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Christina Smylitopoulos

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to understand not only Carr's change of style, subject, and media, but her work as a whole. While the sketchbooks on display in the exhibition and reproduced in the catalogue show that drawing was for Carr a means to understand her environment, there is no in-depth discussion of her practice of copying forms and motifs from ethnographic books and collections that can be seen in the sketchbooks. Carr's 1920s production of pottery and rugs in Native designs is missing altogether. Instead, the authors of the catalogue focus on her wider respect for the First Nations peoples of British Columbia and discover in her work the attitude that would become indispensable for a settler culture such as Canada to adopt in order to overcome its colonial past.

From the Forest to the Sea can be credited with inviting the reader to see Carr as based in a place shared by Native and settler colonial peoples. The catalogue devotes as much space (in both text and image) to Native objects as to Carr's works, and the small-scale Native items (ceremonial as well as domestic), enlarged and set against black or white backgrounds, sometimes surpass in their expressiveness even Carr's monumental red cedars, totem and house poles, canoes, and other figures. (In the exhibition spaces, in contrast, these objects were grouped together in display cases and placed centrally in the rooms; and spectators, turning their backs to the showcases to study the paintings, risked overlooking them, although those who used the audio guides in the exhibition would have learned more about them.)

In the evident concern for what the two organizing institutions called "cultural diplomacy" between Canada and England, the artists' artist Emily Carr threatens, at moments, to disappear. The curators skim over the impact on Carr of her years abroad—particularly her studies in Paris and Brittany in 1910 with Harry

Phelan Gibb—which makes it difficult for them to fully explain Carr's fascination with the artistic production of First Nations peoples. It would be worthwhile to investigate Carr's affective relationship with Native art of the Northwest Coast of British Columbia on an international scale. We can pick up where the catalogue leaves off and imagine new possibilities for thinking about Carr's highly individual modernism with its specifically regional content together with the discourses of international primitivism. This is essential in order to do justice to an artist whose body of work shows its full complexity only when examined in relation to European modernism as well as locally. ¶

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1. Curated by Charles C. Hill, Johanne Lamoureux, and Ian M. Thom, *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a National Icon* was presented at the National Gallery of Canada (2006) and then travelled to Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, and Calgary.

2. For an extensive discussion of the 1927 exhibition and its critical reception, see, for example, Charles C. Hill, "Backgrounds in Canadian Art: The 1927 Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art: Native and Modern," *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon*, exh. cat. (Ottawa and Vancouver, 2006), 92–121; and Leslie Dawn, "Northwest Coast Art and Canadian National Identity, 1900–50," in *Native Art of the Northwest Coast: A History of Changing Ideas*, ed. Charlotte Townsend-Gault, Jennifer Kramer and Ki-ke-in (Vancouver, 2013), 304–12.

3. See Gerta Moray, "Exhibiting Carr: The Making and Remaking of a Canadian Icon" (259–79), and Charles C. Hill, "Backgrounds in Canadian Art," both in *Emily Carr: New Perspectives on a Canadian Icon*, ed. Hill, Lamoureux, and Thom. The 1990 retrospective was guest-curated by Doris Shadbolt and coordinated by Charles Hill.

4. Marcia Crosby, "Construction of the Imaginary Indian," in *Vancouver Anthology: The Institutional Politics of Art*, ed. Stan Douglas (Vancouver, 1991), 268, 276–78.

5. Gerta Moray, "Wilderness, Modernity and Aboriginality in the Paintings of Emily Carr," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 33, 2 (1998): 43–65; and "Emily Carr and The Traffic in Native Images," in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto, 2001), 71–94.

