PAMPHILUS GENGENBACH 1480-1525: WRITER, PRINTER, AND PUBLICIST IN PRE-REFORMATION BASEL

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ABSTRACT

This study of the printer-writer Pamphilus Gengenbach is the first in English. It argues that his writings and his printed output of other authors can be treated as one body of work and develops a meaningful narrative of Gengenbach’s beliefs and intentions. It examines the content, language and form of his own writings, exploring common themes and ideas; and it examines the different audiences at whom Gengenbach was aiming and the messages he wanted to give them. The material he produced is seen as a measure of the ‘mood’ of the times, distinguished by its popular appeal: mostly short, written in the vernacular, and making extensive use of woodcut illustrations and verse. Alongside the more predictable themes that appear in his work - Luther, church reform, anti-clericalism, astrology, the coming apocalypse, the emperor and the pope - there are such themes as the Swiss intervention in Italy, mercenaries, Swiss nationalism, French expansionism, anti-Semitism, wealth and poverty, law and order, and sexual morality.

The historical context is crucial for understanding Gengenbach as he was, above all, a commentator on social, political and religious questions and an analysis of his work can in turn provide important insights into contemporary events. The important influences on Gengenbach are discussed - Humanism, popular beliefs and traditions, and other writers, especially Sebastian Brant.

The first chapter begins with some biographical background and a discussion of his place in Basel society, followed by a review of developments in the German print industry. Subsequent chapters follow in historical order; chapters 2 to 5 loosely so as they are thematically organised. Chapter 2 deals with Brant; chapters 3, 4 and 5 look primarily at Gengenbach’s carnival plays, which are his most significant contribution to German literature. Chapters, 6, 7 and 8 which deal with the coming Reformation, are straightforwardly chronological.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Free access to libraries is a crucial resource for penurious post-graduates and I would like to acknowledge those that helped me - particularly the Basel Staatsarchiv, the Basel Universitätsbibliothek, the Warburg Institute, Senate House, the UCL library, the British Library, and the Institute of Germanic Studies, whose librarian Bill Abbey was unfailingly helpful. Frank Hieronymus of the Basel Universitätsbibliothek very kindly put me in touch with Kerstin Prietzel who generously sent me a copy of her thesis, without which I would have faced some insurmountable problems.

Profound thanks, of course, to my supervisor Timothy McFarland whose breadth and capacity to acknowledge the validity of alternative perspectives is a model of academic tolerance that is depressingly rare.

Personally, a thank-you to all the friends who listened and did not deride my interest in sixteenth century Switzerland as the mid-life crisis I sometimes think it has been. An especial thanks to Ian Lamming for coming with me to Basel, and for taking the trouble to read the first full draft and make such helpful comments on it. Lastly, tolerance of my obscure interest by my family and their belief that I could finish this thesis, despite the prolonged time it has taken, has been essential. It has placed heavy demands on my partner’s patience in the face of many things - the competition for time to do things together, my grumpy self-absorption, and not least the spreading piles of books and files. Despite all she generously undertook to proof-read my final version - I am profoundly grateful to her for being so supportive.
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Abbreviations used in the Footnotes:

ADB  Allgemeine deutsche Biographie, 56 vols (Leipzig and Munich: Duncker und Humblot, 1875-1912)

AGB  Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens

ARG  Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte


Basel St. Arch: Basel Staatsarchiv.

BL  British Library Shelf Mark

DNB  Deutsche National Biographie.

Goedeke  Goedeke, Karl, ed., Pamphilus Gengenbach (Hannover: Rümpler, 1856)


NDN  Neue deutsche Bibliographie (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1952-)


WA  D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe (Weimar: Bohlau, 1883-1983). In accordance with standard practice Arabic volume numbers are used throughout.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES/ continued

At the beginning of each chapter a list is given of those works by Gengenbach being discussed. The underlined reference indicates the version of the work from which any quotes have been drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used in the text.

In some instances in the original text a letter ‘e’ was printed over certain vowels. In this text it has not been possible to reproduce this ‘e’ and it has been replaced with an umlaut.

