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L'Art pour l'Art or L'Art pour Tous?

The Tension Between Artistic Autonomy and Social Engagement in *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 1896–1903

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Abstract

Between 1896 and 1903, Jean Grave, editor of the anarchist journal *Les Temps Nouveaux*, published an artistic album of original prints, with the collaboration of (avant-garde) artists and illustrators. While anarchist theorists, including Grave, summoned artists to create social art, which had to be didactic and accessible to the working classes, artists wished to emphasize their autonomous position instead. Even though Grave requested 'absolutely artistic' prints in the case of this album, artists had difficulties with creating something for him, trying to combine their social engagement with their artistic autonomy. The artistic album appears to have become a compromise of the debate between the anarchist theorists and artists with anarchist sympathies.

Keywords: anarchism, France, Neo-Impressionism, nineteenth century, original print

Introduction

While the Neo-Impressionist painter Paul Signac (1863–1935) was preparing for a lecture in 1902, he wrote, 'Justice in sociology, harmony in art: same thing'.[1] Although Signac never officially published the lecture, his words have frequently been cited by scholars since the 1960s, who claim that they illustrate the widespread modern idea that any revolutionary avant-garde artist automatically was revolutionary in

politics as well. More specifically, they described the revolutionary in art in terms of progress in style towards pure autonomy, concentrating on the artist who was finding and transgressing new stylistic boundaries (thereby leading to a stream of '–isms' in art history). As a result, any possible social or political intentions of the artist were stripped from the artwork itself. Well into the twentieth century, this art was thus interpreted in terms of art for art's sake, rather than in its specific historical, social and political circumstances.[2]

With his quote, Signac meant that an artist did not need to demonstrate his political beliefs in his art, because his ambition to create the best art possible, regardless of rules and regulations of the establishment, already betrayed his social commitment. While he was stressing his own artistic autonomy, he did not necessarily intend to depoliticize art. Although a fervent (social) anarchist, Signac simply did not wish to create propaganda, but art for art's sake. He continued in his notes to define the 'anarchist painter'. This was not someone who 'will exhibit anarchist paintings', but is an artist who, irrespective of money and reward, 'will struggle with all his individuality against bourgeois and official conventions in his personal contribution. The subject is nothing or at least only one of the parts of the work of art'.[3]

At the time of his lecture, Signac painted harmonious and colourful harbour scenes in a pointillist style; indeed, nothing that would betray his fervent anarchist sympathies. 'Maybe he felt a little guilty', the historian Richard Sonn rather cleverly remarked, which could explain the need to defend his art.[4] The fact is that in this case Signac did not necessarily need to defend himself against bourgeois establishment, critics or fellow artists, but against his anarchist allies: he prepared his lecture for a working-class audience and their anarchist leaders.[5] He reacted to the leading theorists of (social) anarchism, who were specifically calling on the involvement of artists in their revolution, as they assigned an important role to artists, considering them victims of capitalism and the bourgeoisie, just like the working classes. Using visual images, artists were able to reach a large audience of workers.[6] Anarchist theorists therefore clamoured for a 'social art', which aimed to be didactic and accessible; in other words, all about subject. Signac was not alone in his defence; many (avant-garde) artists and writers had pronounced at some point, either publicly or privately, their unease with social art.

This debate between anarchist theorists and avant-garde (anarchist) artists has often been cited in scholarly literature since the 1960s, when a social history of art became popular. When discussing the illustrations avant-garde artists made especially for the anarchist cause, scholars were quick to recognize anarchist subject matter, despite the artists' claim for *l'art pour l'art*.[7] Often these illustrations were simply dismissed as a minor part of the artists' oeuvre. Their 'high' art (i.e. paintings) continued to be valued as autonomous, modern, and socially uncharged, although attempts increasingly have been made to read these paintings politically as well.[8]

One album of original prints that is often overlooked or understudied in the literature, but will be central in this article, is the artistic album published by Jean Grave, editor of the anarchist journal *Les Temps Nouveaux*, between 1896 and 1903.[9] These original prints bordered on the dichotomy between artistic autonomy and political engagement, serving both as art and part of the social anarchist mission, therefore not simply to be dismissed as minor work. In an album of artistic prints, one would expect that style dominates and subject is inferior (Signac's wish as expressed above), yet, as it turns out, subject was hard to escape while creating something for the anarchist cause. Several (avant-garde) artists, including Signac, collaborated with Grave and had difficulties in combining their anarchist sympathies with their autonomous position in art, even when asked in this case to create something artistic, not necessarily propaganda.

This example brings up the question of where to locate the political aspects in modern artworks. Canonical accounts of art history tend to depoliticize artworks. Nevertheless, artists often did regard themselves as politically engaged. But how this political engagement should be expressed was debated widely in artistic circles. To understand this tension between artistic autonomy and political engagement, this article will analyze the realization of the album of original prints, from its first idea to its final outcome and in the context of both anarchists and artists. First, the intentions of Jean Grave will be explained from his point of view as a social anarchist who wished to use art as a didactic tool for his working-class audience. To compare his idea for the album with 'anarchist' art in general, a short overview will be given of what kind of visual imagery anarchists published at the end of the nineteenth century. Then the intentions of the artists will be explained from their

side of the debate between art for art's sake and art for everyone's sake. The final result of the album will be analyzed in the last paragraph; what will be shown is how this artistic album seemed to have become a compromise between (social) anarchist and artistic intentions.

A Gentle Face of Anarchism: Jean Grave and the Role of Art in the Anarchist Revolution

To understand both Grave's intentions and those of the participating artists, one first needs to understand anarchism in the chaotic last decades of the nineteenth century, largely because the 'anarchist artist' alluded to above was far from a coherent definition. In general, there were two forms of anarchism: a leftist camp with a social character, and a rightist one with an elitist focus on complete individual freedom.[10] Yet the anarchists did not necessarily restrict themselves to one direction.[11]

Jean Grave can be situated in the left-wing camp as an anarcho-communist, following famous anarchists such as Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865), Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921) and Elisée Reclus (1830–1905). Anarcho-communists sympathized with (or came from) the working class and combined communist-inspired ideas on (collective) economy with individual freedom. Contrary to communism or socialism, these leftist anarchists rejected any political party, programme or hierarchy. Therefore the 'well-known anarchist, rejecting the "political" path of electoral socialists, was either a newspaper editor, theoretician, or terrorist; seldom, if ever, all three'.[12] Grave was an editor. He transferred the journal *Le Révolté*, founded by Kropotkin in Geneva, to Paris in 1885 and renamed it *La Révolte* in 1887.

After freedom of the press was reintroduced by the Third Republic in 1881, and together with the rapid development of printmaking techniques, *La Révolte* was one of many journals founded to disseminate anarchist ideas.[13] Other examples were *Le Père Peinard* by Emile Pouget (1860–1931), *L'Endehors* by Zo d'Axa (1864–1930), *La Revue Blanche* by the three Natanson brothers and *La Plume* by Léon Deschamps (1864–1899), in addition to journals with a more socialist approach, like *Le Chambard Socialiste* and *La Question Sociale*. In 1894, the freedom of the press was restricted again when the state, after a succession of violent incidents, tightened its policy on anarchism, known as the

villainous laws (*lois scélérates*). Everyone associated with anarchism risked severe imprisonment or execution, leading to the famous *Procès des Trente*, the trial of thirty arrested anarchists and alleged conspirators in 1894. When it turned out that most of them were acquitted, the anarchist press quickly resumed its work.[14] This was when Grave founded *Les Temps Nouveaux*.

These journals were important platforms to distribute anarchist opinions in France. They published excerpts from famous anarchists from a previous generation (e.g. Proudhon, Kropotkin and Reclus) and gave room for a new generation of critics and writers, such as Félix Fénéon (1861–1944), Lucien Descaves (1861–1949) and Adolphe Retté (1863–1930). Most of these editors, critics and writers, as well as the artists who will be discussed below belonged to the same generation and came from a middle- or upper-class background.

A recurring theme in these journals was the role they envisioned for the artist in the revolution.[15] Grave was an active participant in this quest for social art. From a simple background, with a career as shoemaker and printer 'whose distinctively long black apron he still wears' according to journalist Félix Dubois (1862–1945), Grave not only worked his way up to become a highly respected editor, but also an eloquent writer.[16] He had a keen interest in art. He was one of the first anarchist editors to include reviews on art and literature in his journal. Despite Grave's many statements on art and the role of artists, his attitude seemed somewhat ambiguous. In his 1895 *La Société Future*, he saw art 'as an arm of combat, placed in the service of an idea'. This was in line with many of his predecessors, but he also allowed the artist 'to execute the [art]work as he will have conceived it'.[17] At the same time, Grave did not believe that all art that 'abominated the bourgeois' was automatically revolutionary.[18] As such, he often dismissed Symbolism in particular as empty and eventually, bourgeois, even if he found it aesthetically pleasing.

