

Images, Idolatry and Iconoclasm

Seminar 10: One Last Iconoclastic Push



A strong claim

The category of Art in the context of early modern iconoclasm is indispensable on account of its ostensible neutrality.

The Image: Recurrent Boundaries

- Educational: learned vs lay
- Theological: immaterial vs incarnate God
- Psychological: material vs mental
- Gender: male vs female
- Dogmatic: licit vs illicit
- Ontological: dead/material or alive/numinous
- Pleasure/instruction
- Transactional / artefactual
- Private / Public
- Historical: us vs them
- Application: Private vs Public
- Aesthetic: Still vs Moving
- Temporal: Punctual or Permanent
- Social: Private or Public
- Ethical: Trust and Distrust
- Artefactual: Image as impressed vs image as crafted
- Production: unique or reproducible
- Tactical: the image as neutral Art or highly charged carrier?

Seminar 9, 4 April: Responding to Iconoclasm: Still Life in the Art Gallery

Primary Texts

- John Milton, *Nativity Ode* (1629), many editions
- John Milton, *Eikonoklastes* (1649), excerpt (posted)
- John Milton, *Samson Agonistes* (1671), many editions

Paratext

Daniel Shore, “Why Milton is not an Iconoclast,” *PMLA* 127 (2012), 22-37 (posted)

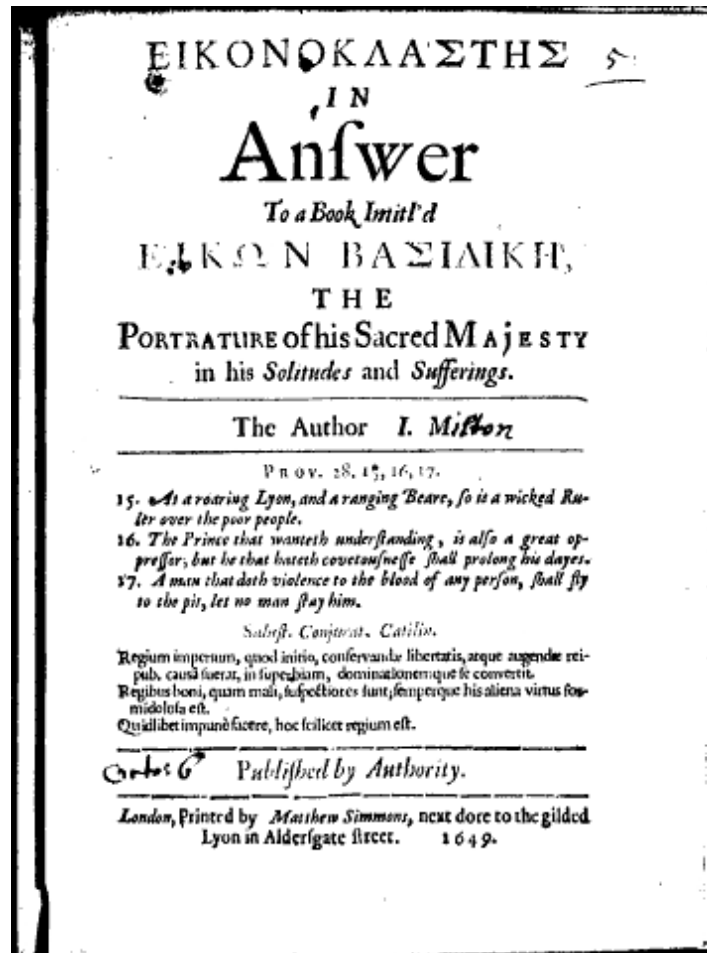
Legislation

- 28 August 1643 Parliament had issued an ordinance requiring the removal and/or destruction of all fixed altars, altar rails, chancel steps, and of ‘all crucifixes, crosses, and all images and pictures of any one or more persons of the Trinity, or of the Virgin Mary and all other pictures of saints or superstitious inscriptions in or upon all and every church’.
- *The Journal of William Dowsing*, ed. Cooper, p. 12. For the texts of Parliamentary iconoclastic legislation in the 1640s, see Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War*, Appendix I.

Frontispiece, Charles I, *Eikon Basilike* (London, 1649), detail



Frontispiece, John Milton, *Eikonoklastes* (London, 1649)



Maerten van Heemkerck, *Samson Destroying the Temple of the Philistines* (c. 1560)



Capital, Samson (12c) (Harvard Art Museum)





The Pourtraicture of K. Charles I illuminated with several of his memorable actions, very proper to be read on the 30th of January, before sermon (London, 1700)

The Prayer of King Charles, stiled, A Prayer in time of Captivity. Printed in a great Folio, called, The

Works of King Charles, and also in his Eikon Basilica■

O Powerful and Eternal God, to whom nothing is so great, that it may resist, or so small, that it is contemned, look down upon my Misery with thine Eye of Mercy, and let thine Infinit Power vouchsafe to limit out some Proportion of Deliverance unto me, as to thee shall seem most convenient. Let not Injury, O Lord, triumph over me, and let my Faults by thy hand be corrected, and make not my Unjust Enemies the Ministers of thy Justice...

The Prayer of Pamela (to a Heathen Deity) being under Imprisonment. In Pembrock's Arcadia, 13. Edition, pag. 248. Printed 1674.

O All-seeing Light, and Eternal Life of all things, to whom nothing is either so great, that it may resist, or so small, that it is contemned, look down upon my Misery with thine Eye of Mercy, and let thine Infinit Power vouchsafe to limit out some Proportion of Deliverance unto me, as to thee shall seem most convenient. Let not Injury, O Lord, triumph over me, and let my Faults by thy hand be corrected, and make not my Unjust Enemy the Minister of thy Justice...

“Ode to Christ’s Nativity,” excerpt

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring, and dale
Edg'd with poplar pale,
 The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flow'r-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
 The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
 Affrights the flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat.