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ART, PATRONAGE AND CIVIC LIFE IN A REFORMED CITY: 16TH CENTURY ZÜRICH

by

MARY GRACE WINKLER

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

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In 1524 under the leadership of the Reformer Huldrech Zwingli the citizens of Zürich undertook to cleanse their churches of idolatrous objects. This was carried out after scholarly debate and with the approval of the authorities. In conjunction with the decision to remove the images, Zwingli prepared arguments to explain and justify the community’s action. These arguments became influential among other Evangelical Reformed Protestants and thus Zürich’s solution to the problem of religious art is essential for an understanding of the development of the visual arts in Protestant areas in the sixteenth century.

Two questions are significant to this development. What sources of patronage would the new art have, and what would be appropriate subject matter? In Zürich three groups would replace the Church as patron: the state, private industry, and the individual citizen. Because Zwingli’s theology demanded a reorientation in subject matter, requiring material that is narrative or historical (geschichtsesyys) new subjects and genres had to be found. Thus for a time the portrait threatened to replace the altar retable and illustration of religious and scientific works became central to Zürich’s artistic life. Small decorative stained glass panels, Kabinettscheiben, became vehicles for both propaganda and display of position and material wealth.

The art of sixteenth century Zürich departed from medieval artistic usage while seeking to avoid aspects of Renaissance Humanism repugnant
to Reformed theology. It pointed new directions in the translation of empirically observed reality as an aspect of the Reformer's conviction that the study of nature reveals the operation of Divine Providence in creation. Thus while Evangelical Reformed teaching denied much of ancient and medieval art, it allowed and nurtured the objective portrayal of the visible world.
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INTRODUCTION

The use of visual art as a vehicle for religious expression is as ancient as art itself, and the attempt of mankind to comprehend and achieve communion with the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* by means of artistic creation has resulted in a rich and beautiful treasure—a treasure now for the most part guarded in museums. Many of the civilizations which created them exist no more and their art and the religions which inspired it can today only be understood with the aid of scholarly research. Certainly it is difficult if not impossible for modern man to enter the mental and emotional world of the cave painters of Lascaux.

It may be impossible to empathize fully with the artisans, craftsmen and theologians who accomplished the creation of such beauty as that which adorns the Gothic cathedrals of Western Europe.

How difficult such empathy may be for a modern viewer is demonstrated in Kenneth Clark's observations on the contemporary literary person's response to the visual arts: "Men of letters are by no means always safe guides to painting. It is not that they are too literary. Artists themselves ... have been extremely literary when they wrote about their works. It is that they do not distinguish between the subject of a picture and the way in which that subject has recreated itself pictorially in the artist's imagination."

This is a modern—a post-Reformation—approach to the necessary interrelationship of subject and technique, and if modern man is to understand works of religious art of the past some attempt must be made to see these works through the eyes of their creators and original beholders. The idea is neither novel nor especially controversial, yet it must be stressed especially strongly when dealing with the art created
in Northern Europe before and during the Protestant Reformation. Only when it is understood that for many – perhaps all – of the individuals participating in the iconoclasm of the Reformation, it was the subject of the art work, not the way that subject had "recreated itself pictorially in the artists' imagination" which was important, can the gulf between modern and medieval attitudes toward art be bridged. Without the understanding that for both peasant and humanist reformer a statue of the Virgin or a painting of a saint were powerful and numinous precisely because they were depictions of holy figures the iconoclasm of the Protestant Reformation becomes merely an act of barbarism – the destruction of all that makes man civilized and humane.²

Yet the Reformers who preached against images, the magistrates who acted on their teaching, and even the rudest destroyers of an altar, roodscreen, or lamp abjured ecclesiastical art not out of hatred of the beautiful but out of recognition of the power of religious art. For the Protestant Reformers and for those who adhered to their teaching religious art had become symbolic of much that they found erroneous and misleading about contemporary religious practice and belief. For them the power of religious images derived not so much from their aesthetic qualities as works of art, but from their ability as depictions of holy figures to seduce the common people into false hope and trust. These works thus derived their power not from aesthetic considerations but from religion. The smallest, crudest statue in a village church was as much an idol as the most exquisite sculpture in a great cathedral. Both had become objects of devotion, and both had been endowed with a power which they no longer possess. That they have lost this particular power is in part the result of the Protestant Reformation.
Because the Reformation signaled the denial of the medieval uses of religious art, Protestantism has been accused of being unfriendly to the visual arts. Certainly some statements of the Reformers and the acts of the Bildersstürmer are strong evidence in support of such a belief. Yet Protestantism did not deny art. Were this true our contemporary world would look considerably different. What Protestantism wished to effect was the separation of numen and art. This meant that an artist living in the midst of a Reformed community and working for a Protestant audience had to find subjects, methods and techniques which would not convey even the slightest suggestion of idolatrous appeal. If possible, it was also the task of that artist to find an artistic vocabulary for the expression of Protestant ideas about God, man and creation.

It is the purpose of this work to demonstrate how this was achieved. The laboratory is small: I will not attempt to describe artistic developments in the whole of the Protestant world. Rather the scope of the investigation is limited to the city of Zürich, a city significant for a variety of reasons, some of them negative. Sixteenth century Zürich was not the wealthy and cosmopolitan city it is today. In the Reformation period sources of artistic patronage were, at best, limited. It was not a city in which learning flourished - at least not before Zwingli reformed the educational system. In sum, Zürich was not a cultural center in the period preceding the Reformation, and its approach to art was somewhat hesitant and old-fashioned. The whole complex of ideas and attitudes associated with the Renaissance was only beginning to be felt.

Zürich was, however, a prosperous city with a constitution remarkably democratic for its time. The city-state was allied to the Swiss Confederacy and governed by magistrates elected from twelve craft guilds.
It was, therefore, a city-state governed by merchants and craftsmen representing other merchants and craftsmen, all very aware of the business of this world. The magistrates of Zürich had long been concerned with the business of the Church also, and the relationship of Church and State in pre-Reformation Zürich had unique features. The magistrates had over a period of time succeeded in achieving for their state a considerable amount of independence from ecclesiastical control.

To these factors must finally be added the person of Huldreich Zwingli, a religious leader who would, with the cooperation of the magistracy, articulate and carry out a solution to the problem of art and reformed religion which would become a model for other Reformed cities.

These factors, both positive and negative, make Zürich an important site for observing and investigating the development of Protestant artistic response to religion and to the visible world. With a clearly articulated theology, without any strong or outstanding artistic tradition or personalities, under the watchful eyes of the pastors and magistrates, Zürich provided an ideal environment in which to study the development of an artistic oeuvre which would conform to and be an expression of Reformed teaching. The very narrowness of the field of study and the rigid confines of censorship are thus more an aid than a hindrance.

The visual arts did not expire in Zürich after religious art was removed from local churches and forbidden by government mandate. Rather, the middle years of the sixteenth century bear witness to an attempt to seek and find new subjects and genres suitable to the mission specified by Zwingli and his fellow theologians. Thus the present work is not intended as a list of negatives—this or that theme was not allowed, this or that artist emigrated or died in poverty. Rather it is an attempt to
answer these questions: What did the Reformed tradition require of the visual arts? What needs did these arts fill for the pious Protestant? How were the emotions evoked and satisfied by medieval religious art to be channeled or limited?

To answer these questions a discussion not only of Reformed Zürich but of Zürich's medieval culture is necessary if there is to be an understanding of the ease with which the citizens overthrew or cast aside centuries of religious culture. Following this is a discussion of Zwingli's attack on Catholic cult practices and on ecclesiastical art, of his theology, of his particular view of art and its relationship to a godly society. The remainder of the work will be devoted to the attempt by the Reformed community to find a mode of artistic expression which both conformed to Zwingli's teaching and satisfied the desire for some form of visual representation. Two specific men have been chosen to exemplify the nature of the difficulties and problems faced by artists trying to pursue artistic careers in the newly-Reformed community. The first is Hans Leu the Younger, an artist who reached maturity before the advent of the Reformation and who struggled to make the transition from medieval artist-craftsman to Renaissance artist. The second, Hans Asper, belongs to the next artistic generation, although he and Leu were near-contemporaries, for he began his artistic career in Zürich after the Reformation was firmly established and after Zwingli was dead. Both men had to contend with difficulties, difficulties which illuminate the religious and cultural climate of their city and which demonstrate the difficulties involved in finding suitable Protestant artistic forms and subjects.

The remainder of the work is a discussion of Zürich's solution to
the artistic question. After the rejection of old subject matter and inappropriate forms, new forms - or old forms in new guises - began to emerge. Narrative and descriptive art, specifically sanctioned by Zwingli, was not only accepted but embraced, even for religious purposes. Thus in a city more harsh toward ecclesiastical art than its Lutheran neighbors, a city which renounced ecclesiastical art outright, three forms of visual art not only flourished but produced hybrids. The remainder of this work will, therefore, explore the development of the decorative and graphic arts in Zürich.

Stained glass Kabinettscheiben will be discussed as an art form which answered the ancient desire for beauty and color while allowing the display of social position along with proper Protestant sentiment. The work of the printer Christopher Froschauer as a business man who heartily embraced the Reformation and who may have been more influential than any other citizen for setting the artistic tone of the Reformed community is next discussed. Finally, the work of a theologian and natural philosopher, Conrad Gesner, will be examined as artistic work in which Reformed theology finds its highest expression.

In exploring decorative and graphic arts and scientific illustration, it is the wish of the author to demonstrate that these were art forms which constituted a solution to the Protestant artistic dilemma and which were, moreover, art forms particularly suited to Protestant bourgeois culture.
NOTES FOR INTRODUCTION


2Kenneth Clark, Civilization: A Personal View (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1969), p. 159. In writing on the motives of the iconoclasts, Clark observes, "I suppose the motive wasn't so much religious as an instinct to destroy anything comely, anything that reflected a state of mind that an unevolved man couldn't share."

3Ibid., p. 160. "But whatever the longterm effects of Protestantism, the immediate effects were very bad: not only bad for art, but bad for life."
CHAPTER ONE

ZURICH BEFORE THE REFORMATION: A CULTURAL HISTORY

On Monday June 20, 1524, as a result of the Second Zürich Disputation held in the city of the previous autumn, a committee of citizens selected by the Zürich Council entered every church in the city, and in an orderly and efficient manner, began the removal of all religious art from those churches. Statues and painted altars were taken out and broken or burned. Frescoes were covered with whitewash, metal vessels and reliquaries were melted down for the city treasury. By July 2, 1524 the churches of Zürich were devoid of those objects which had for generations expressed and nourished the deep religious expectations and desires of the citizens.

That there could be serious and pious objection to the presence of religious images in the churches was not unique to Reformed thought. The whole question of religious art had plagued the church from its beginning: the commandment "Thou shalt not make thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth (Deuteronomy V:8)" applies to Christian as to Jew. Thus the early Christians earned the hatred and suspicion of their neighbors by refusing to participate in the cults of the Roman Empire which involved images and idolatry. Nevertheless, in spite of their abhorrence of the pagan uses of religious art, the Christians of the second and third centuries began to develop a religious art of their own. The third century Fathers may have been hostile to art, but they could not halt the tradition of pictorial representation that was being established. By the fourth century, some images were officially approved for use in churches, and by the eighth century images were being treated with the same respect and awe as were relics. The famous dictum of
Pope Gregory the Great that pictures provide a "Bible for the illiterate," gave increased importance to the use of religious art.

Thus the Christians' use of artistic representation for religious purposes became a reality, and, for the uneducated and illiterate, perhaps even a necessity. Although the early church, with its Old Testament abhorrence of images and its New Testament emphasis on faith—believing without seeing—had been image-less, the impulse to depiction and representation was too strong. By the sixteenth century, the churches of Christendom were filled with visual aids to faith. These churches, even the small and poor and out-of-the-way, were gleaming with the rich colors of painted frescoes and altar panels, with the gems and metals of reliquaries and altar vessels. Men of great ability offered their talents to the end that the invisible might be made visible, that the devout could have immediate experience of the witness of martyrs, of the triumph of good over evil, of the most sacred mysteries of the Christian faith. The Church as an institution fostered the use of religious art as a means of approaching the divine and ineffable; the Church was the great patron of the arts in the Middle Ages. Vast amounts of money were spent by both ecclesiastical and lay patrons; lifetimes of craftsmen and artisans were offered, all in the hope that the products of these donations might somehow bring their donors closer to the achievement of a blessed afterlife.

Medieval Zürich, like the rest of Western Europe, participated in this articulation of religious hope. Yet, the citizens of Zürich could and would renounce centuries of practice and tradition in the use of religious art, could and would become a model for other Reformed cities with regard to the use of religious images. The major factor in this renunciation was theological: Huldreich Zwingli's teaching on the proper function of
the visual arts in the religious life was decisive. The theological issues involved must, however, be discussed later in this work. The first question regarding iconoclasm in Zürich concerns itself with the artistic and cultural life of the city prior to the Reformation. Was there any factor in that life which facilitated or even encouraged the renunciation of images? In order to answer this question it is necessary to explore the history of the visual arts in Zürich.

In discussing the art history of Zürich, it is necessary to overcome two obstacles: first, the almost insurmountable difficulty in obtaining evidence, and second, the problem of placing such evidence as remains of medieval Zürich's artistic life in art historical context. For the lack of evidence we must look to the religious fervor of Zwingli and his supporters and to their rigor in carrying out their theological program. For the more general art historical difficulties we must consider the peculiar nature of the Swiss historical development in which Zürich participated. The interaction of these two themes must be explored in order to determine how the citizens of Zürich saw themselves, how the development of their particular culture reflected and affected this self image, and how in turn this self image contributed to the development of artistic life in the city state of Zürich.

I

First, however, it is necessary to determine what constitutes the particular nature of Swiss culture, and then to site Zürich in that con-
text. Although medieval Switzerland as one of the numerous states risen from the dissolution of the Roman Empire followed the general social and cultural patterns which dominated in Western Europe, there were ways in which the Swiss deviated from that pattern and were, in fact, unique.\textsuperscript{7} Switzerland, in the Middle Ages, was far more a geographical than a national concept. Although the whole of Switzerland had been included in the German Empire since 1032, there was in what is a very small area no unified culture or national language. Rather, Switzerland was, and is, divided into three cultural and linguistic areas. To the south was Ticino, an area oriented toward Italy, culturally a part of Lombardy. In the area bordering on France, the people were French-speaking and the culture was oriented toward the Rhone Valley and Burgundy. In the lands lying near the German kingdom, the people spoke German and participated in a culture which belonged to South Germany.\textsuperscript{8}

Yet Switzerland is united by its alpine geography. Moreover, its inclusion in the Holy Roman Empire was an important and defining factor. Most significant of all, however, was to be the political form which the Swiss developed, uniting what might otherwise appear a divided nation, endowing the Swiss with a unique sense of self. The beginning of the development of this Swiss form of government, the Confederacy (Eidgenoßenschaft), occurred in late 13th century German Switzerland. On the first of August 1291, wishing to circumvent the proprietary designs of their feudal lords, the Habsburg family, and to exclude them or any other intermediaries between themselves and the Emperor, three forest cantons, Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden entered into "Perpetual Covenant" for "the establishment of peace."\textsuperscript{9} These Eidgenossen or Confederates pledged themselves to defend each other and to recognize no foreign power.\textsuperscript{10}
The significance of the Confederates' pact lies in the fact that it was the lower social strata, not the aristocracy, who entered into agreement. Peasants and burghers demanded the right to govern themselves, and it is this proud assertion of right which both reflected and contributed to the development of a Swiss definition of self. It is important to bear in mind the pride with which the members of the Confederacy viewed themselves and their institutions, for although the Confederacy had no central government or Constitution, this pride created a common sense of identity necessary for bridging the gap created by diverse cultural and linguistic orientations.\textsuperscript{11}

The Swiss who entered into the Confederacy were not, for the most part, cultivated people, and it was not their aim to produce a cultivated society. Rather, their pride lay in their sturdiness and simplicity, in their love of "corporate and personal liberty,"\textsuperscript{12} and in their military institutions which would in future allow them to maintain their superiority over feudal armies of Germany, Burgundy, and France.\textsuperscript{13} These military institutions, based on the universal duty to bear arms, allowed the confederates to repel Austrian threats repeatedly. After the victory at Morgarten, the Swiss republic expanded until by 1353 it included Lucern, Glarus, Zug, Zürich and Bern, and in the last quarter of the century, the Confederates won decisive battles at Sempach (1386), and Näfels (1388).

The fame of their rough prowess increased so that by the end of the 15th century they had earned a European reputation as "born suppressors and exterminators of all nobility."\textsuperscript{14} This nobility in turn scoffed at the independent Swiss peasants and burghers as "rude cow milkers."\textsuperscript{15} The "rude cow milkers" took immense pride in their institutions, which not only kept them free from aristocratic dominance but which provided
a means for unifying member cantons of diverse cultural orientation.

Yet, these proud people, so concerned with independence from foreign authority, were bound to the rest of Europe by a broader and deeper tie than any political bond: the members of the Confederacy were Christian and shared with the rest of western Christendom a system of belief and a set of religious institutions which transcended local interests or loyalties. When approaching the cultural life of Switzerland, and of Zürich in particular, the double allegiance must always be taken into account. For the study of the history of the art of Zürich it is most important, for it secures the city a part in the development of western European art and culture while creating a unique emphasis reflecting the peculiar nature of Swiss culture. The art of medieval Zürich, like the art of medieval Europe in general, concerns itself to an overwhelming with the expression of religious belief and ideals. This is the art against which Zwingli inveighed, the art which was destroyed by order of the Council in 1524. What was this art? What influenced its development, and what part did the history of the city play in the determination of artistic style? In order that these questions may be answered, the political and religious history must be examined.

II

Zürich was and is a part of German-speaking Switzerland, and in the middle ages it belonged to the diocese of Constance. Artistically these two factors were important, for just as Switzerland was divided into three linguistic and cultural areas, so was it divided into three areas of artistic influence as well. Ticino received its artistic style from Northern Italy, French-speaking Switzerland turned to Burgundy and Alsace
for models, but the center for the art of German-speaking Switzerland was Constance. During the Middle Ages, therefore, the city of Constance was decisive for the cultural life of Zürich. This was also true politically, because of the nature of Zürich's two major ecclesiastical foundations.

The city had a long history as a Christian community. Turicum, or Tigurinum, a Roman customs station, was the site of the martyrdom of three Christian saints at the hands of the Romans: Saints Felix, Regula, and Experantius who became thereafter the patrons of the city. In the fourth century, the Arian Alemanni won possession of the settlement and for a time held their religious observances on the site where the Wasserkirche now stands. They in turn were defeated by the Franks, and thus Zürich was absorbed into the Frankish Empire.

It was, however, in the ninth century that Zürich began to emerge as an ecclesiastical center. It was then, according to the fond belief of the city's later inhabitants, that Charlemagne gave the settlement his imprimatur by residing there for a time, and by founding the Grossmünster. This church was to be the first of Zürich's two important ecclesiastical foundations. It was the principal parish church for the town, and from the Carolingian period it had a school for training young men for the religious life. Indeed, it would become after the Cathedral at Constance, the most important ecclesiastical center in the diocese.

For the political development of the city, however, another church had more importance. In 853, Louis the German founded a convent, the Fraumünster, for Benedictine nuns in order that his daughter Hildegard might have a position fitting to her royal station. She was the first Abbess of the convent, and her office was endowed with many rights and privileges in order to do honor to her social status. The Abbess of the
Fraumünster was to be the ruler of the city, receiving the title "großen Frau von Zürich." She had the right of jurisdiction over the tenants of the convent's considerable holdings, as well as over the town and its inhabitants. She possessed the right to mint coins and to collect tolls on goods exchanged in the town's market.  

The importance of the Großer Münster as an educational center and the importance of the Fraumünster Abbess in both the ecclesiastical and secular spheres insured the city an important place in the diocese, and this position would in turn play an important role in the development of the city's artistic life for in Zürich, as in the rest of medieval Europe, the church was the primary patron of the arts, and in Zürich's early cultural life the tone was set by the city's ecclesiastics. These men and women, drawn from the aristocratic families of the surrounding area, brought to their religious calling the aims and ideals of their social class.  

Therefore, it is not surprising that while they held the reins of secular and ecclesiastical power, the cultural life of Zürich had a markedly aristocratic flavor.  

During the thirteenth century, however, social and political developments occurred which altered the tenor of life in the city. From a small settlement clustered around the Fraumünster Abbey, the town had grown into a prosperous market center. Far from being isolated, Zürich lay on a trade route which stretched from Northern Italy, over the Bündner Pass, through the Rhineland to the Lowlands ending in England. The silk weaving industry had been introduced to Zürich early in the thirteenth century, and the city was also known for its skilled leather and metal workers. Thus the citizens gained a reputation for being skilled in the production of luxurious goods. It was during this period that nobility
began to leave their domains and to establish residences in the city.\textsuperscript{24} Thus there was a strong material basis for a cultural flowering: it was the economic Golden Age of medieval Zürich.\textsuperscript{25}

There was also a strong spiritual basis for such a flowering. Zürich had long been an important ecclesiastical center for Switzerland, but with the introduction of the newly sanctioned Mendicant Orders in 1229 and 1230, a new impetus was given to cultural development.\textsuperscript{26} In this the Dominican Order was of especial importance. Because the Dominicans placed emphasis on study and teaching, and because membership was not limited to the aristocracy, many able and intelligent young men were attracted to the Order.\textsuperscript{27} That they might carry out their religious duties more ably, many were given superb educations: Zürich often sent its young men to the University of Bologna to study law.\textsuperscript{28} By the end of the thirteenth century Zürich had become an influential Dominican center—in 1293 the Order's philosophical faculty was transferred from Colmar to Zürich.\textsuperscript{29}

The thirteenth century was also crucial for the city's political development, for it was during this period that the burghers began their struggle to secure from the nobility, the Empire, and the Church those rights to which they felt themselves entitled. It was then that the citizens began a conscious program to cultivate and protect their own commercial interests.\textsuperscript{30} Although the aristocratic churchmen and a few patrician families retained important civic privileges and offices within their own circle, the new material prosperity had created a group of merchants and craftsmen with enough wealth to provide a counter-weight against the authority of the aristocracy. From the first decades of the thirteenth century these men began to assert themselves.
The burghers won very important privileges from Emperor Fredrich II, for he declared Zürich a Free Imperial City in 1218, and gave at the same time the office of Reichvogt, which had formerly been in the hands of a member of the high nobility, into the hands of the citizens. Henceforth it was a Zürich burgher who was the highest authority in civic matters pertaining to the Empire.\(^\text{31}\)

In 1220 the burghers were given the right to set up a governing body for civic affairs elected by themselves. This body, the Rat, or Council, was divided into two Councils: the Small Council which was continually in service, and the Great Council which represented all the citizens, called to decide serious or weighty matters.\(^\text{32}\)

These imperial privileges were crucial in the further life of the city. The citizens had succeeded in winning a direct connection with the Emperor (what the founders of the Confederacy would later desire) and in asserting their right for a voice in government. Between 1243 and 1293, the Rat signed a series of pacts with the Rhenish cities which were to advance and protect Zürich's commercial interests, and in 1280, the city law code was formed.\(^\text{33}\) Finally, in 1291, Zürich signed its first pact with the Swiss Confederacy.

The steps in the development led further and further away from aristocratic influence, but the real triumph for Zürich's citizenry lay in their success in freeing the city from ecclesiastical control. Between 1230 and 1236, the power struggle between the Council and the City's religious establishments began. By 1275, the Council had created the office of Stadtschreiber whose function was to oversee the civic administration and military organization and to be in charge of all police matters.\(^\text{34}\) He, with the Vogt and the Schultheiß, worked to curtail the
privileges of the Abbess. The great triumph for the Council came in 1304, when the Bishop of Constance, Heinrich von Klingenber, signed a Concordat with Zürich in which he recognized the civic government. The special privileges which had once been the prerogatives of the Fraumünster Abbess were turned over to the Council, and from this time legal controversies once settled by the Abbess would be decided either by the Council or, in matters governed by canon law, by an ecclesiastical court.\textsuperscript{35}

Thus, in a period in which Zürich lay open to influences from the larger world of Western Christendom through commerce, religious movements, through direct contact with the seat of Imperial power, the ties with that world were simultaneously being loosened. The assumption by the citizens of many of the privileges and duties once held by foreigners or ecclesiastics, and the city's decision to sign a pact with the new Swiss Confederacy were first steps in a movement away from the two great institutions which bound Zürich to a larger world: the Empire and the Church.

How then are these social and political developments to be connected with the flourishing cultural and artistic life of Zürich in the thirteenth century? First, it is important to note that while the burghers were drawing together to assert their rights, the artistic life was reaching outward, embracing the great western artistic and architectural styles, first Romanesque, then Gothic.\textsuperscript{36} Moreover, during the brief decades in which the artistic flowering occurred, the cultural life was dominated by the rapidly-declining aristocracy.

To understand these factors it will be necessary to explore what may at first seem a paradox, for although the burghers wanted to deny the Fraumünster Abbess secular authority, they did not wish to deny the
spiritual authority of the church for the church represented the only medium for salvation.\textsuperscript{37} It provided the heart of the spiritual and cultural life of the community, and continued as the primary inspiration for and patron of the arts. The introduction of the new mendicant Orders into the life of Zürich not only gave fresh impetus to spirituality, but created the practical necessity of building houses of worship in which the Friars could preach. It was, in fact, the Dominicans and Franciscans who truly brought the Gothic style to Zürich.\textsuperscript{38} Certainly there had been some tentative movement toward the new style in the remodeling of Zürich's venerable Romanesque churches. In the thirteenth century, the roof of the center aisle of the twelfth century Großmünster nave was raised above the side aisle's, and its walls pierced with windows.\textsuperscript{39} Yet it was in the churches built by the Augustinians, the Franciscans, and the Dominicans that the Gothic style truly found a home. This in turn influenced the many building projects at the turn of the century. The Fraumünster received a Gothic center aisle early in the fourteenth century, and in the surrounding countryside the Cistercian monastery at Kappel was given a Gothic transept and choir.\textsuperscript{40}

It is in the development of manuscript illustration and fresco painting that a cultural efflorescence reflecting a rich and varied cultural life is most clearly seen. This cultural life reached its high point in the early years of the fourteenth century when a group of cultivated and well-educated men and women came together to form an intellectual circle with Zürich as its center. This circle of aristocrats and noble ecclesiastics receives its name from a work which was produced under the patronage of a powerful Zürich family whose members were intimately connected with the cultural group. This work, the \textit{Manesse}
Manuscript, in turn gives the group its modern name: the Manesse Circle. This circle exerted its influence in both the spiritual and secular realms, for its members were of great prominence not only in Zürich, but in the diocese of Constance as well. Among its numbers were Rüdiger Manesse, the Bürgermeister of the city, and his son Jakob, Heinrich von Gütingen, the Abbot of Einsiedeln, and Diethelm, Abbot of Petershausen. The group also included Elizabeth von Wetzikon, Abbess of the Fraumünster, and Heinrich von Klingenberg, Bishop of Constance and signer of the Concordat recognizing Zürich's city government. These aristocrats cherished ambitions of securing the city a significant position in the spiritual and cultural world of Christendom. Their contact with the larger world was cultivated through their close relationship to the Dominican Order, and through their learned collecting of classical works and their patronage of the arts.

The Manesse Manuscript is the result of this patronage, and serves as a paradigm not only for the cultural life of the circle which produced it, but also for the cultural life of the city itself. Although emanating from a cultural circle dominated by clerics, it is a collection of poems, richly illustrated, devoted to the praise of the world's pleasures, of elegant pastimes and of courtly love. The artistic style of the illustrations suits these subjects precisely, for the ladies and knights are given life by the line which defines their forms and stylizes their bodies even as the aristocratic code of their creator defined and stylized behavior.

Created in a period when the monastic scriptoria were losing their influence, the worldly illustrations of the Manesse Manuscript provided a vehicle for translating their linear ornamental style to religious.
themes. These illustrations were immensely influential in the development of religious painting in Zürich. A new spirit began to animate the world of religious art. Once the work of clerics the fescoes of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries are the work of laymen, of craftsmen. These men concern themselves not so much with making visible the mystery and omnipotence of God and his Son, as with depicting events in the lives of Christ and the saints. The hieratic majesty of the Romanesque gave way to the charming, linear, and approachable Gothic style imported from France, which in Zürich was seized upon as a modern style. Not only the city's great churches, but country churches and chapels were covered with fescoes glowing with color, courtly and stylized, presenting the worshippers with scenes taken from stories of the saints' lives. In the northeast corner of the Fraumünster choir traces of the work of an unknown artist remain in which the work of manuscript illustrators from Constance and from France have been borrowed. Where the manuscripts depicted knights and their ladies, the religious fescoes show the patrons of the city. Near Oberstammhein in the Chapel of St. Gall, a fesco cycle with scenes from the life of Christ employs the same linear ornamental style which the manuscript artists had brought to Zürich to illustrate the poetry of the Minnesänger.

The adoption of the new style first for courtly manuscript illustration and then for religious use reflects the cultural life in Zürich at a time when the city was balanced between the dominance of the old aristocratic clerical party and the emergence of the merchants and craftsmen as a decisive force in civic life. For a brief time an international style was truly embraced. Moreover, during this period at the turn of
the century, the bourgeois artists or craftsmen were able to adopt and translate an artistic style first favored by the nobility to suit their own needs. That is, the delicate linear style used to depict the rarified pleasures of courtly life was borrowed to express the burgher's interest in realism. This new style was translated to the walls of churches and chapels to illustrate the events in the lives of the saints, conceived as both holy men and individuals with real cares and interests.

Thus for a short span of time, in the early fourteenth century, the art of Zürich remained poised between the ideals of clergy and layman. The new treatment of religious themes hints at a trend which will become increasingly marked as the century progresses, a trend characterized the attempt of artists—now often laymen—to impose their aims and ideals on conventional religious subjects. Yet for a time this trend would not be marked, and there would be reflected in the visual arts a delicate balance between the old desire for flight from the world and a new delight mingled with an acceptance of the duties of the world.

III

By the third decade of the fourteenth century this balance no longer obtained. Slowly in the previous century the burghers had been gathering prosperity and strength, and in the middle years of the fourteenth century the desire of the city's artisans and craftsmen for a voice in government plunged Zürich into a political and cultural crisis. In 1336, led by Rudolf Brun, the artisans and craftsmen revolted. The Brun Revolution resulted in a new constitution. In the thirteenth century, the Small Council, which was the city's effective governing body,
consisted of twelve members. This was an elite group: six members were knights and six were chosen from the patrician families of the city.\textsuperscript{47}

Under the new constitution the craftsmen and artisans were allowed to form guilds and send representatives from their guilds to the council: Zürich had become a guild city (Zunftstadt). For four decades the patrician council had attempted to prevent this outcome. In 1291, and again in 1304, special orders were issued against the formation of guilds. After the Revolution, however, the craftsmen achieved their desires.\textsuperscript{48}

The new constitution, modelled on that of Strasbourg provided for conciliar representation from fourteen bodies within the city: the Constaffel, representing the aristocracy, and the thirteen newly instituted craft guilds. The head of the new government was Rudolf Brun, elected for life as Burgermeister.\textsuperscript{49}

The thirteen guilds were recognized as equal in political authority to the aristocrat and commercial elements in city government.\textsuperscript{50} Now the council consisted of the Burgermeister elected by the community, and representatives from both the nobility and the artisan class. The fourteenth century city council, which was the model for future civic government was as follows:

1336–1371

1 Burgermeister, elected for life by the community
13 Members of the Constaffel for the Summer Session
13 Members of the Constaffel for the Winter Session
13 Guild Masters (the Bürger) for the Summer Session
13 Guild Masters (the Bürger) for the Winter Session

At this time "all die Menge der Burger" were called to a congregation "zur Gemeinde" only
under unusual or special circumstances.

1371-1383

1 Burgermeister elected for life by the Rat and theburghers
13 Constaffel Members for the Summer Session
13 Constaffel Members for the Winter Session
13 Guild Masters for the Summer Session
13 Guild Masters for the Winter Session
3 Constaffel Members chosen by the Burgermeister

78 "Sechser" from the Guilds for the Summer Session
78 "Sechser" from the Guilds for the Winter Session

In its final form, the Constitution provided for twelve, not thirteen, guilds the wool and linen weavers combining into one guild in 1448. From that time the guilds of Zürich, as specified by the constitution, were: the Constaffel (made up of the noble or wealthy members of the community, "Ritter, Edelleute, Burger die ir geltend gut hand, Kauffleute, Gwand schnyder, Wächseler, Goldsmide, und Salzlutte"), the merchants, the tailors, those concerned with the selling of wine and hostellers, millers, woolweavers, linenweavers, smiths, tanners, butchers, carpenters and those who earned their livings by working with or selling wood along with cooperers and vineyard workers, fishermen and shippers, and gardeners.

It is important to note that the city's artists did not have a guild of their own. Nor did they belong to a guild concerned with the making of fine or luxurious items. They were included, rather, as members of the guild which dealt with the processing, selling, and serving of wine. The stained glass workers, who in the sixteenth century would play an important part in Zürich's artistic life, belonged to the grocer's guild. Solomon Gyr believed that this is because in the Middle Ages work in
stained glass was only part-time or seasonal work. Therefore, most workers in stained glass had second occupations.\textsuperscript{55} Goldsmiths belonged to the Constaffel, and there was a guild for workers in metal.\textsuperscript{55} This included smiths and weapons makers, but some fine metal objects must have been made by the Kannengießer, experts in casting small and delicate objects.\textsuperscript{56}

This seems to indicate that at the time the constitution was formed there were not enough artists or stained glass workers in the city for them to form their own guilds.\textsuperscript{57} Those artisans whose talents might be employed in the service of the church for the creation of religious art belonged to guilds whose primary functions were far more practical than artistic.

This new constitution which allowed the lower classes of the population a voice in government brought a change in both political and cultural life. Politically, the trend was increasingly toward democratization. Whereas Rudolf Brun had conceived of the office of Burgermeister as something akin to that of a monarch, such grandiose ideas were not permitted to his successors. Under Brun's constitution the Burgermeister served for life and was allowed to name his successor. After his death in 1360, however, there was a rapid series of changes in civic policy. The power of the Burgermeister was curtailed, and in 1383, the office was divided between two men, each serving a six-month term. The power of the Council of Two Hundred was greatly increased at the expense of the Small Council and the Constaffel. Whereas formerly the Small Council and the Burgermeister had been the effective rulers of the city, the Small Council was now obliged to abide by the decisions of the Council of the Two Hundred. In 1370, the Guild Masters were given extraordinary powers:
should the vote of the Small Council be tied, the masters were empowered to settle the tie. Thus, the power of the aristocracy whose voice was the Constaffel and Burgermeister, was broken. The highest authority in Zürich came to rest with the Great Council, and this held true until the late fifteenth century. Karl Dändiker could, therefore, state that Zürich was the most democratic city in Switzerland with a real rulership of the guilds.57

Political change brought with it cultural change. Before the revolution the patrician ecclesiastics had set the tone for Zürich's artistic life. After the establishment of the guilds, a culture began to develop which reflected the new self-consciousness of the artisans and craftsmen.

In the arts, bourgeois features became increasingly dominant.58 Where the Manesse Manuscript had depicted delicate puppet-like figures, and the artists of fresco cycles had depicted the saints as young beautiful beings, as graceful as courtiers, in the second half of the fourteenth century, there entered into Zürich's art a matter-of-fact character reflecting the down-to-earth interests of the city's burgher.59 Although the artists, now participating citizens and guild members, adopted the elegance of line and the abstraction which in religious art was meant to give form to an ideal of eternal transcendent beauty, the strong abstraction has an added quality, now a corporeality, an unsophisticated, sturdy quality.60

The artistic influence of Constance was still felt, but this had reached its peak in the first decade of the fourteenth century.61 Progressively the city loosened artistic ties with the episcopal seat even as the burghers worked to achieve their autonomy from the secular authority
of Zürich's ecclesiastical establishments. It is perhaps not too strong to state that the artists' new status in their community as guild members able to participate in civic government helped to bring about this change in focus.

In 1351, when Zürich signed a perpetual pact with the Swiss Confederacy, another decisive step had been taken in determining the city's future. The result was that Zürich both strengthened its ties to the Empire and acquired leadership in the Confederacy. Now, Zürich's future would lie with the Confederates, and with the Emperor who was distant and whose attentions were sporadic.

IV

At the turn of the century, in 1400, the city bought itself free of the Imperial tax. Entering the fifteenth century, therefore, Zürich was a city whose citizens had a determining voice in the government, authority over many of the secular functions which were once the prerogative of ecclesiastical officials, a direct connection with the Emperor in the person of one of their own citizens chosen as Reichsvogt, and freedom from Imperial taxation. Moreover, Zürich had thrown in her lot with a confederation which would assume increasing influence and power. Henceforth the city must be viewed against that background. For the whole Confederacy the fourteenth century had been a period in which the ecclesiastics and the aristocracy gave way to the rising burghers, in which there was an increasing political separation from the Empire and a distancing from German cultural centers, in which the energies of the citizens were channeled into a struggle for self-determina-
tion. The citizens of Zürich, like other members in the Confederacy, were slowly achieving their independence from church and Empire. In asserting themselves, however, they had greatly loosened the ties which bound them to the high culture of their time. Now, so far as artistic and cultural movement were concerned, their faces would for some time be turned inward, to their own lives and interests.66

This self-concern and self-confidence was enhanced in the first decades of the fifteenth century by two very important factors: by the acquisition and expansion of territory to an area approximating the present boundaries of the Canton, and by the consolidation of the power of the city as an authority over that territory. This act of consolidation was important for the development of the artistic life of the Canton. The officials sent from Zürich to govern the newly-acquired territory were insecure in their positions and did almost nothing to cultivate the arts. Even the old centers of patronage such as the Monastery at Petershausen experienced a hiatus in artistic activity.67 Thus, what was an important political gain for Zürich politically resulted in a stifling of creativity in the surrounding territory followed by a new concentration of artistic support within the city itself.

The church remained the primary patron of the arts, but there began slowly to develop an interest among the citizens in commissioning of works of art either for private use or for pious donation to the church. Although most of the artistic works created in Zürich in the fifteenth century fell victim to Evangelical zeal, account books remain which testify to the numerous altars commissioned in this period for the city's churches.68 These altars, judging from the few works which remain, were painted in a style derived from Southern German works.69 Where once
in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries a group of aristocratic clerics had determined the cultural direction of the city and had effected an artistic efflorescence, in the early fifteenth century the stage was set for an artistic life determined by the interests of the burghers. Certainly economic conditions were favorable for a new artistic climate: the artist-craftsmen, as guild members occupied a respectable place in the community and there was the beginning of private support from wealthy citizens.

Zürich was not unique in this change in focus. The fifteenth century in Europe was characterized by a dynamism which, while widening the gulf between rich and poor, between wealthy merchant and petty burgher, between wealthy and impoverished nobility, also allowed men a new social and economic mobility. In Zürich, moreover, these social factors were enhanced by the city's independent spirit and by its unusually democratic constitution.

Because new artistic influences were arriving from Alsace, and because foreign artists were being received in the city, Zürich would have been able to benefit from the important artistic developments occurring in Alsace and Southern Germany, for it was in the 1430's that the innovations of the Flemish artists spread to those areas. Thus the artists of Zürich could have become acquainted with the new emphasis on the rendering of atmosphere, on weight and density, on the "preoccupation with coherent religious narrative in union with visual reality" which characterized the works of South German artists of the period, above all those of the talented and progressive Swabian artist Conrad Witz who was working in nearby Basel in the 1430's and 1440's. In this new style the artists of Zürich might have found a voice in which to express the
citizens' sturdy sense of pride and self-sufficiency.

This was not to be, however, for in the middle years of the century Zürich became involved in a disastrous war. In 1436, Count Frederick of Toggenburg died childless, leaving his lands without an heir. Both Zürich and Schwyz desired to add his property to their domains, and when the Imperial Diet decided in favor of Schwyz' claim, Zürich refused to accept the decision. The result was war, with the city pitted against all the other members of the Confederacy. The outcome was horrible: Zürich, city and countryside, was overcome by the devastation of this struggle as many were killed and many others emigrated. 74

The city's chief industry, silk weaving, was destroyed, and Zürich was impoverished and paralyzed by debt. Because of these terrible upheavals the artistic activity of the city was also crippled: almost nothing was produced during the war years, 1439-1450. 75 Zürich would not begin to recover from the effects of this war until the second half of the fifteenth century, and only then could the city's artists begin to explore the new styles developed in the urban centers of Northern Europe early in the century. 76

V

The recovery was due in part to a conscious effort on the part of the civil authorities to encourage immigration, 77 and by the custom, beginning in 1440, of bestowing citizenship on those whose services or skills were needed. 78 But the success of Zürich was assured by its participation as a member of the confederacy in France's war against Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. 79 It was this involvement which allowed Zürich to
assume a proud position on the Confederacy, and to win admiration in the
eyes of the rest of Europe: the men of Zürich contributed to the Swiss
victory at Morat in 1476 and fought bravely at Nancy in 1477.\textsuperscript{80} To have
assumed a prominent place in the Confederacy, and to have participated
in two great victories gave Zürich not only a new sense of confidence,
but new prosperity as well.

The new sense of confidence owes much also to a figure who from 1483
to 1489 dominated the city's political and cultural life. Hans Waldmann,
Burgermeister, was a man whose ambitions reached far beyond those of the
stolid burghers who were his fellow citizens. Not a Züricher by birth,
he rose to prominence and wealth through a judicious marriage, careful
financial speculations, and foreign pensions. He became the richest man
in the Confederacy.\textsuperscript{81} His wealth gave him the power and influence to
overcome the opposition of the city's old families, and to rise with the
aid of the guilds to the office of burgermeister.\textsuperscript{82}

His aims for the city and Confederacy were far-sighted but overly-
ambitious. For Zürich he sought an organization which would weld country
and city into a well-run city-state. He encouraged industry and insti-
tuted a program for the beautification of the city through the erection
or renovation of public landmarks.\textsuperscript{83} For the Swiss he envisioned a
single Confederation existing in peace without foreign money, free from
French influence. Unfortunately his method for achieving his aims alien-
ated not only the old families, but the clergy and the peasants as well,
and in April 1489 he was overthrown and brutally executed.

While he ruled, however, Waldmann played an important role in the
cultural and artistic life of the city, a role for which he is remembered
today. As a reflection of his political aims, he began a series of
projects which were intended not only to display the wealth and power of the city, but also to show his own pre-eminence. These were architectural projects, in scope and aim unprecedented in the city, for they were part of a program, reflecting civic pride, but directed by the mind of one man. For almost a decade Zürich had a political leader who consciously patronized the arts as a dimension of political strategy.

Had Hans Waldmann been a man of refined sensibilities or genuine artistic feeling, it is possible that Zürich could have become a flourishing artistic center, attracting talented men from the whole of Southern Germany. In the last quarter of the fifteenth century, the city did not lack for artists. Records indicate that the city employed at least fifty, a number astounding for a city of less than 6000. Moreover, many of these artists were immigrants which indicates that there was a market for art works. In the latter years of the century the city records list the names of artists from Ulm, Augsburg, Nürnberg, Heidelberg, Würzburg, Colmar, and so forth.

Unfortunately, Hans Waldmann had no true feeling for the arts. For him, it was a means of civic and self-aggrandizement, and for the promotion of industry in the city. Since his true interest was political and not cultural, it is enlightening to consider what was created under his patronage. In 1479, construction was begun on a church to be built on the site where once the Alemanni had conducted their religious observances. This church, the Wasserkirche, was intended to be as much a civic as a religious monument: the church was to serve as a hall in which banners and trophies captured by Zürich's armies could be displayed. In 1487, Waldmann donated two hundred gulden from his own fortune to begin the completion of spires for the Grosse Münster. Although these were not
finished until after his downfall and execution, they stood eventually as monuments to his vision for Zürich. Thus Waldmann was responsible for two major architectural projects.

