A Politicized Pastoral: Signac and the Cultural Geography of Mediterranean France

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A Politicized Pastoral: Signac and the Cultural Geography of Mediterranean France

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A cultural geography of Mediterranean France that emphasized the region's naturally harmonious landscape and concomitant traditions of liberty and social accord informed Neo-Impressionist Paul Signac's depictions of the southern shore. Signac drew on this alternative cultural geography and appropriated the conventions of pastoral landscape painting to his anarchist goals to envision a paradisiacal future that would be situated on the southern coast. His immense manifesto painting *In the Time of Harmony: The Golden Age Is Not in the Past, It Is in the Future* (Fig. 1), which measures more than nine by thirteen feet, significantly reconfigured traditional associations between the political right and the classical tradition of idealized, orderly, and harmonious landscapes of the Mediterranean. In this and other major works of the 1890s, Signac claimed the Mediterranean coast as a site for politically critical, avant-garde art.

In the decades before 1880, avant-garde painters rarely depicted France's southern shore due, in part, to the cultural affiliation between southern France and academic classicism, in turn linked with cultural and political conservatism.[1] In the 1860s, the successful Salon painter Ernest Meissonier wintered at the resort town of Antibes, thus underlining the region's connection with academic art.[2] Charles Baudelaire had defined modernism as a product of the north, and this association was strengthened in the first decades of Impressionism.[3] Not until the 1880s did avant-garde Parisian artists begin to travel to southern France, or the Midi, in significant numbers.[4] While en route to Italy in 1882, Auguste Renoir visited the native southerner Paul Cézanne at L'Estaque. Accompanied by Claude Monet, Renoir returned in 1883 for a two-week trip to the Italian and French Riviera (although the French did not yet call it that).[5] In January 1884 Monet went to Bordighera, Italy, for ten weeks and spent two weeks in France at Menton, while Renoir regularly visited the south after 1888. Henri-Edmond Cross, who would adopt the Neo-Impressionist style in 1891, wintered around Monaco from 1883 to 1891 before settling in the southern town of St-Clair in 1892.[6] Other notable visitors to the south include Vincent van Gogh, who persuaded Paul Gauguin to join him in Arles during his 1888 trip to that inland town.[7] And in 1892, Signac was the first Parisian artist to settle in St-Tropez, then a small fishing village on the recently "discovered" Côte d'Azur that might still be called "off the beaten track."[8]

The correlation between the Midi, classicism, and conservatism persisted and even found new impetus in the 1890s, when rising French nationalism and anxiety over French cultural identity led to increasing calls from many quarters for a return to classical landscapes, in the tradition of Claude Lorrain and Nicolas Poussin, thought to express the truly French characteristics of clarity and order.[9] Moreover, James Herbert has shown that the link between the classical ideal and the Mediterranean landscape would be appropriated by the political right in the twentieth century to represent their "call to order."[10] Nonetheless, as I will show, in the 1890s the classical landscape and the allied Mediterranean heritage were invoked to represent an opposing view: the anarchist ideal of natural order and harmony that would be found in the golden age to come. After moving to St-Tropez in 1892, Signac, a committed anarchist, began to paint politicized pastorals juxtaposing north and south and promoting a left-wing vision of the Mediterranean shore.[11]

The pastoral tradition differs significantly from the classical landscape in being a mode that invokes comparison and juxtaposition, features that Signac would use to full advantage. He set his pastoral in the south, a region linked to a tradition of liberty in the literary works of Stendhal and Guy de Maupassant and signaled as the perfect milieu for the development of a well-balanced society by anarchist geographers Élisée Reclus and Pierre Kropotkin. In using the conventions of pastoral landscape painting to radicalize seemingly innocuous depictions of the Mediterranean, Signac invoked these cultural constructs. *In the Time of Harmony* (Fig. 1) initiates a modern, left-wing tradition of picturing the Mediterranean that relies on an anarchist cultural geography that differentiated north and south. Furthermore, I suggest that the pastoral form juxtaposes the idyllic south with the north, as pictured in earlier Neo-Impressionist representations. I conclude by briefly examining Neo-Impressionist statements and criticism in the first decade of the twentieth century that continued to invoke classicism, suggesting an ongoing connection between the classical ideal and anarchist art. Thus, I argue a formative role for Neo-Impressionism in the iconography of the Mediterranean shore: Signac and his Neo-Impressionist colleagues created a radical association for the classical tradition and the Mediterranean coast.

My interpretation relies on a definition of pastoralism that implies a potential for radicalism.[12] The pastoral landscape tradition employs many of the same compositional signifiers as the classical landscape, or *paysage composé,* such as a structured, harmonious landscape marked by its unity and completeness. The pastoral is additionally characterized by Virgilian subject matter that is Arcadian rather than historic or mythological. Yet, as Leo Marx has persuasively asserted, the deeper essence of pastoralism in all its guises is the juxtaposition of dichotomies such as real and idyllic, urban and rural—or, as I will suggest, north and south—rather than the inclusion of Virgilian imagery or the adherence to a particular set of formal qualities.[13] Marx shows that the pastoral is a sophisticated representation that mediates two conflicting ways of life: social complexity and natural simplicity.[14] Examining the history of pastoral paintings, David Rosand proposes that while such juxtapositions may have been explicit in early pastoral landscapes—for example, by the inclusion of a distant town that contrasts with the idyllic country life in the

1 Paul Signac, *In the Time of Harmony: The Golden Age Is Not in the Past, It Is in the Future,* 1893–95. Montreuil, Mairie (© Estate of Paul Signac / ADAGP [Paris] / SODRAC [Montreal] 2003; photo: Alain Llobregat)

foreground—the formal structure that signifies pastoralism in painting came to evoke such juxtapositions even when they were no longer made explicit.[15] He has demonstrated that certain conventions, such as a dominant sheltering tree, acquire their own "expressive momentum" and eventually signify pastoralism and the sense of conflicting ways of life now recognized as inherent in the mode.

With this understanding of the potential of pastoralism, I argue that when Signac moved to the Mediterranean shore and used this pictorial paradigm, he was relying on the formal conventions of the painted pastoral to invoke comparisons between north and south, between his work and other representations, and to envision a better future that contrasted with the present. My argument thus intersects with the important analyses of idyllic landscapes done by John Hutton and Margaret Werth but differs in its emphasis on the cultural geography of the Midi and its more positive conclusions regarding Signac's achievement.[16] Signac's move to the south is often framed as a retreat, suggesting an inevitable abandonment of the critical potential evident in Seurat's work.[17] This view is no doubt compounded by the fact that the pastoral has often been seen as merely escapist, as have images of the Côte d'Azur, as Kenneth Silver has recently shown.[18] I will establish, however, that Signac's work contributes a new understanding of the cultural geography of the nation by imagining the south as a left-wing paradise.

Situating the South in the Nineteenth Century

The nineteenth-century cultural geography of the French nation emanating from the capital imagined the south as a region distinct from the heart of the French nation. Prosper Mérimée, surveying the nation's cultural heritage in the 1830s, described his impression of the south: "Arriving in Avignon, it seemed to me that I had just left France. . . . All seemed strange compared to central France. I felt as though I were in the middle of a Spanish town."[19] The nineteenth-century historian Jules Michelet emphasized this sense of southern otherness when he wrote of "the true France, the France of the North."[20] Throughout the nineteenth century, difference within the nation was increasingly attributed to a division between north and south, marked by a line running from Geneva to St-Malo.[21] Social scientists traced geographic, economic, racial, and cultural differences across the line; while they noted unequal development, however, they did not agree about which side of the line had the advantage. Such polarized dichotomies were, of course, interdependent,

and difference could be used as evidence of either side's superiority. Generally speaking, those who favored industrialization applauded the modernization evident in the north, while conservatives championed the supposedly happier and healthier "traditional" culture of the south.[22] This conservative view would gain strength in the latter part of the century. The northern construction of the Midi as backward and other was countered within Provence by the myth that the south was the most Latin, and thus most truly French, region within the nation.[23] Interpretations of southern culture by the writers Stendhal and Maupassant (both favorites of Signac), and the anarchist geographers Reclus and Kropotkin as well, inventoried differences between north and south; more importantly, however, their accounts accentuated the perceived freedom of life in the south and, in the case of Reclus, highlighted the region's special role in a peaceful future. These constructions of the south as freer and more harmonious would have been particularly attractive to Signac and his Neo-Impressionist colleagues.

Stendhal, whom Signac saw as a libertarian *avant la lettre,*[24] described the south as a place of freedom where the worst faults of capitalist society were less entrenched than in the north. Signac certainly knew Stendhal's accounts of the south and, in an article describing his voyage from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean on his sailboat *Olympia,* even quoted Stendhal's assessment that the region was more beautiful than Italy.[25] In *Memoirs of a Tourist,* Stendhal's fictional account of a businessman's travels, the southerner is described as having a joy, a "brio," absent in northerners.[26] Stendhal wrote that there could hardly be a greater contrast between a northern and southern man; in the south freedom is highly valued as an essential part of life, in contrast to Paris, where freedom is necessarily relinquished in order to get ahead in society. Briefly describing the restrictions in Parisian society, Stendhal's narrator concludes, "Even a vision of this kind of life would make a Marseillais grow pale. For him his life is all freedom and movement."[27] Describing the region as free from the constraints of polite society, Stendhal also suggests the southerner's healthier relation to money:

> The South of France is in the same case as Spain and Italy. Its natural *brio,* its vivacity, keeps it from being "Englished" like the North. A man of the Midi. . . . is not made for the civilization that has reigned since 1830: money and the shrewd and legitimate ways of getting it. . . .
>
> "But do you think of money every two minutes?" they [Northerners] answer him.
>
> "You sacrifice wines to the interest of iron," he says.
>
> There is no answer to that.[28]

Stendhal links the south of France to other "Latin" countries that are also outside "civilized" societies' concern for money. Signac's similar disdain for a culture that chooses financial gain over other considerations is indicated by his selection of Stendhal's aphorism "the exclusive love of money is what most spoils human beings" for publication in the anarchist journal *La Revue Libertaire* in 1894.[29] This portrayal of the vivacious southerner (who, free from the constraints of civilization, seems to belong to an earlier time that predates capitalism and modernity) would certainly have appealed to escapist bourgeois fantasies of "authentic" life. Yet it also resonated with Signac's anarchist belief in a natural way of life that was harmonious, free, and not found under modern capitalism.

In a somewhat different fashion, Maupassant mythologized the south as a place of freedom where individuals had the time to pursue intellectual concerns, which would also resonate with Signac's view of an anarchist future. Despite Maupassant's ironic nostalgia, his vivid description of the beauty of the Mediterranean coast, published as *Sur l'eau* in 1888, has long been recognized as a likely influence on Signac's choice of locale.[30] There is more than beauty in Maupassant's account, however, that would have attracted Signac.[31] Maupassant was caught in the typical tourist dilemma: he knew that the authenticity he sought no longer existed, and perhaps never did, but he still wanted to see the region as savage and wild. Consequently, his account veers between knowing irony and nostalgia. For example, while emphasizing the exotic isolation and wildness of the region, Maupassant simultaneously underlined how far this stereotype was from reality, as he humorously reported attempts to create *stations hivernales* (winter resorts) along the *côte de maures.*[32] Along this isolated coast, he explains, one finds planned roads named after famous painters cutting through the empty landscape: "boulevard Ruysdael, boulevard Rubens, boulevard Van Dyck, boulevard Claude Lorrain. One wonders why all these painters? Ah! Why? It's the banks, it is said, like God himself before lighting the sun: 'This will be an artist's resort [*station d'artistes*]!' "[33]

When Maupassant turns to describe the inhabitants of St-Tropez, he directly confronts the stereotype of the supposedly savage region. His narrator sympathizes with the miserable life of the office workers of St-Tropez as they leave for their lunch breaks, for whom "all the days, the weeks, the months, the seasons, the years resemble each other. . . . They give themselves up as prisoners for eight hours of the day; the prison is open from six in the morning, until the night falls."[34] He laments: "Oh liberty! liberty! Only source of happiness, only hope and only dream!"[35] He draws a parallel between his own quest for freedom and that of the office clerks, concluding, "we remain free despite all the stranglehold."[36] Maupassant thus asserts an indomitable individualism that survives despite modern society's efforts to crush it, even in supposedly isolated St-Tropez. This is followed by the narrator's account of local conversations that "reorganized the army and the magistrature, reformed laws and the Constitution, defined an ideal Republic."[37] In its entirety, Maupassant's account of St-Tropez would have appealed to Signac for its description of physical beauty but, more importantly, because of its tribute to individual liberty, which persisted despite all attempts to suppress it. Maupassant described a world where workers were able to consider such intellectual concerns as the structure of the ideal Republic, and he made it clear that these individuals were part of the modern French nation. This description of freedom-loving, intelligent workers (as opposed to primitive peasants) clearly resonates with Signac's choice of setting and his representations of the locals made only a few years after the publication of *Sur l'eau.*