Biblical references and quotes are from the Revised Version (‘St. James’).
I. RESEARCH TO DATE

The name Pamphilus Gengenbach is familiar to Reformation scholars in Germany. He was a printer and a popular writer who has acquired minor status, particularly for his carnival plays. His collected works were edited by Karl Goedeke in the middle of the nineteenth century and since then a steady trickle of commentaries has appeared. To English-speaking scholars, however, Gengenbach is almost entirely unknown. There has been only one article about him in English, written by Derek Van Abbé who also devoted a short section to Gengenbach in his book on Renaissance Drama. Until very recently it has been hard to find any other English-speaking critics who even cite Gengenbach’s name, excepting the rare books that dealt with the history of printing in Basel.

First writing fifty years ago, Van Abbé recognised the particular importance of the contribution made by Gengenbach and his Bernese contemporary Niklaus Manuel to the development of German language drama. Van Abbé said this about their carnival plays:

Gengenbach and Manuel took over the popular form of the Fastnachtspiel and adapted it to polemical needs - creating at the same time the most lasting literary works of the period.

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2 Derek Van Abbé, *Drama in Renaissance Germany and Switzerland* (Melbourne: University of Melbourne Press, 1961), pp.29-34.


Few German scholars of the period would be likely to disagree. Standard German language histories of German and Swiss literature in the early-modern period have consistently included commentaries on Gengenbach’s work. Early examples include Karl Bartsch’s article in the Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie of 1878, Goedeke’s own Grundlez zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung published in 1886, and Jacob Baechtold’s history of Swiss literature a few years later.

The busiest period for articles written in German about Gengenbach was just before the First World War and the first monograph appeared at this time. This period saw an intensification of interest in the Reformation as a whole, when Rudolf Wackernagel and Otto Clemen published material that is of continuing importance. Between the two world wars, Gengenbach was the topic of three doctoral dissertations as well as further

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5 ADB, viii, pp.566-68.


7 Jacob Baechtold, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur in der Schweiz (Frauenfeld: T. Huber, 1892), pp.273-82.


Since 1945 three of Gengenbach's plays have appeared in new editions, together with a reprint of the collected works, a monograph, a small number of articles, and the most comprehensive and significant work of all, a doctoral thesis by Kerstin Prietzel which was published in 1999.

There have been occasional references to Gengenbach in more recent books and articles by English-speaking scholars, though Steven Ozment is unique in according him any significance. Ozment compares him to Eberlin and Manuel:

\[
\text{Few movements have been assisted by a more able group of popular writers than the Protestant Reformation. [...] Among the very best were Johann Eberlin von Günzburg, Pamphilus Gengenbach, and Nicholas Manuel, each of whom had a secure place in history before he lifted his pen in support of the Reformation during the last years of his life.}\]

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15 These have included: Van Abbé, ‘Development’; Rudiger Brandt, ‘Die Glosse zu Gengenbachs Nollhart’ *Daphnis*, 14 (1985), 357-63; Thomke (footnote 13) also includes an essay to accompany his reprint of *Die Gouchmat*, pp.963-95.


When Ozment wrote this in 1975 not only had Gengenbach been virtually ignored by English-speaking scholarship, but hardly any popular writers of the German Reformation had been accorded much interest. Gwyn Williams's book on the radical Reformation was the outstanding exception to this generalisation.¹⁹ Both Eberlin and Manuel, named by Ozment above, had hardly been heard of although Manuel had achieved some recognition from art historians. Interest in the publications of the period has traditionally been focussed on the weightier theological writings of the humanists and Protestants.

From the end of the 1970's there has been a change thanks to the work of social historians like Ozment and Miriam Usher Chrisman²⁰ in America and Bob Scribner in Britain. They have demonstrated the value of studying popular literature - the pamphlets, the woodcuts, the popular dialogues and the dramas - and showed how such study contributes to understanding the social basis and the development of the Reformation. There has been an associated debate about the role of the 'common man' stimulated by the work of Peter Blickle in Germany.²¹

With this shift, monographs in English have been appearing about popular authors across the religious spectrum.²² There is a wealth of original material to study. German popular theologians produced an explosion in the quantity of literature during the few intense years between 1518 and 1525 which was avidly consumed by the German reading public. There has been a lot of interest in Thomas Müntzer in particular, and his work has now


²¹ For a recent example of his work see: Peter Blickle, The Communal Reformation (London: Humanities Press, 1992).

been translated into English. This academic interest in popular writing and printing has had an impact on the way Luther himself is now understood. In the early years of the Reformation, Luther's writing accounted for up to 40% of all new printed material and recent contributors like Mark U. Edwards have analysed Luther's work in terms of his popular impact as a propagandist.

