

Art between Beauty and Health: Neo-Impressionism, Color Therapy, and Homeopathy

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Paul Signac's Forgotten Letter

This essay will consider an understudied dimension of the Neo-Impressionist movement, namely the group's interest in homeopathy and color therapy, the relation of such views to their founding of a short-lived Neo-Impressionist boutique at 20 rue Lafitte, Paris. The founders of the boutique included almost all the members of Neo-Impressionism, such as Paul Signac, Maximilien Luce, Henri-Edmond Cross, Hippolyt Petitjean, Théo Van Rysselberghe, Charles Angrand, and Camille Pissarro and his three sons Lucien, Georges, and Félix.¹ The boutique founded by the artists as a collective enterprise was based on the anarcho-communist ideal of mutual aid and through it they sought to give every participant equal rights. It was a left-wing boutique that promoted direct marketing, equal opportunity, and mutual aid, in direct opposition to the renowned commercialism of the Durand-Ruel gallery.² Although this project was short-lived, and having opened in 1893 and closed in 1894 due to its commercial failure,³ the boutique held four important collective exhibitions of Luce, Signac, Cross, Petitjean, and Van Rysselberghe.⁴ It unequivocally played a central role in the dissemination of Neo-Impressionist aesthetics and politics.

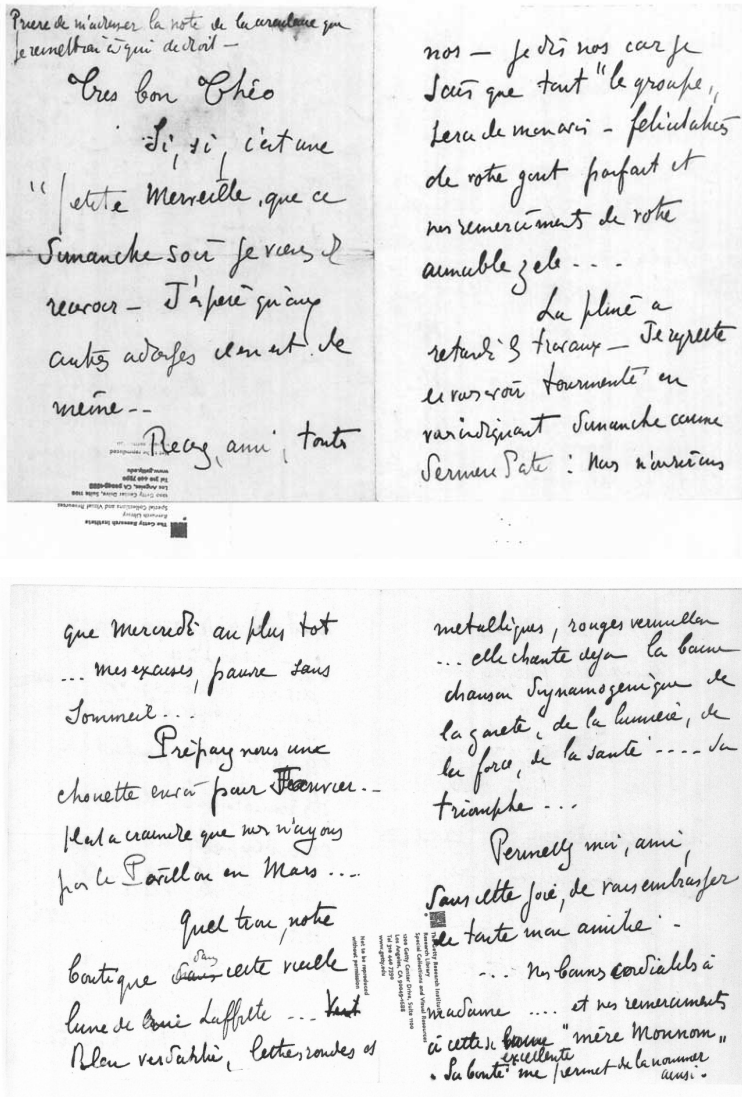
Significantly, the facade of this gallery was painted with bright blue and red letters. The group's choice of glittering red and blue for their boutique was not merely to create attractive decoration, it had deep implications for their artistic philosophy. Some time in the winter of 1893-1894, Signac wrote about the boutique in a letter to his colleague Van Rysselberghe (Figure 1).

Prepare for a pretty present for January...I suspect that we will not have the Pavilion [the boutique] in March ...how sad it is, our boutique has been already forgotten on the rue Laffitte.... Blue on Dahlia, round and metallic letters, vermilion reds... it used to sing a good dynamogenic song of gaiety, light, force, health... a triumph.⁵

This intriguing letter, now housed in the Getty Research Center archive in Los Angeles, has never been examined in the scholarship on Neo-Impressionism. Here, Signac claims that the blue wall and the red lettering of the Neo-Impressionist boutique manifested “gaiety, light, force, health,” and therefore, was a “triumph.” Signac's letter supported the idea that the combination of red and blue directly affects a viewer's mood and sense of wellbeing. Importantly, the color combination was supposed to have an influence on not only an aesthetic feeling (“gaiety”) but also practical results with regard to human “health.” Although past

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(Figure 1) A letter from Paul Signac to Theo van Rysselberghe, c. 1894, the Getty Research Institute, Research Library, Special Collections and Visual Resources (87-A688), Los Angeles, California, USA.



studies have closely examined the Neo-Impressionists' political engagement in anarcho-communism,⁶ the ethics of Neo-Impressionist daily-life practices – the real subject of Signac's letter – has not been sufficiently studied.⁷ As I will demonstrate, the Neo-Impressionists sought to integrate art into their daily-life practices. Without examining Neo-Impressionism's ethics of quotidian life, the full import of their art cannot be understood. By illuminating the artists' daily interest in theories of human health, particularly their engagement with color therapy and homeopathy, I will analyze the Neo-Impressionists surprising correlation of their aesthetic with the betterment of human health. Therefore, this study will contribute to a reconsideration of the canonical French avant-garde slogan of *l'art pour l'art*, providing a new perspective that situates the Neo-Impressionist movement in the larger context of daily life improvement movements in

late nineteenth-century Europe.

Therapeutic Connotation of Red and Blue in Neo-Impressionist Praxis

In the mid-1890s, Signac became deeply interested in architectural decoration, which led him to collaborate with the architect Hector Guimard in designing the Castel Béranger in 1897. An art-nouveau style building, Castel Béranger was built on rue La Fontaine by Signac's architect friend Hector Guimard as a part of Guimard's "Maison joyeuse dans la Cité future" project. The painter wrote an article about this house in *Le Revue Blanche* in February 1899.⁸ In this article, entitled "Hector Guimard, l'art dans l'habitation modern, le castel Béranger," Signac stated that "the architectonic of Guimard, which is apparently under an influence of fantasy, is in fact of pure logic," and that "the capricious aspect of curves in his architecture should be explained by reasons of hygiene."⁹ Just as the painter hoped to enhance health through his Neo-Impressionist boutique, he also looked for the same effect in the design of his own house. Although the colors Guimard used were not as bright as those applied to the boutique, the thematic use of red and blue hues can also be seen in the Castel Béranger (Figure 2): the front door was made of blue-green metals, and decorated in red.

Yet another manifestation of this orientation in Neo-Impressionist praxis were the so-called Red and Blue dinners (*diners du Rouge et du Bleu*), which were held regularly starting in 1886. Significantly, Doctor Paul-Ferdinand Gachet, a proponent of homeopathy who moved in avant-garde circles, was a regular attendee at these events. Paul Alexis chronicled these meetings in a popular anarchist daily journal, *Cri du Peuple* (1886-1887).¹⁰ Among those participating in the dinners were figures associated with the newly founded

(Figure 2) Hector Guimard, *Castel Béranger*, door, 1894-1898, photo: GUYOMARD.



journal *Le Revue Indépendante* (1884-), including Jean Ajalbert, Charles Morice, Odilon Redon, the sculptor Rupert Carabin, Jules Laforgue, Maurice Barrès, Arsène Alexandre, Félix Fénéon, Paul Alexis, Eugène Murer as well as Albert Dubois-Pillet, Edmond Valton, Georges Seurat, Paul Signac, Camille and Lucien Pissarro, and Henri Edmond Cross.¹¹ Although there seemed to be no official explanation for the christening of the dinners, given Signac's understanding of the role of color in the Castel Béranger project and in the Neo-Impressionist boutique, the combination of red and blue clearly had therapeutic and hygienic significance for those who joined Gachet for these evenings.

