

The Origins of Swiss Anabaptism in the Context of the Reformation of the Common Man

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Scholarship emphasizing the religious nature of the original Anabaptist protest also tended to stress its urban beginnings. The writings of Harold Bender,¹ Fritz Blanke,² Heinold Fast,³ and John Howard Yoder⁴ may be considered representative of this school. Traditionally these historians "fixed upon the question of the authority of the state in religious matters, and . . . sought for the earliest point where something was said [between Zwingli and his followers] which could be construed as expressing a disagreement on this question."⁵ Bender thought that this something was said during the Second Disputation in Zürich on the late afternoon of October 27, 1523. After two days of public debate a consensus had emerged that neither the celebration of mass nor the use of images could be justified from Scripture. When the burgomaster sought to adjourn the meeting until the next afternoon Conrad Grebel rose and requested that concrete instructions be given against the unscriptural practices. Zwingli, however, replied that the implementation and timing of reform was best left to the City Council. Upon this Simon Stumpf rose in support of Grebel's motion stating: "Master Ulrich . . . you have no authority to place the decision in the hands of My Lords, for the decision is already made; the Spirit of God decides."⁶

When Yoder reinvestigated this exchange of arguments he concluded that the positions of Zwingli, Grebel and Stumpf were not yet irreconcilable. The real turning point was reached sometime between the Second Disputation and Christmas when the Council "first delayed and then refused completely" to initiate reforms of the mass. The problem of state-church relations came into clear focus for the first time only when the "state" decided against immediate reforms. "Zwingli's firm resolve,"

to begin the evangelical observance of the Lord's Supper on Christmas Day, was broken. For the sake of communal tranquility he surrendered to Council, and compromised the principle of Scripture as norm in matters of ecclesiastic reform. His radical followers, clinging to the original position, now moved to separation of state and church. With the introduction of adult baptism they laid the foundation for a separate believers' church. The birth of Anabaptism, thus, seemed to hinge primarily on the principle of authority in matters of religious reform and hence on state-church relations. A central role in the purely religious beginnings of Anabaptism was assigned to Conrad Grebel, Felix Mantz and Georg Blaurock. Rural Anabaptism appeared in this story as an expansion from urban beginnings.

Paul Peachey who combined this explanation of the Anabaptist genesis with a social analysis of the Swiss movement came to see in rural Anabaptism an intellectual and social impoverishment of its original urban character.⁷ Just as the social composition shifted to a dominant peasant element, so the creative urban, humanist impulses gave way to a narrow externalism expressed in the Schleithem Confession.

An increasing number of scholars, including J. F. G. Goeters,⁸ Martin Haas,⁹ James Stayer,¹⁰ and Hans-Jürgen Goertz¹¹, have taken issue with the interpretation of Anabaptist beginnings sketched above. At stake is not only the turning point in Zwingli's reformation but a different historical starting point. Interest has shifted to seeking an understanding of the social dynamics, the *Sitz im Leben*, that provided the context for religious protest.¹² It is felt that the focus on church-state separation and overt religious disagreements short-shriffs our understanding of the significance of the social-religious protest in the pre-history or early history of Swiss Anabaptism. This pre- and early history receives greater attention in the scholarship just cited. So does the role played by lesser members of the radical circle, in particular their rural allies. The question whether the radicals should be considered Zwinglians until late 1523 or constituted a faction with independent interests as early as 1521/22 remains controversial. However, a consensus exists that their actions prior to October 1523 belong to a sequence of events generically related to the birth of Anabaptism. The number of persons who participated in the early protests and later reappeared among the Anabaptists illustrates the basic continuity between early radicalism and later Anabaptism.¹³

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that the patterns of radicalization in Zürich and its environs showed striking similarity to events observed elsewhere during the popular phase of the Reformation (1520-25). A key feature of that phase was the mobilization of the common man by means of anticlerical propaganda.

An interesting counterpart to the anticlerical chorus was provided by the upgraded image of the common man, in particular the appearance

of the "evangelical peasant" in popular pamphlets.¹⁴ Without question the major reformers, including Zwingli, provided strong impulses in awakening of the common man. An important element in the process of mobilization for reform was the interaction between reforming interests in the cities and the aspirations of subjects in the rural hinterland. As is well known, this interaction climaxed in the Revolution of the Common Man of 1525, when artisans and peasants took seriously the role assigned to them in the propaganda pamphlets of the early Reformation. In order to underline the initially peaceful intentions, nevertheless radical implications, of the movement leading up in 1525, I have chosen to describe this phase of the Reformation as the Reformation of the Common Man.¹⁵ By this I mean a movement toward reform inspired by the aspiration of the common man. It is the intention of this paper to reinterpret the genesis of Swiss Anabaptism in this larger context of the Reformation of the Common Man. Born during the high water mark of the popular phase of the Reformation, Swiss Anabaptism, it will be argued, constituted a partial sequel to the Reformation and Revolution of the Common Man. Thus the interaction between the Zürich radicals and spokesmen of rural reform is brought into new focus. In due process, the significance of Grebel, Mantz and Blaurock takes on new dimensions. Andreas Castelberger, and his school of heretics drawn from the common people will be given a more central role in the emergence of Anabaptism.

As a book peddler Castelberger belonged together with printers and proofreaders to an unintegrated profession newly created by the printing press. Members of this profession seemed particularly susceptible to radical ideas during the Reformation. Castelberger was no exception. He constituted the key link between the Zürich radicals and the popular pamphlet literature of the period. He was the first to contact Andreas Karlstadt and appears among the signatories of Conrad Grebel's letter to Thomas Müntzer.¹⁶ In his role as colporteur he became a transmitter of radical ideas to the countryside. Prior to settling in Zürich he plyed his trade between Glarus, Basel and Einsiedeln.¹⁷ Among others he supplied Zwingli with pro-reform literature, and by early 1522 had founded a "school of heretics" in Zürich. Harold Bender described it as a "Bible School" for the "common unlearned man." Among its early students were Heini Aberli, a baker; Hans Ockenfuss, a seamster; Lorenz Hochrütiner, a weaver; Wolf Ininger, a cabinetmaker; Bartlime Pfister, and Claus Hottinger; all names that figure prominently in the history of Reformation radicalism in Zürich.¹⁸ Late in 1521 or early 1522, Aberli and Ininger helped to engineer an impious spook, ostensibly to attract attention to the plight of a poverty-stricken woman.¹⁹ During Lent 1522, Aberli, Hochrütiner, Ininger, Pfister, together with Bartholomew Pur, Ockenfuss, Lorenz Keller, Hans Uli and others defied the law of the Church and the custom of the city by breaking the fast at the house of the

printer Froschauer.²⁰ Already Aberli clamoured for communion in both kinds, and defended the position that communion was valid only when taken by those who believed. Implicitly this constituted an attack on sacerdotalism. Keller, a participant at this meeting, was later charged with preaching against the tithe in the district of Grüningen. Uli, another participant, later spread Anabaptist ideas in the same area.²¹

During the summer of 1522 Aberli, Claus and Jacob Hottinger organized a meeting of reform-minded supporters at the Lindenhof Inn. Up to five hundred guests were expected, ostensibly to celebrate Zwingli's return from a cure at the notorious baths of Baden. As an investigation by authorities revealed, plans for the meeting had been discussed at the residence of Jacob Grebel, father of Conrad. Conrad, it seems, was one of the initial organizers of the Lindenhof meeting. However, Council considered the gathering a potential danger. The main organizers were called in for questioning. Of special interest in the light of future developments is the fact that among those expected at the meeting were members from the rural communities of Zollikon and Höngg.²² Thus as early as the summer of 1522 contacts existed between the radical faction in Zürich and spokesmen for reform in the villages. Eventually the interests of these rural communities helped polarize the issues between Zwingli and his radical followers.

As noted above, among the promoters of the Lindenhof meeting were members of Castelberger's "school of heretics." The views of members of this school apparently offended the social sensibilities of conservative citizens. Claus Hottinger soon had reasons to complain about nocturnal disturbances outside his residence. Opponents gathered and shouted: "Hottinger, you devil, get up! Take your heretics and go to the *Ketzerschule*." Harrassment did not stop there. At the butcher shop a fellow customer greeted him as "Herr Doktor" suggesting that all this learning would, no doubt, soon earn him a "red hat." Hottinger replied that he would gladly leave red hats to knaves. The sceptic's intended social slur was unmistakable. Obviously not everyone in Zürich believed that the common man should concern himself with religious questions traditionally left to the clergy or other appropriate authorities. Understandably this view originated with defenders of the old order. Of special interest in this context is a statement attributed to Hottinger: "Should Council refuse to protect him" against such harrassment he "would appeal to the common man" (*so muesste er zuoetzt den gemeinen mann anruefen*). The implication of such an appeal must have been well understood to Council because the witness, by no means hostile to Hottinger, softened its impact by adding that Hottinger had no intention to cause "unrest" (*unruow*) or "rebellion" (*Uflouf*).²³ Thus it seems logical to conclude that resentment against the Bible School for the common man

came from supporters of the privileged orders. By inference it is possible to argue that the radicals looked for support to the lower orders.

That the sympathies of the heretics in Castelberger's circle were decidedly on the side of the common people is evident from the topics discussed in their Bible studies. Among other things, Castelberger reportedly taught that anyone who expropriated "house, farm, land or meadows" of the poor was no better "than a thief and murderer." The poor thief who stole for want of his starving children was contrasted favourably with those who collected more than their required share for themselves and their "bastards" by means of usury and benefices. Thus it appears that Castelberger and his friends read the sacred texts in the context of larger social issues. Not that Castelberger was an advocate of violent revolution. According to Lorenz Hochtütiner, one of the original members of the school, much had been said about warfare, "how this was contrary to God's Word and therefore sin." To kill another person was unequivocally murder.²⁴

Other topics on the agenda of discussion appear to have been questions of the tithe and of images. Members of Castelberger's school played a leading role during the iconoclastic disturbances in the fall of 1523. Since images were often donated by wealthy patrons some historians have seen iconoclasm as an expression of lower class resentment.²⁵ Claus Hottinger, Ockenfuss and Hochtütiner were the key figures involved in the removal of the large crucifix at Stadelhofen. Hottinger, it seems, wanted to provide some gratis firewood for the poor! Hochtütiner and Ininger were guilty of the additional crime of having smashed the "eternal light" at the *Frauenmünster*. Only Hottinger and Hochtütiner were subsequently exiled. Both Grebel and Zwingli wrote recommendations on behalf of Hochtütiner to Vadian, but they differed in tone.²⁶ Grebel considered the action of Council against Hochtütiner a miscarriage of justice.

When Hochtütiner arrived in his home town of St. Gall, he joined the Bible study around Johannes Kessler. From his comments in this group it is clear that he had been exposed to criticisms of pedo-baptism in relation to an exposition of Romans 6. Since Castelberger and his circle are known to have undertaken a detailed study of Paul's epistle to the Romans, it is possible to infer that Hochtütiner had encountered criticisms of pedo-baptism as early as 1523 while attending Castelberger's school of heretics.²⁷ It is therefore historically permissible to see in this school the cradle of future Anabaptism. For it was here that lay followers of Zwingli huddling around the New Testament reached "maturity" and independence of judgment in religious matters.²⁸ From its rank came the first evangelical martyr of Switzerland. Driven from Zürich, Claus Hottinger had taken the Gospel to Luzern where he was executed on March 9, 1524. However, the name Hottinger was to play a dominant role in the

history of the first Anabaptist community of Zollikon.²⁹ Hochrütiner in turn made his way from St. Gall to Basel becoming the founding member of the original Anabaptist group there.³⁰

Meanwhile Castelberger and other members of his circle who remained in Zürich fostered contact with rural radicals. Witnesses later claimed that a constant stream of peasants was seen coming and going from Castelberger's residence. Allegedly he advised them that it was not necessary to pay the tithe.³¹ The legitimacy of the tithe was under general discussion at the time, but it was a particularly burning issue in rural communities. Castelberger's visitors came, among other places, from Höngg, Witikon, and Zollikon. One of his customers was Simon Stumpf, and it is possible that Castelberger in this relationship functioned not only as a one-way transmitter of radical ideas to the countryside but also as a recipient of rural concerns for the radicals in Zürich. For Simon Stumpf, active at Höngg, took the initiative in preaching against the tithe as early as the summer of 1522. It was Stumpf who allegedly expressed the opinion that the Reformation would be to no effect unless the "priests were slain" in compliance with Deuteronomy 13.³² On his initiative all images were removed from the parish church at Höngg. For these actions as well as for his position taken at the Second Disputation, Stumpf followed Hottinger and Hochrütiner into exile.

By June of 1523 the refusal to pay the tithe had spread to several of Zürich's dependencies including Witikon and Zollikon within the sphere of Wilhelm Reublin's and Johannes Brötli's influence. The impact of preachers like Stumpf and Reublin on the rural subjects may be illustrated from the testimony of the peasant Hans Klinger. Klinger complained that he and his fellow peasants earned their livelihood by "sour work" with "sweat and blood" toiling from dawn to dusk only to find that most of their labour went to support those with three "tall horses" in their stables. Klinger and friends became fully conscious of the inequity of their position only under the impact of evangelical preaching. Thus the evangelical message played a crucial role in mobilizing Klinger and others against social injustice.³³ Here then we find precisely the convergence of social and economic grievances with the evangelical message which eventually changed the Reformation of the Common Man into revolution.

Reublin, reformer of Witikon by popular acclaim, and Brötli of Zollikon personified the evangelical reformer of the rural commune. Eyewitness accounts of Reublin's preaching help to explain his popularity and give a vivid picture of his style. Reublin, who earlier in Basel attracted "crowds estimated to be as large as four thousand,"³⁴ entertained the peasants with stories about masturbating nuns. Besides ridiculing the cenobitic ideal of the religious orders, he also denounced the entire privileged estates — clergy, lords, patricians in general, and the bailiff and mayor in particular — as "murdering, heretical and thieving" knaves.

At the same time he extolled the virtues of the peasants who unfortunately were kept in ignorance of their own worth.³⁵ That these outbursts were not merely self-serving rhetoric but motivated by genuine empathy for the plight of the common man is illustrated by Reublin's and Brötli's subsequent ministry among the poverty-stricken peasants in Hallau.³⁶ Writing from Hallau, Brötli was able to remind his parishioners in Zollikon: "You know how I had the courage to live among you, to work with my hands and to be a burden to no one."³⁷

By declaring their solidarity with the interests of the common man in the countryside Reublin and Brötli contributed to the tension between rural subjects and Zürich's magistracy.³⁸ They also contributed to the growing tension between Zwingli and his radical followers in the city. At issue were disputes concerning the right of patronage in Zürich's dependencies; that is, the rural communities' right to appoint their own pastors and abolish the church tax. In short, at stake was the autonomy of the local *Gemeinde* in matters of religious reform, or the authority of Zürich in its canton. The struggle against the centralizing encroachment of Zürich was not new. It predated the Reformation. The inhabitants of Zürich's rural dependencies lacked the political privileges of the citizens of Zürich whose representatives in Council arrogated unto themselves the right to govern the whole of the Canton.³⁹ By defending the community's right to choose its own ministers Reublin and Brötli became spokesmen for the Reformation of the Common Man in the countryside.

Returning to the growing rift between Zwingli and the radicals in Zürich, it is clear that a turning point was reached prior to the Second Disputation in the fall of 1523. The problem originated in the conflict of interest between the magistracy of Zürich and its dependent villages. Whatever Zwingli's theological position on the question of the tithe, it soon became clear that he did not contemplate an alliance with rural interests. Instead, he upheld Zürich's authority in its dependencies.⁴⁰ Unlike Zwingli, the radicals in Castelberger's school of heretics sided with the interests of the rural subjects. By mid 1523 Stumpf of Höngg, Reublin of Witikon and Brötli of Zollikon found themselves at odds with Zürich's Council.

As noted above, Conrad Grebel's contact with members of Castelberger's school dated at least from the summer of 1522. He mentioned the book peddler in a letter to Vadian in November of the same year.⁴¹ When, in July of 1522, Aberli, Claus Hottinger and Bartlime Pur were cited before the council because they disrupted services and criticized the monks, Grebel was implicated and spoke in their defence. After suggesting that the "devil was sitting on the bench," Grebel warned that "if my lords will not permit the progress of the Gospel, then they will be destroyed." For emphasis he and his comrades slammed the door with a loud bang!⁴² As noted above, some time after this incident the same group

planned the meeting at the Lindenhof Inn. Contrary to Bender's interpretation, therefore, evidence indicates an early association between Grebel and Castelberger's students.⁴³ Through them Grebel must have come in contact with the rural radicals. When Reublin married publicly after Easter 1523 twenty guests from Zürich were present. These, it may be assumed, included members of Castelberger's school.⁴⁴