Reclus and Kropotkin: Latin Culture and Anarchism

Élisée Reclus and Pierre Kropotkin, both anarchists and geographers, also contributed to the development of the myth of the Mediterranean in ways that would have appealed to Signac.[38] Indeed, Signac later cited Reclus's description of the region as one of the sources that had interested him in the south.[39] Both Reclus and Kropotkin believed in the power of geographic location to shape social and political institutions, and both advocated a decentralized political system. Kropotkin saw the peoples of the Mediterranean basin as more naturally sympathetic to anarchism than German peoples.[40] He believed that Germanic peoples responded to the Paris Commune by supporting the authoritarian socialism of Karl Marx, while Latin peoples responded with sympathy to the anarchism of Mikhail Bakunin.[41] Critiquing the German Social Democratic Party and socialism as espoused by Marx and Friedrich Engels, Kropotkin wrote that the German socialists began to favor

> not the kind of state that might be termed the highest type among those existing today, namely the *federated* state, but the Roman type, unitary, indivisible and centralized in the Roman manner.
>
> Against this Germanic spirit, therefore, the Latin peoples had to defend the very right to revolutionary agitation. They had to wage a difficult struggle against their governments and against the socialists of the German school.[42]

Kropotkin's idiosyncratic definition of Latin and German culture links centralized political authority with the Germanic spirit and with the tradition of the Roman Empire. He distinguished Latin culture as opposing centralization and seeking anarchist revolution. Kropotkin repeatedly characterized anti-Marxist anarchists as Latin, for example, when he explained the split between the anarchists and socialists. He wrote, "the Latin federations, Spanish, Italian, Belgian and Jurassic (French could not be represented) constituted among themselves a Federal union which broke entirely with the Marxist general council of the International."[43] As Kropotkin included both Belgians and Swiss in the category, his definition of Latin seems to be those who support anarchism.

Reclus similarly condemned Germanic culture and praised some aspects of Latin culture.[44] Reclus believed in progress, which he defined as the spread of emancipation.[45] While not anti-German, Reclus criticized the current state of German culture for its regression in terms of emancipation and for its nationalism, militarism, and expansionism.[46] Yet he found the current state of Latin culture even more ambiguous. He recognized the elasticity of the term "Latin," which could apply to any civilization that had been part of the ancient Roman world. Nevertheless, of all the invasions of France, he believed that the Latin one had been the most significant because of its impact on the French language.[47] It was because of the Latin characteristics of the language, he wrote, that "the French spirit took an essentially classical turn."[48] Thus, Reclus emphasized the classical elements within French culture and linked them to a Latin heritage.

Reclus had long advocated a decentralized state as the best social structure, and he linked this to traditions in southern France.[49] For Reclus, the ideal political structure would be independent and self-administering local units, based on "natural" associations. He contrasted this decentralized model with the artificial hierarchies of centralized states, which he argued had been "a tool of despotism, especially in France."[50] Examples of natural units could be found in the south, Reclus wrote, where most of the small landowners resided within the local town so they could effectively take part in its decision-making processes.[51] In the small villages of Provence and the Mediterranean region of France, he suggested, "The great privilege of being able to discuss public interests has, traditionally, changed everyone into urban dwellers. The call of the agora, as in Greece, of municipal life in Italy, attracts inhabitants toward the central square where they debate communal affairs."[52] Anarchism, Reclus noted, was most entrenched where this kind of communal decision making was combined with a tradition of freethinking, where:

> the spirits have for a long time been liberated from religious and monarchical prejudices, where revolutionary precedents have loosened the faith in the established order, where the practice of communal franchises has better accustomed men to dispense with a master, where disinterested study developed thinkers outside every coterie.[53]

Reclus thus recognized that historical tradition alone did not guarantee progress. He stated that in the Middle Ages the south "unquestionably represented the most advanced part of the nation" but regretted that in the present it combined advanced and regressive elements.[54] On the positive side, he cited the strong political support for *radicale* or *radicale-socialiste* parties, which called for the separation of church and state, and the "peasants who deliberately enter into co-operative, even communist arrangements."[55] On the negative side, he noted a reactionary element within the regionalist movement. He lamented the irony that southern towns had rallied their municipal spirit against the central government only to assert their cultural right to bullfighting, which he saw as barbaric.[56] Nevertheless, Reclus saw the tradition of local self-governance as the best form of governance, and he connected it with the Latin culture of the Mediterranean south.[57]

In tourist guides Reclus similarly positioned the Mediterranean as geographically separate from the north. Like others, he suggested that, with the Spanish coast, it constitutes "a distinct part of the world where the transition between Europe and Africa takes place."[58] Since it was a crossroads between north and south, "France historically became the place where the races of the north were united with the south, where the Mediterranean civilization came to intersect with elements of Celtic and German culture."[59] The nation, and particularly its southern part, was therefore uniquely situated; as a crossroads, it would bring about a fusion of all races to create a universal brotherhood. In contrast to those who saw the south as having declined since the age of the troubadours, Reclus argued that Provence still had a role to play in the future of humanity: "history has not at all deserted the shores of the Mediterranean."[60] Thus, both Kropotkin and Reclus related anarchism with some aspects of Latin culture, and Reclus's vision of the future of the Midi would

2 Georges Seurat, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte,* 1884–86. Art Institute of Chicago, Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection (photo: image © The Art Institute of Chicago)

have further contributed to the attraction of the region for Signac.

Situating Signac in St-Tropez

Signac had traveled to the south of France and painted its coastline at Collioure in 1887 and Cassis in 1889, before taking a second home in St-Tropez in the summer of 1892.[61] He chose St-Tropez after lengthy correspondence with his friend Henri-Edmond Cross, a recent convert to Neo-Impressionism who spent 1891 in nearby Cabasson on Signac's suggestion that he visit that part of Provence.[62] In turn, Signac asked Cross if it was too hot to paint there and where he might find a good port for his yacht, *Olympia,* before finally announcing his intention to install himself in the south, "provided I can find a little corner in which to make my nest and a good anchorage for *Olympia,* that's all I ask: a sky, the sea, the setting sun. Less and less I seek the motif."[63] While Signac was obviously drawn by the physical beauty of the south, his letter indicates that he was in search of more than new motifs to paint. Cross first saw the Midi when visiting his uncle, who lived in the already fashionable resort of Monaco, and he later settled on the coast at St-Clair because of health problems.[64] These two Neo-Impressionists thus exemplified the changing tourist trends in the Midi, which had previously attracted mainly wealthy convalescent tourists in winter but was increasingly drawing more fashionable and active year-round tourists seeking an alternative to urban life.[65] They also exemplify the wider trend, both artistic and touristic, of travel from the nation's center to its peripheries in the search for new motifs and new cultural encounters, seen, for example, in van Gogh's choice of Arles and Gauguin's trips to Brittany, Arles, and overseas. The artistic trend may be partially attributed to Georges Seurat's *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (Fig. 2), which Fred Orton and Griselda Pollock have argued made the definitive statement on modern urban life, closing the Parisian landscape as a subject for vanguard painters and prompting ambitious artists to find new spaces of representation.[66] Yet it also corresponds to larger cultural trends and in the Neo-Impressionist case represented a deliberate and anarchist-inspired rejection of Parisian culture in favor of the potential of Mediterranean culture.

The role an artist could play in bringing about the new social order desired by anarchists was much debated, and Signac's position seems to have changed in the early 1890s, a period of intense anarchist activity and concomitant government repression.[67] Anarchist theorists such as Kropotkin advocated an engaged, agitational art—easily understood by all sides—as the best means of bringing about the necessary revolution.[68] In this vein many Neo-Impressionists, including Signac but most frequently Maximilien Luce, contributed rousing illustrations to anarchist periodicals that were meant to be understood by a broad public.[69] Despite his contributions, in an 1891 article Signac asserted that the most advanced art was not necessarily that with an overt socialist intention. Instead, advanced art was the product of honest artists. He argued:

> It would thus be a mistake—committed all too often by the best-intentioned revolutionaries, like Proudhon—to make it a standard demand that works of art have a precise socialist thrust, for that thrust will appear more strongly and eloquently in the pure aesthetes, revolutionaries by temperament . . . who very often unconsciously deal a solid blow of the pick to the old social edifice that, worm-

3 Signac, study for *Young Provençal Women at the Well,* graphite, ink, and watercolor on paper, 1892. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Cabinet de Dessins, RF 37071 (© Estate of Paul Signac / ADAGP [Paris] / SODRAC [Montreal] 2003; photo: Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY)

> eaten, cracks and crumbles like an old, deconsecrated cathedral.[70]

Nevertheless, given the context of the 1890s, Signac did not mean that the subject did not matter but, rather, that the subject and the means of representation would necessarily work together. Consequently, without being proscriptive, Signac recommended subjects representative of their time, which he believed would necessarily bear witness "to the great social proceeding under way between workers and capital."[71] Yet, shortly thereafter, Signac's art moved away from this essentially realist goal to correspond more to the variety of anarchism promoting art that envisioned the golden age to come.[72] As Cross wrote to Signac, "Until now, the pictures dealing with the theme of anarchy always depicted revolt either directly or indirectly, through scenes of poignant misery. Let us imagine instead the dreamed-of age of happiness and well-being and let us show the actions of men, their play and their work in this era of general harmony."[73] This change can be attributed to a desire to present a positive image of anarchism in the face of the bloody facts of the day,[74] and this positive image relied on the reconfiguration of the Mediterranean ideal.

After Signac's arrival in St-Tropez, his art underwent a rapid and significant change.[75] Until his move to the south, Signac had generally avoided pastoral images and landscapes that included prominent figures. His three previous major figure paintings—*The Milliners* (Fig. 5), *The Dining Room, Opus 152* (1886–87), and *Sunday* (1888–90)—had been set indoors.[76] His landscapes (including those of Collioure and Cassis) had been largely unpopulated. Moreover, most of Signac's landscapes were not on a grand scale: indeed, his only large-format works had been the three aforementioned figure paintings. Once ensconced on the coast, however, Signac showed a new interest in situating figures in large-scale, classically inspired landscape settings, as indicated in a letter written to Camille Pissarro shortly after his arrival in St-Tropez in May 1892. "I'm thinking of a large canvas, with figures," he wrote. "Here I will avoid falling into my eternal seascape."[77] A sketch from this first summer in St-Tropez (Fig. 3) seems to be the earliest incarnation of what would become two large-scale, multiple-figure landscapes exhibited as *Young Provençal Women at the Well: Decoration for a Panel in Half-Light* (Fig. 4) and *In the Time of Harmony: The Golden Age Is Not in the Past, It Is in the Future* (Fig. 1). At more than six by four feet and nine by thirteen feet respectively, both works are significantly larger and more ambitious than anything Signac had painted previously. Both also relate to the revived interest in the 1890s for a decorative public art—seen in the critical acclaim given Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and in the mural works of the Nabis—that could be considered the modern inheritor of the classical tradition.[78] In the first half of the decade, Signac was primarily occupied with these works, which makes his attachment to the region and his politicized version of the pastoral very clear.