One of the key figures, who might have given Signac the idea of therapeutic color, was the British art critic John Ruskin. Signac designated Ruskin as "the greatest aesthete of the century," who anticipated Neo-Impressionist precepts including the view that color was superior to drawing, and the Neo-Impressionists' endorsement of divisionism as a painterly technique.¹² Although the full text of Ruskin's major work, *The Elements of Drawing* (1857), was never translated into French in the nineteenth century, his theories were well known to French painters due to their translation in Ogden Rood's *Modern Chromatics* (French translation: *Théorie scientifique des couleurs et leurs applications à l'art et à l'industrie*, published in 1881),¹³ and Octave Maus's journal *L'art moderne* (November 1888),¹⁴ and Robert de La Sizeranne's articles in *La Revue des deux mondes* (1897).¹⁵ As Robyn Roslak details, Signac occasionally cited Ruskin's theory in his *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impionnisme* (1899).¹⁶ Ruskin's following statement – which Roslak cites as influencing Signac – epitomizes how color perception was incorporated into the concept of a viewer's health.

You will find, also, your power of coloring depends much on your state of health and right balance of mind; when you are fatigued or ill you will not see colors well, and when you are ill-tempered you will not choose them well.¹⁷

Ruskin demonstrates how he conceived of mental health, color perception, and the act of painting as one unremitting procedure. If one is healthy, one can perceive colors well and choose good colors. Conversely, if one colors well, one proves that one is healthy. In this statement, beauty in art and health in life are merged into each other. Color enables one to bridge the aesthetic norm (beauty) and the hygienic norm (health).

Color, in fact, gradually came to be regarded as a catalyst for good health in late nineteenth-century Europe and North America. According to historian Faber Birren, color therapy, along with sunbathing, was increasingly prescribed as a curative to mental instability from the 1870s onward.¹⁸ The combination of red and blue in this context came to be regarded as a significant treatment for restoring mental equilibrium. Seth Pancoast, a nineteenth-century American color theorist, asserted in *Blue and Red Light* (1877) that seeing red and blue in equilibrium was indispensable to good health: "To accelerate the Nervous System, in all cases of relaxation, the Red ray must be used, and to relax the Nervous System, in all cases of excessively accelerated tension, the Blue ray must be used."¹⁹ This understanding was widespread in Europe around the turn of the century, which can be seen in German theorist A. Osborne Eaves' 1906 statement that "red and blue were characterized as the most contrasting and the most therapeutically effective colors."²⁰

In France, Charles Féré, a secretary of Jean Martin Charcot and a colleague of Charles Henry (a close friend of Paul Signac), discussed the symptomatic significance of colored vision in his book *La pathologie des émotions* (1892) with a special focus on red and blue.

Colored vision can, moreover, manifest itself spontaneously in neuropaths in the apparent absence at least of every particular excitation. Hirschberg has seen a woman in whom blue vision had endured for several months. Red vision or erythroptosis, studied by Purtscher, can also be present itself apparently spontaneously, in the absence of any apparent characteristic morbid state. In some feeble subjects prolonged exposure to an intense light, to the reverberation from an extensive brilliant surface such as a black plain, a lake, etc., provokes sometimes colored vision in orange, red, etc.

Moreover, red vision manifests itself in anger, at the commencement of a certain number of impulsive acts, under the influence of certain states of exaltation. Saint Catherine of Sienna saw the host colored red. Epileptics complain sometimes of this sensation at the beginning of their fit; hysterical persons complain also of the same phenomenon. Besides, several subjects of this last category have chromopsia in the wake of nervous discharges it may be after the attacks, it may be after violent angers, after fits of weeping; they complain of seeing yellow, violet, blue for a time, longer or shorter, sometimes for several hours.²¹

According to Féré, the patient sees different colors based on his or her mental state. One sees red in anger, and blue and yellow when sorrowful. In other words, color perception is seen to indicate an individual's mental imbalance. Here, red and blue play a significant role as the former represents anger and excitement while the latter represents calmness and depression. Red and blue act as a basic, complementary unit of polar opposites that serve to neutralize each other.

In the field of literature, *À rebours* (1884) of Joris-Karl Huysmans, who had close contact with the Neo-Impressionists,²² epitomizes this interest in the relationship between color and health. The main character Jean Des Esseintes shut himself up in a room painted in orange and blue.²³ As art historian Debora Silverman has pointed out, the period during which Huysmans wrote *À rebours* was the time when the public was becoming increasingly familiar with the psychology of interior decoration.²⁴ Huysmans, who understood well that red and blue were a basic unit for psychotherapy, asserted that Des Esseintes preferred the morbidly stimulating hues of orange or red.²⁵ For the hot-tempered Des Esseintes, a balanced coordination of red and blue was a necessity. Through Huysmans's novel and his description of Des Esseintes's study, it is evident how color therapy was in fashion at that time, and how Huysmans sought to satirize it through the fictional character Des Esseintes.²⁶

In *La pathologie des émotions* (1892), Charles Féré also emphasized the impact of red and blue on people, including artists:

The relation established by Darwin betwixt the color of the flowers and the fertilization of the plants by certain insects exhibits, in another fashion, the influence of colored rays upon animals, an influence that has not struck naturalists only. “M. de B. pretended that his tone of conversation with Mme de --- was altered after she had changed into crimson the furniture of her cabinet, which was blue” (Chamfort). It is a common observation that light and certain colors favour intellectual activity. [...] Wagner always carried with him satin and silk stuffs of brilliant colors with which to adorn his apartments: he died in a chamber tapestried in rose and satin and pale blue.²⁷

In a space reminiscent of Des Esseintes’ study, the dramatist Richard Wagner reportedly died “in a chamber tapestried in rose and satin and pale blue.” These varied examples of the use of red and blue as therapeutic devises enhance our understanding of how Signac conceived of red and blue as a pair. Signac’s theory was part of a larger discourse on the pairing of red and blue and color in general in late nineteenth-century France. Through this discourse, one can appreciate the ways in which the Neo-Impressionists and their allies incorporated notions of color therapy on to their aesthetic theory in an effort to break down the barrier between art and life.

Homeopathic Practices in Neo-Impressionist Circles

A therapeutic understanding of color is not the only issue that reveals the Neo-Impressionists’ interest in hygienic practices. Many artists and intellectuals affiliated with the Neo-Impressionists including Camille and Lucien Pissarro, Octave Mirbeau, Paul Cézanne, Vincent Van Gogh, and the anarchist Elisée Reclus, among others, proclaimed their belief in homeopathy.²⁸ As I will demonstrate, the rising interest in homeopathy and daily hygienic practices in nineteenth-century Europe developed within the context of critiques of traditional medical practices, which arguably captivated the Neo-Impressionists and their allies. There are various anecdotes that demonstrate the circle’s enthusiasm for homeopathy. For example, a famous homeopath Dr. Léon Simon cared for Camille Pissarro on his deathbed. Pissarro was suffering from an abscess of the prostate gland. The attending surgeon, Dr. Cartier, wished to operate to prevent the infection from spreading. However, heeding Dr. Simon’s objection to the operation, Pissarro died of blood poisoning in 1903 at the age of 73.²⁹

Pissarro felt strongly that the causes of his friend Edouard Manet’s death related to Manet’s belief in allopathic medicine, and expressed his regret that the artist did not practice homeopathy.³⁰ Gauguin mocked Pissarro and Cézanne as fervent believers in homeopathy. He wrote to Pissarro.³¹

Has M. Cézanne found the exact formula for a work acceptable to everyone? If he discovers the prescription for compressing the intense expression of all his sensations into a single and unique procedure, try to make him talk in his sleep by giving him one of those mysterious homeopathic drugs and come immediately to Paris to share it with us.³²