Andrew Brink

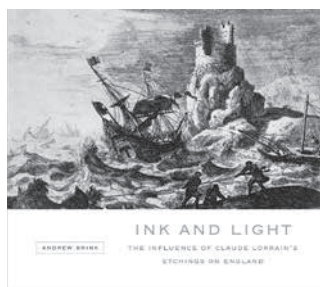
Ink and Light: The Influence of Claude Lorrain's Etchings on England

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Christina Smylitopoulou

IN 1836 THE PAINTER and draughtsman John Constable delivered a lecture before the Royal Institution on "The Origin of Landscape." He was, in his own words, "anxious that the world should be inclined to look to painters for information on painting." Constable, whose anxiety could be read as eagerness as much as distress, was responding critically to those who privileged the aesthetic opinions of collectors and connoisseurs, many of whom believed that the only creditable subject of landscape art was not only found abroad, but also in the past. Still, Constable's goal was also to demonstrate, "by tracing the connecting links in the history of landscape painting, that no great painter was ever self-taught." Among Constable's influences, including painters from the Dutch landscape tradition (the subjects of which were unapologetically domestic) and compatriots Thomas Gainsborough, Richard Wilson, and the tragically short-lived Thomas Girtin, was the seventeenth-century French artist Claude Lorrain. Scholars of Constable's work point to an early encounter with Claude's *Hagar and the Angel* (1646)—a work owned and treasured by Constable's friend, the amateur painter Sir George Beaumont—as a formative moment in the artist's development. Like other British landscape painters, including his rival J.M.W. Turner, who was said to have wept when he first beheld a Claude painting, Constable's study of the "inimitable Claude" taught him about framing devices, the benefits of close attention to nature, and, crucially,



"his peculiar attribute, brightness."¹ Constable was passionate about landscape. He championed the genre in an artistic community dominated by Academicians intent upon advancing British history painting and a market led by connoisseurs who favoured old masters over modern artists. But he would not live to see his works (his interpretations of the Suffolk countryside, especially) celebrated as examples of what came to be understood as the quintessential English landscape. Although Constable won medals in France—Eugène Delacroix even called him the father of French landscape painting—for a contemporary British audience, the "golden age" of landscape lay just beyond view.

In *Ink and Light: The Influence of Claude Lorrain's Etchings on England*, the late collector Andrew Brink (1932–2011) argues that Claude's work encouraged English painters to see their own landscapes as worthy subjects of art. While Claude's paintings and drawings had long been admired and collected in Britain, the more than forty original etchings he produced as a means of diversifying his practice in the market and promoting his work have been largely overlooked. Brink challenges erstwhile artistic hierarchies that privileged paintings and drawings over prints, and contends that these etchings deserve more scholarly attention. He addresses "how and why [these etchings] so empowered eighteenth-century English culture" (xii) and argues that Claude's vision of nature inspired English beholders, who were primed through an

existing "Christian humanist" tradition and were responding to changes stimulated by the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, to adopt a deeper contemplative relationship with landscape (5). To Brink, Claude's celebrated ability to capture sunlight was articulated as agreeably in etching as it was in paint or pen washes, and the imagined warmth it brought was a welcome respite for a climate—physical and artistic—with gloomy prospects. Recent exhibitions and their related scholarly catalogues, including *Claude Lorrain: The Enchanted Landscape* (October 6, 2011–January 8, 2012; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), *Claude Lorrain* (September 29, 2011–January 8, 2012; Teylers Museum and the Musée du Louvre), and *Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude* (March 14–June 5, 2012; National Gallery, London) have demonstrated an active present-day discourse on Claude and, according to Brink, a persistent English "obsession" with Claude that even "the present technological age, with its abrasive post-modernity, cannot banish" (22). Brink's book, a companion text to the exhibition *Ink and Light: The Etchings of Claude Lorrain* (January 23–March 30, 2014) held at the Art Gallery of Guelph (AGG; formerly the Macdonald Stewart Art Centre) and curated by Judith Nasby, brings a Canadian voice to this lively international debate.