From a letter by Grebel to Vadian dated June 17, 1523, it is evident that he too was caught up in the controversy concerning the payment of the tithe. By this time the prebendary canons were complaining bitterly about the loss of income and benefices which they were forced to share with the "common man."⁴⁵ Grebel sympathized clearly with those interested in the abolition or revision of the church tax. However, on June 22, 1523 the Council of Zürich decided in favour of retaining its payment.⁴⁶ Early in July investigators were sent to the rural communities in order to report on resistance against the Council's decision.⁴⁷ On July 15 Grebel registered his feelings on the subject by writing to Vadian: "Our men conduct the affair in matter of the tithe tyrannically and like Turks."⁴⁸ Hereafter all positive references to Zwingli disappear from Grebel's correspondence. Indeed, the same letter contained an allusion to an "arch-scribe" with whom he probably meant Zwingli.⁴⁹ Without question, then, the Council's handling of the tithe and the underlying dispute about village autonomy were cause for the first overt friction between Zwingli and the radicals.⁵⁰ It was a tacit alliance between Zwingli and Council against rural interests that prepared the way for a break with the later Anabaptists. The Second Disputation in October, 1523, it may be argued, concerned implicitly the "right of reformation," a right which the rural communities and their spokesmen, in particular Simon Stumpf, sought to claim for themselves, but the magistracy of Zürich reserved for itself.⁵¹ Adapting to the corporate tradition of Zürich Zwingli also adopted the city's governing interests within the Canton. Zürich's native son, Conrad Grebel, on the other hand, found himself eventually on the side of the common man and rural interests. If there was a turning point it was in Grebel and not in Zwingli. Grebel, who five years earlier admired and adored the "learned" and "cultivated" thinking them worthy of imitation,⁵² now near the end of 1523 saw them as "tensured monsters." The Word of God was overthrown, trampled and bound by its "learned heralds." Grebel, the humanist had extended his dislike for the clergy to the learned advocates of reform. To Vadian he wrote: "He that thinks or believes or says that Zwingli acts according to the duty of a pastor does think believe and speak wickedly."⁵³

Grebel's disillusionment with Zwingli was shared by other members of Castelberger's school of heretics. As book peddler Castelberger was in a key position to provide them with alternative literature. Among the known pamphlets read by the group were contributions by Jacob

Strauss,⁵⁴ Ludwig Hätzer, Gerhard Westerburg, Michael Stiefel, Clemens Ziegler, Caspar Hedio,⁵⁵ Andreas Karlstadt and Thomas Müntzer.⁵⁶ The writings of the latter two proved of particular interest to Grebel and his friends. It was public knowledge that both Müntzer and Karlstadt were at odds with the course taken by Luther. From the perspectives of the radicals Karlstadt and Müntzer found themselves in a situation analogous to their own. Their gestures of solidarity with the common man could only enhance their appeal.

Müntzer in particular spiked his writings with sympathetic references to "the poor unpolished people," the "ordinary people," "the poor common man," and the "poor peasants." These were contrasted with the "big shots" (*grossen hansen*).⁵⁷ Müntzer reserved his harshest words for the "new scribes," members of the clergy in the service of magisterial reform.⁵⁸ These "farting donkeys" and "money-hungry knaves" accepted "red guilders with great piety," while the common man was expected to sit with reverence and awe at their feet because of their degrees and titles. Without shame they admonished the wretched poor to meekness while permitting tyrants to grind and oppress them (*schinden und schaben*).⁵⁹ This continued alliance between secular authority and clerical elite was seen by Müntzer as an unholy "copulation of snakes and eels." Luther came under fire for raising hopes that "the mighty would be overthrown," and then crushing those same hopes by collaborating with the exploiters of the common people, that is, with those who expropriated the fish in the water, the birds in the air and the produce of the fields while "grinding the poor into the dust." Thus the Reformation benefitted the mighty who tailored customs and laws to suit their self-interest. It filled the treasury of princes but brought no relief to the plight of the poor. As for himself, Müntzer made preparations to assist God in bringing low the mighty and elevating the humble. He saw it as his primary task to wean the common man from the tutelage of the clergy. The poor and illiterate, he insisted, could learn the Gospel directly by listening to the "inner Word."⁶⁰ The time had come for "power to be given to the common people."⁶¹

How much of the programme spelled out only in Müntzer's later writings was endorsed by Grebel and his friends is not clear. Considering the situation in Zürich outlined above, it is not surprising that they sought contact with Müntzer. In spite of some misgivings about aspects of Müntzer's programme, the controversial letter of September 1524 praised him together with Karlstadt as one of the "purest proclaimers and preachers of the purest Word of God." Besides Grebel, Mantz and Castelberger, the veteran radicals Ockenfuss, Pur and Aberli made up the signatories.⁶²

Recent scholarship has argued for an important Karlstadt influence on the religious development of the Zürich group, a claim as old as

Anabaptism.⁶³ Karlstadt's initial appeal must have been similar to that of Müntzer.⁶⁴ He too contributed to the anticlerical literature that not only served to "edify" lay piety but also aroused expectations of a church without hierarchy. Although somewhat pedantic in prose, Karlstadt made headlines by his deeds. In plain gown addressing the participants as "fellow laymen" he officiated at the first reformed mass, Christmas 1521. As senior member of the theological faculty and the professor who had bestowed the doctoral degree on Luther, Karlstadt startled the academic community when he shed his titles and refused to participate further in the granting of degrees. In his quarrel with Luther he took the position that it was wrong to "tarry" for the magistrates or "spare" the weak. In his writings from this period⁶⁵ he defended the right of laymen to interrupt sermons, a tactic perfected by the early radicals in Zürich.⁶⁶ During the ensuing controversy over his right to serve as pastor in Orlamünde, he held to Luther's original position in favour of local control over clerical appointments.^{66a} More significantly, he developed a theological rationale in favour of his position. Within the context of the community he enhanced the role of those endowed with "spiritual discernment" against mere traditional authority. At the same time he emphasized the inner calling rather than mere external authorization as the sign of a true minister.⁶⁷ Ordination was not a necessary prerequisite for either preaching or presiding over the sacraments. Thus the priesthood of all believers found a practical and radical application in Karlstadt's writings. His popularity in radical lay circles is therefore not surprising.

When Luther mocked "neighbour Andrew" because he played the farmer in Orlamünde (loading manure in his bare feet!) he could not have given Karlstadt a better recommendation in the eyes of those who sought rapport with the peasants. Karlstadt's insistence that blisters were a more becoming ornament on the hands of God's servant than expensive rings could only enhance his reputation in the same circle. Similarly, radicals everywhere must have applauded when he attacked as "unorderly grease bellies" all preachers who drew big stipends and contributed to the "poor man's sweat." As for his own social aspirations, Herr Professor Doctor Karlstadt prayed to God:

... that I were a true peasant, husbandman or artisan, that I might eat my bread in obedience to God, that is, in the sweat of my brow. But I have eaten from the toil of poor people for whom I have done nothing in exchange . . . If I could I would give all of it back to them. God commanded Adam to work, and that command concerned labour in the field. We are bound to have our nourishment from it in sorrow. No one is excused whoever he might be, unless he is chosen by God to a different office or hindered by divine intervention.⁶⁸

Understandably Grebel's circle and its allies in the countryside, particularly Reublin and Brötli, must have been attracted to a theologian

with such leanings. Not surprisingly Karlstadt's pamphlets enjoyed great popularity with the Swiss radicals. After a personal visit by Karlstadt and Westerborg during the fall of 1524, Felix Mantz arranged for the printing of large editions of Karlstadt's works at Basel. Castelberger aided in their distribution.

Space here permits only discussion of one of the pamphlets in question. It has been chosen to illustrate the point made above about his appeal to the radicals. Given Karlstadt's propensity for longwinded and repetitive arguments the *Dialogue . . . about the detestable and idolatrous misuse of the reverend sacrament of Jesus Christ*⁷⁰ constitutes a moderate success at popular pamphleteering.⁷¹ The *Dialogue* featured Peter, a peasant, as spokesman of evangelical reform. The subject of discussion concerned, of course, the sacrament of mass. It will be recalled that in spite of the consensus reached on the matter during the Second Disputation Zürich's Council had still not abolished the traditional ritual. In this context we are less concerned with the logic of Karlstadt's spiritualism than in the anticlerical thrust of the entire *Dialogue*. The clergy are addressed as a "Pharisaical generation," a "brood of vipers" with whom Christ has nothing in common. Academically trained theologians are described as "born sophists, imposters" and disgusting "ink-eaters" who as a rule sell their gifts for material profit or worldly recognition. Peter, the peasant, has nothing but contempt for the "doctors who carry nice round hats, who parade in long gowns, who stand like scarecrows made of straw and wood, dressed up with (colourful) rags like beggars."⁷² The punchline is reached during a descriptive passage of drunken priests unable to move their tongues when Peter asks: "Who can believe that such wine bottles can bring Christ into the sacrament?"⁷³

Of course, all this was written before 1525. It was directed primarily against abuses in the old church. Karlstadt was not a social revolutionary. When he later encountered rebellious peasants they judged him "not good peasant like." According to his own account, he was fortunate to escape with his life.⁷⁴ However, this does not alter the fact that by helping to deride the first estate and by praising the spiritual acumen of Peter the peasant Karlstadt appealed not only to the prejudice of the laity but helped to mobilize the common man for expectations of radical reform.⁷⁵ His subsequent career, however, demonstrates that in spite of his love for the simple life he was more suited for the life style of an academic. Unlike Müntzer he played no role in the Peasant War. Neither did he join those influenced by his writings on their spiritual trek into sectarian exile. And yet, his influence on their development is undeniable. While it may be exaggerated to see in Karlstadt the founding father of Anabaptism, he was one of the first to question the validity or utility of pedo-baptism. Evidence indicates that his treatise on baptism was carefully studied by the Zürich radicals in manuscript form. The manuscript which has since

been lost, provided the key arguments for the *Protestation* submitted by Mantz to the authorities of Zürich in December of 1524.⁷⁶ Mantz attempted but failed to have Karlstadt's treatise printed in Basel.

