

The background of the slide is a reproduction of Claude Monet's painting 'Rain, Steam, and Great Smog' (1903). The painting depicts a hazy, atmospheric scene of a London street with tall buildings and a bridge, shrouded in rain and steam. The color palette is dominated by muted blues, greys, and earthy tones, with a bright, warm light source in the upper left corner. The brushwork is visible and expressive, capturing the transient effects of light and weather.

Claude Monet's Visions of London

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Introduction

We rightly refer to Claude Monet (Fig. 1) as to the first of the Impressionists, challenged by the advent of photography and capable of going beyond accurate landscapes pictorial reconstructions, painting profound living scenes conveying sensations and emotions. In his London Series, Monet painted nearly a hundred paintings between 1899 and 1902 while sojourning at the Savoy Hotel located on The River Thames south bank. He depicted Charing Cross Bridge, the Waterloo Bridge, and the Houses of Parliament.¹

In this study, we analyze Monet London's masterpieces from dual perspectives via a pictorial analysis of the use of colors and via consideration of the landmarks and weather elements' representation providing historical and scientific contexts.

As for the first aspects, a classification by colors warmth and tones is attempted and justified as being a recurrent path in Monet's production also in earlier paintings.

For the environmental elements Monet's experience of weather is highlighted with reference to historical and scientific findings. Monet's love for the water element in its form of rivers, ponds, and even suspended in fog is apparent throughout his wonderful production and particularly prominent in the mature Monet and in the London series.

¹ Khan, 2011

In the London series, Monet chose to create an ensemble of urban paintings, in which the movement of pedestrians and carriages, of trains and boats, gives way to the greater rhythms of light playing, through fog and mist, upon enduring architectural forms of London landmarks. He installed himself in the Savoy Hotel, from which he could see the Charing Cross Bridge to his right and the Waterloo Bridge to his left, and at the Saint Thomas hospital, from which he painted the Houses of Parliament.² While those landmarks are used to refer to the paintings and are central in these paintings, it was the London fog, in all its pervasive nebulosity that became the artist's predominant theme. For Monet, the indefinable nature of the fog and its transformational visual power, in fin-de-siecle terms, was able to "dematerialize" the river, the great stone bridges, and the rugged contours of the Parliament buildings. These visual effects became essential forms that anchored his pictures during the five years he elaborated and corrected the works in his studio. In these paintings, Monet showed even less concern for detail than in his previous series; with their reduced value contrasts, these works depend for effect on subtle transitions in hue. The Art Institute's Houses of Parliament, Westminster resembles a tissue-thin screen of shifting blues and pinks, suggesting the changing light of the sky through the fog and in the water's reflections.³ In Charing Cross Bridge, London, Monet succeeded in capturing the way in which a light fog can catch and disperse sunlight, transforming here the underlying pinks and blues into scirms of yellow. In the museum's two views of Waterloo Bridge, each with its sweep of smokestacks and buildings lining the riverbank, the artist reversed

² Mancoff, D., 2007

³ Tucker, P. H., 1989

the lights and darks: in one, the bridge is a band of light; in the other, its dark shape is defined by the lighter water surrounding it. In both compositions, the city's life is indicated by dabs of paint that suggest the vague shapes and lights of a carriage, a small boat, smoke. Running through the paintings like a constant current, the city's energy becomes timeless in this series, which, more than any other up to this time, came from the depths of Monet's memory and imagination.

The first two chapters provide Monet's biographical and working context information that help situating its London's production. Monet's London masterpieces are illustrated in Chapter 3 along with an analysis of his painting techniques and the exhibitions. Chapter 4 presents the relationship between a mature Monet and the weather elements and describes the context of a changing London, enduring inspiration for these Monet's masterpieces and for several artists afterwards.

Chapter 1: Claude Monet 1840-1926

Claude Monet was born on November 14, 1840, in Paris, France from a relatively wealthy family. At the age of 5, Monet moved with his family to Le Havre, a port town in the Normandy region where he grew up with his older brother Leon. He suffered the death of his mother in 1857. His natural predisposition to drawing and sketching benefit from the encounter with Eugene Boudin a landscape artist who introduces Monet to outdoor (plein air) painting. In 1859 he moved to Paris (where he spent one year) and enrolled the Academie Suisse as art student. In the summer of 1870 Monet married Camille Doncieux: his first love and mother of his two children. Monet gained financial and critical success during the late 1880s and 1890s, when he remarried with Alice Hoschede, and in this period he started the serial paintings for which he would become well known as the master of impressionism. He died in 1926 at the age of 86, a life spent to arts that survive in our admiration for his work.⁴

Monet went to London to paint in 1899-1901, but he visited London for the first time in the autumn of 1870 the Franco-Prussian War persuaded Monet and his wife to leave France and take refuge in London, where he met Pissarro.

At the beginning of the 1890s Monet began to elaborate and refine a process that he had begun during his journeys of the 1880s, when he had sought to develop extended groups of canvases devoted to specific sites under different conditions of

⁴ House, J., 1986

light and weather. On a given day, moving with the light and changing position as the weather shifted, he would work on perhaps as many as eight canvases, devoting an hour or less to each one (as he indicated, in an early instance, in a letter to Alice Hoschedé, 7 April 1882).

He was interested in painting London's fog, and he thought that London without the fog would not be a beautiful city. But he had problems with the variability of London's climate⁵. By nine o'clock in the morning, he could have already worked on five canvases, by noon fifteen. So radically could it change that Monet began to believe he was in a country that would not submit to his Impressionist technique, and at one point he even suggested that perhaps painting in France would be easier.

1.2. Monet, Whistler and Turner

When Monet began his London paintings, he may have initially had various contemporaries in mind, although none of them would have been more important than the American artist Whistler, who had also painted what Monet described as "that mysterious cloak" of London fog, which made "those regular, massive blocks of the city grandiose". From the time the two had met in the mid-1880s, Whistler and Monet had become good friends. When the Frenchman visited London in 1887, he stayed with the expatriate. Monet also exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists for the first time in the winter of 1887 at Whistler's invitation. While Monet admired Whistler as portraitist, he found the American's abilities as a landscape

⁵ Tucker, P.H., (1998)

painter even more impressive, especially his uncanny power to evoke the mystery of early evening light on the Thames in his numerous Nocturnes (Fig. 2), which Monet surely thought of when he began his own London series.⁶

Whistler and Monet were friends and collaborators who shared a deep admiration for the work of Turner. Their work and aims made a vital contribution both to the development of Impressionism, the art movement that emerged in the 1870s. A pattern of themes and variations begun by Turner appears to have been developed in the artistic interchange between the younger artists Whistler and Monet.

For artists committed to working from nature and seeking beauty in contemporary environments, industrialism and its pollution presented an aesthetic dilemma. They directed their focus increasingly on transient effects of light and weather and revisited their subjects under varying conditions, experimenting with innovative painting techniques, adapting the tentative quality of the sketch, delicate veils of watercolor wash, and the chalky quality of pastel to their oil paintings, which led to accusations of lack of detail and finish.

Like Whistler, Monet, was doing battle with Turner. Turner was born in 1775 and died in 1851, when Monet was 11 years old. Monet lived in London at the beginning of the impressionist years, in 1870-71, to avoid being conscripted for the Franco-Prussian war.

Turner witnessed the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the environment, and by the time Whistler and Monet arrived on the scene, London was extremely polluted.

⁶Lochnan, 2004

Monet probably visited Whistler's studio in 1870-1, and saw his contemporary paintings of the Thames.⁷

In the painting "The Thames below Westminster"(fig. 3) Monet's painted the Parliament Buildings and Victoria Tower describing the distinctive light and atmosphere. The Embankment was opened in July 1870, but in Monet's canvas it is still incomplete, and the lamp-standards have not yet been installed. ⁸The structure in the river and the foreground reflections are crisply handled, but the remainder of the subject is veiled in mist and softly treated in broad sweeps of pastel color, quite thinly applied across the light-toned canvas priming.

This execution suggests comparison with Whistler's contemporary paintings of the Thames (fig. 2), where the quiescent tone has lot in common with the approach Monet would take, using the venerable architecture as something of a pretext for an exploration of atmospheric effects.