Claude has long been considered by artists and connoisseurs as one of the greatest of all practitioners of the ideal (classical, or heroic) landscape, a genre devoted to a semblance of nature more ordered and aesthetically pleasing than can be found in nature itself. Although Claude did not invent this mode of imagining the landscape, a tradition that finds its roots in sixteenth-century Italian painting, his compositions present a view that epitomized the pastoral ideal of a classical Arcadia from a bygone golden age. By the mid-1630s, with his pastorals and harbour scenes, Claude had distinguished himself from his contemporaries—including Salvator Rosa, Nicolas Poussin,

and Poussin's pupil and brother-in-law Gaspard Dughet—through his unique treatment of light. This fascination with light occupied a principal position in Claude's work and was inspired by the studies he conducted during his frequent wanderings in the Roman countryside. In his paintings, luminosity was technically achieved through layers of thin, nearly pellucid applications of oil-based pigment. In his drawings, his *chiaroscuro* was accomplished through pen, brush, and ink in wet washes that created and emphasized the transitions between tonal differences. In his etchings, described by Brink as "an art midway between drawing and painting," the artist achieved dappling, glowing, and reflective effects of light through a combination of lively and controlled needlework, using strategies developed over time (xii). The etchings, drawn from the collection Brink began in the 1970s and bequeathed to the AGG, demonstrate Claude's experimentation with the medium, which he pursued in bursts of productivity rather than as a continuous activity throughout his long and prolific career. These etchings, reproduced in the book in duotone in roughly the same scale as the source prints, "contain the essence of Claude's discovery of how light gives nature its life" (xi).

Claude's work, avidly collected in his lifetime by the Italian intelligentsia and later by Grand Tourists stopping in Italy, exerted considerable influence on British art in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as landscape increasingly became a subject of aesthetic inquiry. Claude's nostalgic landscape appealed to collectors guided by the discourse of civic humanism, which stressed the role of civic virtue informed by classical notions of political liberty, and became a focus for a society characterized more and more by the commercial interests of private individuals. In what the Scottish moral philosopher Adam Smith might have called an unintended positive outcome of the "invisible hand," or the necessary self-interest that

drives a competitive market economy, Claude's work would change the landscapes (metaphorical and concrete) of British art and culture. Brink's book, comprised of four essays, forty plates, a biographical sketch of the artist, and an autobiographical précis of Brink's experiences as a print collector, aims to intervene in the discourse by documenting Claude's importance as a printmaker in eighteenth-century England.

In the first chapter, entitled "Claude Lorrain's Etchings in England," Brink posits a curious question. In an attempt to account for the "overwhelming" interest in Claude he does not ask what was so appealing about Claude to English collectors, but rather "What was it about English collectors that caused this enthusiasm?" (3). In doing so, Brink positions the collectors in a constitutive role, bestowing upon "English art a new sense of direction" that would, in the end, enliven artists to the possibilities of interpreting their own native landscapes (4). As such, this chapter examines how Claude's work, comprised of both Christian and classical themes situated within the natural world, entered a cultural climate conducive to "Claude's messages" and became "a rich source of enlightenment and solace" (6). But this cultural climate was not without its detractors. Claude's etchings were criticized by the portrait painter and theorist Jonathan Richardson, who believed that Claude's "talents lie upon his pallet [sic]" (13). The later theorist and amateur painter William Gilpin, known for his conveniently equivocating views, added a (dubiously) similar assessment of Claude's etchings that his "trees are heavy" (15). The Victorian critic John Ruskin, according to Brink, perpetuated critical disappointment with Claude's etchings, and similarly "attacked" this body of work (16). But Brink deems these critiques either short-sighted or unreasonable, stating that Richardson failed to see them

as a boon to the paintings and drawings, while "Gilpin and Ruskin wanted to assert their own visions and voices" (16). These critical faults, he argues, have resulted in unproductive judgments that have become tradition. The first hint toward Brink's own intervention in the discourse is found amid his evaluations of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century critical responses to Claude's etchings. In tracing the critical trajectory of the etchings, from being works that were "casually subordinated to his drawings and paintings" to achieving "high regard" in scholarship, Brink writes of the late-nineteenth-century artist and critic Gilbert Hammerton who, in his largely favourable formal analysis of Claude's etchings, "at last gives evidence of actually looking at them" (19).