Gauguin’s sarcasm is clear as he speaks of Cézanne, who was one of the key participants in Dr. Gachet’s circle

and, like Pissarro, a firm believer in homeopathy.³³ In addition to Pissarro and Cézanne, Alfred Sisley, August Renoir, and Van Gogh were also said to be believers in homeopathic medicine.³⁴

Painters were not alone in their interest in homeopathy: anarchists close to the Neo-Impressionists were also passionate practitioners. In January 1892, Pissarro wrote to the anarchist writer Octave Mirbeau, “What a pity that you don’t have any trust in the help of homeopathy!”³⁵ A year later, in October 1893, Mirbeau became a convert, writing to his friend Paul Hervieu: “Why don’t you treat yourself with homeopathy? I believe only in homeopathy. And when I am ill, I find a real relief in these easy remedies.”³⁶ Among the anarchists who were influential for the Neo-Impressionists, Elie and Elisée Reclus were also practitioners of homeopathy. When Elisée attended lectures by Louis Blanc and other socialist speakers in London in the 1850s, Elisée wrote to Elie that they were “the only Swedenborgians and homeopaths in all of London.”³⁷ Moreover, the second daughter of Elisée Reclus, who suffered ill health, treated herself with homeopathic remedies.³⁸

Among those in the Neo-Impressionist circle, there were several homeopaths who passionately taught remedies to various artists and intellectuals, including Dr. Paul-Ferdinand Gachet, the professional homeopathic doctor Léon Simon, and the Impressionist collector Georges de Bellio. Dr. Gachet’s first encounter with homeopathy in the 1850s was through Dr. Baron Durand de Monestrol, who was treating Mme Gachet at the time. Although homeopathy was not an official medicine then, Dr. Gachet was fascinated by its less invasive and humane treatments, which differed from standard allopathic practices.³⁹ Between 1871 and 1881, Camille Pissarro regularly called on the doctor’s services for himself and his family. However, at the same time he continued to get closer to the professional homeopathic doctor Léon Simon and the amateur practitioner Georges de Bellio.⁴⁰ In January 1887, Camille wrote to his son Lucien:

When you write me, give me news of your mother. I hope you looked carefully at the book by L. Simon, in which you will find the way to follow in these cases of affections... As for hoarseness of the maid, in not what I said to you in my letter, but in the letters of de Bellio, you will find the case of chronicity of hoarseness.⁴¹

As this passage demonstrates, the medical theories of Dr. Simon and De Bellio were indispensable to everyday life for the Pissarros. Léon Simon held various, prominent posts in homeopathic organizations: for example, he was president of the *société hahnemannienne* and the *société médicale homeopathique de France*.⁴² Simon and De Bellio were two of the founding members of *l’Hôpital Hahnemann* in Paris in April 1870.⁴³ De Bellio, who was close to Renoir, Morisot, Monet, Sisley, and Pissarro, prescribed medicine for their families and friends as a dilettante, and was a supporter of the Impressionists from 1874 on.⁴⁴

A number of homeopathic guides circulated among Dr. Gachet’s circle as evidenced in the libraries of De Bellio and Camille Pissarro: Samuel Hahnemann’s *Organon* (1811), De Monestrol’s *De l’Homoeopathie, de sa doctrine, de ses prescriptions et du régime à suivre pendant le traitement des maladies aiguës et chroniques* (1850), Constantine Hering’s *Médecine homéopathique domestique* (translated into French by Léon Simon, 1864), Léon Simon’s *Conférences sur L’Homéopathie* (1869), P. Jousset’s *Traité élémentaire de Matière*

Médicale expérimentale et de thérapeutique positive (1884), and A. Espanet's *La pratique de l'homéopathie simplifiée* (4th edition, 1894).⁴⁵ Although little has been written on the influence of homeopathy on the artists and intellectuals associated with Neo-Impressionism, there is little doubt that homeopathy had a significant impact on the group.

When homeopathy first appeared in the German medical marketplace through the work of the doctor Samuel Hahnemann in the late eighteenth century, existing medical practices often subjected patients to painful treatments such as amputations, potent laxatives, purgatives, emetics, bloodletting, and venesection.⁴⁶ From its inception, homeopathy was conceived of as a more humane alternative to current medical practices. In 1796, Hahnemann began to use the new term “homeopathy” as the antithesis of allopathic medicine. His tenet was “similia similibus curentur” or “let conditions be treated by things which are similar.” Hahnemann established the first homeopathic college in Leipzig in 1811, and his early disciples became “like members of a persecuted religious sect.”⁴⁷ When leftist feminist Mélanie d’Hervilly, the later Samuel Hahnemann’s wife, read his seminal work *Organon*, she supposedly proclaimed “here at last is a humanitarian medicine!”⁴⁸

Hahnemann’s circle was deeply influenced by the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who emphasized the need for hygiene and cleanliness. As early as the 1790s, Hahnemann wrote a Rousseauesque pamphlet called *The Friend of Health*, which went back to the first principles of hygiene and diet promoted by Hippocrates.⁴⁹ In *Emile* (1762), Rousseau criticized doctors, and emphasized the importance of daily hygiene practices. Rousseau’s slogan was “Let everything follow nature, doctors are evil.”⁵⁰ Rousseau’s ideas were in keeping with those of many ecologists and humanitarians. Consequently, many of Rousseau’s followers were political leftists, who rejected older cultural conventions as unnatural.⁵¹ When the Hahnemanns opened their homeopathic clinic in France in the 1830s, there was an increasing ecological emphasis on hygiene, diet, and hydrotherapy in their practise. In the course of the nineteenth century, crime, alcoholism, prostitution, suicide, and other social pathologies gradually joined insanity as research subjects in French medicine.⁵² The Rousseauesque emphasis on hygiene was one of the social remedies championed by leftists. It is notable that Camille Pissarro, a passionate anarcho-communist and a believer in homeopathy, was also an ardent reader of Rousseau.⁵³

This humanitarian connection is evident in Paul Ferdinand Gachet’s activities as a doctor. Compared to existing allopathic medicine, homeopathic remedies and daily preventive hygienic practices were gentler on the body and mind of patients. Gachet’s various alternative remedies – such as homeopathy, hydrotherapy, and electrotherapy – were largely informed by his own humanitarian beliefs. Gachet worked as an extern at the Salpêtrière in the mid-1850s under the famous physician Dr. Jean-Pierre Falret. His uncle Charles Gachet, a graduate of the Montpellier School of Medicine, who felt that the atmosphere and medical teaching at the southern institution was more akin to his nephew’s way of thinking, recommended that Paul transfer to his institution. In 1857, Paul Gachet moved to Montpellier, which was the city traditionally associated with Hippocratic medicine.⁵⁴ There, he learned of the concept of vitalism theorized by Paul Joseph Barthez (1734-1806), a major contributor to the study of holistic medicine at the Montpellier School.

Barthez’s “principe vital” was close to the concept of “nature” in the Hippocratic system. In Barthez’s

system, health was a state of dynamic equilibrium modulated by the “principe vital”. Barthez “thought the most important phenomenon in live entities was not any single function, but their dynamic integration or ‘unity.’” This “principle of unity” or “vital principle” in the living body is the unknown cause that makes and orchestrates all its organs and all their acts for its self-determined purposes.⁵⁵ This concept of vital principle, as I will discuss below, is connected to the concept of homeostasis, a fundamental principle of homeopathic practices, which postulate the intrinsic neural balance between the organism and the ecosystem. In fact, Léon Simon recognized that there was a direct connection between Barthez’s theory of vitalism and homeopathy as advocated by the Hahnemanns.⁵⁶ It is also notable that the anarchist Paul Brousse, who was close to Kropotkin, was a graduate of the Montpellier school of medicine. Under Napoleon III, the press laws were relaxed in 1868, and, by 1869, Montpellier had become a provincial center of Republican opposition, publishing the newspaper *La Liberté*, edited by Arthur Ballue.⁵⁷ Although Montpellier was not a center of homeopathic remedies per se, its status as a center of oppositional politics created an environment where interested parties could inquire about homeopathy.⁵⁸

