Uses of the Visual in Early Modern Germany, c. 1450-c.1550

Professors Ulinka Rublack and Sachiko Kusukawa, Drs Spike Bucklow and Lucy Wrapson

Few periods are as exciting as Renaissance and Reformation Germany in visual terms. Printing was a new medium, and German skill in creating printed images cutting edge. Innovation was everywhere – in terms of subjects, such as the selfie, witches or the depiction of new world inhabitants, as well as technologies, such as light-weight armour or extraordinary male fashion. Cabinets of curiosities became the most fashionable way to engage with the visual, and courts spent extraordinary sums of money to buy coconut cups or corals. The very first treatise on collecting for such cabinets was authored at the end of our period in Germany, and its analysis will also end our course.

The first part of this year’s course will particularly focus on Albrecht Dürer, one of the most innovative and creative artists of all times. We will collaborate with Dr Spike Bucklow and Dr Lucy Wrapson at the Hamilton Kerr Institute of painting conservation and have the unique opportunity to spend several sessions out in the Institute’s idyllic setting in an old mill in Whittleford to recreate some of the steps Dürer himself would have undertaken to paint. The point of this exercise is to gain a better understanding of a Renaissance painter’s time, skill and his self-representation through reworking some of his processes. You do not need any artistic talent at all.

For the rest of the course we will follow in part Michael Baxandall’s groundbreaking attempts to root an analysis of the visual in the contexts of production, the materiality of media and particular visual logic of the time, as well as the individual contribution
of particular artists. As Baxandall showed, any attempt to recover the visual conventions of early modern Germany must draw on a wide range of historical sources, as there is little overt critical writing on art at the time. We will also integrate anthropological approaches to visual culture. These attend to the ways in which images and artefacts emerge out of particular human encounters and modes of production, which have a bearing on their meaning, as well as on how images and objects are exchanged, invested with value, and displayed. We will explore the responses different images and objects elicited and explore the role of the artist in society.

The course can draw on well known compilations of source material. In addition it can now rely on several recently edited or digitalised bodies of material. We will moreover use the extraordinary resources at hand in our local collections such as the Fitzwilliam to study original prints and drawings by some of the most famous and self-searching artists of all times. Gobbets will be drawn from a mixture of visual and textual sources. Translations for all languages other than English will be provided for all class material. There will be a particular focus on the art of Albrecht Dürer, his disciple Baldung Grien, Lucas Cranach, and Hans Holbein the Younger. You do not need to have previously studied art history or German and German history to enjoy this course, but should be passionate about art.

This Special aims to be as interactive as possible. It uses a highly developed Moodle site with links to texts, digital resources, films, images and extensive bibliographies which can inform work on Long Essays. Different formats of teaching styles, group work and exercises will be integrated in sessions to make them varied and fun.

There will be a two-hour seminar on Tuesdays and one-hour seminar on Thursdays during Michaelmas Term, which allows us to visit collections and study at the Hamilton Kerr Institute for three sessions. We will learn to prepare a canvas, make varnish, and gain an understanding of what it meant to paint in oil and in layers. The format of a two-hour seminar on Tuesdays and one-hour seminar on Thursdays will continue in the Lent Term. In-depth gobbet practice for the exam is integrated early on in course, and will be the focus of four two-hour revision sessions in Easter Term.

All costs for the three visits to the Hamilton Kerr Institute will be covered, but you will need to allow for a little extra time to travel on these Tuesday mornings.
The moodle site hosts a detailed, up-to-date bibliography, but the below indicates some of the scope of the course.

General bibliography:

*Obligatory introductory, to be read in advance:*

General bibliography:
Scott, T., *Soceity and Economy in Germany, 1300-1600*, (2002).

Specific themes:

*Maximilian I:*
Primary:
Hans Burgkmair’s broadsheet of Maximilian on horseback. Coloured and non-coloured.
Secondary:
Keen, M., Chivalry (1984).

Comparative:
Cellini, Benvenuto, Autobiography, extracts on working for the Pope and for Francis I.
Soly, H., Charles V 1500-1558 and his Time (2000).