It is in the painting of the Waldmann period, however, that Zürich's true artistic orientation is most clearly seen. Walter Hugelshofer characterized the art of Zürich in the late fifteenth century as an art without greatness or high aim, a provincial art. It is noteworthy that this characterization is made about a period during which the city was wealthy and politically influential, when, indeed, it was the pre-eminent city in the Confederacy. Moreover, it was a period in which there was a conscious program of artistic patronage. In the context of this patronage, there is one work of art which especially combines both political and religious intent.

From 1476, Hans Waldmann had been one of the Pfleger, or financial supervisors, of the Fraumünster Abbey, and in 1478 he obtained a tomb for himself in the north transept of the Abbey church. In order that there might be prayers for his departed soul, he donated 240 pounds to the church to pay for four days per year to be set aside as his memorial days. In 1480, he commissioned a fresco for the north wall of the church. This fresco, which depicts the patron saints of Zürich in the presence of the Virgin and the Trinity, stands as a monument to personal ambition, patriotism, and religious conviction. Since Waldmann was a man of power and wealth, he most assuredly could have pleased his own taste when selecting the artist for his work. This he appears to have done, for the fresco sheds light not only on Waldmann's personality, but on the differences between him and his fellows.

Waldmann's artist, an anonymous master, seems caught between the
past and the future. While timidly turning toward the new interest in naturalism characteristic of Flemish and Southern German art, he holds firmly to the already out-moded Gothic. The work is over-refined, super-sensitive, evocative of courtly art.93 The figures are crammed into their space with little feeling for depth, yet individually they have a kind of monumental presence. Particular features, such as the hair, have been carefully observed and translated. Walter Hugelshofer speculates that the artist must have been trained in the style but that later he came in contact with the work of the Netherlandish masters, notably the work of the Master of Flemalle.94 He has not sufficient understanding of the Master of Flemalle's aims, and his true purpose seems to be to recreate the artistic spirit which bloomed briefly in the first years of the 15th century.95 Yet this style is fitted for mirroring Hans Waldmann's image of himself and his position. As Burgermeister he lived more like a prince than a magistrate chosen from his fellow citizens.96 In selecting a now-outmoded aristocratic artistic style, Waldmann symbolized his distance from his neighbors. After his overthrow in 1489, the true artistic character of Zürich could at last begin to develop and emerge freely.

The period between Waldmann's execution and the Council's order for the removal of religious images is therefore very fruitful for study. This is true first because Zürich was extremely prosperous in this period, second, because the city had renewed an active contact with the rest of Europe, and third because religious art played a very important role in the devotional life of the period.97 The prosperity and renewed contact with the outside world were the result of the demand of the European powers for Swiss mercenaries, and of new commercial activities.98
With the new wealth came a new desire for luxury and ostentation. This in turn stimulated artistic activity.

Zürich was served by many painters, workers in stained glass, in metal, in wood. Yet none of these could hold his own in competition with the major masters of the Northern Renaissance. The artists of Zürich clung to the craftsman tradition and seem more interested in following learned formulae than in innovation. That they pleased their patrons is evident: although records indicate a large influx of immigrant artists during this period, it is significant that these were the losers in competition with local artists.

This patronage of local artists shows something besides a citizenry pleased with the work of their fellows. It points out a tension that was developing as a result of the new prosperity. A fifteenth century Swiss folk song presents a dialogue between new and old members of the Confederacy. The new members ask the old why they (the old) are so much happier. The reply comes that the original Confederates achieve happiness through adherence to venerable Swiss virtues—fear of God, loyalty, simplicity, friendship, modesty, unity. They despise luxury:

Silk, damask and velvet
We held in low esteem
We did not make much of them

Siden, Damast und Sammat
Das was bi uns in Schlechter Acht,
Wir hand deren nit vil angemacht.

There is, in the preference for local artists not only a hesitancy about innovation, but also a desire to preserve the old values. In hiring a neighbor, a member of a local guild, one is acting with loyalty and friendship.

One is also supporting the city's economy, and in this context it is
important to note how closely the moral, aesthetic, and civic life of the
city were intertwined. The new love of luxury and ostentation, the new
laxity in morality, the increase in violence resulting from mercenary
activity created a tenor of life new to Swiss experience. From the late
fifteenth century the City Councils throughout the Confederacy had moved
to take over functions formerly the prerogatives of the family or church.
As we have seen, Zürich had long been a leader in this. Now, however,
the Council began to regulate not only matters pertaining to finances or
legal jurisdiction, but also to regulate "with Fatherly authority" the
morals and mores of the citizens. It is important to remember that
the artists and craftsmen of the city were guild members and thus eli-
gible to serve on the Council. Here, then appears a tension which must
have affected artistic style and production. On the one hand stands the
artist, a guild member and citizen, eager to maintain the traditional
values. On the other hand stands that same artist trained in a craft
which requires material prosperity and a desire for ostentation and lux-
ury to support it.

The tension is increased when that other element in Zürich's artistic
life is added: religion. Even now, when private luxury had so increased,
when civic pride demanded visible symbols, it was still the church which
provided the major impetus for artistic production. In the years imme-
diately preceding the Reformation, Zürich was rich in works of religious
art. There were at least one hundred altars in the churches and chapels
of the city. The Wasserkirche alone can serve as an example of a church
filled with artistic objects intended for religious use for as a politi-
cal and religious monument it was particularly elaborately decorated.
Heinrich Bullinger would speak of it as, "eine rechte Götzenkilchen als
als sy im Land nienen gefunden worden ist."\textsuperscript{103}

The increased production of religious art is linked not only to the increase in prosperity, but also to the religious climate which obtained in Western Europe in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The period just preceding the Reformation was a time when "a strange terror brooded over people;" fear of plague and of the Turk and above all terror of death bred a "strange restlessness" in the people of Western Europe.\textsuperscript{104} In Zürich this was exacerbated by the sense that those virtues which brought the city success were being lost or destroyed. A Sense of sin and fear of retribution led men to turn from confidence in God's promise of salvation to feverish attempts to appease his wrath. A stern and awesome God of Judgment had come to replace the God of Mercy in European belief.\textsuperscript{105} Beset with temptation, fearing damnation, yet piously longing for communion with the divine, men yearned for assurance of salvation, for knowledge of God's love and mercy.

This desire for reassurance and a sense of the immediate presence of the divine were very much a part of the religious life of Zürich as well as of the rest of Western Europe. Steven Ozment in The Reformation in the Cities has pointed out an interesting paradox in the religious lives of many Christians in this period. On the one hand there was a surge of lay piety characterized by hectic activity: endowments to the church, pilgrimages, formation of religious confraternities. On the other hand, there was a marked decline in attendance at confession, in reception of the Eucharist. Increasingly religious acts became mechanical performances.\textsuperscript{106} If, as Ozment speculates, people had an "immense appetite for the divine,\textsuperscript{107} then the sacraments and offices of the Church no longer seemed nourishment enough.
Originally accepted by the Church as a book for the unlettered, religious art now assumed quite another role. Now it was to provide spiritual nourishment, to assuage fear, and to bring the viewer into immediate contact with the divine. Thus it had become in the deepest sense utilitarian. As secular art could serve as a vehicle for personal or communal self-esteem, so religious art could serve as a vehicle for the salvation of souls. Close attention must be paid to the art produced in Zürich immediately before the Reformation, for it should reveal much about the particular attitudes and beliefs of the citizens.

A document exists which opens a window on the artistic life of Zürich in the early sixteenth century. This document, a list of the members of a religious confraternity, is especially helpful, for through it we are able to glimpse the actual artists and know something of their intent. The Brotherhood of St. Luke and St. Eligius (Lux and Loyen Bruderschaft) was a confraternity formed to provide masses for the souls of the artists and craftsmen and their families. Dedicated to the patron saints of painters and goldsmiths, the confraternity must have included most of the city's established artists and metal workers, plus workers in other crafts who were probably friends or relatives of the artists. There are thirty-one goldsmiths, twenty-three "maler," and fifteen stained glass painters listed. Many of these men were immigrants: Ulm, Augsburg, Constance, Heidelberg, Basel, Bern, and Würzburg are represented. This confirms the strong South German influence which is to be found in surviving works of the period. Unfortunately, with only rare exceptions, scholars have been unable to connect the names of these men with any artistic work; too much has been lost.

What can be determined about the men listed is that their religious
devotion was such that they banded together as artists for spiritual purposes. Certainly their craft guild provided them training, protection from competition, and an entree into the political life of the city. It did not provide for their souls' salvation. This was the function of the Church. Yet these men must have felt the need already described for spiritual nourishment and assurance beyond that offered by the Church. In seeking this they banded together as artists. The interplay between the professional and the religious is thus found in the foundation of the artists' confraternity. Is, however, a deep need or exalted religious view reflected in their art?

VII

Judging from surviving evidence, the artists of Zürich were only slowly beginning to address the serious religious dissonances of their time in their work. Let us therefore, examine the work of three known practitioners of the arts: The Master of the Carnation, the Master of the Violet, and Hans Leu the Elder.

Before discussing the individual works of these artists, it will be necessary to elaborate somewhat on their chosen medium of expression, the moveable altar retable. In the preceding centuries it had been fresco painting on the walls themselves which was the principal medium for the painter of religious art. The introduction and increase in the popularity of painted or carved altar retables reflects a whole complex of attitudes and usages in the late medieval Church. During the central years of the Middle Ages, churches were undergoing architectural developments which would more and more prohibit the laity from participation
in the worship of the church. Further, there was a gradual shift in emphasis in the meaning of the Eucharist: from a communion of the faithful, the meaning of the sacrament had shifted to a concentration on the formal consecration of the elements by the officiating priest. Thus the emphasis shifted from an act of community to a solemn mystery in which ordinary believers had no part.\textsuperscript{111} In architecture this separation of clergy and laity was increased and emphasized by the separation of the long nave in which the congregation stood from the raised choir and apse where the priest celebrated the mystery behind a richly decorated rood screen. Moreover, there had occurred a change in the form and function of the altar itself. Once a table around which the mass was celebrated, by the thirteenth century it had become standard practice for both the celebrant and those assisting him to stand at the west side of the table, thereby giving the altar a true directional quality, a front and a back.\textsuperscript{112} The altar retable grew directly out of this development, for it filled a visual void while drawing the worshipper to reverence or to contemplation of the sacred events and mysteries of the faith.

The altar retable also provided an outlet for the expression of personal piety. A Christian could now, acting alone or in concert with like-minded believers, donate an altar painted and carved with scenes of those holy personages and events most dear to him. The increase in the numbers of altars and of the works of art commissioned to decorate them has been demonstrated to be, in part at least, a symptom of the same sense of dis-ease and fragmentation which religious confraternities expressed.\textsuperscript{113} As Michael Baxandall states, "... the retables on the side-altars seem a concrete projection of the will among well-to-do people to
secure their own souls, in groups of fraternity or family.\textsuperscript{114}

In Switzerland, and thus in Zürich, the high-point in the creation of altar retables fell in the period directly preceding the Reformation. Certainly this reflects religious desire, but is also very strongly the result of the new prosperity brought about by the famous Swiss military victories.\textsuperscript{115} Motive and means converge in the early sixteenth century to provide rich opportunity for the creation of these works of art. Since they served as a medium of expression for both the donor and the artist, it is useful to examine the themes, and stylistic peculiarities of those few works which survive.

The first works to be discussed are those of the so-called Zürich Master of the Carnation. The name is misleading, for scholars now believe that there were at least two and possibly more artists to be identified with that name. These men seem to have been members of a school whose other members worked in Fribourg, Bern, the Bernese Oberland, and Constance. Their distinguishing mark was the use of a carnation as a recurring motif. Each of the cities mentioned had its own artist or school, the quality of the work varying from city to city: the finest work was done in Fribourg.\textsuperscript{116}

The significance of the carnation or the relationship of the members of the school is unknown. What is known is that these artists drew much of their inspiration from the printed graphics of the period. Martin Schongauer and the Master of the Housebook were particularly influential. The first, born around 1435, and the second, active from 1465, were important figures in the artistic life of Alsace and Southern Germany, for they were two of the principal translators of Flemish style for German use. Their influence was increased by the fact that both were popular
graphic artists, and thus their work was readily available to other artists throughout Europe.¹¹⁷

The Zürich Master of the Carnation was at work in Zürich in the years between 1490 and 1505. Several works identified with this artist are extant. His earliest work is of Salome receiving the head of John the Baptist. Other works include the Coronation of the Virgin, the Betrothal of the Virgin, St. Anne and St. Joachim, the Adoration of the Magi, and individual altar panels depicting St. Barbara, St. Jerome, St. Agnes, St. Eligius, and St. Sebastian, and St. Eligius at his smithy.¹¹⁸ These were certainly orthodox and popular themes, but in the handling of his topics the Zürich Master throws light on the interests and sentiments of his fellow citizens. The Adoration of the Magi and a scene from the legend of St. Eligius are good examples for comparison. One of these depicts one of the most popular theses in medieval iconography, and the other, a truly idiosyncratic theme.¹¹⁹ The Adoration of the Magi, executed between 1490 and 1500, is quite conventional in its treatment of the theme, but is useful for illustrating the characteristics of the Master's work. The composition itself is borrowed from a Schongauer print, but the Zurich artist has elongated the figures and flattened the draperies.¹²⁰ This elongation of the figures is a hallmark of all the works connected with the name of the Zürich Master of the Carnation. Characteristic also is a particular and undifferentiated facial type which suggests the hand of Hans Leu the Elder, for it is a type which appears in his work. The use of color is not particularly distinguished. The artists rely on gold background and gold articles of clothing to suggest richness. A harsh green and orange-red predominate. Often color has a symbolic value, and there is little sense that the artist was will-
ing to experiment with color as a vehicle for conveying religious emotion.\footnote{121}

An interesting feature of the Master's work, however, is the introduction of landscape. Behind the Virgin and the Magi opens a panorama of a river valley with distant mountains rising in the background. Details of the landscape have been carefully observed, but the naturalism of detail is to some extent negated by the gold sky. This tentative move toward naturalism has been seen before in Zürich in the votive fresco of Hans Waldfmann, and the Master of the Carnation had made advances on the earlier work. He failed, however, to integrate the various features of his work. The figures are both natural and stylized—an uneasy compromise between translating the features of the artists fellow citizens onto a panel and idealizing the figures who are holy and not fully of this existence. The same anomaly holds true in the treatment of landscape. The rivers, trees, and mountains of the artist's homeland exist without transition against a sky of gold, for centuries the symbol of the world of the divine.\footnote{122}

Even more uneasy is the artist's conception of an episode from the life of St. Eligius. The scene has an almost burlesque quality, yet it is played out against a flat, gold, divine space. St. Eligius (the saint Loyen of the Lux and Loye Brotherhood), was the goldsmith of the Frankish Kings Chlothar and Dagobert and later became the Bishop of Noyon. Apparently he also served as a blacksmith, for one of his miraculous powers was his ability to remove the foreleg of any horse which he needed to shoe. A witch seeking to prevent the miracle appeared at his smithy. St. Eligius, who in his holiness recognized the evil being for what she was, grasped her nose with his smith's pincers, thereby destroy-
ing her pernicious influence. 123

Thus what appears to the modern viewer as a comic scene is in reality a depiction of the triumph of good over evil through faith in Christ. Yet even when this fact is understood, indeed perhaps because this fact is understood, there is a very real sense that the artist has failed to convey the religious meaning of the story. The gold background, the bright color, the elegant elongated figures declare the intent to render the divine emanation visible. The vulgarity of the conception negates the religious intent. One feels himself not in the presence of superhuman holy power, but rather among three Swiss burghers.

The Master of the Violet, a master of the next generation, moves toward the integration of the spiritual and the naturalistic. He, like the Zürich Master of the Carnation, remains anonymous. In all probability he was also a member of an artistic school whose signature motif is the violet. From the evidence of his work some details of his life can be deduced. He was probably born after 1475, in Constance or the Constance area. 124 Stylistically he made advances on the work of the Master of the Carnation: he was acquainted with the work of Albrecht Dürer, and he worked in oil. 125 Most importantly, he abandoned the use of the gold ground in favor of an attempt at true atmospheric rendering. 126 His figures have a physical presence heretofore unparalleled in the art of Zürich.

The central panel of an altar retable painted in 1506 is exemplary of his work. Mary Magdalene and John the Baptist stand in a landscape, the foreground strewn with violets. Between them, bisecting the work vertically, stands a tree. Behind them stretches a mountain vista. The artist was ambitious for his work has much in common with that of the
artists of the Danube School. Like them, he attempted to reflect a vision of the world in which man and nature are united, in which God is immanent in natural forms. Unfortunately, his talent is not equal to the task. He has not been able to integrate his figures and his space. His nature is real and closely observed, yet his figures stand icon-like and detached from their background. They do not communicate with each other or with the viewer. Not only do they not inhabit the naturalistic space, they are not even conceived as inhabiting the same space.

This same uneasiness between figures and landscape can be seen in a slightly earlier work of Hans Leu the Elder. The building accounts of the Großmünster indicate that between 1497 and 1502, a painter "Löw" received payment on "das Tafelwerk der Stadt Konterfey ob der Martyrer Grab." The The "Stadt Konterfey" has been identified as the now fragmentary "Martydom of Saints Felix, Regula, and Exuperantius," painted for the Apostles Chapel of the Großmünster. It is significant that the Großmünster account books do not specify a sacred scene, but a portrait of the city. It is, in fact, as a portrait of the city that the work has survived. Yet it was conceived as a religious work, meant to decorate a church.

What connection, then, is to be found between the religious scene and the depiction of the city? As previously stated, the pre-Reformation period was characterized by a deep desire on the part of the laity for experience of the divine. Religious art was one means of effecting the experience. Moreover, the setting of religious scenes in contemporary environments was not new. The Flemish painters of the early fifteenth century had been pioneers in merging the world of sacred antiquity with their own. One need only remember the works of the Master of Flemalle
or of Jan Van Eyck to understand this. But these artists used contemporary settings for what Erwin Panofsky has called "concealed or disguised symbolism." In, for example, Van Eyck's Virgin and Chancellor Rolin (c. 1433), the Chancellor kneels before the Virgin in a room that is a heavenly throne room transposed into the world of the Flemish burgher. Behind the Virgin and the Chancellor opens a vista of city and river. So precisely is this view rendered that scholars have tried to identify the city and river. Yet it is Erwin Panofsky who has most clearly defined the view: it is an earthly river and also, "the pure river of water clear as crystal" that flows through the New Jerusalem.

A decade later when Conrad Witz dealt with a religious subject in a landscape, the scene has become very particular indeed. He set the biblical narrative of the Miraculous Draught of Fishes on Lake Geneva. Thus, as the fifteenth century progressed, and the artists' observation of the material world became more acute, the landscape became increasingly specific.

This phenomenon is due in large part to a whole movement toward empirical study of nature, but is also attributable to the prevalent desire for direct and immediate experience of the Divine presence. The setting of religious figures and scenes in recognizable and known landscapes is an extremely powerful method of evoking a sense of communion with these figures. When the figures are integrated with the landscape, as they are in the works of a Van Eyck or a Witz, the effect was not only aesthetically pleasing, but was also religiously satisfying.

In the work of Hans Leu the Elder and the Master of the Violet this satisfying integration did occur. In Hans Leu's Martyrdom there is a marked difference between the treatment of the religious and the com-
temporary scenes. The saints, ranged in a line along the plane of the picture are rendered according to formula, without passion or imagination. The city, on the other hand, has been translated to the wood panel with loving observation and detail. This split between the religious and contemporary scene is typical of the art of Zürich in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. There is a marked failure to integrate the sacred and the profane.

The artistic division between figures and settings is in a sense paradigmatic of Zürich's cultural development. Flemish artists in the early years of the fifteenth century had worked in "disguised symbolism" whereby objects both natural and man-made were to symbolize divine immanence. The next generation of Northern artists moved to reveal God's presence in the world not through the veil of symbolism but as directly immanent in natural forms. In their art they wanted to reflect man's impulse to love the visible as a form of veneration of its invisible creator.131 The material world was percieved as the embodiment of God and as a means by which he expressed His will and purpose.

In this pantheistic conception of nature, God dwells in all creation, in the smallest forms and beings as in the greatest. Man and nature are equally God's creation, and had man not sinned and fallen, he would have known unity with all creatures.132 It was this spirit in which Albrecht Dürer made his drawings of the hare, for example, or of the clump of violets. It is the same spirit which led other Northern artists to clarify the individual kinds of trees and plants in their landscape painting.

The artists of Zürich had not been able to grasp or convey this unified vision. Rather, their work shows a deep split between the world of Christ, the Virgin, the Saints, and the world in which they and their
fellow citizens lived and worked. The holy figures retain a style already outmoded: they may be dressed as wealthy burghers, but their form and bearing are Gothic. Often, as in the work of the Master of the Violet, they stand in their settings like sculptures in niches. The use of color is often symbolic: green for hope, red for martyrdom. Gold backgrounds are popular into the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{133} The artist has learned his craft well, and tends to rely on formulae developed previously and elsewhere. In the depiction of landscape, however, or of familiar city life, the same craftsman-artist may show himself very alert and involved, lavishing great attention on well-known places or settings. This reflects the developing relationship of the citizens of Zürich to the Church. The tendency in Zürich had been toward a steady and increasing transfer of ecclesiastical power from the hands of the clergy to the hands of the citizens. More and more the citizens had taken over the worldly rights and prerogatives of the local church. Even the moral authority of the church was being slowly transferred to the Council. In the two centuries preceding the Reformation, the magistrates of Zürich had done much to remove the line of demarcation between clergy and people. As Robert Walton stated, "... the Council stood at the head of a unified corporate society, supervising the affairs of church and society as the delegated representative of the city assembly... The first step toward the priesthood of all believers had been taken before Zwingli preached his first sermon."\textsuperscript{134}

Thus the citizens, acting in their worldly sphere, were slowly but increasingly coming to perceive themselves as men able to stand before God, responsible for the ordering of both their material and their spiritual lives.
In the pre-Reformation art of Zürich the viewer can see the citizens—merchants, craftsmen, artisans—beginning the departure from the panoply and trappings of the Church. Paradoxically this departure began at a time when the commissioning of works of religious art had increased measurably. Yet these works could not fully satisfy that desire for material contact with the divine so characteristic of late medieval piety. The search for the other-worldly in the worldly, for the reduction of the infinite to the finite which motivated so much of piety in the fifteenth century resulted not in peace, but in increased tension. In the art of pre-Reformation Zürich this tension had created a dichotomy: on the one hand, depictions of saints more icons than human beings; on the other, carefully observed contemporary areas and scenes. In Zürich these two elements were not balanced, not infused with equal emotional content. The icon-like saints, so retardataire in style, began to be left behind as the artists began to explore the awakening interest in their contemporary world as a field for religious endeavor. In the art of pre-Reformation Zürich we see the citizens preparing to leave the old religious world and to enter the new.

When Zwingli formulated his theology on religious art he was surrounded with objects which reflected Zürich's long cultural and artistic history. This history is characterized by three significant features. First was the rejection of aristocratic modes and the acceptance of an essentially craftsman-like bourgeoisie outlook. Niccolo Machiavelli writing of the Swiss cities would state, "... these cities which still maintain a free and uncorrupted constitution suffer no aristocracy among their citizens, nor allow one of their citizens to lead the life of an
aristocrat. Moreover, they guard absolute equality in internal matters and are the bitter enemies of the Lords and Chivalry of their land.\textsuperscript{138}

Second was the progressive loosening of ties which had universal or cosmopolitan interest. Humanism, which in the Reformation would play an important role in Zurich's cultural life, but was not yet influential, was strongly patriotic, stressing the importance of the integrity of the Confederacy and the city.\textsuperscript{139} The Confederacy's long struggle with the Empire and the opportunistic but successful practice of mercenary soldiering contributed to the city's turning in on itself in self-congratulation. Third was the increasing control of the magistracy over the moral and, therefore, spiritual lives of the citizens.

The struggles for autonomy from Imperial and ecclesiastical authority, and the pride in self-sufficient and democratic institutions did much to limit the citizens' cultural horizons. In choosing to join forces with the Confederacy, in affirming the ideal of bourgeois government, Zürich committed itself to an artistic expression which was craftsman-like and often connected with conspicuous display of wealth, to an often perfunctory handling of religious subjects. It also, however, committed itself to an artistic expression which was increasingly realistic; to an artistic expression in which intended spiritual content and observed reality were becoming increasingly divorced.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE


4 Ibid., pp. 35-37. We have no positive archeological record before the third century, but it is known that Christians began before that to develop an iconography using such symbols as anchors, doves, and fish for objects of daily use such as lamps and signet rings. Thus motifs current in the Roman world were injected by Christians with meaning significant to them and their religion.


7 Florens Deuchler, Marcel Röthlisberger, Hans Lüthy, Swiss Painting from the Middle Ages to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century (New York: Rizzoli, 1976), p. 12.

8 Ibid.


10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.


13 Ibid.
Ibid., p. 6.

Deuchler, Roethlisberger, Lüthy, p. 12.


Potter, p. 47. The Fraumünster was intended from its foundation as a refuge for the daughters of the nobility.


Ibid.

Potter, p. 48.

Renk, p. 29.

Ibid., p. 23. "die Wirtschaftliche Blützeit der Mitteralterlichen Stadt Zürich."

The Dominican Order was introduced in 1229; the Franciscan, in 1230.


Renk, p. 30.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 24.
31 Gyr, p. 14. The Zähringer line died out in 1218 and the family's rights in the city reverted to the Empire.

32 Ibid., p. 444. A document of Henry VII mentions a twelve member governing body to conduct the daily business of the city. The twelve members were selected equally from the nobility and the patrician families.

33 Renk, p. 24.

34 Gyr, p. 6. The Stadtschreiber was in charge of the fire department, the water works, matters pertaining to building and industry, to food, public health, and public morality.

35 Ibid., p. 25.

36 Zürcher, p. 19.

37 Dändliker, I:264.

38 Zürcher, p. 27.

39 Ibid., p. 25.


41 Renk, p. 19.

42 Ibid., p. 32.


44 Hugelshofer, p. 7. This style comes to Zürich via the workshops of the diocesan center at Constance.

45 Schmid and cetto, p. 8.

46 Ibid.

47 Gyr, pp. 43-44.
48 Dändliker, I:516. Regensburg had guilds from 1330, and Mainz and Strasbourg from 1332.

49 Ibid., p. 518. The Constitution of Zürich was modelled on that of Strasbourg. In its final form the Zürich constitution provided for twelve, not thirteen guilds. In 1448, the wool and linen weavers combined into one guild.

50 Potter, p. 49.

51 Gyr, p. 50.

52 Ibid., p. 44.

53 Ibid., p. 210. Thus Zürich painters now belong officially to a group of citizens referred to as "Wynlüt."

54 Ibid., p. 449, n. 2. In 1433, glass workers were given the right to select their guild from those established in the city. By the 16th century it had become customary for them to join artists' (wine servers) guilds.

55 Ibid., p. 236.

56 Ibid. The Kannengießer made plates, ewers, tankards, etc.

57 Dändliker, I:618.

58 Ibid., pp. 617-618.


60 Zürcher, p. 15. "baurisch-derben qualität."


62 Dändliker, I:527-529.

63 Hottinger, p. 241.

64 Dändliker, I:679.
In discussing literary development in Switzerland, Dändliker observes that whereas in Germany the Meistergesang was already developed in the 14th century, it was not taken up in Switzerland until the 16th century. No Meistersänger is known in Switzerland until the end of the 15th century. This fact he attributes to, "Die Entfernung von den Kulturherden und Kulturmittelpunkten deutschen Literatur die zunehmende politische Trennung vom übrigen Reich, die geringe Wohlhabenheit, nicht minder auch die vollständige Inanspruchnahme unserer Bürger durch die politischen Kämpfe der Zeit." This same principle holds true with respect to the visual arts.

Hugelshofer, p. 61.


Hans Rott, Quellen und Forschungen zur südwestdeutschen und schweizerischen Kunstgeschichte (Stuttgart: Strecher und Schröder Verlag, 1936), p. 287.


Ibid., p. 268.

Ibid., p. 271.

Ibid., p. 269.

Hottinger, p. 246.

Zürcher, p. 38.

Ibid., p. 39.

79 Gyr, p. 83. In 1440, 510 citizens were given.

80 Hottinger, p. 246.

81 Ibid., p. 248.

82 Schmidt, p. 33.

83 Dändliker, I:272.

84 Hugelshofer, p. 21.

85 Ibid., p. 19.

86 Ibid., p. 22.

87 Hottinger, p. 229.

88 Zürcher, p. 46; Garside, p. 78.

89 Garside, p. 79.

90 Dändliker, I:272. These towers were destroyed by lightening in 1763.

91 Hugelshofer, p. 22.

92 Dändliker, I:272.

93 Hugelshofer, p. 23.

94 Zürcher, p. 46. This author calls the work decadent.

95 Hugelshofer, p. 23. The Waldmann fresco bears a close resemblance to the Master of Flemalle's Trinity of 1430-1434, now in the Städelisches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt. Note, however, that this work was painted fifty years before the Waldmann fresco. Moreover, in all-over style the Waldmann fresco is closer to the Manesse Manuscript illustrations than to Flemish painting.

96 Ibid.

97 Dändliker, II:276.
98 Garside, p. 79.

99 Hugelshofer, p. 21.

100 Ibid., p. 22.

101 Ibid.

102 Dändliker, II:426.

103 Ibid., p. 420. "Wäterliche Gewalt."

104 quoted in Hugelshofer, p. 21.


106 Ibid., p. 108.


108 Ibid., p. 44.


110 Other vocations of members were, for example, miller, stone mason, barber, butcher and several saddlers.

111 Schweizer, p. 2. Other religious confraternities in Zürich were the St. Sebastian Confraternity for the police, the Confraternity of Our Lady, a Confraternity for the shoemakers, a confraternity for furriers, and others about which very little is known.


114 Ibid., p. 62.
Ibid.

Ibid., p. 15

Deuchler, Roethlisberge, Lüthy, p. 46.

Cuttler, pp. 280-283, 312-314. The influence of printing on the art of Zürich will be fully discussed in a later chapter. Hugelshofer, p. 31.

I have chosen these particular examples because I am well acquainted with them.

To see how idiosyncratic this work is, compare it to the more well-known painting of St. Eligius by Petrus Christus (1449), now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Deuchler, Roethlisberge, Lüthy, p. 47.


Ibid.


Hugelshofer, p. 35.


Ibid., p. 48.


The subsequent history of this work will be discussed in a late chapter.

Erwin Panofsky, Early Netherlandish Painting, Its Origins and

131 Ibid., p. 139; Cuttler, p. 97.

132 Friedländer, p. 42.


134 Blanke, p. 33.


136 Garside, p. 135.


138 Ibid., p. 4.

139 Leonhard von Muralt, "Renaissance und Reformation in Der Schweiz," Zwingliana Band XI, Heft 1, Nr. 1, 1959, p. 10.

140 Ibid., p. 12.
CHAPTER TWO
THE REFORMED THEOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS ART:
ZHURICH'S SOLUTION TO THE IMAGE QUESTION

If the pre-Reformation art of Zürich reflected a tension between out-worn or corrupt ecclesiastical traditions and the realities of urban life, then Zürich's unique pre-Reformation relationship between the civil authority and the church made possible that marriage of theology and government which produced the city's solution to the problem of religious art. This solution, which would eventually be adopted by most South German and Swiss reformed cities, involved a close cooperation between Zürich's theologians and the city magistrates. This cooperation was not achieved without effort, but the final resolution of the problem illuminates both Zurich's artistic past and its future.

There were three elements which had to coalesce before this resolution of artistic tension could be accomplished: the attitudes of the general population toward religious art, the iconoclastic theology of Zwingli and his fellow pastors, and the relationship of the Council to the Church.

Iconoclasm and the cult of saints were closely intertwined, for religious images had been produced for the purpose of invoking the saints and the artistic life of Zürich had flourished because of the peoples' adherence to the cult of saints. Yet there were also those who resented or distrusted the sculptures and paintings which crowded the city's churches. With the advent of Zwingli, and as a result of his preaching, this group grew increasingly. Moreover, it was with the question of images that evangelical teaching and civic life converge most dramatically, because the very nature of images— their physical
existence as well as the spiritual meaning with which they were endowed—
dent itself to the encouragement of civil disobedience if not anarchy.
Thus, while Zwingli, Leo Jud, and other preachers of Zürich's churches
were carefully forging a theology of religious art, some citizens were
taking the law into their own hands.

It will, therefore, be useful to examine some of the individual
acts of iconoclasm in order to determine the attitudes of citizens of
Zürich and its surrounding territory to the works of art which had be-
come so much a part of their religious lives and physical environment.
Such an examination does much to illuminate these citizens' view of
themselves, their community, and their religion. What were the atti-
tudes of the brave, daring, or even foolhardy individuals who broke or
despoiled religious works of art? What was the response of the govern-
ment, and what role did evangelical theology play in the final determin-
ation of the question of art and religion in Zürich?

I

The first incident to be discussed is unusual, for the perpetrator
of the act involved did not confess his crime until long after the
images had been officially removed from the city's churches. Many
years after the image question had been settled, a garrulous old man,
once the custodian of the Fraumünster, related an incident which oc-
urred in his youth.² One cold morning Zwingli was to preach in the cus-
todian's church, and the narrator, then a young man, had been ordered
to heat the church. Finding no firewood available (and perhaps being
unwilling to seek any), he committed a daring if resourceful act. He
went, as he says, into the church, to the nearest altar, and removed a wooden statue of St. John. Thence he carried it to the school-room furnace and, opening the door, thrust it in. As it did not fit easily, he was forced to manoeuvre it into the oven, all the while carrying on a one-sided dialogue with the statue. "Now, bend over Jörgli, you have to go into the oven whether you're supposed to be St. John or not."

As the old man tells the story he warms to the subject. The oil paint on the statue began to pop and crackle in the heat, and the custodian now must silence his wooden companion: "Now hold still! Be quiet! -- which you're not about to do-- otherwise I'll have to close the furnace door. He can't get out, the devil can come pull him out!"

In the midst of this activityFrau Myconius innocently entered the room on her way to the service. "Good day, my child. Have you begun to heat the room?" "Yes, mother, I've started." With this he quickly shut the oven door, because, as he says, "I didn't want to tell her anything. She could have gossiped about it and in those days if people had found out, it could have cost me my life."

As the service began, Myconius praised the warmth of the room: "Custodian, you certainly had wood today." The custodian thought to himself, "Jörgli, you done the best thing." Then the old man finishes his reminiscences on an almost farcical note. As the priests were preparing to sing the Mass, one of them noticed that the statue was missing. Turning to his colleague in anger, he shouted,"You Lutheran scoundrel! You've stolen my St. John!" This quarrel was carried on for some time before the puzzled Myconius. There the old man closes his story: "Myconius never caught on to what was happening, and the St. John was never seen again. And I never told this story to anyone for
several years.

The event in itself is important for capturing the mentality of the citizens unacquainted with the subtleties of theological argument, but even more important is the general attitude of this one citizen toward the church employed him and its officials.

In his dissertation, "Idolatry and the Reformation: a Study of the Protestant Attack on Catholic Worship in Germany, Switzerland and France, 1500-1580?" Carlos Nieto Eire has discussed the varieties of iconoclasm and the underlying causes. He notes that while an act of iconoclasm may be the result of any number of situations, the basic impulse to such an act is revolutionary. An act of iconoclasm may be individual or collective, with the collective act often being an act of mob violence as in Basel or Geneva. It may be legal, but it was often illegal, causing the offenders to face the judgement of the magistrates. It is also, however, a religious act, but, a religious act with political implications. The individual or group which removed images without the consent of the government was, in fact, challenging that government by "taking the law into its own hands."

The custodian's tale is illustrative of the kind of social disease which accompanied or contributed to acts of religious fervor. Unfortunately, much of the flavor and tone of the old man's story is lost in its retelling and translation. The man's individual personality emerges in his account, but also his social attitudes. It is important to remember that although his destruction of the image occurs in the context of a serious and deeply-felt religious issue, his act was not an act of religious conviction. Moreover, it was sly rather than heroic: that after the fact it becomes legitimate, and even praiseworthy should
not obscure the fact. Even in old age, he seems to derive intense pleasure from having made fools of the two priests who quarreled over the missing image. He laughs up his sleeve at the Myconius couple.

His attitude toward the image itself is interesting. It is clear that he felt no reverence for it. There is no sense that he perceived the object as numinous. Certainly he endowed the wooden figure with a personality, spoke to it by name, chided it, but the personality which he gave the figure is one over which he had control. Not only did he control it physically, but he named it with a diminutive, "Jörgil."

This incident of secret image-destruction has been used to introduce the question of iconoclasm in Zürich because it presents the issue in its simplest form. Other incidents reveal sincere religious feeling allied with social unrest—these will be discussed shortly. In the custodian's act, however, the dichotomy between traditional belief and everyday life is suddenly illuminated. It is the same dichotomy which is to be seen in the art of the period. Admittedly, the custodian's attitude is not on a level with that of the city's artists. Nevertheless, his individual illegal act was committed in the same community as that in which Zürich's artists and craftsmen were creating the works of art discussed at the end of the previous chapter: the custodian's act and artistic creation which he destroyed belong to the same social and religious milieu. It was in this milieu with its tensions that the stage was set for the conflict which led finally to the official renunciation of ecclesiastical art.

In Zürich, there were no mobs breaking into churches, burning and destroying, affronting both secular and ecclesiastical authority. Rather, there were acts of individuals or groups of individuals. One such
act has been examined. The others—misdeeds or acts of pious heroism—have been carefully recorded in the Acts of the Council, where we may hear the voices of the iconoclasts themselves, and of their neighbors and accusers. We feel the tension created by the community's desire for legality and good order, and its need to adhere to divine mandate.

It is important, therefore, to remember this source, for the emphasis was often on questions of ownership and property. The accused were not martyrs before a pagan ruler, a Caesar, but men accused by their neighbors of destroying property and of disturbing the peace. Furthermore, the iconoclast had committed not only an act against property, but also an act which in its religious motivation questioned the ecclesiastical authority of the Council. The magistrates, some of whom were even in sympathy with the iconoclasts, did not hold the two swords of power lightly. Thus, the question of religious art in Zürich involved two issues. One is theological, but the other is one of authority, both secular and religious. It was Zürich's unique pre-Reformation relationship between civil authority and the local church which would make possible the marriage of theology and government. This, in turn would bring about the successful interaction of pastors and magistrates and the final—legal—removal of all religious images from the city's churches.

The reformers were united in their struggle against idolatry. How could they not be, for God's work is clear and must be obeyed:

I am the Lord thy God, Thou shalt have none other gods before me. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth; Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them. (Deuteronomy 5:6-9)
Yet not only the theologians but the magistrates as well were troubled by two questions: what was the relationship of religious images to idolatry, and what was the proper means of curbing or prohibiting idolatrous practices?4

It was not religious art itself which was the target of the first theological attacks against idolatry in Zürich. Rather, the controversy began over a more fundamental issue. Six months after he began his famous sermon cycle from the Großmünster pulpit in January 1519, Zwingli introduced the subject of the cult of saints.5 In preaching against this cult, he was well within the bounds of orthodox teaching, for the Roman Catholic Church had never sanctioned idolatry. The Church had, however, made a distinction between the adoration of saints which was idolatrous, and their veneration which was not. This distinction was one which had become increasingly blurred by the clergy and which had become increasingly difficult for the laity to grasp. The usages of late medieval piety make this abundantly clear. The literature of the period abounds with stories of the pathetically sincere if misguided or superstitious belief in the power of individuals to manipulate or coerce the saints through sacrifice of time and wealth. Erasmus, for example, recounts the belief of swineherds that they must worship St. Anthony as the protector of their hogs, "for fear he should grow angry if they neglect him."6

This kind of superstition was prevalent in Zürich, and in Zürich as elsewhere the image had become confused with the saint himself in the minds of many. Thus in September 1523, the Zürich Council received the report that a Thoma Grossman had seen the image of the Herrgott walk among the beggars and eat a little pastry at a church consecration feast.
Grossman averred that the image then walked through the grass to a near-
by village to eat the grapes in the vineyard. Thus Zwingli's critique
of the cult of saints led naturally to a discussion of religious art:
the cult of saints and iconoclasm were inextricably intertwined.

By December 1522, the effects of Zwingli's preaching on the cult
of saints began to be felt in the Council. Late in December, Melchior
Kuefer was called before the magistrates for blasphemia the saints.
Witnesses reported that in the presence of members of the carpenters'
Guild he had said that, "he would shit on the saints whether in heaven
or on earth." Further, "he would love God, but would shit on the old
painted idols which stood in the church." The final witness makes a
summation of Kuefer's blasphemy by simply stating that Kuefer had said,
"he would shit on the idols."

Although the expression was without question crude, Kuefer's atti-
tude was not without theological validity. He wished to love God, but
recognized that the old painted images in the churches were nothing
but idols (Götzen). Moreover, he stressed that he held his opinion
without ill-feeling or anger: "und syg doch das alles in dheinem bösen
grund besnehmen, noch dhein zorn darby gevesen." Yet he had challenged
authority and created a breach of the peace, had perhaps offended an
even higher authority than the Ratsherren of Zürich. He was, there-
fore, sentenced to six days and nights in prison, and released with a
warning.

Melchior Kuefer's blasphemy was only the beginning, for in Septem-
ber, 1523, from the pulpit of St. Peter's Church, Leo Jud preached a
sermon condemning the works of art in the churches, maintaining
"possibly for the first time in public that they be removed as well."
According to the subsequent testimony of Simon Weber, a member of the congregation, "Herr Löw preached on St. Veren's Day that it could be proved from the Holy Scriptures that it was right that the idols be removed." 9

Now the tension would become unbearable, for now many felt themselves trapped between two authorities. How could obedience to civil authority be reconciled to obedience to Holy Scripture? Moreover, how were the ancient traditions of the Church to be regarded?

The result of Leo Jud's preaching was the deepening of divisions between those who adhered to the Old Faith and those who wished to be led by the new teaching. Thomas Kleinbrodtli, a Catholic, articulated the first position. 10 He was called before the Council to answer for making certain remarks against Jud and Zwingli. The day after Jud's sermon, witnesses reported, Kleinbrodtli said that if the priest wanted to strike down the images with an ax, he (Kleinbrodtli) would, for his part strike them up again. And he would lay the images in the priest's lap and send him to Strassburg. Moreover, Kleinbrodtli maintained that the two priests had preached lies from the pulpit. 11

After this, Kleinbrodtli introduced an argument which would continue to occupy iconoclasts and magistrates in the future. Had Jud, says Kleinbrodtli, donated the images and put them in the church, then he would have the right to remove them. The images did not belong to Leo Jud: they were not his to remove. Further, he accused the priests of sowing dissension in the city: "Zwingli has sown much unrest in this city, and people were more of one mind, before now with his preaching." ("der Zwingli hat vil unruow in diser stadt gemacht, und waren vor bas eins gewesen, dan ietz mit irem predigen." ) 12 The people who had given
the images were more pious than those who wished to destroy them, and if the priests were as pious as they said they were, why didn't they go to the Bishop in Constance, or to some other Confederate city?