The second chapter, "Claudian Architecture," is situated in the book after the plates, an organizational stratagem that appears to reinforce Brink's project to encourage close examination of Claude's etchings. This placement prepares the reader to better appreciate Brink's subsequent reflections that demonstrate his considerable knowledge of the ways in which Claude's work circulated in Britain. Tracing the historical reception of the etchings specifically, however, is challenging and, as a result, this chapter is largely speculative. In it the author imagines, and invites the reader to imagine, what the etchings might have offered to those who became instrumental in furthering a "Claudian aesthetic" in both landscape gardening and architectural design (65). For example, we know that Claude's extraordinary *Liber Veritatis*, or *Book of Truth*—a six-volume catalogue containing nearly 200 tinted sketches of Claude's paintings, now in the British Museum, and drawn by the artist himself to document dates and patrons for the pictures—was a source for the architect William Kent, a proponent of the "natural" style of garden design. The *Liber Veritatis* had been purchased by William Cavendish, the 3rd Duke of Devonshire, and housed

in his Palladian-style London home in Piccadilly designed by Kent. This catalogue reinforced Kent's earlier exposure to Claude's paintings at Holkham Hall, Thomas Coke's estate in Norfolk, which had the largest concentration of Claude paintings in England. When Richard Earlom engraved the *Liber Veritatis* in mezzotint for the publisher John Boydell, Claude's reach would have been extended even further. Using the paintings and mezzotints as examples, Brink reorients his discussion back to Claude's etchings, arguing that "close inspection of the etchings reveals much architectural detail that would have intrigued innovative English aesthetes" including Sir John Vanburgh, Richard Payne Knight, Sir Uvedale Price, and others who were engaging with new ways to view and build the garden landscapes of Britain. "Failing direct evidence," he writes, "it is at least worth supposing that the beguiling presence of rural houses and ancient ruins in Claude's etchings had this leavening effect on Englishmen who were ready to work on their estates guided by this new idea of what to do" (67).

In the third chapter, "Original and Reproductive Prints," Brink engages first with Claude's original etchings. While these do not reproduce specific paintings, scholars have speculated they may have functioned in part as advertisements for his work as a whole. Brink then discusses the prints that reproduce Claude's paintings and drawings; prints of portraits of Claude; and later illustrative engravings after Claude that were, for the most part, executed in steel. Brink concludes that "no other seventeenth-century landscape painter inspired so much effort to disseminate images to an eager public" (71). Although the chapter aims to make a case for the greater aesthetic allure of the etchings, Brink nevertheless draws his focus back to incorporate the role of publishers in disseminating the Claudian sensibility over time, a trajectory he sees culminating in less aesthetic and more illustrative intentions. This shift is demonstrated by

first tracing the circulation of original etchings by Claude and then of prints made subsequently from Claude's plates (citing the London publisher J. McCreery, who published *A Collection of Original Etchings* in 1816, most of which were etched by Claude). By the mid-nineteenth-century, however, "commercialism had all but negated the English print maker's attempts to convey the wonders of Claude" (84). As the century progressed, innovations in reproductive, perhaps more accurately reprographic, methods signalled "the end of an era when a single artist, Claude Lorrain, giving courage to many others, enriched awareness of seaside and landscape," which Brink identifies as a "cultural gain... felt to this day" (84).

The final chapter is by far the largest. Here Brink formally analyzes individual etchings, drawing them into the larger body of Claude's oeuvre and advancing him as a singular artist who defies attempts by art historians to situate him within larger traditions. He uses contemporary sources to illustrate the accessibility of themes found in Claude's etchings to contemporary audiences (by which he means seventeenth-century Europe and eighteenth-century England), themes that might require explanation for a twenty-first-century beholder to fully recuperate. For example, analyzing Claude's etchings of "The Sea Journey," Brink cautions, "How derivative were these prints, art historians like to ask?" His view is that this question has the potential to distract the beholder from Claude's "struggle to come to visual terms with the actual danger of perishing at sea." Although "supported by conventions," Brink concedes, "the encounter with this stark reality seems to have been entirely his own" (86). This theme of travel, which he argues "implies landscape" and which, in this section, flows from the sea journeys to incorporate journeys over land, enables Brink to return to one of his principal arguments—namely, that "Claude offered a visual formu-