Interestingly the first reports of refusal to have infants baptized came not from Zürich but its rural dependencies of Witikon and Zollikon. These refusals dated from late 1523, although at the time other issues dominated the debate. A formal disputation on baptism was not held until January 17, 1525. When the radicals remained unconvinced by Zwingli, with whom they had previously disagreed on the handling of the tithe and the reform of mass and images, they moved to adult baptism (probably on January 21, 1525). This was, as Stayer put it, "a dramatic and desperate act of defiance against the established church and government."⁷⁷ The government of Zürich reacted accordingly. On the very same day Council closed all "special schools." Castelberger together with Reublin, Brötli and Ludwig Hätzer, who had joined the Zürich radicals were given a reprieve but ordered to cease all private meetings. Reublin and Brötli moved to Hallau where they became involved with rebellious peasants. For reasons of health Castelberger's departure was delayed by two months.⁷⁸ In order to cover his debts Grebel left his books with the book peddler.⁷⁹ Having shed the last vestige of academic pretensions, he too left Zürich for the countryside.

After visits to Schaffhausen, St. Gall and Waldshut, Grebel unfolded his most successful ministry in the rural setting of the district of Grüningen.⁸⁰ An account of his message from the summer of 1525 gives credence to the interpretation that the break with Zwingli concerned among other things Zwingli's attitude to the rural subjects of Zürich. Grebel told the peasants how Zwingli counselled the authorities to arrest two, three or four of the ringleaders who refused to pay the tithe and to strike their heads off. In case of an attack on the city the peasants should be permitted to approach within shooting range. The guns should then be unloaded into their midst. Three or four hundred casualties would teach the others a lesson about rebellion.

And Grebel had said; that Zwingli said and advised the following: One should permit the peasants to move freely in front of the city. Then one should empty the rifles into their midst and shoot 300 or 400 of them to death. The others would then have second thoughts. Further Grebel had said that Zwingli advised that if the lords would take two, three or four of the leaders who refused to pay the tithe and decapitate them, the others would have second thoughts.⁸¹

No doubt Grebel pursued an ulterior purpose with these claims. He hoped to gain supporters for his own vision of reform. The point is that these statements substantiate the thesis of an alliance of interest between the Grebel circle and those who championed a Reformation in the inter-

ests of the Common Man in the countryside. As one historian observed: "It would seem that the authorities in Grüningen identified the attack on the tithes with the general programme of the Baptists."⁸² While this may have overstated the case, since Grebel and Blaurock eventually took the position that Anabaptists should pay the tithes lest the new religion become but "a pretext for worldly gain,"⁸³ it does illustrate the common ground between the original Anabaptist protest and the peasant rebels.⁸⁴ The Anabaptist attitude to the tithe was certainly part of that common ground.⁸⁵

The situation in Grüningen was no exception. It paralleled developments under the ministry of Brötli in the area of Hallau near Schaffhausen and under the ministry of Johannes Krüsi, lay preacher, in the rural area of St. Gall. Krüsi, who had been initiated into the Anabaptist movement by none other than Conrad Grebel, allegedly taught that the "common man need not give obedience to authority." According to the "living Word of God no one was obliged to pay the tithe or the like of it." Krüsi accepted only voluntary contributions for his own support. Other elements of his message included the rejection of images, of the real presence, of saint worship, of Mariology and of pedo-baptism.⁸⁶ All topics, it will be recalled, had been discussed in Castelberger's school of heretics. Under Krüsi's ministry Anabaptism assumed the dimensions of a mass movement. When the authorities sought Krüsi's arrest, supporters of the lay preacher showed inclinations to defend their spiritual leader by force of arms. Thirty-one villages pledged their protection for Krüsi.⁸⁷

This favourable reception of Anabaptism in the countryside was not accidental. As noted earlier, the birth of Swiss Anabaptism was inextricably interwoven with the desire of Zürich's rural dependencies for autonomy. The first Anabaptist church appeared not in Zürich, but in Zollikon. Even in terms of the first baptism Zürich preceded Zollikon only by a few hours. Among the original group baptized on Saturday evening, January 21, 1525 seems to have been Brötli, for on the very next day he baptized Fridli Schumacher, his landlord of Zollikon. The event was observed by Hans Ockenfuss on his way to visit Reublin. Either on the same day or the day following, Grebel "officiated" at a radical communion service in the home of Jacob Hottinger in Zollikon.⁸⁸ All this suggests continuity with Brötli's previous ministry. Interestingly, the Anabaptist congregation in Zollikon included thirty of the forty lesser farmers of the community. These were men who supplemented their income by working as day labourers or at a trade. Prominent among them were members of the Hottinger clan. In a true sense of the word the first Anabaptist congregation was a fellowship of the common man. When representatives of this fellowship met with Zwingli during the "great disputation" late in 1525, the contrast of attitudes was revealing. Chaisthans Fessler of Zollikon, spokesman for the Anabaptists, sought to ban the use of books

during the disputation. When he repeatedly entreated Zwingli to speak the truth, Zwingli replied pointedly, "I say the truth, you are (nothing but) a coarse, awkward, rebellious peasant."⁸⁹

Zwingli's observation describes fittingly the rift that had opened between him and his followers. No such social snobbery separated the Anabaptists from the unlearned, for from its inception Anabaptist ideology contained elements of the common man's aspirations of reform. Only when the option of radical reform either with the aid of the magistracy⁹⁰ or the support of a popular base proved an illusion, did the latent tendency to separate from society at large take its course.

The dynamics of sect formation in the Swiss setting have received special attention in the scholarship of Martin Haas and need no elaboration here.⁹¹ Suffice it to state that Haas has shown how issues dominant during the pre-history and early history of Anabaptism waned in significance or underwent a transvaluation. Anticlericalism and the desire to control the appointment of the spiritual overseer became institutionalized in the Anabaptist practice of electing and chastising its *Vorsteher*. With separation new questions about the oath and whether a Christian could be part of the governing apparatus gained in significance. Solidarity with the cause of the common man weakened as a sectarian vision of society crystallized. Believer's baptism, the ban, non-resistance, became the distinguishing features that set the faithful few apart and at the same time reinforced internal solidarity and growing group consciousness. Persecution and martyrdom did the rest to enforce the view that God's kingdom was not of this world. Under the guidance of Michael Sattler, a former Benedictine prior, a radical dualism severed the social solidarity between Anabaptism and the common people.⁹²

II

Anabaptism in Zürich emerged from a context of rural-urban tensions illuminating parallels to the pattern of radicalization associated with the birth of the Great Peasant War. Peter Bickler in his recent studies describes the peasant affair of 1525 as a "Revolution of the Common Man."⁹³ The major points of Bickler's thesis are worth reiterating. According to Bickler the great uprising

represented an attempt to overcome the crisis of feudalism through a revolutionary reshaping of social and seigneurial relations on the basis of the Gospel. The bearer of the revolution was not the peasant . . . Rather, it was the 'common man': peasants, miners, the citizens of territorial towns, the politically disenfranchised citizens of imperial cities.⁹⁴

The common man aimed at a reduction of the rights and privileges of the first and second estate, and sought to create a "Christian common

weal" on "the basis of brotherly love." Clergy and church were to be stripped of economic and political power.⁹⁵ The privileges of the second estate were to be subordinated to the interests of local communal associations. The Reformation message seemed to support these aspirations of the common man. Prior to the Reformation legitimation of social relations rested on "ancient custom". Reformation "Biblicism" in the broader sense of the term — replaced "ancient custom" with "godly law" or "divine law" which it was believed found its fullest expression in the Gospel. The Gospel as Divine law "superceded the authority and legitimacy" of custom. However, since the Gospel in principle left the social and political order undetermined it could not be used to buttress the existing order. Instead, it became a revolutionary instrument used to legitimize peasants' grievances. By increasing the yearning for a "just, more Christian world" among the common people in general the Reformation Gospel also strengthened "the limited coincidence of interests" between town and country.