What Did Anarchist Art Look Like?

Although one would expect that anarchism's freedom would allow complete artistic freedom, important anarchist thinkers demanded accessible art.[19] Yet, when they discussed the role of art, they were hardly ever specific about what they had in mind. Since anarchists

wished to reach the working class, which could not afford paintings, and since they were in no position to commission public murals, it was perhaps too early to lay down specific aesthetic rules.[20] Printmaking appeared to be the solution, as it enabled the artist to bring art into people's houses.[21] In the journal *La Société Nouvelle*, George Lecomte (1867–1958) described the value of lithography, 'Lithography […] has become the art of all those who, having something to say, wish to make their ideas penetrate far and wide. It is by [lithography] especially that one can criticize society and governments, that one spreads the ideas of liberty and emancipation'.[22]

At the time, lithography had existed for only a century. Due to its undemanding, efficient and inexpensive technique, which resulted in high print numbers, lithography was instantly popular and widely used in the commercial field. It soon gained a political reputation as a result of the notorious caricatures by Daumier, Gavarni and Grandville from the 1830s and 1840s, in which the king and the bourgeoisie were ridiculed. In the 1890s, another wave of biting images flooded the press, especially when photomechanical processes enabled editors and publishers to reproduce lithographs and drawings cheaply. Caricatures could be found in all sorts of journals, including those with anarchist leanings, such as *La Plume*, *L'Escarmouche* and *Le Courrier Français*. Well-known illustrators included Henri-Gabriel Ibels (1867–1936), Jean-Louis Forain (1853–1931), Adolphe Willette (1857–1926) and Félix Vallotton (1865–1925), who all possessed a talent for sharing a humorous anecdote in a simple drawing. Yet their anti-bourgeois attitude was not necessarily anarchist all the time. In fact, they contributed to all types of journals, mocking everything and everyone they came across, even the anarchist revolution itself.

Among the anarcho-communist journals, *Le Père Peinard* was abundantly illustrated; it often published crude images of low quality and clear-cut social content with a humorous tendency. Apart from Ibels and Willette, frequent contributors were Lucien Pissarro (1863–1944, son of the famous artist Camille Pissarro) and Maximilien Luce (1858–1941), who both made illustrations next to their more artistic work. Famous for his compassionate compositions was Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen (1859–1923), who, although not necessarily an anarchist, deeply sympathized with the working class and the poor. His images decorated most of the covers of *Le Chambard Socialiste* and *La Feuille*.

These were either heroic depictions of the working class or heartfelt portrayals of vagabond life.

In 1901, *L'Assiette au Beurre* was founded, an anarchist journal consisting exclusively of illustrations, in which the working class was entertained with colourful lithographs with clear-cut social and political criticism. Beside many of the older illustrators mentioned above, members of a younger generation, such as the Dutch artist Kees van Dongen (1877–1968), participated in the journal.[23]

What is striking in all these images of the illustrated press is that the social and political content can only be understood when the illustrator added clear-cut allegories or provided explanatory captions.[24]

Grave's Intentions for his Album of Original Prints

While Grave was ahead of his time in discussing avant-garde art in both *La Révolte* and *Les Temps Nouveaux*, he was slow in including illustrations in his journal. This did not start until 1905. He used illustrations in his special pamphlets for the first time in 1897, and his books were not published before 1901.[25] Because of his chronic lack of financial means, the only way Grave could manage to publish was to receive voluntary contributions from writers and artists. In addition, he organized auctions (tombola) to raise money, selling paintings and drawings donated by artists.[26]

Grave was particularly close to the Neo-Impressionists, especially to the painter and printmaker Maximilien Luce, who was from a working-class background and deeply involved in the anarchist movement.[27] He had no trouble showing his sympathies in his art. Grave knew he could always count on Luce's cooperation – in fact, the idea of an album of original prints may even have been suggested by the artist.[28] Most of the Neo-Impressionists rarely made illustrations, however. Grave thus presented his idea first to the older artist Camille Pissarro (1830–1903), a social anarchist since the 1860s who was well versed in its theories:

> I have the intention to ask – for free – artists we know, [to contribute] a drawing or two, to form an album of about thirty plates to put on sale in aid of the journal. But this album has to be absolutely artistic, and the circulation of the plates very carefully done. […]

> The drawing should in some way relate to the idea, but the author has complete freedom in choice of subject and in execution, which could be engraving, lithography, etching or drypoint. […] What do you think of my idea? Can I count on you and your son?[29]

Grave wished to create an artistic album in a limited edition in order to make a collector's item. In that same year, six prints were published, each one announced in the journal *Les Temps Nouveaux*, and sold individually in an edition of 150 on Hollande paper. Soon, the first copies were already sold out, after which Grave raised the number to 250 copies per print. Twenty prints were published in a luxury edition, printed on *Chine collé*. As soon as the collection of prints was complete, Grave intended to sell them together in an illustrated portfolio as well, in both the regular and luxury edition. Although he planned to have the album ready in 1897, the thirty-one plates, including an illustrated cover and executed by twenty-five artists, were not complete until 1903.[30] All images were black-and-white, and except for one wood engraving, all were lithographs.

Grave's ideas were not new, he responded to the popular 1890s phenomenon of the rise of the original print. Many journals, such as *Le Courrier Français* (since 1891), *La Revue Blanche* (1895) and *Le Rire* (since 1896), offered their illustrations as original prints to their audience: from a drawing published on cheap paper in a large distribution of the journal, the print was now presented in a limited (numbered) edition, on more luxurious paper, and signed by the artist. Art dealers, such as Edouard Kleinmann in 1891, began successfully selling popular posters by Jules Chéret, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen in limited editions. *Les Maîtres de l'Affiche*, initiated by Chéret, published cheerful posters as luxury prints in monthly albums between 1895 and 1900.

Grave did not yet have journal illustrations to offer as work of art, but he was probably inspired by other initiatives in which a different form of the original print was promoted, that is, a portfolio with lithographs, wood engravings, woodcuts or etchings in a limited edition especially made for the occasion. As such, these works do not reflect any functional origin like a poster or illustration, but they were artistically autonomous. The finest example, successful both financially and artistically, was *L'Estampe Originale*, published between 1893 and

1895 by André Marty. Prominent critic Roger Marx introduced the phenomenon of the original print as real art in his foreword. Seventy-four artists, both avant-garde and established, contributed to this album. Some of the finest examples of nineteenth-century avant-garde printmaking can be found in this album.[31] Other initiatives were *Les Peintres-Lithographes* by the journal *L'Artiste* (1892–1897), the experimental *L'Epreuve* (1895), the commercial *L'Estampe Moderne* (1897–1899) and the avant-garde albums of art dealer Ambroise Vollard (1896–1898, see Figure 1).[32] Grave thus came up with his idea for an album when the original print became highly popular.

The popularity of the original print reflected two rather contradictory trends of the late nineteenth century. On the one hand, it was instigated by printmakers who saw their craft being superseded by the new photomechanical reproduction techniques and who wished to promote printmaking as an independent art form instead: prints were offered as

Figure 1: Theo van Rysselberghe, *Le café concert, Lizzie Aubrey* from the album *l'Album des Peintres Graveurs* (1896), etching (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam).

luxury objects, in limited editions and signed by its creators, instead of mass-produced illustrations. With avant-garde artists subsequently experimenting with the new techniques, especially (colour) lithography, printmaking became a recognized art form. On the other hand, the original print fit exactly the demand of a democratic art, that is, art available to all. The desire to integrate art and life, partly inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement, was broadly shared in the late 1890s. The original print thus seemed to be contradictory, since its limited edition related to an elitist form of art. At the same time, the poster or illustration offered as luxury object also elevated the functional image itself to something artistic.[33]

Without sufficient funds, it was inevitable for Grave and other anarchist publishers to ask artists to contribute voluntarily. Fortunately, artists who sympathized with the movement were happy to help the editor whenever possible. In the first announcement in the journal, Grave excitedly announced the cooperation of 'Pissarro père et fils, Luce, Steinlen, Signac, Rysselbergh, Cross, etc'. He again stated that the choice of subjects and the form of execution was up to the artist, but 'the only condition [is] that it has to relate to the order of ideas we defend'.[34] Grave was thus hesitant to ask for specific anarchist art. To understand his hesitance, one must understand the artist's side in the debate between *l'art pour l'art* and *l'art pour tous*.

