisme', *Le Mouvement social*, 69 (1969), 21–34
- BABLET, DENIS, ed. *Collage et montage au théâtre et dans les autres arts durant les années vingt* (Paris: L'Âge d'homme, 1978)
- BARRUCAND, VICTOR, 'Le Noyé', in *Badauderies Parisiennes. Les Rassemblements: Physiologies de la rue*, ed. by Octave Uzanne (Paris: Henri Floury, 1896), pp. 50–54
- BEAUMONT, KEITH, *Alfred Jarry: A Critical and Biographical Study* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1984)
- BÉHAR, HENRI, MARIEKE DUBBELBOER, and JEAN-PAUL MOREL, eds, *Commentaires pour servir à la lecture de l'Almanach du Père Ubu illustré 1890'* (Laval: SAAJ; Tusson: Du Lérot, 2009)
- BÉHAR, HENRI, 'Jarry, l'almanach et le fleuve oral', *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 19/20 (1983), 31–39
- *La Dramaturgie d'Alfred Jarry* (Paris: Champion, 2003)
- *Les Cultures de Jarry* (Paris: PUF, 1988)
- BÉLANGER, CLAUDE, *Histoire générale de la presse française. Tôme III 1871–1940* (Paris: PUF, 1976)
- BELL, DAVID F., 'La Chandelle Verte and the Faits divers', *L'Esprit créateur*, 24, 4 (1984), 48–56
- BENJAMIN, WALTER, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, trans. by Harry Zohn (London: Verso, 1997)
- BESNIER, PATRICK, *Alfred Jarry* (Paris: Fayard, 2005)
- 'Dénombrement du peuple: Jarry et les écrivains de son temps', *Europe: revue littéraire mensuelle*, 59, 623/24 (1981), 9–16
- BLANC, DINA, 'Mallarmé on the Press and Literature: "Étalages" and "Le Livre, instrument spirituel"', *The French Review*, 71, 3 (1998), 414–24
- BOLLÈME, GENEVIÈVE, *Les Almanachs populaires aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: Essai d'histoire sociale* (Paris and La Haye: Mouton & Co, 1969)
- BOURDIEU, PIERRE, *Les Règles de l'art: Genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (Paris: Seuil, 1992)
- BRETON, ANDRÉ, *Anthologie de l'humour noir, Livre de Poche (Biblio)* (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1966)
- CAMBRON, MICHELINE, and HANS-JÜRGEN LÜSEBRINK, 'Presse, littérature et espace public: De la lecture et du politique', *Études françaises*, 36, 3 (2000), 127–45
- CARADEC, FRANÇOIS, 'Alfred Jarry, témoin de son temps', in *Jarry: Colloques de Cerisy*, ed. by Henri Bordillon (Paris: Belfond, 1985), pp. 155–80
- *Alphonse Allais* (Paris: Belfond, 1994)
- CATE, PHILIP DENNIS, and MARY SHAW, eds, *The Spirit of Montmartre: Cabarets, Humor, and the Avant-Garde, 1875–1905* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996)

- CATHÉ, PHILIPPE, *Claude Terrasse* (Paris: Éditions l'Hexaèdre, 2004)
- 'Jarry-Terrasse au travail: Le grand Almanach illustré du Père Ubu d'après des documents inédits', *Viridis Candela* (*Carnets trimestriels du Collège de Pataphysique*), 3 (2001), 73–76
- CHARLE, CHRISTOPHE, *Naissance des 'intellectuels' 1880–1900* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1990)
- CHARTIER, ROGER, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994)
- CHASSÉ, CHARLES, *Les Nabis et leur temps* (Paris and Lausanne: La Bibliothèque des Arts, 1960)
- *Sous le masque d'Alfred Jarry: Les Sources d'Ubu Roi* (Paris: H. Floury, 1921)
- CONKLIN, ALICE L., *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa 1895–1930* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997)
- COPELAND, ROGER, 'Merce Cunningham and the Aesthetic of Collage', *The Drama Review*, 46, 1 (2002), 11–29
- CORNILLE, JEAN-LOUIS, 'L'Œuvre possible d'Alfred Jarry', *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, 266/67 (2002), 87–103
- CUTSHALL, J. A., 'Celui qui Dreyfuse: Alfred Jarry and the Dreyfus Case', *Symposium*, 43, 1 (1989), 20–37
- DATTA, VENITA, *Birth of a National Icon: The Literary Avant-Garde and the Origins of the Intellectual in France* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999)
- DAVIS, MARY E., 'Modernity à la mode: Popular Culture and Avant-Gardism in Erik Satie's *Sports et divertissements*', *The Musical Quarterly*, 83, 3 (1999), 430–73
- DÉCAUDIN, MICHEL, 'Collage et montage dans l'œuvre d'Apollinaire', *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* (Beiheft 7), Apollinaire (1980), 31–36
- *La Crise des valeurs symbolistes: Vingt ans de poésie française* (Toulouse: Privat, 1960)
- DELARUE-MARDRUS, LUCIE, *Mes Mémoires* (Paris: Gallimard, 1938)
- DEMOOR, MARYSA, ed., *Marketing the Author: Authorial Personae, Narrative Selves and Self-Fashioning 1880–1930* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004)
- DENIS, BENOÎT, *Littérature et engagement: De Pascal à Sartre* (Paris: Seuil, 2000)
- DORRA, HENRI, *Symbolist Art Theories: A Critical Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994)
- DUBBELBOER, MARIEKE, 'L'Écriture visuelle dans les *Almanachs du Père Ubu*: Jarry et Bonnard', in *Alfred Jarry et les arts*, ed. by Henri Béhar and Julien Schuh (Laval: SAAJ; Tusson: Du Lérot, 2007), pp. 139–52
- 'Rewriting the News: Journalism and Literature in fin de siècle France. The Case of Alfred Jarry (1873–1907)', in *Form and Style in Journalism: European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880–2005*, ed. by Marcel Broersma (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), pp. 157–75
- ECO, UMBERTO, *The Infinity of Lists: From Homer to Joyce* (London: MacLehose Press, 2009)
- ERULI, BRUNELLA, 'Le Monstre, la colle, la plume', *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, 203, 3 (1986), 51–66
- FAGUS, *Le Divan* (50 lettres de Fagus) 26, 189 (Oct–Nov 1934)
- FELL, JILL, *Alfred Jarry: An Imagination in Revolt* (Madison and Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005)
- *Alfred Jarry* (London: Reaktion books, 2010)
- FISHER, BEN, *The Pataphysician's Library: An Exploration of Alfred Jarry's 'livres pairs'* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000)
- GENDRON, BERNARD, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular music and the avant-garde* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002)
