

I. MEDIEVAL BACKGROUND

- A. Images as "Bible of the illiterate"
6th C. Pope Gregory I (d. 604): defense of images as libri pauperum: church frescoes depict stories from Old and New Testament, saints lives
- B. Cult of saints: relics, pilgrimages, shrines, vows (quid pro quo)
Luther's vow in thunderstorm: "St. Anne help me; I will become a monk."
Scholastic theology: degrees of worship versus reverence to God & saints
in Thomas Aquinas: latria = worship, adoration -- reserved for God alone;
dulia = reverence -- for saints; hyperdulia -- for Virgin Mary
- C. Iconoclastic movement: Byzantine Empire (capitol = Constantinople)
726 Emperor Leo III forbids images as superstitious; Islamic influence
843 restoration of icons ends schism between Rome and Greek church
- D. Devotional context of late medieval art: patrons depicted in paintings
images used for prayer, meditation of sufferings of Christ, sin
penitential system focused on "good works" and "good death":
Ars Moriendi: art of dying well; death bed struggle for soul
Dance of Death wood cut series by Hans Holbein (the Younger 1497-1543)

II. REFORMERS POSITIONS ON RELIGIOUS IMAGES

- A. Karlstadt: Professor of Theology; leader of Wittenberg Movement 1521-22
1522 On Abolition of Images and There Should Be No Beqqars Among Christians
O.T. Mosaic law against "graven images"; hostility to saint cults
1522 Wittenberg City Council authorizes removal of images to prevent riots
- B. Zwingli in Zurich: humanist (Erasmian) critique of "externals," ceremonies
1523 Second Zurich Disputation: condemnation of images and Mass; images to
be removed by magistrates, City Council; not by popular violence
1525 Answer to Valentin Compar: treatise against religious images as false
"theology of idolatry" (i.e. Catholicism); men create false gods
in their minds; abgott = "strange god" or internal idol; condemns
gestures of reverence to statues (kneeling, bowing, kissing, etc.)
- C. Luther: breaks with Karlstadt over pace of change in Wittenberg Movement
urges respect for "weaker consciences," avoid giving scandal
images as adiaphora: indifferent things, matters that don't matter;
may be kept or removed, but only by authorities, not by violence
defends use of (1) images in books (woodcuts), including Scripture;
1522 Luther's German New Testament: illustrated with woodcuts
(2) altarpieces: if kept, should be illustrated with Last Supper
as communal meal, remembrance not sacrifice (as for Catholics)
(3) Crucifix (with body of Christ) retained, not just Cross

III. MAJOR GERMAN ARTISTS OF EARLY REFORMATION PERIOD

- Albrecht Durer (1471-1528) self portraits; 1504 Adam and Eve (original sin)
1513 Knight, Death and the Devil: illustration for Erasmus'
Enchiridion Militis Christianae (Handbook of Xtian Soldier)
1497-98 Apocalypse woodcut series: forces of Christ vs anti-Christ
seven headed dragon; beast with two horns; whore of Babylon
1519 Virgin and Child with St. Anne = Catholic maternal imagery
1526 Erasmus; Four Apostles = Reformation images: male figures
- Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472-1553) transition from Catholic to Reformation
Catholic: 1506 St. Catherine Altarpiece; 1510-12 Holy Kinship Altar
Portraits of patrons: 1514 Duke Henry of Saxony; Frederic the Wise
Reformation: Adam and Eve 1526, 1510-12; Christ and Adulteress 1532
Altar of Redemption 1533-55; woodcuts for Cranmer's catechism
- Hans Baldung-Grien 1511 Fall of Man (Lapsus Humani Generis) or Adam & Eve
Catholic: Christ on Cross with Fall and Sacrament of Mass
Lutheran: Conversion of St. Paul

IV. SINGLE-LEAF WOODCUTS AS REFORMATION PROPAGANDA

- 1520 Michael Ostendorfer, Pilgrimage to Virgin at Regensburg
 1523 Anonymous, The Papal Ass (Der Papstesel zu Rom)
 illustration of pamphlet by Luther and Melanchthon
 1523 Anonymous, The Monk Calf (Das Munchkalb zu Freiberg)
 1524 Hans Sebald Beham: Descent of the Pope into Hell
 Luther and the Artisans
 1524 Hans Holbein the Younger, Christ the True Light; Story of Indulgences
 1525 Erhard Schon, Hunting of Monks and Clerics
 1527 Anonymous, Seven Headed Papal Beast; Prophecy of Papacy
 Hans Sebald Beham: Fall of the Papacy (1527 = Sack of Rome)
 1530 Anonymous, Devil playing monk as bagpipe
 1530-35 Peter Flotner, Procession of the Clergy
 1540 Hans Deutsch, Monk devours widow, house and inheritance
 1540 Lucas Cranach the Younger, Lutheran Communion and Catholics to Hell
 1546 Anonymous, Monkfish

V. PORTRAITS OF LUTHER AND OTHER REFORMATION LEADERS

- Melanchton: Durer 1526; Cranach, 1560
 Luther's Father (at 60): Cranach 1527
 Images of Luther:
 1520 Baldung-Grien, Luther as Augustinian monk
 published as frontispiece to Babylonian Captivity treatise
 1520 Hans Beham, Luther as Evangelist
 1521 Baldung-Grien, Luther with Bible, Halo and Dove
 Cranach's portraits of Luther: 1521 with beard, 1526 bareheaded,
 1532 with hat, 1525 circular image
 Article by Robert Scribner, "Incombustible Luther: The image of the
 Reformer in Early Modern Germany," Past and Present (1986), 38-68
 1521 burning of Luther's books at Diet of Worms: image untouched
 1546 fire in house where Luther died in Eisleben; also there in
 1601 fire: baptismal church, houses of birth & death preserved

Basic bibliography:

- Carl Christensen, Art and Reformation (1979)
 Carlos Eire, War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus
 to Calvin (1986)
 Robert Scribner, For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda in the
 German Reformation (Cambridge 1981)
 Keith Moxey, Peasants, Warriors and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation
 (Univ. of Chicago, 1989)

U.W. Art History Department:

Christine Goettler, Asst. Professor, specialist in Reformation art
 & northern Renaissance