Three questions emerge from the testimony against Kleinbrotli. First there is the question of true piety. Is it truly pious to remove the images and in removing them to destroy the ideas for which they stand? Second, who has the right to remove the images? In the eyes of the citizens these images were not only objects of religious devotion, but private property, bought and paid for. Third, is the question of social unrest. Zwingli's sweet teaching (suessen leren) had encouraged acts of vandalism and turned neighbor against neighbor. "People had been more of one mind," says Kleinbrotli, "before Zwingli."13

The next incident adds a fourth question to the list. On September 9, Hans Kolb entered St. Peter's Church early in the morning.14 As he entered, in the dimness he heard a wild rumpus (ein wild gerumpel) and saw that various ecclesiastical objects of decoration had been torn down. When he moved nearer, into the choir, he discovered no one there but the mass helpers. All remained silent about the incident, leaving it unreported to the authorities. It was not, however, in keeping with the character of community life that the incident should occur without discussion. Soon what Hans Kolb had witnessed became a subject for local gossip. In this wise the incident came before the Council for investigation, and before the Magistrates it was revealed that Lorenz Meyer, one of the massHelpers, with his assistant Hans Pfiifer had taken down an old retable from one of the altars. As Meyer testified, when they approached the high altar their eyes fell upon "an old altar panel
(ein altes tafeli) on which was painted the Descent from the Cross. Meyer said to his assistant, "What is that picture doing here, and who placed it there? I'm going to move it aside." With that he gave it a push so that the frame broke. Thereupon he pushed the whole thing under the altar.15

So far, the incident seems relatively innocent. The motives of the two men seem unclear. When a chaplain, H. Jörg, appeared to decorate the high altar, however, Meyer began to make his feelings about images known. As Jörg began to put the gold and silver candlesticks on the altar, Meyer began to argue with him. Rather than placing these implements on the altar, says Meyer, Jörg should use them to strike the idols from the altar, for, there were so many poor men who sat before the church and elsewhere, who had nothing but great hunger and who must bear poverty. These men might be helped with the costly church decorations, for one finds in the works of St. Ambrose that such decorations should be food for the poor.16

In Meyer's argument there is the echo of a deep unrest. He does not speak only against idolatrous practices, he also protests against a social order whose values are skewed. Some men starve while others use their wealth to bargain ostentatiously for their soul's salvation.17

Thus the magistrates were faced with a serious situation. From adherents of both Old Faith and new teaching the existing order was being challenged. On Sunday, September 13, three citizens the Frau-unster, tore down the lamps before the priest's chair and threw holy water on each other. When called before the Council two of them explained their actions by claiming that they had done no wrong; their action was open and not secret. Their motives were pious and sincere,
but they would bear idolatry no longer. 

It is difficult to determine whether Zürich’s iconoclasts were in any way moved by the objects as artistic creations, if they perceived them as beautiful and powerful because of that beauty. It is, however, certain that they were perceived by some as dangerous: first because they had the power to draw men into idolatry, and second, because they distracted men from their duty to their fellow men. They neither turned men’s minds to the invisible all-powerful God, nor did they turn men’s eyes to God’s true earthly, man.

Those citizens of Zürich who engaged in acts of iconoclasm conceived their acts as one of faith and charity. They acted in response to the teachings of the priests and at the promptings of conscience. Many were simple people, some were resentful, angered by the religious corruption and social injustice which the images represented. Yet at the center of their actions was a belief that the invisible God must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, in the churches, streets, and markets of Zürich, among one’s fellow men. In so believing, and in expressing their belief in acts of destruction they threatened the civil authority which allowed or seemed to sanction such disregard for God’s word.

Although the iconoclastic incidents in the city and the surrounding territory were mild and perpetrated by only a few individuals in each parish, the emotion which the image question engendered was dangerous to the order of the community. Individual citizens were making decisions about their religious lives and those of their neighbors, were destroying private property, and were taking upon themselves the prerogatives of a duly instituted authority. In Zürich it was the Council which was
that authority. The Council, however, was concerned with more than the question of private property, for it was concerned with the interaction of the citizens as well. This concern extended beyond the overseeing and regulation of their secular interactions into the realm of the spiritual order and well-being of the community. Zürich was a Christian community, a single Christian body, the Corpus Christianorum: there was no idea of a separate legal entity known as the church congregation.\textsuperscript{22} The idea of a Christian magistracy which separated itself from the religious life of the community was deeply shocking, even heretical to the citizens of sixteenth century Germany and Switzerland. It was commonly accepted that, although secular and spiritual realms were to be governed by magistracy and priesthood respectively, all shared a common goal: the creation and maintenance of a society obedient to Divine mandate.\textsuperscript{23}

For the magistrates of Zürich, however, the issue had become somewhat more complicated. The relationship between the Council and the local church had some unusual features, for the Council had over the years secured a good portion of the secular authority of the city's ecclesiastical establishments. The magistrates had gained control over the secular rights of the Abbess of the Fraumünster,\textsuperscript{24} and had also extended their jurisdiction to many aspects of the lives of the Großmünster clergy. Moreover they had by means of morality ordinances intervened in those aspects of the citizens' lives which might be considered the prerogative of the Church.\textsuperscript{25}

As early as 1280 they had succeeded in preventing clerics from owning property in the city, and in 1370 the Confederate Diet secured the right to require an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy from all its
inhabitants, and it became illegal for Swiss citizens to be tried before foreign courts. In 1460, the Council created the office of Zinsrichter to preside over litigation pertaining to money due the church.

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the Magistrates gained even further rights from both the papacy and the Bishops at Constance. Martin V acquiesced in their demand for enforced residence of the Canons of the Großmünster, and Sixtus IV formally recognized all existing powers which the Council had acquired. In 1506, the Bishop of Constance agreed to allow full competence to the Council in cases of mixed jurisdiction.

That the Council received important financial benefits from these victories over the clergy cannot be denied. Yet this was not the only motive for its efforts. The magistrates wished that the ecclesiastical establishments be run in a competent, orderly, godly fashion, in keeping with the high aims for which they were intended. Thus even before Zwingli began his work in Zürich, the magistrates of the city had been involved in the ordering and reforming of the local church. It was, therefore, to be expected that they would be concerned with the question of religious life, and thus, greatly troubled by the unrest among the citizens, and undecided in their own minds as to what action should be taken, they called a religious disputation to be held during three days in October — the twenty-sixth through the twenty-eighth — of 1523.

II

Two issues were to be discussed at the Disputation: the question of the Mass and the problem of images. The Disputation, convened in the
Rathaus and presided over by the Burgermeister, was conducted in the German tongue ("in tutschen Zungen"). The clergy from the city and its surrounding territory were summoned, and the Bishops of Constance, Chur and Basel were invited as well as the University of Basel and "unser getruw, lieb Eydg nossen von den zwolff orten." The Bishops and representatives from the University refused the invitation, and of the "Eydg nossen" only Schaffhausen and St. Gall sent representatives. Nevertheless, the Disputation was extremely well attended: Heinrich Bullinger asserted that over nine-hundred people were present. The image question was disputed before the assembly on the first day, the discussion led by Leo Jud.

The October Disputation did not end in a definitive answer to the questions involved. Konrad Schmid, Commander of the Knights of St. John at Kusnacht, had presented the essentially Lutheran argument that the people needed to be thoroughly taught before the images should be taken from them. Although Zwingli and Jud felt that the people had been receiving such an education for some time, and should by now be weaned from old attitudes and needs, it was decided to make an even stronger attempt to teach them. Therefore, it was determined that a committee of three learned priests—including Zwingli himself—be formed. These priests were to travel to the surrounding villages and teach both priests and people the rudiments of the reformed faith. At the request of the Council, Zwingli prepared A Brief Christian Introduction, explaining the fundamentals of evangelistic teaching, and the Council issued a mandate:

No one shall place or remove any image in the temples unless he (himself) has placed them there before, or
unless the entire congregation has made the decision to remove them. And this all is to be done without any form of scoffing or insult or any thing that would intentionally anger or offend anyone.

das niemann ghein bild weder yn noch us den tempelen tün sol, er hab sy denn züvor darin getan oder so ein gantz kilchöre mit mere hand sy erkannte darus ze tun, und das alles ohne schmach spott und allenfanz und alles, das müwilliklich ieman Veregren mag. 36

Finally, the Council appointed a committee to investigate ways in which the images might be removed. 37

Now matters would progress slowly. The arguments presented at the Disputation had made it clear that the adoration of images is contrary to Holy Scripture. Although the First Disputation had resulted in the citizens binding themselves to life according to God's word, the Council did not yet commit itself to the removal of those images which the Second Disputation had demonstrated were offensive to the sight of God. The magistrates had, indeed, issued a mandate against individual acts of iconoclasm and had sanctioned a decision by individual congregations to remove their images should they as a community decide to do so. Beyond this, however, they would not go. To understand why this was true, it is necessary first to know something of the political life of the city, of the relationship between Great and Small Councils, and of their relationships to the new religious teaching.

In July 1523, Zwingli had written an explication of his theological ideas, the Usslegen und grund der Schlussreden oder articklen. In Articles 25, and 33-43, he discussed the relationship of Scripture to a series of social and political questions. Among those questions discussed was the proper relationship of a Christian magistracy to its people. 38 According to this, the magistracy holds its power jure
divino: to it belongs the sword of earthly power. Moreover, all so-called spiritual power in worldly matters rightly belongs to the state. But the state and those who govern it must willingly put themselves under the authority of Christ, must agree, as Zwingli says "to live according to the precepts of Christ" ("nach der Schnur Christi zu fahren"). Should the magistracy fail to do this, it may be set aside.39

In the case of images, therefore it would seem that a decision would be clear. Had not the pastors repeatedly demonstrated that the adoration of images was idolatrous? Had not Leo Jud preached from the pulpit that the images should be destroyed in obedience to God's will? Had not the Disputation made clear that idolatrous practices were not in keeping with adherence to God's word?

No one declared himself willing to set himself against the will of God. Yet the Ratsherren did not immediately act to remove the offending art works from the city's churches. Nor were they willing that their authority be denied and that civil disorder prevail. The compromise reached immediately after the Disputation would not long contain the dissension within the city. A final decision either for or against religious images could not yet be made, however, because there was dissension between the two Councils: they were themselves divided in the acceptance of the new teaching. Although the majority of the Great Council either embraced or was favorable to the new teaching, this was not true of the Small Council.40 There the majority adhered to the old religion. Moreover, it was the Small Council and the two Burgermeister who were extremely powerful in determining the outcome of any issue. Thus there was an imbalance of power.

This imbalance of power was the outcome of political developments
in the city since the end of the fifteenth century. The revised constitution of 1489 had been formulated with the intention of creating a government in which all represented groups were to have an equal share of power. While each of the guilds was to be equally represented on the Council, in reality three of these guilds had acquired more power than the others. In the Reformation period the real power and authority within the city lay in the hands of these three guilds: the Constaffel, the Zunft zur Saffran, and the Zunft zur Meisen. During the first quarter of the sixteenth century it was these three guilds which controlled the office of Burgermeister, the office of Treasurer (säcker), and these same guilds which supplied the Ratsherren von freier wahl, six Small Council members elected to the Great Council from among its members. Thus in practical terms, the three guilds controlled the Council. It was from among these guilds that the city's ambassadors and diplomats were chosen: in 1516 alone, 83% of the Zürichers sent as diplomats belonged to these three guilds. Moreover, it was the members of these guilds who possessed the most wealth: the Constaffel was the guild of land owners, the Saffran guild the guild of merchants, and the Meisen guild was the guild of hostlers. Thus, as Morf points out, a hierarchy had developed in Zürich: within an egalitarian constitution the members of three guilds had secured the majority of wealth and influence.

In dealing with the question of the removal of images in Zürich, the political implications must be borne in mind. First the Small Council was dominated by the most wealthy and powerful element in the city, and the majority of the Small Council was Catholic. Second, the
two Burgermeisters, Felix Schmid (Zunft zur Meisen), and Max Röist (Constaffel), had close papal connections. Felix Schmid had been offered the captaincy of the papal guard in 1507, by Julius II, and Max Röist had been a close confidant of that same Pope. He was himself made captain of the papal guard by Leo X in 1517. As his duties held him in Zürich, he delegated his office to his son, Caspar, who was present at the deathbed of Leo X, and who guarded the conclave which elected Pope Hadrian VI. Third is a very illuminating fact: the powerful Zunft zur Meisen to which Felix Schmid belonged was not only the hosteler's guild. Since the original constitution of Rudolf Brun it had been the guild of the artists as well.

It is significant that while Burgermeister Röist had been Zwingli's ally during the First Disputation, when the Council had asserted its right to control public worship and observances, he proved a stubborn and powerful opponent to the removal of images. No source explains this opposition, but it is possible to attempt some explanation. The results of the First Disputation had strengthened the authority of the Council over the spiritual lives of the citizens. The iconoclastic incidents had threatened the authority of the Council. Moreover, the removal of images implicitly and in some cases explicitly revealed a rift in the social fabric. When men rail against the creation of expensive religious art while the poor hunger, they are more than inveighing against the corruption of the Church. Is it not Burgermeister Röist and the members of the Small Council who have the means at their disposal to commission such works?

Then there was the religious issue: In the Second Disputation, the question of images was introduced with the question of the Mass. As
Zwingli would later write in his *Answer to Valentin Compan*, it was the question of the Mass that was the truly important question.51 Yet both issues involved questions of faith and threatened a break with Rome and the papacy which Röist had diligently served. Finally, there is the most elusive element of all: the influence of the city's artists. About this influence nothing decisive can be said. It is rather the lack of information which is so suggestive. Nowhere is it mentioned that the artists of the city either in a group or as individuals protested what they must have seen as a threat to their livelihood. In other cities where iconoclasm was a problem—Strasbourg, Basel, and Nuremberg, for example—the artists protested strongly, presenting petitions to their magistrates.52 The artists of Zürich remained silent. At least they do not speak in the records. Why? Perhaps the answer can be found to lie in the realm of local politics. The artists belonged to one of the three most powerful guilds in the city. While they themselves may not have been wealthy or influential, many of their fellow guild members were: Felix Schmid was co-Bürgermeister. Is it not possible that, whatever their feelings about the theological questions involved, they felt secure in the protection of their guild and in their influence with the Bürgermeister?

Whatever Max Röist's reasons for objecting to the removal of images, he was able to prevent the decision—until a stroke of fate or Providence intervened. In June 1524, Felix Schmid, long ailing and unable to fulfill his duties as Bürgermeister, died. Two days later Max Röist was dead also.53 The next day the Council acted. The mandate was issued. The images were to be removed, lawfully, quietly, and in good order.
Lucas Wütrich has observed that after the successful institution of the Reformation in Zürich, one stood as if before an artistic void (Nach der erfolgreich durchgeführten Reformation steht man in Zürich gleichsam vor einer Kunstlerischen Leere.) This void, if it was to be filled, had now to be filled with works of art which responded to Evangelical teaching and reformed thought. It remains, therefore, to discuss the theology upon which such an art could be based.

III

Zwingli's argument against religious images rests firmly on Scripture, fundamentally on the First Commandment. In his official statement of his position, the Answer to Valentin Compar, he makes this very clear. *Du sollt dir ghein gegraben noch geschnitzt bild machen.* This is because God wills that we put our trust in Him alone, for he is our only God, our only aid and protector. We shall have no other. Yet, says Zwingli, images have become increasingly important. Men have come to see them as holy in themselves, and begun to seek from them what should be sought from God alone.

Thus, Zwingli's struggle was not against art, or even against religious art. His struggle was against those pictures or images which obscure the one God and hinder trust in Him. Concerning the visual arts in general, he made a poignant statement: since he was near-sighted he did not see the pictures and images very well. He was, however, no enemy of the arts for he took pleasure in beautiful painting and sculpture. This statement is extremely illuminating. The terms in which he spoke of bilder are significant: because his eyesight was so
poor, pictures could harm him only a little. It is this sense of the power of the visual arts which underlies a great portion of his argument against religious images. It is not only because images are ineffectual in teaching God's word that he rejected them. He rejected them also because in their beauty and in their life-like qualities they possessed a seductive aura and exert a peculiar fascination. Thus Zwingli conceded to them a great power. It is, however, a demonic power, for they have been used to simulate or guarantee God's presence. They take the place of God on earth.  

In answering Valentin Comper he concedes Comper's point that man can not help making mental pictures about that which he hears. This human faculty is not, however, what God abhors. It is, rather, the idolization of that image—mental or physical. When the image takes on a physical form, one sees especially clearly the presence of idolization. The manner in which the people approached the images shows very clearly that they viewed them as idols. They dressed them, burned bandlees and incense before them and carried them in procession and called them by name. Most dangerously, in the minds of many there was little or no distinction between the image and the person it represented. Moreover, this lack of distinction between man and object is the result of great error. In calling upon an image become saint man twice offends God by paying honor to it which rightly belongs to God and God alone.  

It is odd as well as wrong, pursued Zwingli, that man should worship these images and allow them so much power, for they are made of wood and stone. They are the creations of men, sculptors and woodcarvers. It is even possible to witness these craftsmen turn the wood and stone to simulacra of human beings. Then lo and behold! the objects
are invested with life, are given names, and offered gifts and prayers. In short, they become idols.\textsuperscript{62} This argument sheds light on the urban environment of Zwingli’s parishioners. Those men who created the objects destined to be worshipped were friends, neighbors, relatives of the worshippers. Isaiah had ridiculed men who made images with their own hands and then worshipped them.\textsuperscript{63} Where is the holiness in the creation of a craftsman who produces that creation in order to earn his livelihood?

If these man-made creations were not to be worshipped could they be used as teaching devices? Compar had urged Zwingli to accept the argument of Pope Gregory the Great that pictures are the Bibles of the poor. To this Zwingli replied that we must learn from the Word, not from pictures.\textsuperscript{64} From pictures we can learn only externals. Even secular history cannot be taught without an accompanying text. How can something so exalted as Christ’s teaching and passion be learned from a picture? If you see a picture of Christ’s passion what do you learn other than that he may have been a handsome man: (“Er is denocht ein hüpscher man xin (gewesen), der da verbildet ist.”)\textsuperscript{65}

Moreover, God had explicitly ordained that we are to learn from His word. His own son used words not pictures in teaching. Therefore, images are to be rejected as primary teaching devices.

In this denial of images as teachers he does not, however, deny their influence and power. Again he acknowledges their particular seductive attraction. If they are used to teach they will obscure the true vision of God, for man loves the tools by which he learns. If those tools of learning are the scripture he will love them, but if
images are his tools, then it is those which he will love. 66

Moreover, when these beloved tools, having been richly and
carefully made, are placed in a church, they take on a holiness by vir-
tue of their position in a sacred place:

Images are either for decoration or devotion and when
one has them in the temples, from that hour they become
idols which man honors.

Bilder sind entweder zu zier gemacht oder zu gedächtnus
und wenn mann sy in den tempelen hat macht mann von stund
an götzen daraus, dass man sy vereret. 66

... and truly there is a danger that everything in the
temple becomes great and holy in our eyes, so dear it
has become.

... und warlich, so statt die gevar daruff, das alles,
so imm tempel ist, wirt uns von stund gross und heilig
in unseren ougen, das wir es nit verneinend zimmer
angerürt werden, so tür wirt es. 67

It is terrible that these man-made creatures should be placed in a
holy place. It is even more terrible that many of these images are not
even seemly. Often the work of the artist is poor, and figures are
rendered comical or offensive by his lack of skill. 68 Sometimes the
saints are so portrayed that they take on the appearance of courtesans
or dissolute young men: Here stands a Magdalene painted in such a
whorish fashion that all the priests have protested: how can anyone be
of a mind to celebrate mass here? (Hie stat ein Magdalena so hürisch
gemalet das oучh alle pfaffen ye und ye gesprochen habend: wie könd
einer hie andächtig sin, mäss ze haben?) 69 The pure Mother of Christ
herself becomes an object of lascivious desire in baring her breast to
her Child: Yes, the eternally pure, spotless maid and Mother of Jesus
Christ must display her breast. (Ja, die ewig rein, unversert magt und
müter Jesu Christi, die muss ire brüst harfürzogen) 70 and There stands
a Sebastian, a Mauritius and the pious John the Evangelist, in such an
aristocratic warlike and seductive way that the women must make confes-
sion because of them. (Dort stat ein Sebastian Mauritius und dir fromm
Johanns evangelist, so jünckerisch Kriegisch, Kuplig dass die weiber
davon habend ze by chtenghebt.)71 Yet even if these art works are well
and beautifully made, and if they are not lewd and unseemly, still they
must not be allowed. For if they are well made, then the viewer looses
himself in admiring their beauty.72 In short, images do not lead to
true devotion.

Moreover, care and wealth are lavished on these objects of paint,
wood, and stone, which properly belong to our fellow men. We use silver
and gold on images which we should give to the poor, even though Christ
had forbidden greed and splendor, and himself had only one garment.73
We think more of these images than we think of men, yet the image is
only a picture of a man while man himself is the image of God.74 Is it
suitable therefore, to spend money on the creation and adornment of
images when many of one's neighbors are hungry and cold? Zwingli's re-
ply was strong: "(Images) are a true abomination in the eyes of God,
especially the gold and silver idols. This is a real true robbery,
for that property belongs to the poor."75

In all of his arguments against idolatry, Zwingli acknowledged
his belief in the power of the visual arts. When faced with the question
of religious art, much of his thinking was influenced by this belief.
Graven images were to be destroyed because God has commanded that we
have none. This was a fundamental truth for Zwingli. God did not
want Christians to have images for He foresaw that they would be subject
to misuse.76 The images had to be forbidden because they could harm
the weak and uneducated. In this context it is good to remember Zwingli's opinion that they could not harm him because of his poor eyesight. Zwingli feared the images for their power to dazzle the viewer and to obscure his vision of the one true God: "May God take the evil misleading devils from us that we may look into the face of clear truth without deception! Amen!" (Gott welle den bösen, verwirrenden tütel von uns nemen, das wir der claren warheit ungeblintzet mögend ins angsicht sehen! Amen!)  

Given, therefore, that the visual arts are powerful and may move men's hearts, was any art to be allowed to the pious citizens of Zürich? To this Zwingli answered yes. He made crystal clear that he was himself sensitive to the arts—rather more than many others. But he could in no wise sanction those artistic objects which are offensive to true piety. It followed, thus, for him to clarify his distinction between acceptable and unacceptable art. This he did be using examples readily visible to, and apprehendable by, his fellow citizens. 

On the Limmat facade of the Großmünster, seated in a niche high on the tower, was a statue of Charlemagne. Inside the church there was also a statue of the sainted emperor. The statue on the tower had never been worshipped or given any special homage. The image inside the church was, on the other hand, honored like the other saints images. Therefore, the statue inside the church was removed as idolatrous, while the image on the outside which excited no awe was allowed to stand. This seemed to solve the problem: that which excites awe or reverence must be removed. That which does not may remain. Nevertheless, this did not completely settle the question for Zwingli: "But mark! As soon as anyone begins to view it idolatrously, then this must also be
removed." ("Merck aber: sobald man sich an dem ouch vergon wurde mit abgöttery, so wurd man inn ouch dennen tun.")) The danger is always present. Should the statue of Charlemagne on the outside of the Church become more than a remembrance of an important figure in the city's history, it must be removed.

Zwingli then offered other examples, in order that his position might be completely clear. On the tower of the GroBmünster there was a golden cock, and in the Fish Market, an ape carved from stone. These figures, he said, are harmless because no one worships them or calls upon them for aid. They do not usurp that honor which belongs to God alone, and accordingly they may be allowed to stand.

As for art which is meant to enrich and adorn the house of God, Zwingli had this answer: although there were depictions of oxen in the Temple of Solomon used to decorate the furnishing and although the throne of Solomon was adorned with lions, these were not idols. These depictions of beasts were not intended as objects of adoration—as was the golden calf—but were created to enhance the beauty of certain ceremonial vessels or furnishings. Thus, they were innocent of any wrong even though they were created for a holy place. It is for this reason that Zwingli would allow one particular art form to remain in Reformed churches. In his eyes stained glass threatened no danger to true belief, and could be retained.

From this we see that Zwingli did not argue that there should be no art works with religious content or meaning. The question is, what sort of art work was to be created and seen by a people wishing to adhere to the mandates and teaching of Scripture? From Zwingli's carefully formu-
lated theology several concepts emerge. He advanced two definitions, one for idols (Götzen), and one for images (Bilder). An idol is the image or picture of a helper, a comforter or one to whom honor is paid. A picture or image is the likeness of something that is visible, but which is not used in a misleading hope nor honored: "an image of a helper or comforter or that to which honor is paid; images we call however likenesses of certain things that are visible but are not made up for deviant hope nor are being venerated." ("ein bildnus eines helfers oder trost huffens, oder dero eer witt angeton; bilder nennend wir aber glychnussen eins yeden dings, das da sichtbar ist, aber zu gheiner ab- furigen hoffnung nit gemacht, ochu nit vereret wirt.")

Thus a work of art which is used as a simulacrum of a saint or even of Christ himself is forbidden: Such a work obscures man's true vision and perverts his belief. Moreover, unseemly art is denied. Pictures should not create lascivious thoughts or lead to immoral behavior. Finally, the placement of work of art is important. Zwingli stressed that what is in a church--a sanctified place--takes on a kind of holiness of its own in the imagination of the viewer. Therefore, the churches must be unadorned. Zwingli's oft-quoted praise of Zürich's churches makes clear his ideal of church decoration. "In Zürich we have churches which are positively luminous; the walls are beautifully white!"

IV

If the pre-Reformation art of Zürich is seen through the lens of Zwingli's theology, the causes for the tensions and uncertainties in those works may be seen more clearly. Given a society which, whether
out of superstition or true piety, invested works of religious art with a power far beyond that intrinsic in those objects of wood or metal, we must ask how the artistic style of these works affected the viewers. We have no evidence of the average citizen's opinions on the quality or aesthetic value of the works of art he regularly saw in the city's churches. We know only that he perceived them as powerful— as did Zwingli— and either embraced or rejected them according to his belief.

It is important to remember that the style of these works was becoming increasingly realistic. Local artists were becoming increasingly adept in their rendering of density and recession in space— that is, in creating life-like figures. Moreover, they had become increasingly concerned with the portrayal of the real world, their own environment and that of their neighbors.

Let us now consider these works in the context of the type of religious expression against which Zwingli and his co-religionists had inveighed. To a worshipper, bent on securing the attention and aid of the saints by praying before their "portraits" or by carrying their images in procession, the effects of the new leanings toward realism may have been startling.

These pictures and images of the saints had been created in response to a desire for the immediate and real presence of the divine, and the artistic developments of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had done much to aid in this aim. The attempt to portray the holy and ineffable in physical form had been the goal of artists in Western Europe for centuries, but during the period preceding the Reformation artists had concerned themselves increasingly with a translation of the
visible world based on close observation of the details of that world. The depicted figures of Christ and the saints gained a corporeality which greatly enhanced their semblance of reality. The great Northern artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—Van Eyck and Grünewald, had distanced the viewer from the naturalistic figures and settings through the use of disguised symbolism. Thus the sacred and profane, the transcendent and the material, were united and harmonized. In Zürich the artists had succeeded in portraying the sacred figures in the profane world without effecting such a union. Thus there was an unresolved tension in the works between the mystical transcendental ideals of medieval religious art and the pragmatic naturalistic view of the world. Because of this the figures were both too real and not real enough.

Such figures, therefore, reflected a tension not only in the artistic life of the period, but in the civic life of Zürich as well. This tension was especially present in the altar retables painted by Zürich artists in the years immediately preceding the Reformation. They clearly mirror a dichotomy between the old belief and teaching and the new religious, civic and political realities of the city. Thus the works, mediocre as they may be from an artistic standpoint, are true mirrors of a state of mind which requires a release from tension in the reform of religious and, therefore, civic life.

The resolution to the religious and civic tensions was provided by the Reformation. The artistic resolution of the failure to integrate material styles with the new empiricism was finally provided in Zürich by Zwingli’s theology of religious art. In A Brief Christian Introduction, 1523, Zwingli had argued against religious images, especially
in the churches.

But it is evident that the images, the paintings that we have in the churches were born in the veneration of idolatry. Therefore, you should no longer let them remain in your house, nor in the marketplace, not anywhere where one could do them any kind of honor. Above all they are intolerable in the churches, because everything that is in them is important to us. 86

Yet Zwingli did not deny religious art. Rather, he limited and confined it. He continued, writing on religious images and pictures:

They may be tolerated outside the churches but only where they are represented in historical or narrative fashion (Geschichteswyss) without invitation to worship. 87

In casting aside religious art as an aid to devotion, but in retaining the visual arts as a vehicle for the translation of visible reality—Zwingli's geschichteswyss—Zwingli provided a solution to the dilemma by definitely separating the two approaches to religious art which those artists who were his contemporaries and compatriots had tried unsuccessfully to unite. Medieval transcendentalism in the arts was cast aside. Empirical naturalism was allowed to remain. This sanctioning of an already present and increasing interest in the world as it was actually seen provided the beginnings of a solution to the problem of religious art and of a new legitimization of the visual arts by theology. Now the artist had to turn his internal eyes from the contemplation of the invisible, and focus them on what actually existed or occurred in this world.

It is significant that in sanctioning that art which not only most truly reflected evangelical Reformed thought, but also the desires of the citizens and the realities of their lives, Zwingli freed the city's artistic life from outmoded attitudes and means of expression. If
Zürich's artists stood before an artistic void, they had the new theology to aid them in filling it. If they no longer had the Church as patron, they had the newly awakened interest in visible reality of their fellow citizens.

It will be necessary, therefore, to discover how this theology and interest effected their work. This will be the subject of the following chapters. The work of painters, and workers in stained glass must be examined. The new sources of artistic patronage must be discovered. Above all, the relationship of printing (that servant of the word) to the reformed artistic life of Zürich must be explicated.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO


2Quoted in Walter Hugelshofer, Antiquarischen Gesellschaft in Zürich Band 30, Heft 4 (Zurich, 1928, note 2, p. 20.

3Eire, pp. 163 ff.


5Garside, p. 95.

6Eire, p. 7.


8Egli, doc. 317.

9Garside, p. 104.

10Egli, doc. 416.

11Ibid.

12Ibid.

13Garside, p. 106.

14Egli, doc. 414.

15Ibid.

16Ibid.

17Ibid., doc. 415.
18 Ibid.

19 Potter, p. 93.


21 Ibid.

22 Walton, p. 16. This idea was held throughout the cities of Germany and Switzerland, and it was maintained throughout the sixteenth century.

23 Ibid., p. 18. Walton excludes the Anabaptists.

24 Ibid., p. 8. In 1397 the Fraumünster was placed under the direction of Pfleger, guardians appointed by the Council, and in 1485 Waldmann had the seals of office and keys removed from the Abbess on account of moral and financial corruption.

25 Ibid., p. 11. In 1415, for example, adultery became a civil offense.

26 Ibid., p. 10.

27 Ibid., p. 8.

28 Ibid., p. 11.

29 Ibid.

30 Garside, pp. 104 ff. Chapter V contains a detailed discussion of events leading to the Council's decision to convene a Disputation.

31 Locher, p. 131.

32 Ibid., p. 132.

33 Stirm, p. 132. See also, Garside, pp. 135 ff.

34 Garside, p. 146. The work was read and approved by the Council on November 9, 1523, and printed by Christopher Froschauer.
35 Ibid.
36 Quoted in Stirm, p. 132.
37 Garside, p. 151.
38 Locher, p. 125. See also Potter, pp. 117 ff.
39 Egli, doc. 434.
41 Ibid., p. 4.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid., p. 11. In 1516 alone, 83% of Zürichers sent as Ambassadors or diplomats belonged to these three guilds.
44 Ibid.
46 Cyr., p. 233.
48 Ibid. The son Caspar was formally given the office by Pope Clement VII on August 16, 1524 after the death of his father.
49 Potter, p. 100.
50 Garside, p. 151.
52 Baxandall, pp. 75 ff.
53 Gyr, p. 233.

54 Wüthrich, p. 10.


56 Ibid., p. 86.

57 Ibid., p. 84.

58 Stirm, p. 141.


60 Ibid., p. 102.

61 Ibid., p. 41.

62 Ibid., p. 107.

63 Ibid., p. 43.

64 Ibid., p. 120.

65 Ibid., p. 122.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., p. 102.

68 Ibid., p. 147.

69 Ibid., p. 145.

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid., p. 146.

72 Ibid., p. 148.

73 Ibid., p. 102.
74 Ibid., p. 108
75 Ibid., p. 102.
77 Ibid., p. 708.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p. 96.
81 Ibid., p. 106.
82 Ibid., p. 97.
83 Ibid., pp. 145-146.
84 Garside, p. 160.
85 This is not to say that they achieved the goals of their great contemporaries in Germany of Italy—of Durer or Leonardo, for example.
87 Ibid.
CHAPTER THREE
HANS LEU THE YOUNGER

Of the numerous artists working in Zürich during the Reformation period, two were of far greater artistic significance than their contemporaries. These two, Hans Leu the Younger and Hans Asper, belonged to the same generation. Between their aims and styles there is such a dichotomy, however, that they and their work might almost serve as paradigms of what was best in both old and new attitudes, and while both tried to adapt their talents to the demands of their audience, neither achieved great fame or financial success. A study of the lives of these two men and an appraisal of their work should, therefore, prove useful in discovering what the citizens of Zürich required of their artists, and from these requirements we may learn much about the influence of Protestant thought on the visual arts.

I

Hans Leu the Younger was born into his craft. His father, also named Hans, was not a native of Zürich, but arrived from Baden in Aargau with his widowed mother in 1488 or 1489.¹ He married a young woman of the city, Anna Frick, and eventually they became the parents of seven children: three sons and four daughters. In 1492, he became a member of the community officially when he purchased citizenship.²

With time he came to hold a respected place in the community, was a member of the artists' guild—the Zunft zur Meisen—and the Confraternity of Saints Luke and Eligius, and was in great demand as a

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painter. We have already become acquainted with his work as an artist through the discussion of late Gothic art in Zürich. It is sufficient at this time, therefore, to remember that he was talented enough to stand as an equal to any of the other artists in his community and that he was considered the city's leading master of landscape. Some altar panels attributed to him, and above all the famous view of the city testify to a more than modest talent. He was, however, a painter in two senses for not only did he paint altar retables, he maintained a successful business painting decorative facades for houses and public building as well.  

From 1496, until his death in 1507, Han Leu's name was mentioned frequently in the account books of both the Großmünster and the Frauenmünster, and he received commissions from the Council as well. The entries in the account books of Church and Council show clearly how diverse were the commissions which a prominent artist/craftsman might receive:

1497— Hans Leu was to be paid 160 Haller for regilding the panel painting with Zürich's "counterfeit" which adorned the martyr's grave.

1498— Leu was commissioned to paint the clockface on the church and his workmen were given a tip (Bibalis) of three pounds for their assistance.

1499— He was commissioned to paint four angels and to make wings for them.

1500— He was paid to take down the painting of the patrons (i.e. Felix and Regula), and to wash and rehang the draperies surrounding it.

1504— He was hired by the Council to provide decorations for a great shooting festival to be celebrated in Zürich. He was also to provide a large city banner and 121 small flags to be given as prizes for expert marksmanship.
In the year of his death he was commissioned to paint a retable (Rächentafel) for the Großmünster.

This was the normal activity of a late medieval painter, and Hans Leu the Elder seems to have been satisfied with it. There is no evidence that he aspired to more than the status of a respectable craftsman and pious son of the Church. He was his son Hans first teacher, and in that role he trained this son in the techniques and values of his craft.

Hans Leu the Younger was born in 1491, the second son of his parents, and is first mentioned in the Großmünster's account books in 1497 as the Malers Knab (the painter's boy), when he received four pounds due his father for work completed. From 1500, the elder Leu began to be referred to as Meister to distinguish him from his son and in 1504, as an adolescent of thirteen, the son began to be called Hans Leu der Jung, the Younger.

Hans Leu's training in his father's workshop was interrupted by the Elder Leu's death in 1507, and shortly thereafter he began his adult life as an artist by setting out as a journeyman for the cities of southern Germany and German Switzerland. He had learned his craft from his father. His art he learned elsewhere. It was during his wander years that he learned to translate his father's combination of late medieval traditionalism and alert interest in landscape into a language more in keeping with the newly developing concept of artist as creator. During these years he came in close contact with the work of Albrecht Dürer, perhaps with Dürer himself. It is certain that he spent time in Nuremberg, and that in 1523, when Dürer had occasion to write to Pro-
vost Felix Frey in Zürich, he sent greetings to Leu, and apparently enclosed a graphic for the young man.\textsuperscript{10} From the evidence of a pen and ink drawing of 1510, initialed by the young Leu, Walter Hugelshofer argued that Leu must have had personal contact with the Nuremberg genius, so great is the stylistic influence.\textsuperscript{11}

In Freiburg in Breisgau Leu worked also with Hans Baldung Grien, for scholars detect the young man's hand in some portions of the landscape in the Schnewlin Altar which Baldung Grien executed for the Freiburg Minster.

Sometime in 1513 or 1514, having completed his "higher education," he returned to Zürich to take over his father's workshop which his mother had managed in his absence. In either 1514 or 1515, he married Verena Ott, the daughter of a wealthy and highly-regarded family, settled into his father's house on the Rennweg for which he paid four pounds annual rent.\textsuperscript{12} His life as citizen, family head, and bread-winner had begun.

It is, of course, impossible to know with what hopes or trepidations he returned to his native city and his father's workshop. Something of the young man's self-conception and aspirations can, however, be gleaned from his choices of masters once he left his father's workshop. His first master, his father, seems to have seen himself first and foremost as an honest craftsman: his works are not signed, and he was unashamed to do what is essentially the work of a cabinet-maker or of a house painter when it was required. Yet there can also be seen in his artistic works the stirrings of a new spirit. These works seem Janus-faced, looking at once back on old ideals nurtured by tradition,
and forwards to a translation of observed reality.

The younger Leu seems to wish for something else. Observe his first independent steps in his vocation. In the year of his father's death, at the age of seventeen or eighteen, he turned his face resolutely toward what he understood to be the future. He moved from the retardataire artistic atmosphere of his home and sought contact with the best masters available to him. Whether he actually was taught by Dürer is perhaps not so important as is he wish to be taught by him, by his sensitivity to that master's work. His susceptibility to the influence of Baldung Grien and the work of Albrecht Altdorfer also suggests a self-knowledge and ambition that puts him outside the range of his neighbor craftsmen and artists. When he returned to Zürich, therefore, knowing the work of Albrecht Dürer, and acquainted with the style of the Danube School, Hans Leu the Younger was conversant with and sensitive to two of the most forward-looking trends in Northern European art.

Dürer, born in 1471, and therefore twenty years older than Leu had been trained like Leu in the tradition of the craftsman. He began his artistic training with his goldsmith father. But he soon moved beyond the training of his youth. He was the first northern artist to leave a record of a conception of himself and his art as something more than the work of a practitioner of a craft.13 He saw himself as a creator and as a reformer.14

In 1486 he was apprenticed to Michael Wohlgemut, and in his wander years he sought the workshop of Martin Schongauer at Colmar. Schongauer, had died shortly before Dürer's arrival and so, he went to
Basel to work with Schongauer's brother between 1492 and 1493.\textsuperscript{15} There he introduced a new graphic style to the Basel area. From these beginnings he continued to create a graphic style which would set the standard for graphic perfection for more than a century.\textsuperscript{16} The famous self-portrait of 1500 points to a new self conception and altered world-view new to Northern European art. As both Charles Cuttler and Erwin Panofsky have pointed out, this view is both medieval and modern for Dürer's self portrait is like a portrait of Christ and is a harbinger of his mature attitude toward art and the artist.\textsuperscript{17} Whereas the medieval artist had piously and submissively revealed what God had created, the Renaissance artist exalted himself to a position formerly held only by God. The artist became a creator and there began to develop a mystical identification of the artist with God: does not the artist give life to previously non-existing form?\textsuperscript{18} Emphasis had shifted from the anonymous craftsman to the creative individual, and an artistic world was developing quite different from that of Hans Leu the Elder, a man whose workshop painted clock faces, washed altar hangings and produced altar retables with equal ease. Hans Leu's son, even before he returned to Zürich, had begun to sign his work with his initials.

Hans Leu's son had also learned a style of depicting nature which fused observation and idealization, a style which he had experienced in the works of the artists of the Danube School. This so-called Danube School is a difficult concept to define. It had no distinct center, but was broadly based with representative artists working all across southern Germany and Austria. Within this broad area there
emerged various styles reflecting their several sources. Yet some attempt at definition has been made, beginning in the nineteenth century. Scholarly consensus now defines the Danube School in this way: the major artists are Albrecht Altdorfer, Wold Huber, and Lucas Cranach, with Dürer as a major influence on the work of these. The life of the "school" is seen to begin in the final years of the fifteenth century and end in 1538 with the death of Albrecht Altdorfer.\textsuperscript{19}

Stylistically the Danube School is characterized by a particular and sensitive approach to man and nature and to man in nature. The works of Danube School artists posit an integral relationship between man and nature—-one in which nature is dominant, yet one in which nature responds to the emotions and experiences of man.\textsuperscript{20} It was an art which, because of its stress on calligraphic line and delicacy of expression, spoke most clearly and urgently to a refined audience of sophisticated connoisseurs. It found its patronage among the humanists and aristocrats of the German-speaking world. The Aristocrats were the major patrons of the Danube School. Altdorfer worked for Emperor Maxmilian I, Huber, for the Bishop Passau, Hirschvogel (another artist of the group) for Frederick I.\textsuperscript{21}

II

Leu returned to Zürich with the desire and perhaps the ability to introduce the artistic innovations which he had learned in his wander years. His connections with his wife's prosperous conciliar family certainly brought him commissions, and it is known that shortly after
his marriage the Ott family commissioned him to paint a retable for the Fraumünster. His first dated paintings appear in 1515, and show the direction his work would take, betraying a sense of space and a feeling for landscape entirely new to Zürich.

That same year, 1515, however, he experienced an interruption in his career. Since 1494 the Swiss had been involved in the struggle between France, Spain, and the House of Habsburg for territory in Italy. This involvement began when they agreed to enter the service of Charles VIII of France as mercenaries, but was to some degree the result of the development of a formidable soldiery in the Confederacy. The Swiss had, in the course of their long struggle with Austria, developed the principle of the universal duty to bear arms—creating an infantry which was to be constantly prepared to wage war. Until the mid-fifteenth century, however, they confined their military activities to the boundaries of the Holy Roman Empire. In 1444, these Swiss soldiers came to the attention of the French when Charles VII, in alliance with Austria, sent the Dauphin against them in battle. The Dauphin, soon to become Louis XI, was greatly impressed with the skill and hardiness of his Swiss adversaries and determined to win them to his service. The Swiss, seeing an advantage in having a powerful ally against Austria, welcomed Louis' interest. In 1474, therefore, they signed the first mercenary alliance with France, an alliance which would hold good throughout Louis' reign. This alliance set the pattern for future mercenary agreements: the Swiss contracted to grant recruiting facilities and to offer aid in time of need, while the French agreed to provide annual payments or pensions.
The alliance of the Confederates and France against Charles the Bold, the Duke of Burgundy earned the Swiss a reputation as the best infantrymen in Europe. 26 This reputation, well-deserved as it was—did not extend to the field of political skills, for the Swiss were, as Oechsli observed, "... incapable of the consistent pursuit of political aims beyond the immediate demands of the moment." 27

As a result of their alliance with France, the Confederates became involved in the brutal and confused Valois-Habsburg struggle in Italy. When, in 1494, they began to participate in Charles VIII's campaign for the conquest of Naples, they began participation in a struggle that would continue for over twenty years, in which the mercenaries were alternately or simultaneously courted by not only the French, but the Habsburgs and the Papacy as well. 28

The participation in the Italian struggle was to have great impact on the economy and social life of the Swiss. Much of Switzerland in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was rural and poor, and the small mountainous country suffered from a surplus population. 29 Thus the possibility of acquiring grain and luxury items in return for men was greatly tempting to many levels of the population, from ordinary pikeman to government officials. 30 Unfortunately such a temptation was corrupting, for it was the practice of foreign powers to give pensions not only to the soldiers, but to their recruiters as well. This practice affected and eventually corrupted all office holders at every level, for all saw the profits to be gained from "selling" their fellow citizens. 31

It was not alone the practice of securing pensions which would
prove so corrupting and destructive to traditional Swiss life. Mercenary service led to a decline in morality and an increase in violent crime, for the cruelty of the Italian campaigns hardened the veterans, and when they returned home they often were often without training or occupations suitable for civilian life. But they did have money in their pockets when they came home, and therefore, spent their days drinking in taverns, relieving their despair and boredom by quarreling or fighting. Those with fewer resources turned to crime.