- GENOVA, PAMELA A., *Symbolist Journals: A Culture of Correspondence, Studies in European Cultural Transition* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002)

- GIBBONS, JOAN, *Art and Advertising* (London and New York: I. B. Taurus, 2005)
- GROJNOWSKI, DANIEL, *Aux commencements du rire moderne: L'Esprit fumiste* (Paris: Corti, 1997)
- 'Laforgue fumiste: L'Esprit de cabaret', *Romantisme*, 64, 2 (1989), 5–15
- and BERNARD SARRAZIN, *L'Esprit fumiste et les Rires fin de siècle. Anthologie* (Paris: Corti, 1990)
- GROOM, GLORIA, ed. *Beyond the Easel: Decorative Painting by Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis, and Roussel, 1890–1930* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2001)
- HACKETT, C. A., 'Jarry and Ubu', in *The Writer and his Other Self* (London: Grant & Cutler, 1995)
- HALPERIN, JOAN U., *Félix Fénéon: Aesthete and Anarchist in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988)
- HEMMINGS, F. W. J., *Theatre and State in France, 1760–1905* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- HURET, JULES *Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire* (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1891)
- *Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire (notes et préface par Daniel Grojnowski)* (Vanves: Les Éditions THOT, 1982)
- HYMAN, TIMOTHY, *Bonnard* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998)
- JEAY, MADELEINE, *Le Commerce des mots: L'Usage des listes dans la littérature médiévale (XIIe–XVe siècles)* (Genève: Droz, 2006)
- KALIFA, DOMIQUE, 'L'Écriture du fait divers au 19e siècle', in *Presse et événement: Journaux, gazettes, almanachs (XVIIIe–XIXe siècles)*, ed. by Jean-Yves Mollier & Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink (Bern: Lang, 2000), pp. 297–311
- KLEEBLATT, NORMAN L., ed. *The Dreyfus Affair: Art, Truth and Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987)
- KRAUSS, ROSALIND E., *The Picasso Papers* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1998)
- KRUMM, ELKE, 'Die Gestalt des Ubu im Werk Alfred Jarrys' (Inaugurat-Dissertation, Köln, 1976)
- LEIGHTEN, PATRICIA, *Re-Ordering the Universe: Picasso and Anarchism, 1897–1914* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989)
- 'The White Peril and L'Art nègre: Picasso, Primitivism, and Anticolonialism', *The Art Bulletin* 72, 4 (1990), 609–30
- LEROY, GÉRALDI, and JULIE BERTRAND-SABIANI, *La Vie littéraire à la Belle Époque* (Paris: PUF, 1998)
- LÜSEBRINK, HANS-JÜRGEN, 'La Littérature des almanachs: Réflexions sur l'anthropologie du fait littéraire', *Études françaises*, 36, 3 (2000), 47–63
- LUGNÉ-POE, AURÉLIEN, *Acrobaties: Souvenirs et impressions de théâtre (1894–1902)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1931)
- *La Parade, t.I, Le Sot du tremplin* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard/Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1930)
- LUND, HOLGER, *Angriff auf die erzählerische Ordnung: Die Collagenromane Max Ernsts* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2000)