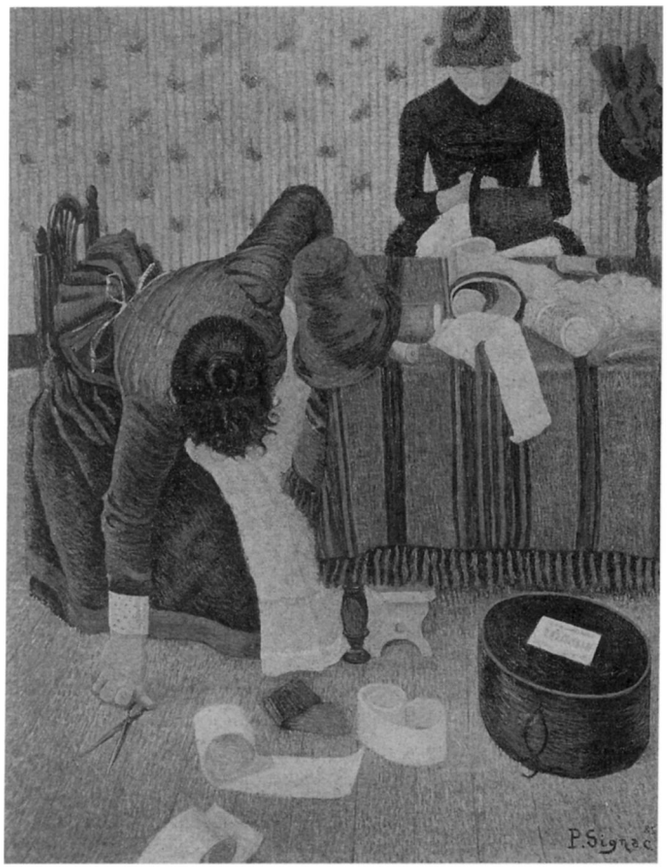
The Locals in the Landscape

Young Provençal Women at the Well, of 1892, uses the eminently classical motif of two local women gathering water at a communal well, while another carries her water up a hill and into the distance.[79] The view conflates several sites, sacrificing realism for the idealism associated with the classical tradition.[80] Signac's portrayal of daily life in St-Tropez reveals the anarchist belief that rural culture was more likely to embrace the ideal of mutual aid, which Pissarro also depicted in the

4 Signac, *Young Provençal Women at the Well: Decoration for a Panel in Half-Light,* 1892. Paris, Musée d'Orsay (© Estate of Paul Signac / ADAGP [Paris] / SODRAC [Montreal] 2003; photo: image © Erich Lessing/ Art Resource, NY)

early 1890s.[81] The women at the well seem to assist each other in their task; the figure on the left swings her jug, as if to move it up to the ledge, while the figure on the right draws the water.[82] More important, the well is communal, not private. This representation of communal living accords with Kropotkin's ideals of "mutual aid" and communal property. Indeed, Kropotkin noted that "a peasant commune, no matter where, even in France, where the Jacobins have done their best to destroy all communal usage," shares resources, including water.[83]

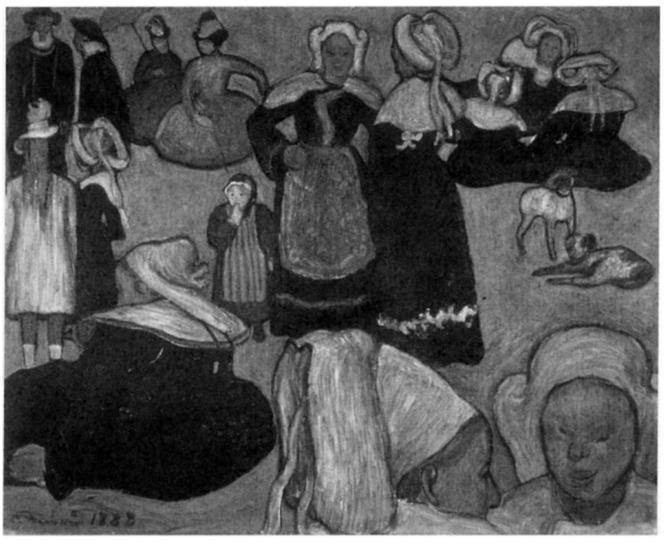
The sketches in which Signac worked out the final composition reveal that the motif of two women together at the well was a virtual constant.[84] The significance of this representation of mutual aid is made clear through a comparison with Signac's previous figural works—showing relations in the north—in which social interaction is consistently depicted as stilted or formal. Neither *The Milliners* (Fig. 5) nor *Sunday* (FC 197) portrays any exchange between the figures. In *The Dining Room* (FC 136) the man and woman at the table display no signs of interchange. The only implied interaction involves servitude—the maid approaches the woman of the house—in a relation that runs counter to the anarchist ideal



5 Signac, *The Milliners,* 1885–86. Zurich, Fondation E. G. Bührle (© Estate of Paul Signac / ADAGP [Paris] / SODRAC [Montreal] 2003)

of individual liberty.[85] The chosen motif in *Young Provençal Women at the Well* instead embodies the anarchist ideal of a communal society in which individuals share communal resources and assist each other willingly.[86]

Signac's portrayal of regional women in this painting stands out in contrast to that of other artists of the day, such as Jules Breton, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, or Émile Bernard.[87] When exhibited in 1893, the picture's title identified the figures as young Provençal women. Yet, some years later, Gauguin derisively described what seems to be this painting when he wrote, "Beside the sea, a well: a few Parisian figures dressed up in brightly colored stripes, no doubt thirsty with ambition, are seeking in this dried-up well the water that will quench their thirst, the whole thing made out of confetti."[88] Gauguin apparently remembered the figures as bourgeois Parisians. Although his competitiveness certainly would have affected his assessment, Gauguin's comment points to Signac's very different way of depicting the local inhabitants. The figures have neither the sturdy body types nor the so-called traditional regional costume (a "tradition" invented in the latter half of the nineteenth century) that normally mark locals as peasants.[89] In contrast, many works by van Gogh and Gauguin in Arles (or a host of artists visiting Brittany) clearly designate their subjects as locals by both body type and costume. In Gauguin's *The Night Café* (1888), the women in the bar wear what is clearly meant to signify traditional Arlésienne clothing. Their identity is summarized by their costume in a stereotypical response that reduces individuals to types.[90] Signac, however, conveyed an aspect of the everyday life of local women, avoiding the by-now standard depiction of the peasant hard at work in the fields *à la* Jean-François Millet or Breton. He used the grandeur of a decorative, classicizing composition but did not archaize the scene by putting the women in identifiably regional clothing. Indeed, Signac's work refuses the oft-made distinction between the modern and the provincial, a distinction that van Gogh had positively remarked on in Émile Bernard's *Breton Women in a Meadow* (Fig. 6). Describing the painting, van Gogh noted the importance of women's clothing as signifiers of their relation to modernity:



6 Émile Bernard, *Breton Women in a Meadow,* 1888. St-Germain-en-Laye, private collection (© Estate of Émile Bernard / ADAGP [Paris] / SODRAC [Montreal] 2003)

> I have seen a Sunday afternoon in Brittany by him [Bernard], some Breton peasant women, children, peasants, dogs, walk about in a very green meadow, the costumes are black and red and the coiffes are white. But in this crowd there are two ladies, one in red, the other in bottle green, who make it a very modern thing.[91]

In contrast, in Signac's painting the viewer is forced to recognize that the women exist in the present and are, at the same time, Provençal. This is a distinction most other artists would not or could not make[92] but that Maupassant's account of the office workers of St-Tropez had emphasized.

Signac thus avoided the facile primitivizing that so often characterized sympathetic portrayals of rural life at the end of the nineteenth century, and this, too, may relate to Kropotkin's theories. Kropotkin noted that artists' depictions of field-workers were "not true to life, nearly always merely sentimental," and asked how a depiction could be truthful if the painter "only knows it as a bird of passage knows the country he soars over in his migrations."[93] Kropotkin's view, well known in anarchist circles, that artists should avoid sentimentalizing peasants or workers by not rendering them until they had lived among them and understood them may be a reason why Signac's earlier landscapes were largely

depopulated and why he generally represented his own social class in bourgeois interiors.[94] It may also explain why Signac's paintings from his earlier summer travels, such as *Cap Lombard, Cassis* (1889), had fewer figures than those from milieus with which he was more familiar, such as *Le Passage du Puits Bertin, Clichy* (1886).[95] While figures took on a prominent role once Signac settled in Provence, they are not the stereotypical fisherman or herdsman nor the sentimental fieldworker. In *Young Provençal Women at the Well,* Signac simultaneously invoked the idealizing, classical tradition and certain anarchist precepts to represent the communal traditions of the harmonious Provençal town, while explicitly avoiding the suggestion that this harmony does not belong in the modern world.

An Anarchist Pastoral

Signac again linked classical conventions, the Mediterranean south, and anarchist ideals in his next major work, *In the Time of Harmony: The Golden Age Is Not in the Past, It Is in the Future* (Fig. 1).[96] The manifesto painting proclaims an anarchist utopia that would be situated in a rural, Provençal landscape, and it uses the conventions of the pastoral to contrast this ideal with the urban north. The massive size of the work, which was not made for a particular buyer or location, suggests its importance in Signac's oeuvre as a very public statement of personal belief.[97] We can read his personal engagement in his inclusion of a self-portrait in the figure of the painter at the easel and a portrait of his wife Berthe, who modeled for the woman in the foreground.[98] The commitment is further suggested by his intention that *Harmony* be the first in a series of paintings to show the idyllic future and the necessary stages of transformation to reach it.[99] I begin by examining the ways in which the painting is simultaneously marked as classical, anarchist, and Provençal before turning to explore how its pastoralism inevitably juxtaposes north and south by recalling the absent referent, Seurat's *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (Fig. 2).

Classical and pastoral conventions are clearly evident in *Harmony.* The painting's monumental scale emphasizes its connection to the classical landscape, as does the broad panoramic view of the Mediterranean bay.[100] The repoussoir tree in the foreground providing shelter for the group below is one of the key signifiers of pastoral landscape.[101] The obvious idealization of the generalized, yet southern, scene, the sense of unity and completeness of the vision, the disposition of the figures throughout the clearly constructed, orderly landscape with its alternating patches of sunlight and shadow, and the path that leads us through that landscape all invoke the classical tradition.[102]

At the same time, however, the painting recodes traditional pastoral imagery to picture the anticipated anarchist future.[103] In a letter to Cross written in the summer of 1893, Signac described the painting and made its relation to anarchism clear.

> Great news! On your advice, I'm going to try a large canvas! . . . The *boules* player is becoming a minor figure of: in the time of anarchy (title to be determined). In the foreground, a group at rest . . . man, woman, child . . . under a large pine an old man tells stories to the young kids . . . on a hillside . . . the harvest: the machines smoke, work, lessen the drudgery: and around the haystacks . . . a farandole of harvesters . . . in the center, a young couple: free love![104]

Although Signac ultimately dropped the term "anarchy" from the title, Albert Boime points out that its substitute, "harmony," hardly disguises the point, since it was widely used with reference to the ideal anarchist society.[105] The man reading, in the left foreground, evokes the Arcadian image of the shepherd reciting poetry in days of old. He bears a double message, however, since he also indicates the anarchist belief in the importance of education for all.[106] Following the path into the middle distance, an embracing couple signifies "free love," as Signac put it, which was both a common motif in the pastoral and widely espoused by anarchists. In the background, a tractor relieves much human labor, allowing for the leisurely life depicted elsewhere in the painting; it invokes the anarchist belief that modern machinery would improve the lot of humanity. Signac referred to the setting as the harvest, which normally occurs in the fall and indicates the earth's bounty. Yet the sower indicates spring, as do the irises. Signac conflated times of year, suggesting a seasonless utopian paradise, with machines that lessen the work.[107] In Signac's image and anarchist ideology, utopia is not cut off from the modern world but, instead, will arrive once we have harnessed the benefits of industrialization and shared them with all society.

The embracing couple signifies another important, albeit less obvious, aspect of the anarchist future.[108] They contemplate a flower, which they hold in outstretched arms. The pose is repeated in the woman seated by the sea and in several other significant Neo-Impressionist works, including Signac's *Portrait of Félix Fénéon.*[109] It seems to signify aesthetic contemplation, which is an important aspect of both traditional pastoral poetry and anarchist harmony. Kropotkin saw aesthetic appreciation as an elevated goal, but one that would be available only after baser needs were satisfied. He wrote of humankind: "As soon as his material wants are satisfied, other needs, which, generally speaking may be described as of an artistic character, will thrust themselves forward."[110] Signac concurred, stating, "When the society that we dream of exists, when rid of the exploiters who exhaust him, the worker will have time to think and to learn. He will appreciate all the qualities of a work of art."[111] Signac included an artist at his easel, which is a traditional signifier of aesthetic appreciation, the implication being that once the anarchist future has arrived, others will also appreciate beauty.