Dr. Gachet’s early success in converting artists to homeopathy was directly related to this tradition of libertarianism. Gachet was close to the painter Amand Gautier, who introduced Gachet into bohemian circles in the 1850s. When Gachet volunteered to fight the cholera epidemic in the Jura in 1854, Gautier went with him. In return, Gachet gave Gautier access to the ward for female mental patients. It was there that Gautier found a subject for the painting that would launch his career at the Salon of 1857. In addition to Gautier, Gachet was also close to some of the most renowned French artists of the time, including Gustave Courbet,⁵⁹ Charles-François Daubigny, Jean-Baptiste Corot, Honoré Daumier, Jean-François Millet,⁶⁰ and Charles Baudelaire.⁶¹

From the 1870s onward, following the end of the Franco-Prussian War, Gachet began to frequent a number of cafes including the *Nouvelle Athènes*, the *Chat noir*, the *Rat crevé*, the *Château des brouillards*, and the *Taverne du baigne*, where he met the Impressionists Pissarro, Édouard Manet, Edgar Degas, Pierre-August Renoir, Alfred Sisley, Claude Monet, Paul Cézanne, and Armand Guillaumin.⁶² In 1872, the doctor divided his residence between Paris and the north-west suburb of Auvers-sur-Oise because of his wife’s tuberculosis.⁶³ In this period when he was traveling to and from Auvers-sur-Oise, Gachet met Toulouse-Lautrec,⁶⁴ and the Puerto Rican Impressionist, Francisco Oller y Cestero,⁶⁵ the Realist writer, Emile Zola, the Naturalist, Edmond Goncourt, and anarchist writer Paul Alexis. Later, Gachet became acquainted with the Neo-Impressionists or members of the *Indépendants* through the Red and Blue dinners. Gachet, under the pseudonym of P. van Ryssel, annually contributed his own pictures to the *Indépendants*. Paul Signac organized the display of ten of Gachet’s works at the *Salon des Indépendants* in the spring of 1891.⁶⁶ These left-wing artists in Dr. Gachet’s circle sympathized with the doctor’s humane, liberated, homeopathic remedies. Pissarro and other participants in Dr. Gachet’s circle, who were to varying degrees ecologists and anarchists, were clearly attracted to homeopathy, which reflected the political ideals of the left in France

Ethical and Aesthetic Beliefs in “Equilibrium”

I have elaborated on the little-studied details of the hygienic practices of the Neo-Impressionists and their social circle in terms of humanitarian discourse. However, I have not yet addressed the theoretical background of these therapeutic practices that so captured the imaginations of these artists and intellectuals. In this concluding section, I will analyze the ethical and aesthetic value of “equilibrium,” which pervaded the artists’ political theories, therapeutic practices, and their standard of color harmony.

“Equilibrium,” a relatively new concept, emerged with the development of the physical sciences in the mid-sixteenth century. From the beginning, the word signified the balance between opposing forces, as it does now, and developed alongside the system of mathematical quantification, as applied by advocates of the physical sciences and of psychology.⁶⁷ The concept of equilibrium was a fundamental tenet in anarchist philosophy, which captivated the Neo-Impressionist painters. Camille Pissarro strongly recommended his son Lucien read Proudhon’s *De la Justice dans la révolution et dans l’Eglise* (1858), where he writes:⁶⁸

Economic equilibrium is the necessary condition of morality, due to the stability of governments: this principle is unquestionable.⁶⁹

God of builders is not Substance, not Cause, not Soul, not Monad, not Creator, not Father, not Verb, not Love, not Paraclet, not Redeemer, not Satan, nothing that corresponds to a transcendental concept: everything metaphysic is here out of the way. This is personification of universal Equilibrium.⁷⁰

In the anarchist’s worldview, which rejects metaphysical existences and the centralization of power, the ethics of equilibrium was the supreme tenet as it guarantees social harmony among all members of society. Kropotkin also emphasized the importance of social equilibrium by stating that society “looks for harmony in an ever-changing and fugitive equilibrium between a multitude of varied forces and influences of every kind, following their own course.”⁷¹

I would argue that the Neo-Impressionists and their allies had a particular attachment to the anarchists’ concept of equilibrium and its accompanying ethics. As I have discussed above, the function of the quasi-complementary set of red and blue in nineteenth-century color therapy was to control nervous tension to maintain an equilibrium internal to the body. Also, the homeopathic notion of health was largely based on faith in the intrinsic natural balance of nervous functions, which we now call “homeostasis.” Although the word itself was coined by Walter B. Cannon in 1929, the nineteenth-century physiologist Claude Bernard proposed the stability of the bodily processes in *Léçon sur les phénomènes de la vie communs aux animaux et aux végétaux* in 1878.⁷² In fact, the discourse of “homeostasis” or a belief in an intrinsic bodily and social stability was widely shared by a large number of European psychologists, physiologists, medical doctors, and philosophers among Bernard’s contemporaries.⁷³ Homeopaths were believers in the homeostatic stability of the human body.

According to Samuel Hahnemann, who was active in the early nineteenth century, there were only two

kinds of diseases, “sthenia” and “asthenia.” “Sthenia” was the result of over-stimulation or over-irritation, and “asthenia” was the result of insufficient stimulation. Therefore, there were only two treatments: “sedatives,” which served to sooth irritations such as bleeding, cold applications, emetics, purgatives, and diaphoretics; and “stimulants” such as purging and sweating, and the use of hot applications, meat, spicy foods, wine, and exercise which stimulated the affected area.⁷⁴ By balancing the application of “sedatives” and “stimulants,” homeopaths were supposed to maintain a patient’s health based on the premise of homeostasis.

Interestingly, Hahnemann’s *Organon* did not identify any material causes for disease, and took an energy-monistic worldview. He regarded the cause of disease as only “mistunings of the life force of the human body.” Hahnemann argued:

With the medical art of homeopathy, it is entirely different [from allopathy]. It can easily persuade every reflecting person that human diseases rest on no material, on no acidity, that is to say, on no disease matter; rather they are solely spirit-like (dynamic) mistunings of the spirit-like enlivening power-force-energy (Kraft) (the life principle, the life force) of the human body.⁷⁵

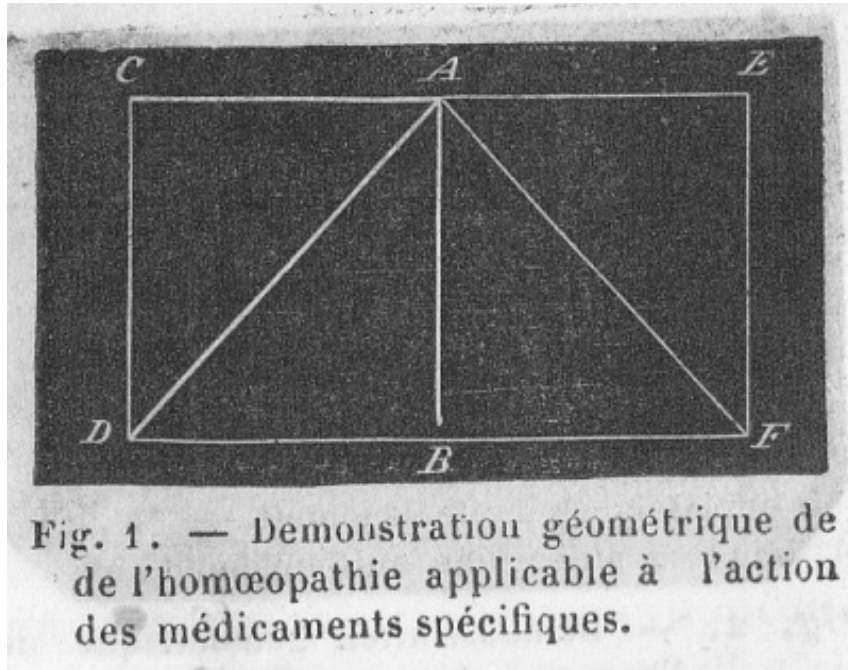
Likewise, Paul-Ferdinand Gachet’s doctoral thesis, *Etude sur la Mélancolie* (1858), argued that disease was a state in which bodily equilibrium was upset.⁷⁶ According to Gachet, “Material lesions, fever, inflammation or edema, a congested organ, or some area of malfunction, indicate that the equilibrium is disrupted ... that the vital force which presides over acts and movements is disturbed, modified, and injured.”⁷⁷ Gachet’s homeopathic teacher, Dr. Monestrol also argued that one can define health as complete equilibrium of vital forces and disease as disruption of these forces.⁷⁸ Dr. Léon Simon’s influential text book, *les Cours libres de la Sorbonne, Conférences sur l’homéopathie* (1869), which Pissarro often consulted, similarly regarded health as a vital harmony and defined the function of medicine as a means to rectify disharmony.