L'Art pour l'Art for Anarchism's Sake: The Artist's Response to the Debate

Two days after Grave's letter to Camille Pissarro about his plans to make an album, the artist responded positively, 'My dear Grave, I am entirely at your disposal for a print or drawing. Evidently, my son will be as well'.[35] Yet Pissarro admitted to his son Lucien that finding a subject worried him.[36] Nonetheless, he had no trouble advising his son on subject matter: 'Thus do anything for Grave, provided that it is well done, all subjects lend themselves to it […] a strike in London, or a procession of the numerous sects in London, an allegory of misery, of money, of the wounded life, etc'.[37] Two months later, Pissarro informed Grave he already had contact with the lithographer Taillardat, who was to become responsible for most of the printing of the album, and that

he was thinking that 'female peasants carrying bundles of firewood best suit your publication, which is also the opinion of Luce'.[38] This example is reminiscent of an earlier request by *La Plume*'s editor Deschamps, who asked Pissarro to participate in its special issue on anarchism in 1893. Startled, Pissarro wrote to his friend, the Symbolist writer Octave Mirbeau:

> I wonder what a man of letters means by anarchist art? Forain? I guess so. Is there anarchist art? What? Something alien it seems to me. Is there an anarchist art? Decidedly they don't understand! All art is anarchist! When it is beautiful and good!

Pissarro further explained to Mirbeau that, since he was working on a motif of dockworkers anyway, he was able to send in a drawing, 'otherwise I would have been forced to send him a tree trunk, which wouldn't have done the job'.[39] This example may clarify why Grave explicitly made clear that the album was something artistic and that he carefully added it should only address the 'idea'. It worked: in June Pissarro's lithograph of female wood carriers[40] was offered for sale as a second print for the album.

In other words, even though troubled, Pissarro clearly separated his drawings with an anarchist purpose from his general oeuvre, in which one finds numerous landscape paintings with peasant elements in a style that combined both his Impressionist roots and Neo-Impressionist experiments. The trouble of finding a subject is a bit surprising when one considers *Turpitudes Sociales*, a series of drawings Pissarro made as a New Year present for his English nieces in 1889. Pissarro created a set of twenty-eight pen-and-ink drawings, for which he spared no trouble, to educate his nieces in politics. He illustrated a wide range of subjects on capitalism, poverty, suicide and crime, using both caricature and social empathy à la Steinlen, accompanied with explanatory texts from *La Révolte*.[41]

These drawings were not meant for publication, even though Grave would have loved to have received them. In his entire artistic oeuvre, there is no parallel to these drawings. Why the pronounced anarchist Pissarro did not use these drawings for public purposes should be understood as a result of the reticence many (avant-garde) artists felt to create propagandistic art.

Although attempts have been made by scholars to see a relationship between the Neo-Impressionists' search for visual harmony in their paintings and their anarchist ideals of social harmony, the Neo-Impressionists themselves always emphasized the formal characteristics of their art.[42] Since its inception, their literary spokesman, the critic (and fervent anarchist) Félix Fénéon described Neo-Impressionism solely in terms of style and colour theory. Signac was pleased with Fénéon's eloquent understanding of their aspirations. As mentioned, Signac was the most outspoken in publicly announcing his ideas on the role of art in the anarchist revolution, whereas Camille Pissarro kept his opinions private in letters (e.g. to Mirbeau), the café or at home. Years before his lecture in which he stated: 'Justice in sociology, harmony in art: same thing', Signac published an article in *La Révolte*, arguing for an independent, autonomous position for the artist, since style, especially Neo-Impressionism, mattered more than subject:

> It would therefore be an error – an error into which the best informed revolutionaries, such as Proudhon, have too often fallen – systematically to require a precise socialist tendency in works of art; this tendency will be found much stronger and more eloquent in pure aesthetes – revolutionaries by temperament, who, departing from the beaten track, paint what they see, as they feel it, and, often unconsciously, give a solid pick blow to the old social edifice, which, worm-eaten, cracks and crumbles like some abandoned cathedral.[43]

The artist criticized Proudhon for demanding propaganda, while he advised artists to focus on pure aesthetics, that is, on innovation in style.[44] This would automatically involve political sympathies.

Pissarro's son Lucien did at one time publicly announce his dissatisfaction with social art as well in an articulate letter published in *Les Temps Nouveaux*, though only signed with his initials. He reacted to the article 'Art and Society', published a week before, in which the author, Charles-Albert, made a case for the artist to produce for the masses.[45] Lucien wrote a persuasive letter, addressed to 'Camerades', published two issues later on 7 December 1895:

> The distinction that you establish between 'Art-for-Art's sake' and Art with a social tendency does not exist. Every production that is really a work of

> art is social (whether the author wishes it or not), because the one who produces it makes his fellow creatures share the most vivid and clear emotions that he felt before nature's spectacles.
>
> Following the ideas you express, you seem to establish hierarchies of works, hierarchies based on their direct usefulness as propaganda. I do not believe that this is true. Such work, [that is] conceived exclusively with an eye on pure Beauty, will do more for the human intellect than a number of others that have the pretention to teach, because this oeuvre of pure beauty will broaden the aesthetic conception of other individuals. [46]

The strong reactions of these artists to social art were possibly partly fed by their connection to Symbolist writers, such as Fénéon, Gustave Kahn, (1859–1936) and Jean Moréas (1856–1910), with whom they spent much time in bars discussing arts and politics, even though their art differed greatly.[47] Whereas anarchists pointed towards the responsibility of writers to reach an audience that, due to the Republican reforms in education, was larger than ever before, the Symbolists wished to produce an art for art's sake. More related to anarchists' elitist side, they were unconcerned with social problems and they wrote works completely inaccessible to the average reader.[48] The Symbolist writers had actually more in common with artists such as Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) and Emile Bernard (1868–1941), who were not necessarily involved in politics, leaving aside their possible 'armchair' anarchism, and were mainly interested in the emotional use of colour and the personal experience of the landscape, displaying a longing for primitivism and the past.

Despite their strong resistance to propaganda art and their claim to freedom, both Signac and Camille Pissarro condemned the art of Symbolism precisely because of its subject matter. Signac dismissed such artists as follows: 'by confining themselves to retrograde subjects, [the symbolists] revive old errors and forget that art is much more a matter of seeking the future in all its breadth than of exhuming the legends of the past – golden though they [may] be'.[49] Pissarro, roused by an 1891 article by Albert Aurier on Gauguin's 1889 painting *Vision du Sermon* in *Mercure de France*, angrily wrote to his son:

> I do not criticize Gauguin for having painted a vermilion background nor do I object to the two struggling fighters and the Breton peasants in

> the foreground, what I dislike is that he pinched these elements from the Japanese, the Byzantine painters and others. I criticize him for not applying his synthesis to our modern philosophy which is absolutely social, anti-authoritarian and anti-mystical. – Here the problem becomes serious. This is a step backwards; Gauguin is not a seer, he is a schemer who has sensed that the bourgeoisie are moving to the right, recoiling before the great idea of solidarity which springs up among the people.[50]

Pissarro thus accused Gauguin of copying and compromising for the sake of the bourgeoisie. Both Signac and Pissarro criticized Gauguin's primitivism as a step backwards, which they felt was opposed to the revolutionary attitude of the artist. Apparently then, while arguing for art for art's sake, they took offence to art that did not represent their ideas regarding social consciousness.[51]

With the different characteristics of the original print in mind, Grave and the participating artists were perhaps uncertain of what the album should look like and which audience should be targeted. When comparing prices of the prints in Grave's albums to elitist initiatives such as *La Revue Blanche* or *L'Epreuve* – Grave asked 1.25 francs for the regular and 3.25 francs for the luxury print – he was much cheaper. His luxury editions were close in price to *L'Estampe Originale* though, while his regular prints were well below that value. Yet, the latter were priced above *L'Estampe et l'Affiche* and *L'Estampe Moderne*. For a complete set of prints, Grave asked 75 francs for the regular version and 150 francs for the luxury version.[52] Compared to the 10 centimes he asked for one issue of his weekly journal, one would assume that Grave did not wish to reach out to a working-class audience. In the journal issue of 1 September 1900, he nonetheless explained the dual goal of the album, which was to 'help to spread the artistic taste among workers' and '[find] additional resources for our propaganda'. He understood that his first aim needed 'time and patience', yet at the same time, he explained he had to limit the edition to respond to the bad taste of the bourgeoisie, who preferred unique objects. He already mentioned in his first announcement that the price of the prints had to be relatively high in order to guarantee their artistic appeal to the audience.[53] This probably is also the reason why he offered the prints in a regular and luxury version – a choice typically offered on the bourgeois market. Grave's aims with the album thus were a bit ambiguous, to say the least. This

may be precisely the problem of the artists who cooperated with Grave: for whom were they making these original lithographs?