According to Camille Mauclair, Monet's view of the Thames 'come close to Whistler's nocturnes, containing as they do a nuanced musicality easily transferred from eye to ear, and can, in fact, be linked to the last glorious works of Turner'.⁹

Monet's 'Houses of Parliament' series, viewed from St. Thomas's Hospital, invites comparison with one of Turner's most celebrated subjects, "The Burning of the Houses of Lords and Commons" (fig. 4). In his preface to the 1904 catalogue accompanying the exhibition "Vue de la Tamise a Londres" in Paris, Octave Mirbeau praised the variations of this theme shown at Durand-Ruel's gallery:

⁷Lochnan, 2004

⁸Lochnan, 2004

⁹Lochnan, 2004

“Look at the Houses of Parliament, the tower is light here, massive there, and farther on scarcely indicated and lost among barely distinguishable shapes. Here gulls flock to the monument, dive through the air, skim the surface of the water, then soar in a whirlwind of balletic motion. There the light, like a green scarf, descends and drapes itself around the tower, extending as far as the river until the sun strikes it, and the water suddenly turns into a magical garden balancing flowers of gold and red on its surface. In the distance the city gradually disappears, is engulfed and obscured by all the subtlest shades of pink, yellow, green and blue, mixed together”.¹⁰

Louis Vauxcelles, at the end of his review of the 1904 exhibition, describes one of the thirty-seven canvases as being as ‘flamboyant as a Turner’ (Vauxcelles, 1904). The painting he refers to is “Houses of Parliament: Effect of Sunlight in the Fog, 1904” (fig. 5). Focusing attention on the play of light, Gustave Kahn described the same work a few weeks later: “The sun pierces through a gap in the fog, sweeping across and illuminating air and water, appearing to rotate. Where it bursts forth it lights each surface with the gleam of its luminous limbs, which resemble a multiplicity of filtered and endlessly modulated lamps’.¹¹

Reviewing the exhibition of Monet’s London series in 1904, Gustave Kahn imagined hanging some of them alongside Turner’s work, just as Turner hung alongside Claude in the National Gallery.

In the painting ‘Waterloo Bridge: Effect of Sunlight in the fog’ (fig. 6) the morning fog that obscures the view of the opposite bank dissipates in front of the ‘pretty red ball’, as Monet referred to the sun in a letter dated 6 february 1901 (to Alice Monet;

¹⁰Lochnan, 2004

¹¹ Khan, 1904, p.86

Wildenstein 1974-91, III, letter 1597). When the painting was exhibited at Durand-Ruel's in 1904, Gustave Kahn (a French Symbolist poet and art critic), commented on its unusual tonality, which he associated with twilight:

“In Sun in the Fog the bridge slumbers in ever deepening tones of blue with long melting greenish reflections. A sulphurous crimson ray drags in the colour of the river Styx and smoulders beneath an arch where its glint turns to carbon...A boat glides or rises up like a violet shadow. In this setting the neighboring canvases appear so brilliant, so limpid in their clear iridescence, vibrant with bright sparkles and golden flakes; in this image these merge with the blues as they sink away”.¹²

¹² Khan G., 1904, pp. 87-8

Chapter 2: Monet in London

Monet and Camille were married on 28 June 1870. During that summer the Franco-Prussian War broke out, and Monet fled with his young family to London in the autumn, in order to avoid conscription. There he renewed ties with Camille Pissarro, with whom he had painted in the Paris suburbs during 1869, and was introduced to Paul Durand-Ruel, who became his first dealer soon thereafter. Monet saw Turner's work for the first time when he came to London in 1870 and, according to Camille Pissarro, who was there at the same time, they were both very much impressed by it. Monet said admiringly of Turner's *Frosty Morning*, (exh. 1813, on display in room 35 at Tate Britain), that he had painted it with his eyes wide open. In his own paintings of Charing Cross railway bridge he may have had Turner's famous *Rain, Steam and Speed*, (exh. 1844), in mind, and the intense coloring of his *Houses of Parliament* paintings of 1904, with the sun shining through fog, could remind one of Turner's record of the burning down of the old parliamentary buildings in 1834.

During a stay of approximately nine months he painted numerous views of the Thames (e.g. the Thames below Westminster, London, N.G., w 166), Hyde Park (Providence, RI Sch. Des., Mus. A., w 164) and Green Park (Philadelphia, PA, Mus. A., w 165).

He visited London again in late 1891, when he had been invited to participate in an exhibition at the New English Art Club. After that, he always talked about going

back again but had never acted on his wish. Less than a year later he was back on holiday with his wife and his stepdaughter Germaine. The family stayed at the Savoy, one of the city's leading hotels.¹³

They took a suite of river-view rooms on the sixth floor, and remained six weeks.

Monet converted one of the rooms into a studio, and while Alice and her daughter went sightseeing with Michel he set to work.

The Savoy hotel is situated on the Northern side of Thames at the height of the elbow and between the 2 bridges (Charing-Cross and Waterloo bridges, this latter not yet present on this map).

In addition to being able to enjoy the amenities of the Savoy, Monet could see Charing Cross and Waterloo bridges from his room, which is why there are more canvases of these motifs than any other; he could work on them in the comfort of his hotel. For the Houses of Parliament, he had only to walk along the Victoria Embankment to St. Thomas's Hospital across Westminster Bridge, where he established a makeshift studio on a balcony affording spectacular view of the neo-Gothic parliament buildings.¹⁴

Having two studios became an annoyance; there were the problems of insufficient supplies, storage, and serenity, and he found himself torn between the two sites because of the schedule he had established. Mornings and early afternoons he painted his bridges, then devoted the mid- to late afternoons to his Parliaments.

¹³ House, 1981

¹⁴ Khan, 2011

Working outside in winter at Monet's age was also not the wisest plan. He came down with pleurisy in March 1901, forcing him not only to abandon his views of Leicester Square but also to stop painting for the rest of the month.

In November 1898 Monet travelled again to London because he received the news that his son Michel who was studying English in the capital was gravely ill and in February 1900, when there was a certain amount of anti-French feeling, he again took up residence in the Savoy, on the lower floor 'with a less plunging view', where he set up easels at the windows of two rooms so that he could move from canvas to canvas as the light change.¹⁵

On this and on his next visit, early in 1901, he painted two motifs, looking to the southeast from the hotel to Waterloo Bridge and the South Bank, and the west to Charing Cross Bridge and the Houses of Parliament.

He also arranged to work from a terrace in the open air at St Thomas's Hospital directly across the river from the Houses of Parliament, going there daily at 4 p.m. to paint the sun setting behind the huge silhouette of the mock-Gothic building (having persuaded the hospital's almoner that his fever of commencements should not be interrupted by cups of tea).

By 1904, when he exhibited thirty-seven of them to rave reviews at Durand-Ruel's gallery in Paris, he could count almost one hundred "Londons" as he had come to call them, in various stages of completion. They were divided into three primary groups: forty-one views of Waterloo Bridge, thirty-four of Charing Cross Bridge, and nineteen of the House of Parliament. There was also a fourth, smaller

¹⁵ Tucker, 1998

group consisting of three rough sketches of Leicester Square done at night from a balcony of a private club called the Green Room, and a suite of twenty-six pastels that he executed in 1901 while awaiting the delivery of his canvases, which had been detained in customs.

In total between the years 1899 and 1901 Monet resided at the Savoy Hotel in London for approximately six months.¹⁶

2.1. Working in London

The London views can be understood as the result of Monet's interest in reworking older motifs, and they are far more monumental than his earlier Thames pictures: with their brilliantly diffused light, they appear to be tinged with nostalgia, a feeling reinforced by the purples and yellows, blues and roses with which they are painted. After twenty years he return to paint factory chimneys spouting streams of smoke and railroads hurtling across iron trestles, he decide to go to London to paint such motifs, far from Paris, where he could have found similar subjects.

He may have just wanted to work in London again probably because he wanted to see more of his oldest son, or spend more time with his friend and fellow artist Whistler. While he had bad memories of his first stay in London in 1871, when the Prussians were invading his homeland, Monet apparently enjoyed being around English men and women, even though he did not read or speak their language (but at the dinner parties he attended guests always spoke his language even though he was generally the only French person invited).

¹⁶ House, 1981

When he was in Bordighera in 1884, for example, he stayed in an English pension. He never offered an explanation for his esteem of the English, and during all the months he spent in London, for instance, he never complained about the food, the traffic, or the general difficulties of being a Frenchman in a foreign land. He visited the Tower and viewed Queen Victoria's funeral procession in 1901, an event that he found "a unique spectacle".¹⁷

Monet was always conscious of himself as a foreigner, and as a foreigner (un étranger), he had a somewhat stilted view of England. He never would have been as critical of it as he would have been of his own country. He had not invested as much in it, at least not until this London series, which pushed him to the limits of his artistic powers.