In the state of health, the vital force, which dynamically animates the material part of the body, has unlimited power. The vital force maintains all the parts in an admirable vital harmony... There is only a disaccorded vital force, which, according to Hahnemann, produced diseases.⁷⁹

Based on the vitalist tradition shared by nineteenth-century homeopaths, Simon argued that life is a force, and that bodily accordance of this mysterious force was the only barometer of health.⁸⁰

Constantine Hering, a German homeopath, whose book was translated into French as *Médecine homéopathique domestique* (1864) by Dr. Simon and read by Pissarro, visually schematized this monistic discourse as it related to homeopathic remedies (Figure 3). According to Hering, Figure 3 is a scheme that shows the power balance among three major forces, including the life force, illness, and medical treatment. Here, line AB is a vital force, and line AC is a morbid force. Therefore, line AD, which is an additive vector of AB and AC, represents illness. In order to counterbalance the morbid force of AC, the vector AE is necessary. Thus, vector AE represents therapeutic medicine, and vector AF, which is an additive vector of AE and AB,

(Figure 3) *Démonstration géométrique de l'homéopathie* from Constantine Hering, *Médecine homéopathique domestique*, translated into French by Léon Simon, Paris: Baillière, 1864.



represents a therapeutic and healthy life force.⁸¹ In this way, life, illness, and medicine were quantified in the same dimension in homeopathic discourse, and equilibrium among the three kinds of energy was the ultimate goal of the treatment. The Neo-Impressionist aesthetics of color harmony was largely based on the premise of homeostatic equilibrium among the optical nerves, which, I contend, was one of the reasons why the artists were attracted to homeopathy and color therapy.

Signac repeatedly emphasized the importance of equilibrium in his major theoretical book, *D'Eugène Delacroix au néoimpressionnisme* in 1899. Signac argued that, “it is not enough to assure the technique of division. By only taking account of the optical mixture of pure elements, maximum luminosity and coloration, moreover, the controlled usage and equilibrium of these elements according to the rules of contrast, gradation, and irradiation, the technique of divisionism can guarantee the integral harmony of the work.”⁸² Charles Angrand later wrote to his fellow Neo-Impressionist Maximilien Luce in 1909 that “equilibrium is the law of the cosmic world.”⁸³ For Neo-Impressionists, a steadfast belief in the laws of equilibrium continued to function as a mainstay of the group’s aesthetics into the early twentieth century.

Although the interpretations of these notions of equilibrium can vary, since they circulated freely in the fields of politics, medicine and aesthetic theory, one chief signification of the concept in Neo-Impressionist aesthetics is the laws of complementary contrasts. As Georges Roque and John Gage have demonstrated, the Neo-Impressionist painters were ardent believers in the beauty of complementary contrasts.⁸⁴ Seurat’s 1881 “Notes on Delacroix” anticipated their orientation among the Neo-Impressionists.⁸⁵ In this memorandum, Seurat specifically focused on the use of complementary contrasts in Eugène Delacroix’s oil painting

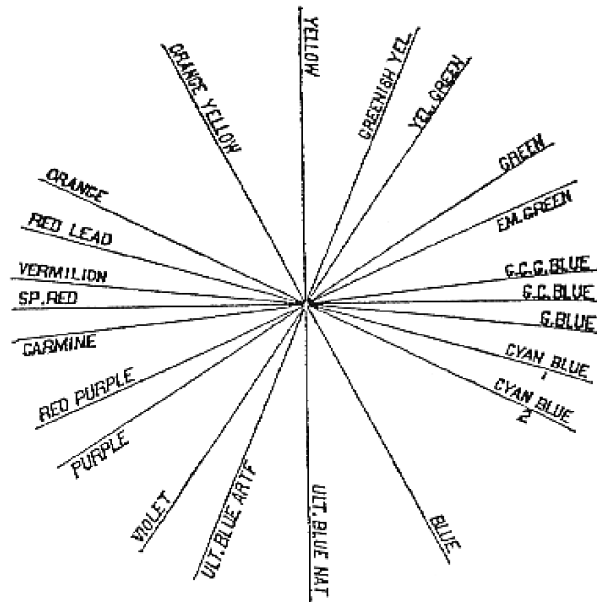
“Fanatics of Tangier” (1838).⁸⁶ In 1880s, Seurat and Pissarro began painting their frames using the same complementary colors employed in their canvases.⁸⁷ By the sixth Impressionist exhibition in 1881, Pissarro had started using complementary color frames that supposedly countered the dominant color of the painting, and he even printed the words on the exhibition pamphlet in red ink against a green background.⁸⁸ Seurat’s famous “Letter to Maurice Beaubourg” (1890) ends with a declaration that “the harmony of the frame contrasts with that of the tonal values, colors, and lines of the picture,”⁸⁹ and the painter in fact started putting complementary colors in the frames of his works including *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* (1884-86) and *View of le Crotoy* (1889).

In his letter to Camille Pissarro in 1887, Signac further commented on the popularity of painted frames among the Neo-Impressionists at the time: “With the complementary frame, you can reinforce the tones that are located on the border of the canvas, but how about those of the center?”⁹⁰ Signac’s question suggests that he was even more concerned with the equilibrium of complementary contrasts as an entity than Seurat. The most typical examples can be seen in his “Portrait of Félix Fénéon, Opus 217” (1891) (Figure 4), “Women at the Well” (1892), and “In the Time of Harmony” (1895), which carefully display complementary contrasts diagonally, recalling the color theorist Ogden Rood’s diagram (Figure 5). In Figure 4, for example, Fénéon’s outstretched hand with a white flower seemingly creates a magical maelstrom that governs its rotating movement at the center of the color wheel. The diagonal complementary contrasts such as combinations of red and green, yellow and purple, orange and blue are offsetting each other in this painterly world.

(Figure 4) Paul Signac, “Portrait of Félix Fénéon, Opus 217,” 1890-91, oil on canvas, 29×38 3/8 in. (73.5×92.5 cm), The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



(Figure 5) Ogden Rood, “Color contrast diagram,” 1879 in *Modern Chromatics*, New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1973.



Rood – a professional scientist who studied physics and chemistry in Berlin, Munich, and Leipzig from 1854 to 1858, and one of the most influential figures on the Neo-Impressionists – designated color generation as a function of the three optical nerves, i.e. orange (red), green, and violet (blue), following Thomas Young’s hypothesis.⁹¹ On the basis of this neurological standardization of color vision, Rood believed that complementary afterimages are generated as a result of fatigue caused by the labor of the nerves. Rood connects afterimages with nervous system reactions that struggle for homeostatic equilibrium among the three optical nerves:

It is quite easy to explain their production [complementary afterimage] with the aid of the theory of Young and Helmholtz. Let us take as an example the experiment just described. According to our theory, the green light from the little square of paper, acting on the eye, fatigues to some extent the green nerves of the retina, the red and violet nerves meanwhile not being much affected. When the green paper is suddenly jerked away by the string, grey light is presented to the fatigued retina, and this grey light may be considered to consist, as far as we are concerned, of red, green, and violet light. The red and violet nerves, not being fatigued, respond powerfully to this stimulus; the green nerves, however, answer this new call on them more feebly, and in consequence we have presented to us mainly a mixture of the sensations red and violet, giving as a final result rose-red or purplish-red.⁹²

Therefore Rood emphasized the significance of complementary contrasts, which could maintain the intrinsic balance of the labor of the nerves while he generally dissuaded painters from using a mixture of similar colors,

presumably because this resulted in a partial stimulation of the three optical nerves.⁹³

As Rood himself clarified, his theory was based on the Young-Helmholtz neurological trichromatic system. Helmholtz's first major publication on the topic, *Handbuch der physiologischen Optik* (1860), made a significant impact on contemporary popular theorists including Hippolyte Taine, Théodule Ribot, Eugène Véron, Herbert Spencer, Ogden Rood, and Charles Henry, all of whom were read by the French Neo-Impressionists.⁹⁴ Moreover, Helmholtz's most significant text on art, "Optisches über Malerei" (the source text for his popular lectures on optics in painting delivered in Germany from 1871 to 1873) was available in French under the title of "L'optique et la peinture," as a part of Ernst Brücke's text, *Principes scientifiques des beaux-arts* (1878).⁹⁵ It is likely that this book made its way into the hands of both Charles Henry and Seurat.⁹⁶ In 1878, three years before the French translation of Rood's *Modern Chromatics* appeared, Helmholtz's "L'optique et la peinture" explained color and light perception in terms of nervous labor and fatigue by stating that "the muscle is tired by work, the brain is tired by thinking, and by mental operations; the eye is tired by light."⁹⁷

Accordingly, Helmholtz recommended that painters arrange their colors in a manner that avoids lopsided fatigue. Drawing on Young's hypothesis concerning the trichromatic nature of optical nerves, Helmholtz defined ideal harmonies as contrasts of two complementaries and those of three primaries.