Art, Propaganda, or a Confused Compromise?

The first print that was published for the album was – not surprisingly – by Luce, Grave's closest friend. This large black-and-white lithograph showed an arsonist stripped to the waist on top of the hills, accompanied by a line from a poem by the Belgian writer and anarchist Emile Verhaeren (1855–1916), which certainly was a good start to 'relate to the idea' Grave had asked for (see Figure 2).

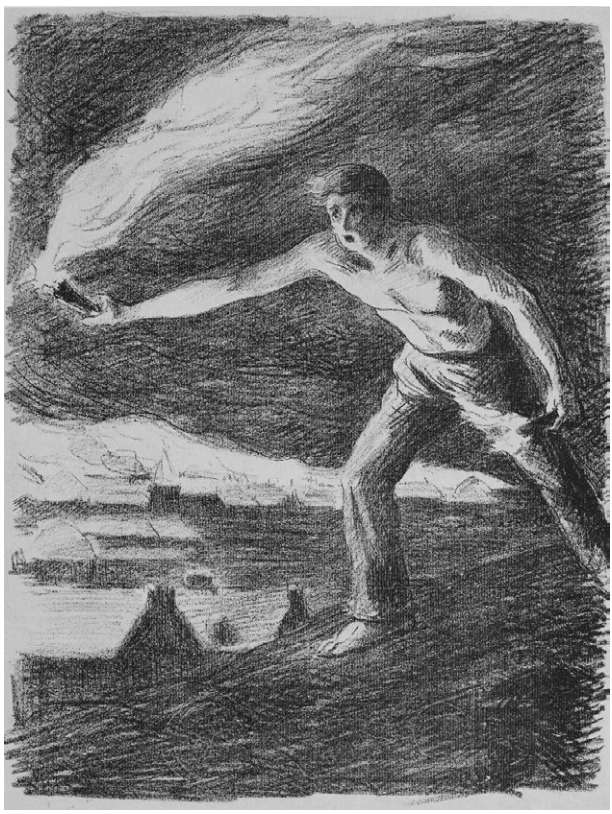

Figure 2: Maximilien Luce, *L'Incendiaire* from the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux,* 25 April 1896, lithograph (private collection; © photograph by Michiel Stokmans).

The result did not please the editor entirely, though, as Grave admitted to Lucien Pissarro, because of an error in the printing.[54] Grave published it nonetheless. Luce's print completely discouraged Lucien Pissarro, who felt the size was too large and the quality of an original print lacking. If Grave wished to create 'something absolutely artistic', then Luce's contribution was a bad start. Lucien wondered why he should work hard on a time-consuming wood engraving if a simple drawing, badly reproduced on stone, was accepted by Grave as well, as he wrote furiously to his father.[55] In the end, Lucien's contribution was published one year later, and was indeed a simple, yet sincere drawing of a poor man dying, reproduced on the lithographic stone by Taillardat (see Figure 3), though it did not look at all like his sophisticated wood engravings.

Signac first planned to create a colour lithograph after his painting *Au Temps d'Harmonie* for the album. This painting from 1893–1895 is his only work directly related to anarchism.[56] It has as subtitle: *L'âge d'or n'est pas dans le passé, il est dans l'avenir* ('the golden age is not in the past, but in the future'), inspired by a quote from the anarchist

Figure 3: Lucien Pissarro, *L'Homme Mourant* from the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux,* 5 June 1897, lithograph (private collection).

writer Charles Malato.[57] The Neo-Impressionist artist Henri Edmond Cross (1856–1910) told Signac, 'You are right on there. It is a perfect synthesis of the conception of the anarchist era'.[58] Recalling the murals of Puvis de Chavannes, and in response to Seurat's famous *La Grande Jatte* that celebrated bourgeois leisure, Signac hoped – in vain – to exhibit his painting that showed a peaceful anarchist future in a public building.[59] Signac was not happy with the lithograph, however.[60] It is doubtful anyway if Grave could have afforded to produce a colour lithograph. Signac had made a study in black ink, which perfectly represents the character of the painting and would have suited the purpose well, but Signac chose a different motif altogether. He informed Grave, 'I am working on a Wrecker, of which I intend to make a vertical panel. As soon as I am satisfied with the movement, I will make you a litho of it'.[61] This composition was indeed what Signac published in the album, print no. 4 (see Figure 4), and he subsequently created the large painting *Le Démolisseur*.[62] Unfortunately the painting never found its location in a civic building apart from the museum.

The lithograph differs in many ways from the painting. Beside the reversal of the composition, the image is dark, without colour to distract, and the worker is untouched by the sun. The painting on the other hand is predominantly an embodiment of the Neo-Impressionist style. The shadow play on his muscular body and the incidence of light in green tones on the trousers make the dominant figure much more an aesthetic object than a symbol of social change. Compared to the clear-cut anarchist, utopian, version of *Au temps d'harmonie*, how should one interpret the demolisher in the lithograph? As Eugenia Herbert argues in her influential 1961 study, *The Artist and Social Reform*, 'Although it is easy and probably correct to read radical implications into its very title, the picture itself can also be considered within the accepted traditions of studies of stonebreakers and other human labourers'.[63] In her extensive research on *Les Temps Nouveaux*, Aline Dardel does read this breaking of the wall directly as deconstructing the structures of the city, that is, society.[64] John Hutton too juxtaposes 'the image of the *démolisseur* as agent of social change' to anarchist writings of that time, in which the demolisher was used as metaphor for the destruction of bourgeois society. The dark, unhappy portrayal of the workers had to be understood as part of the education they had not yet received, but soon would, symbolized by the rising sun.[65] Many of the illustrations for

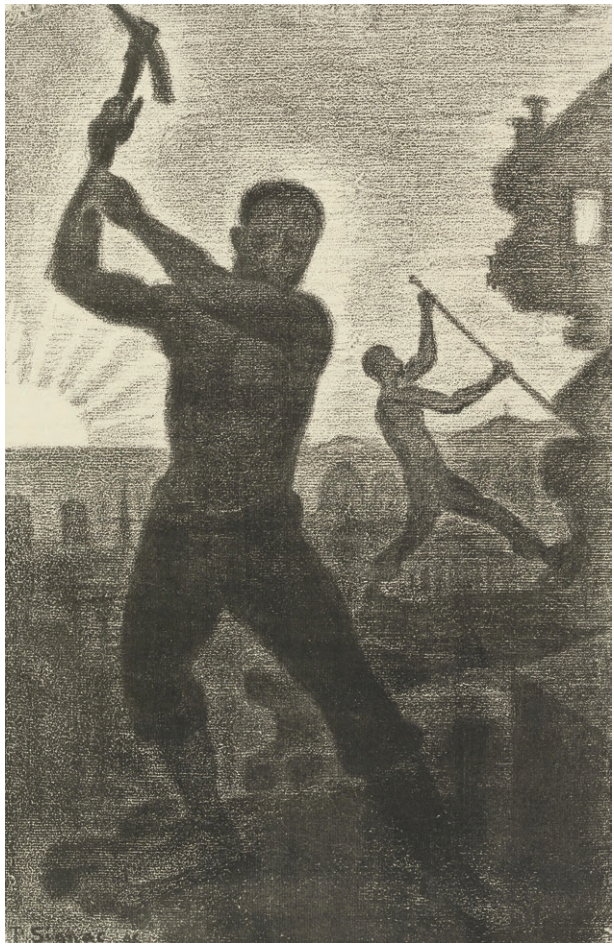

Figure 4: Paul Signac, *Les Démolisseurs* from the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux,* 29 September 1896, lithograph (Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam; Vincent van Gogh Foundation).

the anarchist press indeed contained the sun with the childlike beams. In his 2013 article on the painting *Le Démolisseur*, Thomson argues that the sun in the lithograph is ambiguous, since Republicans used this motif for their iconography as well.[66] Still, according to Richard Thomson, Signac was, using both painting and lithograph, 'trying to answer Kropotkin's appeal with a more immediate and less pedagogical image than the utopian *Au Temps d'Harmonie*'.[67] One has to agree

with Herbert that the demolisher, despite its connotations, can still be an innocent portrayal of a worker. However, whereas Signac claimed that style was going to 'give a solid pick blow to the old social edifice' rather than 'a precise socialist tendency in works of art', in the lithograph style was hard to find.