Although he was able to finish nearly a dozen views of Charing Cross and Waterloo bridges in 1899 and 1900, and to find a buyer for at least one of them, he became frustrated with the more than eighty others that he had started and was unable to bring to completion for another four years. So upset was he in 1903 that he told Durand-Ruel to abandon hope of exhibiting them that year. The problem was the variability of London's climate.

¹⁷ House, 2007

Chapter 3: Claude Monet London's masterpieces

In his London Series, Monet painted nearly a hundred paintings (95 found and documented images) between the year 1899 and 1904. He resided at the Savoy Hotel, and during his stays in 1900 and 1901 he painted his scenes from a suite located on the elevated floor (probably the fifth floor as estimated by Khan ¹⁸). The letters that he wrote to his wife Alice illustrate his passion for the light and visual effect that fog introduced on the sights around Westminster. The typical Victorian London fogs can be devised from those paintings.¹⁹

Monet was fascinated by the ways light was made visible in the smoke, mist and fog of the poisonous London atmosphere which he articulated with the metal scaffolding of the railway bridge, the stone arches of the road bridges, factory chimneys and the attenuated towers and pinnacles of the Houses of Parliament.

Toward the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century London paintings by Claude Monet can be clustered with the following color sectors, ordered from the colder and more livid representation to the warmer and red-toned.

¹⁸ Khan et al. 2011

¹⁹ Khan et al. 2011

3.1 Monet, Painting London

The Thames and the Houses of Parliament is one of the first canvases in which Monet treated the effects of mist and fog, later to become so important in his work, as a means of giving his paintings an overall atmospheric unity.

Here sky and water are treated in delicate nuances of greys, yellows and pinks, set off against the veiled silhouette of the Houses of Parliament and the crisp forms of the landing stage in the foreground. The paint surfaces are applied with great economy and with simplicity, and yet provide a complex.

However, the precision of its forms shows that 'The Thames and the Houses of Parliament' was intended as a fully finished picture in its own right, in contrast with rapid sketches such as *Impression, Sunrise* of 1872.²⁰

When Monet painted this scene, all of its elements had only recently been constructed (the House of Parliament, the new Westminster Bridge, Victoria Embankment, and St. Thomas's Hospital). It was the prime example of urban reconstruction in London.

Having friends in the capital was another advantage; Singer Sargent, the American painter had been living and working in London for many years and was extremely well connected.

He provided Monet with an entree into English society (although Monet could speak only a little English).

²⁰ Khan, 2011

Monet painted his bridges in the mornings and early afternoons then devoted the mid-to late afternoons to his Parliaments. The problem Monet practically faced was the changing weather. The light and atmosphere in the city changed with frustrating frequency, which helps explain the staggering number of canvases in the campaign, and Monet's often-expressed agony over chasing a continually elusive goal. He said: "This is not a country where you can finish a picture on the spot; the effects never reappear. I should have just made sketches, real impressions. I have worked and reworked some canvases as many as twenty times. He compounded the problem, however, by starting picture after picture as conditions changed.²¹

In Monet's canvas color is a function of the light which floods into the picture, animating the complex surfaces of objects, but also bringing them into unison by the homogeneity, which it confers on the whole.

Monet worked exclusively on white-primed canvas, and in 1920 told: "I've always insisted on painting directly on white canvases, in order to establish on them my scale of values".

His daily letters to his wife give a vivid picture of his obsession with effects, which changed so rapidly that he was forced to produce over 100 canvases.

Sometimes he was interrupted three times in a day by changes of light so extreme that he could not work. This kind of experience is repeated in letter after letter as fog, mist, sun, snow, rain, hail succeeded one another, and, as the season advanced the sun changed its course. At the end of two seasons Monet concluded that he could not finish his paintings in London, but, of his 100 canvases, some at

²¹ Petrie, 1979

least had been brought to that state of conclusion where studio work would consist of finishing touches (not major structural painting).

Monet vacillated between two solutions to the problem of changing light: he would paint a new canvas in response to every change of light and weather, with the intention of doing major work on it at home, or perhaps of leaving it as an impression; or he would try to match an effect to a previous picture. His letters records the large production of canvases.

In London his more conscious innovative professionalism had predominated. The London painting was the truer prototype of the Impression, Sunrise and the views of the Boulevard des Capucines at the exhibition of 1874. These, like the much later Houses of Parliament of 1905, were works whose true theme of light and atmosphere was much more demanding of the artist's powers of concentration than the relatively simple task of recording an interesting motif.

In 1887 Monet confided to his friend Theodore Duret: 'Did you know that I went to London to see Whistler and that I spent about twelve days, very impressed by London and also by Whistler, who is a great artist.'

Whistler's and Turner's paintings of the Thames are a visible presence in every one of Monet's 'Londons'. Geffroy pointed out that, like Whistler, Monet 'painted harmonies, and like him, could have given his paintings titles according to their color-dominants and nuances.²²A painting like 'The Houses of Parliament, sun shining through a gap in the fog' (fig. 5) could be called 'Harmony in red and violet', but Monet preferred the more descriptive title. In this painting the thick impasto

²²Lochnan, 2004

strokes of brilliant orange, red and yellow represent the sun's rays as a sudden turbulence in a livid red and violet sky; they are reflected on the water in a curiously cold blaze of red, and the great towers cast a shadow across the water like a huge veil filling space in layers of vermilion, mauve and violet.

In two paintings of Waterloo Bridge (fig. 7 and 8), in early morning, in brilliant mist sunlight, or enfolded in fog but illuminated by a livid gleam of sun, the last layers of paint were composed of scales of color applied in tiny flickering strokes. The long strokes articulating the arches; the staccato ones suggesting reflections and shadows on the water; the more closely related tones and softer brushstrokes suggesting the vast complexity of buildings on the South Bank; the dots and dashes evoking the dense crowd of people and vehicles on the bridge; the different mauves and pinks smudged on to the smoke, all build up internally coherent scales of color, which both clarify the effect and strengthen the decorative unity.²³

Monet's central concern during his three sojourns of 1899, 1900 and 1901 was to execute 'views of the Thames'. He dreamed of painting the river wrapped in the famous fog that was transformed by smoke and pollution into 'smog'. The nature of the exercise dictated his daily routine: the allocation of time was governed by the work to be accomplished in the locations selected, taking the position of the sun into consideration. He spent hours before his easel scrutinizing what he called 'my Thames', going so far as to make it his own.

²³ House, 1986

Monet's favorite vantage point was his window at the Savoy with its precipitous view over Charing Cross railway bridge to the right (which gave rise to about thirty-five canvases), and over Waterloo Bridge to the left (which gave rise to about forty canvases).

Whistler, who had stayed at the Savoy in 1896 and executed a series of lithographs there, may have suggested this viewpoint.

From the South Bank Monet depicted the Thames and the Houses of Parliament, which he observed at sundown from the terrace of St Thomas's Hospital.

The sites he chose to paint did not only dictate his daily routine in London, but were also subject to the weather conditions. He longed for the sun, which could be capricious calling it at times 'the pretty red ball' and at other times 'an enormous ball of fire'. He wrote in a letter: 'Beginning at 10 o'clock the sun showed itself, a little veiled at moments, but with admirable effects of sparkles on the water: so I was well rewarded'.

London was the city of fog. The painter analyzed its different colors: 'at daybreak there was an extraordinary mist entirely yellow; I made an impression of it'. He complained about the fog solely when it was impenetrable or absent; his letters home mark anxious occasions on which the fog, so pleasing when translucent, rolled in with such density that he had to endure idleness.²⁴

In a letter to his wife, Alice the artist reported: 'when I got up I was terrified to see that there was no fog, not even the shadow of a fog. I was devastated and

²⁴Lochnan K., 2004

already imagined that all my canvases would be ruined, but little by little the fires were lit, and the smoke and fog returned.'²⁵

The fog could be so opaque that it obscured his motifs: 'its hard to have beautiful things to paint and to have suddenly in front of you a layer of darkness of an unnamable color...Alas, the fog persists, from dark brown it has become olive green, but always just as dark and impenetrable. At times, however he lamented the total absence of fog, in particular on Sunday when, since industrial activity largely stopped, the atmosphere was different from that which he observed during the week.

What disconcerted Monet in particular was the extremely variable nature of the weather. The incessant climatic changes gave rise to repeated complaints in 1900. As a result of the unstable atmosphere, he increased the number of works begun.