As yet, the interest in Gengenbach among English-speaking scholars remains a passing one. This dissertation intends to show that study of Gengenbach's work can provide important historical insights into the early stages of the Swiss Reformation, seen not just as a religious disagreement, but as a complex social and political crisis.

Printing played a critical role in the Reformation and the Peasants War, but the printers of the time have left little direct evidence of how they saw their world. Whether it has been because of the available material or for reasons of method, most studies of individual printers have been bibliographical with little biographical information or discussion of their ideas. The work of Josef Benzing, the most prolific writer about Reformation printers, exemplifies this approach to printing history.

A few writers became printers - Sebastian Frank and Thomas Platter are two good examples - but Gengenbach was almost unique in being both a writer and a printer over such a sustained period of fifteen years. Through his writing he provides the means to study an individual printer's thoughts about his world.

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25 Both Sebastian Frank and Platter became printers in Basel after Gengenbach's death. This theme is explored further in chapter 9, IVc (p. 293). The two writer-printers
II. THE SCOPE OF THIS THESIS

a. Work of its time

This dissertation is the history of a printer-writer and his work; an attempt to understand why he produced what he did and why his publications say what they do. The title includes the word ‘publicist’ because his work is distinguished by its popular appeal. This dissertation argues that the religious literature he produced was a reflection of contemporary religious debates and concerns; the books of factual and vocational interest - the ‘Fachliteratur’ and the schoolbooks that he produced reflected the emergence of popular education in various forms; the ‘Zeitungen’ - reports and commentaries that were the forerunners of the newspapers that emerged a century later; and the carnival plays that brought contemporary politics and religion to the stage reflected a period of social upheaval and debate that was not to recur in Swiss history until the French Revolution. The ideas to be found in Gengenbach’s work are a form of evidence about the wide range of issues that were concerning his readers. In sum, the popular literature he produced is a measure of the ‘mood’ of the times, as Josef Schmidt has argued:

Seine eigenen Schriften, die Lieder, Traktate, Pamphlete und Spiele umfassen, verraten eine erstaunliche Belesenheit und Vertrautheit mit den zeitgenössischen moralisch-sozialen Problemen, seine Sprache zeigt den hellhörigen, gewandten Publizisten.

König takes a similar view of Gengenbach’s sensitivity to the mood of his times:

Mit überraschender klarheit erkennt er die schäden der zeit, die unsittlichkeit, die habsucht und untreue, die kriegslust der jugend und wird nicht müde, sie in seinen gedichten immer aufs neue zu tadeln. Hinter dem strengen tadler, dem pedantischen moralprediger, aber steckt der warme patriot.

Relatively predictable religious themes can be found in his work, for example: the work and ideas of Luther, the place of the laity in church affairs, anti-clericalism, astrology, the coming apocalypse, church reform, the emperor and the papacy. But there are also

\[\text{of particular interest from elsewhere are Jakob Köbel and Hans Folz.}\]

26 Schmidt, Die Totenfresser, p. 59

themes in Gengenbach’s work that have never been fully discussed before: the intervention by the Confederation in Italy, mercenaries, Swiss (and German) nationalism, the French, anti-Semitism, poverty, law and order, the responsibilities of wealth, and sexual morality. Alongside the study of these themes this dissertation explores the influence of other writers on Gengenbach, beginning with Sebastian Brant.