- MALLARMÉ, STÉPHANE, *Correspondance X Novembre 1897–Septembre 1898*, ed. by Henri Mondor and Lloyd James Austin (Paris: Gallimard, 1984)
- MERCERON, JACQUES E., *Dictionnaire des saints imaginaires et facétieux* (Paris: Seuil, 2002)
- MÖBIUS, HANNO, *Montage und Collage: Literatur, bildende Künste, Film, Fotografie, Musik, Theater bis 1933* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2000)
- MOREL, JEAN PIERRE, 'Collages, montage et roman chez Döblin et Dos Passos', *Revue d'Esthétique*, 3/4 (1978), 213–32
- MOREL, JEAN-PAUL, 'Ambroise Vollard: How & where I met Père Ubu', in *Alfred Jarry: De los Nabis a la patafísica* (Valencia: IVAM–Centre Julio González, 2000), pp. 210–19

- OLIVIER, FERNANDE, *Loving Picasso: The Private Journal of Fernande Olivier* (New York: Abrams, 2001)
- PASCAREL, BARBARA, 'Du docteur Festus à Homoblicus: Jarry en bandes dessinées', in *Alfred Jarry et les Arts*, ed. by Henri Béhar and Julien Schuh, *L'Étoile-Absinthe*, 115/16 (Paris: SAAJ; Tusson: Du Lérot, 2007), pp. 172–96
- PERLOFF, MARJORIE, *The Futurist Moment* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986)
- 'The Portrait of the Artist as Collage-Text: Pound's *Gaudier-Brzeska* and the 'Italic' Texts of John Cage', *The American Poetry Review* (1982), 19–29
- PERNOUD, EMMANUEL, 'The Art of Facsimile: Alfred Jarry and Reproduction', *Word & Image*, 16, 4 (2000), 352–262
- PIES, STACY, 'Un fil visible: Poetry and Reportage in Stéphane Mallarmé's "Un spectacle interrompu"', *French Forum*, 29, 2 (2004), 1–18
- POGGI, CHRISTINE, *In Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism and the Invention of Collage* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992)
- 'Mallarmé, Picasso and the Newspaper as Commodity', *Yale Journal of Criticism*, 1, 1 (1987): 133–51
- POLLACK, ILSE, *Pataphysik, Symbolismus und Anarchismus bei Jarry* (Vienna, Cologne, Graz: Böhlau, 1984)
- QUILLARD, PIERRE, 'De l'imagination et de l'expression chez M. Alfred Jarry', *La Revue Blanche* (July 1902), 198–200
- RACHILDE, *Albert Jarry ou Le Surmâle des lettres* (Paris: Grasset, 1928)
- REARICK, CHARLES, *Pleasures of the Belle Epoque: Entertainment and Festivity in Turn of the Century France* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1985)
- RÉGIBIER, PHILIPPE, *Ubu sur la berge: Alfred Jarry à Corbeil (1898–1907)* (Paris: Les Presses du Management, 1999)
- RICHARDSON, JOHN, *A Life of Picasso. Volume 1: 1881–1906* (New York: Random House, 1991)
- RIFATERRE, MICHAEL, *Sémiotique de la poésie* (Paris: Seuil, 1983)
- RUSCELLI, GIROLAMO, *Les Secrets du seigneur Alexis Piémontais, divisez en deux parties*, electronic resource BNF/Gallica, Num. BNF de l'éd. de, Cambridge, MA: Omnisys, [c. 1990] (French books before 1601; 77.3). 1 microfilm Reprod. de l'éd. de, Lyon: G. Rovinge, 1564
- SALMON, ANDRÉ, *Souvenirs sans fin 1903–1940* (Paris: Gallimard, 2004)