la for lifting melancholy and enhancing mood, with English 'taste' quickly assenting to its importance" (88). In his section on "earthly pilgrims," he shows shepherds and shepherdesses "enjoying perfect accord with each other in the natural order" (91), thus bringing together the classical Virgilian and Christian traditions in a subtle blend that would not be lost on Claude's learned public. Brink interprets Claude's theme of "The Dance" as a preoccupation with animals and humans engaged in natural celebrations, a down-to-earth response that draws "the yearning eye outward" into a nostalgic landscape, unlike Pousin's allegorical "vision of cosmic harmony" (94). In his sections on "The Light" and "Ideas About Light," he investigates the precursors to Claude's concern with light and the debt Claude may have owed to thinkers about light. Brink then returns to his notion of Christian humanism in the theories of, among others, the philosopher Anthony Ashley Cooper, the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, who went on a Grand Tour in 1689 and owned a painting by Claude, and whose *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711) aimed to introduce the notion of moral beauty and taste to British society. "Light in England" is a summary of Brink's thoughts on the artist and on how his work appealed to "light-starved English collectors" who acted as conduits for Constable, Turner, and others to experience their "adopted prophet," Claude Lorrain (109). The volume ends with a section that briefly outlines Claude's "Biographical Essentials," a "List of Works" that provides tombstone information for the etchings reproduced in the book, and the final, autobiographical section entitled "Collecting Claude."

This book makes a significant contribution to the discourse on Claude's place in eighteenth-century British art, but not on how Claude's etching informed what became a "thoroughly English idiom" (116). The main criticism is that it does not allow for tensions, either in the works themselves

or in the contexts in which they circulated, to exert influence. Much as he was admired and avidly collected (Beaumont famously travelled with Claude's *Hagar and the Angel* in a purpose-built case), Claude's work could also be viewed as an obstacle to artists who were attempting to advance their own personal visions. In the preface to *Constable's Discourses*, the editor R. B. Beckett states that this is precisely where Constable "fell foul of the aesthetic theories of the eighteenth century, drummed into him by the connoisseurs, who would have reduced artistic practice to an observance of rules deducible from the work of the old masters."² Nor does the book allow for tensions in this discourse; Brink's insistence on an "English" aesthetic belies the thrust toward a "British" aesthetic supported by the very societies in which Claude would have loomed large. For example, the British Institution, founded in 1805 by prominent connoisseurs who took over Boydell's former Shakespeare Gallery, held annual exhibitions of Old Master works derived from British collections as well as shows by contemporary British artists (including Constable), who could study works by Claude in the galleries. The "English idiom" of landscape has, moreover, been productively complicated in studies that address the utility of art—landscape in particular—in negotiating imperial identities. Jeffrey Auerbach, Jill H. Casid, John E. Crowley, Ian MacLean, and G. H. R. Tillotson have all made vital contributions in this area. Sadly, Brink would not have had access to the most recent studies, including Finola O'Kane's *Ireland and the Picturesque: Design, Landscape Painting, and Tourism, 1700–1840* (2013), which argues that picturesque theory may have developed independently and, significantly, may have taken hold earlier in Ireland than in England, and Romita Ray's *Under the Banyan Tree: Relocating the Picturesque in British India* (2013) that engages with the aestheticization of the Indian landscape, along with the animals and people of India, during the