Because of the times that he lived in, this is also a study of social change. It looks at Gengenbach in the context of his historical period, relating his writing to the events that occurred and the ideas that were circulating in Basel and the Swiss Confederation. In producing an historical narrative, a variety of diaries and collections of published documents from the period have been consulted, but no claims are made to any special research discoveries and a lot of secondary literature has also been used. For the facts of the events that were taking place in Basel, Rudolf Wackernagel’s history of Basel has been particularly useful.

b) Kerstin Prietzel’s work
The approach taken here contrasts with Prietzel’s, whose recently published thesis is one of the most exhaustive and comprehensive of any study of an individual printer of the period, matched perhaps only by the section on Adam Petri in Frank Hieronymus’s monumental study of the Petri family. Prietzel’s basic method is bibliographical with a detailed empirical examination of everything published by Gengenbach, work by work. It is combined with a comprehensive biography, reflecting Prietzel’s awareness of the limitations of previous bibliographical studies. Prior to her work the main interest had been in his writing, but Prietzel’s research into Gengenbach’s printing has uncovered a huge amount of information to which this dissertation is indebted. No attempt has been made here to emulate or repeat what she has done and so sections of her source material do not reappear in the bibliography of this thesis. Where there are wider questions to consider, such as some of the vexed discussions of attribution, the analysis does then


29 She discusses them in her Introduction, AGB, pp. 231-33.
cover many of the same sources and has not always led to the same conclusions being
drawn.

Prietzel has studied Gengenbach’s total output, combining and classifying into six groups
all that he wrote himself together with what he printed by other authors. These groups
she calls *Historisches Tagesschriftum, Theologisches Tagesschriftum, Fachliteratur,
Weltliche Unterhaltungsliteratur, Frömmigkeitsliteratur* and *Klassikerausgaben.* She
has further divided each of these six into two parts, considering first the publications in
German and then those in Latin. She has discussed each of the publications in
chronological order within each sub-category. The very substantial biographical
information has been put in a separate, first section. One result of this process, however,
has been to fragment Gengenbach’s life and ideas as she moves between the start and the
finish of his printing career no less than thirteen times. The effect of this fragmentation
of his life and work can sometimes be to obscure, rather than illuminate, Gengenbach’s
life and work as a whole.

This study is structured rather differently from Prietzel’s. It is divided into broad
chronological bands, studying the whole range of Gengenbach’s publications during any
one period of time, looking for the ways that the different publications relate to one
another, and looking at how this activity related to wider external events. At the start of
each of these periods the historical and biographical context is set. Such was the intensity
of the period that some of Gengenbach’s ideas changed considerably during the short
period of fifteen years that he worked as a printer. Though the focus is on content and on
ideas, developments of form and genre are also looked at where it is appropriate, most
notably in respect of carnival drama.

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30 Prietzel, *AGB*, pp. 311-12. Prietzel herself is not entirely comfortable with trying to
classify the works and she discusses the alternative classifications and problems that have
been raised by Schwitalla and others. See: Johannes Schwitalla, *Deutsche Flugschriften
example of an alternative set of categories, see: H. Künast, *Getruckt in Amsburg
By taking into account what appear to be the author’s intentions, the publications have been described and grouped rather differently from Prietzel. So, for example, Prietzel puts Gengenbach’s Latin publications into five categories, whereas here they are in three groups. The small number of classical Latin texts which he printed and which Prietzel classifies in a separate category of Klassikerausgaben, have been included here in the discussion about schoolbooks in chapter 6, IIIb (page 181) a discussion which logically includes his published Latin grammar books as well. While formally the content of these two types of book is quite different one from another, it is argued that Gengenbach’s decision to publish them was based on a common purpose of selling them to the same group of buyers. His Latin output as a whole is examined within the overall context of German and Latin publishing at that time in chapter 6, III (page 180). Gengenbach’s decision to print the majority of his publications in German was very significant as only a handful of other printers in Germany did so.

Trying to decode Gengenbach’s intentions is a fraught project as he was a man who left little direct evidence about himself: there are no letters or notes by him, nor are there reports about him or his work from his contemporaries. It is not even known when he died. The critic depends almost entirely on the published text to investigate what Gengenbach was saying about his world. Relying on this public persona clearly involves risks as the ideas in an author’s head would be strongly affected by all manner of factors in the process of writing and publication - at that time perhaps more than most. Ignorance of Gengenbach’s unmediated opinions and his personal relationships in the last two or three years of his life is especially frustrating, as more information would help illuminate the choices he made about which theological material to publish.