- SAPIRO, GISÈLE, 'Forms of Politicization in the French Literary Field', *Theory and Society*, 32 (2003), 633–52
- SCHOLZ, DIETER, *Pinzel und Dolch: Anarchistische Ideen in Kunst und Kunsttheorie 1840–1920* (Berlin: Reimer, 1999)
- SCHOONBEEK, CHRISTINE VAN, *Les Portraits d'Ubu* (Paris: Séguier, 1997)
- SCHWARTZ, VANESSA R., *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin de Siècle Paris* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998)
- SEIGEL, JERROLD, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life 1830–1930* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999)
- SHATTUCK, ROGER, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the avant-garde in France 1885 to World War I. Alfred Jarry, Henri Rousseau, Erik Satie, Guillaume Apollinaire* (New York: Random House, 1968)
- SHAW, MARY, 'All or Nothing? The Literature of Montmartre', in *The Spirit of Montmartre: Cabarets, Humor, and the Avant-Garde, 1875–1905*, ed. by Philip Dennis Cate and Mary Shaw (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), pp. 111–58
- SHAYA, GREGORY, 'The Flâneur, the Badaud, and the Making of a Mass Public in France, circa 1860–1910', *The American Historical Review*, 109, 1 (2004), 41–78
- SIMPSON, JULIET, 'Symbolist Illustration and Visual Metaphor: Remy de Gourmont's and Alfred Jarry's *L'Ymagier*', *Word & Image*, 21, 2 (2005), 150–68

- SONN, RICHARD, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989)
- ST JAMES, ASHLEY, ed., *Vallotton: Graphics* (London: Ash & Grant, 1978)
- TAYLOR, BRANDON, *Collage: The Making of Modern Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004)
- TERDIMAN, RICHARD, *Discourse/Counter-Discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1985)
- TERRASSE, ANTOINE, *Bonnard illustrateur* (Paris: Biro, 1988)
- THÉRENTY, MARIE-EVE, *La Littérature au quotidien: Poétiques journalistiques au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 2007)
- VARIAS, ALEXANDER, *Paris and the Anarchists: Aesthetes and Subversives during the Fin de Siècle* (New York: St Martin's, 1996)
- VARNEDOE, KIRK, and ADAM GOPNIK, eds, *Modern Art and Popular Culture: Readings in High and Low* (New York: Abrams/Museum of Modern Art, 1990)
- VAZZOLER, FRANCO, 'Marinetti et Jarry', in *Présence de F. T. Marinetti*, ed. by Jean-Claude Marcadé (Lausanne: L'Âge d'homme, 1982), pp. 134–40
- Versants n°56: Poétiques de la liste (1460–1620): Entre clôture et ouverture*, sous la direction d'Adrien Paschoud et Jean-Claude Mühlethaler (Geneva: Slatkine, 2009)
- VOLLARD, AMBROISE, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1948)
- *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, trans. by Violet M. MacDonald (New York: Dover Publications, 1978)
- *Tout Ubu Colonial et autres textes*, ed. by Jean-Paul Morel (Paris: Musée Léon Dierx/Séguier, 1994)
- WALKER, DAVID H., *Outrage and Insight: Modern French Writers and the 'Fait divers'* (Oxford and Washington, DC: Berg, 1995)
- WEISBERG, GABRIEL P., ed. *Montmartre and the Making of Mass Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001)