'Each day I find London more attractive to paint'.

'I find this country so changeable but for the same reason, so admirable'.

Claude Monet, like Whistler, painted harmonies, and like him, could have given his paintings titles based on the dominant colors and tones.

Some of his paintings reveal layers of over-painting or significant retouching, attesting to this long period of gestation. In the case of the 'Parliaments', Monet was accused of having worked from photographs.

Monet's statements about the qualities of subjects veiled in mist and fog refer to his London series of 1899-1901. In 1901 he described to the American journalist

²⁵Lochnan K., 2004

Emma Bullet the many varied colors of London's fog: 'My practiced eye has found that objects change in appearance in a London fog more and quicker than in any other atmosphere, and the difficulty is to get every change down on canvas'. Late in his life he spoke to Rene Gimpel about London: 'I adore London, it is a mass, an ensemble, and it is so simple. What I like most of all in London is the fog. How could the English painters of the nineteenth century have painted its houses brick by brick? Those fellows painted bricks, which they didn't see, they couldn't see. I like London so much, but I only like it in the winter. In summer it's fine with its parks, but that's nothing beside the winter with the fog, because without the fog, London would not be a beautiful city. It is the fog that gives it its marvelous breadth. Its regular, massive blocs become grandiose in this mysterious cloak²⁶.

3.2 Monet's painting techniques and studio work

Monet's concentration on changing atmospheric effects led him to treat each subject in a far greater number of canvases than he had ever done before, rather than summing them up in one or two paintings.

Previously to those paintings Monet did not indicate all important light effects so clearly in his paintings, but in the London's series there is an elaborate light effect, that is the results of changing weather.

²⁶House J., 1986

The “ebauche” is the first stage of a painter’s work on a canvas, used to envisage the general effect of the picture with its coloring before it is completed. The landscapist used this practice and Monet as well.

From 1860s onwards, Monet often used the light-toned ground as an feature in the final appearance of a painting, either leaving it bare in small areas, or consenting it to be felt through thin layers of color, for instance in the sky. In “The Thames below Westminster” (fig. 3), for example, the very light grey priming, showing through thin paint layers, has well-maintained the luminosity of the sky, while a dark-grounded sky would have darkened considerably. His sensitivity to greys reaches great finesse in this painting, where soft pinks suffuse the misty sky on the right²⁷.

From around 1890 Monet’s concerns in his series led him on occasion to add improvised color effects late in the execution of his canvases, which bear little or no relation to their lay-in phases. Many effects of sunlight in the London series were added in this way, but another London canvas, “Charing Cross Bridge”, shows that not all such sunbursts are late additions.

The lay-ins of Monet’s paintings often shows a complex structure of planes.

In some of the London series, dense layers of dry horizontally brushed under painting ignore the position of the bridges across the Thames. The opacity of the dense layers is probably due to a further thin lay-in without textured impasto, and might include sections successively painted above to improve the appearance of the whole effects.

²⁷House J., 1986

Monet's typical method over the lay-in is clear. He used it to create the main masses of the painting, flatly and rather roughly, with muted and unmodulated colors.

Monet's technique for painting a canvas was quite extensive. He focused on the priming of the canvas and how the color of it could drastically alter how viewers see and interpret the colors. Monet experimented with neutral colored primed canvases varying from pure white to cool light greys to warmer creamy tones (House, 1986). A pattern noticed throughout Monet's work was the integration of the background color into the painting itself. The effect it created was a range of tones from highlights to mid-tones. He also investigated opaque layers of paint to play with the lighting in the painting²⁸. Monet used several different techniques when laying down the paint on the canvas such as scumbling, various brushstrokes, and layering paint. Scumbling, layering one color over another lightly so the bottom layer is still visible, can be done with pastels, oil paint, and acrylics. Scumbling does not actually mix the two colors; rather it creates the allusion that they are mixed (Smith, 2012).

Another technique Monet uses is "visual mixing" which is playing with the placement of the brushstrokes to create the visual allusion that two colors side by side mix to create another color. An example of this technique is the effect of putting a stroke of red next to a stroke of yellow. From far away, it will start to appear orange thus "visual mixing"²⁹. The visual mixing began to affect the vividness and intensity of Monet's color palette.

²⁸ House J., 1986

²⁹ House, 1986

Color is another important tool Monet focused his work on. His range of colors was very selective, especially after he narrowed it down to white lead, cadmium yellow, vermilion, madder, cobalt blue, chrome green (Nelson, 2012). Prior to 1886, Monet included black ivory in his color palette but later abandoned it to use more vibrant colors to create the darker shades he desired (Nelson, 2012). As an impressionist painter, dark colors were not necessarily in the general color palette that also influenced Monet's decision to stick to bright colors. Monet focused on representing nature through his paintings, which influenced color choices.³⁰

Most of Monet's series are concerned with the play of sunlight and shadow at different times of day. In 1901 Monet described the varied color the saw in London's fog: 'There are black, brown, yellow, green, purple fogs and the interest in painting is to get the objects as seen through all these fogs'.³¹ In the London paintings the nuances change from picture to picture, but the keynotes of the series as a whole are blues and mauves, with touches of green, often punctuated by the orange of a sunburst.

On his final visit to London in 1901 (when he brought with him many of the 80 canvases he had previously painted), he had written that it was 'not a place where one can finish on the spot; one never finds one's effects over again', and when he got back to Giverny he invited Geffroy to come and see 'the mass of studies, quick

³⁰ Tucker, 1989

³¹ House, 1986

sketches and attempts of all sorts that I've brought back with me'. Two year later he wrote again to Geffroy in quite a different vein: 'My mistake has been to want to retouch them; one so quickly loses a good impression...those attempts and lay-ins could have been shown; but now that I have retouched all of them, I must at all costs go through to the end'³².

It was only after 1900 that writers began to comment publicly on Monet's use of the studio, particularly in relation to the London series; Monet himself seems to have been prepared at this point to admit that the paintings had not been completed on the spot. Desmond Fitzgerald and Arsene Alexandre spoke of the Londons as in a sense a studio series, and Monet's letters confirm that much studio work went in to this series. Monet's denied that he had any use for photographs of his subjects, although he did own several photographs of London.

Some paintings have an anomalous date; the majority of London series are dated 1902, 1903 and 1904, although Monet only worked in London in 1899, 1900 and 1901. Here the dates may refer to the year in which did the principal body of work on each canvas. He worked for long periods on very large number of canvases in the studio, and some canvases were executed entirely in the studio. In 1905 he delayed sending Durand-Ruel a view of Waterloo Bridge because, he wrote, 'it is useful to me to keep it in order to make another on with smoke, as you have requested' ³³.

Alexandre described Monet's method in the London series accurately: 'His work was partially recommenced in the studio, and more than that, several

³²Letters to Alice Monet, 10 March 1901, and to Geffroy 15 April 1901 and 15 April 1903

³³Letter to Durand-Ruel, 26 October 1905

paintings contributed to recompose a single one, or a smaller number. Thus he repainted the views of the Thames in his studio, keeping them for almost two years, reshaping them and combining them'.³⁴

Thus, some works were painted entirely in the studio, but Monet's words for what he was doing ('retouched' and 'most delicate') still suggest the intensification of existing effects rather than major structural painting away from the motif.

Studio work took so long because it was not only a physical but also a mental process in which each painting demanded more precise remembrance of the 'Londonian'.

Monet also worked on pastels. Made of powdered pigment bound with gum, pastel delivered colour in its full and immediate brilliance and it did not have to dry to reveal its full effect. He took advantage of this quality, exploring the range of possibility within a single hue, as seen in the tonal gradations that he used in 'Charing Cross Bridge, 1901' (fig. 9).³⁵ Unlike oil, pastel could not be corrected, and practice steeled Monet's confidence as he made bold, sure marks, which are seen in his rendering of the structure of the bridge in the deepest shades of turquoise engulfed in clouds of aqua mist. In "Waterloo Bridge, 1901" (fig. 10), he quickly delineated the contours of the broad supporting arches, but worked the shadows and reflections shimmering beneath them in gentle, modulated strokes.

³⁴Alexandre, 1930

³⁵Mancoff, 2007

By the time Monet's canvases finally arrived at the end of his first week in London, he had finished 25 sketches in pastel, and he confessed to Alice: 'It is thanks to my pastels, made swiftly, that I realize how to proceed'.³⁶

3.3 The exhibitions

Monet stated several times in the 1890s that he wanted to work in London. He even went there twice during the decade before he began his 'London' series in 1899.