Thus the practice of providing mercenaries to the powers of Europe became as much a curse as a blessing, and the increase in lack of respect for authority and in violence was viewed with alarm by authorities. From time to time both local and Confederal governments issued ordinances against the acceptance of mercenary pensions, but neither Council not Diet was strong enough to enforce the prohibitions and the practice continued.

In 1515, the Swiss forces were humbled by a crushing and humiliating defeat. On January 1, 1515, Louis XIII died, leaving Francis I as an heir. The following month Cardinal Schinner, that obdurate enemy of France and architect of Swiss military agreements, arranged a new alliance between the Emperor, Spain, Milan, and the Swiss. When at the end of June, Francis left with his armies to campaign in Italy, these allies were called upon to come to the aid of Milan. The leader of the Swiss forces was the Burgermeister, Max Röist. Among the Swiss forces was a large contingent of men from Zürich. Hans Leu, with other members of his guild, was among them. With them he participated in the raw and brutal life of the mercenary soldier, and with them, on
September 14, 1515, he participated in the bloody defeat of the Swiss at the Battle of Marignano--a battle which Oechsli called the greatest defeat in Swiss history. 36

What Leu saw of battle can only be imagined. What he saw of Italian art cannot be determined. It is noteworthy, however, that he shared with his compatriot artists Urs Graf and Niklaus Manuel Deutsch a common experience: these Swiss painters had their first-hand experience of the Italian Renaissance not as artists but as soldiers, 37 and whatever Leu may have seen of Italian art, he seems to have remained stylistically untouched by it. 38 He may, however, have been inspired, for a significant fact emerges from a scrutiny of his history: the two years immediately following his return from Italy were the most productive of his life. 39 If by 1515 he had begun to develop his mature style, in the years between 1516 and 1519 he had fully developed it. Moreover, he was prolific. During those years he seemed well on the way to a productive and perhaps lucrative career.

It appears, however, that this was not to be. Some time before 1519, his wife died, leaving him with small children, and perhaps severing his close ties with former patrons. 40 That same year there arose a new possibility of entering mercenary service. Ulrich, Duke of Württemberg, had become involved in the French campaign against the Swabian League and needed to recruit men. 41 For this cause he sent his recruiter to seek soldiers among the men of Zürich. In this instance the Council responded with a strong prohibition against any citizens' acceptance of the Duke's pension. 42 Nevertheless several young men, including Leu, joined the Duke's army. This greatly angered the Council,
for the service of Swiss mercenaries in French cause involved a larger issue than the military activities of some private citizens. In 1519—the same year the Duke's recruiters came to Zürich—an Austro-Spanish embassy had arrived in Zürich hoping to gain Swiss support in the Imperial election. The Swiss, fearing the increasing power of the French, and wishing therefore, to obstruct Francis I's bid for the Imperial throne, agreed to support the Habsburg cause. Thus it was imperative that any Swiss serving in the Duke of Würtemberg's army be called home.\(^{43}\)

Those called home to Zürich were answerable for their disobedience in entering the Duke's service, and were called before the magistrates. Hans Leu was among these. In a letter usually dated 1520, he petitioned the council for understanding of his situation:

> August, firm farsighted, wise and gracious Lords: As I have now been in foreign situation against the bidding of my Lords by the will of the Duke of Würtemberg, I beg that my gracious Lords will see fit graciously to pardon me. For I have never acted against my Lords: nor have I ever come before the law court or the magistrates for any misdeed. Further, also, I ask that you remember and bear in mind that I can no longer support myself with my craft (\textit{Handtwerck}).  

The Council ordered that he pay a fine of one pound.\(^{45}\)

This seems to mark a turning point in his affairs. As we have seen, the years immediately preceding his entrance into mercenary service had been productive and fruitful. Yet he would excuse his actions by stating that he could not support himself with his craft (\textit{Handtwerck}). Moreover, he could write to the magistrates that he had never appeared in a law court. After 1520, he could no longer make such a claim. Events occurred which may have alleviated his financial distress. In
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1521, Ratsherr Hermann Ott, Leu's former father-in-law, died. The children of Verena and Hans Leu were his heirs. That same year Leu petitioned the Council for trusteeship of his children's inheritance, and in the same period (between 1521 and 1524) he remarried. His second wife, Regula Haldenstein, was a woman of independent income, a fact which would (as will be seen later) have some bearing on Leu's life-style and standing in the community. Leu was not, therefore, without means in the years following his return from mercenary service. Yet still he remained dissatisfied.

By 1525 his name had become linked with a group of young men who were known to be opponents of Zwingli's teaching. This group of drinking companions included Leu's brother-in-law, Heinrich Wyssenbach, one Heinrich Wolff, and a person who seems at this time to have had great influence on the artist: his brother Felix. This young man had quite a checkered career. Ordained a priest and given the care of the Holy Ghost Chapel of St. Nicholas Church in Freiburg in Uechtland, he seems to have favored the rather disreputable company of a local artists' circle. In the Freiburg Council records of March 13, 1521, it recorded that Felix Low of Zürich had been given the chapel and altar of the Holy Ghost on the condition that he conduct himself in an honorable and priestly fashion. Should he fail to do this, it was to be the prerogative of the Council to set him aside. Paul Ganz posited that these provisions on the part of the Council may indicate that Felix' reputation was not particularly good. But he adds that the fact that he was from Zürich may have contributed to their doubts: they may have feared that he leaned toward Reformed teaching.
In 1524 he was indeed removed from office for the Zürich Council sent an official letter to Freiburg asking that he be reinstated. The reply of the Freiburg Council leaves no doubt as to his standing in that city: Master Felix Löw, priest and cantor, stood in disgrace and had been obliged to leave their city and territory and might not return. He was, stated the Council, so far tainted with Lutheran teaching (in dem luterschen Handell so vryt geubt) that they could no longer bear his presence (in unser statt noch land Kheins wege welien lyden).

He, therefore, remained in Zürich where he seems to have been something of a malcontent. What influence he had on his brother Hans cannot be known. It is, however, significant that from 1525 to 1527 both brothers' names appear several times in the Council records. The interaction between the brothers and the Council followed a rather unhappy course: the young man who in 1520 could claim never to have been at odds with the authorities now had to defend himself against several charges of petty civil disturbances. Accusations against him appeared first in August 1525, when an investigation of certain "wrongs" (unfuor) done Zwingli was undertaken by the Council. One of these insults seems to have taken place in a tavern, the Besen. "Unchristian words" were uttered against the pastors, Zwingli having been selected for especial opprobrium. Tempers being heated, and too much beer having been drunk, a fight occurred in which objects were thrown. One young woman who testified concerning the incident stated that she had seen two of the men involved, but did not recognize either. She did, however, suspect Hans Leu, for she had seen him standing in front of
the custodian's house with one of the guilty men. This was slender evidence against Leu and nothing was proved against him. The significance of the woman's testimony lies, accordingly, not in any act which he may have committed. The testimony belongs to the realm of gossip and supposition. The supposition is, however, significant. Leu was regarded by at least one of his neighbors as a man dissatisfied with the present regime and with Zwingli's teaching.

If this were the only evidence of such dissatisfaction, little could be said about Leu's actual opinions or feelings. In October, 1526, however, a rather more serious matter came before the Council. In the records for 22 September 1526 this entry appears:

Burgermeister Walder, Seckelmeister Werdmüller, Masters Jaeckli, Konrad Gull and Schneeburger shall, as a result of M. Ulrich Zwingli's recent sermon investigate the question of who in the city had received pensions or gifts from foreign princes and lords and shall report their finding to the Council.

The result of this investigation was the reopening of the mercenary trials.

On the 11th of October, Zwingli himself appeared before the Council to make a statement on the mercenary question. He stated that he had preached on this matter because he had observed that all those who were suspected of receiving pensions were the very same men who professed themselves against evangelical teaching. Moreover, pensions were accepted in Zürich against the faith and prohibition of the Council.

On the 12th of October the trials began. Hans Leu was among those called to defend himself. On the 23rd of October he was questioned about his dissident opinions. He was first asked what objections he
had to Zwingli: the Council had received information that he had complained that Zwingli's regime was too harsh for him. Unfortunately, his reply to this question is not reported. It seemed, however, to satisfy the magistrates, for they proceeded to the next accusation, that of receiving a pension from a foreign authority. He was required to explain his sumptuous life-style and the large amount of money he was seen to have at his disposal. That such a question should arise seems to indicate that he was not regarded as being successful in his work, for was his artistic career known to be lucrative, his neighbors would not have been surprised at his life-style. His reply is of interest. He had, he reported, accepted no pension. He was able to account for his expenditures by explaining that his second wife had allowed him to take one hundred gulden from her own property (Hauptgut). Moreover, the money which he was seen to possess came from a "gult-brief" which his brother-in-law had cashed and from which Leu had been given 14 gulden and "some crowns." That he was forced to do this indicated the extremity of his situation for the Hauptgut was to remain intact within the family except for cases of extreme need. That Leu took from this reserve suggests that he must have been in dire financial straits.

The magistrates accepted this answer and set the artist free on the 31st of October after his brother Jakob, his brother-in-law Hartmann Klauser, his nephew Hans Füssli, and his mother paid his bond of 200 gulden.

The dating of the next incident is problematic: Emil Egli includes it in the records for 1527, but allows the possibility that the proper
date is 1526. This second possibility seems more in accordance with other details of Leu's life, but is included for discussion here in order to be faithful to Egli's dating. On February 3, 1526 or 1527, Hans and his brother Felix were called before the magistrates to answer for an unpleasant incident which had occurred outside Zwingli's house. The previous Sunday around ten o'clock shortly after the watch had cried the hour, three men were seen running up the Kirchen- gasse. One of them, brother Felix, stood at the corner and began himself to cry the hour. One witness reported that he spoke then to Felix, saying that he shouldn't yell, that the watch had already cried the hour. Felix (der Pfaff Löw) insolently replied that he wanted to yell and would yell, and that he wanted one time to accompany the watch down the street. Then Hans entered the argument, belligerent now, saying: "You can't pull the wool over our eyes (ir zwingent uns dannocht nit in ein bockshorn)." The sense of the incident seems to lie in the brothers' wish to make a disturbance near the pastor's house. Another witness reported that four days earlier a group of rabble had stood in front of the Schenkhof, among them Hans Leu. These men had then locked or barricaded the area and spoken insultingly when questioned about their activities.

The results of this hearing are not reported, but what emerges clearly is the sort of activity in which the Leu brothers were involved. There are not the acts of men motivated by an all-consuming passion. They are, rather, the acts of discontented men, out-of-step with the society in which they find themselves. The source of Felix' discontent can only be surmised. Hans' motivation, however, deserves very close
scrutiny.

A review of the events between 1519 and 1527 helps explain the sources of his unhappiness and dis-ease. In the three years previous to 1519, he had reached what was to be the artistic high-point of his life. During those three years he achieved his mature style, creating a large portion of his whole oeuvre. Moreover, he had begun to experiment with Renaissance themes and motifs. He belonged to a respected painter's family, had inherited his father's workshop, joined his father's guild, had married into a prominent family and become the father of a family. He was in the prime of his life, apparently at the peak of his artistic powers. Yet in 1520 he would petition the magistrates, stating that he could not support himself by the practice of his craft. Within a few years he would find himself called before the magistrates at least three times, and would gain a reputation among his neighbors as a member of a group of rowdies and malcontents.

Testimony at Leu's hearing after 1520 indicates that Zwingli and Zwingli's teaching had become a focus for his discontent. Certainly as an artist he would have had reason after 1524 to complain against Zwingli's successful preaching against religious art in the churches and it is true that his anti-Zwinglian outbursts begin in 1525. The removal of images does not, however, explain Leu's self-avowed financial difficulties in 1519. Although Zwingli had come to Zürich at the end of 1518, and although he began preaching against the cult of saints in 1519, there is no evidence that his teaching created difficulties for local artists at that time. Moreover, the private acts of iconoclasm which would lead to the Second Disputation did not begin until
1522, and Zwingli did not launch a full-scale attack on the misuse of religious art until the summer of 1523. The official action of the Council did not occur until the following summer. Thus Leu's lack of financial success in 1519 cannot be related to Zwingli's position on religious art, for at that time Zwingli had neither fully articulated his position nor implemented his goals.

Sometime between 1519 and 1525 however, Hans Leu seems to have fixed on Zwingli and the new regime as an outlet for his frustration. In part he must have been correct in believing that Zwingli's teaching had cost him commissions. There is no indication that he blamed Zwingli for his entrance into mercenary service in 1519. The question thus remains: how was it that an able, talented, prolific young artist, heir to a flourishing workshop, could be within six years unable to support himself by his chosen craft? Perhaps the answer to this question can be discovered through an investigation of the artist's work and of the relationship of that work to the cultural and social life of Zürich.

III

As has been previously stated, the years immediately following his return to Zürich seem to have been extremely fruitful for him. Even an incomplete list of his works for this period shows how rich and varied was his output. Drawings and designs for stained glass and woodcuts comprise the major portion of his work. This type of work must have constituted a useful laboratory in which he could develop
his style: a small format which could be quickly executed, inexpensive to produce, it offered the artist a rich opportunity to experiment with what he had learned abroad. Especially this small graphic format allowed him to develop fully his calligraphic talents. Most of his drawings, designs and wood cuts from this period were of a religious nature. Single figure drawings of the saints and scenes of the Holy Family dominate at this time. A particularly beautiful example of his drawing from this period is a pen and brush Pieta now in the Fogg Museum, Harvard University. Initialed and dated, the work was executed in 1519, the year of acceptance of a mercenary's pension. It shows Leu working confidently in the Renaissance style. The two monumental figures are fully in command of the space they inhabit. The foreshortened body of the dead Christ dominates the foreground, while the figure of the grieving Virgin stands like a column behind him. The draperies of the Virgin are handled surely, the composition is strong, and while the work betrays Leu's difficulties with figure drawing (the right foot of Christ, for example, is not quite correct), the overall effect is powerful. He had used his Wander Years well.

It is in his rendering of landscape however that his true artistic vocation is expressed. This can be seen very clearly in two paintings now in the Oeffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel. The first, St. Jerome in the Wilderness, is dated 1515. The other, Orpheus and the Beasts, dated 1519, is unusual in Leu's oeuvre because it deals with a theme drawn from classical mythology. Thus one was executed shortly after his return to Zürich, the other in the fateful year when his financial difficulties seem to have become the most pressing. The St. Jerome
follows closely models by artists of the Danube School. St. Jerome kneels in prayer before a crucifix with his faithful lion crouching beside him. The chief beauty of the work is the landscape. Rugged pine trees shelter the saint, and in the distance mountains rise, shutting him off from the world and behind him stands the ruins of a rustic chapel. The rendering of atmosphere is particularly effective, suggesting vast distance. It is clear that Leu had two sources for his work: one, the models of the great Northern artists with whose work he had come in contact; the other, observation of the mountainous landscapes of his homeland. A third is more difficult to define. There is a sensitive, almost romantic approach to the rendering of the landscape, for Leu's depicted nature is both gentle and sublime. It is not, however, tamed. The trees are gnarled and the chapel is slowly being enveloped by vegetation. In this attitude Leu is truly in tune with that of the Masters of the Danube School. In his rendering of the human figure, however, he is less successful. In the works of a great master such as Altdorfer there is a union of man and nature, a reciprocity between them. This reciprocity is a powerful means for evoking a whole world of thought and emotion: man and nature both as God's creation, nature reflecting and expressing man's suffering or ecstasy, a lost Eden in which man and nature are obedient to Divine will.

In the St. Jerome, Leu was not artist enough to convey this idea fully. His human figures are never as surely and truly rendered as is his landscape. In his Orpheus, however, he comes closer to the standards set by the great masters. This is truly a strange work, unlike any other executed by him. First, there is the selection of the theme.
Not to Scripture, not to the *Golden Legend* does he turn, but to myth. Yet the theme is a good choice for an artist wishing to express a relationship between man and nature for Orpheus was gifted with the power to calm men, beasts, even the gods themselves with his music and Leu chose to depict Orpheus in a solitary moment, surrounded by animals of the forest who listen, hypnotized by his lute. The significance however of the work lies in Leu's success in unifying all aspects of natural life.

As Georg Schmidt observed, man and animals are the same color as the earth, as if all were of the same substance. The trees themselves seem to sway in response to Orpheus' playing. There is an elusive quality about this work, something dream-like; one is reminded of frescoes found on the walls in Pompeii or Herculaneum.

Although the work is not an unqualified success, one senses in it an authentic and original vision. Certainly it is a vision wholly unlike that of known works found in Zürich at this time. Where was the audience for such a work? Leu chose from the artistic models available to him a vision which spoke to an erudite few. In this vision nature is neither a harsh master nor a force to be mastered. Nor is it a mere background for urban life and against which urban life is walled. Rather, nature and man join to form one entity; man himself is a piece of nature. Where in Zürich was the patronage for such a vision? Where among his fellow citizens was he to find his audience for an art which spoke most clearly to the refined taste of the connoisseur? We have observed the cultural world of pre-Reformation Zürich. It has been demonstrated that the taste of that portion of the citizenry which com-
missioned works of art tended toward the formulaic, the matter of fact. If the extant works of art provide evidence, there was an insistent if not fully articulated demand for an art which portrays life as it was lived in the here and now. Judging from the works which survived the removal of images the population preferred works which showed them their own environment rendered in minute detail. The citizens were craftsmen, merchants, even, when the occasion demanded, soldiers. They were not aristocratic or learned connoisseurs. Nor were they yet well-acquainted with the artistic innovations being carried out elsewhere in Europe. They were, however, Hans Leu's viewers and potential patrons.

Before the Reformation Zürich's artistic patrons commissioned religious works in which the artist-craftsmen had attempted to unite the sacred and profane by setting icon-like figures in observed landscape. Leu's own father had created such works. Leu himself painted or drew many religious images in which holy figures are presented against an Alpine landscape. Many of these images belong to a genre which had great importance in late Medieval Europe: the Andachtsbild, a genre that had great appeal, for it offered the worshipper a focus for meditation and devotion. Essentially these Andachtsbilder were sculpted or painted figures of saints, usually bearing a symbol of martyrdom, or they were figures of the suffering Christ or of his grieving mother. With the advent of printing this genre reached a new audience, for artists began to produce woodcut votive pictures. Mass produced, cheaply made and cheaply bought, these woodcuts came to adorn the household shrines of the common people. Although they were cheap-
ly reproduced, and although they were not created for use in the churches, they still served a devotional function, still received the adoration of the uneducated. Thus, in so far as they served as "helpers," they fell within Zwingli's definition of "Götzen," if only in a modest way. 78

Many of Leu's drawings and woodcuts belong, therefore, to this category of "Götzen." The Pieta discussed above, for example, can be considered a devotional picture, as can any one of a series of drawings of saints done by Leu in the years immediately following his return to Zürich in 1515. In adopting this form of artistic endeavor he was much like the artists of his youth. The Master of the Carnation, the Master of the Violet, his own father had created panel paintings in which the holy figures presented themselves for the devotion of the beholder. These figures were often placed in familiar landscape, as if the saints were somehow present in the same world which the viewer inhabited.

IV

Leu was in many ways the true heir of his father. He used the same late medieval themes employed by the Elder craftsman. Certainly the overwhelming majority of the younger Leu's work was religious in theme and content. He, like the Elder Leu, lavished great care on the rendering of natural settings. He, like his father, had difficulty—at least in the early works—in successfully integrating figure and setting. Thus in some ways his approach to his art was medieval. 79
Yet he introduced a new element to the art of Zürich. What is new is Leu's approach to nature, and the uses to which he put it. For his father and his contemporaries, nature was a background, employed for religious purposes. Closely observed nature, the world in which he and his neighbors lived, served as a stage on which the holy figures dear to late medieval Christianity played their roles. Leu's use of nature—landscape—is quite different. It is a fanciful, sentimental view of nature. Leu's landscape is the landscape of dream. In his wander years he had learned the expressive uses of landscape. It is true that he, like the Danube School artists, observed and painted Alpine scenery with which they were familiar. (Any contemporary viewer familiar with Alpine vegetation will be able to recognize and name the kinds of trees and plants depicted.) But these trees and plants are not observed and rendered with the eye of the scientist. Rather, they are depicted in such a manner as to evoke or convey emotion. For example, a favorite tree of the Danube School painters, as well as of Leu, was the larch. This is a tree common in alpine forests. More significantly, however, it is a tree whose feathery, drooping branches can be rendered so as to appear to weep, or bend and caressingly protect human figures. Both Cranach and Altdorfer made ample use of this quality. For example, in Cranach's *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (1504), the Holy Family rest under such a larch tree which seems to stand guard over them. In Altdorfer's *St. Jerome*, the drooping branches of the trees seem to weep for lost innocence. It is this empathetic quality with which Leu time and time again embued his nature.80

More than just a new attitude toward nature, Leu brought with him
to Zürich a new sense of the human figure. This he must have learned from Dürer and from Baldung Grien, for it is quite unlike anything he could have learned in his father's workshop. It is, however, quite like Dürer's rendering of the human figure. Compare the Pieta of Leu with any similar work of Dürer's. To this new understanding of the human figure, with monumental presence, Leu added a third innovation to his catalogue: Renaissance ornamentation. In many of his graphics he employed ruined pillars, scrolls, arches, putti, and other such devices.

Around the time he returned to Zürich, Leu began to initial and date his works. This indicates a new sense of his vocation and of his craft. As a child and a youth he had been trained by a father whose approach to his work was that of a craftsman, an approach described by Albrecht Dürer in this way: "Until now, many talented boys in Germany were raised as painters, instructed without any reason and merely by daily habit."

In his early adult years, however, he came in contact with the new concept of the artist introduced in Northern Europe by Albrecht Dürer. This concept had two major components: first, an intensely self-conscious emphasis on the artist as creator, and second, a rational approach to art. In short, the artist was to take his place beside the humanist. Leu participated with other Swiss artists of his generation in the reception of these ideas, and for him as for his contemporaries, contact with these ideas introduced a whole vision of the world and of his place in it.

The works which he initialed and dated began to employ the artis-
tic vocabulary of humanism, a vocabulary which allowed the artist to
express a new human ideal based on an ideal of spiritual freedom and
the autonomy of personality. Moreover, they were executed in a style
which courted the fastidious appreciation of an audience accustomed to
a view of nature that may be called Romantic. In theme and content,
however, these same works were meant for a public which required that
a religious work provide a vehicle for meditation and comfort.

When Leu returned to Zürich he returned speaking an artistic
language not yet understood by his fellow citizens. This fact is im-
portant for understanding his life and career. A young man, conscious
of the new role of artist, seeking an audience of knowledgeable sophis-
ticated viewers was thwarted in his desire to translate his experience
of the new style to his father's workshop and community. Finding him-
self lacking with sufficient commissions to sustain himself and his
family, he entered the service of a foreign ruler and found himself
for the first time before a conciliar tribunal. Only after the offic-
ial removal of images did Leu find a focus for his professional dis-
satisfaction in the person of Huldreich Zwingli. In this he was prob-
ably strongly influenced by his brother who had recently returned to
the city. It is significant that his "crimes" are the petty offenses
of a man who feels himself powerless to comprehend or control his life
fully.

His offenses were not serious, they consisted for the most part
of being in the wrong place at the wrong time, perhaps while intoxicat-
ed, of indiscrete and angry grumbling against the authorities. The gen-
eral sense is one of dissatisfaction and dis-ease, of inarticulate misery.
After the second mercenary trial, however, he seems to have found a way to be reconciled with the authorities. No more proceedings are recorded against him. The same year as the trial and again in 1527, he was doing work commissioned by the Council. How or why this reconciliation occurred is uncertain. Some attempt at explanation can, however, be made. First, his crimes or misdemeanors were not so great as to put him beyond the boundaries of good citizenship, nor to earn him a reputation as a threat to the commonweal. Further, few of the accusations against him were actually proved: the worst seems to have been that he frequented the company of men known to grumble against Zwingli’s regime. Second, he was a talented artist and craftsman, probably the most talented artist living in Zürich at that time. Third, the period following the Council’s decision on ecclesiastical art saw the beginning of a new trend in artistic patronage in the city. Once the Church and those purchasing works for the Church had been the primary patrons of the arts. Now a new source of support for artistic works had to be found, or the visual arts abandoned altogether. In Zürich, the state, that is to say, the Council would become one of the primary patrons. This trend could not have developed overnight, for before patronage must come understanding and articulation of new artistic needs. Nevertheless, the trend must have begun in Leu’s brief remaining years. Finally, there is evidence that he had begun to find a way to reconcile himself artistically to Zwingli’s teaching on art. One design for a stained glass window, executed in 1526, will serve to demonstrate this.
The drawing is of a religious theme. Leu— or his patron— chose his subject from the Book of Genesis, the story of Lot and his Daughters. It is useful to compare this with a pre-1524 work.

In 1516 he had designed a stained-glass window depicting St. James and St. Jodokus as pilgrims. Kneeling at their feet are the donors, man and wife. A window made from this drawing can be seen today in the cloister of the monastery at Wettinger. The saints are framed by ornamented pilasters, a Renaissance innovation, but above these fly quite medieval angels blowing trumpets.

This work is in subject matter, in source of patronage, and in intended use a nearly perfect example for the study of late medieval religious art. The two saints are presented with their attributes as objects of meditation and devotion. They do not act, they merely offer themselves to the viewer as holy men, as icons. The window was commissioned, presumably, by the man and wife depicted. They kneel, each with the heraldry of his or her family, much smaller in scale than the figures of the saints. The implication is that they remain forever at their pious devotions, impelled by the same piety which led them to commission the window. They commissioned and donated the window then that their piety might have a concrete manifestation.

Let us, now, compare, this work with Leu's drawing of Lot and his daughters. In this 1526 drawing, Leu created not an object of devotion nor a work intended for pious donation. He has drawn a narrative, a story. Lot's daughters are seen plying him with wine, while in the background their mother, turned to a pillar of salt, stands before the
burning cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The scene is not meant to lead
to prayer or devotion. Rather, it depicts an event described in the
Bible, and event which Leu and his viewers believed actually occurred.
It stands as a reminder of God's intervention in men's affairs, perhaps
of God's wrath. It is not, except as a reminder, a source of comfort
or aid. Moreover, in this work there are no indications of the forms
of late medieval piety which are evident in the earlier work: no don-
ors kneel before the figures of Lot and his daughters.

The drawing was, like the drawing of the saints, intended as a
design for a stained glass window. Zwingli accepted stained glass
windows, even those placed in churches, as innocent and devoid of the
seductive power of Götzen.93 Thus in both form and content the work is
in accordance with Zwingli's teaching on art. It relates a biblical
(historical) event, but threatens no danger to the viewer. It is not
an idol, it is not an image, it is a likeness of something visible:
it is Geschichteswyss.94

How Leu's career would have proceeded cannot be known, for his
life ended in 1531. It is, however, significant that the last profes-
sional view of him is one in which he appears successful and reconcil-
ed to his community. From the Ratsprotokoll written by the Stadt-
schreiber on the fourth of October, 1531, from Aarau comes this last
record of Leu's professional activity. The Stadtschreiber was in Aarau
with other emissaries from Zürich attempting to effect an agreement
among the Swiss Protestant cities.95 Leu was in the city also, and
seems to have spent time with his fellow citizens.96 The Stadtschreib-
er and his wife had received an invitation from the emissaries from
Strasbourg and Constance to view the panorama from the Gysellflu. The 
Stadtschreiber relates that the group picnicked on the summit (also doben 
gessen und us iren becheren getrungken). He continues: and also with 
us was the painter Master Hans Leu who had painted the clock on our 
tower (so uns unser zit gemalet). While the group was enjoying the 
view from the peak, Leu was occupied, for the Stadtschreiber added: 
Leu also painted the panorama around them (die region gemalet). It 
is pleasant to think that in this last verified description of his work 
we see him doing that thing which and in which he excelled: he was 
painting landscape. Soon he would be dead.

As the Reformation spread in Switzerland, the Confederacy became 
divided into two camps. In 1529, the five Catholic cantons, Lucerne, 
Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, and Zug united with Fribourg and the Valais 
to form a Catholic League, while the Reformed cities of Zürich, Bern, 
St. Gall, Mühlhausen, and Bienne entered into a separate alliance, 
the "League of Christian Citizens." The Catholic cantons sought to 
ally themselves with Catholic powers outside Switzerland, entering into 
agreement with Emperor Charles V.

As Reformed teaching advanced in Switzerland the Protestant alli-
ance gained new members also: in 1530 Schaffhausen and Glarus entered, 
and in April, 1531, the men of Toggenburg, Thurgau, and Rheintal join-
ed Zürich and Glarus in a league to defend the Protestant faith.
Zwingli had long urged that the Protestants take the offensive, and 
when tensions were high because of persecution of Protestants within 
the Catholic states, Bern suggested a blockade of supplied to these can-
tons. This angered the Catholics and they appealed to their allies,
the Austrians and to the Emperor, and to the Pope as well. Their pleas were answered quickly in the shape of arms and supplies, and on October 11, 1531 the Five States with an army of eight thousand men advanced from Zug on Kappel where Zürich maintained a small garrison. 102

This surprise attack was devastating for Zürich. Over five hundred of Zürich's men were killed, among them Huldreich Zwingli whose body was quartered and burnt by the victorious Catholics. 103 The Protestant forces came quickly now to the aid of Zürich, assembling a large force. 104 The Catholics aided by Italian soldiers sent by the Pope set up their camp at the foot of the Zugerberg, ready to do battle. 105 On October 24, 1531, at 2:00 a.m. a battle between these two forces was joined. There, among the defenders of Zürich and the Protestant cause, Hans Leu fell in battle. 106

VI

It is difficult to assess Hans Leu's place in the cultural history of his city. If, after the removal of images in 1524, Zürich indeed stood before "an artistic void," might not have Leu have been an artist to help fill it? Certainly what was needed was an artistic vision which would respond to the needs of the populace while adhering to Reformed teaching on religious art. Yet he was not to be the artist who would speak for the new religious regime, or for Reformed religious thought, for he was too much a transitional figure. He was linked too intimately to his medieval early training and thus he never fully grasped or understood the humanistic impulses underlying the Renaissance
approach to the depicted human figure. His style was neither completely based on empirical observation nor on a rational or mathematical approach to his subjects. His greatest achievements are works in which knowledge gained by observation of the world around him is filtered through his own romantic sensibilities.

Even had he succeeded in bringing the High Renaissance style to Zürich, it remains questionable whether such a style would have been suitable for the religious climate of the community. In *Six Subjects of Reformation Art: A Preface to Rembrandt*, William H. Halewood makes the observation that High Renaissance art depicts a golden world peopled by monumental figures with smooth generalized features, disciplined by a symmetrically structured composition. The style is a humanistic style: "It is not exaggeration to say that the only formal vocabulary available to Renaissance artists— and hence the only message— was a humanist one."\(^{107}\) If the Reformation with its insistence on man's powerlessness to effect his own salvation, on salvation through grace alone, came in conflict with humanistic ideas, then the artist, having only the artistic vocabulary of humanism, was faced with a very great dilemma.

For these reasons Hans Leu was not the appropriate artistic spokesman for the Reformation in Zürich. Such a spokesman or spokesmen would have to be sought elsewhere.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE


2 Ibid., p. 156.


4 Ganz, p. 161.

5 Ibid., p. 159.

6 Walter Hugelshofer, p. 46.


8 Ganz, p. 168.

9 Hugelshofer, p. 47.

10 Ibid., p. 142.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Charles Cuttler, p. 231.


15 Cuttler, p. 322. Perhaps it is in works printed in Basel that Leu first became acquainted with Dürer's innovations.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.


20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., p. 11.

22 Hugelshofer, p. 50.

23 Wüthrich, p. 9.

24 Oechsl, p. 28.


26 Ibid.

27 Oechsl, p. 6.

28 Walton, p. 30.

29 Ibid., p. 31.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Dändliker, II:432.

33 Oechsl, p. 23. Even among the patricians corrupting influences could be felt. In Zürich sons of the most prominent families (Güldi, Escher, Grebel, Röist) became involved in drunken brawls and acts of petty vandalism.

34 Ibid., p. 50.

35 Hugelshofer, p. 50.

36 Oechsl, p. 56.
Ibid. Leu is known to have had three children by his first wife: Jakob, Beat, and Elisabeth. How many other children he had is not known. Sources indicate that he had "several" daughters.
Ibid., doc. 1042.

Ibid., doc. 1050.

Ibid.


Egli, doc. 1050.

Ibid., doc. 1122.

Ibid.

Hugelshofer, p. 50.

Ibid.

Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 98.

Garside, p. 94.

Ibid., p. 99.

Ibid., p. 159.

Wütrich, p. 9. Most of his extant works are graphics, of which about thirty are in existence.

The works of Albrecht Altdorfer are good examples.


Themes drawn from classical mythology were certainly the staples of Renaissance art, but new to the art of Zürich at this time.

Schmid, p. 35.

I personally am reminded of the mood of the works of such Ital-
ian artists as Giorgione or Piero di Cosimo.

76 Schmid, p. 34.

77 Panofsky, pp. 3–4.

78 Zwingli, "Compar." Zwingli's definition of "Götzen" is fully discussed in Chapter Two.

79 Walter Hugelshofer for example consistently writes of him as an artist still working in the medieval or late Gothic tradition.

80 I am reminded of his drawing of St. Jerome of 1518, or of his St. George and the Dragon of 1516.

81 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 98.

82 Ibid.

83 quoted in Benesch, p. 13, from the Introduction of the Mensuration of the Compass and the Triangle, dedicated to Willibald Pirckheimer.

84 Benesch, p. 121; Cuttler, p. 323.

85 DeBrunner, p. 10. This transition occurs between 1510 and 1520.

86 Note, however, that he was influenced by Northern artists, not Italian ones.

87 Benesch, p. 57.

88 Hugelshofer, p. 55.

89 Wütrich, p. 10.

90 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 98.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid., p. 99.
94 Garside, p. 150.
95 Ganz, p. 173.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
100 Oechsl, p. 112.
101 Ibid., p. 118.
102 Ibid., p. 120.
103 Potter, p. 413.
104 Oechsl, p. 121.
105 Ibid., p. 122.
106 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 98.
CHAPTER FOUR
HANS ASPER

The life of Hans Asper, like that of Hans Leu, presents an interesting study in failure, for neither man was able to support himself successfully as an artist in Reformation Zürich. The lives of the two men can be compared usefully in order to determine the cultural and religious climate of Zürich in the Reformation years. Leu, as we have seen, was in financial difficulty before the iconoclasm began because his fanciful delicate style with its Düreresque undertones seems not to have appealed to his public. When the Reformation with its official disapproval of ecclesiastical art became established in Zürich, Leu lost a significant portion of his livelihood as there was no longer a market for altar retables or Andachtsbilder.

Accordingly, if an artist were to succeed in Reformation Zürich, he had to seek new sources of patronage and new subject matter, and Hans Asper had both patronage and an artistic genre new to Zürich. He was often given commissions by the Council. Indeed, he held the unofficial status of state painter. Moreover, he undertook what promised to be a successful career as a portrait painter. Yet, he ended his life in poverty living on a pension granted him by the Council.

Hans Leu's life ended before he could adapt his talents to the new cultural climate. Hans Asper's artistic life began in the year of Leu's death. It began with promise. That it ended in failure must reflect the cultural climate of the city in which he lived and worked.
Hans Asper was born in 1499. It was formerly accepted that he was the son of Heinrich Asper, a Constaffel member, whose family seat was "Auf der Asp" near Wollishofen. Hence the name "Asper." Nothing is known of his early training, and although it was once thought that he might have received some training from Hans Leu, recent scholarship refutes these theses. In the catalogue for a superb exhibition of Post-Reformation art in Zürich, Lucas Wüthrich argues that Asper may not have belonged to the conciliar family, and may not have been trained as an artist in his youth. Wüthrich posits that he did not begin his professional life as a painter, much less as a portraitist, but that he turned to portraiture when the opportunity presented itself. This opportunity came as a result of the new attitudes toward the uses of art, as the result of the new attitudes toward the uses of art, as the result of the vacuum left by Zwingli's teaching and by the position on images assumed by the state-church.

Credence is lent this theory by the fact that nothing is known about Asper's life before 1525, when his name appears in the Council records. On February 25, 1525, Hans Hottinger, a vociferous Anabaptist, had been called before the Council to answer for his religious views, and Asper was one of the witnesses against him. Asper's testimony is of value for it established his religious orthodoxy— at least in the Zürich context. Called to testify on Hottinger's religious beliefs, Asper reported a conversation between himself and the accused man. According to Asper, he had brought down Hottinger's wrath by stating that, "he took joy in Zwingli's preaching (er freue
sich über Zwinglis Predigten").

In 1526 Asper married the daughter of Ludwig Nöggi, a Council member, and the next year the first of his eleven children was born. No firmly documented artistic work can be traced to him before 1531, when he was thirty-two years of age. The question thus poses itself: how and where was he employed before then? Wüthrich suggests that his youth may have been spent in some city other than Zürich, and that he had been trained as a goldsmith. He further suggests that Basel was the site of his early professional life—although he certainly was in Zürich between 1525 and 1527. The suggestion of Basel is important, for it allows Asper to have come in contact with Hans Holbein the Younger, an artist to whom Asper owed much, and Wüthrich argues that Asper may have known members of Holbein’s circle, perhaps Holbein himself. He further argues that the Asper-Holbein connection must have been made between the years 1528 and 1532, when Holbein was once again resident in Basel after his famous stay in England. If a connection had been formed, these years do indeed seem the logical time period for Asper to seize on Holbein as a model. Holbein had left Basel in 1526 due in part to the worsening conditions for artists brought about by the Reformation, but after great success in England, he returned to Basel where he bought two houses, re-opened his workshop, and began to paint portraits.

Had Asper met Holbein at this time he could easily have taken the German artist as an inspiration, and his work as an incentive. Holbein was successful, and successful in a genre that seemed proof against the Reformers’ wrath: portraiture. Whether Asper indeed work-
ed in Basel or met Holbein is not known. What is known is that Asper was deeply influenced by Holbein's work and that in the year in which he emerges as an artist he began painting portraits. More interesting perhaps is his early source of patronage. When he began his artistic work in Zürich in 1531, he began with rather important commissions from the Council.  

These commissions are significant for they point to a new direction for patronage in the city. The Second Zürich Disputation and the subsequent ordinances of the Council determined the course of the visual arts in Zürich for the following decades. After 1524, there could be no more ecclesiastical support of the arts. The old styles and forms no longer applied to the new teaching, the Church as it was known in the Middle Ages with respect to the arts no longer existed. For a time after the removal of images there seems to have been confusion and a loss of direction. Some artists solved the problem by leaving the city, emigrating to Catholic cities such as Lucerne or Freiburg. Others went to Basel where there were more opportunities for artists. The names of others merely disappear. 

How the tense years preceding and including evangelical reform affected the talented Hans Leu has been discussed and it is clear that means of accommodating the visual arts to Reformed teaching had to be found or there would be little room for the artist in Zwingli's city. The solution to the problem of both patronage and style was supplied by three sources. The Council was one source of patronage for the city's artists, calling upon their skills for renovation or decoration of public edifices and for the creation of decorative objects.
Private citizens supplied another source of income, purchasing or commissioning portraits, metal work, or stained glass. A third source was what might be called private industry. In Zürich this was the printing industry, notably the Froschauer Press. Hans Asper earned his livelihood from all these sources.

II

In 1531, Hans Asper emerged as an important artistic personality in the city. He began with two rather important commissions, for he was employed by the Council to decorate the small Council chamber and to paint the Stadt schreiber's house. That he was given such relatively important tasks must indicate that he was already recognized for his talents by at least some of his fellow citizens. This implicit recognition raises important questions about his previous artistic training and experience but unfortunately, the years between his marriage and his emergence in Zürich as an artist remain a blank. It is possible that he had already supplied some illustrations for the Froschauer Press and Paul Leemann-van Elck posits that he had created twenty-three woodcuts for the second section of the small Folio Bible of 1524-1527. He offers this as supposition, however, not as fact, and Asper's early years remain a mystery.

Nevertheless, it is certain that he received two substantial commissions from the Council in 1531, followed by an even more important commission in 1532. In that year he was commissioned to decorate the entire Rathaus, for which he was paid sixty-one pounds, eleven schil-
lings and six heller. That same year he was also employed to paint the clock faces on the Hall of Justice and the Grimmelsturm, and to supply the lead banners which decorated the public buildings of the city.

In this same period (i.e. 1531-1532) he also began his work as a painter. In 1532 he was employed by the Council to carry out an extremely interesting project—interesting at least to the art historian. He was commissioned to repaint the diptych of the city's patron saints in the Fraumunster. This work is familiar for it was painted by Hans Leu the Elder and includes a very accurate rendering of early sixteenth century Zürich as its background. The city Fathers seem loath to have lost such a work in spite of the fact that it was now officially idolatrous. Therefore, the Council commissioned Asper to paint over the offending elements, leaving the view of the city and the surrounding countryside intact.

Throughout the 1530's and 1540's Asper worked often for the city and also for the printer who had established what might be called the printing press of the Zürich Reformation: Christopher Froschauer. In the years 1538 and 1539 he not only gilded the clock faces on St. Peter's tower, but also supplied a program of decoration for the Rathaus facade. This work, destroyed with the old Rathaus, must have been quite an ambitious project as it was to depict the twelve months of the year, and contained a landscape with figures and fishes which could be caught in each month to symbolize the changing seasons. In 1539 he created a heraldic device for the title page for the city's constitution and laws. In the same period he prepared a series of
heraldic woodcuts for Froschauer, as well as drawings for woodcut portraits of Conrad Pellican and Huldreich Zwingli.

In 1545 he was elected to the Great Council from his guild, the Meisen. The next year he again worked for the city, painting the fountain on the Rennweg. More importantly, however, he was employed on a large project undertaken by the Froschauer Press. In 1547, Froschauer published the Schweizer Chronik by Johannes Stumpf. This work undertaken by Stumpf, a supporter of Zwingli's Reformation and pastor at Stammheim, was a crowning effort for Froschauer as a printer. The Chronicle, a two volume history of Switzerland, contained over four thousand woodcut illustrations. The subjects of which were numerous and varied: portraits of rulers, popes, humanists, and reformers, battle scenes, heraldic devices, city views, and maps. It was a delightful and richly illustrated work and Asper contributed many woodcuts to this Chronicle, many of them signed with his initials. The greater portion of his effort was devoted to the depiction of battle scenes and city views. In 1546, he had been sent to Solothurn with a letter of introduction from the Zürich Council in order that he might draw a view of that city for inclusion in the printed work.

At this time there begins to be indication that Asper had financial difficulties. Although he was often employed, he had, by this time, a large family and the need for money beginning in these years was to trouble him for the rest of his life. In Solothurn, however, he was able to earn seventy crowns by painting a view of the city on canvas.

The year 1550 seems to have marked a turning point in his life. The commissions did not come so quickly after this period. In 1550
he painted the fountain of the Neumarkt, then there is not record of
government works until 1567. In that year he completed the last work known
to come from his hand. 33 In the Rathaus of Zürich there exists today
what can be called a secular triptych. The central panel of this work
proudly displays the Zürich coat of arms: two lions flanking the im-
perial crest, the blue and white shields of Zürich supporting it. The
two side panels are richly painted with fruit and flowers. Each of
the side panels bears a quotation from Scripture:

Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again;
but whoever drinks of the water I shall give him shall
never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall
become in him a well of water springing up to eternal
life (John 4:13-14, in German),

and

Unless the Lord guards the city the watchman keeps
awake in vain (Psalm 127, in Latin).