- WEISS, JEFFREY, *The Popular Culture of Modern Art* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 1994)
- WESCHER, HERTA, *Die Collage: Geschichte eines künstlerischen Ausdrucksmittels* (Cologne: M.DuMont Schauberg, 1968)
- WINOCK, MICHEL, ed. *L'Affaire Dreyfus* (Paris: Seuil, 1998)

INDEX



- Adam, Paul 117
Adorno, Theodor 84
Allais, Alphonse 10, 53, 70, 71
anarchism 117–21
anti-colonialism 109–15, 129
Apollinaire, Guillaume 1, 6, 7, 9, 13–15, 18, 19, 63, 128–30
Aragon, Louis 64 n. 5
L'Argus de la Presse 47
Arnaud, Noël 2, 9, 51
L'Assiette au beurre 88
L'Aurore 122 n. 12
authorship 35, 63, 68, 69, 83–86, 89, 90, 96
 and Père Ubu 2, 15, 19, 35, 82
- Bans, Georges 47, 130
Barrès, Maurice 102, 103, 106, 120, 121, 122 n. 11,
 123 n. 19
Barrucand, Victor 94 n. 45
Baudelaire, Charles 33, 72
Bauër, Henry 1
Beaumont, Keith 3
Béhar, Henri 2, 62
Benjamin, Walter 72, 84
Bergson, Henri 32, 128
Bernard, Émile 21 n. 44
Bernard, Tristan 70, 94 n. 45
Bertillon, Alphonse 98, 99, 100
Besnier, Patrick 3, 26
Billot, Jean-Baptiste 106
Blum, Léon 94 n. 45
Boisdeffre, Charles Le Mouton de 106, 123 n. 18
Bon, Gustave le 89
Bonnard, Charles 12, 13, 47
Bonnard, Pierre 2, 11–18, 21 n. 44, 30, 40, 47–49, 51,
 56, 59–61, 71, 72, 76, 91, 100, 104, 105, 114, 115,
 127, 130
Bonnat, Léon 56
Bouguereau, William 51, 119
Bourgault-Ducoudray, Louis-Albert 30
Braque, Georges 24, 128
Breton, André 89, 131
Bruant, Aristide 9, 123 n. 19
Brunetière, Basile 13
- Le Canard Sauvage* 69, 85, 98
Caradec, François 3
Caran d'Ache 59, 107
Cazals, J. C. 56
- Cazin, Ch 56
Céard, Henry 1
censorship 115, 116
Chanoine, Charles 100
Le Chat Noir 9, 10, 70
Clemenceau, Georges 102, 103, 122 n. 12
Cohen, Alexander 118
collage 24–63, 128, 129
Collège de Pataphysique 2, 131
Collière, Marcel 10
Coolus, Romain 1
Coppée, François 13
Coquelin *dit* cadet 53
Couturier, E. 97
Cremnitz, Arthur 19 n. 6
La Critique 13, 47
Cros, Charles 10
Cubism 24, 63, 115
Cutshall, J.A. 3
- Dada 1, 89
Dagan, Henri 102, 123 n. 12
Daudet, Alphonse 117
Decadents 7, 131
Delarue-Mardrus, Lucie 66 n. 56
Demolder, Eugène 66 n. 63
Denis, Benoît 107
Denis, Maurice 21 n. 44, 47, 51
Derain, André 21 n. 44
Déroulède, Paul 106
Dierx, Léon 21 n. 44
Douglas, Lord Alfred 9, 20 n. 23
Dreyfus Affair 27, 44, 68, 71, 96–108, 120, 121, 129
Dreyfus, Alfred 97–101, 103, 104, 108, 119, 122 n. 11
Drumont, Édouard 102, 106, 122 n. 11
Duchamp, Marcel 131
- L'Écho de Paris* 6, 107, 123 n. 21
L'Éclair 122 n. 11, 123 n. 21
Eco, Umberto 26
Eekhoud, Georges 118, 121
Ernst, Max 131
Eruli, Brunella 62
Esterhazy, Charles-Ferdinand Walsin 99, 100, 101,
 122 n. 11
- Fagus, Félicien 13, 14, 16–19, 23 n. 75, 107, 118, 119,
 127, 130

- faits divers* 70, 76, 78
 Falguière, Alexandre 107
 Fargue, Léon-Paul 117, 118
 Fasquelle, Eugène 130
 Fell, Jill 62
 Fénelon, Félix 6, 9, 10, 70, 94 n. 45, 97, 117, 118, 120,
 124 n. 60
Festin d'Ésope 19
Le Figaro 56, 57, 69, 7
 Fisher, Ben 3, 26
flâneur 72, 88