In several documents Signac indicated that he related the classicism so evident in *Harmony*'s composition to anarchist thought. In a letter to his friend the Belgian Neo-Impressionist Théo van Rysselberghe, Signac revealed his awareness of the classical referents behind his approach to the work: "started the sketch [*esquisse*] for 'In the time of Harmony.' Every morning, gymnastics for half an hour: sketches [*croquis*] after Raphael, Puvis, Andre de Sarto [illegible word]—excellent training."[112] The composition often invokes comparison to the work of the most classical of contemporary artists, Puvis de Chavannes, whom Signac linked to anarchism.[113] When beginning the large painting, Signac thanked his friend Jean

Grave, the anarchist writer and publisher, for his latest book, writing that Grave had succeeded in conveying "the hope of this near future where, finally, for the first time, all individuals will be free. In the great poetic decor, *à la* Puvis—of Kropotkin, what solid memorials, practical and livable, you erect! How well one breathes there."[114] In this succinct statement, Signac linked the anarchist philosophies of Grave and Kropotkin to the large-scale classical mural compositions of Puvis. The intellectual and idealizing tendencies of classical compositions, their harmony and order, conveyed to Signac hope for the ideal future.

The picture contains several identifiably Provençal features, which are also linked to anarchist ideology within the picture.[115] Led by a drummer, a group of women performs the traditional dance of Provence, the *farandole,* under the shelter of the umbrella pine in the background. Their joyous gestures are echoed in the motion of the women folding laundry in the middle ground, suggesting the anarchist ideal of unalienated labor in which work and leisure need not be so different. The *boules* players in the foreground are similarly signifiers of both Provence and the similarity of work and leisure, since the gesture of the player at the extreme right is echoed by the pose of the sower, a common anarchist motif, behind him.[116] The vegetation, especially the characteristic umbrella pine set before the beautiful bay, indelibly marks the Mediterranean location. I would suggest, however, that the southern location takes on additional significance when it is understood as implicitly juxtaposed to the painting that "every vanguard artist . . . had to come to terms with" after 1886: Seurat's *La Grande Jatte* (Fig. 2).[117]

Harmony and *La Grande Jatte*

As others have noted, *Harmony* recalls *La Grande Jatte* in several ways.[118] The paintings are compositionally similar: both depict a sunlit shoreline, using alternating patches of sunlight and shadow, with small groupings of figures mainly engaged in leisure activities. Signac evidently drew on Seurat's work and, in doing so, he juxtaposed urban and rural, capitalism and anarchism, and north and south.

This was not the first time that Signac had responded to *La Grande Jatte.* At the eighth Impressionist exhibition, where Seurat exhibited it in May 1886, Signac showed *The Milliners* (Fig. 5).[119] The painting depicts two women finishing hats, illustrating the labor involved in the contemporary fashion industry. Signac reworked the painting with the divisionist technique after seeing Seurat's work, which indicates that formally, at least, the painting engaged with *La Grande Jatte.*[120] While the strong silhouettes and decorative flattening might make Signac's painting seem to be purely a study in form, its subject matter also responds to Seurat's work.[121] We can surmise that Seurat was deliberately concerned with contemporary fashion in *La Grande Jatte,* since sketches give evidence that in the final version he increased the already exaggerated size of the bustle of the woman on the right. If nothing else, the alteration seems to gently mock bourgeois women's elaborate clothing styles.[122] Signac chose as his subject the contemporary laborers who created these fashions, taking Seurat's critical observation to the level of class analysis.

The garment industry gave rise to much debate on the plight of the working poor, women's labor, and industrialization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[123] Economically significant, the industry was also central to the larger debate over France's declining position as an exporter of luxury goods.[124] Needleworkers became "the very image of poverty"[125] in the late nineteenth century. Most were too poor to purchase sewing machines and did piecework in their homes by hand, as is likely depicted in Signac's painting. As Seurat had done, Signac specified the location: the rue de Caire. In the second *arrondissement* of Paris, this street was in an area where rents had become particularly expensive after the reconfiguration of Paris directed by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann, and where the working classes were finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet.[126] Thus, while Seurat portrayed the suburban recreation of the middle classes, Signac pictured working-class life in the city; while Seurat ambiguously rendered the signifying clothing of modern, suburban recreation, Signac showed the inexpensive labor on which the modern fashion industry relied. Signac's representation of behind-the-scenes laborers in the fashion world affirms that he entered into a dialogue with Seurat's paintings from his first foray into Neo-Impressionism, and that he took that dialogue in a direction that was more unequivocally antibourgeois than Seurat's ambiguous imagery would ever allow.[127]

There is strong evidence that Seurat's painting continued to be relevant for Signac. In December 1894, while he was at work on *Harmony,* Signac went to see *La Grande Jatte* in Seurat's mother's apartment.[128] Moreover, when *Harmony* was exhibited in 1896 in Brussels, Signac ensured that it hung in the same position that *La Grande Jatte* had occupied nine years earlier.[129] Signac's aspirations are also indicated by the painting's size: *Harmony* measures 117 by 156 inches, considerably larger than *La Grande Jatte* (81½ by 121¼ inches). But they differ significantly in their depictions of human interaction, labor, class, and, most importantly, in terms of place.

The contrasting overall tenor of the two paintings comes largely from the figures.[130] Seurat's figures are stiff and hieratic, resisting interaction, which Linda Nochlin has argued signifies modern alienation.[131] She quotes a critic of the day: "one understands the stiltedness of the Parisian promenade, stiff and distorted; even its recreation is affected."[132] If Nochlin's conclusion that the picture is an anti-utopian allegory does not fully recognize the work's ambiguity, most historians agree that the picture engages "the viewer in a dialogue of cohesion and separateness. . . . Here we have nothing other than the dilemma of modern urban people under industrial capitalism."[133] In contrast, despite their equally evident stylization, Signac's figures play and work together in harmonious interaction, inverting Seurat's mockery of Parisian mores.[134] Where Seurat's stylization underlines the lack of interaction between the figures, Signac's stylization often links the figures together in rhythmic patterns. For example, the undulating pattern created by the movement from left to right in the foreground figures is so stylized that it emphasizes how each figure is connected to the next. While the meaning of Seurat's painting and its figures remains ambiguous and open to debate, Signac's figures are clearly meant to convey harmonious relations.

The figures also point to the issue of class. Seurat's figures

are dressed in contemporary fashions, which may signify the intersection of differing classes in modern recreation but are certainly common indicators of socioeconomic difference. In contrast, Signac's figures wear much simpler fashions that avoid such markers of class as parasols and top hats. The clothes of the women working are not markedly different from those of the women at leisure. Similarly, one cannot identify class from the clothing of the male figures. The bare-chested men in the foreground enact both characteristically lower-class activities (playing *boules*) and upper-class ones (reading), signifying the lack of hierarchy in the society to come.[135] Indeed, Seurat's title points out that the painting depicts a day of leisure—a defining feature of work under modern capitalism—yet, as discussed above, work and leisure take place side by side and are not so very different in Signac's *Harmony*.

The animals extend the juxtapositions. The prominently depicted hen and rooster form the brightest spot in the foreground, as they are encircled by an aureole of light.[136] More than just a foreground stopgap, as Henry van De Velde suggested, the hen and rooster wittily juxtapose rural anarchist harmony and suburban anomie by analogy with Seurat's much-debated woman with a monkey.[137] Signac's use of the rooster as an anarchist symbol took on particular significance in the early 1890s, when the French government enacted the so-called *lois scélérates,* which criminalized any kind of anarchist propaganda and led to the Trial of the Thirty, in which Signac's friends Maximilien Luce, Jean Grave, and Félix Fénéon were charged.[138] As Marina Ferretti-Bocquillon points out, Signac's journal entry of August 7, 1894, linked the rooster with these political events in the entry: "Drew the rooster. Beginning of the Trial of the Thirty."[139] Further evidence of the rooster's currency as an anarchist symbol comes from an article published serially in 1893 by Élie Reclus, an anarchist and the brother of Élisée. "Mythologie populaire: Le coq" appeared in *La Société Nouvelle* throughout the fall of 1893, when Signac was working on *Harmony*.[140] Reclus describes the cock as a symbol of the revolution, since it will fight until it wins or dies, and consequently as a symbol for the "rights of man."[141] Describing a drawing of a cock beating its wings over the globe, Reclus concluded, "It represented, no doubt, the triumph, still far off, of universal Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. 'Here is,' I thought, 'the glorious decoration that the Arc de l'Étoile will receive when the French Revolution has succeeded.' "[142] For Reclus the crowing rooster signals the dawn of the anarchist future; Signac's rooster, who rests peacefully, is a symbol of the anarchist battle won.

The hen and rooster can also be seen as a visual and symbolic reference to the strutting couple with the monkey in *La Grande Jatte*.[143] The rooster's plumage echoes the monkey's tail in Seurat's painting; in turn, the monkey's tail echoes the Parisian woman's bustle. At least one critic of the day referred to Seurat's woman as a *cocotte,* or prostitute, and Signac has paralleled her with the rooster and a real *cocotte,* or hen.[144] Élie Reclus noted the similarity between a rooster's flamboyant plumage and contemporary fashion, stating that in France, "our stylish people copy the physique and morals of the sultan of the henhouse, imitate his gestures, manners and attitudes, his posture and his costume."[145] The utopian theorist Charles Fourier saw the rooster and hen as a sign of good marital relations between the sexes, which heightens *Harmony*'s contrast with *La Grande Jatte*.[146] Signac's poultry thus contrast with Seurat's elegant couple in numerous ways: they invoke the juxtaposition of natural and artificial, make a verbal pun on *cocotte,* and simultaneously show Fourier's ideal of harmonious relations between the sexes.

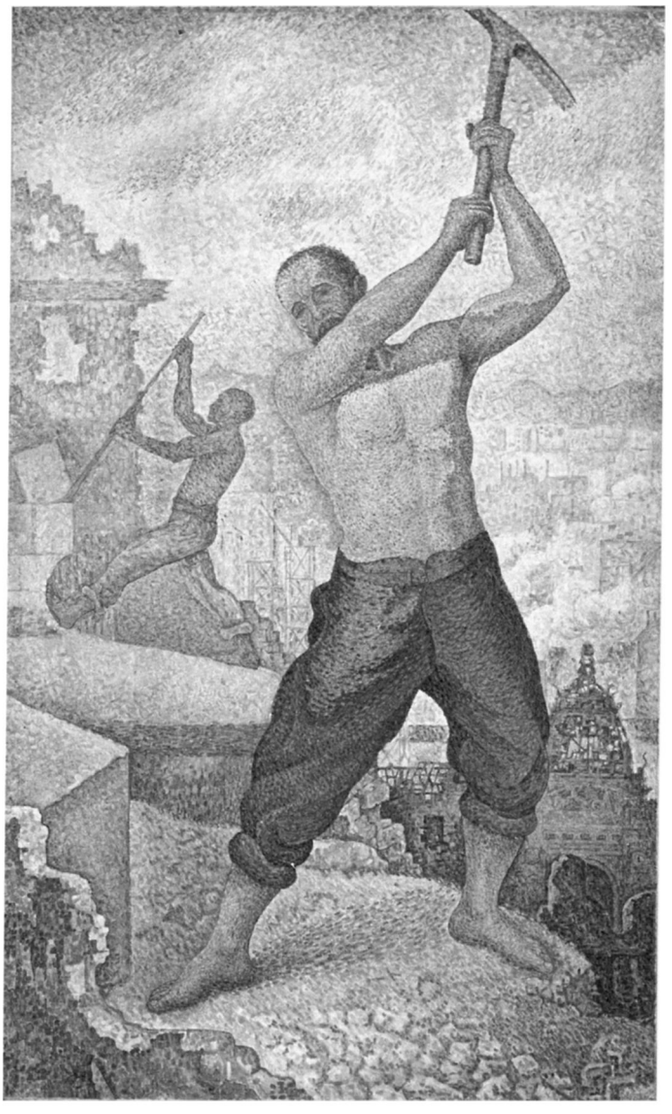
The most significant juxtaposition, however, is that of place. Where Seurat's work is set in a park—a representation of nature emblematic of modern, urban life—Signac's is set in the open countryside. Furthermore, Signac has transposed the setting from the northern suburbs so irrevocably linked to Neo-Impressionism by *La Grande Jatte* to an archetypal southern village. It is precisely the kind of village applauded by Kropotkin for sustaining the anarchist ideal of mutual aid and by Élisée Reclus for maintaining a tradition of public culture in which villagers are not disenfranchised from decision making.[147] Signac believed that the artist's ability to create harmony was stronger in a peaceful setting.[148] Indeed, he encouraged his friend van Rysselberghe to leave Paris, stating, "I believe that the environment where an artist lives has a big influence on him."[149] Additionally, in another letter thanking Grave for his latest book, Signac linked the anarchist future to the contemporary Provençal setting:

> I will read it in the shadow of a pine tree, by the sea, and in the beauty of this setting, I naturally recall the life of goodness and harmony that you allow us to hope for. One breathes freely in your book, as under this tree, in the breeze off the open sea.[150]

For Signac, then, the environment of St-Tropez enabled him to envision a better life. It is here, in a decentralized, independent, and southern society, that Signac located the anarchist future. It is not, in Signac's image and anarchist ideology, part of the modern metropolis, but neither is it cut off from the modern world. It arises from the natural geography and cultural traditions of Mediterranean France. Moreover, Signac chose to represent this radical vision of the future by a reconfigured pastoral tradition.