Godly law was potentially dynamic in a threefold sense. Now any kind of demands which were deducible from the Bible could be put forward. The social barriers which had previously separated the peasants and townsmen were now removed. In principle the future social and political order now stood open.⁹⁶

Thus the preachers⁹⁷ who carried Reformation Biblicism — the Gospel as divine law — as a reforming principle to the countryside prepared the way for the "Revolution of the Common Man." The authorities failing to accept "the common man's interpretation of the Gospel" became opponents of divine law. Thus legitimization of rebellion was achieved. Ultimately the revolution of 1525 failed because it was soon obvious that the "concerns of the common man were not compatible with those of the Reformers."

The traditional explanation that the Peasant War resulted primarily from a clash of political interests between centralizing efforts of territorial authorities and the defensive reflex of the local communities is thus expanded.⁹⁸ By raising the possibility of local control over religious matters the Reformation provided part of the inspiration for a revived interest in communal autonomy, both on the urban and rural level. If it can be argued that the revived ideal of autonomous communities provided an alternative conception of society from hierarchical feudal notions, it becomes clear why the corporate communal notion proved particularly revolutionary in the countryside where feudal hierarchical structures remained dominant. Of special significance for this paper is that in Bickle's account the Peasant War as Revolution of the Common Man becomes an integral part of the popular phase of the Reformation. While artisans constituted the social link between the common man in the city

and countryside, evangelical preachers and colporteurs peddling Reformation propaganda bridged the communications gap between reformers and common people. The cities thus functioned as transmission centres for Reformation ideas. With the mobilization of the peasants, supporters of reform in the cities tended to polarize into moderate and radical factions.⁹⁹ The radical factions as a rule sympathized with or found themselves in alliance with communal rural interests.

Moreover, the advantage of Blickle's reinterpretation of the Revolution of 1525 lies in the fact that it seeks to do justice to the social, political as well as religious factors motivating the rebels. By describing the events of 1525/26 as a Revolution of the Common Man Blickle has been able to bridge the gap between town and country without resort to nineteenth-century Marxist conceptions of an alliance between pre-proletarian plebeians and backward peasants. Thus Blickle's account does not presuppose the Marxist periodization of history nor the conceptualization of the Reformation as an "early bourgeois revolution."¹⁰⁰ For Anabaptist studies it is significant that Blickle's explanation of the dynamics of the Revolution of the Common Man shows striking parallels to recent descriptions of the "revolutionary beginnings" of Swiss Anabaptism in the context of "reformed congregationalism."¹⁰¹ Events in Memmingen, birthplace of the "Twelve Articles," the major manifesto of the Revolution of 1525, may help to illustrate this point.

Recent scholarship has once again implicated Balthasar Hubmaier, the reformer and Anabaptist of Waldshut, as having helped in the formulation of certain peasant grievances, Blickle has traced the original version of the Twelve Articles to the Upper Rhine near Basel, not far from Hubmaier's Waldshut. Müntzer's influence on Hubmaier, long denied, is once more considered as likely.¹⁰²

Whatever the outcome of these reconsiderations, scholarly consensus attributes the final composition of the Twelve Articles to Christopher Schappeler and Sebastian Lotzer.¹⁰³ Schappeler together with Johan Vadian and Sebastian Hofmeister chaired the Second Disputation at Zürich in October 1523.¹⁰⁴ Both Vadian and Hofmeister sympathized originally with the cause of the radicals. We can assume the same for Schappeler. Earlier in 1523 on the urging of Vadian, Grebel sought Zwingli's help in procuring Schappeler's appointment to the parish in Winterthur.¹⁰⁵ Instead, Schappeler resumed his reforming efforts in Memmingen. He found a staunch supporter in Lotzer. Originally from the same town as Wilhelm Reublin, Lotzer personified the common man turned reformer.¹⁰⁶ As lay pamphleter he amplified the anticlerical feelings of the common people, defending their right to dispute the implications of the Gospel.¹⁰⁷ His open letters to the community of Horb¹⁰⁸ may be considered part of the pre-history of Reublin's and Michael Sattler's later Anabaptist ministry in that area. Meanwhile Lotzer contributed to

the creation of a conventicle of reform-minded radicals in Memmingen, who found an eloquent and independent spokesman in Schappeler.

Schappeler himself was a moderate.¹⁰⁹ However, by preaching a Gospel with social implications he was partly responsible for creating a movement that climaxed in open rebellion. As early as 1521 the reformer had run afoul of upper class interest at Memmingen. He had openly criticized Council for favoring the rich in its decisions. Called to account, members of Council were forced to admit that "he has told us the truth."¹⁰⁰ Schappeler's support came above all from low income artisans in the city.¹⁰¹ His preaching helped to forge a bond between the radical party in the city and peasants in the surrounding countryside who came to hear him preach. Here too the payment of the tithe soon became a contentious issue. As in the case of Zürich, so in Memmingen the first refusals to pay the tithe came not from the city itself but from its rural dependencies. Schappeler, if not the instigator of these protests, sympathized with them. He could find no support for the tithe in the Gospel. Early in 1524 the Procurator of the bishop of Augsburg complained bitterly that Schappeler openly condoned refusal to pay the tithe. When the council in June of the same year, after consultation with the Swabian League, threatened all those refusing to pay the tithe with punishment, it faced open rebellion. The action of the citizens assured that the Gospel would continue to be preached "pure and simple". Council was asked to prosecute those who opposed Schappeler. By December of the same year the reformer dispensed the sacrament of the Lord's table in both kind. A month later, after public disputations with his opponents, Schappeler won the city officially for the Reformation. But while he remained a moderate the forces that he had helped to unleash soon overtook him. When the peasants rose the radicals in the city continued to make common cause with them in spite of Schappeler's misgivings. Eventually Schappeler himself, together with the Council and the entire city, was drawn into the Revolution of the Common Man. Lotzer, Schappeler's staunch ally, became the secretary to Ulrich Schmidt, the moderate leader of the Baltringen Peasants. Together with Schappeler he helped to draft the Twelve Articles.

In the first two of these they voiced the common man's expectations of ecclesiastical reform. The first article asserted the right of the local community to appoint its own pastors; the second called for a reform and redistribution of the tithe. The remaining ten articles gave voice to specific economic demands. Suffice it to state that in this manifesto and its subsequent significance Schappeler and Lotzer bridged Reformation and Revolution. As noted above, the community's right to appoint evangelical preachers and the reform or abolition of the tithe had been key issues in the early history of Anabaptism. These were also the key concerns giving the Twelve Articles a supra-regional dimension. The document

went through twenty editions within two months and found distribution from Thuringia to Tyrol and from Alsace to Salzburg. It has been claimed that it held the revolution of 1525 together "like a clamp both in terms of matter and in terms of time."¹¹²

When the revolution failed Schappeler and Lotzer escaped across the Swiss border. Lotzer reappears in records relating to Anabaptists, but his reaction to their teachings is not clear.¹¹³ More illuminating is Schappeler's subsequent confrontation with members of the movement. Siding with the Reformed clergy of St. Gall, Schappeler participated in attempts at winning back Anabaptists. Observers noticed the personal hostility of the Brethren to Schappeler. At one of the hearings the Anabaptist Hans Marquart accused him: "You, Schappeler, you know the truth and preached it a few years ago at Memmingen, as I myself heard from you, but you have fallen away from it."¹¹⁴

If nothing else the accusation suggests a former proximity of positions from which both Schappeler and the Anabaptists deviated or evolved in diverse directions. The accusation of Anabaptists against Schappeler like similar accusations against Zwingli indicates the gulf that had opened between former allies. Schappeler, moderating the social claims of the Gospel, had become a servant of magisterial reform. Not everyone was capable or willing to evolve in this direction. Unwillingness to compromise condemned some former radicals to a sectarian life-style. However, even in its more purely religious expression and pacifist stance, Anabaptism proper constituted a disturbing social critique thus carrying the birthmarks of the Reformation of the Common Man betrayed by the magisterial reformers.

By way of conclusion the main contention of this paper may be summarized as follows:

1. Swiss Anabaptism had its genesis in the converging interests of urban radicals (the Castelberger school) and rural reformers (Stumpf, Reublin and Brötli). Either for reasons of empathy with the peasants or for tactical purposes the Anabaptists in the city found themselves in alliance with rural interests. In due process they resisted Zürich's attempt to use the Reformation in order to enhance its own authority in the countryside. This contextualizing of the original Anabaptist protest provides a corrective to interpretations that emphasized the urban and humanist origins of Anabaptism. It should be clear, however, that while the dynamics of radicalization that spawned the initial Anabaptist protest found parallels elsewhere, the outcome was not predetermined.