 Fontainas, André 12
 Footit 10, 20 n. 25
 Forain, Jean-Louis 21 n. 44, 59, 107, 108
 Fort, Paul 18, 118
 Fouquier, Henri 1
 Fourier, Charles 10
 Franc-Nohain 9, 27, 46
 France, Anatole 30, 51, 102, 103, 106, 107, 117, 120,
 121, 123 n. 12
 France, Louise 10, 13, 30, 100
 Freycinet, Charles de 27, 29, 101
 Futurism 7, 130
- Gandillot, Léon 27, 28
 Gauguin, Paul 119, 129
Le Gaulois 122 n. 11
 Gauthier-Villars, Henry 30, 66 n. 63
 Gémier, Firmin 4 n. 2
 Gide, André 1
 Godillot, Alexis 28
 Gogh, Vincent van 13, 118
 Gohier, Urbain 102, 106, 117, 123 n. 12
 Gonse, Charles-Arthur 102, 103, 106, 122 n. 11
 Goudeau, Émile 9
 Gourmont, Remy de 8, 87, 91, 131 n. 2
 Grave, Jean 117, 121
 Guérin, Charles 22 n. 64
 Guilmant, Alexandre 38, 43
 Guyot 12
 Gyp 102, 103, 122 nn. 2 & 11, 130
- Hauptmann, Gerhart 118
 Henry, Émile 120
 Henry, Hubert-Joseph 123 n. 18
 Hermant, Abel 27
 Hirsch, Charles-Henry 23 n. 75
 Horkheimer, Max 84
 Humbert, Alphonse 102, 122 n. 11
- Ibels, André 110
 Ibels, Henri-Gabriel 108
Images d'Épinal 91
 Ionesco, Eugène 131
- Jacob, Max 90
- Jarry, Alfred:
L'Amour absolu 6, 45
La Dragonne 53, 79
Gestes et opinions du Docteur Faustroll 3, 26, 36, 37,
 41, 53, 69, 127, 131 n. 2
 'Guignol' 1, 6, 73, 127
 journalism and *La Chandelle Verte* 69–71
Les Jours et les Nuits 108, 109
Messaline 51, 62, 87, 127
Les Minutes de sable mémorial 27, 127
Le Moutardier du Pape 127
Pantagruel 11, 13, 46
Les Paralipomènes d'Ubu 73
Perhindérior 8
Le Surmâle 18, 74, 75, 127
 'Le Temps dans l'art' 49, 83
 Théâtre des Pantins 9, 11, 47, 61, 62, 115
Ubu Cocu 1, 2, 73, 128
Ubu enchaîné 1, 18, 44, 116
Ubu Roi 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 18, 25, 27, 44, 47, 61, 86, 90,
 98–101, 115, 116, 127, 130
Ubu sur la Butte 2, 10
L'Ymagier 8, 87, 91, 127
- La Jeunesse, Ernest 20 n. 23, 94 n. 45
Le Journal 68, 122 n. 11
Le Journal Officiel 56
 Judet, Ernest 27, 97, 102, 122 n. 11
La Justice 118
- Kahn, Gustave 9, 21 n. 37, 91, 94 n. 45
 Kessler, Harry 21 n. 44
 Krauss, Rosalind 45
 Kropotkin, Peter 117
 Krumm, Elke 3
- Lautréamont, Comte de 1, 128, 131 n. 2
 Léautaud, Paul 118
 Leblond, Marius-Ary 21 n. 44
 Leconte de Lisle 117
 Lecouffé, Gaston 42
 Léger, Augustin 120
 Lévi, Sylvain 12
La Libre Parole 122 n. 11
 Lormel, Louis 117
 Loti, Pierre 117
 Lugné-Poe, Aurélien 1, 6, 9, 10, 59, 86
 Lüsebrink, Hans-Jürgen 7, 8
- Maillol, Aristide 21 n. 44
 Mallarmé, Stéphane 27, 35–37, 53, 68, 69, 84, 117
 Marinetti, F.T. 7, 130
 Marinoni, Hippolyte Auguste 106
 Massat, René 3
 Massenet, Jules 56
Le Matin 68, 70
 Méline, Jules 102, 122 n. 11

- Mendès, Catulle 1
 Mercier, Auguste 102, 103, 122 n. 11
Le Mercure de France 6, 9, 13, 18, 46, 47, 51, 57, 68, 131 n. 2
 Meyer, Arthur 102, 103, 122 n. 11
 Mirbeau, Octave 66 n. 56, 98, 117
 Le Mirliton 9
mission civilisatrice 109, 111
 Monnier, Adrienne 131
 Morel, Jean-Paul 2, 113
 Morin, Charles 1
 Morin, Henri 1
 Musset, Alfred de 73
- Nabis 11, 13, 91
 Natanson, Thadée 94 n. 45, 97
 Natanson, Alfred 97