The first time was in 1891, having been invited to participate in an exhibition at the New English Arts Club; the second was in late 1898 when he went to see his son Michel, who had settled in the city to learn English and had apparently fallen ill.

Each time, he returned to France without having touched his paints.

The London series was exhibited only in 1904, over three years since he had last been in London. The titles of the works were listed under their motifs (for example, 'Sun shining through a gap in the fog', (fig. 5) was listed under 'The House of Parliament'), indicating that Monet wished his public to see the atmospheric effects as much as the only too well known symbols of London.³⁷

The opening of the 1904 exhibition was a social event seen as competing successfully with the Salon, and was greeted with the customary torrent of laudatory prose. Monet remarked: 'This time the press has overwhelmed me with

³⁶Mancoff, 2007

³⁷Lochnan, 1997

exaggerated praise' (Virginia Spate, 1992). The paintings sold more than well, Durand-Ruel bought 24 'Londons' at prices between 8,000 and 11,000 FRS.

Mirabeau's preface to the catalogue suggests something of the embarrassment of Monet's supporters over how to discuss the work and particularly the studio work. He wrote: 'These canvases are the result of four years 'reflective observation, of deliberate effort, of prodigious work'.

I will describe below the exhibition history of some paintings:

1) Houses of Parliament, Sunset, 1902, oil on canvas, 81 x 92 cm

Private Collection (fig. 11):

Exhibited at Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1904; bought from Monet in 1904 by Durand-Ruel and sold within the year to P. van de Velde, Le Havre.

2) Charing Cross Bridge, Smoke in the fog, 1902, Musee Marmottan, Paris (fig. 12):

Exhibited at Galerie Durand-Ruel, 1904;

Zurich, Paris, La Haye, 1952;

Musee Toulouse-Lautrec, Albi, 1975;

Somerset House, London, 1977.

3) Houses of Parliament, Sunset, 1904, oil on canvas, 81x92 cm

Kunsthhaus Zurich, Donation Walter Haefner (fig. 13):

Not exhibited at Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris, May-June 1904; bought from Monet in October 1905 and sold in December 1905 to Charles Harrison Tweed, New York.

4) Houses of Parliament, Sunlight Effect, 1903, oil on canvas, 81x92 cm.
Brooklyn Museum of Art, Bequest of Grace Underwood Barton (fig. 14):

Exhibited at Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris, May - June 1904; bought from Monet in May 1904 by Durand-Ruel;

Paul Cassirer, Berlin, 1904;

Copley Hall, Boston, 1905;

Wildenstein, New York, 1970;

Hayward Gallery, London, 1973.

5) Houses of Parliament, Seagulls, 1904, oil on canvas, 81x92 cm.

Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow:

Exhibited at Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris, May - June 1904; bought from Monet in May 1904 by Durand-Ruel and sold in November 1904 to S. I. Shchoukine, Moscow.

6) Houses of Parliament, Symphony in Rose, 1900-01, oil on canvas, 81x92 cm. Private collection, Japan:

Not exhibited at Galerie Durand-Ruel, Paris, May-June 1904

Possibly given by Monet before 1916 to Lamberjack in exchange for a car.

7) Le Parlement de Londres, Soleil Couchant, 1903, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC. (fig. 15): Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1904.

8) Houses of Parliament, Stormy sky, 1904, Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille, Lille, France (fig. 16): Grand Palais, Paris, 1980.

9) Waterloo Bridge, Effect de soleil avec fume, Baltimore Museum of Art, 1903 (fig. 7):

Baltimore Museum of Art, 1935, 1936, 1942 and from 1967 to 1976;

Hayward Gallery, London, 1973.

10) Waterloo Bridge, Effect of Sunlight, 1903, Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh (fig. 8):

Georges Petit, Paris, 1924;

Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1925;

Orangerie, Paris, 1940;

Beaux-arts, Paris, 1952;

Durand-Ruel, Paris, 1959;
The Art Institute of Chicago, 1975;
Somerset House, London, 1977;
Grand Palais, Paris, 1980.

During the Durand-Ruel's May exhibition in Paris the Symbolist poet and art historian Gustave Kahn, observing the painting "London, Houses of Parliament, Sun Breaking Through the Fog, 1904" (fig. 5) said:

"In one of these sunsets, the star is a visible, heavy disk from which emanates the most subtle variations of colour; elsewhere, it spreads like brimstone, like the sulfurated smoke over Gomorrah, in clouds of violet, crimson, purple, and orange, and its reflections lap on a heavy water of rose, blue, green, with mica glints of rose everywhere bloodied with points of red. The sun breaches the fog, illuminating melded flakes of air and water".³⁸

³⁸Lochnan, 2004

Chapter 4: Monet and the London's Weather

Monet made three trips to London in the autumn of 1899 and in early months of 1900 and 1901, to paint the London series. The series show three views of Central London: two are from the Savoy Hotel, a third is from St. Thomas' Hospital.

He had difficulties to paint the atmospheric effects, due to the extreme variability of the weather, and he did not consider the London series complete when he returned from his final trip in 1901; he continued to work on them in his studio in Giverny (House 2005), consequently it is not possible to say how many of the paintings brought back from London were finished and how many were painted entirely in Giverny.³⁹

There are 19 paintings in this series, in 9 of them the sun is depicted; five of these paintings show direct representations of the sun in the sky (Table 1: W 1596, W1602, W1604, W1607, W1610), three others show partial solar discs coupled with strong reflections on the Thames indicative of direct sunlight (Table 1: W1597, W1605, W1606). The other painting (Table 1: W1599) doesn't show the sun but its position was inferred from the gradation of the lighting of the sky.

In the London series there is also the best colored-record of the Victorian fogs; the color of the fogs provides information on the light passing through the London atmosphere.

³⁹ House, 1986

Monet in 1900 and 1901 wrote frequently to his wife, describing his progress on the London series and providing information about the weather. Another source of information about the weather condition is given from the weather data of the time. An analysis of these data indicates that there is a close consistency between Monet's letters and the reported weather conditions.

This means that these paintings were based on actual observation or impression made from Monet, and that they contain real quantitative information, rather than invented one created in his studio in Giverny (J. Baker and J. E. Thornes, 2006).

It is therefore possible to say that Monet's aim was to capture as accurately as he could the observed visual effect (J. Baker and J. E. Thornes, 2006).

Monet's series paintings is an excellent example of art representing aspects of the weather, for example, when Monet painted his scenes of London, he portrayed the sun both in situations when it was visible and in days when it was obscured, trying to illustrate the atmosphere, and thus the weather, in his paintings.

Monet was also known to rework many of his canvases with the intention of reflecting how the atmosphere appeared on specific days from year to year.

Claude Monet, was one of the most prominent Impressionist painters of the nineteenth century, painting numerous scenes of London at the turn of the twentieth century, his main motifs were the Houses of Parliament, Waterloo Bridge and Charing Cross Bridge. Monet wanted to capture the atmosphere, which he

describes to be the enveloped all of his paintings. Monet's paintings and his representations of the London fogs are therefore of great interest to these aspects.⁴⁰

Monet's paintings of London however are not simply portraying landmarks of the Great city but can be put in relations also with the weather.

This can be done thanks to the observations recorded at Chiswick, in West London, and collated by the Royal Horticultural Society in the form of weather diaries, and the Meteorological Office Archives in Exeter that maintained a collection of weather stations data from Westminster, Brixton and Kew as gathered and synthesized by Khan (2011).⁴¹

During his stays in 1900 and 1901, Monet wrote also many letters to his wife, Alice, who remained at the family home in Giverny, France, and also to some of his other acquaintances. Within these letters, Monet included detailed accounts of the weather, particularly observations of the fog.

The contents of Monet's letters used in conjunction with the observations logged in the Royal Horticultural Society's weather diaries and weather reports for Westminster, Brixton and Kew, help determine the accuracy of Monet's portrayal of the London fogs at the turn of the twentieth century.

Therefore for Monet's London Series, we benefit from both the previous work of art historians, and more recently the work environmental scientists that have broaden the existing knowledge on the skies represented in those paintings.

⁴⁰ Tucker, 1998

⁴¹ Khan, 2011

The study of Monet's London Series proved to be an accurate representation of the London skies for 1899-1901, with both pictorial as well as numerical representation of the London fogs in the form of a weather diary.⁴²

This period of history sees the advent of the Industrial Revolution and a definite shift in the motifs being studied by nineteenth century artists. Claude Monet, who without doubts a forerunner of the French Impressionist movement, saw a variety of changes during the nineteenth century that we can appreciate via his paintings.