2. This account deliberately scales down the significance traditionally assigned to Grebel, Mantz and Blaurock. Correspondingly the book peddler Andreas Castelberger and his school of heretics drawn from common people (Aberli, baker; Pur, baker; Inninger, tablemaker; Hochrütiner, weaver; Ockenfuss, seamster) are given greater signifi-

cance. Stumpf, Reublin, and Brötli, spokesmen for rural reform, are seen as representative of the early movement. The first Anabaptist congregation at Zollikon, consisted primarily of lesser farmers who supplemented their income by working as day labourers or at a trade. The first Anabaptist congregation, therefore, constituted in the true sense of the word a reformed church of the common man.

3. The initial appeal of Karlstadt and of Müntzer, it has been argued, lay not only in their religious radicalism, but also in their conflict with established authorities, the anticlerical themes in their writings and in their gestures of solidarity with the common man.

4. Swiss Anabaptism born during the high water mark of the popular phase of the Reformation constituted a partial sequel to the Revolution of the Common Man. The nonresistance position latent in the thought of some members became dominant only after trial and error. It crystallized rapidly after the failure of the peasant movement and found full expression in the Schleithem Confession of 1527. Although Anabaptist ideology incorporated strong pro-lay and anticlerical impulses the Swiss Brethren soon found themselves in a minority position. In this context traditional claims that saw in Anabaptism a potentially powerful mass movement competing for majority support with the magisterial reformers must be revised. Only in its pre- or early history not in what traditional historians understood by Anabaptism proper, did Anabaptists approximate a populist movement of solidarity with the common man. In its peculiar sectarian expression the movement was condemned to ephemeral minority status. Yet as the persecutions amply testify even in its purely religious, sectarian and peaceful stance Anabaptism retained a disturbing social critique.

A historical understanding of the beginnings of Swiss Anabaptism must take as its starting point the larger context of the Reformation of the Common Man.

Notes

¹Harold Bender, *Conrad Grebel, c. 1498-1526: The Founder of the Swiss Brethren* (Goshen, Indiana, 1950).

²Fritz Blanke, *Brothers in Christ* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1961).

³Heinold Fast, "'Die Wahrheit wird euch freimachen.' Die Anfänge der Täuferbewegung in Zürich," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* (hereafter *MGBL*), XXXII (1975).

⁴John Howard Yoder, "The Turning Point of the Zwinglian Reformation," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (hereafter *MQR*), XXXII (1958), pp. 128-140.

⁵*Ibid.*, An abbreviated version reprinted in James M. Stayer and Werner O. Packull, eds., *The Anabaptists and Thomas Müntzer* (Dubuque, Iowa, 1980), pp. 61-65, esp. 62.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 61. The discussion of Yoder's point of view which follows is taken from the same essay. For an alternative view compare Robert Walton, "Was There a Turning Point in the Zwinglian Reformation?" *MQR*, XLII (1968), pp. 45-56.

⁷Paul Peachey, *Die soziale Herkunft der Schweizer Täufer in der Reformationszeit* (Karlsruhe, 1954), pp. 9, 11, 73, 92-93, 95; also "The Radical Reformation, political pluralism and the Corpus Christianum" in *The Origins and Characteristics of Anabaptism*, ed. by

Marc Lienhard (The Hague, 1977), pp. 10-26. It is unfortunate that this part of Peachey's thesis has not received the debate it deserves.

⁸J. F. G. Goeters, "Die Vorgeschichte des Täuferturns in Zürich" in *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie der Reformation*, ed. by Louise Abramowski and J. F. G. Goeters (Neukirchen-Vlyn, 1969), p. 239-281.

⁹Martin Haas, "Der Weg der Täufer in die Absonderung" in *Umstrittenes Täuferturn 1525-1975. Neue Forschungen*, ed. by Hans-Jürgen Goertz (Göttingen, 1976), pp. 50-78.

¹⁰James M. Stayer, "Die Anfänge des schweizerischen Täuferturns im reformierten Kongregationalismus," *ibid.*, pp. 19-49; "Reublin and Brotli, the Revolutionary Beginnings of Swiss Anabaptism" in *Origins and Characteristics of Anabaptism*, ed. by M. Lienhard (The Hague, 1977), pp. 83-102; "The Swiss Brethren: An Exercise in Historical Definition," *Church History*, XLVII (1978), pp. 174-195.

¹¹Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *Die Täufer. Geschichte und Deutung* (Munich, 1980).

¹²For some of the general trends in Anabaptist history consult James M. Stayer, Klaus Deppermann and Werner O. Packull, "From Monogenesis to Polygenesis: The Historical Discussion of Anabaptist Origins," *MGR*, XLIX (1975), pp. 83-121; Werner O. Packull, "Some Reflections on the State of Anabaptist History: The Demise of a Normative Vision," *Studies in Religion*, VIII (1979), pp. 313-323.

¹³This runs counter to Bender's attempts at minimizing any continuity and set Grebel apart from these earlier radical manifestations. Bender, *Grebel*, pp. 85-87, 95-96.

¹⁴I dealt with this subject in greater detail in "The Image of the 'Common Man' in the Early Pamphlets of the Reformation (1520-1525)," a paper read at the Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies, Ottawa, June 1, 1982.

¹⁵The author first used Peter Blickle's concept of the common man in a paper entitled "In Search of the Common Man in Early Anabaptist Ideology," read at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, Guelph, October 26, 1979. More recently two other scholars have elaborated on Anabaptist relations to the common man: Arnold Snyder, "The Schleithelm Articles in Light of the Revolution of the Common Man: Continuation or Departure?" James Stayer, "Christian Community of Goods. The Anabaptist Ideal of Social and Economic Justice for the Common Man" read at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, October 28, 1983 at Milwaukee.

¹⁶Bender, *Grebel*, p. 58.

¹⁷According to Bender he had been in Zürich since 1516 (*Ibid.*, p. 86.); others place his arrival in early 1522. G. R. Potter, *Zwingli* (London, 1976), p. 176. Robert Walton, *Zwingli's Theocracy* (Toronto University Press, 1967), p. 98.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 62. Leonhard Von Muralt and Walter Schmid, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz*: Vol. I: Zürich (hereafter *Quellen:I:Zürich*) (Zürich, 1952), pp. 386-388.

¹⁹Emil Egli, ed., *Aktensammlung zur Geschichte der Züricher Reformation in den Jahren 1519-1533* (reprint of 1879, Nieuwkoop, 1973), (hereafter *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*), pp. 66-67.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

²¹Walton, *Zwingli's Theocracy*, pp. 60-61.

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 62-63; Egli, *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*, p. 83.

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

²⁴Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen: I: Zürich*, pp. 386-387.

²⁵Thomas Brady, *Ruling Class. Regime and Reformation at Strasbourg 1520-1555* (Leiden, 1978), p. 201.

²⁶Grebel claimed that Hoehrutiner had been persuaded by Hottinger that he was acting in agreement with the Council's wishes. Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen: I: Zürich*, pp. 6-7.

²⁷Goeters, "Vorgeschichte des Täuferturns in Zürich," p. 280.

²⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 254-255.

²⁹Claus was executed March 9, 1524. Walton, *Zwingli's Theocracy*, p. 62; Stayers refers to Jacob Hottinger as "the leading Anabaptist in Zollikon." "The Swiss Brethren," p. 185. Jacob became a travel companion of Grebel for a time. Bender, *Grebel*, p. 147.

³⁰Hanspeter Jecker, "Die Basler Täufer," *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alter-*

tumskunde (LXXX 1980), p. 17: "Hingegen durfte es feststehen, dass Hochrutiner als der Hauptgründer des Basler Täuferturns bezeichnet werden muss."

³¹Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen: I: Zürich*, p. 387-88. "... wie vil puren volcks zum Andress uss und in wandlent, denen sag er, sy syant kein zehenden schuldig ..."

³²*Ibid.*, p. 121. Also cited in Stayer, "The Swiss Brethren," p. 177.

³³Egli, *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*, p. 143.

³⁴Jecker, "Die Baseler Täufer," p. 28; Stayer, "Reublin and Brötli," p. 84.

³⁵Egli, *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*, p. 137.

³⁶For a biographical sketch of Reublin see James Stayer, "Wilhelm Reublin. Eine pikareske Wanderung durch das frühe Täuferturn" in *Radikale Reformatoren*, ed. by Hans-Jürgen Goertz (Münich, 1978), pp. 93-102.