Later Pastorals

The Wrecker (Panel for a House of the People) (Fig. 7), originally made as a print to illustrate Grave's anarchist journal *Les Temps Nouveaux,* is Signac's only other oil painting to employ the didactic symbolism found in *Harmony* and *Young Provençal Women at the Well*.[151] Showing laborers destroying the state to make way for the dawning of the new anarchist society, it was envisioned as part of the series that would feature work, in counterpart to the idyllic life depicted in *Harmony*.[152] In sharp contrast to the rural, southern location of *Harmony,* the region being demolished is urban and industrial. These three paintings, however, are exceptions in Signac's larger oeuvre and represent his specific response to the culture of the mid-1890s. In 1891, Signac had passionately supported aesthetic freedom.[153] The visual evidence of the mid-1890s shows that during a period of severe government censorship of anything thought to promote anarchist ideals, Signac believed in the value of didactic subject matter when combined with Neo-Impressionism's radical technique. In the later



7 Signac, *The Wrecker (Panel for a House of the People),* 1897–99. Nancy, Musée des Beaux-Arts, on deposit by the French state (© Estate of Paul Signac / ADAGP [Paris] / SODRAC [Montreal] 2003; photo: Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY)

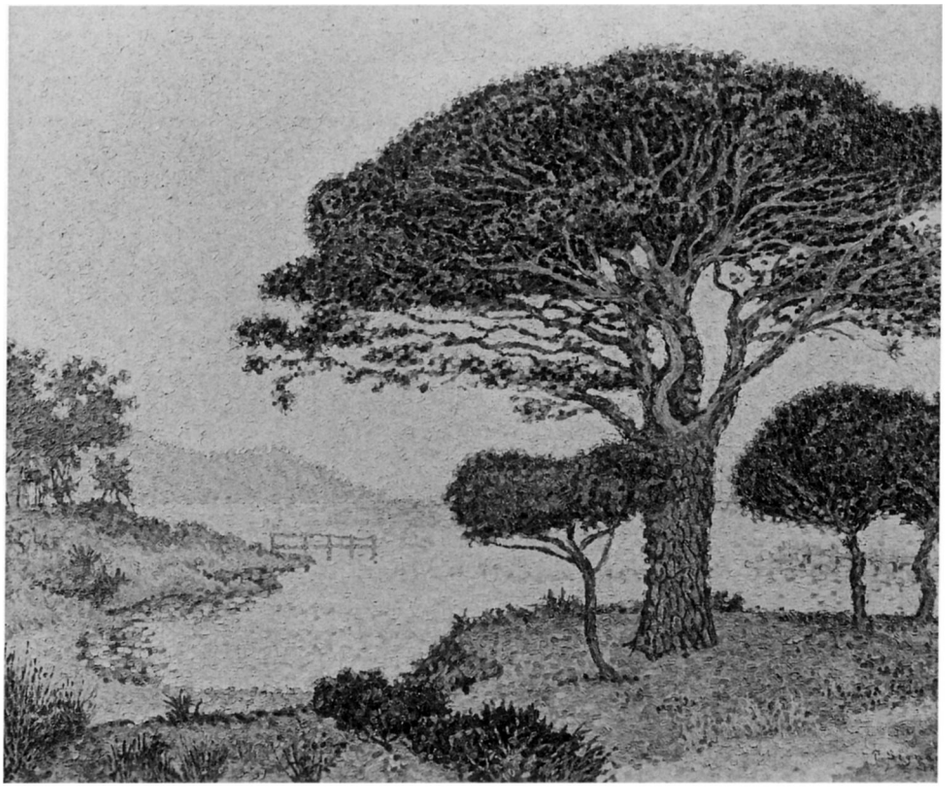
1890s, however, Signac returned to his earlier faith that the visual harmony created by the Neo-Impressionist technique would signify his ideals, and he abandoned the overt symbolism of these works.[154] After the turn of the century, Signac suggested that the technique was suited exclusively to such positive representations. In a letter from about 1908 to van Rysselberghe, Signac wrote:

> We must leave aside everything that could be better represented by other means. . . . and search for that which is wholly suited to our technique. . . . Why use our beautiful colors for the sadness of a night effect, of muddy ground, of a black crowd following a funeral etc when with conté crayon, with beautiful black ivory and Cassel earth one can more or less render the same effect.[155]

Neo-Impressionists, he emphasized, are not seeking realism. We do not want to imitate, he insists, but instead have "the will to create the beautiful. . . . We are false, false like Corot, like Carrière, false, false! But we also have our ideal—to which it is necessary to sacrifice everything."[156] Thus, while Signac abandoned the overt symbolism seen in *Harmony,* he continued to value the underlying principle of these works: an idealized, harmonious landscape that both envisions and embodies the political and social ideals of the anarchist movement.[157]

In *Saint-Tropez: The Umbrella Pines at Les Canoubiers* (Fig. 8), the primary focus is a decorative, rhythmic treatment of the landscape. A beautiful umbrella pine is silhouetted against a yellow sky, and the bay indicates human presence with several jetties. At the extreme right edge of the picture, just at the edge of the land, two human figures are silhouetted in the light under the sheltering branches of a smaller tree. These figures, hinted at in only the barest of detail, render the landscape neither terrifying nor sublime, but rather human and inhabitable, making its harmony seem available and possible. This composition relies on the conventions of the later pastoral that Rosand delineated, especially the convention of the sheltering grove, which he calls "one of the standard articulating units . . . [and] a clear sign of the 'idyllic.' "[158] After 1895, Signac concentrated increasingly on idyllic, imagined landscapes, but to reject them as compromised by Mediterranean affiliations and the pastoral tradition would be to misunderstand the context in which Neo-Impressionist works made their meaning.

In the mid-1890s, when Signac created his most evidently classical landscapes, response to the artist and artistic movement waned. Martha Ward has argued that there was a range of political links among those critics favorable to the movement in the 1890s, and she sees this as evidence that artistic and political allegiance did not correlate in this period when formerly radical tendencies looked increasingly conservative.[159] Hutton and Werth both similarly argue the failure of this Neo-Impressionist tradition to effectively signify its radical politics.[160] Yet despite being praised by certain conservative critics of the day, Signac's pastorals were differentiated in significant ways from both academic and Symbolist renditions of the same subject.[161] First, the radical divisionist technique clearly marked these works, tying them to precedents like *La Grande Jatte* and *Harmony,* which signal a clearly different lineage. Moreover, Neo-Impressionism remained the group most closely connected with the Société des Artistes Indépendants in the twentieth century, and this society continued to be associated with radicalism. After the turn of the century, many reviews of the Salon des Indépendants noted the society's democratic judging principle, "neither jury, nor award." Regardless of whether they praised or criticized it, most recognized implicitly that it was linked to left-wing ideals. For example, Émile Sedeyn began his review of the 1901 exhibition stating, "The idea of independence enhances human dignity," before gently criticizing the society for being too undiscriminating.[162] Many critics also drew attention to Signac's important role in fostering the ideals of the Société des Artistes Indépendants; for example, in the left-wing newspaper *L'Aurore,* Robert Kemp specifically names Signac and other Neo-Impressionists as those who carry on the battle of this brave society.[163] Thus, I suggest that Neo-



8 Signac, *Saint-Tropez: The Umbrella Pines at Les Canoubiers.* St-Tropez, Musée de l'Annonciade (© Estate of Paul Signac / ADAGP [Paris] / SODRAC [Montreal] 2003; photo: image © Giraudon / Art Resource, NY)

Impressionist works continued to be seen as socially and culturally radical.

After the turn of the century, Félix Fénéon, well known as an anarchist critic, discussed the idealism of Signac's later Neo-Impressionism in explicitly classicizing terms. In his catalogue essay for the Galerie Druet's 1904 exhibition of Signac works, Fénéon compared Signac to Claude and Poussin, the undisputed masters of French classicism.[164] His comparison concluded by invoking Goethe's assessment of Claude: "Claude Lorrain knew by heart every detail of the real world, and he used it as a means to express the world contained by his beautiful spirit. That is the real idealism."[165] Fénéon thus situates Signac as the inheritor of a landscape tradition that envisioned the realm of harmony.

Signac himself related the classical aspects of Neo-Impressionism to the landscape of Provence in his preface to the 1913 exhibition catalogue of the Neo-Impressionist painter Charles-Henri Person. Signac underscored the lessons the Mediterranean landscape could offer the painter, writing, "the marvelous organization of classical beauty of the landscape of the Maures, all these pure lines filling the sky, taught him the rules of composition, balancing of masses, interlacing of rhythms."[166] Furthermore, Person's Neo-Impressionist images of the Midi put him in "the real classical tradition."[167] Signac's famous, if naive, dictum "Justice in sociology, harmony in art: same thing"[168] demonstrates how thoroughly imbued Neo-Impressionist principles were with political ideology in his mind. He saw and emphasized a connection between anarchism, the Neo-Impressionist technique, the Mediterranean location, and the classical tradition in painting.

Paul Signac reconfigured the Mediterranean pastoral, taking advantage of its ability to evoke an ideal—in this case, the anarchist myth of the south that envisioned it as a harmonious land with a tradition of communal life—and to heighten the contrast between the ideal and the real by juxtaposition. Signac's pastorals indicate that in the 1890s the Latin heritage so closely allied to the Midi could have associations other than with the political right, and Signac made these other correlations palpable in his art. Like most potent ideologies, the myth of French classicism could be used by left as well as right, to look forward as well as back.

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Notes

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1. On the 19th-century association of the south and the classical landscape as "all but an absolute," see Thomson, 78, 17, 22–27, 77–87; see also Roger Benjamin, "The Decorative Landscape, Fauvism, and the Arabesque of Observation," *Art Bulletin* 75 (1993): 301–3.

2. Cachin, 2000b, 200. Salon artists Carolus-Duran and Henri Harpignies both bought coastal property in the mid-1880s; Maupassant, 12; and Thomson, 65.

3. Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846," in *Art in Paris, 1845–1862, Salons and Other Exhibitions,* trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon, 1965), 47; I thank Vojtech Jirat-Wasiutynski for this reference. On Impressionism as associated with the north and expressing the centralizing ideology of the Île-de-France, see Richard Brettell, "The Impressionist Landscape and the Image of France," in *A Day in the Country: Impressionism and the French Landscape,* exh. cat., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, 1984, 28; see also Thomson, 27–37.

4. Recently, literature on the attractions of the Mediterranean has burgeoned; for Provençal artists, see *Peintres de la couleur en Provence, 1875–1920,* exh. cat., Hôtel de la Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, Marseilles, 1995; and Thomson, 67–71, who notes that the presence of a regional artistic community (which generally emphasized the color of the region and represented it as both wild and pastoral) differentiates the south from the channel coast; on the changing dynamic between regional artists and the perceived center, see Vojtech Jirat-Wasiutynski, *Modernity and Region in France: Representing Provence in the Visual Arts 1830–80* (forthcoming). For other artists before 1900, see Kenneth E. Silver, *Making Paradise: Art, Modernity, and the Myth of the French Riviera,* exh. cat., AXA Gallery, New York, 2001; Cachin, 2000b; Richard Thomson, ed., *Framing France: The Representation of Landscape in France, 1870–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Kenneth Wayne et al., *Impressions of the Riviera: Monet, Renoir, Matisse and Their Contemporaries,* exh. cat., Portland Museum of Art, Portland, Me., 1998; *La Côte d'Azur et la Modernité: 1918–1958,* exh. cat., Musée Picasso, Antibes, 1997; and Thomson, 77–87.

5. On Monet, see Joachim Pissarro, *Monet and the Mediterranean,* exh. cat., Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, 1997; on the different position of Cézanne, see Nina Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, *Cézanne and Provence: The Painter in His Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

6. Cross's family wintered at the home of his uncle Dr. Soins, in Monaco; Cachin, 2000b; *Paysages méditerranéens d'Henri-Edmond Cross,* exh. cat., Musée de l'Annonciade, St-Tropez, 1990; and Françoise Baligand et al., *Henri-Edmond Cross, 1856–1910,* exh. cat., Musée de la Chartreuse de Douai, Douai, 1999.