Cranach and the Saxon Court:
Primary:
Selected Cranach religious and secular paintings and broadsheets;
Contracts between Cranach and the Saxon court in translation

Secondary:
Cat. of the Royal Academy exhibition 2008.
Cat. of the Dürer-Cranach exhibition Madrid 2008.
Heydenreich, G., Lucas Cranach the Elder: Painting Materials, Techniques and Workshop Practices (2007) – this is a landmark in the study of workshop production and includes extensive textual primary material.
Scribner, R.W., Religion and Culture in Germany (1400-1600) (2001), ch. 5.
M. J. Friedländer, The paintings of Lucas Cranach (1978)

Albrecht Dürer:
Primary:
The complete paintings of Dürer, ed. A. O. della Chiesa (1971)
Picture Database, Albertina, at:
http://gallery.albertina.at/eMuseum/code/emuseum.asp
Bartrum, G., Albrecht Dürer and his legacy: the graphic work of the Renaissance artists (2002).
**Sketchbook of the journey to the Netherlands (1520-1521),** tr. P. Troutman, ed. E. Schilling (1968).


**Secondary**


**Nuremberg:**


Cat., *Gothic and Renaissance art in Nuremberg, 1300-1550* (1986).


Augsburg
Primary:
We will focus on the work of Jörg Breu and his followers. Breu was one of the few early modern artists to keep a (fascinating) chronicle, and selections from it will be analysed in translation. We will also examine the patronage of the Fugger merchant family, and use letters by Hans Fugger, who dealt with a wide range of art and objects, in translation, as well as excerpts from the diary of the Augsburg architect Elias Holl.

Die Augsburger Monatsbilder.
Geschlechtertänze.
Ehrenbuch der Fugger – also available online at http://www.bayerische-landesbibliothek-online.de/fuggeren.
Examples of Augsburg armour and goldsmiths’ work.

Petrarchmaster, Selected De remediis woodcuts.

Secondary:

On the Fugger:


*Religious Visual Cultures:*

**Primary:**
Selected Reformation Title-pages and Propaganda, via the Lutherdatenbank, at [http://diglib.hab.de/edoc/ed000007/start.htm](http://diglib.hab.de/edoc/ed000007/start.htm); Cambridge University Library, rare books and selected broadsheets

Andersson, C., Talbot, C. eds., *From a Mighty Fortress: Prints, Drawings, and Books in the Age of Luther 1483-1546* (1983)


**Secondary:**


Pettegree, A., *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*, ch. on Lutheran images.


Zapalac, K.E.S., “In His Image and Likeness”: Political iconography and religious Change in Regensburg, 1500-1600 (1990).

**Visualising the Self:**

**Primary:**
Die Augsburger Monatsbilder.
Augsburg Geschlechertänze.
Grosses Tucherbuch (CD-Rom 2004)
Depictions of artisans and their trades in the books of the Mendelsche
Zwölfbrüderstiftung, searchable in English at http://www.nuernberger-
Matthäus Schwarz, Book of his Clothes (Klaidungsbüchlein), ed. by A. Fink (1963). 
Portraits by the Augsburg painter Christoph Amberger; contracts and letters by him
in translation.
Cat., Christoph Amberger : Bildnismaler zu Augsburg : städtische Eliten im Spiegel

Secondary:
Mann, N. and Syson, L., eds., The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the
Renaissance (1998)
Woods-Marsden, J., Renaissance self-portraiture: the visual construction of identity
and the social status of the artist (1998).

Encoding Sexual Difference:

Primary Material from Geissberg/Strauss ed., The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 6
vols.
Images of Landsquenets
Portraits and Medals
(1994), for comparison.
Cat., Emblems of Eminence : German Renaissance Portrait Medals ; the Age of
Albrecht Dürer ; the Collection of an Art Connoisseur, Peter Volz, and Hans
Christoph Jokisch, eds., trans. Andrew Jenkins (Munich, 2008).
Hans Sachs, with Amman, Jost, The Book of Trades, Ständebuch. trans. A. Rifkin

Secondary:
Roper, L., The Holy Household: Discipline and Morals in Reformation Augsburg
(1989), chs 2-5.
Koerner, J. L., The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance art (1993),
chs.8, 12.
Hale, J.R., Artists and Warfare in the Renaissance (1990), chs. 1-2, 4-5.
Moxey, K., Peasants, Warriors and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation
Chicago (1989), chs 3-5.
Stephen K. Scher, ed., Perspectives on the Renaissance Medal (New York: Garland,
2000).
Scribner, R.W., Religion and Culture in Germany (1400-1600), (2001), ch. 5.
Zika, C., The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-
Zika, C., ‘Cannibalism and witchcraft in early modern Europe: reading the visual