This triptych was the gift of Hans Asper to this city. It serves
as a fitting example to close the discussion of Asper's public com-
missions, for it contains all the elements of the new art in Zürich.
It borrows a form long belonging to religious works, the triptych. Yet
where once the central panel would have been devoted to the birth or
crucifixion of the Saviour, now it belongs to the symbols of the city-
state. Where once the side panels would have offered the figures of
saints for the contemplation or devotion of the viewer, now they offer
the ordered abundance made possible by the godly city-state. Godly
is an important concept here, for it must not be forgotten that Zürich
had put itself under evangelical rule: it is God who watches and pro-
tects the city, it is Christ who offers the reviving waters of eternal
life. Thus when citizen Asper gave his gift to his city he gave a
gift faithful to orthodox Zwinglian teaching. The work, although
combining symbolism and realism as did the works of late medieval re-
ligious art, in no wise leads to worship or devotion. It is, rather,
a work meant to remind the viewer that earthly power and prosperity
come from the hand of the Almighty, that the Reformed community of
Zürich must never forget this source of peace and abundance. The
triptych belongs to a community whose greatest artistic patron was now
the government, whose government had taken upon itself not only the
artistic patronage once provided by the church, but many of the
church's former duties and responsibilities as well.\textsuperscript{34} The work was
to hang not in a church, but in the Rathaus where the business of com-
munity life was daily conducted. In return for this gift Asper re-
ceived a pension from the city,\textsuperscript{35} and except for work on the Helmhaus
fountain in 1568, he worked no more. In 1571, at the age of seventy-
two, he died in poverty.\textsuperscript{36}

III

The above brief discussion of Asper's life tells nothing of that
aspect of his art for which he is known today. Although he was
known to his contemporaries for his architectural decorations, pos-
terity knows him best as a portraitist. This is chiefly true because
it is he who painted many of the Swiss Reformers. Hans Asper was to
Zwingli what Cranach was to Luther, for it is Asper's posthumous pro-
file portrait of Zwingli that remains the definitive physical descrip-
tion of the Reformer.

It is fitting that Zwingli's portrait should introduce the discussion of portraiture in Zürich, for Zwingli and his teaching can be said to be at the center of the development of portraiture in Zürich. This statement implies a paradox, for the portrait genre became fully developed in Zürich only after the Reformation, and yet Zwingli's teaching contains views on man and his nature and on art which ultimately make portraiture a problematic genre for evangelical Christians.

Portraiture in Zürich before the Reformation has a short history indeed. The earliest portraits appear only in the second half of the fifteenth century, and are not portraits in the ancient or modern sense, but are donor portraits. The tradition of the donor portrait had begun in the thirteenth century in Italy with the inclusion of small-scale figures at the bottom of pointed crucifixes. Although these may be said to belong to the portrait genre, their intent is religious. The donors wished to associate themselves with the pious gift. The inclusion of the donor's portrait became, therefore, itself an act of piety.

By the fourteenth century, however, these donor portraits had begun to develop into records of individual personality. In Zürich what there may have been of these, like the rest of the city's medieval art, fell victim to iconoclastic fervor: only a few examples remain. In the Twelve Apostles Chapel of the Großmünster there is a fresco remnant of an epitaph to Provost Sweder von Göttlikon who died in 1467. The Landvogt Schwarzmurer and his wife were depicted in the "Reichskammer" of the chapel in Kyburg Castle in 1480, and
Commander Werner Marti was painted kneeling before the Man of Sorrows in the church of the Order of St. John at Kusnacht in 1485.40

We cannot know with certainty when the desire for the recording of an individual personality began in Zürich: too much has been lost. We can know only these few late examples, remnants of a type of piety no longer sanctioned by the evangelical teaching of Zwingli and his supporters.

The remnants of late medieval piety are not, however, the sole vestiges of pre-Reformation portraiture. Two true portraits have survived.41 Both belong to the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and both are of young men—citizens of Zürich. The first was painted in 1501, a portrait of Hans Schneeberger. The second, from around 1520, is of an unknown man, perhaps Provost Felix Frey.42 Both contain elements which will become marked features of Hans Asper's works, and both works differ from the earlier donor portraits in that they have no religious intent. These portraits serve, rather, to depict their sitters as they were. More, they serve to set the young men in their social context.

For example, the portrait of Hans Schneeberger, apothecary, presents a three-quarter view of the sitter. The voluminous cloak of the young man fills the space creating a sense of solidity and presence. Only the sitter's right hand emerging from the folds of his cloak lightens the massive darkness of the lower two-thirds of the work. The light and color are concentrated on the upper third, on the face. At his right shoulder is the coat of arms of his family, above each shoulder an initial. The date is painted in the upper left hand corner.
The second portrait is similar in composition, but here the young man is seated before a mountain landscape. Both works are true portraits: they record individual personalities in their social and temporal context. It can, perhaps, be argued that psychological insight is lacking, but it cannot be denied that each sitter's individuality is preserved.

This desire to record and preserve individual personality had become a part of portraiture in Zürich before Hans Asper had begun to paint. This desire has much in common with the interests expressed in the city's religious art in the pre-Reformation period: an interest in this world, its scenes and people. When Hans Asper began to paint portraits of Zürich's citizens, he already had local artistic models from which to learn. Throughout his career he would follow the simple format established by Hans Schneeberger's portraitist. He would choose the plainest of backgrounds, often adding an appropriate inscription or date. He would concentrate attention on the face and hands of his sitters, translating as accurately but untheoretically as he was able their strong or stolid complacent faces onto canvas or wood.

Of the portraits painted by Hans Asper, roughly thirty remain in existence. This is even fewer than was once thought, for some portraits formerly attributed to Asper—such as that of the printer Christopher Froschauer—are no longer thought to be his work.43 A listing of the subjects and dates of these works firmly attributed to Asper is useful. The first portrait, of Zwingli, was painted in 1531
or 1532. The next is from 1535: Peter Füssli, a military man and life-long Catholic.\textsuperscript{44} In 1536, three portraits are known to have been painted: the Ratsherr Heinrich Rahn, his wife, and Johannes Stumpf, pastor and subsequent author of Schweizer Chronik. 1538 was a very productive year. Asper painted five portraits, all of important figures in Zürich's civic life: Eschler vom Glas, a member of a respected conciliar family, Leonhard Holzhalb, Constaffel member and Landvogt for Knonau, and his wife, Andreas Schmid, the son of former Burgermeister Felix Schmid, and his wife Anna Schmid-Schärer.

Three other portraits belong also to this decade: two of unknown figures—a Johannes Müller, and a prosperous-looking woman—and one of Konrad Pellican, the famous humanist and theologian. In 1540 Asper portrayed the talented and respected goldsmith Hans Ulrich Stampfer.\textsuperscript{45} In 1542 he painted Max Röist of the Constaffel family; and in 1544, Jakob Werdmüller the Seckelmeister for the city. 1549 was another especially productive year, for in that year he painted at least five portraits: two of Wilhelm Frölich, a former Zürcher living in Solothurn, one of his wife, another portrait of Zwingli, and one of Zwingli's daughter Regula Gwalther with her daughter, Anna.\textsuperscript{46} At some time before 1550 he also completed his first portrait of Oecolampadius, the Basel reformer. In 1550 he painted a series of portraits of reformers and theologians: Heinrich Bullinger, Theodor Bibliander, Oecolampadius again, and another of Konrad Pellican.\textsuperscript{47} After 1550, only three portraits are known. In 1551, he painted the former Provost Heinrich Brennwald, and in 1551, he painted two "foreigners:" a Ratsherr of Schaffhausen, Alexander Peyer, and Peter...
Martyr Vermigli, then resident of Zürich.\textsuperscript{48}

The portraits can be said to fall into two groups. Those of reformers or theologians, and those of prominent figures in civic life. Eleven of these works (if Regula Gwalther is included), are of religious figures, eighteen are of secular leaders and their wives. Six of the reformer portraits were completed between 1549 and 1550, and make up the whole of his known work in portraiture for that period: the 1549 portraits of the Frölich couple seem to have been completed together.

A discussion of some of these works will be useful for determining Asper's aims, his style, and his relationship to Hans Holbein. The earliest, and very famous, work is of Huldreich Zwingli. It seems to have been executed shortly after Zwingli's death on October 11, 1531, for the inscription at the top states: \textit{Occubuit Anno Aetatis XLVII/ 1531} (he fell in the 47th year of his life). The portrait sets the style for most of Asper's later portraits, and must be discussed rather extensively. Painted in oil on parchment and affixed to a wooden panel, the work shows Zwingli in profile against a plain, bitter-green background. The inscription runs across the top of the work in vermilion letters, while the artist's initials, again in vermilion, float in the right hand side of the background. The work is characterized by stark simplicity: a half-length portrait in which no decorative objects, no richness in clothing or jewelry is present to distract the viewer from the face of the reformer. The work has the quality of a portrait bust, for it does not even include the hands. Rather, the black clergyman's gown and baretta frame the face and call
attention to it. The face, then, is all important, for while the stark simplicity of the gown can be seen as a metaphor for the simplicity of Zwingli's message, it is also an artistic device, giving corporeality to the portrait and forming a frame for the face.

The rendering of the face itself must have presented problems for Asper, since the work is a posthumous portrait. This profile portrait of Zwingli has an interesting history, for it may be based on the work of another artist. In 1531, the Zürich goldsmith Jakob Stampfer struck a medallion commemorating the death of the Reformer. The obverse of this medallion displays a profile portrait of Zwingli, turned toward the left, in clerical gown and baretta. The pose and features are identical in both medallion and portrait. The question, therefore, has arisen as to which work was the model for the other. 49 A satisfactory answer has not been found, but for our purposes it is unnecessary that one be found. Significant for this study is the marriage of style and purpose, for in Asper's first documented portrait two influences are immediately present. One is the influence of the goldsmith's art, the other is that of Hans Holbein. Both influences merge in the Zwingli portrait to form the foundation for Asper's style. If Lucas Wüthrich is correct in assuming that Asper was a goldsmith before becoming an artist, it is not mandatory to seek in the work of Jakob Stampfer a source for the Zwingli portrait. Asper may have already been acquainted with the art of the medallion maker as the medallion a fit medium for the depiction of a humanist scholar deriving as it does from ancient models, had for some time been a Renaissance device for depicting famous men. 50 The medium involves
a raised figure—usually a bust, usually in profile—against a flat clear background. The features are given life by the artist's skill in modelling and etching. The works are commemorative in intention, all attention focused on the face of the subject which fills and dominates the space allotted the artistic work.

Much of what has just been said about the work of the medallion maker can also be said about the work of Hans Holbein. He, like the medallion maker, fills the appointed space with his subject, making dominate the space. He, like the medallion maker focuses attention on the head, rendering it in the clearest, most beautifully geometrical way possible. It is supreme simplicity which defines both the art of the medallion maker and the art of Holbein. Yet Holbein's art is much more than a beautifully clear and simple rendering of the individual subject. Paul Ganz has discussed the quality of Holbein's achievement:

The art of Hans Holbein the Younger is founded upon his unusual talent and his cool apprehension of the outward appearance of things, undisturbed by sentiment or personal feeling. His vision is so penetrating that in depicting what he sees, he manages to reproduce not only the characteristic features of any object, but also, when dealing with human beings, the invisible characteristics of their innermost being. The relationship between an artist and nature is the key to the proper understanding of his art, and the manner in which he reproduced and gave life to the world around him is a measure of the spiritual force through which he exercised his creative gifts. Holbein strove to achieve the utmost degree of truth to nature and a faithful reproduction of the world around him. His vision penetrated the subject and extracted the essentials, discarding everything immaterial, he discovered new beauties, hitherto unsuspected in nature and reproduced her inexhaustible variety without resorting to sensuous charm or exaggerated effects... he detected the peculiarities of his subject with the thoroughness of a scientific investigator...

Hans Holbein was a very great artist. Hans Asper was not, but his
aims not withstanding, were similar to those of his greater contem-
porary.\textsuperscript{52} That he looked to Holbein as a model is known from his
own words. In 1534 he is known to have shown a group portrait to Max
Röist. It was supposed to have been Holbein's portrait of his wife
and children. According to the document relating the incident, Asper
allowed Röist to see "a work of art as Holbein in England had painted
of his wife and both children" ("ein Kunststück... wie der Holbein im
Engelland sin wib und beide kind abconnterfeet").\textsuperscript{53} He averred that
he would never sell it but-- attempting now to sell his own work--
had other pretty portraits of his own which should encourage
patronage. He mentioned specifically the portrait of Cleophea Holz-
halb-Krieg which he had painted in 1538: "But he had pretty art works
and portraits, for example the wife of Vogt Holzhalb" ("Aber er hatte
hüpsche kunst stück und angsicht (portraits) als nämlich vogt Holzhalben
frouw...").\textsuperscript{54}

Since Asper himself chose this work to advertise his talents, I
shall follow his suggestion and choose the portrait as an example for
discussion. Painted in 1538, it belongs to the early years of Asper's
career as a portraitist. The work is half a pair, for Cleophea Holz-
halb's husband had his portrait painted as well. This couple typify
one of the two kinds of subjects who sat for Asper. Leonhard
Holzhalb, born in 1503, was the son of a wealthy family. In 1532 he
was one of the Eighteen from the Constaffel who sat on the Council,
in the same year becoming \textit{Landvogt} for Knonau.\textsuperscript{55} Thus at the age of
thirty-five when his portrait was painted, he was a man to be reckoned
with in Zürich society. Cleophea Krieg von Bellikon was his second
wife, the widow of a prominent Bernese. 56

Asper's portrait owes a great debt to Holbein's English portrait series, for Asper, like Holbein, set his subject against a deep green ground from which her garments and her countenance may be observed and studied. He has attempted Holbein's cool-eyed objectivity but lacks his unifying vision. Nevertheless, the work is a pleasure to behold. The self-confidence and solidity of this wealthy public figure's wife is clearly conveyed. Asper has devoted time and attention to every detail of her apparel: the embroidery of her headdress, the folds of her fine white dress bound with gold embroidered ribbon, the black velvet of her cape with its sudden display of vermilion lining are all carefully translated. The sitter herself, however, has not been flattered. She is a substantial—plump—woman with a ruddy complexion and proud demeanor.

Where, however, Holbein's works both record reality and elevate it through purity and elegance of line, Asper's work is more record than aesthetic experience. It is, however, the record not only of an individual, but of a way of life and of that individual's status in society. Cleophea Holzhalb could be neither duchess nor nun. She is ultimately a rich burgher's wife. The self-assurance and self-satisfaction in her glance indicate that she wanted to be nothing other.

IV

Such an example of portraiture in Sürich must be tied to the larger
context of Renaissance portraiture, and the even larger context of Humanism. In the fifteenth century a new trend developed in the representation of the individual. No longer relegated to the margins of religious scenes, no longer appearing in smaller scale than the depicted holy figures, the individual became a subject for representation in his own right. Many factors contribute to this phenomenon, but for this study the relationship of Humanism to portraiture is most significant. The revival of ancient forms, the core of Humanism, drew its strength from the belief that in studying the works and thought processes of the ancients, contemporary man might find solutions applicable to "modern" problems. The ancient forms revived were not only literary and scientific but, --as is well knows, -- artistic. Works of Greco-Roman antiquity were newly discovered or seen with new eyes. Where once a portrait sculpture of a Roman emperor might have been cherished for its connection with Early Christianity, as was, for example, the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius long thought to portray Constantine, but now, in the Renaissance, ancient portraiture would be studied for new reasons. Renaissance men, drawing on Pliny or Suetonius, believed that an individual's reputation sprang from his character, and that his character was mirrored in his face. 57

Indeed, Pliny, in writing on the history of art, set his imprimatur on the portrait genre: "Realistic portraiture indeed has for many generations been the highest ambition of art (hic multis iam saeculis summus animus in pictura)." 58 Moreover, portraiture fulfilled the desire for self-perpetuation tied to both ancient and Renaissance men's wish for glory. 59
Given that portraiture was accepted on ancient authority, and that it satisfied the needs of modern life, it remained only to find a medium of expression for these ideas and needs. This medium was supplied in the 1480's by Leonardo da Vinci.\textsuperscript{60} Leonardo explicitly stated a new aim for portraiture: the artist in executing a portrait should portray "the motions of the mind."\textsuperscript{61} The articulation of this ideal opened new vistas for the artist. Now he was no longer merely to strive to reproduce nature, he was to interpret it as well. Portraiture at its best would become "a statement by the artist of the sitter's personality."\textsuperscript{62}

We must explore, therefore, what this artistic program would have meant to the citizens of Zürich. In order to do this, something of the nature of Swiss Humanism must be understood. G.W. Locher in his discussion of Swiss Humanism defines Renaissance Humanism first as a movement of the learned, characterized by a longing for experience and personal self-realization.\textsuperscript{63} The study of ancient writings and ancient forms, the desire to return \textit{ad fontes}, was connected with a perspective of antiquity quite unlike that held by the Middle Ages. Men believed that they could emulate the figures and events of the past, could act in such a way that their actions, like those of the ancients, could lead to fame and glory. Tied to this was a desire for spiritual expansion, for a new consciousness and awareness of personality, a new feeling for the worth of man, and of self.\textsuperscript{64}

In Northern Europe, and in Switzerland in particular, these humanistic desires had a special focus. The leaders of the Swiss humanistic movement sought to define and glorify those qualities which could
be called "Swiss." In the early decades of the sixteenth century Switzerland was blessed with a group of talented young men, devoted to humanist studies: Glarean, Vadian, Xylopectus, Myconius, Zwingli, Grebel. These young men were not unknown to each other—many had studied together or had had the same teachers. Through correspondence they began consciously to create a program of study and pedagogy which would both articulate their love of their homeland and also give a focus and direction to their nation. In the sense that these young men's humanism was centered on patriotism it varied from the cosmopolitan aims of Erasmian humanism: it aimed at creating a sense of Swiss-identity and a sense among the Swiss of their individual identities in a patriotic context. In 1513 Vadian wrote to Zwingli: "I love the community of the Swiss and I desire the well-being of all" ("Amo totam Helvetiorum communitatem et omnium salutem desidero").

In 1519, Glarean's *Descripito de situ Helveticae* was published by Froben in Basel. The burden of the argument of the work was this: Switzerland had come of age. Now Switzerland, the cradle of freedom, reknowned throughout Europe in the arts of war, can be reknowned also for the arts of peace and learning. Athena with Mars looks with favor upon the Swiss, and Apollo's Muses make their home in the Swiss mountains. The Swiss were exhorted to nurture both military prowess and learning, for liberty can only be preserved by arms. Thus Swiss humanism had a patriotic, civic character. The young men, Glarean, Vadian, Myconius, and even Zwingli carried on their several studies not merely as ends in themselves, but as spiritual exercises and as a service to their land and people.
The development of portraiture was intimately tied to the developments of Renaissance humanism. In each area touched by humanism the development of portraiture reflected the particular character of the humanism evolved. In the North we have already examined one aspect of the relationship of humanism to the arts. The Danube School artists were (and are) most noted for their sensitive renderings of nature. The portraits of Lucas Cranach give some sense of the qualities demanded in the aristocratic and humanist circles which offered patronage to Danube School artists. Here, as Otto Benesch has pointed out, humanism struggled to revive the classical personality. In so doing it created a new human ideal based on an ideal of spiritual freedom and the autonomy of the personality. Tied to a desire, and finally to a demand for reform, this ideal would find new expression in the Evangelical Reformation. 71

In Zürich both the civic and religious aspects of humanism would be articulated by Zwingli and his followers, for Zwingli was both a patriot and a learned man seeking to return to the font of all wisdom and truth, Scripture. He led the citizens of Zürich, the Ratsherren, the merchants and artisans to an acceptance of evangelical teaching. It is these citizens of Zürich who were to become Hans Asper's patrons. It is through the works of Asper that we know the physical appearance of the men and women who were prominent in the civic and religious life of the community. It is through Asper's work that we know the city's reformers.

What are these portraits and what do they tell us of the attitudes of their sitters? These questions can have many answers, for although
the very existence of portraiture in a society makes a statement about that society, that statement is no more than the introduction to a whole world of thought and belief. Scholars have observed that Asper's art develops at a moment when Zürich's artistic direction seemed uncertain. Much can be made of the fact that Asper began his career at just the time when the old artistic visions and modes had been outlawed. The full introduction of the portrait genre to Zürich's artistic life can be tied not only to the larger context of humanism and the visual arts, but to Zwingli's teaching on art. Certainly, portraiture flourished in a humanistic context: is it not an expression of the concept of man as independent, self-knowing individual? Can it not be demonstrated that it reflects the particular focus of Swiss humanism? The men and their wives who are portrayed by Asper all have a place in the new reformed society of Zürich, a society in which patriotism and religion merged ever so subtly with each other. Observe the relationship of the state— that is the Council— to the Church in Zürich. Long before the Reformation began men thought of society as a single Christian body whose purpose was established by God. It was the function of both the secular and spiritual authority to work toward the realization of God's plan for the world. This was true in Zürich before the Reformation and it remained true after the break with Rome. After the Council accepted reformed teaching, however, this idea became colored by reformed theology. When Zwingli and his followers replaced the authority of Rome with the authority of Scripture interpreted with the aid of the Holy Spirit, the role of the Council was altered. Society was still perceived as a single Christian body:
society and the Christian community were one, and the Christian community and the Church were one. In his "Reply to Emser," Zwingli clearly defines his concept of the church. He begins by defining the word ecclesia as "... the whole company, congregation, assemblage, army, multitude, of the people of Israel..." The word ecclesia "... is used not only for the pious, holy and faithful, but also for the impious, wicked and unfaithful..." Zwingli continues:

Christ Himself has painted this church in the clearest colors in Matthew 13:24-30, where, by the parable of one sowing good seed in a field and of an enemy, i.e., the devil, secretly mixing in tares, He means nothing else than that all of us who are called Christians receive the word, or at least wish to appear to have received it. Yet none the less we admit the devil's seed also. Yet God allows the crops that grow from both grain and tares to continue until the day of harvest; nay, He even commands us to let both grow, though He keeps account of the noxious, who are destined to rejection, and of the wholesome, for whom favor is meantime in store... We are, I say, to let both grow until the day of harvest. 76

Thus the elect and the damned both belong to the Church, the ecclesia, and God alone can know them. But man has been given laws, and God has seen fit to appoint rulers that these laws might be enforced. In Zürich, according to its constitution, the magistrates were delegated the authority by the people to rule over them and enforce the laws: their power was sanctioned by the consensus of the community. 77 Long before the Reformation, the Council assumed that it governed in order to fulfill the word of God. 78 In embracing Zwingli's teaching, the magistrates believed that they received a mandate to purify the Church, that is, the community. 79 Hence the Sittenmandate of March 15, 1530 which made attendance at communion mandatory for all members of the community. 80
In Zürich, Zwingli envisioned a model community in which magistrates and pastors worked hand-in-hand as members of the same body: the magistrates acted on knowledge of the Gospel, taught them and the whole community by the pastors. Thus it is not incorrect to say that the magistrates, the Ratsherren, the prominent members of the community and church who were portrayed by Asper were, in a very real way, just as much reformers as were Zwingli, Bullinger, and Jud.

V

The humanistic impetus toward portraiture has been explained. The position of the men and women of Zürich who chose to have themselves portrayed has also been discussed. Now the relationship of portraiture to the particular theological climate of Zürich must be examined. At first sight it would seem that portraiture would be an accepted genre in a Reformed community. The portrait is, as John Pope-Hennesey has observed, empirical. It is the translation by the artist of an actual, observed individual. In this way it is geschichteswyss, and conforms to Zwingli's teaching. Moreover, the portraits of the citizens of Zürich were intended for display in private homes, not in the Church. The portraits executed by Asper were certainly not unseemly. This being the case, portraiture should have flourished in a Reformed city such as Zürich. Yet scholars have repeatedly noted the problematic nature of portraiture in a Reformation context. Pope-Hennesey has stated that while Counter-Reformation portraiture took on "a new poetry and depth," the influence of reform caused "the horizons of
the portrait to contract." Otto Benesch observed that Protestant attitudes toward human character "meant a certain impoverishment of an art which was in its beginnings rich and imaginative." "Reformation," he states, "won the battle over humanism completely." It will be the purpose of the remainder of this chapter to attempt an explanation of the failure of portraiture in a reformed context. Such an explanation should shed much light on Hans Asper's life and work.

Remember the psychological turn given the art of portraiture by Leonardo da Vinci. The artist should portray "the motions of the mind," and Leonardo's ideal and his skill in developing a means for its expression changed the course of Renaissance portraiture. In his hands the artist becomes both creator and revealer, and the portrait opens to the viewer the mind of the man or woman portrayed, letting him know his neighbor.

Let us now explore Zwingli's teaching on the nature of man. In his work "On True and False Religion," he devoted a section to the question of man in relation to God and to society. He began by stating flatly that "... man cannot be known by man. He has such recklessness in lying, such readiness in pretending and concealing, that when you think you have caught him somewhere, you find he has long since slipped away elsewhere... Since, then, it is such an unattainable thing to penetrate into the recesses of the human hears, we shall doubtless have to give up hope of the knowledge of it. Under no other teacher or guide than God alone, the builder of man, will it ever be granted to see the secrets of the human heart."
Why this is true is due to the nature of man himself. God, the Creator, formed man in his own image and then placed him in a garden "abounding in all delights." He was given dominion over all of creation, "but on this condition, that he might eat there except of the knowledge of good and evil." Should he eat of the tree he would know death. The story is too familiar. The serpent envious of man's happiness tempted Eve and she ate of the fruit. She gave it then to Adan who ate also. Thus sin and death came into the world.

Zwingli continues to probe the nature of Adam's sin. In discovering this, he will discover the nature of Adam, for, as he says, "We infer the character of everything we see from the inward urge by which it is impelled to the pursuit and acquisition of what it desires." What, then, was Adam's aim in eating the forbidden fruit? He wanted to be equal with God, to know what good and evil were. What was the origin of this craving? The love of self, the trust in self. "Man is, then, by nature a lover of self; not by the nature with which he was made and endowed by God, but by that which he acquired when... he desired in his heart to become skilled in good and evil, yea, to become equal with God." Zwingli, a good humanist, now turns to a pagan author to confirm that even those without knowledge of the true God understood man's true desires. He quotes Cicero. "There dwells in every man of worth an influence which
roused his soul day and night with the spur of glory and whispers to him that the remembrance of our names must not be suffered to disappear with our life but be made to endure through all future ages."94

VI

How is this attitude toward man to be related to portraiture? Zwingli himself makes no connection. Nothing that he wrote on the subject of art would seem to be directed against portraiture. Moreover, portraiture began to flourish in Zürich in the years immediately following the reformation of the church and the removal of religious images. The question, therefore, poses itself: is portraiture a genre acceptable to an evangelical community? Interestingly enough, this question troubled some of Zwingli's followers. In 1949, Paul Boesch published an article which included a Latin correspondence between Rudolf Gwalther, Zwingli's son-in-law, and a young Englishman named Christopher Hales.95 This young man had in 1549 spent six months in Zürich as a guest of Rudolf Gwalther.96 On March 4, 1550, having returned to his homeland, Hales wrote to his former host with a request: he asked that Gwalther send him a series of portraits.

I ask you, my dear Rudolph, that you commission your Zürich Apelles to supply me with the following likenesses: those of Zwingli, Pellikan, Thoedor, Bullinger, and of you yourself. Let these be of the same size as that portrait of you which you showed me, on wood, not on canvas, with a book in the hands. Under this let there be written four verses, the selection of which I leave to your discretion... if you think that a portrait of Oecolampadius could be painted, I would like to have this sixth work included with the others. 97
On December 10, 1550, Hales writes again to Zürich, now to Heinrich Bullinger:

I have written to Master Gwalther that he might have six portraits painted for me. He writes that he has taken care of the matter, but four (of the portraits) have been held back for two reasons: first, because a danger exists that a door to idolatry might thereby be opened to posterity, and second that you might be reproached for having your selves painted out of vain-glory. But the matter is completely different. For I wanted the portraits to adorn my library, and also that your worthy faces pictured as in a mirror might be seen by those who, due to the distance, are hindered from seeing you with their own eyes. Honored man, it is not that we wish to make icons (idols) of you; only on the aforementioned grounds, not from a wish to idolize are these portraits desired. 98

At about the time Hales wrote this letter to Bullinger, he wrote also to his friend Gwalther. 99 From this letter we discover that John Burcher, an English Protestant and friend of both Hales and Bullinger at that time living in Strasbourg, had involved himself in the matter, declaring that no pious man could with good conscience allow his portrait to be painted. Hales reports this opinion and then continues:

I marvel that Burcher vigorously persists in his opinion, that he believes that absolutely no images can be painted in good conscience and piety... Truly in Holy Scripture, so far as I understand it, it is forbidden to make pictures only when the people of God are led away from the true worship of the one true God to the vain worship of many false gods. If this danger does not exist I do not see why it is not possible to paint and possess pictures if they are not to be displayed in a place where the idea of idolatry is to be feared. 100

Hales then brings Zwingli's arguments on the placement of images into the argument. No one worships the cock on the tower of Großmünster, nor the statue of Charlemagne. 101
Is there any one who is so alien to all religion, piety, fear of the most high and omnipotent, so directly forgetful of himself that he dignifies little images set up in a profane place, in a museum? But, it is said, that such times may come when there may be danger that through (pictures) an occasion for idolatry may occur. And so for this reason it could be argued that absolutely no image or likeness of things may properly be created. I think that no man holds this opinion... 102

The outcome of this correspondence is not known. Whether Christopher Hales actually received the portraits cannot be determined. Significant for this discussion, however, is the identity of the "Zürich Apelles," and the controversy over the propriety and even orthodoxy of creating or owning portraits.

The question of the artist's identity is less complicated than the question of the propriety of portraiture, for Paul Boesch has effectively proved that the artist was none other than Hans Asper.103 The portrait controversy, however, requires further examination. If one takes together Zwingli's writings on the nature of man together with the whole Reformation issue of idolatry one sees that portraiture in the context of reformed life is not a simple issue. The Hales correspondence leaves the question of the propriety of images open. Because the arguments both in Zwingli's work and in the discussions of art following his death concern themselves chiefly with the use to which art is put, and because art per se was never forbidden to Evangelical Christians, the question must always to some degree remain open. No work of art should lead man from the true worship of the true God. No work of art should be used as a help or comfort. The possible use of portraiture to inspire by example or to bring a distant loved-one near can be forbidden only should the person or thing depicted become an
adored object.

For the study of portraiture, however, a more difficult issue is the relationship of the portrait to the man or woman depicted. There is no evidence that the portraits painted by Hans Asper were commissioned or created with idolatrous intent. Even the portraits of the leaders of the Swiss Reformation can be viewed as remembrances rather than objects of adoration. If Wüthrich's theory is correct, Asper saw an opportunity and seized it: he saw that there was a market for portraits in Zurich, and he began to paint portraits. Some of the sixteenth interest in portraiture had been explained. With the introduction of the New Learning to Switzerland, and with the patriotic focus of Swiss Humanism, a new or increased interest in the leaders of Helvetic society arose. Who were these leaders but the Ratsherrn, the scholars, and the clergy? With the coming of the Reformation the leadership of society took on an added meaning for now the men who governed the state or played a prominent role in society were the same men responsible for administering Christ's Church on earth. Moreover, they, with their wives and children, were to be the components of the newly reformed Christian society. These were people of substance and influence. Their pastors by their writings and teachings made Zürich a name reknowned for evangelical thought. Surely, it was fitting that their faces be recorded for posterity.

Were there no other side to the issue, the question of the legitimacy of portraiture would seem settled. There is, however, another aspect. It will be remembered that the aim of portraiture is to present to the viewer an accurate representation of the specific features of
the individual portrayed. The genre is, as has been pointed out, empirical. Yet the greatest portraitists have succeeded in creating more than a visual record of an individual's external appearance. They convey a sense of a whole thinking feeling person—both a unique individual and a member of a specific society or culture. The purpose is to record the sitter not only for his own time but for posterity. The intent is to glorify the individual, making clear by means of paint, canvas, and the artist's skill that the sitter is worthy of representation and commemoration.

Hans Asper does not belong to the highest rank of portraitists and much of our interest in his work derives not from his skill, but from the personalities of his sitters. We want to know the appearance of Zwingli or Bullinger; we are fascinated to see the faces of their co-citizens and contemporaries. Asper recorded these faces without great insight or skill, but it is clear that he intended to record them as accurately as possible. His method is empirical. There is no sense that he indulged in any artistic theorizing, no sense that he was concerned with geometric generalizations, for example. In Asper's work all extraneous objects are stripped away, all effort is concentrated on the face, the hands, the status-revealing details of dress. Against flat backgrounds of brilliant blue or green, the faces are recorded feature by feature, in a simplified linear style. The viewer is meant to know the sitter, his or features, his or her place in society. Implied in these works is the self-concept of the patron, for the patrons were men wealthy enough or prominent enough to believe themselves worthy of portrayal. Implied is a desire for individual for familial
glory, a desire to be known and remembered.

These desires are not, however, altogether consonant with Zwingli's teaching. Begin, for example, with the question of accuracy in representation. What is the purpose of this? Clearly the purpose is to present and make known one individual to others. But, wrote Zwingli, man is so devious, so steeped in the arts of obfuscation that he can never truly be known to another. "To know man is as toilsome as to catch a cuttlefish, for as the latter hides himself in his own blackness in order not to be caught, so does man, as soon as he sees one is after him, stir up such sudden and thick clouds of hypocrisy that no Lyneus no Argus can discover him."¹⁰⁶

If this is true—if men cannot truly know each other by their actions and thought—how much less revealing is mere appearance? Moreover, if men could know each other, what would they discover? Man is not good, he is "by nature evil, however much he struggles and shuffles to conceal the fact."¹⁰⁷ His desire for fame, for glory, all are manifestations of this evil nature.¹⁰⁸

He should, therefore, not seek knowledge of himself or another through human agency. God alone can know and reveal the secrets of the human heart: "Under no other teacher or guide than God alone, the builder of man, will it ever be granted to see the secrets of the human heart."¹⁰⁹ Given these arguments, portraiture becomes meaningless. What purpose can the accurate translation of an individual's features to wood or canvas have? Further, what good intent can there be in such an attempt? The desire for fame or glory is part of man's sin against God: "And if among the faithful you find any who deny that
man does everything for the sake of his own private glory and gain, you may consider it as settled that they are themselves not faithful, but carnal and servants of sin." Thus, although portraits may not have had the magical qualities attributed to many works of late medieval religious art, although they were secular works created for secular use, even though they were geschichteswyss, they were futile. They can tell us nothing of our neighbor but the external details, and these details only point out man's carnality and servitude to sin. The aims of portraiture as articulated by Renaissance humanists and embodied in Leonardo's psychological portraits are therefore implicitly declared invalid. To glorify man and to seek to plumb the depths of the human psyche is of no avail. The knowledge of "the motions of the mind" belongs to God alond.

VII

Although a denial of the worth of portraiture is thus implicit in Zwingli's teaching on the nature of man, nowhere does he condemn portraiture explicitly. It is his successors who raise the question of the religious validity of portraits. Portraits may lead to idolatry. The portraits discussed by Gwalther, Bullinger, and Hales are not portraits commissioned by proud burghers. Rather they are the portraits of the pious leaders of reform. Moreover, they are not commissioned by these men themselves, but by a young man who wishes to revere and remember them.

The Hales-Gwalther correspondence is important for understanding
how seriously the question of idolatry was taken by the leaders of Zürich's ecclesiastical establishment. Zwingli and his supporters had proved the danger of painted idols. The idols had been removed. Great care had now to be taken that a new form of idolatry did not emerge with the leaders of the Reform themselves becoming the objects of idolatrous devotion.

This controversy had direct bearing on Hans Asper, for it has been demonstrated that it was he who was commissioned to paint the portrait cycle for Hales.112 The theologians had presented their misgivings about the uses of portraiture. Is there, however, some quality in the paintings themselves which would exacerbate their fears? A reiteration of Asper's characteristic style may be illuminating here: he customarily placed a single figure against a flat background of vivid color. He was not a master of color or texture, nor was he an anatomist, and his figures have a rather stiff smooth quality, as if carved from wood. He was not a great artist, no master of human psychology, no innovator. Because of this he was heavily reliant on older artistic traditions or on borrowing from the more talented Holbein. The result of his borrowings is interesting. In his simplicity he has reproduced many of the qualities of the late medieval Andachtsbild. One example will suffice to demonstrate this phenomenon. In 1549 he had painted a portrait of Regula Gwalther and her daughter Anna.113 It is quite a tender portrait. Ostensibly it owes its composition to Holbein's portrait of his own family. Without this knowledge, however, the viewer may be reminded of other depictions of mother and child: Hans Asper's portrait of Regula Gwalther and her daughter is very
reminiscent of depictions of the Virgin and the Infant Christ! The likeness is enhanced by the simplicity of the woman's dress for as a pastor's wife she could not afford the rich embroideries, ribbons, and laces which decorate the garments of the wives of the wealthy. Rather than an elaborate head covering, she wears a simple white veil—a veil that might almost be a nun's wimple. This simplicity of dress gives a timelessness to her appearance. In fact the total simplicity of the work contributes to creating this impression even though Asper has carefully included the date and the ages of both mother and child. The brilliant blue background has the same flat unreal quality possessed by the gold backgrounds in many medieval religious works. The heads of both figures possess a smooth almost carved quality which creates the sense that one is viewing presences rather than persons. Thus the whole effect of the portrait is iconic: mother and child presented to the viewer, but separate from him. Asper has a final touch which unites the scattered impressions contributing to the disturbing quality of the work. Enclosed in her mother's arm, Zwingli's granddaughter holds a pear. Although there is no doubt that Asper added this detail in order to enliven the portrait, he may have unconsciously drawn on memories of other paintings of mother and child, for in medieval religious art the pear frequently appears in connection with the Infant Christ, symbolizing his love for mankind.\textsuperscript{114}

None of this is to suggest that Asper intended to create an icon. It is rather to note that old habits and forms are difficult to discard. When Asper painted Zwingli's daughter and granddaughter he would not have been conscious that he was alluding to time-honored ways of de-
picting the Virgin and Child. Nevertheless he has painted a secular Madonna. When the controversy over the correctness of allowing the portraits of Switzerland's reformers to be painted occurred, it must be remembered that Hales, Gwalther, Bullinger, all had Asper's work—or something similar—in mind.

It would be a gross overstatement to say that style alone determined the objections to portraiture. The doubts and objections already existed. The whole question of idolatry had been thoroughly disputed and decided. What is suggested here is an unconscious connection made between theological objections and artistic style. Asper's portraits of Zwingli, Bullinger, Pellikan, et al. retain many of the stylistic features of pre-Reformation religious art. That Asper ever intended anything but a faithful translation of observed reality—here, the physical appearance of individual men and women cannot be implied even obliquely. Yet his portraits of the leaders of the Swiss Reformation have in their very simplicity and naivety the solemnity of icons.

Thus what on the surface might appear to be an artistic genre highly suitable to a reformed and evangelical society becomes, when investigated, highly problematic. The same Christians who form the Ecclesia and the community are tainted with Adam's sin. Proud, willful, vain, and deceitful by nature, they only display these qualities when they commission and hang portraits. Even when portraits are desired as remembrances of loved and revered men, they are not innocent. Might not the representations of these men lead to idolatrous thoughts and practices?

It is, however, important to bear in mind that portraiture was not
clearly condemned. A portrait is, after all, only an object of wood, cloth, and paint. Zwingli did not condemn the commissioning of portraits. Rather he condemned those qualities which made men and women desire to have their portraits painted. Even realistic renderings cannot remove the suggestion of vainglory and deceit: what depiction of external reality can reveal the dark secrets of the human heart?

VIII

It was noted earlier that 1550 seems to have marked a turning point of Asper's career. The number of commissions declined, his work decreased. The decline in public work commissions cannot be fully explained even though it is known that the Council undertook no great building projects during this time. Perhaps the city gave no significant decorating commissions in this period. It is, moreover, true that Asper was in his fifties at this time and perhaps considered past his artistic prime. Yet he had no rival as a painter in this period. It is significant, therefore, that after 1550 only three portraits are now attributed to him. Two of these are of "foreigners." Asper's final works, as we have seen, are not portraits at all but public art.

The career of Hans Asper as a portraitist follows an interesting course. It begins with a portrait of Zwingli and there can be little doubt that the work was created out of a desire to memorialize the fallen leader. After this came a series of portraits of men prominent in both secular and religious life. For twenty years Asper dominated
the field of portraiture in Zürich, attracting the patronage of the city's most successful citizens. His last major works of portraiture were of religious leaders. These portraits were fraught with controversy. It is the nature of the controversy that offers answers to the continuing question of the relationship of the visual arts to the cultural and religious life of Zürich.

The years following Zwingli's death in 1531 were years of ecclesiastical and civic reorientation. Under the leadership of Heinrich Bullinger, the Reformed Church in Zürich underwent a change not in basic principles but in direction. The church remained a force to be reckoned with, and Bullinger took upon himself the task of following in Zwingli's footsteps. Yet his own religious outlook was greatly influenced by the meditative qualities of the devotio moderna. As the leader of the church, he set himself the task of maintaining the work undertaken by his predecessor, especially emphasizing the teaching and clarification of the faith. Bullinger lacked Zwingli's zeal in the spread of reform and had opposed the aggressive policy which led to Kappel. His leadership therefore, stressed fellowship with other reformed communities and more individualized piety.

In the years between 1531 and Bullinger's death in 1574, the emphasis in religious teaching shifted to a new and increasingly strong emphasis on orthodoxy, and with this ordering of religious thought came an effort to order religious behavior: Christian obedience was stressed. Men and women were to consider their thoughts and acts in the light of God's Word, to order their lives both inwardly and outwardly according to the dictates of Scripture. It is true that
by mid-century Zürich had relinquished the leadership of the Swiss Reformation to Calvin's Geneva, yet the citizens of Zürich remained aware that their city was a beacon for adherents of the Evangelical faith throughout Europe. Did not their religious leader carry on massive correspondence with other leaders of reform, and did not the city itself receive and welcome religious exiles from England and Italy? Thus with the stress on personal piety, orthodoxy and religious obedience, and with the knowledge of Zürich's place in Reformed society, many citizens must have considered their public actions carefully.

Long before the removal of images the question of artistic patronage had been raised. Men had argued that money should not be lavished on religious art while there was hunger and want in the community, raising a question both social and religious in its implications. Post-Reformation portraiture was not intended as religious art. Christopher Hales had supported his desire for portraits of Switzerland's religious leaders quite ably, using Zwingli's own arguments on the proper uses of art. Nevertheless serious questions had been raised as to the propriety of portraiture for Zwingli in his exposition of man's character had implicitly denounced the desires which impelled men to want their portraits painted. The suggestion that a portrait might lead to idolatrous devotion must have raised further doubts. Thus in a religious climate such as that which obtained in Zürich in the middle decades of the sixteenth century, men may have hesitated before openly displaying their personal vanity.

At the beginning of this chapter the problem of Hans Asper's finan-
cial failure was introduced, and an attempt made to investigate the cultural and religious climate in which he worked. To say that this climate was inimical to the visual arts would be false. An investigation of book illustration and stained glass will reveal a very real interest in some forms and aspects of artistic expression.