The young Monet would normally paint in the areas where he was living at that particular point in his life, but in his mature age and particularly during the 1880s Monet chose to travel in an attempt to grasp foreign scenes of nature and their consequential effects (House, 1986) and search for renewed inspirations. The atmosphere and the various effects of light had always intrigued Monet, yet it was not until 1890 that this area of interest came to the forefront and the physical objects became subordinate. (House, 1986).

In this period we observe Monet becoming more captivated by the overall effect of a scene, and interest by the possibility of painting nature at its purest, as opposed to the individual aspects within the scene.

Obviously Monet was not the only artist who attempted to accurately depict the atmosphere in his paintings. Neuberger (1970) identified more than 12,000 paintings from 1400 through to 1967 each portraying a representation of the climate, in an attempt to prove that the various paintings were a record of the

⁴² Khan, 2009

changing climate of Europe. Monet's London Series alone do provide an accurate depiction of London's weather at the turn of the twentieth century.⁴³

6.1 Solar position analysis of Monet's Houses of Parliament

The most recent studies of Khan et al. (2009) permitted a detailed analysis also of the scientific and environmental aspects, and the content of Monet's paintings of the Houses of Parliament were analyzed also by Baker and Thornes (2006).

In this study a selection of the paintings were dated according to the position of the sun in each painting, by superimposing solar tracks over the Monet's House of Parliaments in order to determine a range of possible dates for the production of the painting.⁴⁴In fact thanks to the letters that Monet was writing to his wife it was possible to know that his preferred painting time was mid-morning hours, and the sun position at a give hour does follow a precise and reproducible path in each day of the year.

The exact solar positions can be determine in principle for a large fraction of paintings in the London Series, and those of Waterloo Bridge and Charing Cross Bridge, still needed to be derived, owing to the fact that many of those scenes contain only an inferable representations of the sun, thus its position.

⁴³ Khan, 2011

⁴⁴ Khan, 2009

An analysis of the synoptic meteorological data and the information contained in nineteenth century weather diaries was considered in Khan (2011), in order to draw a comparison between real data and Monet's representations.

Other proxy data that can bring information on the weather at the time of the painting that can be retrieved from other sources, such as logbooks, and other visual data, such as paintings. Whilst the entries of the logbooks are very technical and scientific, describing the weather situation experienced at the time of recording, it could be concluded that the information collated from a painting is only as reliable as the artist painting it, due to the so called artistic license.

Solar geometry methods have instead enabled the derivation of the dates and times of production of Monet's paintings of Waterloo Bridge and Charing Cross Bridge, sometimes with great degree of detail.⁴⁵

The letter that Monet wrote to his wife, Alice at the family home in Giverny, France, also included detailed accounts of the weather, particularly observations of the fog. This correspondence permits today almost a reconstruction of Monet's weather diary and an extract is reported in Table 1.

The number of foggy days in the period just before the Artists visits to London indicated in the work of Brimblecombe (1987) suggests that around 2 months a year were affected by this weather phenomena (Table 2), thus fuggy scenes were very common in colder months of the year.

As well know fog is triggered not only by cold weather but needs humid air with a sizeable amount of particles and impurities suspension in the air, which favor

⁴⁵ Khan, 2009

the physical process of condensation. London's air was very abundant in those particles as it was very polluted due to its industrial time and the heavy use of charcoal for several man-made activities including keeping houses warm. I therefore examine briefly the London expansion time to better situate the Monet's period.

6.2 Monet and the changing London

Toward the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century London was living a large expansion. Mogridge et al. (1997) in their study illustrate maps of the expansion of London from 1880-1914 (Figure 17).

This expansion can be attributed to the development of the suburban transport networks during the nineteenth century, associated with growing population of London and coal-burning activities.

The smoke present at the time in London was reason of concerns for the authorities and led to the introduction of the Smoke Nuisance Abatement Act established in 1853 (Brimblecombe, 1987). The true amount of air pollution present in the city air was difficult to assess and its origin closely related to manufacture of glass, along with the production of alkalis such as sodium carbonate and sodium hydroxide.

Moreover the 1900s are indicated as the peak of pollution in the Victorian's industrial development (Figure 18).

Pollution levels could not be ignored, as the fogs on the River Thames started to become much more noticeable. It is now known that high levels of pollution aid in the formation of fog, and since the levels of air pollution were particularly high during this time the fogs naturally became thicker, more frequent, and different in color than those of the past.⁴⁶

Later on and all along the 20th century smoke reduction measure in London attributed to the smoke control zones assigned to local areas of the city. However, before these had been put into place, coal burning in London had diminished

6.3. London in photography at Monet's time

To get an idea of the skies for the early 1900s first photography is also of help and here I report few London landmarks, although for the colors the painting of Monet are once again a great resource.

Photography is certainly very important for Impressionism as Levinson (1997) pointed out, because this movement was started as a reaction to the introduction of photography. Paintings were thought to be unrealistic whereas photography “produced life like images much more efficiently and reliably” (Levinson, 1997) than portraits and landscapes paintings.

Therefore Impressionists were challenged to go beyond photography and to infuse in their portraits their own experiences of nature and emotions and not merely documents of scene or a subject. In fact, it seems that photography

⁴⁶ Khan, 2009

encouraged the artists to exploit certain aspects of the painting medium, like color; so they were the “first to consciously offer a subjective alternative to the photograph”.⁴⁷

Monet’s London series compared to the photographs above can provide a great example of this challenge being undertaken and the classification proposed using colors is relevant for interpretation.

⁴⁷ Levinson, 1977

Summary and Outlook

Monet's series paintings of London landmarks is an excellent example of art representing aspects of the weather in a changing London, and a color-coded classification is proposed in this work to get closer to this production of one of the most impressive Impressionist Artist.

Biographical and historical elements were provided to situate the context in which Monet developed and reached his mature age with refined painting techniques that followed his passion for the water and weather elements.

His love for a changing London, shared by several contemporary Artists, is demonstrated by the large amount of paintings, each of them made unique by the combination of sunlight, shadow, fog and mist, in a multitude of colors that pertain to emotions and sensations as much as to visual arts. The letters to his wife are of great help to support these impressions.

Recursive patterns of painting that characterize Monet daily routine when sojourning in London and the weather elements have raised interest of the scientific community. Geometrical and retrospective analyses permitted to localize in space and time the moments in which Monet produced some of the paintings. The changing London was of great inspiration as this historical period saw growing population and coal-burning activities that surely contribute to the frequent occurrence of fog (nearly three months per year) and some of the colors used for painting the sky and its reflections. The Monet's work in London highlights his

research of the first impression, which situates those paintings well above visual arts. This is the essence of the ambition of the Impressionism above photography.

A vision of London immerse in fog from the 11th of December 2013 gives us the “impression” on how Claude Monet reaches much more than photography even today and delivers a truly involving scene (fig. 19).

Monet’s conclusion after six weeks’ continuous painting in London was that: “This is not a country where one can finish anything on the spot; the effect can never be found twice, and I should have done nothing but sketches, real impressions. With them and drawings, I could have made the best of it, whereas I worked up to twenty times on canvases which I denatured each time, so that I end up with a mere sketch, which takes only a few instants...” (Virginia Spate, 1992).