Having more facts would not of course guarantee critical agreement, as the period 1522-1525 was extremely complex. Knowing, for example, a lot of factual information about Luther and his thoughts has not prevented varying interpretations of his motives and his

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actions. Just because there is no one definitive explanation does not invalidate the exercise, but the conclusions reached need to be recognised for what they necessarily are - historical ones. The facts of Gengenbach's life do not speak for themselves: court reports are quite the fullest and the best source of information available about him and they threaten to unbalance any biographical discussion. Although she documents it very fully, Prietzel wisely avoids trying to draw many conclusions about Gengenbach from this court material, but other commentators have not been so discreet.\(^{32}\)

On the other hand, Prietzel's approach sometimes prevents her drawing a conclusion when one is begged for; but because she has separated the biography from the discussions of Gengenbach's published texts she is only able to offer occasional, brief interpretations of how the two dimensions relate to each other. An example of this is Prietzel's fascinating account of the Catholic *Bruderschaft*, or men's association, of the *Schildknechte* that Gengenbach joined sometime in 1521 or 1522.\(^{33}\) This is in her biography. How this action reflected on Gengenbach's religious views and his publishing activity at the time is of obvious interest, but the commentary on the relevant publications is scattered throughout the rest of Prietzel's thesis.

The empirical approach gives rise to a familiar problem: a catalogue of interesting facts about all of Gengenbach's publications - facts of varying artistic, literary and historical significance - can make it difficult to determine the relative importance of some works over others. An instance of this problem is Prietzel's treatment of the carnival plays. Within her classification system these plays are variously categorised: as *'Historisches Tagesschriftum'* (*Welsch Flusz, Alt Eydgnosz, X Alter and Der Nollhart*); as *'Unterhaltungsliteratur'* (*X Alter, Der Nollhart, Die Gouchmat*); and as *'Theologisches Tagesschrifttum'* (*Die Totenfresser*). Yet these plays were Gengenbach's main claim to fame at the time and have been ever since. They are of lasting significance and an

\(^{32}\) This is further discussed in chapter 1, 1c (page33).

\(^{33}\) Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.253-54. Although 1520 was thought to have been the joining date by most commentators, Prietzel is not sure and suggests that it could have been 1521 or even 1522: *AGB*, p.253, fn 228.

16
understanding of the way these plays developed produces valuable insights into the changing moral and religious beliefs of the period. Besides the work of Van Abbé this study is the first extended examination of these plays in English.

Gengenbach’s carnival plays change over time from being relatively uncomplicated reviews of current politics towards a complex discussion of both practical and theoretical politics and religion, with his last drama being a ground-breaking polemic against the Catholic Church. The dramas mark the watershed between the older medieval form of carnival play with all its ambivalence and paradox, and the new post-Reformation form of carnival play containing an emphatic moral message. The significance of Gengenbach in the history of literature as the majority contributor to a new sub-genre of plays, the politische Moralitäten, is considered in chapter 3, V (page 84). Nearly half of this study is about his carnival drama: there are three full chapters, 3, 4, and 5, and a substantial part of chapter 7 whose conclusions also provide a structure for chapter 8.

Prietzel’s discussion of the broader literary issues is far shorter and necessarily somewhat arbitrarily located: there are two sections on three of the plays (X Alter, Der Nollhart, Die Gouchmat), one located in the biography (pages 247-48) and the other in ‘Unterhaltungsliteratur’ (pages 393-97).

Prietzel’s empirical approach has the obvious strength of bringing together what we know about Gengenbach, which is extremely useful. This study has been able to rely on her material, making it much easier, for example, to proceed to discuss the relative importance of his different publications. Freed of the necessity to first assemble the available information about them, a number of Gengenbach’s minor publications have barely warranted a mention in this study as there is nothing more to be said.

c. Printing and writing as a coherent whole.