7. See Vojtech Jirat-Wasiutynski, "Van Gogh in the South: Antimodernism and Exoticism in the Arlesian Paintings," in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity,* ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 177–91; Griselda Pollock, "On Not Seeing Provence: Van Gogh and the Landscape of Consolation, 1888–9," in Thomson, 1998 (as in n. 4), 81–118. The changing relation between the coast and inland Provence is too complicated for me to discuss here, except to say that in the 20th century they were increasingly perceived as separate.

8. For current bibliography on Signac, see Cachin, 2000a; and Ferretti-Bocquillon et al.; on his St-Tropez period, see Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992; and Françoise Cachin, "L'arrivée de Signac à Saint-Tropez," in Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992, 11–15. For a critique of the concept of being "off the beaten track," see James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature and the Ways to Culture, 1800–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). The term "Côte d'Azur" was coined with the publication of Stéphen Liégeard's *La Côte d'Azur* (Paris: Maison Quantin, 1887), although it did not come into widespread use until the 20th century.

9. On the cultural politics of the 1890s and the resurgence of idyllic landscapes in the work of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Signac, and Henri Matisse, see Werth. I thank Professor Werth for making her dissertation available to me; unfortunately, her book *The Joy of Life: The Idyllic in French Art, circa 1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) only became available as this article was going to press, so it could not be integrated. See also Jennifer L. Shaw, *Dream States: Puvis de Chavannes, Modernism, and the Fantasy of France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). On the reputation of Poussin and interpretations of "French tradition" in the period, see Richard Kendall, ed., *Cézanne and Poussin: A Symposium* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); on an alternative use of classicism in the 1890s, see Gloria Groom, *Beyond the Easel: Decorative Paintings by Bonnard, Vuillard, Denis, and Roussel, 1890–1930,* exh. cat., Art Institute of Chicago, 2001; Timothy Hyman, "The Golden Age Returns," *Royal Academy Magazine* 58 (spring 1998): 52–54, who discusses the influence of Signac's anarchist vision of the golden age on Bonnard; and Thomson, 24, 78, who persuasively argues that classicism was never fully extinguished and was so widespread a construction that it belonged to no one affiliation.

10. See James D. Herbert, *Fauve Painting: The Making of Cultural Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 124–29.

11. On the relationship between Neo-Impressionism and anarchism, see Herbert and Herbert; and Hutton. On the relation of this to Neo-Impressionist landscape, see Roslak, 96–114; and idem, "The Politics of Aesthetic Harmony: Neo-Impressionism, Science, and Anarchism," *Art Bulletin* 73 (1991): 381–90; on the politics of the department of the Var, especially as related to changing concepts of the decorative, see Flagg, 160–236.

12. On the parallel debate in left-wing circles over the politics of utopian imagery—condemned as compensatory and thus diverting revolutionary potential, or praised as anticipatory and thus furthering the cause—see the excellent overview in Werth, 132–33, 199–200, 206–7; see also E. P. Thompson, "Postscript: 1976," in *William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 790–92 and passim; and for a general overview of utopianism, see Roland Schaer, Gregory Claeys, and Lyman Tower Sargent, eds., *Utopia: The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World,* exh. cat., New York Public Library, 2000.

13. Leo Marx, "Does Pastoralism Have a Future?" in *The Pastoral Landscape,* ed. John Dixon Hunt, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1992, 213. Marx draws on reconsiderations of pastoralism in literary studies that see the pastoral as a mode (defined by its way of looking at the world) rather than a genre (defined by adherence to specified formal qualities); see Annabel Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology: Virgil to Valéry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 8; Paul Alpers, "What Is Pastoral?" *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 3 (1982): 437–60; Renato Poggioli, *The Oaten Flute: Essays on Pastoral Poetry and the Pastoral Ideal* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975); and William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral: A Study of the Pastoral Form in Literature* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1950).

14. Marx (as in n. 13), 212–13.

15. David Rosand, 1992, "Pastoral Topoi: On the Construction of Meaning in Landscape," in Hunt (as in n. 13), 9; idem, "Giorgione, Venice and the Pastoral Vision," in *Places of Delight: The Pastoral Landscape,* ed. Robert Cafritz, Lawrence Gowing, and David Rosand, exh. cat., Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., 1988, 50; and Thomson, 77–87. The view of pastoral as a play of contrasts is maintained in Thomas Crow's assessment of its relevance in contemporary art, "The Simple Life: Pastoralism and the Persistence of the Genre in Recent Art," *October* 63 (winter 1993): 47–48.

16. Hutton, 144, argues that the historical tradition of the pastoral compromised any criticism radical artists may have intended in their use of the mode; and Werth, xix, 205–7, taking a psychoanalytic approach, examines the cultural politics of pastorals in the 1890s and 1900s, concluding that such idealized imagery of the body and national origins is

impossible to maintain. See also Taube G. Greenspan, " 'Les Nostalgiques' Reexamined: The Idyllic Landscape in France, 1890–1905," Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1981; Roslak; and idem, 1991 (as in n. 11); and Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992, 54, on St-Tropez works as juxtaposing rural and urban.

17. The assumption is explicit in Hutton's chapter title "Utopianism and the Retreat from the *Grande Jatte*," but less directly confronted in Scott Schaefer, "The Retreat from Paris," in *A Day in the Country: Impressionism and the French Landscape*, exh. cat., Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, 1984, 299–304; John Leighton calls it a "strategic withdrawal" in "Out of Seurat's Shadow: Signac, 1863–1935; An Introduction," in Ferretti-Bocquillon et al., 14.

18. Silver (as in n. 4), 17–22.

19. Prosper Mérimée, *Notes d'un voyage dans le Midi de la France* (Brussels: Hauman, 1835), 123. Again, I thank Vojtech Jirat-Wasiutynski for this reference.

20. Jules Michelet, *Tableau de la France*, 1831, quoted in Maurice Agulhon, "Conscience nationale et conscience régionale en France de 1815 à nos jours," in *Histoire vagabonde*, vol. 2, *Idéologies et politique dans la France du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 156.

21. Roger Chartier, "The Two Frances: The History of a Geographical Idea," in *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 172–200; see also idem, 1986, "La Ligne Saint-Malo-Genève," in Pierre Nora, ed., *Les lieux de mêmoire*, 7 bks. in 3 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–92), vol. 3, bk. 1, 740–52; Christian Amalvi, "France du Nord et France du Midi: Les bases d'une opposition historique," *Sources: Travaux Historiques* 12 (1987): 67–71; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, "Nord-Sud," in Nora, vol. 2, bk. 2, 117–40; Alain Corbin, "Paris-Province," in Nora, vol. 3, bk. 1, 776–823; the special issue devoted to the theme Paris-province of *Le Mouvement Social* 160 (July–Sept. 1992); and Thomson, 17.

22. Chartier, 1988 (as in n. 21), 182–85.

23. Eugen Weber, "Nos ancêtres les gaulois," in *My France: Politics, Culture, Myth* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1991), 35.

24. Cachin, 2000a, 75.

25. Paul Signac, "D'océan en Méditerranée par les canaux," *Le Yacht* 15, no. 759 (1892): 352. Evidence of Signac's continuing interest in Stendhal is found in 1894, noted below, and in 1914, when Signac published anonymously a pamphlet on the writer; Cachin, 2000a, 75.

26. Stendhal, *Memoirs of a Tourist*, trans. and ed. Allan Seager (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1962), 263.

27. Ibid., 274.

28. Ibid., 302.

29. Cachin, 2000a, 75.

30. Françoise Cachin, *Paul Signac*, trans. Michael Bullock (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1971), 56, notes Maupassant's description of the St-Tropez bay in her explanation of Signac's attraction to the south and notes further evidence of Signac's admiration in the painting *Nature morte: Livre, oranges* (1885, Nationalgalerie, Berlin, FC 83), which prominently includes Maupassant's book *Au soleil*.

31. Maupassant describes the Maures mountain range, which separates St-Tropez from inland Provence, as an almost foreign land, as a "little Saracen kingdom" with many "Moorish houses with their arcades, their narrow windows, and their interior courtyards" and inland as "incredibly wild" (119); St-Tropez, with its ruined towers, is a "little port isolated from communication with the rest of the world" (122). See also Jacques Dupont, preface to Maupassant, 8, who states that the account is a fictional composite of Maupassant's vacations in the region from 1881.

32. There was rampant financial speculation on Côte d'Azur land, and the financial group Société Foncière de Cannes et du Littoral had specifically created resort towns starting in the 1880s (Dupont [as in n. 31], 42 n. 2), although, as we have seen, artists did not travel there in significant numbers until the 1890s.

33. Maupassant, 120.

34. Ibid., 125.

35. Ibid., 123–24.

36. Ibid., 128.

37. Ibid., 129.

38. The importance of milieu in Reclus and Kropotkin's work is convincingly argued in Roslak, 100–104; she considers Reclus's view of the Midi in "Scientific Aesthetics and the Aestheticized Earth: The Parallel Vision of the Neo-Impressionist Landscape and Anarcho-Communist Social Theory," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1987. The connection between Reclus's science and his anarchism is convincingly argued by Fleming, 1979; see also Béatrice Giblin, introduction to Reclus, 1982, vol. 1, 5–99; Fleming, 1988; Gary S. Dunbar, *Élisée Reclus: Historian of Nature* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1978); Yves Lacoste, *Paysages Politiques: Braudel, Gracq, Reclus* (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1990), esp. 191–224, for a history of the reception of Reclus's work; and Chris GoGwilt, "The Geopolitical Image: Imperialism, Anarchism and the Hypothesis of Culture in the Formation of Geopolitics," *Modernism/Modernity* 5, no. 3 (1998): 49–70. On Kropotkin, see Caroline Cahm, *Kropotkin and the Rise of Revolutionary Anarchism, 1872–1886* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 8.

39. Cachin, 2000b, 108, cites a 1932 letter from Signac to Georges Besson, which states that Signac encouraged Cross to settle there based on Reclus's descriptions of the region. Given his general immersion in anarchist circles from around 1888 (as shown by Herbert and Herbert, 477), Signac would have known the work of Kropotkin, and around 1893, he refers directly to Kropotkin's work; ibid., 519.

40. Cahm (as in n. 38), 8.

41. Ibid.

42. Kropotkin, 215.

43. Ibid., 242.

44. For Reclus, cultural characteristics were determined by environment, history, and education, and so they were not immutable; see Fleming, 1979, 239–44, on Reclus's concept of race, and 153, on Reclus's assertion of the importance of education in determining national characteristics.

45. Ibid., 39 and passim.

46. Reclus, 1990, 169–70, recognized that Germany had made much material progress, but as for its "march toward a future of equality and justice . . . the same assessment cannot be made."

47. Élisée Reclus, *Nouvelle géographie universelle: La terre et les hommes*, vol. 2, *La France* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, n.d.), 50.

48. See Reclus, 1990, 169–70.

49. Fleming, 1988, 64, summarizes Reclus's ideal political structure as one that "would take the form of small groups or associations whose relationship to existing communes would depend on the people involved. While each association would be independent and self-administering, the people of one, acting out of a sense of brotherly love rather than competition, might well join the people of another to form a larger association, and these would vary in size"; on his decentralist ideas in general, see 63–65, 115.

50. Fleming, 1988, 64.

51. Reclus, 1982, vol. 2, 46.

52. Ibid.

53. Reclus to Georges Renard, June 2, 1888, quoted in Fleming, 1979, 153.

54. Reclus, 1990, 146.

55. Ibid., 146–47.

56. Ibid., 147.

57. This positive view of Latin culture is emphasized in the illustration for Élisée Reclus, *L'homme et la terre*, 6 vols. (Paris: Librairie Universelle, 1905–8), by František Kupka, also an anarchist, entitled *Latins et Germains*, which is reproduced in Dunbar (as in n. 38), 117, and discussed in Pierre Brullé et al., *Vers des temps nouveaux: Kupka, oeuvres graphiques, 1894–1912*, exh. cat., Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 2002; Virginia Spate, *Orphism: The Evolution of Non-Figurative Painting in Paris, 1910–1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 88–89, discusses Kupka's anarchism, and, 103–4, his illustrations for Reclus.

58. Reclus, *Les villes d'hiver de la Méditerranée et les Alpes Maritimes* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, Collection des Guides Joanne, 1864), iii.

59. Reclus, n.d. (as in n. 47), 4.

60. Reclus, 1990, 114.

61. See Cachin, 2000a, 43–49; Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992; Cachin, 1992 (as in n. 8); and Anne Distel, *Signac au temps d'harmonie* (Paris: Découvertes Gallimard and Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2001), 65–74.