It is necessary... to avoid a onesided fatigue of the eye by too prominent a color to a moderate extent upon a dull, slightly colored ground, or by the juxtaposition of variously saturated colors, which produce a certain equilibrium of irritation in the eye, and, by the contrast in their after-images, strengthen and increase each other. [...] Still more satisfactory combinations are those of three things which bring about equilibrium in the impression of color, and, notwithstanding the great body of color, avoid a onesided fatigue of the eye, without falling into the baldness of complementary tints. To this belongs the combination which the Venetian masters used so much – red, green, and violet; as well as Paul Veronese's purple, greenish blue, and yellow. The former triad corresponds approximately to the three fundamental colors, in so far as these can be produced by pigments; the latter gives the mixtures of each pair of fundamental colors.⁹⁸

Notably, in neuro-psychological discourse, color juxtaposition is no longer a matter of simple factual science, but now largely one of ethical and aesthetic value judgment. Such a notion of harmony cannot be deduced only from factual observations, but necessarily from a belief in intrinsic homeostatic energy equilibrium. Although Rood's contemporaries regarded neuro-psychological color theories as the most objective,⁹⁹ once these theories were incorporated into the field of art and aesthetics, they inevitably assumed a strong ethical dimension that identified labor equilibrium as a criterion for beauty and harmony. By examining the life and letters of the Neo-Impressionists, I have illuminated the way in which those artists saw themselves as social reformers who integrated art into the broader project of overturning traditional medicine and improving the health of ordinary citizens.

- ¹ Erich Franz, ed, *Signac et la liberation de la couleur: de Matisse à Mondrian*, Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1997, 69.
- ² Robyn S. Roslak, *Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France: Painting, Politics and Landscape*, Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007, 42.
- ³ Erich Franz, 1997, 52, note 3. John Rewald, "Extraits du journal inédit de Paul Signac, I, 1894-1895" *Gazette des beaux-arts*, juillet-septembre, 1949, 106.
- ⁴ Kathleen Adler, *Camille Pissarro: A Biography*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977, 147.
- ⁵ This unpublished letter is now in the Getty Research Center archive. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine. Accents are often omitted in this original French: "Préparez nous un chouette envoi pour Janvier... il est craindre que nous n'ayons pas le Pavillion en Mars...quel trou, notre boutique dans cette vieille lune de rue Laffitte... Bleu vers dahlia, lettres rondes et metalliques, rouges vermillons ... elle chante deja la bonne chanson dynamogénique de la gaiete, de la lumière, de la force, de la santé ... un triomphe." The term "dynamogénie" was invented by the neurologist Charles Brown-Séguard (Charles Brown-Séguard, *Recherches expérimentales et cliniques sur l'inhibition et la dynamogénie*, 1878). For Charles Henry's impact on Neo-Impressionism in relation to the concept of "dynamogénie," see Michael F. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of his Time*, Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1991, 249f. and Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000, 164-165.
- ⁶ The following two studies specially thematize Neo-Impressionist political engagement in anarcho-communism. Eugenia and Robert Herbert, "Artists and Anarchism: Unpublished Letters of Pissarro, Signac, and Others," Pts. I & II, *Burlington Magazine*, 102 (November-December 1960), 472-482; 517-522. John G. Hutton, *Neo-Impressionism and the Search for Solid Ground: Art, Science, and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994.
- ⁷ Several art historians have dealt with the issue to some extent. In her article "Symphonic Seas, Oceans of Liberty: Paul Signac's La Mer: Les Barques (Concarneau)" (*Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, Volume 4, Issue 1, Spring 2005), Robyn S. Roslak discusses an orientation toward "better life" arguably shared by members of the Neo-Impressionist circle. She refers to the Wagnerian critic Théodor de Wyzewa, who argued that art, specifically musical harmony, should contribute to improvement of the quality of life. In her book *Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France: Painting, Politics and Landscape* (2007), Roslak also points out the possible impact of Ruskin's idea of morality and the anarchist idealization of agriculture on Signac's aesthetics, all of which arguably indicated his embrace of an atomic worldview. Françoise Cachin likewise argues that the artists' rigorous observance of the laws of color and harmony had not only an artistic dimension but also an ethical one, in comparison to the "indulgent" praxis of the Impressionists (Paul Signac, *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impressionnisme*, Paris: Hermann, 1964, 16). Within the literature associated with Neo-Impressionism, Anne Distel's *Cézanne to Van Gogh: The Collection of Dr. Gachet* (New York: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999) and Margaret Werth's *The Joy of Life: The Idyllic in French Art, Circa 1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) have partly dealt with Neo-Impressionist daily practices as manifest in Dr. Gachet's homeopathic treatment of the Pissarros and other Impressionists, and the idealization of leisure in Signac's "In the Time of Harmony." However, these studies do not thematize Neo-Impressionist daily practices as an asset of their art.
- ⁸ Paul Signac, "Hector Guimard, l'art dans l'habitation modern, le castel Béranger," *La Revue Blanche*, 15 février 1899. On details of this article, see Françoise Cachin, *Signac: Catalogue Raisonné de l'Oeuvre Paint*, Paris: Gallimard, 2000, 84, note 68.
- ⁹ Cachin, 2000, 50.
- ¹⁰ Paul Alexis (under the pseudonym Trublou), "A minute," *Le cri du peuple*, 25 juillet, 1886; 13 mai, 1887; 15 novembre, 1887. -----, "Trubl'au vert – Trubl'Auvers-sur-Oise," *Le cri du peuple*, 15 août, 1887.
- ¹¹ Ibid.; Distel, 1999, 9-10; Anne Distel, *Seurat, Profils de l'art chène*, 1991, 18-19; Musée du Louvre, *Signac 1963-1964*, Ministère d'État Affaires Culturelles, 1963, 16-17. Camille Pissarro, *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro*, tome 2, ed. Janine Bailly-Herzberg, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980, 100.
- ¹² Signac, "Le néo-impressionnisme" 1898 in Erich Franz, ed. *Signac et la liberation de la couleur: de Matisse à Mondrian*, Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1997, 382 and note 1.
- ¹³ Ogden Rood. *Théorie scientifique des couleurs et leurs applications à l'art et à l'industrie*, Paris: Librairie Germer Baillière et Cie, 1881, Ch. 10.
- ¹⁴ 11 novembre, 1888, huitième année, numéro 46, 365f.
- ¹⁵ Robert de La Sizeranne, "La Religion de la beauté: Etude sur John Ruskin," pts 3 & 4 *La Revue des deux mondes*, 139, 1 février, 1897, 610-633. -----, "Sa pensée," *La Revue des deux mondes*, 140, 1 mars, 1897, 169-203.
- ¹⁶ Roslak, 2007, 186f.
- ¹⁷ John Ruskin, *The Elements of Drawing*, Boston and New York: Colonial Press Company, 1909, 156-157.
- ¹⁸ Faber Birren, *Color Psychology and Color Therapy: A Factual Study of the Influence of Color on Human Life*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1950.
- ¹⁹ Seth Pancoast, *Blue and Red Light*, Philadelphia, J. M. Stoddart & co., 1877, 267.
- ²⁰ A. Osborne Eaves, *Die Kräfte der Farben* (1906) as cited in John Gage, *Color and Meaning: Art, Science, and Symbolism*,

- Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999, 252.
- ²¹ Charles Féré, *The Pathology of Emotions, Physiological and Clinical Studies*, trans by Robert Park, London: The University Press, 1899, 32-33.
- ²² Huysmans's book *L'Art moderne* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1883) made the relationship between the writer and the painters closer. The book was well read among the Impressionists including Seurat, Signac, and Pissarro, although it claimed "daltonisme," or retinal disorder of the artists. Pissarro mentioned the book in two letters of May 1883 (Letters 145 & 146 in Camille Pissarro, *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro*, 1980, 203-205). Seurat admired the book, which Signac told in this book 1899 (Signac, 1964, 110). For more details, see Paul Smith, "'Parbleu': Pissarro and the political color of an original vision," *Art History*, vol. 15, no. 2, June 1992, 235.
- ²³ Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Against Nature*, trans by Margaret Mauldon, Oxford University Press, 1998, Chapter 3.
- ²⁴ Debora L. Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology, and Style*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989, 75.
- ²⁵ Joris-Karl Huysmans, 1998, Chapter 1.
- ²⁶ Joyce Henri Robinson, "'Hi Honey, I'm Home': Weary (Neurasthenic) Businessmen and the Formulation of a Serenely Modern Aesthetic," *Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art and Architecture*, ed. Christopher Reed, New York: Themes & Hudson, 1996, 106.
- ²⁷ Charles Féré, 1899, 23.
- ²⁸ Anne Distel, 1999, 5; Marianne Delafond, *A L'Apogée de L'Impressionnisme: la collection Georges de Bellio*, La Bibliothèque des Arts, 2007, 40; Gary S. Elisée Dunbar, *Historian of Nature*, Hamden, Conn. : Archon Books, 1978, 27.
- ²⁹ Adler, 1977, 189-190. Camille Pissarro, *Camille Pissarro: Letters to his son Lucian*, ed. John Rewald, Boston: MFA Publications, 1972, 360. Pissarro's mistrust of ordinary medicine and surgery in particular dated back to an unsuccessful operation on his son Georges. See Ralph Shikes and Paula Harper, *Pissarro: His Life and Work*, New York: Horizon Press, 1980, 206.
- ³⁰ Letter from Camille Pissarro to his son Lucian on April 2, 1883 (Pissarro, 1972, 25-26).
- ³¹ Adler, 1977, 87-88.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 87-88.
- ³³ For example see a letter from Cézanne to his son on 3 August 1906: "I gave up homeopathy in favour of mixed syrup of the old school." (Paul Cézanne. *Paul Cezanne Letters*, ed. John Rewald, New York: Hacker Art Books, Inc., 1976, 320). This illustrates his belief in homeopathy until around then.
- ³⁴ Delafond, 2007, 40.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ Gary S. Dunbar. *Elisée, Historian of Nature*, Hamden, Conn. : Archon Books, 1978, 27.
- ³⁸ Henriette Chardak, *Élisée Reclus: L'homme qui aimait la Terre*, Paris: Édition Stock, 1997, 183.
- ³⁹ Remo Fabbri, Jr., *An Inquiry into the Life and Thought of Dr. Paul-Ferdinand Gachet*, Doctoral Thesis, Department of the History of Medicine, Yale University, 1964, 7.
- ⁴⁰ Pissarro's letters regularly referred to De Bellio after 1876,⁴⁰ and Dr. Simon after 1886. Pissarro mentions Dr. Simon many times: see Camille Pissarro. *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro* (1980): lettre 351(to Lucien, Paris, dimanche 12 [septembre] 1886); lettre 390 (to Lucien, Paris, mercredi 26 janvier 1887); lettre 496 (to Lucien, Paris, 12 juillet 1888); lettre 478 (to Julie, Paris, 5 avril, 1888); lettre 602 (to Lucien, Eragny par Gisors, Eure. 17 novembre 1890); lettre 607 (to Lucien, Eragny par Gisors, Eure., jeudi 11 décembre 1890); lettre 649 (to Lucien, Paris, 1er avril 1891); lettre 659 (to Lucien, Paris, 7 mai 1891) et al.
- ⁴¹ Letter from Camille Pissarro to Lucien (mercredi 26 janvier 1887) in Pissarro, *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro*, t.2, p. 124, lettre 390: "Quand tu m'écriras donne-moi des nouvelles de ta mère, j'espère que tu as regardé attentivement dans le livre à L. Simon, tu y trouveras la marche à suivre dans ces affections... Quant à l'enrouement de la bonne, se ce n'est pas ce que je te disais dans ma lettre tu trouveras dans les lettres de de Bellio le cas *chronicité de l'enrouement*."
- ⁴² Léon Simon, *les Cours libres de la Sorbonne, Conférences sur l'homéopathie*, Paris: J.B. Baillière et Fils, 1869, the front page.
- ⁴³ *L'Hahnemannisme, Journal de la Médecine homéopathique* (rédigé par les docteurs Boyer, Chancerel père, Chancerel fils, Desterne, Jahr, Léon Simon fils, tome premier, Paris: J.B. Baillière et Fils, Tome Troisième 1870).
- ⁴⁴ Paul Gachet. *Lettres Impressionnistes*, Paris: Bernard Grasset Editeur, 1957, 54.
- ⁴⁵ Delafond, 2007, 12-13, note 11. Pissarro, 1980, tome 1, 74.
- ⁴⁶ Robert Jütte, Guenter B. Risse, and John Woodward, ed., *Culture, Knowledge, and Healing: Historical Perspectives of Homeopathic Medicine in Europe and North America*, Sheffield: European Association for the History of Medicine and Health Publications, 1998, 70-71.
- ⁴⁷ Robert Jütte, "The Professionalisation of Homeopathy in the Nineteenth Century," *Coping with Sickness: Historical Aspects of Health Care in a European Perspective*, ed. by John Woodward and Robert Jütte, European Association for the History of Medicine and Health Publications, 1995, 49f. Robert Jütte, Guenter B. Risse, and John Woodward, ed. 1998, 72, note 32.
- ⁴⁸ Rima Handley, *A Homeopathic Love Story: The Story of Samuel and Mélanie Hahnemann*, Berkeley: Horth Atlantic Books, 1990, 47. Before Hahnemann's death, *Organon* was published in 1810, 1819, 1824, 1829, and 1834. (Handley, *Ibid.*, 3, 80).