 Nietzsche, Friedrich 128
 Nostradamus 7, 48, 59
- L'Œil* 69
 Olivier, Fernande 19 n. 6
L'Omnibus de Corinthe 97, 110, 130
 Onimus, James 23 n. 75
- Papini, Giovanni 130
 pataphysics 69, 70, 129–31
 Paty de Clam, Armand du 101
 Pellieux, Georges-Gabriel de 102, 106, 122 n. 11
 Perloff, Marjorie 129
Le Petit Journal 68, 72, 79, 97, 104, 105, 122 n. 11
Le Petit Parisien 68, 78
La Petite République 118
 Picasso, Pablo 1, 7, 9, 13, 16, 18, 21 n. 44, 24, 63, 115, 117, 128
 Picquart, Georges 100, 101, 106, 122 n. 11
 Piémontais, Alexis 12, 33, 76
 Pissarro, Camille 13, 117, 118
La Plume 7, 18, 69, 90, 117, 118
 Plumet, Mélanie Le 131
 Ponchon, Raoul 70, 71
 Pouget, Émile 8, 117
 Pranzini, Henri 51
 Pressensé, Francis de 102, 122 n. 12
 Proust, Marcel 1
Psst! 108
- Les Quat'z'Arts 2, 6, 9, 10, 116
 Quillard, Pierre 10, 18, 41–44, 96, 102, 103, 109, 111, 117, 120
- Rabelais, François 3, 8, 9, 26, 37, 51, 53, 80, 106
 Rachilde 10, 93 n. 25, 96
 Ranson, Paul 15, 16
 Redon, Odilon 15, 21 n. 44, 56
 Regnier, Henri de 4 n. 4, 21 n. 37
- Renaudie, Charles 12
La Révolte 117
La Revue Blanche 6, 9, 11–13, 15, 16, 44, 47, 48, 57, 69, 70, 83, 87, 94 n. 45, 97, 112, 117, 118, 120, 123 n. 12, 127
La Revue indépendante 70
La Revue Libertaire 117
 Rictus, Jehan 22 n. 57
Le Rire 70
 Rochefort, Henri 123 n. 12, 123 n. 22
 Rochevoort, *see* Dagan, Henri
 Rodin, Auguste 30, 71, 88, 107
 Roussel, K.-X. 21 n. 44, 27
 Ruscelli, Girolamo 33, 34, 53
- Sadi Carnot, Nicolas Léonard 117
 SAILLET, Maurice 131
 Saintmont, Jean-Hugues
 Saint-Saëns, Camille 51
 Salis, Rodolphe 9
 Salmon, André 6, 7, 18, 19, 90, 92 n. 11, 109
 Samain, Albert 9
 Sandomir, Irenée-Louis 131
 Sapiro, Gisèle 121
 Sarcey, Francisque 1
 Satie, Erik 129
 Scheurer-Kestner, Auguste 27, 119
 Sert, José-Maria 21 n. 44
 Shaw, Mary 3
Le Sifflet 107
 Signac, Paul 117
 Soffici, Ardengo 130, 132 n. 10
 Steinlen, Théophile Alexandre 59, 123 n. 19
 Strauss, Émile 13
 Sully-Prudhomme 56
 Surrealism 1, 89, 131
 Symbolism 3, 6, 7, 19, 27, 44, 61, 91, 127, 131
- Tailhade, Laurent 117, 118, 120, 130
Le Temps 35–37, 56, 74, 123 n. 12
 Terrasse, Andrée 11
 Terrasse, Claude 2, 8, 9, 11–18, 21 n. 44, 30, 42, 43, 46, 51, 60, 127, 130
 Théâtre de l'Œuvre 1, 9, 11, 86, 117, 118
 Thuillier-Chauvin, Adolphe 12
 Toulouse-Lautrec, Henri de 9, 91, 123 n. 19
Le Transigeant 123 n. 12
 Trombert, François 9
- Uzanne, Octave 78, 89, 94 n. 25
- Vaillant, Auguste 119
 Valéry, Paul 1
 Vallette, Alfred 6, 10, 41, 43, 93 n. 25, 97
 Vallotton, Félix 11, 78, 91, 94 n. 45, 119
 Velde, Henry van de 130

- Verlaine, Paul 59
La Vie Parisienne 70
 Villon, François 9
 Vlaminck, Maurice de 21 n. 44
 Volland, Ambroise 2, 11, 13–18, 43, 47, 49, 56, 57, 59,
 76, 87, 110, 113, 127, 128, 130
 Vuillard, Édouard 11, 21 n. 44, 47, 119
 Willy, *see* Henry Gauthier-Villars
 Xanrof, *né* Léon Fourneau 71
 Xau, Fernand 102, 103, 106, 122 n. 11
 Zanetta 117
 Zo d'Axa 118
 Zola, Émile 30, 39, 44, 96, 97, 107, 120, 122 nn. 11 &
 12, 123 n. 21
 Zurlinden, Émile 102, 122 n. 11