62. Henri-Edmond Cross to Signac, Nov. 4, 1891, quoted in Cachin, 1992 (as in n. 8), 13.

63. Signac to Cross, Nov. 21, 1891, quoted in ibid., 14.

64. Cross regularly visited the Monaco home of his uncle Dr. Soins from 1883 until 1891, when he ventured to the less frequented Cabasson, the year before building his house in nearby St-Clair; see Baligand et al. (as in n. 6), 13–14, 25.

65. On the bourgeoisie's increasing desire for "natural nature" as a product of urban life, see esp. Nicholas Green, "*Natura naturans:* The Formation of an Urban Vision," in *The Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), pt. 2, 67–126; Robert Herbert, "City vs. Country: The Rural Image in French Painting from Millet to Gauguin," *Artforum* 8 (1970): 44–55; and Thomson, 17–18. On changing tourist patterns along the coast, see Anne Dymond, "Exhibiting Provence: Regionalism, Art, and the Nation, 1890–1914," Ph.D. diss., Queen's University, Kingston, 2000, 138–46; and for a general overview of French tourism, see Marc Boyer, *Le tourisme* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), 133–48.

66. Fred Orton and Griselda Pollock, "Les données Bretonnantes: La prairie de répresentation," *Art History* 3, no. 3 (1980): 331–32.

67. For a more detailed examination of art and anarchism in the 1890s, see Eugenia W. Herbert, *The Artist and Social Reform: France and Belgium, 1885–1898* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961); Herbert and Herbert, 477–80; Hutton, esp. 94–114; and Werth, 167–70. For essential background on anarchism, see Jean Maitron, *Le mouvement anarchiste en France*, vol. 1, *Des origines à 1914* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 206–61; Richard D. Sonn, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1989).

68. Hutton, 96, who also points out that Kropotkin further believed that once the revolution was achieved, art would become more purely aesthetic (see below).

69. Herbert and Herbert, 474–79; and Hutton, 59–63, 232–36.

70. Paul Signac, "Impressionnistes et révolutionnaires," *La Révolte* 40 (June 13, 1891): 4, trans. Hutton, 251.

71. Ibid.

72. Werth, 169, on various anarchist positions regarding art in the future.

73. Cross to Signac, n.d., trans. Ferretti-Bocquillon, 2001, 196.

74. Werth, 139; see also Hutton, 46–50.

75. On the significant changes in Neo-Impressionist style that would occur throughout the 1890s—enlarged brushstrokes, increased interest in the decorative, move away from realism to idealism—see Cachin, 2000a, 56–62; and Flagg, 14.

76. *The Dining Room, Opus 152,* oil on canvas, 35 by 45¼ in., Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, FC 136; *Sunday,* oil on canvas, 59 by 59 in., private collection, FC 197. FC followed by a number refers to catalogue entries in Cachin 2000a. Claire Frèches-Thory, "Paul Signac, acquisitions récentes," *Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 33, no. 1 (1983): 38. Although some of his landscapes include figures, such as *Le Passage du Puits Bertin, Clichy* (1886, oil on canvas, 25⅝ by 31⅞ in., location unknown, FC 118), they are not usually the focus of his outdoor compositions. See also idem, "La donation Ginette Signac," *Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France* 28, no. 2 (1978): 107–12. The lack of figures may be due both to Signac's lack of formal training and the difficulties of the Neo-Impressionist technique, since it becomes more pronounced after his adherence to the style.

77. Signac to Camille Pissarro, May 1892, quoted in Frèches-Thory, 1983 (as in n. 76), 38; Signac's new interest in the "Claudian idiom" is discussed by Richard Thomson, "Signac," exhibition review, *Burlington Magazine* 143, no. 1180 (2001): 444; and idem, 1994, 24–25, 77–80; I thank Richard Thomson for his comments on this issue.

78. For decorative art, see n. 9 above.

79. Marina Ferretti-Bocquillon, "Paul Signac au temps d'harmonie, 1892–1913," in *Signac et la libération de la couleur de Matisse à Mondrian,* exh. cat., Musée de Grenoble, 1997, 58, suggests that this work, consciously or not, recalls Seurat's *Le cirque.* On the work in general, see Frèches-Thory, 1983 (as in n. 76); Flagg, 208–15; Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992, 32–39; Werth, 146–54; Ward, 214–15; and Ferretti-Bocquillon, entry for cat. no. 63, in Ferretti-Bocquillon et al., 181–83. For analysis of the important use of the term *décoration* in the subtitle and its relation to anarchist thought, see Werth, 148–50.

80. Ferretti-Bocquillon, entry for cat. no. 63, in Ferretti-Bocquillon et al., 181.

81. For a consideration of other Neo-Impressionist images that idealize peasant life as evidence of Kropotkin's ideology of mutual aid, see Roslak, 101–3; see also Ward, 174. Signac specifically refers to the work of Kropotkin in a letter to Jean Grave dated about 1893, in Herbert and Herbert, 519. Kropotkin's *The Conquest of Bread* was published serially in *Le Révolté* and *La Révolte* and as a book in 1892.

82. Werth, 152, sees them as gossiping.

83. Kropotkin, 61–62.

84. Of the seven known preparatory works, only the two sketchiest renditions (FC 236 recto and verso), which depict two separate wells, do not show the women working together.

85. Ferretti-Bocquillon, entry for cat. no. 40, in Ferretti-Bocquillon et al., 149–50, sees *Sunday* as evidence of Signac's bleak, sterile view of bourgeois marriage; Thomson, 2001 (as in n. 77), 444, disagrees, since figures facing "different directions hardly adds up to a damning critique of marriage." However, Ferretti-Bocquillon, entry for cat. no. 24, in Ferretti-Bocquillon et al., 125–26, suggests the possibility of a more positive reading of *The Dining Room,* as the older man on the right is a portrait of Signac's supportive grandfather. Regardless, the contrast between the total interaction depicted in these works and that depicted in his two major canvases from St-Tropez is notable.

86. Roslak, 108, states that the town's communal fishing industry would have appealed to Signac, but says that Cross and Signac eliminated it from their work in favor of an aestheticization that corresponded to Reclus's "belief that humanity must assist in the creation of idealized geographical environments" (110); I suggest that this work conveys support for communal life in a more direct way.

87. Werth, 152, notes that Signac's women are decidedly modern.

88. Paul Gauguin, quoted in Cachin, 1971 (as in n. 30), 64.

89. I thank Perry Chapman for alerting me to the importance of body types. On the so-called traditional costume, see Dymond (as in n. 65); Pascale Picard-Cajan, ed., *Arlésienne: Le mythe?* exh. cat., Museon Arlaten, Arles, 2000, and therein, Dymond, "L'Arlésienne exposée à Paris et à Marseille," 199–210.

90. *The Night Café,* oil on canvas, 29 by 36 in., Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow. On van Gogh's interest in cataloguing portraits by "types," see Vojtech Jirat-Wasiutynski, "Vincent van Gogh's Roulin: Radical Republican and Socratic Type," in *Dear Print Fan: A Festschrift for Marjorie B. Cohn,* ed. Craigen Bowen et al. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Art Museums, 2001), 167–73; and Carol Zemel, *Van Gogh's Progress: Utopia, Modernity, and Late-Nineteenth-Century Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 102–4. On the depiction of peasants in general, see Robert Herbert, *Peasants and "Primitivism": French Prints from Millet to Gauguin,* exh. cat., Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, Mass., 1995, passim.

91. Vincent van Gogh, quoted in Orton and Pollock (as in n. 66), 332–33.

92. Ward, 215, makes a similar point. The classic text on constructs of time being used as a primitivizing tool is Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); on the artificiality of the construct of "peasant," see Susan Carol Rogers, "Good to Think: The 'Peasant' in Contemporary France," *Anthropological Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (1987): 56–63.

93. Kropotkin, 104, 103. For a differing interpretation of the relation between artists and anarchist theories of art, see Herbert and Herbert, 478.

94. Michael F. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of His Time* (Antwerp: Fonds Mercatur, 1991), 205; this suggests that Signac in 1892 felt more connected to the local population than when he had only vacationed along France's coasts.

95. *Cap Lombard, Cassis,* oil on canvas, 26 by 31⅞ in., Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, The Hague, FC 182. For *Le Passage du Puits Bertin, Clichy,* see n. 76 above.

96. For comprehensive bibliography, see Cachin, 2000a, 215–16; the most thorough accounts, with extensive use of unpublished sources, are Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992, 50–59; and idem, 2001, 195–200; Flagg, 215–27; Linda Nochlin, "Seurat's *Grande Jatte:* An Anti-Utopian Allegory," *Museum Studies* 14, no. 2 (1989): 140–41; Hutton, 135–48; Werth, 154–69; Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1997 (as in n. 79), 57–61; and Salé, 314–19.

97. Signac wanted to donate the work to a site with sufficient viewing space for the large work and that would also be appropriate ideologically; he negotiated to donate it to a *maison du peuple* (socialist workers' building) being designed by Victor Horta in Brussels. Acceptance of the gift was delayed, resulting in Signac caustically asking if it would be more easily accepted if he changed the name to "In the Time of the Socialist Deputies"; Ferretti-Bocquillon, 2001, 199. See also Philippe Thiébaut, "Art Nouveau et néo-impressionisme: Les ateliers de Signac," *Revue de l'Art* 92 (1991): 72–73.

98. Ferretti-Bocquillon, 2001, 195.

99. Ibid., 198. It is unknown when Signac first envisioned the series, which is mentioned in his unpublished diaries of 1896. It was to have included other panels depicting boat haulers, wreckers, and builders; apparently, only *The Wrecker* (Fig. 7) was completed.

100. For Neo-Impressionism and the changing concept of the decorative in the 1890s and this work, see ibid., 198; Flagg, 195, 208, and passim; Werth, 148–49; and Ward, 210–22.

101. Rosand, 1992 (as in n. 15), 169; the motif of the sheltering tree is repeated in the background.

102. Werth, 157, notes the importance of totality in this work; she categorizes it as utopian with pastoral components, 134, because of its emphasis on the future rather than the past.

103. Hutton, 135–37, is primarily concerned with the anarchism of the image; see also Werth, 159, 165–70.

104. Translated from Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992, 52, but retaining her ellipses.

105. Albert Boime, "Georges Seurat's 'Un dimanche à la Grande-Jatte' and the Scientific Approach to History Painting," in *Historienmalerei in Europa: Paradigmen in Form, Funktion und Ideologie,* ed. Ekkehard Mai and Anke Repp-Eckert (Mainz: Phillip von Zabern, 1990), 316; on the subtitle, taken from anarchist writer Charles Malato, see Salé, 314–15.

106. Kropotkin, 18.

107. The fruit-bearing fig tree could also be a symbol of plenty, since it can have two crops per year; I thank Hayden Maginnis for pointing out the variety of seasons indicated in the picture. See also Werth, 166.

108. For a different reading of this couple and the role of sexuality in this work, see Werth, 176–80, 189–92.

109. The full title is *Portrait of Félix Fénéon (Against the Enamel of a Background Rhythmic with Beats and Angles, Tones and Tints),* 1890–91, oil on canvas, 29 by 36⅜ in., Rockefeller Collection, New York, FC 211. Fénéon appears to be gazing beyond the flower; a similar pose is used in Signac's *Portrait of My Mother* (1892, oil on canvas, 25⅝ by 31⅞ in., private collection, Paris, FC 228); in Cross's *The Evening Air* (1893–94, oil on canvas, 45⅝ by 65 in., Musée d'Orsay, Paris), discussed in Werth, 170–71; and in one of the seated girls in Seurat's *La Grande Jatte.* Paul Smith, *Seurat and the Avant-Garde* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 138–39, suggests that Seurat's *Le cirque* (1890–91, oil on canvas, 73¼ by 59½ in., Musée d'Orsay, Paris) juxtaposes the artistic life, embodied by the performers, and the life of the spectators, thus indicating that art can liberate people from enslavement to the mere illusion of reality. Following this interpretation, Neo-Impressionism was engaged in a discourse on the value of aesthetic appreciation, which Signac continued within an anarchist context. The pose is also not unlike the pose in Seurat's *Jeune femme se poudrant* (1889–90, oil on canvas, 37⅝ by 31¼ in., Courtauld Institute Galleries, London), where the woman regards the powder puff she will use for her makeup; this would suggest a different set of contrasts.