One would expect that Luce, as an experienced illustrator for the anarchist press, had no problem creating something for Grave. Nonetheless, while the first lithograph was a work he had ready, it appeared that during the process Luce became unsure of his plans for the second lithograph, 'My dear Grave, I am willing to make you a drawing, but what is really the difficulty, an idea, that does not easily give into the eternal pauper and sentimental things. Inspire me, give me an indication'.[68] Maybe Luce was at first a bit confused as well, because of the artistic intention of the album. His printmaking mainly entailed illustrations for the press or original lithographs with an anarchist purpose. He did participate in *L'Estampe Originale*, for which he created a woman combing her hair, and in *L'Epreuve*, for which he created a lithographer in his studio. For Grave, he apparently did want to create work with social content, yet without becoming a 'pauper' or 'sentimental'. His two other contributions in the end were very much in the style of his anarchist illustrations: both allegories and topical, one referring to the famous Italian anarchist Malatesta and the other to the Dreyfus affair.

In later correspondence, one finds Cross and van Rysselberghe struggling with the tension between their anarchist sympathies and artistic ambitions as well. In 1906, when Cross was supposed to make a drawing for the journal, he complained to Grave that his 'good intention struggles with my incapacity'.[69] He did deliver in 1897 a rather strong drawing for the album of an old wanderer,[70] whose thoughts, depicted in the background, either go back to the 1871 Commune or show a utopian future.[71] The fact that Cross refused to sign the print, even only with his initials or pseudonym, indicates that he was not comfortable being associated with it.[72] Van Rysselberghe had no problem creating a signed drawing *hors-texte*, but he later admitted in 1905 that he felt completely unqualified illustrating a text.[73] In 1898, he wrote to Grave 'But I have to confess that nothing seems harder to me than rendering an image of an abstract idea'. In 1897, he did manage to touch upon this idea in his lithograph of a family of vagabonds, walking in a miserable

cold landscape, in which the endless row of trees emphasizes their hopeless path (see Figure 5). He added a line from the poem *Les Errants* by Verhaeren: '…il est ainsi de pauvres gens / Qui trimbalent leur misère / … Au loin des plaines de la terre…' (So it is that the poor people / who carry their misery / far along the plains of the earth). Camille Pissarro made a similar composition of a vagabond family in 1898, in a more friendly landscape and without text (see Figure 6). Hutton, the oft-cited scholar on Neo-Impressionism and anarchism, argues that in the composition of van Rysselberghe 'nature itself seems to conspire against the vagabond family; in Pissarro's lithograph the landscape is open and fertile'. In other words, in the composition of Pissarro no other reason can be found to account for their misery than society's inequality.[74]

Some artists had no trouble creating something that clearly revealed the anarchist idea. These were mainly illustrators and printmakers, not so much the painters. Caran d'Ache (1858–1909)[75] depicted

Figure 5: Theo van Rysselberghe, *Les Errants* from the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux,* 6 February 1897, lithograph (private collection; © photograph by Michiel Stokmans).

Figure 6: Camille Pissarro, *Les Trimardeurs* or *Les Sans-gîte* from the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux,* 3 April 1898, lithograph (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam).

a monstrous skeleton wearing sacks of money on his shoulders and a peacock on his head, strangling an innocent worker's family. The caption of capitalism and the passive representatives of the Church, State and Army on the background further emphasize what this is supposed to mean. In the album, similar images occurred in lithographs by L. Chevalier (unknown), Jehannet (1854–1929, see Figure 7)[76], Georges Willaume (unknown), Oswald Heidbrinck (1858–1914), Lochard[77] (unknown), Aristide Delannoy (1874–1911) and Jules Hénault (1859–1909, see Figure 8). During the realization of the album, it appears that Grave increasingly published prints from these illustrators with a deliberate purpose. A possible reason, suggested by Dardel, is that they had the most experience with illustrations reproduced by lithography, and were able to deliver quickly.[78] They were also the ones who could best visually deliver the anarchist idea. Despite emphasizing his artistic aim throughout, Grave seemed to have compromised halfway,

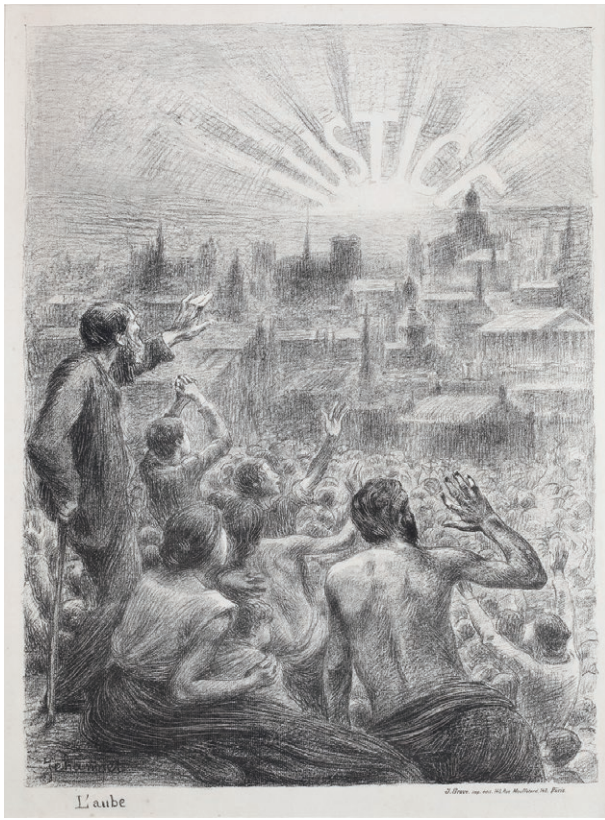

Figure 7: Jehannet, *L Aube* from the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux,* 28 November 1896, lithograph (private collection; © photograph by Michiel Stokmans).

knowing that he could count on the illustrators. The change in direction of the frontispiece already reveals this insight. In the beginning, Grave hoped that William Morris (1834–1896), spokesman of the Arts and Crafts Movement, would illustrate the cover in his signature decorations. Unfortunately, however, Morris died that same year. Eventually it was Roubille, an active contributor to *L'Assiette au Beurre* at the time who never failed to include his anti-authoritarian opinions, who completed the cover.[79] In his lithograph, we see a revolutionary with torch, dressed as Hercules, fighting the three-headed dragon of Church, Law and Army with a brush.

Quite surprising is the contribution of Vallotton, published in 1900. While Vallotton is often considered to be an anarchist due to his

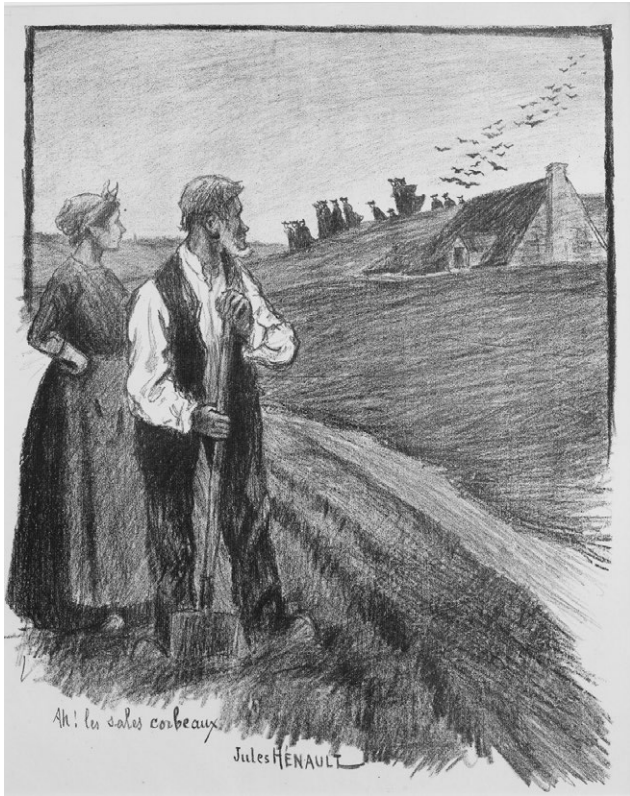

Figure 8: Jules Hénault, *Ah! Les sales corbeaux* from the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux,* 24 June 1899, lithograph (private collection; © photograph by Michiel Stokmans).