³⁷Stayer, "Reublin und Brötli," p. 86; Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen: I: Zürich*, pp. 44-45. See also Brötli's references to the depressing poverty of the peasants, pp. 54-55.

³⁸Reublin had come into conflict with the Cathedral Chapter over his appointment. Council originally tolerated his position. Egli, *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*, p. 90.

³⁹Walton, *Zwingli's Theocracy*, p. 4.

⁴⁰Kurt Maeder, "Die Bedeutung der Landschaft für den Verlauf des reformatorischen Prozesses in Zürich (1522-1532)," in *Stadt und Kirche im 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Bernd Moeller (Gutersloh, 1978), pp. 91-108.

⁴¹Letter to Vadian, dated November 21, 1522, translated into English by Edward Yoder in *Epistolae Grebelianae 1517-1525*, copy at Conrad Grebel Library, Conrad Grebel College.

⁴²Egli, *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*, p. 94; Heinold Fast, "Reformation durch Provokation" in *Umstrittenen Täuferturn 1525-1975*, ed. by Hans-Jürgen Goertz (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 80 ff; Goertz, *Die Täufer*, p. 14.

⁴³Bender consistently sought to show that there was no connection between "the aggressively evangelical elements in the population" who gathered around Aberli, Pur and the Hottinger brothers and the "more learned and cultivated men ... like Stumpf, Reublin ... Hatzer ... Grebel and Manz." Grebel, pp. 85, 87.

⁴⁴Goeters, "Vorgeschichte des Täuferturns," p. 256.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen: I: Zürich*, p. 1, n. 4.

⁴⁷Egli, *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*, pp. 137-138.

⁴⁸Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen: I: Zürich*, p. 2, n. 1. Edward Yoder dates the letter for July 13, 1523, *Epistolae Grebelianae*. See also Grebel's letter of June 17 in this collection.

⁴⁹Goeters, "Vorgeschichte des Täuferturns," p. 258.

⁵⁰Bender followed by Yoder insisted that Grebel's attitude on the tithes "was exactly that of Zwingli" and felt it necessary to emphasize "the unrevolutionary character of Grebel's attitude at this point in order to prepare for a just evaluation of Grebel's attitude later, after the break with Zwingli." Bender, *Grebel*, p. 86. It is not my intention here to argue for or against a revolutionary attitude by Grebel, but merely to insist that the break with Zwingli ought to be considered in the larger historical context of tension between the rural communities and Council.

⁵¹Stayer, "The Swiss Brethren," p. 180.

⁵²See his letters to Vadian in July, September and October, 1518 in Edward Yoder, *Epistolae Grebelianae*.

⁵³*Ibid.*, letter of Grebel to Vadian on December 18, 1523.

⁵⁴John Oyer, "The Influence of Jacob Strauss on the Anabaptists. A Problem in Historical Methodology," in *The Origins and Characteristics of Anabaptism*, ed. by Marc Lienhard (The Hague, 1977), pp. 62-82.

⁵⁵Stiefel was mentioned in the letter to Müntzer, and Bender detected some possible apocalyptic influence about this time on Grebel. Bender, *Grebel*, pp. 196-197, 273 n. 44.

⁵⁶Grebel also mentioned a pamphlet about the Ass of Balaam. Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen: I: Zürich*, p. 2 n. 5, p. 13 n. 4, p. 22 n. 10.

⁵⁷Günther Franz, ed., *Thomas Müntzer: Schriften und Briefe* (Gutersloh, 1968), pp. 256, 275, 283, 329, 337.

⁵⁸Hans-Jürgen Goertz has observed that Müntzer's rabid anticlericalism strengthened lay impulses in a paradoxical fashion — by "clericalizing the layman." "Schwerpunkt der

neueren Müntzerforschung" in Thomas Müntzer, ed. by Hans-Jürgen Goertz and Abraham Friesen (Darmstadt, 1978), p. 507.

⁵⁹Franz, *Müntzer: Schriften unde Briefe*, pp. 293, 299, 306, 496, 500. Müntzer was astute enough to recognize a fruitful tool in anticlericalism. He accused Luther of using it: "seine lere aufzubringen durch der layen hass wider pfaffen." (*Ibid.*, p. 333).

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 270: "Derhalten mustu, gemeyner man, selber gelehrt werden, auff das du nicht lenger verführet werdest."

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 471: "das dye gewalt sol gegeben werden dem gemeinen volck"; also pp. 289, 450.

⁶²For an updated interpretation of the letter see Stayer, "The Swiss Brethren," pp. 181-182, esp. the notes.

⁶³Calvin Pater, "Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt. As the Intellectual Founder of Anabaptism" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1977).

⁶⁴K. Uhrig claimed that Karlstadt elevated the status of the peasant above the other estates. "Der Bauer in der Publizistik der Reformation bis zum Ausgang des Bauernkrieges," *ARG XXXIII* (1936), p. 178.

⁶⁵Erich Hertzsch, ed., *Karlstadts Schriften aus den Jahren 1523-25* (Halle, 1956-57), vols. I and II. Ronald J. Sider, *Karlstadt's Battle with Luther. Documents in a Liberal-Radical Debate* (Philadelphia, 1978).

⁶⁶See Heinold Fast, "Reformation durch Provokation. Predigtstörung in den ersten Jahren der Reformation in der Schweiz," in *Umstrittenes Täuferum 1525-1975. Neue Forschungen* (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 79-110.

^{66a}Gert Haendler, *Luther on Ministerial Office and congregational Function* (Philadelphia, 1981).

⁶⁷For the significance of the emphasis on an inner calling in later struggles between laity and professional clergy see the excellent essay by Dennis Martin, "Schools of the Prophets: Shepherds and Scholars in New England Puritanism," *Historical Reflections*, V (1978), pp. 41-80.

⁶⁸"Anzeyg etlicher Hauptartickeln Christlicher leere. In wolchen Doct. Luther den Andresen Carolstat falsche zusag und nachred verdecktig macht (1525)," in Hertzsch, *Karlstadts Schriften aus den Jahren 1523-1525*, II, esp. pp. 95-97. See a slightly different translation in Sider, *Karlstadt's Battle with Luther*, p. 135.

⁶⁹Pater, "Andreas Karlstadt," p. 286. Mantz came to Basel with Westerburg and Castelberger in the fall of 1524. They lodged with Hochrütiner. Jecker, "Die Basler Täufer," pp. 16-17. Brotli wrote from Hallau asking for Karlstadt's booklets. Bender, *Grebel*, pp. 123, 197-198.

⁷⁰"Dialogus oder ein gesprechbüchlin von dem gewrelichen und abgottischen missbrauch, des hochwirdigsten sacraments Jesu Christi," in Hertzsch, *Karlstadts Schriften aus den Jahren 1523-1525*, II, pp. 5-49.

⁷¹Karlstadt used the form of dialogue in three of his writings. Each was intended for the broadest general public. One of these was his tract on baptism. It was refused a printing in Basel. Pater, "Andreas Karlstadt," p. 444.

⁷²Hertzsch, *Karlstadts Schriften aus den Jahren 1523-1525*, II, pp. 31, 35, 39, 40.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 46. At the conclusion of this dialogue Karlstadt advertised the six other treatises which he had written "in straightforward language."

⁷⁴"Entschuldigung D. Andres Carlstads des falschen namens der auffrur, so yhm ist mit unrecht aufgelegt. Mit eyner vorrhede Doct. Martini Luthers" (1525) in Hertzsch, *Karlstadts Schriften aus den Jahren 1523-1525*, II, pp. 105-118, esp. 110-111, 115-116.

⁷⁵Pater has argued that Karlstadt was no social egalitarian. "Andreas Karlstadt," p. 118. However, Hermann Barge was undoubtedly correct that Karlstadt "die religiöse Urteilskraft des Christlich gesinnten Volkes . . . wesentlich höher eingeschätzt als Luther." *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*, II (Leipzig, 1905), p. 317.

⁷⁶Calvin Pater, "Felix Mantz' Protestation and Karlstadt's *Von dem Tauff*" (paper read at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, October 1979, Guelph, Ontario).

⁷⁷Stayer, "The Swiss Brethren," p. 183.

⁷⁸Action was taken against him on June 12, 1525. His wife, children and books were placed on a boat and he was sent back to Graubünden. Muralt and Schmid, *Quellen*: I: Zürich, pp. 37, 55-56, 387. Mantz and Blaurock were in Graubünden in July. Heinold Fast,

ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz*: Vol. II: *Ostschweiz* (Zürich, 1973), pp. 502, 504. It appears that Castelberger later settled in Chur. A complaint about his activity there is dated March 17, 1528. He may have obtained citizenship in 1531. Thereafter the sources are silent. *Ibid.*, p. 509 n. 7.