The art produced in Zürich in the years preceding the Reformation betrayed the rift between traditional religious expression and the religious desires and interests of the community. Zwingli's teaching on art had sanctioned the desire for depictions of contemporary life evidenced in pre-Reformation art. Portraiture concerns itself in the most intimate way with contemporary reality and should have, therefore, been acceptable. Yet the subject of portraiture is man and his nature, and the purpose of portraiture was often to provide an outlet for man's vanity or his desire for fame. Thus the portrait genre must have presented problems to those wary of misusing the visual arts. Christopher Bale's request for portraits of six religious leaders raised serious questions about the orthodoxy of portraiture. That such a man as Bullinger could have doubts as to the propriety or orthodoxy of the genre may help to account for the decline in portrait commissions after 1550. Portraiture would not disappear in Zürich because of this— even to suggest such an idea would be false. It would however, be some time before another artist attempted to make his name as a portraitist in that city. 129
NOTES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

1 Wüthrich, p. 12.


3 Ibid.

4 Wüthrich, p. 10.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Egli, doc. 655. For details on Hottinger see G.R. Potter, Zwingli, p. 185, note 2.

8 Egli, doc. 655.

9 Hugelshofer, Zweiter Teil, p. 87. Asper had six sons and five daughters born between the years 1527 and 1552. Two sons, Hans Rudolf (born 9 March 1531) and Rudolf (born 12 January 1552) followed their father's profession. Both belonged to the Meisen Guild. Hans Rudolf left the city in 1554 for an unknown destination. Rudolf took over his father's workshop after his death. He received numerous commissions from the Council including the painting of decorative panels for the Rathaus, and decoration of various clock faces and sundials. He is also known to have produced at least two portraits in 1593.

10 Hugelshofer, Zweiter Teil, p. 88. Also, Paul Leemann-van Elck, Die Offizin Froschauer (Zürich: Orell Füssli Verlag, 1940, pp. 80, 82, and 86. Leemann-van Elck posits that Asper may have executed some woodcuts before 1531, but this is supposition.

11 Wüthrich, p. 11.

12 Ibid.

13 Cuttler, p. 410.

14 Ibid., pp. 410-411.

15 Hugelshofer, Zweiter Teil, p. 88.
16 Ibid., p. 86. Some Zürich artists emigrated to Catholic cities such as Lucerne or Freiburg. Others went to Basel where there were more artistic opportunities. For example Jost and Martin Moser, Oswald Suler, Heinrich Weber and Hans Heinrich Ban became stained glass painters in Freiburg. Jakob Klauser and Hans Dygg emigrated to Basel.

17 Wüthrich, p. 10.

18 Ibid., p. 11.

19 The subject of stained glass and its patrons will be more fully discussed in the next chapter.

20 Hugelshofer, Zweiter Teil, p. 88.

21 Lemann-van Elck, p. 80.

22 Hugelshofer, p. 88.

23 Ibid., p. 89.

24 Ibid.

25 Lemann-van Elck, p. 80.

26 Hugelshofer, Zweiter Teil, p. 95.

27 Ibid.

28 Lemann-van Elck, p. 83.


30 Hugelshofer, Zweiter Teil, p. 97.

31 Ibid., p. 98. See also Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, pp. 158-159.

32 Ibid.

33 Wüthrich, p. 12.
34 Ibid., p. 10.


36 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 54.

37 Fischer, et.al., p. 11.


39 Ibid.

40 Fischer, et.al., p. 12.

41 Since these were not religious works and therefore not threatened by iconoclasm, it is unlikely that works were lost in the "purge."

42 Fischer, et.al., p. 12.

43 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 75.

44 Ibid., p. 48.

45 Ibid.

46 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 62. There may also have been a companion portrait of Rudolf Gwalther, now lost.

47 Ibid., pp. 68–69.

48 Ibid., p. 190.

49 Ibid.; See also, p. 46.

50 Pope-Hennessy, pp. 64–66.


52 Holbein was only two years older than Asper.
53 quoted in Hugelshofer, p. 96.

54 Ibid.

55 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, pp. 52-53.

56 Ibid.

57 Pope-Hennessey, p. 94.

58 The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art, trans., K. Jex Blake (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1896), p. 99. Pliny praised naturalism as the goal of painters. This thought is developed throughout his chapter on painting.


60 Ibid.

61 Ibid., p. 205.

62 Ibid.


64 Ibid.

65 Ibid., p. 45.

66 Ibid., p. 52.

67 Ibid., p. 53.

68 Ibid., p. 51.

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

71 Benesch, p. 61.
72 Wüthrich, p. 10.

73 Walton, p. xii, I. I, like Walton, recognize that here the term "state" is an anachronism.


76 Ibid., p. 367.

77 Walton, pp. 210-112.


79 Ibid., p. 221.

80 Egli, doc. 1655.

81 Walton, p. 226.

82 Pope-Hennessy, p. 3.

83 The arguments advanced have already been discussed in Chapter II.

84 Pope-Hennessy, p. 179.

85 Benesch, p. 70.

86 Ibid., p. 77. Benesch continues by stating that the Reformation broke the back of German art for the rest of the century.

87 Pope-Hennessy, pp. 101-103.

88 Zwingli, "On True and False Religion," The Latin Works, III:75-76.

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid.
91 Ibid., p. 78.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid., 83.

94 Ibid., p. 84.


96 Ibid., p. 17.

97 Ibid., p. 45. Interim rogo te me Rodolphe, ut cures mihi apud Apelles vestrum hae pingendae effigies, videlicet Zwingli, Pellicani, Theodore, D. Bullingheri, et tuam ea magnitudine, qua mihi tuam ostendisti, idque tabulis, non panno, manibus tenentes libris; in quibus imis rogo te, ut quatuor versus affigendos cures quorum argumentum ego tuae prudentiae reliquo.

98 Ibid., pp. 47-48. Scripsi ad D. Gualterum, ut sex imagines describendas mihi curaret; quod ille efficisse se scribit sed 4 retentas esse duplici ratione: primum, quod periculum sit ne in posterum idololatriae fenestra patefiat; deinde ne vitiis vobis vertatur, perinde quasi inanis gloriae studio enim cupiebam habere, ut et Bibliothecae ornamento essent; et vestrae imagines effigies in tabella quasi in speculo conspicereantur iis, qui loci intercapide prohiberverunt, quo minus vos coram cernere possent. Non hoc agitur, vir praecclare, ut ex vobis idola faciamus, iis quas dixi de causis, non honoris aut cultus gratia desiderantur.

99 This letter is undated.

100 Ibid., p. 48. Valde miror Burcherum persistere in ea sententia, ut putetnullas omnino imaginines salva conscientia et pietate pingi posse, cum ne unus quidem apex in sacrarum literarum extet, quo id vere probari posse videatur. In sacrarum libris non alia ratione (si quid ego intelligo) vetantur fieri imaginines, quam ne populus Dei a vero veri periculum si absit, non video cur non et pingi et haberi possint, cum praesertim non es loco retineantur, ubi ulla idololatriae sit metuenda suspicio.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid. ... ecquis tam ab omni religione, pietate, timore altissimi et omnipotentis alienus, tam sui prorsus obitus, ut imagunculam in

103 Ibid., pp. 25-27.

104 Pope-Hennessey, p. 3.

105 I am thinking here of Holbein or of Agnolo Bronzino whose Mannerist portraits give insight into a whole culture.


107 Ibid., p. 82.

108 Ibid., pp. 83-84.

109 Ibid., p. 76.

110 Ibid., p. 84.

111 Pope-Hennessey discusses fully the relationship of humanism to portraiture.

112 Poesch, p. 25.

113 Hales had seen this portrait.

114 George Ferguson, Signs and Symbols in Christian Art (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 36. This symbolism can be seen in Dürer's Dresden Altar of 1496.

115 It must be remembered that portraiture did not become a popular genre in Zürich until after Zwingli's death.

116 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 5.

117 I have been unable to discover any major projects in Zürich for this period, although it is known that Asper worked in Solothurn painting mural battle scenes in 1552 and 1554. See Wüthrich, p. 12.
118 Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 74.
119 Ibid., pp. 68-69.
120 Locher, p. 586.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid., p. 42.
123 Ibid., p. 43.
124 Ibid., p. 613.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid., p. 619. It is interesting to note, however, that no one was executed on religious grounds during this period.
127 Ibid., p. 614.
128 Ibid., p. 42.
129 Tobias Stimmer who was born in 1539 in Schaffhausen was a truly talented painter of the next generation. Although he is famous in part for his portraits of some Zürich citizens, he cannot, I think, be accurately described as a Zürich artist.
CHAPTER FIVE

STAINED GLASS

KABINETTSCHEIBEN

The problem of portraiture had pushed one aspect of Reformed theology on art to its logical conclusion. The theologians of the city had reached an impasse, able neither to exonerate portraiture from the accusation that it presented a potential spiritual threat nor to forbid the genre altogether. Thus the issue must have been clouded enough to raise doubts in the minds of that segment of society able to commission portraits. That there were doubts about portraiture did not, however, mean that these same citizens were willing to forego opportunities for the display of status and for the addition of beauty to their daily lives, and while portraiture became problematic, those small fruits of the craftsman's labor which could decorate the homes of those of comfortable means seemed free from censure. Among these objects of decorative art, one genre came to play a significant role in the cultural life of the city. This genre, stained glass, became an important form of artistic expression in Zürich—indeed, in all of Switzerland—in the middle years of the sixteenth century, only to begin a decline in the waning years of that century. In the years when the genre flourished, however, the art of heraldic glass or Kabinettscheiben became so developed and so popular in Switzerland that it has been called a truly Swiss art form,¹ and a study of its development does much to illuminate the social and economic changes that occurred in Zürich in the years following the official acceptance of Reformed Evangelical teaching.
The art of stained glass has a long and noble history, long because it extends far back into the culture of Western Christendom, noble because it became a vehicle for exalted, even mystical, contemplation. It is important, therefore, to stress that stained glass is basically a Christian art form, an art form which developed out of the need to make the Christian church an edifice separate and distinguishable from any other.

There were colored glass windows in churches in Western Europe as early as the sixth century, for it is reported that the Church of St. Martin of Tours had such windows. These should, however, be thought of as small panes of colored glass, not the sophisticated and elaborate designs which would develop later in the Middle Ages. Slowly there grew an intimate, even inextricable, interrelationship between ecclesiastical architecture and the stained glass art, culminating in the Gothic cathedrals of Western Christendom. This interrelationship was created first by an attitude toward the church building and second by an attitude toward the nature and function of light. The church, material edifice and object of human labor and expenditure, was intended to give the worshipper a foretaste of paradise, to be in the world yet otherworldly. One means of effecting this miracle was the use of light—light which Robert Grosstepe would define as the mediator between bodiless and bodily substances. Increasingly stained glass would become this mediator, taking life, glowing when penetrated by natural light.
What did this mean to the theologians and less learned worshippers who entered the churches and cathedrals in which these windows were placed? Abbot Suger, the moving force behind the development of the Gothic style at St. Denis, argued that men could come to closer understanding of the light of God through the light of material objects in the material world. About St. Denis he wrote, "Bright is the noble edifice that is pervaded by new light (lux nova)." This new light had both a material and mystical existence. The stained glass, glowing by the operation of light, and bearing images of the saints and scenes from Scripture could teach the faithful the details of the faith. But such windows could teach other truths as well. Suger observed that stained glass, which gleamed with light like precious stones, taught a mystery: these windows glowed like fire without fire and seemed to burn without heat.

Such a mystical approach to the use of stained glass reached its highest achievement in the cathedrals of France. At Chartres, for example, there is a true union of the didactic and mystical qualities of stained glass, creating within the church the sense of a world exalted and apart. At the height of the Gothic period by means of the marriage of architecture and stained glass, the light on the inside of churches was completely different from the light outside.

With time, however, the attitude which had made this union possible changed, and stained glass became less and less identified with divine light. Two factors contributed to this. One was the introduction of glass—sometimes stained glass—into non-ecclesiastical edifices, both public and private. The other had to do with a change
in artistic taste resulting from a new concept of divine light. Light was still conceived of as representing order and value, as a manifestation of the creative principle. But by the fifteenth century, men had developed a new concept of the visible manifestation of these principles. Where once divine light was emulated artistically by colored glass which took on the varied and rich colors of precious gems each of which had its own symbolic meaning, now men had come to conceive of divine light as a white radiance. From this belief a new style developed in stained glass—grisaille—uncolored or smoky glass which allowed natural uncolored light to fill the church. Thus, by 1500, those churches possessing these grisaille windows were illuminated by white light, now identified with divine light.

II

When Zwingli formulated his theology of art, he was acquainted not only with the stained glass windows in Zürich's churches, but with the small heraldic panels already popular in Switzerland. These panels did not concern him, and when he spoke or wrote of stained glass it was in the context of religious art in an ecclesiastical setting. In his "Answer to Valentin Compar," he touched on that subject when discussing those art forms which he considered to be harmless and therefore acceptable. After explaining that Zürich's churches had been cleansed of idolatrous images, he continued: "Yet, there are many pictures (Bilder) in the windows... they do not lead to idolatry, and no man respects them or worships, honors or serves them...."
For Zwingli those windows, once conceived as transmitters of god-like radiance, had become mere colored decorations with "many pictures." Yet he seems not to have been blind to the possible presence of divine light. After the removal of the images, paintings, and decorations from the churches their walls were covered with white-wash. Zwingli was moved by the effect of this bare radiance for he wrote, "In Zürich we have churches which are positively luminous, the walls are beautifully white!"\#19

It is noteworthy that in attempting to create an atmosphere free from idolatrous incitement, an atmosphere of silence and serenity where nothing could distract the worshipper from the sound of the Word read or explicated by the pastor, the city officials had gone beyond their goal and achieved something else, something which Zwingli noticed perhaps without fully comprehending what he had observed. With their "luminous" walls, the churches of Zürich became suffused with clear natural "white" light— that light lately identified with divine light.

When Zwingli exonerated stained glass windows from any idolatrous culpability he not only implicitly declared them an acceptable art form, he also de-mystified them. Where once Suger had seen stained glass windows as noble symbols of a great mystery, now in Zwingli's Zürich they would become merely beautiful decorative objects. Stained glass had become secularized.

In truth, however, this process of secularization had begun before Zwingli ever formulated his ideas on religious art. The process had begun when stained glass windows were produced for non-ecclesiastical
edifices. The great tradition of stained glass, so intimately interrelated with Gothic architecture and scholastic theology, had waned in the late Middle Ages but in Switzerland it took a new form determined by civic and private patronage. These new sources of patronage were not the monoplies of the Swiss, but belonged to a general trend characterized by increasing prosperity among the urban population with the attendant desire to improve or beautify the edifices in which they lived and conducted their affairs of business or government. Until the fifteenth century, the Church had preserved its influence in determining the subject matter of stained glass windows, secular topics were virtually taboo. With the increased desire for the advancement of public buildings and the private dwellings of the wealthy, however came the desire not only for stained glass, but for stained glass depicting new subjects or proclaiming new ideas. Even when the windows were commissioned as pious gifts to the church the donors were becoming increasingly concerned with advertising and preserving their identities. Out of this concern came the type of stained glass which would become so popular in Switzerland, and hence in Zürich.

From the end of the twelfth century there had steadily grown an interest in including a picture of the donor among the saints or holy figures depicted in church windows. From this developed the custom of including the heraldic devices of the donor and/or his wife. Such devices appear in stained glass early in the thirteenth century as components of windows offered to the church; by the end of the fifteenth century the field had expanded, and glaziers were creating heraldic devices not only for churches but for government buildings, guilds,
and the homes of the wealthy.  

The glaziers of the Swiss cities came to excel in the production of these small heraldic panels, developing the genre until the authors of Stained Glass could write that these Kabinettscheiben "constitute a genuinely Swiss art form."  

This new form of stained glass art began in Switzerland in the second half of the fifteenth century with Bern taking the lead in its production and development, but by 1500 the genre had been introduced to Zürich. The list of membership of the Lux and Loy Confraternity list the names of several "Glaser" some of which recur throughout the century in the context of glass painting.  

The genre did not develop in a vacuum. On the contrary, its development seems a direct reflection of social and economic developments in Zürich and throughout the Swiss city-states. It is, therefore, important to note that the art of the Kabinettscheibe began in a period when material prosperity began to rise in the Swiss cities as a result of the pensions obtained through mercenary service. This activity meant not only an increase in prosperity, but an increase in contact and commerce with the rest of Europe, and an accompanying need for some distinctive object of symbolic display or diplomatic gift-giving. In this context one very important factor must again be stressed: in Switzerland in general, and in Zürich in particular, there was no monarchy, no court life, nor any enormously rich magnates with cultural pretensions. Rather, there was a loose Confederacy led by city-states which were nominally democratic or oligarchic in constitution. Thus there were not centers for the production of monumental art, no
enormously wealthy patrons. There was, at the turn of the century, on the other hand, a trend toward the building and decoration of those buildings so important to urban life, the City Hall and the Guild House. Increasingly these buildings boasted glass windows. Zürich certainly participated in these trends: money poured into the city from mercenary pensions in the latter years of the fifteenth century, and the years associated with the rule of Hans Waldmann were characterized by expenditures on civic beautification. The rise in prosperity was not enormous, however, and René Hauswirth has demonstrated that the population from which the government of Zürich was drawn in the early sixteenth century was often of comparatively modest means.

Given all these factors, the reasons for the popularity of Kabinett-scheiben become clear, for such an art form seems ideal for a society which wished some form of ostentatious display but possessed neither the wealth nor the cultural foundations for the production of monumental art forms. The small heraldic stained glass panels responded to both social and economic necessity, and by the end of the fifteenth century a custom peculiar to Swiss culture had developed around their creation and use. This custom, Fensterbetzelei, or "window begging" is curious indeed. Developing in the late fifteenth century in the period of new prosperity and new building projects, the custom was enthusiastically carried on by representatives of various civic and ecclesiastical organizations which sought decorative windows for their guild halls, monasteries, or council buildings. These organizations developed the practice—which was a departure from the tradition of stained glass as an art form belonging to a religious setting—of
sending representatives to meetings of the Confederate Diet with petitions begging windows from the assembled Confederates for their respective organizations or public buildings. This custom was quickly accepted, and became an established and increasingly bothersome Swiss tradition. That "window begging" had become almost epidemic in Zürich is evident from this mandate of the Zürich council dated 6 February 1487: "Up to now there has been much running after and pleading (with the Council) for windows... which causes useless expense and which must cease... Henceforth no one should give windows either to innkeepers or to any others for their houses." "Should requests be made to the Bürgermeister," the document continues, "he may have reference to this mandate which allows the donation of windows only to churches, City Halls, Guild Halls, or other similar community houses. In these cases the Bürgermeister and council may act as they have on previous occasions." 

By the early years of the sixteenth century the custom had become so prevalent and troublesome that the Confederate Diet itself took steps against indiscriminate and private window begging. Finally, in 1517, the Diet ordered that the begging must stop—except in the case of churches and other public buildings.

Such mandates indicated that the desire for these small decorative windows had become an entrenched feature of Swiss urban life well before the Reformation. When the Reformation came to Zürich, therefore, this particular secular aspect of the stained glass art was a firmly established art form which had already found non-ecclesiastical patronage, an art form which had already departed from the original use for
which stained glass had been intended. Where once stained glass had adorned only churches, used as a conveyor of symbolic meaning and as a teaching aid, now it had become a decorative means for displaying private or civic wealth and prestige. Thus it had become robbed of much of the significance which was once attached to it. True, the craftsmen of Zürich continued to produce stained glass for churches, but they worked now in a different context. The Swiss stained glass of the sixteenth century was small, non-monumental, and separate from any great architectural scheme.

Zwingli's theology on art insured that what had been a drift away from past usage would now become a final break. True, he sanctioned the use of stained glass windows in churches, but in doing so he drained them of their original significance. Now these stained glass windows, like the Kabinettscheiben, became decoration, nothing more. Their former function had been usurped by the luminous white church walls, by the sound of Scripture read in the worshippers' own language.

Once the art of stained glass had become truly secularized first by popular usage and then by theology, the art of the Kabinettscheibe came to full fruition, for it was an art that truly flourished in Zürich after the Reformation. Paul Boesch has observed that Zürich had more glass painters in the sixteenth century than in any other city in Switzerland, and notes an increase in their number in the second half of the century. Thus while in 1540 he records the presence of nine glaziers, in 1560 there were twelve, and by 1580, seventeen. A real stained glass industry seems to have been in operation in Zürich during the Reformation period.
III

To understand the workings of this industry it will be necessary to discover how the glass painters worked, who they were, and for whom they worked. First it is important to understand something of the glass painter's technique. As with other medieval art forms, stained glass had undergone an evolution since its early development. A stained glass window began then— as it does now— with a pattern or design. This design was produced by a craftsman or artist who may or may not have been the actual maker of the stained glass window. In the Middle Ages these designs were drawn on whitened boards which could be folded into sections for transportation or storage. They were not only cumbersome but relatively expensive, and thus they were frequently used, transported to a new church, and reused. The glazier, using this design as a pattern, cut pieces of glass "puzzle" or mosaic fashion. These pieces were then fastened together by means of lead strips. This "puzzle" method of creating a window meant that the windows of the Gothic period had a certain flat, abstract quality with the expertise of the artist or glazier being confirmed by his ability to juxtapose the brilliant glass pieces so as to achieve the greatest and most effective interplay of light and color. In other words, the medieval glazier painted with glass.

Slowly, however, the techniques of the glazier began to change. In the fourteenth century it was discovered that silver stain applied to glass would turn yellow or gold when fired. This was important for two reasons: first because it introduced the technique of paint-
ing on glass, and second because it reduced the amount of leading required. This meant that the craftsman could paint such details as haloes and garment decoration directly on the glass.

During the same period glaziers also developed the verre doublé or flashed glass technique, a technique whereby glass of one color was coated with another, a hitherto unimagined range of color. Added to these techniques was the use of Schwarzlot, a kind of ink or paint used for features. By the 1380's glaziers had added a stippling technique, allowing a sense of roundness to the flat glass figures.

By the end of the fourteenth century the trend away from abstraction was established, aided by a series of factors both social and artistic. The increasing use of glass and stained glass for public buildings and private homes necessitated a change from the large colored windows which were such an integral part of Gothic cathedrals, for whereas the stained glass windows in churches were intended to create a mysterious space, the windows in public buildings were intended to let in light. Hence the popularity of the small figured panels. Moreover, the influence of the Flemish painters in the fifteenth century changed the approach of the glaziers to their craft. In stained glass, as in painting, there developed a great interest in detail, especially the details of contemporary life, and such interest necessarily led away from the abstraction which had been one of the intrinsic beauties of stained glass during the development of the Gothic style.

Finally the invention of the printing press had here—as in so many other areas—a very great influence. Where once the glazier had
depended on cumbersome wooden cartoons, now he had the whole world of
graphic art at his disposal. Soon glaziers were borrowing designs from
such artists as Dürer and Holbein. Here interest in observed reality
and technique merged, for with the use of verre doublé, and with the
increasing use of shading and detail, the craftsman had not only a
wider and more subtle range of color, but more possibility for natural-
istic rendering. By the Reformation period glaziers were no longer
painting with glass, but painting on glass.48

Furthermore they were working increasingly in the Renaissance style
with its concern with perspective space and sense of three-dimension-
ality.49 This required the skill of a true artist and thus there
developed a trend—seen already in the development of graphics—of
a division of labor between the artist-designer and the glazier, al-
though the best glass painters were capable of both design and execu-
tion.50

That Zürich participated in all of these trends should not sur-
prise, for the culture of Reformation Zürich was one in which there
was a fascination with the natural world and with its accurate depic-
tion. Now this fascination will find expression in the miniature but
super-vivid world of the stained glass Kabinettscheibe.

Many of the glass painters in Zürich were both successful and high-
ly respected members of the community. This itself testifies to the
popularity of their work: the prominent practitioners of the craft
seem not to have had the difficulties with which artists like Leu and
Asper had to contend. Some of these men belonged to families which
had been involved in the glazier's craft since the turn of the cen-
tury: the names Egeri, Blüentschli, and Funk are prominent in both the civic and the artistic records of the city well into the sixteenth century.  

IV

Of all the art forms discussed, it is the art of stained glass which seems most to have captured the interest and imagination of the citizens of Zürich. The work of the glass painters was in great demand not only by private citizens but by the government. This governmental patronage of stained glass, moreover, was important because after the Reformation came to Zürich the state became the most significant patron of the arts in the city. Although it did not commission great mural cycles or monumental works of sculpture, it did desire some artistic vehicle for the enhancement of the city-state through some form of rich display. Stained glass Kabinettscheiben answered a need, for although they are relatively small and inexpensive, the effect of a series of such panels filling the windows of a building is indeed brilliant and impressive.

The altar retables or pre-Reformation Zürich were not distinguished for their richness or subtlety of color. The opposite is true of stained glass of sixteenth century Zürich. Here the artists' experiments led to a wide variety of rich and brilliant hues: a whole range of blues, clear amethysts and burgundies, glowing greens and golds. The glass painters provided a richness and brilliance for the homes of the citizens and for their public buildings which had once been
the sole prerogative of the Church. 54

Such richness and brilliance were not, however, the only qualities which made stained glass panels popular. These panels also offered opportunities for the expression of themes and ideas dear to the hearts of their owners. Since stained glass was considered an art form which was harmless to Christian piety, and since it was such a popular form it is useful to be acquainted with the themes and topics employed by the glass painters.

Once the theologians and magistrates had arrived at an official agreement about religious art, and once this agreement had led to governmental action, both artists and craftsmen must have been eager to work within sanctioned boundaries. Since the action of the magistrates reflected the wishes of the dominant portion of society, the purchasers of post-Reformation art works must have sought art which expressed these wishes. Thus the chosen themes of stained glass panels must express the tastes and interests of that same segment of society which embraced Reformed teaching. This can be demonstrated through a study of the extant panels made for Zürich's citizens.

Before enumerating these themes, however, it is necessary to discuss a group of patrons who did not belong in the closed context of Zürich and its surrounding countryside: that is, the patrons in the Catholic areas for whom some of the craftsmen of Zürich continued to work. It is significant that these men worked not only for their fellow citizens, but that they provided Kabinettscheiben for Catholic churches and monasteries as well. It is an interesting phenomenon that in a city which had renounced the cult of saints, and which
officially forbade the use of images in churches, there were artists and craftsmen at work supplying windows depicting scenes from the life of the Virgin or representations of the saints.\textsuperscript{55} Thus, for example, Carl von Egeri, one of the city's most prominent and talented glass painters, created a cycle of windows for the cloister of the monastery at Muri consisting of depictions of donors with their patron saints, and Niklaus Bluntschli and Jos Murer prepared a series showing scenes from the life of the Virgin for the convent at Tänikon in Thurgau in 1558–1559.

It is noteworthy that these Protestant artists usually turned to the work of an earlier generation of artists when preparing religious works for Catholic areas: Bluntschli and Murer relied heavily on Dürer's Life of the Virgin and Passion Cycle when working for Tänikon.\textsuperscript{57} This must reflect the religious orientation of their own community, for since the reform of the church in Zürich there would have been no contemporary local models on which to draw. Moreover, the religious climate was such that it seems unlikely that such themes would have been generated spontaneously. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that "Catholic" panels would no have been frowned on if displayed in Zürich itself, there seems to have been no objection to the creation of such works for Catholic patrons in Catholic areas.\textsuperscript{58}

The Kabinettscheiben produced for the citizens of Zürich and other Protestant areas, however, followed a different direction than those produced for Catholic "consumption." In this context, the artists began to develop themes which were of particular interest to a Protestant society while at the same time retaining the old heraldic ones.
In these works the same concern with narrative, history, and realism which characterized both local late-medieval works and which were Zwingli's preferences obtained. An interest in heraldic or patriotic themes was certainly not exclusive to Zürich, but was in evidence throughout Switzerland, due in part to the patriotic interest in the Swiss past fostered by Swiss humanists and in part to the uses for which Kabinettscheiben were intended. It is therefore not surprising that two of the favorite subjects were the Wilhelm Tell story, and the depiction of the swearing of the oath which bound the earliest Confederates in perpetual covenant.59 One of the earliest depictions of Wilhelm Tell's famous feat of archery was commissioned by the printer Christopher Froschauer.60

It is significant that one pre-Reformation religious subject retained its popularity after the Reformation, namely the legend of the city's patron saints. Theoretically representations of Felix and Regula should have been forbidden along with those of the other saints. Instead a new meaning was attached to their representation, one which was altered to conform to the new teaching. Where once they were honored as holy intercessors, now they were honored as a part of Zürich's history, as was Charlemagne.61 They became not figures for religious awe, but figures used to express pride and patriotism. They were retained as symbols and rendered harmless.

The most interesting subjects, however, were those taken from Scripture. The favorite themes were drawn from the Old Testament, although some New Testament stories such as that of the Good Samaritan were also popular. The selection of Old Testament subjects de-
serves close attention, for these were often related to popular literary works, and were employed for their efficacy as didactic vehicles. Here is a clear example of a close relationship between word and picture, for the drama held an important place in Swiss urban life in the sixteenth century, and the citizens experienced intense delight in dramatic presentations of historical or religious subjects: many of these plays were based on stories from scripture. ⁶³

In Zürich and throughout the Protestant areas of Switzerland the favorite biblical themes were Abraham's sacrifice, Lot and his Daughters, Susannah and the Elders, David and Bathsheba, and Judith and Holofernes. ⁶⁴ These same stories were among those most popular among Protestant writers in Germany, for they presented apt examples of God's favor to the righteous, of the victory of the godly over the godless, and they were, moreover, considered exemplary of a proper Protestant life-style, especially in the areas of marriage and family life. ⁶⁵ It is not difficult, therefore, to understand the popularity of these subjects in an art form which was intended to decorate homes and public buildings.

The story of Susannah, for example, was quite popular among Protestant dramatists. One of the first dramas which combined humanist literary form with Protestant ideology was the "Geistlich Spiel von der Gotfürchtigen und Keuschen Frowen Susannen," written in 1535, by the Lutheran schoolmaster Paul Rehuhn, although the story had already been dramatized by Sixtus Birck in Basel in 1532. ⁶⁶ This story, dealing with virtue vindicated, had wide resonance in the Reformation period and continued to retain its popularity throughout
the century. Equally meaningful was the story of Judith which Luther had praised as "a good, serious and courageous tragedy (eine gute ernste tapfere Trägödien)." Several plays devoted to the story of Judith and Holofernes were written in the second half of the century, with the figure of Judith used to symbolize the Protestant cause, and the figure of Holofernes to symbolize the Pope. The story of David and Bathsheba, another popular subject for stained glass panels, was treated by Hans Sachs in 1556 as an object lesson in sin and repentance.

The Kabinettscheiben thus played an important role in the expression of a wide spectrum of religious and societal ideals. They not only satisfied the desire for light and color, but they served in a small way at least to announce the possessor as a person of some means and standing in the community. These small glass panels reflected many of the interests and aims of the citizens who produced and bought them.

This being the case, it is noteworthy that scholars of the stained glass medium see a decline of that medium beginning in the last decades of the sixteenth century, and continuing into the early years of the next. They find that stained glass did not retain its popularity after the early years of the seventeenth century. The authors of Stained Glass make this very pointed observation: "(stained glass) ... died in the sixteenth century, slowly poisoned by the Renaissance and... stabbed in the back by the Reformation." This is a strong statement, supported by art historical criticism, for judged on an aesthetic basis, the works created toward the end of the
sixteenth century do decline in quality, becoming busier, more confused in composition, having less clarity and brilliance. Certainly, in the development from a religious to a secular art the medium had lost much of its mystery, but this had begun before the Reformation with the interest in stained glass for civic and private buildings, and with the popularity of non-religious subjects. The art historical criticism concerns itself, however, with the relationship of Renaissance style to stained glass. Renaissance art had introduced the concept of the picture as a framed window into which the viewer gazes. The adoption of perspective space and the artists' ability to make figures inhabit that space convincingly meant that the depicted world could approximate the visual perception of observed reality. Stained glass workers experimented with perspective, and began to develop techniques which would aid them in this endeavor. The result was the ability of the glass painter to paint on glass as he would paint on canvas: he could achieve depth, perspective, and three-dimensionality. Soon stained glass came to be regarded by artists as "an intractable form of easel painting." This new attitude toward stained glass is viewed as detrimental to the achievement of true beauty by students of the medium, for when the picture conceived as a window into a world approximating visual experience is itself a window depending for its aesthetic effect on light penetrating a flat, clear plane, difficulties arise. Thus for those sensitive to the beautiful abstraction of medieval stained glass, the stained glass panels of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries seem betrayals of the stained glass medium. Once the stained glass "space" was perceived as "real
space" the way was clear for the decline of stained glass as an art form: The beauty intrinsic to the art was lost. Where once the artist had concentrated on "painting with light," now, in pursuit of realistic if jewel-like depictions of emblems and scenes, he forfeited the aura of mystery which stained glass had been developed to communicate. It is perhaps in this as much as in the adoption of stained glass for secular usage that the art of stained glass was "poisoned by the Renaissance and stabbed in the back by the Reformation."

Although this explanation does much to clarify the artistic decline of stained glass in the early seventeenth century, it does little to illuminate the cultural context in which these later works were produced. That the citizens of Zürich should want realistic depictions is in keeping with what is known of other art works produced in their city both before and after the Reformation. That stained glass painters should adopt Renaissance perspective to answer their needs is also appropriate. Moreover, such a style was fitting for the narrative and didactic scenes sanctioned by Zwingli as appropriate subjects for artistic activity once the old transcendent art had been discarded.

Yet this adoption of Renaissance style meant a vast difference between the clarity and abstraction of medieval religious stained glass and the elaborate confusion of the late sixteenth century Kabinett-scheiben.

Therefore, it is useful to seek an explanation for this "decline" in the social and economic life of the city, in the status and interests of the patrons of the medium, as well as in any religious motivations. The art of stained glass seems to have truly captured the
imagination of the Swiss in the sixteenth century. The work of stained glass painters was in demand among private citizens, members of the government, and guild members and members of clubs (Schützengesellschaften). Court rooms, hospitals, council chambers, guild meeting halls and private sitting rooms all boasted the brilliantly colored panels. Even religious leaders and men of recognized piety possessed Kabinettsscheiben; in 1545 for example Bullinger was presented by his colleagues with three panels bearing Biblical scenes and quotations executed by Karl von Egeri, and Grosshans Thomann, another local artisan had created a panel depicting sea creatures for Conrad Gessner. 77

This public and private patronage is significant for it indicates one direction open to the arts in post-Reformation Zürich. Moreover, stained glass panels answered the need for color and display, for although they are small, they are brilliant and impressive when seen in series filling the windows of a building. The altar retables of pre-Reformation Zürich had not been distinguished for their richness or subtlety of color. The opposite is true of stained glass. The earlier jewel-like brilliance became muddied in the course of the century, however, and since the panels appealed so greatly to the affluent public and since they reflected the taste of that public, the connection between the public and the "decline" of stained glass must have significance.

Oechsli dated the decline of the medium from around 1560. 78 This is curious for it is at this time that some segments of Zürich's citizenry began to achieve new prosperity and a new concept of their position in their community. Even before the Reformation there had
been a rise in prosperity in connection with the acceptance of mercenary pensions, which had led to a more luxurious life style for many. Moreover, although the members of the Small Council belonged to the elite of the society, and although that group was made up of the wealthier landowners and merchants, Zürich had long been a community in which artisans and craftsmen could participate in government and be eligible for the lucrative bureaucratic positions necessary for governing the Landschaft. Thus although there was validity to the claims raised in the pre-Reformation period that the poor were begging at the church door, there was not the gap between the wealthy conciliar families and the small merchants and craftsmen, between the burghers and the inhabitants of the surrounding countryside, which would develop as the century advanced. During the second half of the century, however, this relative homogeneity began to alter, creating wider divergences.

One subtle factor was the authority with which Reformed teaching had endowed the magistrates for this element of society was empowered to maintain order and orthodoxy by the Grace of God. Such a concept did much to alter the self-consciousness of the magistrates of the city-state. Another factor was the development of strong monarchies outside of Switzerland, which attracted the admiration of these same magistrates who were seeking a model fitting their own enhanced positions in their society. Thus they developed an attitude toward themselves and their position more than a little unlike that which their fathers and grandfathers had held. They began to select models for their roles and behavior that can only be called aristocratic.
The significance of the guilds altered also. At their inception they had been a force for the democratization of society. By the second half of the sixteenth century this was no longer true, for the guild masters had severely restricted the rules governing eligibility for membership. It became increasingly difficult for a citizen to achieve master status—a requirement for becoming a member of the Council. It became increasingly difficult for the ordinary citizen even to become a member. 85

Allied to these elements which altered the social constitution of the community were economic developments which fitted a general pattern throughout Europe during the century. The chief characteristic of this pattern was a sharp division in wealth and social status between agricultural workers, small businessmen and craftsmen, and those members of the community who controlled the means for production of manufactured goods. 86 In Zürich these trends manifested themselves in a sharp differentiation between ruling city and ruled countryside, 87 and in a rise in prosperity among that element of society connected with the cotton and silk weaving industries which after a late medieval hiatus flourished in Zürich after mid-century. 88

Thus the general trend and pattern in Zürich was an increase in wealth and power for those connected with government and commerce, and an impoverishment for many artisans and merchants. These divisions of necessity affected the life-style of the citizens involved. For many there was poverty, but for others there was an increased ability to possess fine furniture, tableware of pewter and silver, beautiful panelling for sitting rooms, rich fabric hangings, stained glass. 89
A study of artistic patronage must pass over the interests and possessions of those too poor to commission or purchase works of art. Rather, attention must be focused on the tastes and interests of the art-buying public. In Zürich this public consisted of comfortable burghers and conciliant families with increasingly aristocratic pretensions, a public which produced from its midst neither connoisseurs of the arts nor patrons of large monumental projects, a public with a taste for objects which declared their owners' prosperity.

The "aristocracy" which begin to come into existence in Zürich in the latter part of the century reveal two interests in the art forms which they preferred. One is an interest in maintaining and defending the evangelical religion adopted by both citizenry and state. The other is rather more worldly: the interest in securing and displaying wealth and position. Stained glass Kabinettscheiben were a means of declaring both interests. Many of the motifs chosen asserted the desire for a godly community, but even as these works made this statement, they declared the secular interests of their owners as well. They are an art form which allowed not only ostentation but also the expression of a desire for color and display which the Reformation had bridled and confined. Within these confines stained glass was given astounding latitude, for Zwingli himself had exonerated the genre from any culpability.

With the tacit approval of the state-church and the enthusiasm of the citizens, therefore, the genre grew and developed. It became more ornate, reflecting the changes in the social fabric of the community, adopting perspective and three-dimensionality necessary for the
realistic depictions of figures and scenes which its public desired.

The earliest stained glass had been created to aid in the trans-
lation of worshippers to a spiritual realm, to a transcendence of the
cares and desires of this world. The purpose of the Kabinettscheiben
was quite other. Their purpose was to articulate the interests and
positions of their owners in this world. Thus although they were not
theoretically objects of idolatrous adoration, and although they obeyed the strictures on religious art, they betray trends in society not
necessarily consonant with the austere beginnings of the Reformation.
The Kabinettscheiben betray an interest not only in the things of this
world, they declare an interest in the material things of this world.
Yet even though they betray that desire for ostentatious self-aggran-
dizement which Zwingli had characterized as part of man's fallen nature,
they were a minor art form, and allowed a latitude denied more serious
genres. What was questioned in portraiture passed unnoticed in stain-
ed glass.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE

1 Bernhard Anderer, "Glasmalerei im reformierten Zürich," Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 15.


3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 16.

5 Locher, Zwingli’s Thought, pp. 6-8.


7 Lee, Seddon, Stephens, p. 16.


9 Deuchler, Light, p. 41.

10 Ibid., p. 42.

11 Lee, Seddon, Stephens, pp. 53-54.

12 Patrik Reuterswärd, "What Color is Divine Light?", Light, p. 109.

13 Lee, Seddon, Stephens, p. 100.

14 Deuchler, Light, p. 38.

15 Reuterswärd, Light, p. 112.

16 Lee, Seddon, Stephens, p. 83.
17 Reuterswärd, Light, p. 112.


19 quoted in Garside, p. 160.

20 Panofsky, Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism (Latrobe, Pennsylvania: The Archabbey Press, 1948), pp. 2-3. As the title implies this essay demonstrates the connection between the Gothic style and Scholastic thought.

21 Deuchler, Röthlisberger, Lüthy, p. 82.


23 Ibid.

24 Ibid., p. 28.

25 This follows the trend in the development in portraiture.


27 Anderes, Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 15.

28 P. Schweizer, "Die Lux and Loyen Brüderschaft in Zürich," pp. 2-4. This document lists several family names prominent among glass painters during the pre-Reformation and Reformation periods: Bluntschli, Egeri, Funk, as well as glaziers from other Swiss and German cities.


30 Anderes, p. 15.

31 Ibid.

32 Boesch, Glasmalerei, p. 28.

33 Ibid., p. 29.
34 Hauswirth, pp. 201-224.

35 Boesch, *Glasmalerei*, p. 29.

36 Ibid. In 1499, for example, Zürich, Lucerne, Schwyz, and Zug all provided windows for the cloister of the monastery at Kappel.

37 quoted in Boesch, *Glasmalerei*, p. 28.

38 Ibid., p. 29.

39 Ibid., p. 32.

40 The development of oil painting by Flemish artists in the fifteenth century is a good example.


42 Anderes, p. 18.

43 Lee, Seddon, Stephens, p. 84.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Note that large windows, as opposed to small panels, were very expensive.

47 Lee, Seddon, Stephens, p. 61.

48 Anderes, p. 18.


50 Ibid., p. 64.

51 Anderes, p. 84.

52 *Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation*, p. 10.
In the Swiss National Museum in Zürich these small panels are displayed with great success: the rows of colored windows all glowing in natural light are extremely jewel-like and brilliant.

Lee, Seddon, Stephens, p. 63. It is noteworthy that the Reformed churches did not commission stained glass during the Reformation period.

I know, however, of no artist from Zürich making a retable for a Catholic church after the removal of images in that city.

Boesch, Glasmalerei, p. 90. Carl von Egeri was one of the more influential glass painters working in Zürich during the Reformation period. Born between 1510 and 1515, he seems to have been trained outside Zürich even though he belonged to a prominent local family. He was a member of the artists' guild, and married to Anna Lavater, the daughter of the Burgermeister. The 1540's were a very prosperous period for him as he received many commissions, represented his guild on the Great Council and was one of the Chorherrenpfleger. His talents were recognized by his fellow citizens. The number of public commissions testifies to this, and it is confirmed by Bullinger's assessment of him and his work: "he was a great artist (Ein Großer Künstler)." Niklaus Bluntschli, his pupil, was born around 1525. His career is interesting because of the fact that most of his commissions came from Catholic areas. That he worked so often for Catholic patrons and that he employed pre-Reformation subjects has led to the supposition that he himself may have been a Catholic, or at least sympathetic to the Catholic faith. Jos Murer was one of the most talented men working in the stained glass medium. He was, moreover, very versatile, for he worked not only as a glass painter but as an illustrator, topographer, dramatist and poet as well. He was born in 1530 the son of a brass founder who had emigrated as a young man from Grünigen, and thus Jos Murer did not belong to any of the local artist families and his early training remains a mystery. Today he is best known for the work he did for Froschauer.

Ibid., pp. 90-91.

I know of no such objection.

Boesch, Glasmalerei, p. 138.

Leeman-van Elck, Offizin Froschauer (Zürich: Orell-Füssli, 1940), p. 118.

62 Boesch, Glasmalerei, p. 140.


64 Barbara Könneker, Die Deutsche Literatur der Reformationzeit (Munich: Winkler Verlag, 1975), p. 166. Other favorite stories were those of Jacob and Esther.

65 Ibid., p. 165.


67 Ibid., p. 326.

68 Ibid.

69 Ibid., p. 606.


73 Claude Lapaire, Handzeichnungen des 16. Jahrhunderts (Bern: Paul Haupt, 1965), p. 47. The earliest Kabinettscheiben depicted heraldic devices or banner-carrying figures in an architectural framing device. The frame was intended only as a decorative border, and the figures enclosed in the border float in space. Hans Holbein the Younger changed this by introducing perspective space to the stained glass repertoire. The figures inhabiting this space thus inhabited "real" space.

74 Sowers, p. 47.

75 Lapaire, p. 4.

76 Lee, Seddon, Stephens, p. 18.

77 Boesch, Glasmalerei, p. 115.
78 Oechsli, p. 204.

79 Morf, pp. 2-21.

80 The offices of Landvogt or Ammann, are examples.

81 Dändliker, II:678.

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid., p. 679.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid., p. 683.


87 Dändliker, II:682.

88 Oechsli, p. 205. In 1555 Catholic refugees from Locarno fled to Zürich bringing with them their skills as weavers of silks and velvets, and as makers of richly embroidered ribbons and laces. This revived what had earlier been a thriving industry and soon Zürich became so successful in the manufacture of these items that France began levying tariffs in 1585 to protect its own industry in Lyons.

89 Dändliker, II:686.
CHAPTER SIX

CHRISTOPHER FROSCHAUER

THE IMAGE AND THE WORD

The ancient argument over the efficacy and propriety of a sensual approach to the divine and ineffable had been settled in Zürich with the decision to remove all religious images from the city's churches. Centuries of custom and tradition were thereby negated and denied. Where once entrance into a church had meant entrance into a world outside earthly time and space, now entrance into one of Zürich's churches meant not an escape from contemporary life, but an affirmation of it. Here the community---the gemeinde---met to hear God's word, to pray, to commemorate Christ's death and sacrifice. The tension between the lively interest in community and daily existence and the desire for union with the holy apparent in Zürich's pre-Reformation art had been resolved. As we have seen, however, the issue was not so easily resolved by the city's artists. A search for an artistic style appropriate to the new teaching was difficult for men trained in the forms of late medieval art. Portraiture, a newer form developing from humanist interests and studies, was also found to be suspect and considered even idolatrous. Art forms which attempted to serve as intermediaries between God and man, which sought to provide a mystical connection between the earthly and heavenly spheres were denied, as were those forms which sought to glorify men. Nevertheless, the desire for pictorial representation remained strong. Now, however, this desire had to find new expression in keeping with evangelistic teaching. Art as a vehicle for transcendence was forbidden. Art as explication was not.
Sixteenth century Zürich's solution to this artistic dilemma is to be found in the efforts of some citizens—most of them not themselves artists—who were thoroughly committed to Zwingli's teaching. The discussion will begin with the work of Christopher Froschauer, a printer and publisher, and will end with the work of Conrad Gessner, a humanist scholar and natural philosopher. Through the efforts of these men and others working with or near them Zürich's artistic life was given new direction.

I

To understand the significance of printing in Zürich and of Christopher Froschauer's efforts in the evangelical cause, something must first be known of the history of printing in Zürich, a history which is both typical of developments throughout Northern Europe and of cultural developments within the city. Fifteenth century Zürich was a center neither for learning nor for cultural innovation. While Swiss military prowess and skill had introduced a precarious kind of prosperity to the city, this prosperity had not raised the educational level of the city's population. In Zürich as in most of Switzerland the general public was poorly educated, and the cultural tone was that of a community which had quickly acquired ready money without at the same time acquiring deep intellectual interests. There was little audience for the erudite Latin works published in nearby Basel, yet there was an avid audience for another more popular type of printed works. Even before the introduction of the printing press,
there was a lively market for woodcut pictures of the saints and of sensational events introduced by travelling artists or peddlers.⁶

This interest was shared by other illiterate or un-educated people throughout the rest of Europe in the pre-Reformation period and did not necessarily indicate that Zürich's paucity of cultivation was unique. Rather, it followed a general cultural trend: single leaf block-printed woodcuts or block books were popular among the common people long before printed books became common.⁷

Zürich did not lag far behind the rest of German-speaking Europe in acquiring its own printing industry, for the first printing press in the city was set up in the Dominican monastery in 1479.⁸ Printing presses in their early history had found favor with the Church, and they were not uncommon in monasteries in the last decades of the fifteenth century, and thus it was not unusual for a bishop or an abbot to hire an itinerant printer to set up a press in his cathedral town or monastery and to print works on theology, missals, and breviaries.⁹ Printing in pre-Reformation Zürich, therefore, followed a not atypical course. In Zürich as in other cities in Northern Europe printing for the popular market involved itself in meeting the demands of late medieval piety. In Zürich, however, the introduction of the printing press was linked to a specific need: in 1475 Pope Sixtus V had declared a Jubilee Year for the city. Beginning in 1479, and continuing for five years, the profits from the sale of indulgences were to be directed toward the renovation and beautification of the city's churches. The Papal Bull inaugurating this project was sent to Zürich on July 12, 1479. It was the arrival of that Bull which led to the intro-
duction of the printing press to Zürich, for now it was necessary to print the letters of indulgence. Thus the printing industry in Zürich began under the auspices of the Church, in a monastery, with the strong support of the Abbot.

Because the city had no printer, it was necessary to import one. The Bürgerbuch of Zürich contains this entry for April 14, 1479: "Sigmund Rot, known as Langschneider the book printer from Bitsch has sworn citizenship 3. Post resurrexit 79. gratis." Sigmund Rot, brought to Zürich by the Dominicans, was given citizenship in order that he might set up a press and bring the art of printing to Zürich.

Once Rot was established in the city, he began to train some of the Dominicans in his craft and by late 1479, or early 1480, the Dominican press was producing religious works, notably those of one of the brothers, Albert von Weissenstein. Rot remained in Zürich aided by the local notary as proof-reader, printing indulgences, dispensations, spiritual commentaries, and calendars until 1483 when he departed to continue his work in Heidelberg. After Rot's departure, although the Dominicans continued to print some single-sheet religious works, their press seems to have gone into decline; there was little interest among the ill-educated citizenry in the works published there. Thus the Dominican printing experiment must, when objectively judged, be termed a failure.

If the old-fashioned Latin religious works did not find a market, it was not that printing had none in Zürich. There was an enthusiastic market which required not the product of the modern and expensive printing press, but the older and simpler product of the wood-
cutter and block-book maker. These craftsmen provided what the public demanded: Andachtsbilder and playing cards. The most successful purveyor of these works was Peter Hager, a formschneider who had come from Breisach via Basel. He was not a printer, but was trained in the older craft of transferring an artist's drawing onto a wood block for printing. It is significant that he was established in Zürich before Rot came, and had begun to be quite successful by the time Rot left. Evidence for his success can be found in the expansion of his business and in his steady increase in prosperity. Although he had come to work in Zürich as a formschneider, he had, by 1477, a thriving business in playing cards and religious woodcuts—articles which answered both the sacred and profane needs of the community.¹⁸

Successful as Hager might have been, he was not a printer by trade. Thus when the itinerant Rot left Zürich he left no successor to further publishing in the city. There were others besides Hager making and selling calendars, religious pictures and playing cards but it would be inaccurate to speak of a true printing industry in Zürich at the end of the fifteenth century. Two factors contributed to this. One was the low level of education among the population, the other was the proximity of Basel, a major printing center. Thus should any citizen of Zürich have had an interest in the classic works of antiquity or in the recent innovations of humanistic scholarship he looked to the publishers of Basel to supply his needs.¹⁹ For the general public the Andachtsbilder and calendars sufficed. By the turn of the century printing in Zürich was at a standstill if not in a recession.²⁰ Early in the sixteenth century, however, the industry began a modest
revival. In 1503 Hans Ruegger opened a combination printing press and book shop. He himself was probably not a printer, as there was no source of training in Zürich, and there is no evidence that he was apprenticed elsewhere. He was, like Hager and the other purveyors of woodcuts, a businessman working to satisfy the local market.

In 1504 a great Schützenfest was announced for Zürich. Suddenly Ruegger's shop was in great demand, for there was a need for placards, invitations, and other materials which only Ruegger could supply. This local event set Ruegger solidly in his feet, and he continued until his death on May 8, 1517 to print documents for the city, as well as calendars and those single-leaf works typical of late medieval piety.

When Hans Ruegger died in 1517, he had in his employ a quite remarkable figure. This young man was a young printer of unusual capability and sensitivity to the potential of his craft. He was remarkable not in any startling or dramatic way, but rather in the timeliness or his entrance into the cultural and communal life of the city. Before his coming, printing in Zürich had been without focus or direction, without creativity or force, utilitarian and commercial. When used in the service of religion it supported outmoded tradition rather than reflecting the growing unrest in the community. Standing in the shadow of Basel, serving neither the humanist scholar nor the connoisseur of the arts, Zürich had no graphics industry of its own.

Because of the limited scope of the city's printing industry, one would hardly imagine that Zürich would be prepared for the task of spreading Reformed teaching. Yet the city was fully capable of carry-
ing out this important task, largely because of the efforts of the remarkable figure, Christopher Froschauer.

II

Christopher Froschauer was not a native of Zürich, but had been born around 1490, in Bavaria. He probably learned his craft from his step-father Johann Froschauer, a printer from Augsburg, and seems to have followed that traditional course open to printers, attending school until the age of fourteen and then being apprenticed. At least some of his journeyman experience was in Basel, for it is known that he was in that city in 1508. Paul Leeman-van Elck posits that he worked at the Froben Press, for his relationship with the Froben brothers was extremely friendly from his earliest years as a publisher. At some time between 1515 and 1516 he arrived in Zürich to become a typesetter and printer for Ruegger. It must be noted at this time that Froschauer was, even at his arrival, somewhat unique in Zürich, for he was a trained master printer, and he was, moreover, a printer who would remain the rest of his life in Zürich.

When Ruegger died, he left his printshop to his widow. Froschauer continued in her employ, until soon thereafter when he married her. Now Zürich had a publisher who was also a printer, for with the bride came the bride's property. The means for developing a real printing industry in Zürich were, therefore, at hand. Now all that was lacking was a motivating influence or force. This would soon be supplied by the evangelical preaching of Huldreich Zwingli.
On the eleventh of December of 1518, Zwingli began his duties as the people's priest of the Großmünster, and on January 1, 1519 he began to carry out his intention of preaching the gospels in their entirety and in sequence, beginning with the Gospel of Matthew. That same year Froschauer took membership in the Guild zum Saffran and became a citizen of Zürich. This citizenship was a gift of the Council which bestowed it "seiner Kunst wegen," signifying the body's appreciation of the importance of printing as an industry. More important for the development of printing in Zürich, however, was the fact that within that same year Zwingli and Froschauer became friends. The importance of this friendship cannot be underestimated, for soon the two men would form a tacit partnership, each working for the spread of evangelistic teaching, and through Froschauer's efforts Zürich would have one of the most prominent printing houses in the sixteenth century.

It is not known exactly when the printer became converted to the reformed faith. In October 1520, the Swiss Confederal Diet sitting in Baden took the decision to burn Luther's works and to ban their publication within Switzerland. It is known that shortly thereafter Froschauer began to print these forbidden works anonymously. This act indicates not only courage, but conviction, and it is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Froschauer had by this time become convinced of the truth of evangelical thought. The next year, 1521, he printed the first dated work with his name and the address of his press: four Latin works of Erasmus previously printed in Basel and now translated into German by Leo Jud.

During Lent, 1522, he took an action which gained him the strong
disapproval of the heretofore friendly authorities. That March he, as well as several other like-minded citizens, undertook to violate both the law of the Church and the Ordinance of the city in the name of their faith. One evening Froschauer gathered around him in his house members of his household and some friends who shared his beliefs. Zwingli himself was present but did not participate. There in defiance of law and custom they ate meat with their evening meal even though it was Lent. This was no light offense, and must have been done with forethought and planning, with knowledge of the potential danger involved, for Froschauer's wife had procured the meat from the butcher with a lie, saying that she bought it for a friend in childbirth.

Their fears were well founded for Froschauer and several others were arrested before the end of March and there was some danger that they would be handed over to the Episcopal Court at Constance.

Such danger caused Zwingli to clarify his position, and on March 23, 1522 he preached his famous sermon, "Concerning the Choice of Freedom of Foods," in which he argued that Lenten fasting was not Scriptural. In April Froschauer submitted a petition to the Council in which he defended himself both as a good citizen and a good Christian. This document is quite interesting, for it reveals Froschauer as not only an upright member of the community and a pious man, but as a canny businessman as well. It is well to pay heed to this combination of qualities which appear in his petition, for it was this combination which assured his success as a printer and publisher. He began not with Scriptural arguments in defiance of custom but he rather excused himself on the traditional grounds that he and the men working
at his press had incurred an unusually heavy amount of manual labor in order to have their edition of the Epistles of Paul ready for the Frankfurt Book Fair.\textsuperscript{42} After providing himself--and the Council--with a traditional and legal sanction for his activity he continued by stating his most sincere religious belief, that God has enlightened men with the light of truth and that that truth is to be found in Scripture which we must believe.\textsuperscript{43} He continued that he had such trust in his government that he knew that if he had done nothing against God's word then he would be protected. If, however, the authorities should see fit to punish him he will not complain. Yet he intended no offense either to God or man in eating meat and he is an obedient citizen. Moreover, he stated, "I believe in Holy Scripture, that is, where it states that a Christian life is not lived by food or yet by drink or in any outward works, but along in right belief, trust and love whereby we live with each other in truthful, correct, friendly and simple condition." He concluded his defense thus:

"Item, who wants to read let him look in the Gospel of Matthew XV, Mark VIII, Luke XI, in Paul to the Romans X, to the Corinthians VIII, to Timothy in the first Epistle IV, and in the other Epistle III."\textsuperscript{44}

He was freed with a small fine, and on April 16, he printed Zwingli's sermon on freedom of choice with regard to foods, now expanded to a pamphlet.\textsuperscript{45}

The meat-eating incident allows us to see clearly the printer's motivation: his petition to the Council is in effect his declaration of faith. The discussion of that work cannot proceed without that knowledge, for in his choice of works to print, in his care in produc-
tion, even in his business acumen there is always evidence that he worked in the service of a belief. A list of the works published by his press from 1521 until his death in 1564 makes this abundantly clear: beginning with publication of the works of Erasmus and Luther, he continued by supporting the work of Zwingli, Jud, Bullinger and Gwalther and by publishing numerous editions of the Bible in both Latin and German. Moreover, he printed reports on religious disputations as well as Leo Jud's Catechism.46

His publication of all these works tacitly testifies to his intention, but the idea is also clearly and firmly articulated in his will. Childless, he left his press to his nephew Christopher with this demand:

... that the printing and book business shall remain together as it is now owned, undivided and undiminished for this reason: that through printing the honor of God and His eternal truth, and also the good arts (Künste) and morals of the world along with all goodness are to be planted. Furthermore, the honor and praise of our good city Zürich will be increased and many a good and pious citizen may thereby make his living. Also nephew Christoffel above all shall print useful things so that our true Christian religion shall fight against and be victorious over the sectarian, rebellious, immoral, annoying and harmful ... that at all times he print only useful honorable and Christian works ... 47

Nowhere can one find a more clearly articulated sense of vocation. Froschauer has dedicated his press to the service of his religion, to his city, and to his fellow citizens. It is necessary to remember this in the following discussion of the illustrations of the works which were printed by him. Froschauer's piety and patriotism have been indicated. One other element must be noted: that is his vivid and refined aesthetic sense, a sense which can be seen everywhere in his work, in
his care in selection of type faces and decorative borders, in his keen interest in the procurement of woodcuts to illustrate his books. It is this last which most concerns us, for in seeking illustrative woodcuts he did much to allow "... many a good and pious citizen to thereby make his living."

Froschauer's interest in woodcut illustrations presents somewhat of a problem inasmuch as the great preponderance of the works published by his press were of a religious nature: much of his effort was devoted to the publication of Bibles. Many of these were richly illustrated. Does this not present a contradiction? Froschauer as a friend of Zwingli and a supporter of the Reformation in Zürich must have agreed with the new teaching on religious art. Yet it was Froschauer who to a large extent helped change the direction of artistic patronage in Zürich by employing the artist and the Formschneider to illustrate his productions both religious and secular. How did Froschauer and the pastors of Zürich reconcile the new teaching on religious art, on images with the illustration of Bibles? Was there in fact, difficulty in such a reconciliation, or was Biblical illustration accepted without question? To discover the answers to these questions the pertinent theological arguments must first be reviewed.

III

Zwingli had declared himself a friend of the arts. In writing against images he admitted that, "no one is a greater admirer than I of paintings and statuary." It was not art, but art falsely used
that offended him: "No one is so stupid as to think that we ought to
do away with statues, images, representations where no worship is offered them." Thus the Reformed church's struggle was only against those
images which hindered belief in one God, ones which were honored or
used as helpers. This was clear and should have presented little
difficulty for the pious printer or artist. Andachtsbilder must be
discarded. But what of pictures as educational aids? This is rather
more difficult. Zwingli had dealt with this question at length in
the Answer to Valentin Compar. He had argued that Christ, who was to
be our example, had not taught with images but with words. We have
those words and the other words of God in Scripture, and that should
suffice. Moreover, one can learn very little of Christ's message or
nature through images, for Christ's divine nature cannot be depicted.
In short, only external things can be learned from images.

But what of these external things? Did Zwingli object to their
depiction? The evidence is somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand,
as we have seen, he found these things useless. On the other hand,
they may also be harmless and even pleasurable. His struggle was not
against pictorial art but against idolatry. Thus a work of art which
is not idolatrous may be approved. Therefore he separated images
(Bilder) from idols (Götzen): "Götzen are images of helpers or those
to whom honor or worship is paid; Bilder are likenesses of any visible
thing which does not lead to hope or to worship." Bilder were
allowed. Götzen were not. "Thus they (Bilder) may be tolerated out-
side the churches but only where they are represented in historical
or narrative fashion without invitation to worship."
These arguments lay bare what must have been an ambiguous attitude toward the illustration of Bibles. Theoretically men and women should learn from the Word alone: pictures do little more than suggest externals. Moreover, under the leadership of Zwingli, Zürich's educational system was being reorganized to provide the means for the training of pastors for the spreading of knowledge of scripture. In 1525 Zwingli had been made principal of Zürich's schools, and he began immediately to put his educational ideas into operation.\textsuperscript{54} After this Zürich would have a grammar school and a theological seminary. Thus where once the common people had had to rely on pictures and images, now there would be pastors trained in explicating the Word, and that Word could be translated into Swiss German for those who were literate.\textsuperscript{55} No longer should the people be in need of a "Bible for the illiterate."

Yet Zwingli sanctioned narrative and historical representation, and he and his contemporaries viewed Biblical narrative as a record of historical events, as history. Thus one door is open for the introduction of illustrated Bibles.

We do not know directly what Zwingli's attitude toward Bible illustration was. What we do know is that Froschauer was a committed follower of Reformed teaching and would not willingly have done anything against the spread of the Gospel. Thus it can be concluded that during Zwingli's lifetime there must have been no objection to Froschauer's efforts. In 1523, and again in 1543, the Council passed a censorship ordinance which stated that "from henceforth no painter of any sort of book, song, speech or any other thing might print
anything be it small or large without the knowledge and permission of 
the authorities."

Toward the end of 1545, the Council increased the severity of the 
censorship ordinance because another printer living in the city, 
Augustin Mellis, known as Fries, had printed a "perverted, offensive, 
papist Lord's Prayer (ein verkert, schmechlich, böupstlich Vater-unser) 
and "sayings of Duke Heinrich von Braunschweig and his followers."
These works were confiscated and burned, and the Council ordered that, 
"no printer may accept or print either books, songs, sayings or any 
other thing small or large with no exceptions whether the work had been 
printed before or was to be printed for the first time, either clandes-
tinely or without the foreknowledge of the authorities." 56

Thus it can be assumed that from that time anything printed at the 
Froschauer press had received an official imprimatur. The illustrations 
of religious works printed in Zürich, therefore, deserve close atten-
tion for they must reflect an "approved" religious art.

Two ideas must be borne in mind in connection with the illustration 
of the printed book in Zürich: one is the relationship that had dev-
developed between the printed word and the woodcut or engraved illustra-
tion, and the other is Christopher Froschauer's own aesthetic sense. 
The marriage of printed woodblock pictures with printed texts had be-
gun before the invention of the printing press. The block book, a 
fifteenth century development, had filled a great need, for it provid-
ed simple illustrated reading material for those too ill-educated or 
too financially disadvantaged to read or own expensive manuscripts of 
learned works. Woodcuts of religious scenes or of sensational events
obtainable at a very small price were circulated throughout Northern Europe before Gutenberg's invention revolutionized the world of letters. The intellectual aspect of this revolution is well known. The aesthetic aspect is not always given its full due. The beauty of the early illustrated printed book often lies in the harmonious balance between the black and white linear woodcuts (or more rarely, engravings), and the black and white of the printed page. The result is a series of pages in which text and picture have equal optical value. With the immense artistic leaps taken by Albrecht Dürer at the end of the fifteenth century, the arts of woodcut and engraving had reached their height and were now true partners with the printed word.

A man with such a good business sense as Froschauer could not have been blind to the virtues of the illustrated book. Even were this not so, tradition would have played its part: already by the second quarter of the sixteenth century the culture of northern Europe possessed an almost ingrained disposition toward illustration. The broadsheet or single leaf had, since the fourteenth century, been popular among the poor and many a poor man's home had been transformed into a shrine with the purchase of a woodcut Andachtsbild.

After the Reformation the Andachtsbild was no longer welcome in Zürich. But what of pictures, or illustrations? What of Froschauer's desire to produce beautiful books for the common people as an expression of faith. Was there to be no more illustration of religious works? Even the most perfunctory study of Froschauer's publications must evoke a resounding "No" in answer to this question. With the growth of the Froschauer press, book illustration in Zürich became increasingly
rich, varied and creative. Much of this richness, variety, and
creativity is found in his illustrated Bibles. How is this to be ex-
plained?

Before proceeding with an explanation I would like to quote at
length from Bruno Bettelheim's book on fairy tales, The Uses of En-
chantment:

This, incidentally, is the reason why illustrated
storybooks, so much preferred by both modern adults
and children, do not serve the child's best needs. The
illustrations are distracting rather than helpful.
Studies of illustrated primers demonstrate that the
pictures divert from the learning process rather than
foster it, because the illustrations direct the child's
imagination away from how he, on his own, would expe-
rience the story. The illustrated story is robbed of much
content of personal meaning which it could bring to
the child who applied only his own visual associations
to the story, instead of those of the illustrator.
Adults and children alike often prefer the easy way of
having somebody else do the hard task of imagining the
scene of the story. But if we let an illustrator deter-
mine our imagination, it becomes less our own, and the
story loses much of its personal significance. 60

How does a modern psychologist's writing on fairy tales relate to
the question of idolatry? There were two foci to the image question,
both responding to late medieval misuses of religious art. One was
the use of images as "books for the illiterate," seen by many Reformers
as a dereliction of duty on the part of the spiritual authorities
(we have the word of God, if the people were taught they would not
need images and pictures). The second was the idolatrous practice--
arising out of ignorance --of honoring or worshipping images or pic-
tures.

The use of art as an educational aid was more or less discarded
by Zwingli and his supporters. Here they are in agreement with the
ideas which Bruno Bettelheim will later formulate ("...pictures diverge from the learning process"). The use of art as a spiritual aid was discarded also, but here the issue is cloudier. This is where Bettelheim's argument can be helpful and illuminating: "...if we let an illustrator determine our imagination, it becomes less our own, and the story loses much of its personal significance." It was this "personal significance" against which the Reformers fought. The misuse of late medieval art had been this attaching of "personal significance" to a statue or picture, the use of such an art work as a source of superstitious comfort, as a means for wringing from heaven assent to prayers or demands. This personalization of artistic works was what so offended Zwingli and his friends. If, however, there were an art which did not foster such an emotional relationship between viewer and object, might not such an art be permitted? When viewed in the context of Bettelheim's observations, might not Bible illustrations take on a new meaning?

Zwingli had clearly sanctioned the use of narrative or historical illustration, that much is clear. This was in contrast to the art forms which led to meditation and beyond that, perhaps, to mystical experience. Zwingli, Jud, and Bullinger had recognized the power of this kind of art, had recognized that it contained an almost magical power. Illustration, however, does not possess such power. That is its virtue. It is partner or handmaiden to the written text— that is its function. It is not intended to live a life of its own but to lead the viewer willingly to the text.

Thus rather than allowing the mind of the viewer to wander on its
own meditative path, a good illustration will grasp the mind firmly
and lead it to the appropriate text, and this is how Bruno Bettelheim
says an illustration functions. This is precisely what Zwingli would
have desired, a form of art which explicated or illustrated while
actively discouraging reverie or meditation.

The same illustration may, however, function in other equally use-
ful ways. It is important to remember the community context of
Zürich's Reformation. In the arguments against religious images in the
churches one had been heard again and again, namely that the churches
are full of the images of the saints richly clothed and adorned, while
God's true earthly image, man, goes naked cold and hungry. It will
be remembered also that the purchase of an image was a "good work,"
possible only for those with wealth and influence. Thus in a certain
sense image worship was a social issue which threatened to rend the
were not necessarily cheap, but neither were they like the costly
wooden or painted statues or retables commissioned by wealthy indi-
viduals or groups. Christopher Froschauer had said that he wished to
produce Bibles so that the head of every household could obtain one.
Within these Bibles was art, but art which every man could buy, not
just donors with wealth or power. Moreover, it was uniform art.
Each man buying an edition of a Bible had the same pagination and the
same illustrations as his neighbor. Thus while he is united with his
neighbor in knowledge of the Word, the art illustrating that Work
"becomes less his own," as Bettleheim observed of illustration.

That the leaders of the community were eager to impose uniform
orthodoxy can be seen in their increasing control over the production of Bibles in the city. In the beginning Bible printing was left entirely in Froschauer's hands with Zwingli and Leo Jud present to do the proofreading and correcting. Later the Council set up a standing committee to oversee Bible production. Thus Bible printing came to have a civic or community character which it had not previously had.65

There are problems which Bettelheim's discussion presents for anyone dealing with religious art in a Reformation context: Bettelheim argued that the pictures divert from the learning process, that they direct the viewer's imagination away from any empathetic experience of the narrative, that the "story" loses much of its personal significance. These are valid objections, ones which Zwingli himself would have understood. Two things, however, were more important for Zwingli than the objections just noted. First, he was so seriously concerned with image as idol and with the unguided imagination of the viewer that he must have welcomed an art which prevented imaginative or emotional meditation. Second, he was committed to the belief that artistic objects gained much of their power from their placement in churches. Thus the appearance of a picture in a book must have seemed harmless by comparison. A third element must be added. Zwingli belonged to a culture which had for centuries found a portion of its deepest religious expression via the visual arts. The religious expression of Europe in the late Middle Ages had been intensely visual, and this was strengthened, not weakened, by the introduction of printing as a means of communication.66 Perhaps Zwingli and his followers simply could not imagine a world in which there would be no artistic translation of
reality past or present.

Had Zwingli believed illustrations to be harmful or distracting from Scripture, he would surely have fought against such illustration. Had Christopher Froschauer believed that he was diverting his fellow citizens from contemplation of Scripture, he would never have undertaken his massive and expensive illustration projects.

This holds true, I believe, even though the Folio Bible of 1531—the crowning effort of the Froschauer Press, printed shortly before the Battle of Kappel—was criticized by some members of the clergy because many people were more interested in the woodcuts than in the text. This criticism came during the conservative and reactionary period immediately following the disaster at Kappel, and seems to have had no real effect on further Bible illustration. There is no record of any attempt at censorship nor any official reprimand. The objection seems more a recognition on the part of some conservative clergy of the continuing power of the visual arts than a demand that Bibles no longer be illustrated, and Froschauer continued to print illustrated Bibles after 1531, indeed throughout his lifetime. That he did so is a measure not only of his belief in their rightness and conformity to Reformed doctrine, but of their acceptance by the community.

IV

Even though Froschauer continued to print Bibles and other works of religious nature throughout his whole life, it was not religious works alone that were produced by his press. Bruno Weber has ob-
served that the entire output of the Froschauer Press can be divided into three categories: religion or theology, geography, and natural philosophy or science. It is true that in the early years of the Reformation in Zürich Froschauer had expended the greatest part of his effort in printing religious works. This is due in part to his own deepest religious convictions, in part to the encouragement and support given these efforts by the state-church, and in part by the public's demand for such works. The fervor of the early years of reform can only be imagined today, but in this context the stimulating environment of the printshop where printers, publisher and pastors worked together to print the Bibles, sermons and treatises which would purify and strengthen the whole community must be borne in mind.

With Zwingli's death one phase of that Reformation was past, and a kind of wariness had come to replace the enthusiasm of the early years. The Council was put on the defensive, not only by situations and events outside their jurisdiction, but by the demands of the country population as well. Orthodoxy and obedience were stressed. This societal unrest affected Froschauer's publishing business as well. With the publication of the richly illustrated Bible of 1531, his press had reached a height in both productivity and excellence. Froschauer had four presses in operation and had ably demonstrated his skill as printer and entrepreneur. In the decade immediately following the Battle of Kappel in 1531 there was a marked falling-off in his production of printed matter. During this difficult period he began to search for new uses for his press and for new means for expressing his convictions. He would always give great attention to
the printing of religious works, but beginning in the 1530's he began to explore the possibility of printing historical or scientific works.\(^76\)

On the surface it may appear that he was seeking to move away from his original religious intent, to introduce wholly new categories, but this is quite untrue. In printing works on history, geography and science Froschauer was expressing a belief in the interrelationship of these disciplines which was current in the Reformed thought of the period. This relationship is best understood through the reformers' teaching on the Providence of God. In discovering the character of Providence and its relationship to nature, an understanding of the lively interest in natural philosophy which manifested itself in Reformed circles, may be achieved.\(^77\) Before focusing on Zürich it will be useful to understand something of the Protestant position with regard to the study of nature.

When Phillip Melanchthon formulated his educational theories he stipulated that Lutheran Universities and schools should teach only those subjects which serve evangelical doctrine.\(^78\) Among those subjects natural philosophy was given an important position. Why? Because, says Melanchthon, "This whole splendid theatre, that is the heavens, lights, stars... the earth... is evidence (testimonium) of God the overseer. He who lets his eyes roam about must recognize in the order of things God the Architect who continuously is with his work and who preserves and protects it. Also we know God's will in this world, perceive his footprints, when we pursue natural philosophy."\(^79\) Further, the world was created that man may have a habitation and that he may know God. This God rules over everything and the
study of nature not only makes this understandable to man, but proves it. Thus God's Providence may be known now, today, without recourse to Scripture. 80

Zwingli was in agreement with these arguments. In "On the Providence of God," he set forth the nature of Creation, and discussed the relationship of the study of nature to man. He argued that, "Not one of the things exposed to our senses has its origins in itself." 81 Earth was created from nothing by God: "If the earth comes from another cause it must have been created... Therefore it must come from nothing. 82 Since, then, it must be admitted that the earth and stars were produced or created, and that they and all things emanate equally from one and the same source, the next thing is to show by virtue of what power all things exist... existence is... given by Him who is the source and origin of all things that are." 83 Because of this, argues Zwingli, "... all the things that are have their being and live and move in Him... man is not alone the offspring of God; all creatures are so, though one differs from another in nobility and freedom. They are by birth of God and in God, and the nobler any one is, the more it proclaims the divine glory and power." 84 What does this mean for the scholar? Zwingli argued that in the Creation the Creator may be discovered, that the whole of Creation is ordered and regulated by Divine Providence: "And do not things without sensation bear witness that the might, goodness and life-giving power of the Godhead are ever present with them?... do they not proclaim the invincible power of the Godhead, and the solidity and vastness of his grandeur? In all things... we discover the presence of the divine power by which they have
their being, live, and move... By this we learn that even the things which we call fortuitous or accidental are not fortuitous or random happenings, but are all effected by the order and regulation of the Diety. Thus to study nature is to know intimately not only the work of Providence but the will of God.

Theologically all was prepared for interest in the subjects printed by Froschauer. This interest was further supported and aided by Zürich's new educational system. Although the greatest stress was laid on the study of ancient languages as an aid to scriptural study, other subjects were studied as well. The students at the Carolinum studied not only the literature of antiquity, but also mathematics and natural philosophy. After 1541 these courses were taught by a first-rate scholar and scientific innovator, Conrad Gessner. Thus there began to develop an audience for historical and scientific works which had been absent in Zürich in the preceding century. Froschauer, always sensitive to his public, began to seek scientific or historical works to publish.

In September, 1534, he printed Vadian's *Epitome trium terrae partium; Asiae, Africae et Europae*, a geographical work which included one of the earliest examples of geographical illustration in Zürich, a folio size map of the world. Vadian had written the *Epitome* a decade before, but he now dedicated it to Heinrich Bullinger, explaining his intentions to him in a letter dated July 26, 1534. He hoped, he wrote, that in publishing that work he could refute those who felt that Scripture should be the sole source of knowledge, and that he could demonstrate a correspondence between theology and all other
science. Some pious men, continued Vadian, believe that no other source of knowledge than Scripture may be admitted. These men argue that he who represents the church should be a pastor not a thinker (contemplator), should have nothing before his eyes by salvation, knowledge of which comes from Scripture, not form worldly study. With this Vadian strongly disagreed. He came to the defense of the study of the world, of science. It is true, he said, that everything needful is to be found in Scripture. Yet this should not prevent man from the study of nature: the study of astronomy, for example, can demonstrate the wonders of creation and the wisdom of God.

Vadian's words are important in helping to illuminate Froschauer's intent in publishing scientific and geographical works. As with the illustration of Bibles he rejected a narrow interpretation of evangelical teaching, but he always worked with the religious authorities. These men, leaders of the Reformed church, felt supported not threatened by geography and natural sciences, for these could only reveal God's Providence. Thus Froschauer, and his nephew after him, printed great numbers of scientific and historical works.

It is in connection with these works that the printer set out to bring a graphics industry to Zürich. To understand the significance of this decision, it is necessary to draw attention to some features of Zürich book production. First, it is important to note that in the sixteenth century a woodcut was the product of the work of at least two men: the artist who created the design or drawing, and the formschneider who translated that design to the wood block for printing. Second, one should note that Zürich seems to have had no Form-
schneider in the Reformation years, and even when local artists such as Hans Asper provided drawings for Bibles, they had to be sent to Basel or Strasbourg for cutting.  

In 1544 Froschauer took steps to remedy this situation. He decided to set up his own shop for producing woodcuts as part of a general expansion of his publishing operations, a project which involved not only new organization but a rather large financial expenditure. His plan was to bring a prominent Formschneider from some nearby printing center and to use him to train local artists and craftsmen in his craft. This plan was carried out late in 1544, with the introduction of the Strasbourg artist Heinrich Vogtherr, and later the Formschneider, VS, also from that city. Under Vogtherr many local craftsmen were trained, among them three brothers, Rudolf, Johann, and Hieronymous Wyssenbach, Rudolf Herrliberger, and Ludwig Fryg. His work accomplished, Vogtherr left Zürich in 1546, probably accompanied by VS. Before these men left, however, they had aided in the production of one of the most important books published at the Froschauer Press. This work, although not a purely scientific one, reflects not only the newly awakened interest in history fostered by the Swiss humanists, but also the new interest in geography and topography. It contained thousands of woodcut illustrations, all intended as visual counterparts to the text. Such a project was a great boon to local artists, and with the establishment of a woodcutting atelier, these artists were able to continue work on the project after Vogtherr had left the city. This work, Johannes Stumpf's Schweizer Chronik, published in 1547, employed Hans Asper, and another very able artist
Jos Murer, who supplied portraits, battle scenes, and scenes of historical events. Even more important were the carefully observed and drawn views of Swiss cities, for whose execution the artists travelled throughout Switzerland making accurate drawings for incorporation in the Chronik. The passion for sachlichkeit is overwhelming, and points a new direction not only in illustration, but in scholarship as well.

In the late fifteenth century the attempt to integrate the desire for depiction of the known, visible world with the invisible and transcendent had produced a tension rather than a synthesis. Here the tension is resolved. Under the Reformed teaching on Providence there was justification for accurate representation of the world in which the community "had its being, lived and moved." Hence the great care in the depiction of hills, valleys, streets, and buildings which characterize the illustration not only of the Stumpf Chronik, but geographical works as well.

The Reformation in Zürich had virtually negated direct ecclesiastical patronage of the arts, and the local artists felt its effect. True, the printing industry provided another source of income for artists, yet even with this possibility the artist in Zürich was slow to find his place. Until the 1540's and the coming of Vogtherr, Zürich artists had to bow to the productivity and talent of their counterparts in Strasbourg and Basel, and even after Froschauer had established his workshop in Zürich, local artists worked for him only occasionally, Moreover, their efforts were not necessarily of the first rank artistically. Bruno Weber goes so far as to say that book
illustration in this important period represents a series of missed opportunities. 100

If this is true it is unfortunate, but understandable. Zürich had never been a great artistic center, and the confusion brought about by iconoclasm and by the city-state’s position on religious art and censorship altered the city’s artistic development. In the confusion time had to pass before theology and art could reunite in a new context. The approval given depiction of the visible allied to the reformed teaching on Providence did much to give the visual arts new direction. Nature became the focus for study, declaring and explicating the workings of Providence. Thus in this context, geography, zoology, and botany become in a way forms of religious study.

In Froschauer Zürich had a man sensitive to this new thought and willing to aid in its spread. What was lacking was an artist with both the vision and skill to give this idea visible form. It is significant that when such a figure emerged in Zürich he was not an artist but a theologian and natural philosopher, and that his artistic work would not be published until after his death.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX

1Locher, Zwingli's Thought, pp. 6-7-

2Ibid., pp. 8-9.


4Dänkliker, II:700-702.

5Ibid. In the fifteenth century there were two figures of some intellectual stature, Felix Hemmerli (1388-1454), canon at the Großmünster, and Albrecht von Bonstetten (1442-1504), working at Einsiedeln, both of whom had humanist interests. The general population of Zürich, however, had little interest in, or knowledge of, their work.

6Ibid.


9Febvre, p. 170. When presented with the first printed Bible, the Archbishop of Mainz declared printing a "divine art."

10Ibid.


12Ibid. The Abbot Albert von Weissenstein had travelled in Italy and understood the advantages to be derived from printing.

13Ibid.

14Ibid., p. 14. As a printer for the Dominicans he was probably responsible for providing his own type, as this was usually a part of the printer's responsibility. Leeman-van Elck assumes that he acquired his nickname "Langschneider" because he cut his type himself.
Ibid., pp. 12-13. Soon after Rot's arrival the Dominicans printed von Weissenstein's *Laus et commendation illius suavissimi cantici regina feliciter incipit*. Shortly thereafter his *Laus commendatio et exhortatio ed punctis et notabilibus circa indulgentias gratias et facultates ecclesius Thuricensis* was printed. These works were clearly intended for a learned audience. Leeman-van Elck makes some interesting observations about the process of the printing of these works. He notes that while the lines of type are unevenly set, the learned use of Latin abbreviations requires a high degree of education. Thus he posits that the type was set by monks who were being trained by Rot.

Ibid., p. 46. Four years later he went to Northern Italy where he worked until 1490.

Ibid., p. 47.

Ibid., p. 31.

Ibid., p. 35. By the end of the fifteenth century Basel, which got its first printing press in 1468, had at least twelve presses, its own paper making industry, and its own graphics industry.

Leemann-van Elck, *Offizen Froschauer*, p. 4.


Ibid.

Ibid., p. 48. This event will be remembered in connection with the work of Hans Leu the Elder. The *Schützenfest* (Shooting match) was a patriotic and sporting event. Marksmen represented their communities in feats of skill in a carnival-like atmosphere.

Ibid. It is known that he printed 614 Invitations at six heller per piece.

Leemann-van Elck, *Offizin Froschauer*, p. 3. At his death he left his widow a house and press all valued at 700 gulden, a not inconsiderable sum.

Ibid., p. 19. When Zwingli first came to Zürich he ordered his books from the Froben Press at Basel.

Ibid., p. 16.
Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 17.

Ibid.

Potter, p. 60.


Ibid., p. 22.


Ibid.

Egli, doc. 234. Also see Potter, pp. 70-71.

Ibid. A woman in this condition would have been allowed to eat meat.

Potter, p. 70.

Ibid., p. 75.

Egli, doc. 234.

Ibid.

Ibid. Also see Potter, p. 75. Potter argues that these grounds are a feeble afterthought. I, on the other hand, see this as a means for Froschauer to remind that Council of his service and importance to the community while giving them a legal loop-hole through which they might release him.

Egli, doc 234.

Potter, p. 75.

Ibid., p. 138. quoted from Froschauer's will. The original is to be found in the Staatsarchiv Zürich, Gemächtsbücher B VI 310.


Ibid., p. 331.

Zwingli, "Contra," p. 94.

Ibid., pp. 120-122.

Ibid., p. 97.


Potter, pp. 220-222.

Ibid., p. 223. Potter states that the Zürich Bible emerged from this educational program.

Dänklicher, II:696.

Febvre, p. 46.


Erwin Panofsky, The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer, p. 6.


This is where the visual relationship between the type and the woodcut becomes so important.

This does not deny that an individual illustration may be beautiful as a work of art.
64. Leeman-van Elck, Offizin Froschauer, pp. 64-66.

65. Ibid.

66. R.W. Scribner, For the Sake of the Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 3-4. Scribner points out that "reading ability" entails three modes of perception: reading, listening, and looking, with looking being given as much weight as listening. Printing is thus related to both oral and visual forms of communication. Scribner stresses that the development of printing gave enormous impetus to the visual features already present in popular culture.

67. Leeman-van Elck, Offizin Froschauer, p. 64.

68. Ibid., p. 105. He printed illustrated Bibles in 1539-40, and in 1542, for example, but his proudest achievement was the Folio Bible printed in 1545. This work, with woodcuts by Vogtherr, was his richest and most beautiful edition. E. Camillo Redolphi provides a complete list of all works printed by Froschauer and his nephew in Die Buchdrucker-Familie Froschauer in Zürich 1521-1595 (Zürich: Orell Füssli, 1869). From this list one learns that the Froschauer Press produced some edition of the Bible (Latin, Greek, English, German) almost every year until Christopher's death.


70. Leemann-van Elck, Offizin Froschauer, p. 30.

71. Ibid.


73. Locher, Zwingli's Thought, p. 613.

74. Leemann-van Elck, Offizin Froschauer, pp. 91-93. He had set up his own paper manufacture on the Werdinsel on the Limmat and had a permanent office in Frankfurt.

75. Ibid.

76. Werner Näf, Vadian und seine Stadt St. Gallen (St. Gallen:


79Ibid., p. 215.

80Ibid.


82Ibid., p. 139.

83Ibid., p. 142.

84Ibid., p. 149.

85Ibid., p. 150.

86Ibid.; Allen G. Debus, Man and Nature in the Renaissance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 3. Erasmus was not in agreement with such ideas. He thought a student could learn all that he needed to know of nature from reading the ancient authors. He also felt that mathematics were not of much use to the educated man.

87Potter, p. 233.

88Fischer, p. 84.

89Leemann-van Elck, Offizin Froschauer, p. 91.

90Nüf, pp. 373.
quoten in Nüf, pp. 373-375.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Leeman-van Elck, Offizin Froschauer, pp. 130-132.

Ibid., p. 102. See Froschauer's letter to Johannes Stumpf of 20 November 1544. Here he describes Vogtherr's work. Vogtherr had already been in Zürich two weeks and had completed fifteen topographical woodcuts beginning with the Zürich area. He still had "Europa and Deutschland" to complete.

Ibid.