110. Kropotkin, 94.

111. Signac, ca. 1902, trans. Herbert and Herbert, 479.

112. Signac to Théo van Rysselberghe, Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, Special Collections, Van Rysselberghe Archive, 870355: "Tous les matins gymnastique d'une ½ heure: croquis d'après Raphael, Puvis, Andre del Sarto [illegible word]—excellent entrainement."

113. See Werth, 190–91; and Ferretti-Bocquillon, 2001, 195–96. As Werth, 5–37 and passim, has shown, Puvis's classicism was applauded by all camps in the period; see also Shaw (as in n. 9), 2, 187–90; and Ward, 204–22. On other Neo-Impressionists' attitudes toward Puvis de Chavannes, see Hutton, 119–22.

114. Signac to Jean Grave, ca. 1893, trans. Herbert and Herbert, 519.

115. See Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992, 58–59.

116. Although *boules* is widely played, it was associated with Provence; see, for example, B. Durand, "Le joueur de boules," in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes: Encyclopédie morale du dix-neuvième siècle,* vol. 2 (Paris: L. Curmer, 1840), 294, who writes of the *boules* player in Paris, "of all the French provinces, Provence supplies the most of them to Paris." On the sower as an anarchist symbol, see Salé, 316; and Werth, 164.

117. Orton and Pollock (as in n. 66), 332.

118. See Hutton, 136–37, who notes that the first to compare the two paintings was Sally S. Medlyn, "The Development of Georges Seurat's Art with Special Reference to the Influence of Contemporary Anarchist Philosophy," M.A. thesis, University of Manchester, 1976; see also the extended comparison by Werth, 154–69; and Leighton (as in n. 17), 15–16.

119. The work was exhibited as *Apprêteuse et garnisseuse (modes), rue de Caire;* see Cachin, 2000a, 171.

120. This is reported by Seurat in his letter to Fénéon asserting his primacy over Signac in the invention of the technique; see Herbert et al., 383.

121. Ward, 66–67, analyzes the painting in relation to similar formal elements, especially primitivism, in Pissarro's paintings; Cachin, 1971 (as in n. 30), 26, notes that the geometry is stressed and concludes that "the pleasure or interest aroused by the picture ought to come simply from the lines, the contrast of values and colors. . . . This is a deliberately stylized and, as it were, dehumanized version of a 'genre scene' "; Herbert et al., 175, discusses its primitivizing features.

122. For a judicious assessment of the literature, see Herbert et al., 170–79, esp. 173, 425; see also n. 133 below.

123. See Judith G. Coffin, *The Politics of Women's Work: The Paris Garment Trades, 1750–1915* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Lorraine Coons, *Women Home Workers in the Parisian Garment Industry, 1860–1915* (New York: Garland, 1987); Marilyn J. Boxer, "Women in Industrial Homework: The Flowermakers of Paris in the Belle Epoque," *French Historical Studies* 12, no. 3 (1982): 401–23; and idem, "Protective Legislation and Home Industry: The Marginalization of Women Workers in Late Nineteenth–Early Twentieth-Century France," *Journal of Social History* 20 (fall 1986): 45–65.

124. See Nancy J. Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France: Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 52–67 and passim.

125. Coffin (as in n. 123), 4.

126. On high rent in this district, see Lenard Berlanstein, *The Working People of Paris, 1871–1914* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 32, 191.

127. Signac's *Sunday,* exhibited as *Un Dimanche: Paris, 1889* (FC 197), also seems to have continued this engagement with the subject of *La Grande Jatte.*

128. Paul Signac, "Extraits du journal inédit de Paul Signac," ed. John Rewald, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts,* 6th ser., 36 (July–Sept. 1949): 171.

129. Werth, 156.

130. For another comparison of their figures, see ibid., 161–73.

131. Nochlin (as in n. 96), 147.

132. Henry Fèvre, 1886, quoted in ibid., 140.

133. Herbert et al., 177. Nochlin (as in n. 96), 147–48, does point out the hope contained in the figure of the girl running. Like Nochlin, Richard Thomson, *Seurat* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1985), does not see the painting as a positive endorsement of contemporary society; however, both Boime (as in n. 105) and Stephen Eisenman, "Seeing Seurat Politically," *Museum Studies* 14, no. 2 (1989): 211–22, see it as positive and in accordance with certain anarchist principles, which I find implausible given the lack of interaction Nochlin and critics of the day pointed out. John House, "Meaning in Seurat's Figure Paintings," *Art History* 3, no. 3 (1980): 345–56, argues that it can be read, in contrast to other works by Seurat, as juxtaposing natural and artificial, an argument with many similarities to my own; Timothy J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 266, argued influentially that the picture is about the intermingling of classes; Herbert et al., 178, disagrees; Smith (as in n. 109), 56, argues that Seurat approved of the intermingling of social classes, and that the rendition is thus positive.

134. Hutton, 137.

135. In contrast, see Werth, 162–64, who argues that work can be divided into a left half, identified with intellectual and artistic pursuits, and a right half, associated with rural labor and peasants, primarily stemming from the male foreground figures; however, in my reading of the picture, a man instructing children in the background right fails to follow this division.

136. Ferretti-Bocquillon, 1992, 54, suggests this is "a wink" at Seurat's painting; Nochlin (as in n. 96), 140, notes that the "hen and rooster play out the theme of mutual aid and interaction spelled out by the work as a whole"; Salé, 316, states it is an anarchist symbol.

137. Henry van De Velde, "Les expositions d'art," *La Revue Blanche* 10 (1896): 284–87.

138. See Hutton, 46–52; and Maitron (as in n. 67), 206–61. Paul Reclus, nephew of Élisée, was also charged.

139. Ferretti-Bocquillon, 2001, 198.

140. See Élie Reclus, "Mythologie populaire: Le coq," pts. 1–3, *La Société Nouvelle* 106 (Oct. 1893): 470–82; 107 (Nov. 1893): 587–602; 108 (Dec. 1893): 700–715, esp. 715. On roosters as anarchist symbols more generally, see Ronald Creagh, "Socialism in America: The French Speaking Coal-Miners in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *In the Shadow of the Statue of Liberty: Immigrants, Workers and Citizens in the American Republic, 1880–1920,* ed. Marianne Debouzy (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 150; the May 1911 cover of *Mother Earth,* edited by Emma Goldman, shows a cock crowing (I thank Mark Antliff and Allan Antliff for these references); and E. Herbert (as in n. 67), 155, notes that *Le Coq Rouge* was the name of the Belgian edition of the anarchist journal *Les Temps Nouveaux* in 1895.

141. Élie Reclus (as in n. 140), 472. On the rooster as unifying symbol of the French nation, see Michel Pastoureau, "Le coq gaulois," in Nora (as in n. 21), vol. 3, bk. 3, 528–29, but he makes no reference to anarchism.

142. Élie Reclus (as in n. 140), 715.

143. Thomson, 1985 (as in n. 133), 123, argues that the term *singesse* (female monkey) was slang for prostitute and thus supports his assertion that the woman represents a prostitute; Herbert et al., 176, rejects this identification, arguing that the monkey's tail only mocks "the pretentiousness of this elegant couple."

144. Anonymous critic, likely George Moore, in the *Bat* (May 25, 1886), 186, quoted in Thomson, 1985 (as in n. 133), 123.

145. Élie Reclus (as in n. 140), 600.

146. Charles Fourier, *Oeuvres complètes de Ch. Fourier,* vol. 6, *Le nouveau monde industriel et sociétaire* (Paris: Librairie Sociétaire, 1845; reprint, Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1966), 464: "The rooster reveals the opposite character, the courteous man who, without mastering women, knows how to maintain his rank among them: he is the man of good spirits."

147. Kropotkin, 61–62; Reclus, 1982, vol. 2, 46, and as discussed above.

148. On the importance of harmony in anarchist and Neo-Impressionist thought, see Roslak, 1991 (as in n. 11). This belief is also present in the theories of Charles Henry; in "Rapporteur esthétique et sensation de forme," pt. 1, *Revue Indépendante* 7, no. 18 (1888): 90, which Signac recommended to van Gogh, Henry stated that better art is produced in more harmonious societies, where artists are better able to sense the universal harmony, and he concluded, "It is not the schools, but the outstanding social states as one saw in Greece or in the Renaissance that produce the great periods of art."

149. Signac to Théo van Rysselberghe, Wednesday, Nov. 18, [no year], Van Rysselberghe Archive (as in n. 112), 870355 (5). Signac criticizes Maurice Denis's influence over van Rysselberghe and urges him to move, stating: "Je crois le milieu où vit un artiste a sur lui une grande influence."

150. Signac to Jean Grave, n.d., trans. Herbert and Herbert, 521.

151. See John Leighton, entry for cat. no. 88B, in Ferretti-Bocquillon et al., 206–7; and esp. Hutton, 59–66.

152. As outlined in Signac's diary, in Ferretti-Bocquillon, 2001, 200 n. 16. Thomson, 2001 (as in n. 77), 445, suggests that it is a "quasi-clandestine self-portrait," paralleling Signac's self-representation in *Harmony* and indicating his continuing anarchist commitment. A variant was made as a print, which includes the rising sun, a well-known anarchist symbol for the coming of the new order; Hutton, 59.

153. Signac (as in n. 70).

154. As convincingly argued in Roslak, 1991 (as in n. 11), 388–89; and idem, 1990, 99–110.

155. Signac to Théo van Rysselberghe, Van Rysselberghe Archive (as in n. 112), 870355 (8): "Nous devons laisser de coté tout ce qui pourrait etre aussi bien representé d'une autre façon. . . . et rechercher ce qui s'adapte entierement a notre technique. . . . Pourquoi employer nos belles couleurs à la tristesse d'un effet de nuit, d'un sol boueux, d'une foule noire suivant un enterrement etc quand avec crayon conté, du beau noir d'ivoire et de la terre de Cassel ± on pourrait rendre le même effet."

156. Ibid.: "mais la volonté de créer du beau. . . . Nous sommes faux, faux comme Corot, comme Carrière, faux, faux! Mais nous avons aussi notre ideal—auquel il faut tout sacrificier."

157. Flagg, 206, sees such later works as politically neutral.

158. Rosand, 1992 (as in n. 15), 169 n. 17; on the grove as theme, see Rosand, 1988 (as in n. 15), 51, and on the shift from intimate to more panoramic views of landscape, 70.

159. Ward, 201–40, esp. 203–4. For criticism directly related to *Harmony,* see Werth, 174–78.

160. Hutton, 143–44; and Werth, 207.

161. Symbolism was not as clearly associated with a single political viewpoint as was Neo-Impressionism. Denis's increasingly right-wing views are well known, but for the politically radical aspects of the Nabis decorative program, see Nicholas Watkins, "The Genesis of a Decorative Aesthetic," in Groom (as in n. 9), 7–9; and Hyman (as in n. 9), 52–53, who suggests political differences within the Nabis signified by Denis's classification of Bonnard's art as Semitic rather than Latin.

162. Émile Sedeyn, "Les artistes indépendants," *La Critique* 149 (May 5, 1901): 69.

163. Signac was elected president of the society in 1908; Robert Kemp, "Au

Jour le jour: Les Indépendants," pt. 1, *L'Aurore,* Feb. 28, 1914, 1: "What ingrates, alas, among the artists who won, at the Indépendants, their first successes and who owe to this brave old Society the best of their renown! Count those who abstained this year. . . . It's not nice on their part. They should have . . . stayed with those who still lead the battle, with the veterans, like Signac, Luce, Laprade. . . . Let us speak now of these valiants."

164. Félix Fénéon, "Exposition Paul Signac," 1904, in *Oeuvres plus que complètes,* ed. Joan U. Halperin, 2 vols. (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1970), vol. 1, 246. On Poussin especially as representing intellectual landscapes, see John House, "Cézanne and Poussin: Myth and History," in Kendall (as in n. 9), esp. 134–40. Signac was increasingly interested in these classical masters, even consulting Claude's *Liber veritatis* in the Bibliothèque Nationale; Cachin, 2000a, 60.

165. Goethe, quoted in Fénéon (as in n. 164), 246.

166. Signac, "Préface," in *Exposition Charles-Henri Person,* exh. cat., Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, 1913, quoted in *Signac,* exh. cat., Musée du Louvre, Paris, 1964, 54–55: "la merveilleuse ordonnance de beauté classique du paysage des Maures, toutes ces pures lignes remplissant le ciel, lui enseignèrent les règles de la composition, balancement des masses, entrelacs des rythmes."

167. Ibid., 55.

168. Signac, ca. 1902, trans. Herbert and Herbert, 479.