ILLUSTRATIONS:

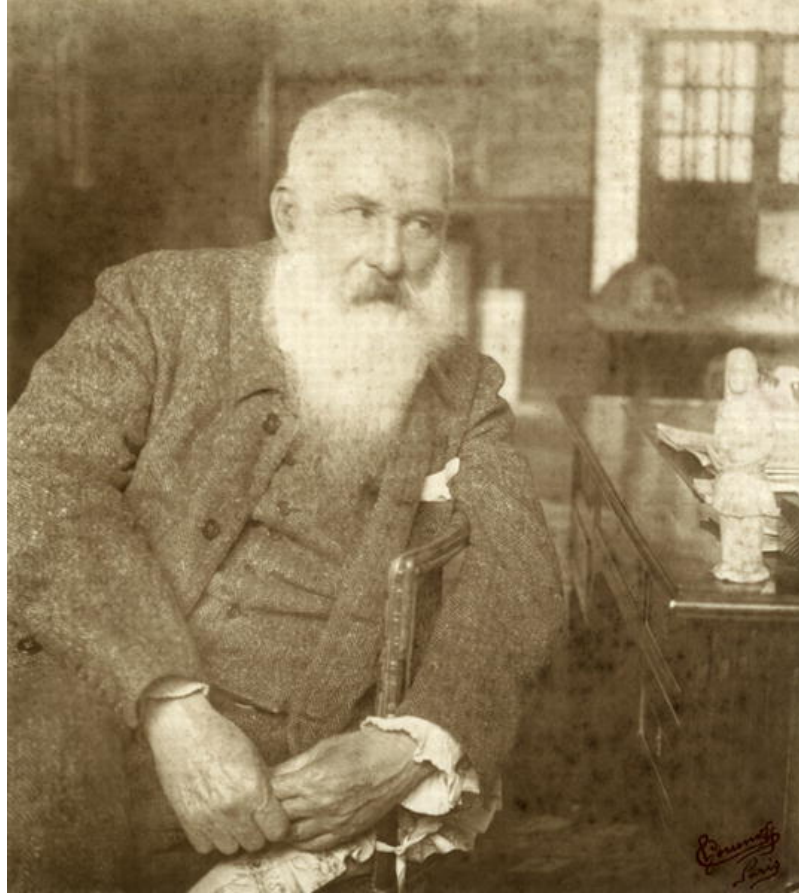


Figure 1: Claude Monet



Figure 2: Whistler: Nocturne: Grey and Gold - Westminster Bridge (1871-2; Glasgow: Burrell Collection)



Figure 3: The Thames below Westminster, 1871, National Gallery, London



Figure 4: J.M.W. Turner, The Burning of the Houses of Lords and Commons, exh. 1835, Philadelphia Museum of Art



Figure 5: Trouée de soleil dans le brouillard, Houses of Parliament, London, Sun Breaking Through the Fog, 1904, Musée d'Orsay, Paris (front-cover Photo)

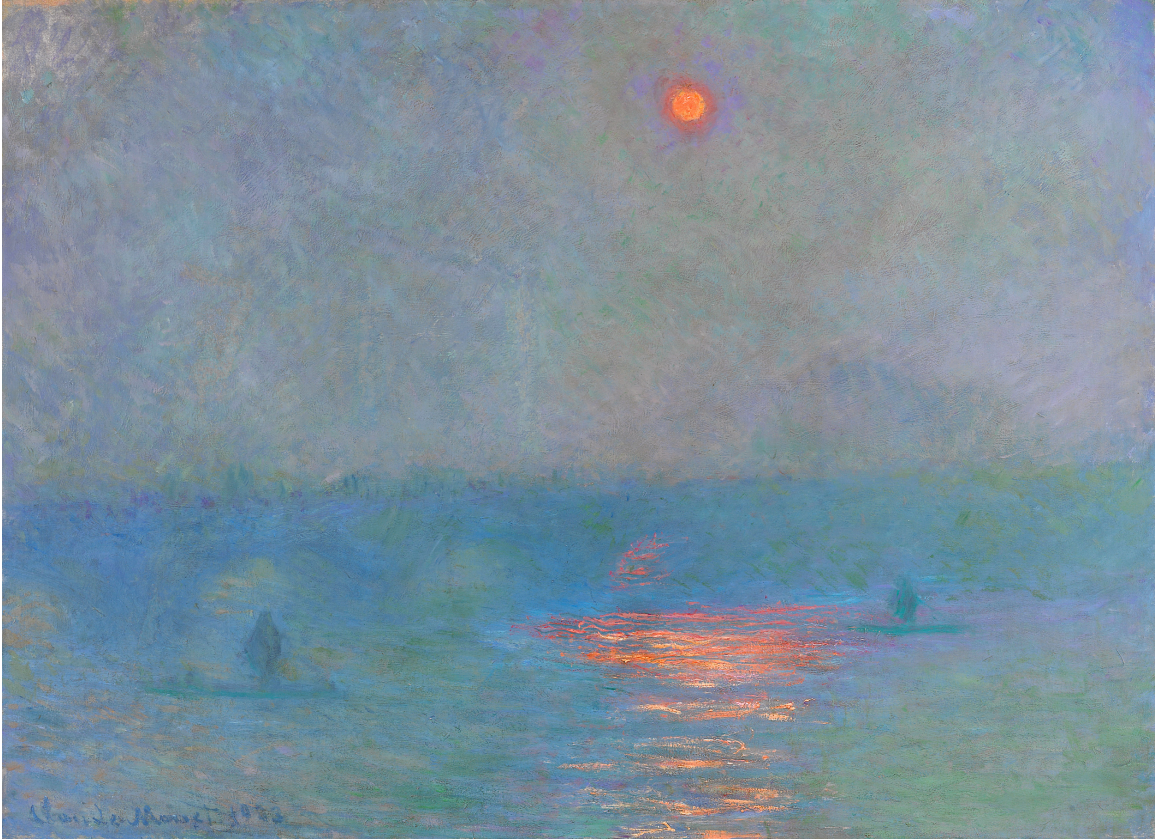


Figure 6: Waterloo Bridge: Effect of Sunlight in the fog, 1903, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa



Figure 7: Waterloo Bridge, Sun effect with smoke, 1903, The Baltimore Museum of Art

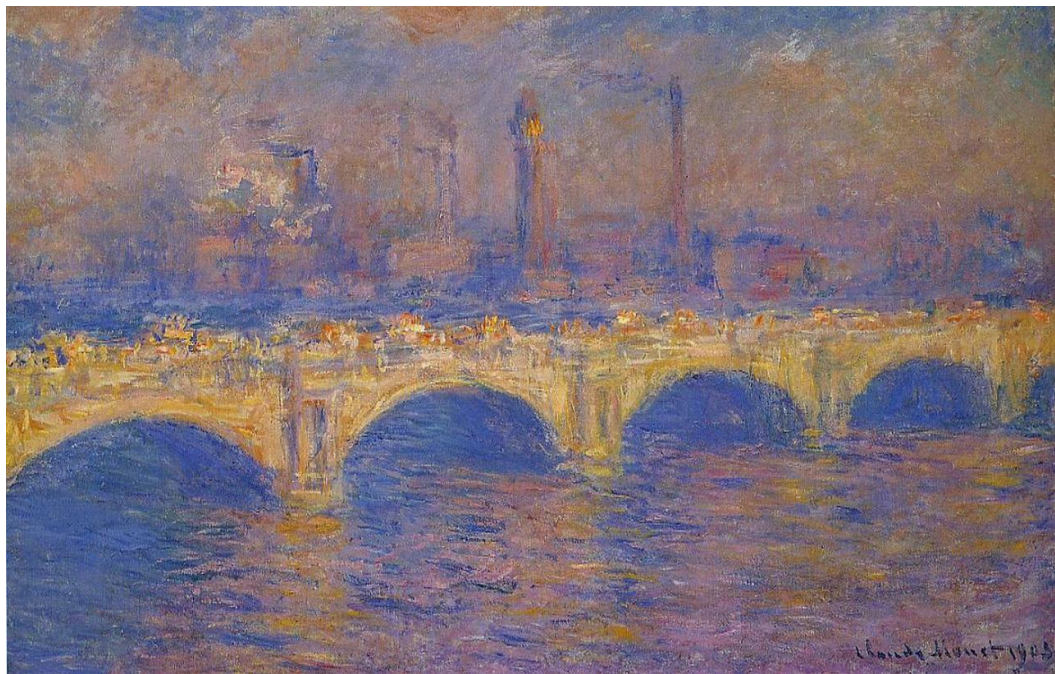


Figure 8: Waterloo Bridge, effect of sunlight, 1903, Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh



Figure 9: “Charing Cross Bridge, London” (1901), Rotterdam's Kunsthall museum (Stolen in October 2012)



Figure 10: Waterloo Bridge, c. 1901, Pastel 305 x 480 mm, Triton Foundation, The Netherlands



Figure 11: Parlement, coucher du soleil (sunset), 1902, private collection



Figure 12: Charing Cross Bridge, Smoke in the Fog, 1902, Musee Marmottan, Paris



Figure 13: Houses of Parliament, Sunset, London, c. 1904, Kunsthaus Zürich



Figure 14: Houses of Parliament Sunlight Effect (Le Parlemeffet de soleil), 1903, Brooklyn Museum



Figure 15: Le Parlement de Londres, soleil couchant, 1903, National Gallery of Art Washington, DC.