- D'Harvilly read a French translation of the 4th edition (1829).
- ⁴⁹ Handley, 1990, 62.
- ⁵⁰ Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *Emile*, trans by Barbara Foxley, Nu Vision Publications, LLC, 2007, 28f.
- ⁵¹ For strong criticism against modern medicine and medical system, see the concept of "iatrogenesis" in Ivan Illich. *Limits to Medicine, Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health*, Penguin Books, 1976.
- ⁵² Robert A. Nye, *Crime, Madness, and Politics in Modern France: The Medical Model of National Decline*, Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, c1984, xii-xiii. Jacqueline Sonolet, "Le Docteur P. F. Gachet," *Qui était le docteur Gachet*, Auvers sur Oise, 1980, 45.
- ⁵³ Adler, 1977, p. 27.
- ⁵⁴ Fabbri, Jr., 1964, 9-10.
- ⁵⁵ Alisa Schulweis Reich, *Paul Joseph Barthez and the Impact of Vitalism on Medicine and Psychology*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1995, 18.
- ⁵⁶ Léon Simon, *Les Cours libres de la Sorbonne, Conférences sur l'homéopathie*, Paris: J.B. Baillière et Fils, 1869, 12: "En France, Barthez proclamait une doctrine plus précise et plus complète que celle de ses prédécesseurs; Pinel poursuivait l'application du point de vue des naturalistes à l'art de guérir; Bichat enfin jetait les bases de l'organicisme que Broussais devait suivre bientôt jusqu'à ses dernières applications. Hahnemann, en proclamant un dogmatisme plus complet et rigoureusement enchaîné, donna à chacun de ces points de vue exclusifs la place qui lui appartenait."
- ⁵⁷ David Stafford, *From Anarchism to Reformism: A study of the political activities of Paul Brousse 1870-90*, London: LSE, 1971, 23-24.
- ⁵⁸ Fabbri, Jr., 1964, 11.
- ⁵⁹ Howard Halle, "Art therapy: the Met's "Doctor Gachet" highlights the extraordinary eye of a physician, collector and friend of Van Gogh," *Time Out New York* (June 3-10, 1999), n.p. Janet Flanner, "Kindly Bystander," *Happer's Bazaar*, April 1952, 140, 201.
- ⁶⁰ Distel, 1999, 8-9.
- ⁶¹ Halle, 1999, n.p.
- ⁶² Bruno Vouters, *Vincent et le docteur Gachet*, Lille: La Voix du Nord Edition, 1990, 30. Distel, 1999, 6-7. Fabbri, Jr. 1964, 21. Halle, *Ibid.*, n.p. Flanner, 1952, 140.
- ⁶³ Gene M. Moore, "Conrad, Dr. Gachet, and the 'School of Charenton'," *Conradiana* 25, no. 3, 1993, 168.
- ⁶⁴ Ursula Frances Vandenbroucke, *Qui était le docteur Gachet?*, Auvers sur Oise, 1980, 22.
- ⁶⁵ Halle, 1999, n.p.
- ⁶⁶ Flanner, 1952, 201. Distel, 1999, 10-12, note 68.
- ⁶⁷ The first recorded French word *équilibre* was used in 1544 as a meaning of equivalence (*Le trésor de la langue française informatisé*).
- ⁶⁸ Ralph Shikes and Paula Harper, 1980, 68.
- ⁶⁹ Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *De la Justice dans la révolution et dans l'Eglise*, Paris: Garnier frères, 1858, tome 1, 396. "L'équilibre économique est la condition nécessaire de la moralité, par suite de la stabilité des gouvernements: ce principe est incontestable."
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, tome 2, 212. "Le Dieu des maçons n'est ni Substance, ni Cause, ni Ame, ni Monade, ni Créateur, ni Père, ni Verbe, ni Amour, ni Paraclet, ni Rédempteur, ni Satan, ni rien de ce qui correspond à un concept transcendantal: toute métaphysique est ici écartée. C'est la personnification de l'Équilibre universel."
- ⁷¹ Peter Kropotkin, *Anarchism: A Collection of Revolutionary Writings*, ed. Roger N. Baldwin, New York: Dover Press, 2002, 124.
- ⁷² Erma Fox, *Homeostasis and Philosophy*, Master's Thesis, San Diego State University, 1991, 5.
- ⁷³ For more details, see Yukiko Kato, *Color, Hygiene, and Body Politics: French Neo-Impressionist Theories of Vision and Volition, 1870-1905*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Durham, NC: Duke University, 2010, Chapter I.
- ⁷⁴ Handley, 1990, 58.
- ⁷⁵ Samuel Hahnemann, *Organon of the Medical Art*, the sixth edition of Dr. Samuel Hahnemann's work of genius based on a translation by Steven Decker, Edited and annotated by Wenda Brewster O'Reilly, Redmond, Washington: Birdcage Books, 1962, p. 4.
- ⁷⁶ Paul-Ferdinand Gachet, *Etude sur la Mélancolie*, doctoral thesis, Montpellier: University of Montpellier, 1858, 13.
- ⁷⁷ Fabbri Jr., 1964, 35-36.
- ⁷⁸ Durand de Monestrol, *L'Homeopathie, de sa doctrine et de ses prescriptions*, Lille: impr. de Lefebvre-Ducrocq, 1850, 10. "On peut définir, la santé, l'équilibre complet des forces vitales, d'où résulte la régularité dans les fonctions des divers organes. Et la maladie, la perturbation de ces mêmes forces, produisant comme conséquences, le trouble, le désordre dans une ou plusieurs des fonctions organiques."
- ⁷⁹ Léon Simon, 1869, 140. "Dans l'état de santé, la force vitale qui anime dynamiquement la partie matérielle du corps, exerce un pouvoir illimité. Elle entretient toutes les parties dans une admirable harmonie vitale [...] Il n'y a que la force vitale désaccordée, dit encore Hahnemann, qui produise les maladies."
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 307.

- ⁸¹ Constantine Hering, *Médecine homéopathique domestique*, translated into French by Léon Simon, Paris: Baillière, 1864, 10-13.
- ⁸² Signac, 1964 (1899), 92.
- ⁸³ Letter of Charles Angrand to Maximilien Luce on 4 Octobre, 1909: see Charles Angrand, *Correspondences 1883-1926*, Rouen : F. Lespinasse, 1988, 202.
- ⁸⁴ Georges Roque, *Art et Science de la Couleur: Chevreul et les Peintres, de Delacroix à l'abstraction*, Nîmes: Éditions Jacqueline Chambon, 1997, 61f. John Gage, *Color and Meaning: Art, Science, and Symbolism*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999, 165.
- ⁸⁵ Félix Fénéon, "Notes inédites de Seurat sur Delacroix (1881)," *Le Bulletin de la Vie Artistique*, 1 avril, 1922, 154-158.
- ⁸⁶ After the publication of Delacroix' *Journal* in 1893, his color usage specifically attracted the Neo-Impressionists' attention including that of Signac. For Delacroix's impact on subsequent avant-gardists in general, see Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art: Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, 308.
- ⁸⁷ Didier Semin, "Note sur Seurat et le cadre," *Avant-guerre sur l'art, etc.* numéro 1, 2, trimestre 1980, 53-59. Roque, 1997, 256-259; 316-317. Pissarro started using complementary color frames around 1880, and Seurat began to paint his frames in the late 1880s.
- ⁸⁸ Roque, 1997, 258.
- ⁸⁹ Norma Broude, ed, *Seurat in Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978, 19.
- ⁹⁰ Signac's letter to Camille Pissarro on 30 June, 1887 as cited in Roque (1997), 317.
- ⁹¹ As William Innes Homer pointed out, it is notable that the critic Félix Fénéon exclusively referred to the texts of Ogden Rood and his associates such as Helmholtz, Maxwell, Wilhelm Dove, and Charles Henry, while the names of Eugène Chevreul is strangely absent in his writing from 1886 to 1891. Significantly, Rood and his associates founded their research on a neuro-psychological explanation of color perception, while Chevreul did not necessarily rely on that body of knowledge. See William Innes Homer, *Seurat and the Science of Painting* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1964), 130. For Rood's reference to Thomas Young's theory, see Ogden N. Rood, *Modern Chromatics* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1973 [1879]), 176.
- ⁹² Rood, 1973 (1879), 237.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 161, 273.
- ⁹⁴ For Helmholtz' influence on contemporary artists in general, see Filiz Eda Burhan, *Vision and Visionaries: Nineteenth century psychological theory, the occult sciences and the formation of the symbolistic aesthetic in France* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton University, 1979; reprinted by University Microfilms International in 1982), 22 and note 32, 75-77 and note 38. John Gage, *Color in Art*, New York: Thames and Hudson, 2006, 53f.
- ⁹⁵ Hermann von Helmholtz, "l'optique et la peinture," Ernst Wilhelm von Brücke, *Principes scientifiques des beaux-arts, essais et fragments de théorie*, Paris, G. Baillière et cie, 1878, 169f.
- ⁹⁶ Burhan, 1979, 104.
- ⁹⁷ Hermann von Helmholtz, *Helmholtz on Perception: Its Physiology and Development*, ed. Richard M. Warren and Roslyn P. Warren, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968, 150-151.
- ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 164-165.
- ⁹⁹ Not only Rood, but also many influential theorists in nineteenth-century avant-garde circles claimed scientific legitimacy of the nervous psychology. Among them were Théodule Ribot, Hippolyte Taine, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Herbert Spencer. See Théodule Ribot, *La psychologie allemande contemporaine* (Paris: Librairie Germer Baillière, 1879), Hippolyte Taine, *On Intelligence* (trans by T. D. Haye, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1875), Arthur Schopenhauer, *Über das Sehn und die Farben, eine Abhandlung* (Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, 1816), Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Psychology* (2 vols, New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1896; the version of 1872 was translated into French by Ribot and Espinas in 1874 to 1875).