well-known connections in such circles, he never referred to any specific political sympathies. Furthermore, he married a wealthy bourgeois widow. He was famous for his innovative black-and-white woodcuts, which he produced first and foremost to make a living. Although most of them relate to the social and political circumstances of the Third Republic, his sharp and humorous observations always lack anecdotal character and were quite ambiguous.[80] He contributed to *L'Estampe Originale*, *La Revue Blanche* and many other journals and albums with different backgrounds. His contribution to *Les Temps Nouveaux* is certainly not characterized by ambiguity. No longer in need of creating a living, he largely ignored his printmaking after his wedding. Although he was less well acquainted with Grave than the other participants, he was willing to contribute to the album in 1900. Instead of making a

woodcut himself, he sent in a drawing, which 'either could be engraved just as you told me or reproduced directly, but engraving should be better and more artistic'.[81] Grave, following Vallotton's advice, had G. Berger engrave the composition in wood, instead of transferring it to the lithographic stone as with the other prints. In the drawing, Vallotton had Justice triumphing over the bodies of the Church, Army and Law, referring to the recent Dreyfus affair.[82]

Contrary to journals such as *Le Père Peinard* and *L'Assiette au Beurre*, humour was hard to find in *Les Temps Nouveaux*. Only the illustrator Hermann-Paul made a print for the album in his typical witty manner, in which a police officer, clumsily boiling from anger, shouts to a small boy that he is not allowed to walk on the lawn. The remaining contributions all relate to social content, and can easily be read in favour of anarchism, but, just like the lithographs of Signac, Camille and Lucien Pissarro, van Rysselberghe and Cross, they are not clear-cut anarchist. The sculptor Constantin Meunier (1831–1905) created a portrait of a miner from the Borinage, just as he did for *L'Estampe Originale*. The painter Charles Maurin (1856–1914), known for his Symbolist nudes and intimate scenes of women and their children, depicted in *La Guerre* two nude women, probably allegories of peace, watching an exhausted army passing by.[83] Henri Lebasque (1865–1947), an artist working in a Neo-Impressionist style in the 1890s, and close to the Nabis, who painted numerous nudes in interiors, created two scenes in 1900 and 1901 respectively in which social injustice was central. In the first, called *Provocation*, we see a young, hungry girl standing in front of a bakery,[84] and in the second, *Ceux qui mangent du pain noir*, a heavily bent couple of peasants is ditching, while the birds in the background appear to steal their freshly planted seeds.[85] Charles-Jean Agard (1866–1950), a painter largely influenced by Camille Pissarro, made his first lithograph ever for the album.[86] He created a drawing of labourers preparing mines for exploitation, likely simultaneously symbolizing the pioneers for the new society, as the prominent title of *Les défricheurs* indicates.[87]

Although all the scenes in the album unmistakably address social issues, which seem to fit the remit of the album, the ones by the painters (except Vallotton) were not necessarily anarchist. Dardel, who analyzed the different themes in all kinds of illustrations that were done for Grave, argued that while the lithographs were not clear-cut propaganda,

they do 'relate to the idea' Grave was asking for.[88] 'All the drawings implicitly accuse society, which does not succeed in protecting the weakest, and denounce social injustice in general', according to her.[89] Although recurring elements can indeed be found, none of these exclusively belong to the anarchist iconography, however. It becomes clear that straightforward anarchist subject matter could only be read as such once unambiguous captions and allegories were used, such as representatives of the army, state and church, whereas depicting a hardworking labourer or the miserable poor could mean anything. While in the time of Millet and Courbet, representations of the lower class were considered to be revolutionary, in only a few decades, Naturalism became the preferred style of the state, flooding the Salon with Millet-like pictures and sentimental portrayals of the deprived. According to Hutton, a difference could still be noticed, when comparing a composition by Camille Pissarro or van Rysselberghe with for instance the 1886 Salon painting *Sans Asile* by Fernand Pelez (Petit Palais, Paris). In this painting depicting a vagabond family of a mother and five children, apparently there was nothing provocative to the Salon audience. Their misery could be explained by the absence of the father. Therefore the painting had no socialist or anarchist inclinations, but called for the Christian ideal of charity instead.[90] While Hutton is right about the painting's meaning, he forgets that there were plenty of similar Salon paintings in which the father was present. However, as Patricia Leighten convincingly argues in her 2013 study *Modernism and Anarchism*, 'these themes were not offensive to the salon juries, provided that the style and composition sufficiently gestured toward tradition, even when they constituted a veritable call to arms'.[91] In other words, Signac was right from the start: it was the revolutionary, anti-bourgeois style, not its clear-cut subject matter, that decided whether or not art was anarchist.

Conclusion

While it was style that made the avant-garde artist stand out, touching the nerves of conservative critics, the prints for the album did not reveal any particular style. Nonetheless, Dardel argued that the works by the painters 'relate entirely to their oeuvre in general'.[92] The difference with their painted work is obvious, however. Also compared to

their artistic printmaking, such as van Rysselberghe's contribution to *L'Estampe Originale* (see Figure 1), the earlier etchings from Camille Pissarro, or the sophisticated wood engravings by Lucien Pissarro, one can only conclude that these artists were capable of creating much more daring compositions, both in drawing and print techniques, than what they did for Grave.[93] The drawings done for *Les Temps Nouveaux* were all transferred to stone by the printer Taillardat, not drawn on the stone by the artist himself, and all show the similar greasy drawing technique typical of black-and-white lithography, thus nothing personal or inventive. Although they had nothing in common with the meticulously detailed and skilled prints one could find in the Salon (mainly etchings and copper engravings), they did not offend any Salon critic, simply because they were not on their radar. They did not stand out as 'high' art, even though artists increasingly showed their paintings together with their printmaking at exhibitions, and journals such as *L'Estampe et l'Affiche* were founded to promote the print revolution. The prints in Grave's album were never exhibited as such, but offered in the context of the journal alone. Despite all the trouble and expenses of the artists, their ambition of remaining absolutely autonomous apparently made them cautious to be associated with these lithographs. Their participation must be read as a sympathetic gesture to Grave and the anarchist revolution.[94]

The ambition, purpose and outcome of the album are quite ambiguous: Grave wanted to have his share in creating an artistic album with a potential for success, both financially and artistically, but then he had to address the right audience and artists. From the start, Grave struggled between a bourgeois undertaking and a working-class audience. Artistically, starting by asking the artists Pissarro and his son to participate, Grave followed a promising direction, but his mistake may have been to focus too much in the end on the illustrators, who were much better prepared to create works that 'relate to the idea'. Surely Grave's choices were limited, since he could neither pay the artists for their contributions nor invest in high quality techniques and papers.[95] What would the album have looked like if he had asked artists, from the more experimental group Nabis, beside Vallotton? These artists were responsible for some of the most innovating colour lithographs during the print revolution in the 1890s and they already helped Grave out with his tombola. The dilemma of the painters with anarchist sympathies

how to participate in the album is therefore comprehensible. Despite the high ambitions at the beginning (in his first announcement in the journal, Grave especially named the painters, not the illustrators), they knew it was for an anarchist context without budget available. Grave clearly could not decide between art and propaganda, and exactly this uncertainty is what is represented in the album.

Nonetheless, the album turned out to be successful, since Grave had to raise the print number shortly after takeoff. Despite Grave's ambition, the buying audience could not be the same as his working-class readers, since they hardly could afford the original prints, and it is doubtful whether Grave reached the bourgeois audience, whose taste he wanted to improve. It must have been the well-to-do anarchists who wanted to support Grave's idea. Years after the realization of the album, Grave was able to influence his working-class audience in reproducing eighteen of the lithographs as postcards.[96]

Today these lithographs are hard to find. Only few of them have found their way into public collections.[97] In the scholarly literature, apart from some exceptions, they have been inadequately discussed.[98] These prints were not only lacking the truly groundbreaking artistic appearance of art for art's sake, but it was also hard to strip off the (dated) social issues. Thus both in reputation and materiality, these lithographs did not survive the ravages of time. Nonetheless, this album is a perfect example of how the often-cited debate between the anarchists and artists on what art should look like influenced, or better, confused both commissioner and artist in their ambitions, unsure who they were addressing. And while Grave was anxious not to put too much pressure on the artists, the latter were afraid to let down this gentle anarchist. In addition, the artists feared to lose their reputation as modern, progressive creators of timeless, high quality art in the late 1890s and early twentieth century, when artistic and literary 'movements' followed each other one by one, constantly renewing the 'rules' of modern art.

Notes

* This essay has been a long process, because it is partly based on my MA thesis *Positioning the 'Original Print': Politics of Printmaking in France, 1870–1900* (VU University of Amsterdam, 2011) and my lecture at the Arts

and Politics conference in 2014 which I organized together with Camelia Errouane in collaboration with *Royal Netherlands Historical Society* (KNHG). Therefore many thanks to Jos ten Berge (VU University), Rachel Esner (University of Amsterdam), Jouke Turpijn (KNHG/University of Amsterdam), Wessel Krul (University of Groningen), Joes Segal (Wende Museum), Willem Russell, Peter-Louis Vrijdag (Steendrukmuseum Valkenswaard), Olaf Tans, Marieke Jooren and Megan Mullarky. I also like to thank Sarah Ganz Blythe for giving me access to her PhD thesis (see note 9).

1 'Justice en sociologie, harmonie en art: même chose'. This quote was first found in undated notes in the Signac Archives in Paris by Robert L. Herbert and Eugenia W. Herbert, 'Artists and Anarchism: Unpublished Letters of Pissarro, Signac and others', *Burlington Magazine* 52:692 (1960) 479. Translation from Richard D. Sonn, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siècle France* (Lincoln/London, 1989) 148.

2 Patricia Leighten, *The Liberation of Painting: Modernism and Anarchism in Avant-Guerre Paris* (Cambridge/London, 2013) 2.

3 Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 479; translation from Sonn, *Cultural Politics*, 148–149.

4 Richard D. Sonn, 'Marginality and Transgression: Anarchy's Subversive Allure', in Gabriel P. Weisberg (ed.), *Montmartre and the Making of Mass Culture* (New Brunswick, 2001) 135.

5 Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 479, n. 37.

6 In this article, a generalizing definition of bourgeoisie is used, i.e. 'the bourgeoisie was defined by its antagonists', who opposed themselves to anything middle or upper class: Peter Gay, *Schnitzler's Century: The Making of Middle-Class Culture, 1815–1914* (New York/London, 2002) 28. See also Jerrold Seigel, *Modernity and Bourgeois Life* (Cambridge, 2012).

7 See e.g. Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 473–482; Annemarie Springer, 'Terrorism and Anarchy: Late 19th-century Images of a Political Phenomenon in France', *Art Journal* 38:4 (1979) 261–266; Aline Dardel, *"Les Temps Nouveaux" 1895–1914. Un Hebdomadaire Anarchiste et la Propagande par l'Image* (Paris, 1987); Robyn Roslak, *Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France: Painting, Politics and Landscape* (Burlington, 2007) 8; Allan Antliff, *Anarchy and Art: From the Paris Commune to the Fall of the Berlin Wall* (Vancouver, 2007).

8 E.g. John G. Hutton, *Neo-Impressionism and the Search for Solid Ground: Art, Science, and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Baton

Rouge/London, 1994); Roslak, *Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism*; special RIHA issue 'New Directions in New Impressionism' 48 (2012), eds. Tania Woloshyn and Anne Dymond http://www.riha-journal.org/articles/2012/2012-jul-sep/special-issue-neo-impressionism; Richard Thomson, 'Ruins, Rhetoric and Revolution: Paul Signac's *Le Démolisseur* and Anarchism in the 1890s', *Art History* 36:2 (2013) 366–391. It appears that after 2010, Neo-Impressionism and anarchism became increasingly interwoven in art-historical literature, see e.g. the exhibitions catalogues of Richard R. Brettell, *Pissarro's People* (Munich, 2011) and Clare A. P. Willsdon, *Impressionist Gardens* (Cambridge, London 2010) 110.

9 There are exceptions of course: Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, made an important step to give political circumstances and sympathies of artists more attention, and they published for the first time excerpts from letters to Grave. While these letters address the album, Mr and Mrs Herbert did not analyze the album isolated from illustrations in general. Dardel, *Les Temps Nouveaux*, did discuss the album next to the illustrations, but her extensive research (originating from her 1980 unpublished dissertation) focused on analysis of the depicted themes. In other studies, the lithographs are used as illustrations to their text, e.g. Allan Antliff, *Anarchy and Art*. Two more recent but unpublished PhD dissertations have given attention to the album of *Les Temps Nouveaux*, both with different perspectives. Sarah Ganz Blythe, *Promising Pictures: Utopian Aspirations and Pictorial Realities in 1890s France* (PhD thesis, New York University, 2007) illustrates how different agents involved artists in projects with utopian ambitions in 1890s French society. She convincingly shows the contrast between the specific aspirations of the organizers and the problem artists had in visualizing these. By using the album of Grave as one of the case studies, Blythe's study is one of the first attempts to better understand Grave's aims. Anne-Marie Bouchard (*Figurer la société mourante: Culture esthétique et idéologique de la presse, anarchiste illustrée en France, 1880–1914*, PhD thesis, Université de Montréal, 2009) thoroughly discusses the role of illustrations in the anarchist press, including the album (http://hdl.handle.net/1866/4155). See also her article 'L'Infécondité Vicieuse des Artistes: L'Art Social dans les Réseaux Médiatique Anarchiste', in Neil McWilliam, Catherine Méneux, Julie Ramos (eds), *L'Art Social en France: De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre* (Rennes 2014) 193–204.

10 John G. Hutton, *Solid Ground*, 54–59, 463–465.

11 Sonn, *Cultural Politics*, 10–11. For information on nineteenth-century anarchism in general, see Jean Maitron, *Histoire du Mouvement Anarchiste en France (1880–1914)* (Paris, 1951).

12 Louis Patsouras, *The Anarchism of Jean Grave* (Montréal/New York/London, 2003) 34–35.

13 The first years of the Third Republic, which arose after the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871) and the Paris Commune (1871), France was still mainly governed by conservative monarchists. This changed in 1879, when Jules Grévy was the first President chosen by Republicans. Whereas in the 1870s, out of fear for the working classes and Communards, all kinds of (political) gatherings were prohibited, in the 1880s several laws were mitigated, including the liberty of press.

14 Joan Ungersma Halperin, *Felix Fénéon: Aesthete and Anarchist in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (New Haven/London, 1988) 267–271; Hutton, *Solid Ground*, 49–50.

15 Many nineteenth-century socialists were not yet interested in the role of art, probably because they believed the working class was not ready for it, see Eugenia W. Herbert, *The Artist and Social Reform: France and Belgium 1885–1898* (New Haven, 1961) 11–14.

16 Félix Dubois, *Péril anarchiste*, *Le Figaro, supplement littéraire*, 13 January 1894, 6, translation from Patsouras, *Grave*, 37.

17 Jean Grave, *La Société Future* (Paris 1895), 358 and 367, as quoted in Roslak, *Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism*, 15.

18 Grave, *La Société Future,* 357–358, see also Hutton, *Solid Ground* 108 (n. 43).

19 These anarchists followed the footsteps of industrialist Comte de Saint-Simon (1760–1825), who formulated already in the beginning of the century the idea that artists were supposed to be in the front line to portray the golden age of a harmonious society freed from government control. Saint-Simon was the first to term the military word avant-garde in an artistic context. See e.g. Neil McWilliam, *Social Art and the French Left, 1830–1850* (Princeton, 1993). In the 1890s, in numerous articles in different journals, supporters of social art were building on their predecessors, calling for both artists and writers to create accessible, mass-oriented and didactic work. For an extensive overview, see esp. Bouchard, *Figurer la société mourante.* See also Hutton, *Solid Ground*, ch 3.

20 Blythe, *Promising Pictures*, 55–64.

21 According to Bouchard, *Figurer la Société Mourante*, 259–268, it was reproducibility that defined the social art of the anarchists. See also Bouchard, *L'Infécondité Vicieuse*, 196.
22 Lecomte in *Le Société Nouvelle* (November 1895), quoted in Herbert, *Social Reform*, 192.
23 Leighten, *Modernism and Anarchism*, 28ff.
24 This characteristic is similar to the caricatures of Daumier, see Werner Hofmann, 'Ambiguity in Daumier (& Elsewhere)', *Art Journal* 43:4 (1983) 362–363.
25 Aline Dardel, *Catalogue des dessins et publications illustrées du journal anarchiste Les Temps Nouveaux: 1895–1914*, 2 volumes (PhD thesis, Sorbonne, Paris IV 1980) vol. 1, 60.
26 Grave listed these artists' contributions in *Les Temps Nouveaux* several times.
27 Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 482.
28 Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. I, 61.
29 Grave to Camille Pissarro (March 25, 1896), in Dardel, *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 18.
30 Aline Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. I, 67.
31 For examples, see http://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/en/prints/person/40641/l_estampe_originale.
32 See e.g. André Mellerio, *La Lithographie Originale en Couleurs* (Paris, 1898), reprinted and translated in Phillip Dennis Cate and Sinclair Hamilton Hitchings, *The Color Revolution: Color Lithography in France, 1890–1900* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1978) 77–99; Phillip Dennis Cate (ed.), *The Graphic Arts and French Society, 1871–1914* (New Brunswick, 1988); Patricia Eckert Boyer and Phillip Dennis Cate, *L'Estampe Originale: Artistic Printmaking in France, 1893–1895* (New Brunswick/Amsterdam/Zwolle, 1991).
33 This discussion of the original print has been thoroughly researched in my MA thesis *Positioning the 'Original Print': Politics of Printmaking in France, 1870–1900* (VU University of Amsterdam, 2011).
34 *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 11 April 1896, 1.
35 Camille Pissarro to Grave (27 March 1896), in Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 517.
36 Camille Pissarro to Lucien (28 April 1896), in Jeanine Bailly-Herzberg (ed.), *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro*, 5 volumes (Saint Ouen l'Aumône, 1980–1991), vol. IV (1989), 199.