Raj. The contribution of studies informed by postcolonial theory may be part of that “abrasive post-modernity” to which Brink takes exception. In the book, Brink seems to be at times frustrated by the questions art historians have posed, particularly when the answers stray from what he sees as the object’s primary role, namely to inspire aesthetic pleasure. He writes, “Putting ideological labels on an artist’s work, or expecting them to emerge, can compromise, or even foreclose, unique visual experience” (105). Brink waves away the ideological thrust that has dominated the discourse on British landscape since the 1960s. In doing so he is, however, making a valuable point. This book’s major intervention, matched by the contribution made by the excellent and thoughtfully curated exhibition, is the insistence that we engage with the aesthetic qualities of Claude’s etchings. For the art historical contexts of these works, one would perhaps be better directed to Martin Sonnabend’s essay entitled “Claude Lorrain: the Printmaker,” in *Claude Lorrain: the Enchanted Landscape* (2011), but for a celebration of Claude’s etchings and for a glimpse into the mind of a collector, *Ink and Light* triumphs. The insights of a scholar and collector into what was a lifelong engagement with Claude’s etchings, harkening back to a bygone “era when foraging for small treasure at low prices was really possible,” triggers just the sort of melancholic nostalgia that Claude’s work inspired (138); it sheds its own light on the pleasure one would receive in beholding the works and challenges the critic to find fault in the idylls of Claude’s imagination. ¶

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1. John Constable, *Discourses*, ed. R.B. Beckett (Ipswich, 1970), 39, 52.
2. Beckett, in Constable, *Discourses*, 5.

Joseph Monteyne

From Still Life to the Screen: Print Culture, Display, and the Materiality of the Image in Eighteenth-Century London

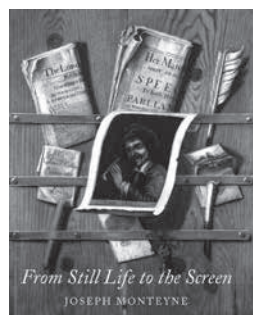
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Christina Smylitopoulos

JOSEPH MONTEYNE’S ANALYSIS of eighteenth-century print culture draws on thing theory to investigate the subjectivity and agency of prints, a power that was not without its dangers: there was “a dark side to the excessive pursuit of these commodities, for the pleasure they offer potentially leads to narcissistic obsession” (109). *From Still Life to the Screen: Print Culture, Display, and the Materiality of the Image in Eighteenth-Century London* considers themes of “consumption, display, and the materiality of the image” and, in privileging things, uncovers “overlooked and undervalued correspondences” (14).

Demonstrating affinities with scholars from anthropology, archaeology, literary criticism, material culture studies, philosophy, and his own discipline of art history, Monteyne argues for the value in a heightened attentiveness to things, which he understands as being the result of a transformative process “created out of what is excessive about objects, from what exceeds their simple materialization.” In his introduction, he writes, “One might say, as recent theorists of things have done, that I am concerned here to pay attention to the ways that objects become things when they are made to stand out against the background of the world in which they exist” (14). The literary theorist Bill Brown, a leading proponent of this “comparably new idiom” and one of the theorists to which Monteyne refers, has argued for developing a framework



to “think with or through the physical object world,” an approach that has already enlivened studies in art and material culture.¹ This attentiveness to things destabilizes standard questions traditionally queried of objects. Rather than ask, for instance, “How do people create things that reflect social worlds?” thing theory urges new questions, such as, “How do things create the social worlds of people?” Monteyne intervenes in a debate that has been largely characterized by studies concentrating on the socio-political contexts and individual actors in the London print industry/market. Nevertheless, this is a discourse that is poised for some fresh ideas.

The introduction, entitled “Painting, the Print on Display, and the Paragon” opens the book with an examination of the work of the Dutch seventeenth-century still-life artist, Edwart Collier, who supplied the early modern London art market with, among other subjects, curious virtuoso *trompe l’oeil* paintings depicting illusionistically rendered prints after well-known portraits by artists including Anthony Van Dyck and Petrus Staverenus. Unlike painted portraits, which (if of sufficient quality) could create the illusion that the sitter was in attendance, Collier’s painted prints, anchored to the painted wooden panels with shadowed push pins or stamped sealing wax, catch the viewer “in the gaze of a thing, a face represented on the flat surface of a printed object” (3). These paintings do not, as Jean Baudrillard