Figure 16: Houses of Parliament, stormy sky, 1904, Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille, Lille, France

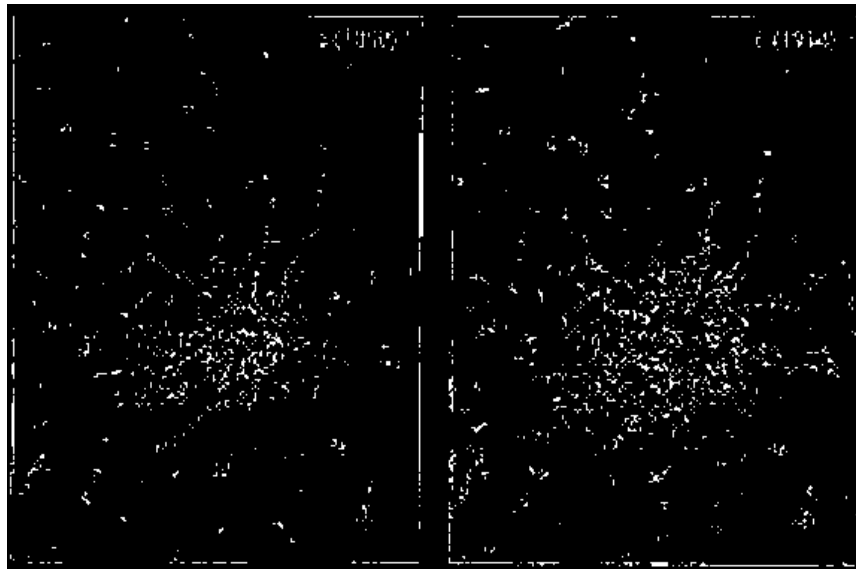


Figure 17: London urban expansion between 1880 (c) and 1914 (d) from Mogridge and Parr (1997)

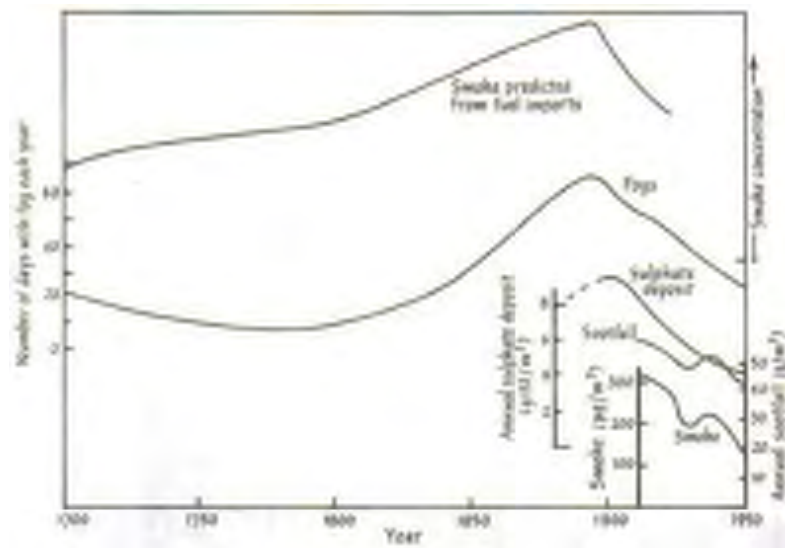


Figure 18: Air pollution in London, 1700-1950 as studied by Brimblecombe (1987) shows a peak around the years of Monet's London production.



Figure 19: Photos of London immerse in fog, Taken 11th of December 2013.



Figure 20: Charing Cross Bridge, 1900-1903



Figure 21: Photographs around Westminster taken by Alvin Langdon Coburn in 1900-1913



Figure 22: The Savoy Hotel and occupied by Monet in 1899 (on 6th floor) and in 1900-01 (5th floor)



Figure 23: Le Parlement, Effet de Brouillard, (Fog effect), 1903, Museum of Fine-Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida



Figure 24: Waterloo Bridge, 1900

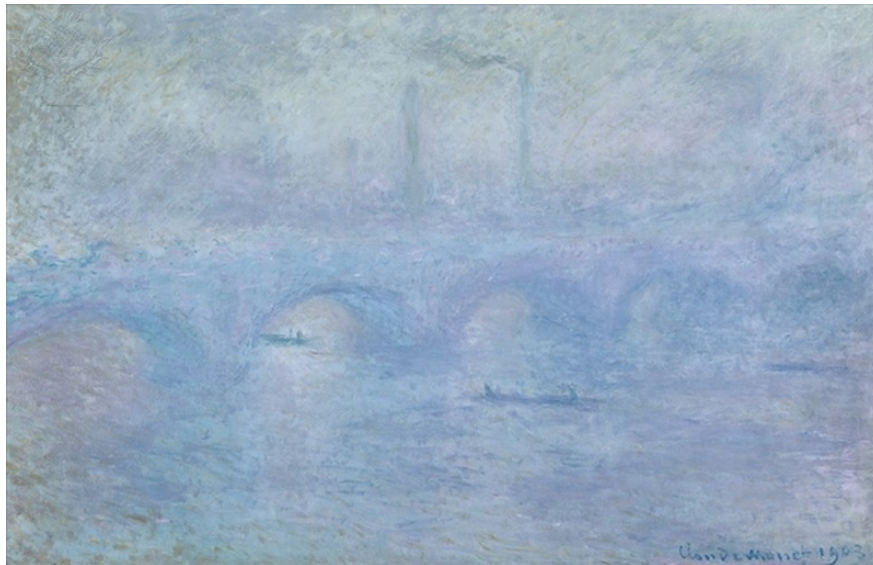


Figure 25: Waterloo Bridge Effect of the mist, 1903



Figure 26: The Thames at Charing Cross 1903



Figure 27: Parliament, Reflections on the Thames, 1905, Musee Marmottan, Paris

Table 1: Details of the Houses of Parliament Series from Wildenstein, 1996. All title begins with: London, Houses of Parliament

<i>Catalogue</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Date on painting</i>	<i>Collection</i>
W1596	Effect of Sun in the fog	1904	private
W1597	Sunlight Effect	1903	Brooklyn Museum, NY
W1598	Sunset	1903	National Gallery of Art, Wahshington DC
W1599	Symphony in Rose	undated	private
W1600	Towers of Westminster	undated	The Art Institute of Chicago
W1601	Symphony in Blue	1903	High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA
W1602	Sunset	1904	Kaiser Whilhelm Museum, Kreferld, Germany
W1603	Sunset	1902	private
W1604	Sunset	1903	private
W1605	Stormy Sky	1904	Musee des Beaux-Arts, Lille, France
W1606	Reflections on the Thames	1905	Musee Marmottan, Paris
W1607	Sunset	1904	Kunsthhaus Zurich, Switzerland
W1608	Fog Effect	1903	Musee des Beaux-Arts, Le Havre, France
W1609	Fog Effect	1903	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY
W1610	Effect of Sunlight in the Fog	1904	Musee d'Orsay, Paris
W1611	Fog Effect	1904	Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida
W1612	The Seagulls	1903	Art Museum, Princeton University, New Jersey
W1613	The Seagulls	1904	Pushkin Museum, Moscow
W1614	Evening Effect	1903	private

Table 2: Letters written from London by Claude Monet to Alice Monet in 1900 commenting about the fog and the weather (analysis of Khan, 2011).

<i>Dates (often written in morning hours)</i>	<i>Letter's extract (in French)</i>	<i>English translation</i>
Monday 12 Feb. 1900	...il y a un brouillard des plus épais...	...there is a very thick fog...
Tuesday 13th Feb. 1900	Ce matin et hier, brouillard à ne rien voir...	This morning and yesterday, nothing to see but fog...
Wednesday 14th Feb. 1900	...lorsque ce n'est pas un brouillard à ne rien voir...	...when there is a fog nothing is to be seen...
Saturday 17th Feb. 1900	...une brume exquise, et un splendide coucher de soleil; aujourd'hui, pluie et brouillard...	...an exquisite fog, and a splendid sunset; today, rain and fog...
Saturday 24th Feb. 1900	...un brouillard superbe...	...the fog is superb...
Sunday 25th Feb. 1900	...beaucoup de brouillard...	...lots of fog...
Monday 26th Feb. 1900	...Je profite du brouillard très épais...	...I benefit from very thick fog...

Table 3: Number of days of fog in London 1871-1890, Brimblecombe (1987)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of days with fog in London</i>
1871-5	.51 ± 15
1876-80	.58 ± 15
1881-5	.62 ± 7
1886-90	74 ± 11

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