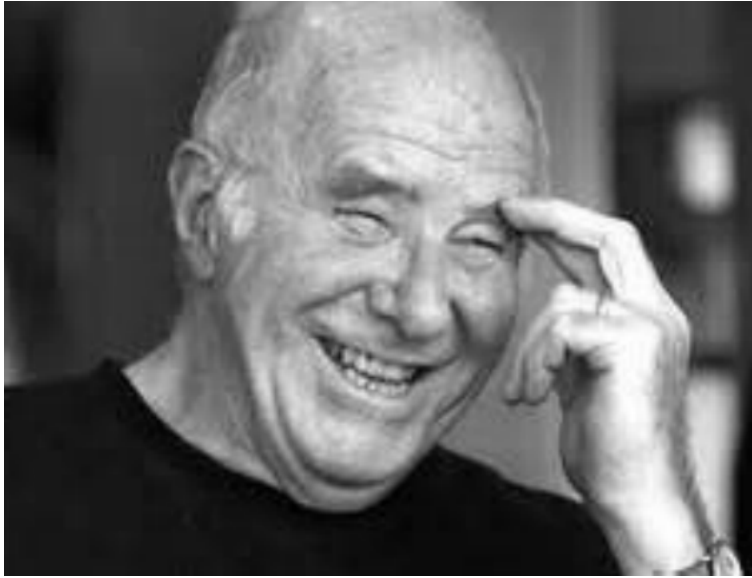


## PARODY



Clive James

(1939- )

Richard Wilbur's Fabergé Egg Factory (1986)

If Occam's Razor gleams in Massachusetts  
In time the Pitti Palace is unraveled:  
An old moon re-arising as the new sets  
To show the poet how much he has traveled.

Laforgue said missing trains was beautiful  
But Wittgenstein said words should not seduce:  
Small talk from him would at the best be dutiful--  
And news of trains, from either man, no use.

Akhmatova finds echoes in Akhnaten.  
The vocables they share *a fortiori*  
Twin-yolk them in the self-same kindergarten  
Though Alekhine might tell a different story.

All mentioned populate a limpid lyric  
Where learning deftly intromits precision:  
The shots are Parthian, the victories Pyrrhic,  
Piccarda's ghost was not so pale a vision,

But still you must admit this boy's got class--  
His riddles lead through vacuums to a space  
Where skill leans on the parapet of farce  
And sees Narcissus making up his face.