37 Camille Pissarro to Lucien (12 July 1896), in Bailly-Herzberg, *Correspondance* IV, 230.

38 Camille Pissarro to Grave (21 May 1896), in Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 517.

39 Pissarro to Octave Mirbeau (30 September 1892), in Bailly-Herzberg, *Correspondance* III (1988), 261.

40 http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.41725 (Rijksmuseum).

41 For more information on these series, see e.g. Brettell, *Pissarro's People*, 241–245.

42 See note 8.

43 Signac, 'Impressionnistes et Révolutionnaires', *La Révolte* 4:40 (1891) 4. English translation published in Charles Harrison, Paul Wood and Jason Gaiger, *Art in Theory 1815–1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Oxford, 2005) 795–798. Signac had signed the letter simply with 'an Impressionist comrade'.

44 Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Du principe de l'art et sa destination sociale* (Paris 1865), published and translated in Harrison, Wood and Gaiger, *Art in Theory 1815–1900*, 407.

45 *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 23 November 1895, 1–2.

46 Lucien Pissarro, in *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 7 December 1895, Translation partly from Hutton, *Solid Ground*, 91–92.

47 John Rewald, *Post-Impressionism: From Van Gogh to Gauguin* (London, 1978 [1956]) 139–146.

48 Herbert, *Social Reform*, 43, 59–61.

49 Signac, *Impressionnistes et Révolutionnaires*, 797.

50 Camille Pissarro to Lucien (20 April 1891), in Bailly-Herzberg, *Correspondance*, III (1988), 66.

51 One of the reasons why Signac strongly opposed to Symbolist art in his 1891 article, was the fact that Symbolism increasingly gained recognition from critics, while attention to Neo-Impressionism after Seurat's death diminished, see Martha Ward, *Pissarro, Neo-Impressionism, and the Spaces of Avant-Garde* (Chicago/London, 1996) 233–234.

52 *L'Estampe Originale* had an edition of 100, offered in annual subscription of 150 francs a year (= c. FF 3.75 per print). The complete album of *La Revue Blanche*, in edition of 100, cost 25 francs (and FF 5.00 for each print). *L'Epreuve* asked for one issue of 10 prints, in edition of 200, 100 francs, and luxurious version, in edition of 15, 250 francs. *L'Estampe Moderne* (edition of 150) and *L'Estampe et l'Affiche* (edition unknown, but

rather large) had both a subscription price of 40 francs a year (= c. FF 0.90 per print).

53 *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 11 April 1896, 1.

54 Grave to Lucien Pissarro (22 April 1896), quoted in Dardel, *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 19.

55 Grave to Lucien (5 April 1896), quoted in Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. I, 70; Lucien Pissarro to Camille, in Anne Thorold (ed.), *The Letters of Lucien to Camille Pissarro, 1883–1903* (Cambridge, 1993) 467.

56 *Au temps d'harmonie: L'âge d'or n'est pas dans le passé, il est dans l'avenir,* 1893–1895, oil on canvas, 300×400 cm, Mairie de Montreuil.

57 Malato was in his turn inspired by Saint-Simon.

58 Cross to Signac (undated), quoted in Woloshyn, *Colonizing the Côte d'Azur*, sect. 13 in special *RIHA* issue 'New Directions in New Impressionism' 48 (2012), eds Tania Woloshyn and Anne Dymond: http://www.riha-journal.org/articles/2012/2012-jul-sep/special-issue-neo-impressionism.

59 Marina Ferreti-Bocquillon [et al], *Signac 1863–1935* (New Haven/London, 2001) 195.

60 Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux* , vol. II, catalogue no. 39.

61 Signac to Grave (1896), quoted in Ferreti-Bocquillon, *Signac*, 206.

62 *Le démolisseur*, 1897–1899, oil on canvas, 251×150.5 cm, Musée d'Orsay.

63 Herbert, *Social Reform*, 190.

64 Dardel, *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 25–26.

65 Hutton, *Solid Ground*, 59–63.

66 Thomson, *Ruins, Rhetoric and Revolution*, 383–384.

67 Ibid., 387.

68 Luce to Grave (undated), quoted in Dardel, *"Les Temps Nouveaux"*, 13, translated in Blythe, *Promising Pictures*, 111.

69 Cross to Grave (July 1906), quoted in Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 521.

70 http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/56927.

71 The composition cannot be read unambiguously, because Cross did not use clear symbols. Generally however, the background is interpreted as the future, because of its lightness, see e.g. Hutton, *Solid Ground*, 137, and Blythe, *Promising Pictures*, 112.

72 This becomes clear from correspondences with Luce and Grave, quoted in Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. II, catalogue no. 4. It may be that Cross was uncomfortable delivering because he did not want to

be associated with anarchism in general, perhaps out of fear that the State would tighten its laws again.

73 Dardel, *Les Temps Nouveaux*, 13.

74 John Hutton, '"Les Prolos Vagabondent": Neo-Impressionism and the Anarchist Image of the *Trimardeur*', *Art Bulletin* 72:1 (1990) 305.

75 Pseudonym for Emmanuel Poiré; here he used his other, lesser-known pseudonym Comin'Ache.

76 Jehannet, who created many illustrations for both *Les Temps Nouveaux* and *L'Assiette au Beurre* was actually the pseudonym of a painter working in the Neo-Impressionist style, Hippolyte Petitjean.

77 http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/53274.

78 Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. I, 149.

79 Grave to Lucien Pissarro (23 May 1896), quoted in Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. II, catalogue no. 1.

80 See Sasha M. Newman (ed.), *Félix Vallotton* (New Haven/New York/London, 1991), especially chapter by Richard S. Field, 'Exteriors and Interiors: Vallotton's Printed Oeuvre', 43–92.

81 Vallotton to Grave (1900), quoted in Herbert and Herbert, *Artists and Anarchism*, 522.

82 Newman, *Vallotton*, 31. While Vallotton was ambiguous about his anarchist sympathies, he was, like most of the (bohemian) avant-garde, actively pro-Dreyfus.

83 http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/53310.

84 http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/56914.

85 http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/53244.

86 Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. II, catalogue no. 26.

87 http://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/53262.

88 Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. I, 143.

89 Ibid., 131.

90 Hutton, *Prolos Vagabondent*, 303–306.

91 Leighten, *Modernism and Anarchism*, 23.

92 Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. I, 149.

93 This does not necessarily concern colour (although colour lithographs easily have a modern appeal), an artist could make innovative compositions in black-and-white as well, such as Vallotton's woodcuts.

94 See also Blythe, *Promising Pictures*, 117.

95 The van Gelder paper has a rather large watermark and stripes in the paper. In some cases, these disturb the composition of the lithographs.

96 Dardel, *Catalogue Les Temps Nouveaux*, vol. I, 71.

97 Only at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, I was able to look at a complete set of these lithographs of the regular edition. One from these series (Daumont) was on *chine collé*, thus from the luxury edition; unfortunately the paper was cut and pasted on thicker paper, so that stamps were missing. The same is the case with one lithograph in Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (Pissarro). Lithographs from the luxury edition are (naturally) harder to find.

98 See note 9. It must be said that in general printmaking has always been given less attention than painting (for these exceptions, see note 32). Recently, museums have given increasing attention to printmaking, such as the Van Gogh Museum that will have an exhibition on their nineteenth-century print collection in 2017.

About the Author

Laura Prins is an independent writer and researcher who specializes in nineteenth-century art and culture. She has collaborated on different projects on Vincent van Gogh, e.g. *On the Verge of Insanity: Van Gogh and his Illness* (2016) at the Van Gogh Museum, *Van Gogh: Into the Undergrowth* (2016) at the Cincinnati Museum of Art and she curated an exhibition of Van Gogh's graphic work for the Dutch Museum of Lithography in Valkenswaard in 2015. For a number of years Laura worked as assistant curator at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. Prior to that she wrote a master's thesis on nineteenth-century French printmaking at the VU University Amsterdam, entitled *Positioning the Original Print: Politics of Printmaking in France 1870–1900*. She is currently preparing a PhD proposal on nineteenth-century art and madness. Email: LSEPrins@gmail.com