For a discussion of contemporary European topographical works see G.R. Crane, Maps and Their Makers (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962). The Swiss scholars were not working in a vacuum. From the fifteenth century there had been topographical studies of Italian cities, and in the second half of the fifteenth century the University of Vienna had been an important center for these studies. What is interesting about Zürich is the religious impetus for such studies.

Weber, p. 25.
CHAPTER SEVEN

CONRAD GESSNER

THE SCIENTIST AS ARTIST

The theologian and natural philosopher who would take a place among the artists of Zürich was Conrad Gessner, born in Zürich in 1516, the son of a leather worker. His parents had numerous children and the family always lived a hand-to-mouth existence. Because of this the five year old Conrad was sent to live with his mother's uncle, an assistant priest at the Großmünster, who undertook his earliest education. This was fortuitous, for the great-uncle had a great interest in, and knowledge of, medicinal plants, and the small boy accompanying the man in his mountain wanderings, learned the names and uses of various Alpine plants. In later life Gessner wrote this about his great-uncle: "This man took me from my father as a child, brought me up in his house, led me now and then into the outdoors and taught me to make and care for his own small garden which was filled with plants of all kinds."¹ Thus, Gessner, a respected scholar, would thank his uncle for this early education, attributing to him his first knowledge of medicine and botany.²

Even as a small child he must have displayed unusual intelligence and diligence for he very soon came to the notice of the teachers at the newly-reorganized Carolinum.³ The child was avid for all kinds of learning, and in 1526 was admitted to study at the Fraumünster school, Zürich's elementary school. His teachers, Oswald Myconius, Thomas Platter, and Theodor Bibliander quickly recognized his abilities and encouraged him in his studies. Indeed Myconius was to be-
come a lifelong friend, so much a friend that on January 7, 1533, Gessner could write to him, "You are my friend and advisor in all situations. Only to you do I entrust the deepest secrets of my heart."\(^4\)

In 1529, well grounded in Greek and Latin, he was admitted to the Carolinum. By this time he had the full support of Zürich's ecclesiastical establishment, for Zwingli himself requested that he receive a stipend from the Studienamt.\(^5\) So talented was the young Gessner that a member of the Carolinum faculty, Johann Jakob Ammann, took him into his household.\(^6\) Thus Conrad Gessner could be said to be one of the first generation of Zürich citizens nourished and formed by the Evangelical Reformation, and for a space of years the adolescent had both the security and the opportunity to satisfy his enquiring mind while growing in the Reformed faith.

His life would change drastically in 1531 with the Battle of Kappel. Not only did Zürich lose a leader, but Gessner lost a friend and important mentor. He lost more than that, however, for his father was killed within days in the city's defense.\(^7\) His mother was now completely unable to support him in any way, and Ammann, committed to aiding Catholic refugees, now had the difficult task of sending Gessner away from his house and protection.\(^8\)

These must have been dark days for the young man with no home or source of support, but he was again aided by one of his teachers. Myconius, now in Basel, hearing of his plight, wrote to Wolfgang Capito requesting that the boy be allowed to study with him in Strasbourg. Capito agreed, and in June 1532, Gessner became a member of his household.\(^9\) Although he rapidly advanced in his studies in Strasbourg, and
although he had the opportunity to learn Hebrew there, he was not happy.\textsuperscript{10} By autumn (probably October), he was petitioning Bullinger for a stipend so that he could return home to Zürich.\textsuperscript{11} This was granted, but after his return he seems to have been restless and undirected.\textsuperscript{12} It appears, however, that he had begun to formulate a plan for his future life for it is known that in November 1532 he was discussing the possibility of medical study.\textsuperscript{13} He was now almost seventeen years old, without family or means and, although he was deeply committed to the evangelical faith and although he had been supported in the designated training course for pastors, there is no indication that he desired to become one.\textsuperscript{14} Rather, he reverted to the interests of his childhood, to the fascination with botany and medicine which he had acquired from his great-uncle. He did not yet make this interest public, but quietly continued his studies in Zürich. He was soon to receive another push from the city's religious leaders: Bullinger and Pellikan, being aware of his unusual abilities, gained another stipend for him, this time for study in France.\textsuperscript{15} It was intended that he continue his humanist studies at the Universities of Bourges and Paris, afterward returning to Zürich as a teacher.\textsuperscript{16} It is clear that Bullinger wanted to make a theologian of Gessner.

Although Gessner dutifully pursued humanist study at Bourges it was becoming clear that his real interest was medicine: he devoted every free moment to the study of ancient medicine, especially Galen.\textsuperscript{17} In May 1534 he left Bourges for Paris where he devoted himself to his studies with a kind of unsystematic fervor, reading anything he could find, Greek and Latin poets, ancient historians, and above all ancient
medical studies. "As often as I get a little free time," he wrote to Bullinger, "I throw myself into reading the best Latin and Greed authors, but I especially study the Greek Physicians and writers of plants and their powers."¹⁸

How he would have continued had he remained in Paris cannot be known. The persecutions of Protestants, beginning in the autumn in 1534, drove him from France. Although he had a letter from the Zürich Council and was therefore theoretically immune from arrest by the French authorities, he could not bear to remain while his co-religionists suffered: "I could bear it no longer to be a witness to the most unheard of cruelty."¹⁹ Therefore, on December 9, 1534, he departed Paris for Strasbourg where he was welcomed by Martin Bucer. He remained there, living in Bucer's household and studying Hebrew, until early in 1535 when he was recalled to Zürich.²⁰ Now it was time to fulfill the promise which many of his teachers had observed, and to repay his debt to the community. The leaders of the Church had intended that he return to Zürich as a teacher of philology, but by April Gessner had seriously disappointed them. The nineteen year old, recognized as brilliant, singled out for preference and educated at community expense, made a hasty marriage to a poor girl even younger than himself.²¹ The officials were shocked and dismayed, for in their eyes Gessner had proved himself disobedient and unworthy of their trust. He was swiftly punished: rather than the fine academic position for which his education had prepared him, the authorities offered what must have seemed an insult. He was given the "baby" Latin class for the youngest boys in the school—at very low wages.²²
Now the young man had leisure to repent his fault, and he must have felt real regret. Not only had he failed to fulfill his potential as a philologist, but he had failed as well to find either satisfaction or financial security. He felt his talents wasted, and returned to his dream of medical study. He wrote to Myconius, his friend and mentor: "I could accomplish something in natural philosophy, in the making of medicines and in Logic, as well as in the three learned languages." 23

Again he would be aided by pastorly intervention. Myconius interceded with Bullinger and Bullinger arranged another stipend so that Gessner would resume his studies. This time, however, he was to be allowed to study medicine. Thus on December 20, 1536, he arrived in Basel to begin his medical studies. This of course meant the study of botany for this knowledge was part of the physician's necessary information. 24 He remained there only a short time, for the newly founded Academy at Lausanne needed a professor of Greek and the officials of the school selected him. Gessner accepted, and for the first time in his life he held a secure and well-paid position. 25 He was fortunate in his students and colleagues, among whom was Pierre Viret, who would soon become a good friend, and it was in Lausanne that he began the serious and systematic study of botany that would continue the rest of his life. 26 There he began to write on that subject, and there that he began to lead the students in his Greek class on botanical field trips. 27 The Lausanne stay was a period of transition from his original philological studies to an expression of his life-long interest in botany, for he prepared a treatise on plants and their medicinal uses, the Handbuch der Pflanzenkunde, and although
he began a four-language lexicon of plant names, he relied not on his own observations, but on the work of ancient authors. Yet he was beginning to formulate those methods which would contribute to the development of his botanical system, and to recognize fully his own interests and talents. Years later, in writing of this period of his life he would remember, "I was very happy." Some time in the early summer of 1540, he returned to Zürich for a brief visit. It is known that he had conversations then with the Stadtarzt, Christoph Clauser, which must have influenced him greatly, for in October he resigned his position at Lausanne and enrolled in medical school at Montpellier. There he came in contact with men of like mind, and there he received the training which would allow him to synthesize his interests and skills. He studied anatomy and botany with Guillaume Rondelet, forming a friendship and intellectual link which would be important to his future writing and study. Moreover, he continued what had by now become habit, the botanical excursions from which he gathered data for future study. He did not remain in Montpellier, however, and did not complete his studies there. Rather, following a now familiar pattern he left less than a year after he arrived and returned to Basel to complete his medical studies. There, in 1541, he finally received his degree.

Now his student life was over, and he returned to Zürich to live for the rest of his life. He began a private practice as a physician, but his chief duty for the next twenty-two years would be teaching natural philosophy at the Carolinum. He was always poorly paid, and his financial situation was made worse by the fact that for
the first five years he shared one salary with Otto Werdmüller, a former student of Melanchthon's, who became Gessner's colleague. Nor was his medical practice lucrative, probably owing to the fact that because of religious conviction he refused to set fees for his patients, accepting only what they were able to pay.

Thus it was necessary to find a way to augment his income, and in this way he made his first contact with Christopher Froschauer. While a medical student in Basel he had prepared a Greek and Latin lexicon for the Petri Press. At Lausanne he had prepared botanical handbooks. He was highly trained in the liberal arts, intimately connected with the leaders of Zürich's state-church, and now a member of the city's educational establishment. It is clear that he was exactly the kind of writer Froschauer was seeking. In 1541, therefore, he published his first work with the publisher, the Libellus de Lacte, and in the next year he published a Namenverzeichnis aller bekannten Pflanzen, griechisch, lateinisch, deutsch und französisch, which he had begun to compile in Lausanne.

He dedicated this work to his old teacher Johann Jakob Ammann and his great-uncle Johannes Frick, explaining his method and purpose thus:

In order to satisfy my burning desire to know the plants and their powers better, I have for the past four years read the relevant books, whose descriptions of plants have made a great impression on me. I have, sometimes alone, sometimes in the company of men of various nations who are knowledgeable in the plant studies made smaller or greater excursions. I have climbed the high mountains in order to find new plants and in order that I might teach my young students about them.
In 1546, he published his first major work, the *Bibliotheca Universalis*, a work as comprehensive as its title suggests. This amazing comprehensive work which earned him the title, "Father of Bibliography" was divided into three parts, an alphabetical list of authors of all ages, a systematic discussion of all scholarly disciplines based on literary sources, and a dictionary of scholarly terms. When completed it was 1264 folio sized pages in length, citing over 3000 authors and 10,000 works. It is the work of a dedicated humanist, but it advanced beyond the usual humanistic program in that it attempted not only to preserve the fame of ancient authors but also to evaluate the works and lives of all the authors cited— even those who were Gessner's contemporaries.  

After this he continued to write and publish both literary and scientific works, writing constantly in his "Museum," the workshop/laboratory where he collected his specimens and where he wrote. In the autumn of 1565, the plague struck Zürich. Gessner as Chief Physician for the city exhausted himself in caring for his stricken fellow citizens and soon he himself fell ill. Knowing that he was near death he asked to be carried to his workroom, his "Museum." There, after saying farewell to his wife, his students, and his friend and pastor Heinrich Bullinger, on December 13, 1565, he died.  

I  

Such a skeletal outline of Gessner's life does little to explicate either the intellectual context in which he pursued his studies or the
contributions which he would make to the advancement of the natural sciences. Such an outline does even less to suggest why a philologist, natural philosopher, and physician should be included in a discussion of the visual arts of Post-Reformation Zürich. His contributions to the fields of philology, zoology, and bibliography were great, but it is not on these but on his botanical studies that the rest of this discussion will focus, because it is in the interest of these studies that Gessner turned himself into an artist of great power and sensitivity. Thus although he was neither craftsman nor artist by profession, he came to take his place next to those great naturalist-artists Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer, and to allow Zürich to list itself among those cities which have produced innovations in the visual arts. Moreover, the work of Gessner grows directly from Protestant roots and is an expression not of artistic strivings nor craftsmanship but of scholarly and religious convictions.

Although he received much of his formal education outside of Zürich, and although he was in contact with scholars throughout Europe, the decisive influence on his life had thought was the teaching of Zwingli. As a small child he had witnessed the transformation of Zürich's religious life, had heard Zwingli's preaching and had been selected by the Reformer himself for special notice and educational advancement. After Zwingli's death he would find the same emotional and financial support among other leaders of the Swiss Reformation. His education had prepared him to be a theologian, perhaps in his early life he had himself had that expectation. He had studied Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and had translated works of the Church Fathers, and
had taught Greek and Latin. He always maintained close relationships with Swiss theologians. Yet his greatest interest was in natural history. His study of medicine was a reflection of that interest, for medicine and philosophy were during his lifetime the only disciplines connected with that study. He did not, however, view his scientific studies as a departure from the education of his childhood and youth. Rather, he viewed them as a confirmation: he saw religion and science as parts of a great whole. For him nature was God's creation—a belief which, true to his Protestant faith and education, he drew from Scripture. This belief he confirmed by his studies.

In June, 1541, he wrote to Jakob Vogel, one of his numerous correspondents, that the intended to make a yearly trip in the mountains "in the season when the plant world is at its fullest power" partly to strengthen his body and to refresh his spirit (Teils um meinen Körper zu stärken und meinem Geiste die edelste Erholung zu verschaffen), but mostly to observe the workings of Providence.

After commenting on the splendor of the "measureless mass of mountains," he continues: "Only men with slothful souls do not feel wonder, remain indoors in dull apathy, do not consider that human-kind was placed on this earth in order that from the observation of the wonders (of nature) they might come to know something greater, namely the invisible Godhead itself."

Gessner's approach to his studies was not unique, but was the result of an attitude to nature found among many of the Reformed faith. Both Melanchthon and Luther, for example, were proponents of the belief that the study of nature revealed the mercy of God. Luther clearly
defined this belief and the studies deriving from it as a Protestant phenomenon: "We (Reformed Christians) are now living in the dawn of the future life; for we are beginning to regain a knowledge we had forfeited by the fall of Adam. Now we have a correct view of the creatures, more so, I suppose than they have in the papacy. Erasmus does not concern himself with this... By God's mercy we can begin to recognize his wonderful works and wonder also in the flowers when we ponder his might and goodness (WA Tischreden I:1160)."47

It is not surprising therefore to discover that scholars have found a connection between the sixteenth century renaissance in botanical studies and Lutheranism.48 This connection has been demonstrated by noting the religious affiliations of prominent botanists or by observing their connection with the University of Wittenberg: Jerome Bock, Leonhard Fuchs, Valerius Cordus, and Leonhard Rauwolf were all Lutheran and all had studied or taught at the Lutheran university.49

To understand the relationship between Wittenberg and the study of botany it is important to understand something of the nature of the university and of how botany was taught there. Wittenberg University had been founded in 1502, with "graduate" schools in law, theology, and medicine. Botany had traditionally been a part of medical studies, necessary for knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants. In 1546, however, Melanchthon reorganized the university according to Protestant ideology, one aspect of which was the attitude toward nature expressed by both Luther and Melanchthon.50 Botany was no longer a study subordinate to the larger study of medicine.
(although the therapeutic properties of plants continued to be studied), but one of those disciplines which aided in the revelation of God's will. Thus at the University of Wittenberg theologians and philologists began to study and lecture on botany. Caspar Cruciger, professor of theology and Hebrew, lectured on the ancient botanist Dioscorides, and established two botanical gardens outside the city. 51

Beginning with the study of ancient natural historians, such as Pliny and Dioscorides, the professors and students at Wittenberg soon evolved a new approach to plant and animal life inspired by religious conviction and based on scientific observation.

Conrad Gessner knew the work of these men, corresponded with them, and even edited the works of one of them—Valerius Cordus—in 1561. 52 By his own testimony he shared their religious view of nature, and this belief is reflected in his work as a scholar and a teacher. Had he perceived a conflict between his scientific studies and orthodox Reformed teaching there is no question that he would have adhered to the latter.

When he was called to teach the sciences at the Carolinum, he was called to participate in a program set up by Zwingli himself in accordance with what he believed to be principles fitting for Evangelical Christian education. Zwingli had high regard for the works of Aristotle, and had taken care that these were included in the curriculum; thus every day for the twenty-two years he taught at the school, Gessner gave an hour lesson on Aristotle's philosophy. 53 He went beyond reliance on Aristotle's work, however, and soon he was leading his students on botanical excursions so that they might see for them-
selves the functioning of nature. This combination of ancient authority and immediate experience was typical of Gessner's whole method—but underlying all of this was his self-imposed discipline of orthodox thinking. He would study or teach nothing which he believed contrary to divine will or revelation. Thus, for example, although he was almost certainly familiar with the work of Copernicus, he rejected it on religious grounds. He was bitter in his condemnation of Paracelsus, although much of Paracelsus' work would have interested him, saying that he denied Christ.

Therefore, although he was committed to knowledge gained from observation, maintaining that science comes from a combination of human experience and God-given wisdom, he would allow nothing to interpose itself between him and his religious beliefs. His approaches to the world of nature, to teaching, and to his medical practice were all firmly grounded in his convictions as an Evangelical Christian.

The interrelationship between his botanical studies and these religious convictions forms the key to Gessner's work as an artist. The works which define him as an artist are the result of years of teaching and study and grow out of his belief that nature declares the Providence of God. Before he began to work as an artist he had had many years experience as a teacher of the natural sciences and had already published his famous Zoological works. In 1553 he published his *Icones Animalium Quadrupedum*; in 1554, his *Historia Quadrupedum Oviparorum*; in 1558, *De piscium et aquatilium natura*; in 1563, the *Thierbuch* and the *Fischbuch*. His *Vogelbuch*, *Thierbuch*, and *Fischbuch* were richly illustrated, and in some cases even hand colored,
but not by his own hand. They belonged to the tradition established by Froschauer in which scholarship was aided and enhanced with abundant woodcut illustration. Gessner had received illustrations from all over Europe, for by this time he was a well-known scholar, receiving recognition from the Emperor himself when he was called to Augsburg in 1559 for an audience with Ferdinand I, and when in 1564 he received the right to a coat of arms. His zoological works which were compendia drawn from the writings of ancient authors and the observations of modern scholars, were filled with illustrations sent by friends, of older woodcuts (one of the most famous being that of the rhinoceros of Dürer), and of original works.

II

Conrad Gessner was not an artist by vocation. He had not been trained in any craftsman's workshop, he was a master in no guild. Moreover, his artistic works were known to only a few of his students and colleagues during his lifetime, and it was over a century before these works were published. Yet he belonged to the artistic life of Zürich by virtue of the approach to pictorial representation and to nature which they dispaly.

In the pre-Reformation art of Zürich and in the work of Hans Leu the Younger, nature was depicted either as a background for religious life or as a vehicle for the expression of an individual artistic sensibility. Neither of these uses had completely satisfied the criteria for art laid down by Zwingli and his followers. The first was
rejected because it was united to depictions of saints which were no longer acceptable. The second was not explicitly rejected, but seems to have failed to answer the needs of the newly Reformed community. Yet the interest in depicted nature was strong and continuous throughout the Reformation period. What was needed, therefore, was an artistic approach to the natural world which both satisfied this interest and conformed to Protestant teachings on art and life.

Conrad Gessner had acquired not only the interest in nature and an orthodoxy by piety but two other important qualities as well. First, he possessed the most advanced learning in the botanical sciences, and he was, moreover, innovative. Second, he was a very talented and sensitive artistic interpreter of that learning. These qualities make possible a new artistic approach to nature, an approach deriving directly from Protestant theology and aided by his fortuitous artistic skills. Gessner's approach to the world of nature was not only different from works of the late medieval craftsmen but was, indeed, quite foreign to theirs. Although such artists as the *Nelkenmeister* and the *Veilchenmeister* may have had a genuine interest in depicting the observed world, and although Hans Leu was sensitive to the expressive qualities of the nature which he closely observed and translated, these men worked as artists, trained from childhood in artistic traditions and appealing to an audience with expectations gained from earlier artistic experiences. Conrad Gessner worked as a humanist scholar and scientist: his artistic productions resulted directly from scientific aims. The difficulty in assessing Gessner's position comes from the fact that few men knew of his artistic work
during his lifetime. He himself viewed his artistic achievement as secondary to a larger goal. He was attempting to make faithful and accurate depictions of the plants he studied because he was attempting to create a system of botanical classification. Thus he sought to render his chosen examples in a manner as true to nature as possible.  

He himself was always very modest—almost shy—in his dealings with professional artists and craftsmen. He began his artistic endeavors by quietly correcting the illustrations prepared by the artists working for Froschauer: in 1561 he complained to his friend and colleague John Kaye that although the printer had for some time employed an artist to illustrate his Thierbuch, his illustrations were not colored accurately enough. 

In the years preceding his death Gessner had been collecting examples for a massive botanical work, a Historia Plantarum. For this purpose he employed various local artists to illustrate his botanical specimens. Soon, however, he was making his own drawings, each with careful and descriptive notations. These drawings of plants—and some animals—are of extreme sensitivity and beauty. They are also extremely accurate. After Gessner's death his colleague and successor Caspar Wolff, wishing to pay a humanist's compliment stated with awe that the drawings and watercolors from Gessner's hand were executed with such art that what Pliny had said about Xeuxis could be said about Gessner: that is, that he painted such realistic grapes that the birds flew down to snatch them.

This compliment contains more than a grain of truth, but does much to obscure Gessner's aims. His accurate and naturalistic drawings of
plants were not artistic exercises intended to display a mastery of technique. Rather they developed directly from his scientific aims. He drew as a botanist not an artist, intending to illustrate his botanical system.

Although he had been fascinated with plants and their uses since childhood, he had undertaken his first systematic botanical studies as a medical student, for these studies were a necessary part of the curriculum. The years in which he studied were particularly exciting for anyone interested in botany because there had been great advances in interest and knowledge in plant lore, especially in the Protestant world and this was due in large measure to three factors. One was the increased knowledge of ancient botanical works and the comparison of these works with information gathered from direct observation. Another was the connection made in Protestant circles between nature and Providence, and the third was due to developments in the art of illustration. Late medieval botanical illustration had been often crude and non-naturalistic, and while the introduction of the printing press meant rapid dissemination of such works as the late fifteenth century Herbarius, the techniques of woodcutting created many problems for the illustrator. With a less than skilled hand at work as formschneider, even such delicacy or accuracy as might have been present in an original drawing was in danger of being lost. By the sixteenth century, however, great advances had been made in the production of woodcuts in general and of herbals in particular. One work especially deserves mention because of the advances made in botanical illustrations: in 1530 Otto Brunfels published in Strasbourg
his *Herbarium vivae eicones*. To illustrate the work he hired an artist, Hans Weiditz, who was acclaimed by contemporaries as being, "no less skilled than the reknowned Apelles." The result was an illustrated herbal in which the botanical specimens were rendered in a manner which was both true to nature and "artistic."

Conrad Gessner's work as scientific illustrator grew out of this innovative tradition, but his work went beyond that of other botanical illustrations intended for publication. Where Weiditz and other illustrators had worked as artists applying themselves to an artistic task, Gessner worked as a scientist, applying himself to a scientific task. This difference in approach is evidenced in comparison with his work to that of Weiditz. The difference is fundamental, for Weiditz, an artist, chose for illustration the most "beautiful" example of any given type. Gessner chose the most typical.

Where he displayed skills beyond the scientific was in his sensitivity to composition, in the fluidity and power of the line, in his understanding of the totality of the work. When this skill is allied to a desire for extreme accuracy and fidelity to nature, the result is a series of drawings worthy to take their place beside those of Leonardo da Vinci or Albrecht Dürer. Gessner himself must have had some sense of his own artistic abilities, for even though he worked with at least one very able artist—Jos Murer—and although he was almost shy when correcting the works of others, he took pride in his own work. Thus he cannot avoid this rather shy boast on a notation on a watercolor which he prepared as a correction of an artist's work:

"1563 pinxi haec folia, melius quod ad formam colorem et hirsutiem
(I painted these leaves better as to form color and treatment of the hairs." ) \(^7\)

III

Is there a connection between Gessner's view of art and his view of nature, and—more importantly—is there a connection between the Reformed attitude toward art as formulated by Zwingli and his followers and the Protestant view of nature?

At the beginning of the discussion of printing it was stated that a sensual approach to the divine was discarded in Reformation Zürich. This meant that art could no longer be used to aid the worshipper in forming a mystical union with God: a painted or sculpted reality was no longer accepted as a vehicle of transcendence. Yet Zwingli had sanctioned the representation of the visible world—its knowable through the senses. Thus orthodox Reformed art should be neither mystical nor magical, it should be "historical," that is, the translation of an event or scene taken from observed or observable reality. A large proportion of this observed reality is the natural world—in which God's Providence can daily be experienced. According to the teaching of both Luther and Zwingli God can be perceived in the natural developments of plant and animal life. Therefore, to study nature is to study God. This, it must be firmly stated, is not a Pantheistic or mystical concept, but a straight-forward conception of nature as one facet of Divine Revelation (Scripture, of course, is another).

If, then, the study of nature is righteous and commendable, must
not accurate depictions of nature be also righteous and commendable? What can be more pious, if one is seeking to translate the visible world into art, than to translate closely observed natural forms? Such translation answers the demands of both theology and art. Thus drawings taken from accurately observed nature become, in the context just described, a new kind of religious art—a didactic form aimed at explicating God's Providence.

Certainly this is the spirit in which Conrad Gessner worked, for in making drawings of plants and animals he was expressing a deep religious conviction. He saw the working of the Creator in creation and was thankful. "God is in the midstest of beasts, men, markets, and seas," as a contemporary English translation of one of his works phrases it.75 Because this is true, he believed that, "It is our duty to God the Lord, the Creator and Preserver of all good who has created so many and great things to decorate the universe and for the various use of men, to offer him the greatest thanks that he had given us life, health, leisure and intelligence to contemplate these works."76

It was not enough for Gessner to perceive Providence in nature: he desired to make his knowledge available to others. In his earliest scholarly works his aim had been to make a gift to the learned world of his day.77 Soon he began to develop a personal theology based on the belief that a Christian's faith could be displayed in all areas of study, and that science should be practiced with Christian understanding.78 Thus in his work on the distillation of medicines, translated into English as The Treasure of Euonymus: Conteyninge the hid Secrets of Nature, he would write, "... although in smal wealth, yet
have I ben ever of nature ready to communicate and make any man priuye of any cunning I had, which som referre unto simplicitie or childishnes, others some better to the liberalitie of my disposition... But good men, simpely such good thinges as they have, they make them common... "79 It was in this spirit that he undertook his botanical systematisations, and in this spirit that he rendered his accurate and beautiful drawings.

The problem, of course, lies in the fact that his audience among the citizens of Zürich must have been quite small. Pre-Reformation Zürich had not been a highly educated community, and during Gessner's lifetime perhaps only his close friends and students could grasp fully what he was attempting: the book of nature was open for all pious men to read, but its language was understood only by those participants in the evolution of botanical study. Gessner belonged to that group of men, but he also belonged to the Evangelical Reformed community of Zürich. His religious thinking was formed there and he, as a teacher, aided in forming the thinking of others.

He was not a member of the city's artistic community. Probably most of the congregation of the Großmünster where he worshipped had not and would never see any of his beautiful drawings and watercolors. Yet perhaps he is a more suitable spokesman for Reformation art than any other citizen of Zürich. After the summer of 1524, it became necessary to find art forms suitable to the new teaching if the visual arts were to survive in Zürich. The woodcuts printed as accompaniments to Froschauer's work give evidence of an attempt to find such a form— a form deriving from and responding to Protestant needs. But
there was in Zürich no artist of stature contributing to the effort. This in itself may be telling: the message had not yet found an artistic form.

In the works of Conrad Gessner, however, message and form united. His drawings derived from Protestant studies, they were intended as teaching aids, and they are beautiful. But they possess a beauty unlike that to be observed in late medieval depictions of natural objects. Their beauty derives from a combination of Gessner's observational method and his own individual refined but untrained sensibilities. Thus there is a logical progression in the tradition of the depiction of nature from the workshop of the late medieval craftsman to the Museum of Conrad Gessner. The seeds planted by such craftsmen as Hans Leu the Elder came to fruition in the work of a man who was a theologian and natural philosopher by vocation, not an artist.
NOTES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN


2Rudolf Steiger, "Einführung zum Bilder Teil," Conrad Gessner 1516–
1565, Universal gelehrtner Naturforscher Arzt (Zürich: Orell-Füssli,
1965), p. 66.


4Ibid.

5Fischer, "Conrad Gessner," Conrad Gessner 1515-1565, Universal
gelehrtner Naturforscher Arzt, ed. Hans Fischer, Georges Petit, Rudolf


7Ibid., p. 11.

8Ibid., p. 12.

9Ibid., p. 13. Myconius' letter to Capito praises Gessner's
talents thus: "I have educated him from the first fundamentals and
he has so characterized himself as my student that rather than needing
to urge him to his studies, I wonder at his progress." Myconius
then adds, "Don't be frightened by his tall form (Lange Gestalt), he
is only sixteen years old."

10Ibid.

11Ibid. This letter begging Bullinger to allow him to come home
has an almost hysterical tone: "ich flehe Dich um Hilfe an denn hier
fehlen Rat und Hoffnung." Yet he approaches Bullinger with great
trust, as a son a father.


couraged him to study medicine.

14Potter, pp. 219–220. Potter's discussion of Zürich's education-
al system makes clear that the post-Reformation Carolinum was a theo-
logical seminary. Potter feels that Zwingli's "educational influence
in Zürich led to what can only be described as over-specialization in
theology."


16 Georges Petit, "Conrad Gessner, Zoologiste," Conrad Gessner 1515–1565, p. 49. He was sent to learn "the customs and knowledge of the French." There he pursued his humanist studies, being particularly fortunate to have the famous Melchior Wolmar as a teacher. He also studied law because the natural sciences were somewhat neglected at Bourges at that time. See also, Fischer, "Leben und Werk," p. 14 for Gessner's letter to Myconius of 14 April 1534: "All other sciences are neglected here only not legal studies, for because of Alciati these are held in great honor."


19 Ibid., p. 16. In a letter to Bullinger of 27 December 1534 he describes the persecution of the "God-fearing."

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., p. 17.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid., See also Conrad Gessner 1516–1565, p. 110. In spite of short periods of study at Basel and Montpellier, where his study was based on the work of Aristotle, most of the medical knowledge Gessner had he acquired on his own through a self-constructed curriculum. In 1540 he wrote to Crato von Krafftshiem: "I once accepted the method of our Galen and I find no cause to change it in the slightest."

25 Ibid. The Lausanne officials were more generous than Zürich's would ever be. Gessner was given a house, a salary of 200 gulden, 2 mutt of grain and 2 wagons of wine.

26 Ibid.
27. Ibid., p. 22.


29. Ibid.

30. Fischer, "Leben und Werk," p. 23. Also, Petit, "Conrad Gessner Zoologiste," *Conrad Gessner 1516-1565*, p. 54. When he arrived at Montpellier he could find no Professor who would take him into his house and he only remained there for a few months. It was once thought that he had studied with the famous physician Laurent Joubert, but this is impossible as Joubert was not in Montpellier during Gessner's short stay there. He did become friends with Guillaume Rondelet, the Spanish physician Petrus Jacobus, and Pierre Belon. Rondelet and Belon would greatly influence his later works on fish and aquatic animals.


32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., p. 26. Although he lived in Zürich for the rest of his life, he made a visit to Venice in the summer of 1544 where he had entrance to the library of Diego Hurtado di Mendoza, the Emperor's ambassador to Venice and a great collector of Greek and Latin manuscripts. This visit was very influential both because of the library and because of the Alpine journey which allowed him to collect new botanical specimens. In 1545 he accompanied Froschauer to Augsburg and at the invitation of Johann Jakob Fugger, he worked in that man's library.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., p. 24. In 1546 Werdmüller became *Archdiakon* and Gessner was made Professor of *Physica naturalis et moralis*.


37. Rudolfi lists all the Gessner works published by Froschauer.


41 Ibid., p. 6.

42 We have seen how often Myconius and Bullinger came to his aid, and it was Bullinger who, in 1546, secured him the position of Oberstadtarzt, the city's chief medical officer.


44 Ibid.


49 Dannenfeldt, pp. 227-229.

50 Ibid., p. 228.

51 Ibid., p. 227.

52 Ibid., p. 233. Gessner possessed two manuscripts of Cordus' Historiae Plantarum one of the most important German herbals of the early sixteenth century. Gessner published this in 1561 in Strasbourg, after Cordus' death in Italy, with a dedication to the "reknowned and notable" medical faculty of the University of Wittenberg.

53 Gessner's relationship to the work of Aristotle is interesting. He relied heavily on Aristotle for his great animal books but he was in no wise a slavish follower. As an evangelical Christian he had some difficulty with Aristotle's philosophy. Thus he would write in his Preface to Naturphilosophische Meditationen that he could not completely accept Aristotle's teaching because the philosopher had argued against the immortality of the soul. "In this matter," wrote Gessner, "we
must listen to another Master: it is Jesus Christ, the true light and our Salvation who has taught us the truth. This will become apparent after this life as something which rests on principles totally different than those represented by Aristotle." Quoted in Conrad Gessner 1516-1565, p. 126.

Fischer, Conrad Gessner 1516-1565, p. 122. Gessner had known Joachim Rhaeticus since youth, when both had been pupils of Myconius in Zürich. They became close friends and carried on a life-long correspondence. Thus it is certain that he knew of the work of Copernicus through Rhaeticus. Fischer posits that he rejected the theory because it contradicted Scripture. He also notes that even had he accepted it, the authorities would not have allowed him to teach it. Even 150 years after Gessner's death, Copernicus' theory could not be taught in Zürich's schools.

Fischer, "Conrad Gessner als Arzt," Conrad Gessner 1516-1565, p. 46. The major reason for Gessner's rejection of Paracelsus was religion. He had no patience with a mystical approach to nature, and in his correspondence with Crato von Krafftshem he wrote of Paracelsus as a "black Magician" and of his followers as heretics.

Rudolph lists these works.


Fischer, Conrad Gessner 1516-1565, p. 22.

Leemann-van Elck, "Buchschmuck," p. 9. There is some question about the identity of the local artists involved. It is known that Jos Murcr worked for Froschauer and Gessner, and also that Lucas Schân from Strasbourg did most of the woodcuts of birds. We have Gessner's own evaluation of Schân: "...a Strasbourg artist drew most of the birds from life and added descriptions of some also; a man as experienced in painting as in bird-catching."


Ibid., p. 133. Besides Jos Murcr the names of Grosshans Thomann,
Hans Asper, Jost Ammann and Jakob Klauser have been suggested. It is known that Gessner borrowed works from Rondelet. His friend Caspar Wolff stated that Gessner himself made over 150 drawings and water colors.

63 Zoller, p. 58. Quoted from a letter of 14 March 1566.


65 Ibid., p. 520. The 1520's and 1530's had produced new editions of Galen and Hippocrates, authors who stressed a need for knowledge of botany. It will be remembered that Gessner himself had edited Galen's work.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., p. 530.

68 Allen G. Debus, Man and Nature in the Renaissance, p. 44.

69 Ibid.

70 Reeds, p. 529.

71 Ibid.

72 Zoller, p. 64. Zoller finds that Weiditz' aims are similar to those of Dürer, that is, both approached the natural world as artists, translating their observations by artistic means and thus imposing order on nature.

73 Zoller, p. 57. Zoller rates Gessner's artistic ability very very highly.

74 quoted in Zürcher Kunst nach der Reformation, p. 40.


76 quoted in Conrad Gessner 1516-1565, p. 132. from the "Forward to the Reader," Historia Animalium, Liber I.
77 Staedtke, p. 24.

78 Ibid.

CONCLUSION

Iconoclasm is a recurring phenomenon in the history of Christianity for there is in the Judeo-Christian tradition a strain of thought which is unfriendly to the use of art as a means of religious expression. This thought would separate true worship of an invisible deity of pure spirit from devotion to man-made objects which attempt to make this spirit apprehensible by means of the senses. In its most virulent form such thought became iconoclastic, leading to the destruction of religious art as anathema. This strain of thought was particularly prominent and influential during the Protestant Reformation in a period coinciding with the creation of some of the most glorious works of the Renaissance. While the Reformers in Germany and Switzerland were formulating their solutions to the problem of ecclesiastical art, Michelangelo was at work on his great sculptures for the Medici Chapel in Florence (1519-1534).

It is not easy to enter the mental and emotional world of the men and women who renounced what is today perceived as one of the great accomplishments of European culture—its art. Yet some attempt must be made to see these works not with the eyes of a modern art lover or museum visitor but of a sixteenth century Christian bent on aiding in the restoration of his church to what he perceived as the pristine state of its antiquity. For such a Christian the statues and altar retabes represented the corruption of pure doctrine and practice.

This is the background against which the events which took place in Zürich, Switzerland in 1523 and 1524 occurred. Zwingli and his followers wished to purify their Church, to turn it from a course
which they believed to be corrupt and idolatrous, and to place it under the sole authority of Scripture. In implementing their program of Reform they attacked many of the practices of late medieval piety, including those which centered on religious art, for religious art had become inextricably intertwined with everything they were committed to fight.

When Zwingli began to preach the Reformation in Zürich he preached the removal of an art that had come to represent not only the ignorant and superstitious idolatry of the credulous, but a more dangerous form of idolatry which forgets the Creator in the creation, which ignores a great mystery in the adoration of one lesser and man-made. In Zwingli's eyes religious art was a vehicle for the idolatrous adoration of saints, for the frantic race to fend off damnation through good works, for vain and prideful display. Because of this and because he and others of like mind believed that Christian practice had to be stripped to the fundamental teaching of Scripture, religious art as it was known in the Middle Ages had to be discarded.

In Zürich the discarding of images— that is the discarding of ecclesiastical religious art— was carried out in an orderly, thorough manner with the support and cooperation of the government. This solution to the image question was so successful that Zürich became a model for other Reformed cities which wished to purify their churches of idolatrous tradition. Zürich was an old city, one with venerable ecclesiastical edifices which were by the sixteenth century crammed with artistic works and decoration both ancient and modern. The tradition of ecclesiastical art was not, however, the only tradition
to which the citizens of Zürich were accustomed. Because of their history as members of the Swiss Confederacy, and because of the relative freedom of their own city, Zürichers had also a tradition of proud, if stolid, self-rule. The history of the medieval city can be seen as a history of the citizens' self-assertion in the governance of their community—and of their Church. The Reformation was the culmination of a long and quiet struggle by the magistrates for control of the ecclesiastical establishments of their city. Thus while the Evangelical Reformed Christians of Zürich broke with the Church of Rome, they remained true to their desire for a church in which the laity could participate more fully.

There is a relationship between the religious art produced in pre-Reformation Zürich and the frame of mind which led that city to renounce the religious art of its past. The cultural environment in which this art had been produced was in many ways narrow, lacking in flamboyant creativity. The patrons of the city's ecclesiastical art were for the most part merchants and artisans. Even the patricians were more concerned with business than with the esoteric pursuits of the aristocracy. In war the Zürichers were mercenary foot-soldiers, not chivalrous knights. In peace they tended to be poorly educated. Renaissance learning and emphasis on education would come to the city only with the Reformation.

Yet these same citizens possessed an independent and pragmatic interest in their world. A keen observation of daily environment is reflected in many of the works of local pre-Reformation art. When this was combined with religious sensibility and ignited by Zwingli's
preaching the result was a religious response both stolid and exalted. The paradoxical nature of this combination contributed greatly to the citizens' final response to religious art, allowing the people to relinquish the color and richness which had been such an integral part of the religious experience for the somber luminosity of whitewashed walls. The brilliant greens and vermillions, the gilded backgrounds of their altar retabes were solemnly put away in the name of evangelical reform and in the hope of a purer, more enlightened religion.

This renunciation of religious art, the arguments against idolatry, and the sympathy and enthusiasm with which many men and women of the sixteenth century embraced them, has led to the opinion that Protestantism, and especially the Evangelical Reformed Protestantism of the Swiss cities, was inimical to the visual arts and detrimental to their development. Zwingli's own testimony should, however, dispel any idea that Reformed theology demanded the abandonment of art. The removal of images in Zürich was not an act aimed at the destruction of the visual arts per se, but an act aimed at the destruction of those objects which the pastors and government considered harmful to the spiritual welfare of the community.

Reformed theology did, however, make demands on art, did seek to confine it and render it powerless to seduce. It demanded either tacitly or explicitly art forms unlike those developed to express a desire for transcendent religious experience arrived at by material means, unlike those which attempted to make the spiritual comprehensible through the senses. Moreover, in its purest form, Reformed teaching also renounced some of the humanistic impulses which had led
to the High Renaissance style. Neither mystery nor the glorification of man and his works were wholly acceptable.

Yet cramped, cabined and confined as the pastors and magistrates demanded that they be, the visual arts did not expire in Zürich or in other Reformed areas. The men and women who accepted the Reformation had known a richly visual culture. Effort and wealth had been expended in the creation of visual splendor for the churches of the city. The coming of the printing press had meant a new source of visual stimulus in which image and word were united in fruitful marriage. The artists of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries had begun to explore the translation of observed contemporary reality. This visual wealth could not be wholly denied.

Art had, therefore, to be channelled so that it did not lead to idolatry, but so that it could answer the needs of a Reformed community. Essentially this meant that the visual arts had to take a subordinate position to verbal expression. For the leaders of Zürich's Reformation, a picture was only a poor substitute for the word, especially in religious matters. But there was a place for art, for "Bilder," in the Reformed tradition even though this place had limits. Zwingli himself set these when he conceived the concept geschichte- wyss: things seen or able to be seen, things historical, narrative, descriptive.

Pre-Reformation Zürich was pre-disposed to these concepts for reasons which reflect the city's particular history. The citizens were interested in an art which recorded their material environment, which reflected their daily interests and desires. Although the city
acquired some wealth and status in the fifteenth century due to mercen-
ary pensions, it did not, despite Hans Waldermann's efforts acquire a
reputation as a cultural center. It was not until the Reformation that
the city found a means for the expression of its religious and cultural
desires. When these means were found, however, it was verbal not vis-
ual expression which pre-dominated.

For individual artists this presented a difficult dilemma. Some
emigrated, but others remained to make faltering attempts to bridge
the gap between the old and new uses of art.

Those who remained had to learn a new artistic language or to give
their old vocabulary new meaning. It was not to be a poetic vocabu-
larly, but rather the simple forthright language of description or
narrative. The old medieval use of art as an aid to meditation or
mystical experience was discarded, and the fanciful dreamy art of
which Hans Leu was an exemplar never found soil in which to take root.
Even portraiture, a genre which combined empiricism with humanist
attitudes and goals, barely escaped censure by the city's theologians.

What was purely descriptive or narrative did, however, flourish.
Works which illustrated God's Word or which made his world comprehen-
sible were embraced and admired. This reflects the belief articulated
by Protestant leaders that God's Providence can be seen daily and all
around in Creation. When this belief is allied with Zwingli's concept
of geschichteswyss, an approach to the visual arts emerges which can
be characterized as Protestant. The result is an art intended to de-
scribe the closely observed and studied world, viewed as a manifesta-
tion of God's continuous work and presence. That the great proponent
of this art in Zürich was not an artist by a natural philosopher is therefore fitting. Because Conrad Gessner was trained in no workshop, and learned in none of the artistic theories current among Renaissance artists, he was able to circumvent the pitfalls presented by contemporary artistic style which stressed so firmly the glory and independence of man and of his reasoning powers. Rather, his artistic work was an integral part of a whole view of the visible world, a view based on Protestant theology.

It is true that Reformed theology was unfriendly to the visual arts when they were used to obscure the Creator. When, however, they became implements for the explication of the operation of the Creator in creation, when they became illustrative or descriptive, that same theology embraced them. Thus the concept of geschichteswyss pointed a direction which the visual arts could follow, a direction leading away from the mystical and transcendent, certainly, but leading toward the explication of the workings of the material world. The printed illustrations of sacred and scientific works and the Protestant parables depicted in stained glass represent the artistic equivalent of the verbal concept "priesthood of all believers."
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