⁷⁹Correll and Bender, "A Letter of Grebel to Castelberger, May 1925," MQR I (1927), pp. 41-53; Muralt and Schmidt, *Quellen*: I: *Zürich*, pp. 70-72.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 85-86, 98. In March 1525 Grebel visited with Sebastian Hofmeister in Schaffhausen. The latter proved sympathetic to his cause. Grebel then returned to Zürich. He visited St. Gall in late March returning to Zürich after April 16. It is believed that he left Zürich again in June for a visit to Waldshut. By the end of June he was in the district of Grüningen. Bender, *Grebel*, pp. 139-149.

⁸¹Egli, *Aktensammlung der Züricher Reformation*, p. 379.

⁸²Walton, *Zwingli's Theocracy*, p. 61. This view contrasts sharply with Yoder's who argued that the preaching against the tithe was primarily the work of Zwinglians such as Johann Brennwald and Sporli or Schorli. Yoder maintains that peasants sympathized with the Anabaptists because they saw in them fellow *Entrechtete*. Yoder, *Täuferium und Reformation in der Schweiz*: I: *Die Gespräche zwischen Täufern und Reformatoren 1523-1538*. (Karlsruhe, 1962), pp. 69-70, 77, 79.

⁸³Stayer, "The Swiss Brethren," p. 185.

⁸⁴As late as 1536 Reformed ministers lamented the fact that the peasants were more inclined to either Anabaptism or the traditional faith than to their own position. Fast, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz*: II: *Ostschweiz*, p. 82. It is also noteworthy that the tithe remained a bone of contention between the Anabaptists and Reformed ministers. *Ibid.*, pp. 264, 467, 549, 698. See also the "Zofinger Gespräch" of 1532 in Martin Haas, Vol. IV of *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz* (Zürich, 19), esp. pp. 228-230.

⁸⁵Yoder consistently sought to show that later Anabaptists distinguished themselves from those who opposed the tithe in that they did not take measures to abolish the tithe except within their *Gemeinde*. Yoder, *Gespräche zwischen Täufern und Reformatoren*, p. 17 n. 19. Yoder found support for this interpretation in Zwingli's ability to distinguish between those radicals with religious goals and those with primarily economic concerns. *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 38, 45, 69-70. More qualified were Peachey's conclusions about the interrelatedness of Anabaptism with peasant unrest in Grüningen. "Abschliessend sehen wir also in Grüningen eine gewisse indirekte Beeinflussung der letzten Bauernunruhen und umgekehrt einen nicht völligen Erfolg bei den Täufern, die Unruhe von ihren Kreisen fernzuhalten." *Soziale Herkunft der Schweizer Täufer*, p. 61.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p. 66

⁸⁷Yoder, *Gespräche zwischen Täufern und Reformatoren*, pp. 95-96; Heinold Fast, "Hans Krüsis Büchlein über Glauben und Taufe; ein Täuferdruck von 1525" in *Beiträge zur Geschichte Zwinglis, der Reformation und des Protestantismus in der Schweiz* (hereafter *Zwingliana*), XI (1962), p. 464.

⁸⁸Blanke, *Brothers in Christ*, pp. 21-23.

⁸⁹Yoder, *Gespräche zwischen Täufern und Reformatoren*, pp. 74-75.

⁹⁰Mantz and Grebel had at one time proposed the election of a Reformation minded Council to push through the required reforms. *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

⁹¹Haas, "Der Weg der Täufer in die Absonderung."

⁹²On Sattler's influence at Schleithem see especially the excellent paper by Arnold Snyder cited above n. 15.

⁹³Peter Blicke. *Die Revolution von 1525* (Munich, 1975), pp. 156-179, esp. 174:

Die Tragfähigkeit des Begriffs Bauernkrieg wird angesichts der Beteiligung der land-sässigen Städte und der reichstädtischen Gemeinden fraglich. Dies um so mehr, wenn man sich vergegenwärtigt, in welchem Umfang auch die Bergknappen an der Revolution von 1525 beteiligt waren.

⁹⁴Peter Blicke, "The 'Peasant War' as the Revolution of the Common Man — theses," in *The German Peasant War 1525. New Viewpoints*, ed. by Robert Scribner and Gerhard Benecke (London, 1979), pp. 19-22.

⁹⁵See also Heiko Oberman, "Tumultus rusticorum: Vom 'Klosterkrieg' zum Fürstensieg," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, LXXXV (1974), pp. 157, 164, n. 23; Rudolf Endres,

"Zur sozialökonomischen Lage und sozialpsychischen Einstellung des 'Gemeinen Mannes.' Der Kloster- und Burgsturm in Franken 1525," in *Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg 1524-1526*, ed. by Ulrich Wehler (Göttingen, 1975), pp. 61-78.

⁹⁶Peter Blickle, "Biblicism versus Feudalism" in *The German Peasant War 1525. New Viewpoints*, ed. by Robert Scribner and Gerhard Benecke (London, 1979), p. 142.

⁹⁷A mine of information is contained in Justus Maurer, *Prediger im Bauernkrieg* (Stuttgart, 1979).

⁹⁸Günther Franz, *Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg* (Darmstadt, 1975); Horst Buszello, *Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg von 1525 als Politische Bewegung* (Berlin 1969); Adolf Wass, *Die Bauern im Kampf um Gerechtigkeit* (Munich, 1976).

⁹⁹Blickle, *Die Revolution von 1525*, pp. 164, 171.

¹⁰⁰For the debate about the Marxist interpretation see Rainer Wohlfeil, ed., *Reformation oder frühbürgerliche Revolution?* (Munich, 1972).

¹⁰¹See especially Stayer, "Die Anfänge des schweizerischen Täuferturns im reformierten Kongregationalismus," pp. 19-49; Haas, "Der Weg der Täufer in die Absonderung," pp. 83-102; Stayer, "Reublin and Brötli," pp. 83-102.

¹⁰²See especially Stayer's recent paper cited above n. 15.

¹⁰³Martin Brecht, "Der theologische Hintergrund der Zwölf Artikel der Bauernschaft in Schwaben von 1525. Christoph Schappellers und Sebastian Lotzers Beitrag zum Bauernkrieg," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, LXXXV (1974), pp. 170-208. Besides picturing Schappeler as a moderate Brecht seeks to weaken Schappeler's reformed connections placing him into a proto-Lutheran camp.

¹⁰⁴Torsten Bergsten, *Balthasar Hubmaier. Anabaptist Theologian and Martyr*, transl. by I. Barnes and W. Estep (Judson Press, 1978), p. 82.

¹⁰⁵Bender, *Grebel*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁶For a brief biographical sketch consult Barbara Gerber, "Sebastian Lotzer. Ein gelehrter Laie im Streit um das Göttliche Recht," in *Radikale Reformatoren*, ed. by Hans-Jürgen Goertz (Munich, 1978), pp. 60-74.

¹⁰⁷Sebastian Lotzer, *(Ein) christlicher Sendbrief darin anzeigt wird, dass die Laien Macht und Recht haben von dem heiligen Wort Gottes reden* (n.p., n. publ., 1523); H. J. Köhler et. al., *Flugschriften des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts*, (Inter Documentation Company AG: Zug, Switzerland), Fiche 224, #668.

¹⁰⁸For his other publications see A. Goetze, ed., *Sebastian Lotzers Schriften* (Leipzig, 1902).

¹⁰⁹A pamphlet entitled "Verantwortung und Auflösung etlicher Vermeinter Argument . . ." previously attributed to Schappeler has since been identified as the work of Lazarus Spengler. Heinz Scheible, "Reform, Reformation, Revolution: Grundsätze zur Beurteilung der Flugschriften," *ARC*. LXV (1974), pp. 111-112.

¹¹⁰Philip Kintner, "Ecclesiastical Reform at Memmingen, 1525-1532, and the Lau-Moeller Thesis," p. 3. The author graciously made this paper available to me while it was still in manuscript form.

¹¹¹Philip Kintner, "Memmingens 'Ausgetretene,' Eine vergessene Nachwirkung des Bauernkrieges 1525-1527" in pp. 6-35, esp. 11. Again I would like to thank the author for making a complimentary copy of the article available to me.

¹¹²Peter Blickle, "The Economic, Social and Political Background of the Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants of 1525" in Jonas Bak, *The German Peasant War of 1525* (London, 1976), pp. 63-75, esp. p. 63.

¹¹³He surfaced in company of Gabriel Giger and Sebastian Rugglisperger, a friend of Hubmaier. Heinold Fast, ed., *Ostschweiz*, vol. II, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz* pp. 218, 397 n. 26.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 687, also 461 n. 4 and 653.

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