By classifying Gengenbach’s own writing together with all the other material that he

34 Burke’s analysis of what he calls the ‘Triumph of Lent’ shares this understanding of Gengenbach’s plays reflecting this period of intense social and ideological change: Peter Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1994), pp.207-43 (chapter 8 entitled, ‘The Triumph of Lent: the Reform of Popular Culture’).
printed, Prietzel has identified a very important aspect of Gengenbach’s output:

Auf diese Weise stellt sich schnell heraus, daß die Drucke eigener und fremder Werke eine Einheit bilden. Die eigene Position Gengenbachs findet ihre Fortsetzung in dem ‘nur’ von ihm gedruckten Text eines anderen Verfassers.\(^{35}\)

This unity is very significant, and in particular there is - broadly speaking - an ideological coherence to be found within it. Prietzel began to explore the links to be found within the total body of his published work. In pursuing this insight - that ideas contained in the material by the other authors that Gengenbach printed did not fundamentally contradict the ideas in his own writings - this dissertation develops a narrative of Gengenbach’s beliefs and intentions. Because of Prietzel’s careful work it is now possible to be reasonably sure about the identity of the whole of Gengenbach’s output that is extant.

The unity of his publications was not unique to Gengenbach and not necessarily surprising if one considers the conditions under which each work was published. At the very minimum Gengenbach was its printer, bookseller, publisher, and responsible for marketing and distribution. He was also its financier, as Gengenbach almost certainly printed at his own expense, risking his own money each time he published. Gengenbach took one of a possible variety of additional roles with many of his publications: either as writer; or as editor who added forewords and postscripts; or as editor who commissioned or sought out an appropriate work to publish. So whatever roles he took, publication presupposed a considerable commitment of work and funds on his part to ensure the work was sold successfully.

These circumstances suggest that the relationship between a printer and his material was more akin to our contemporary concept of a political magazine publisher or editor - someone who prints articles and material that are reasonably consistent ideologically. In turn, that material appeals and sells to an identifiable audience. For their part writers would be inclined to send their material to a printer they thought would be interested in

\(^{35}\) Prietzel, AGB, p.414.
their work. The printer in the early sixteenth century was not just the technician of today but was nearly always the publisher as well.\textsuperscript{36}

This approach taken in this dissertation contrasts with Rudolf Hirsch, who argued that:

Printers were literate craftsmen or businessmen who produced primarily what they believed to be in demand. Their production reflected the taste of the actual or presumed reading public and only very secondarily their own taste, preference or predilection.\textsuperscript{37}

Nowadays the decision by a printer to print a text is by and large simply a business transaction, done on the instruction of a publisher, in the way that Hirsch describes. Of course, it is highly likely that Gengenbach published some items simply to earn money as his business would otherwise have failed. Michael Furter, an important printer in Basel at the beginning of Gengenbach’s career, died bankrupt for example, as John Flood has recently reminded us.\textsuperscript{38} Gengenbach had a nose for the popular market and while acknowledging that some of what he printed had little or no significant ideological content, that does not negate a narrative of his ideological concerns that demonstrates there is a coherent framework around the work that he wrote and published. His entire production fits within definable limits - the markets he was aiming at, the selection of topics, the styles and genres he used, the ideological parameters, the political parameters - these form a distinctive whole.

Gengenbach’s ideological framework was a broad one, as will be shown, firmly located

\textsuperscript{36} The separate role of publisher was in its very early days - one or two did exist such as Johannes Rynmann who was ‘der bedeutendste Verlagsbuchhändler der Zeit’, commissioning 188 works up to his death in 1522: Hans Niedermeier, ‘Johannes Rynmann, ein Verleger theologischer Literatur’, in AGB, 9 (1969), 421-432, p.421. Gengenbach is listed in \textit{VD 16} (Abteilung 2) as the publisher of two works: \textit{Nilius} (H3533) and \textit{Dangrotzheim} (C4896), 1, p.286.


in a section of the middle ground of contemporary ideas. Other printers had different focuses although there have not been many detailed studies which lend themselves to an easy comparison. In the final chapter Gengenbach’s output is compared with some other popular printers.

d. Other writers
Before Prietzel, commentators had largely ignored the impact of other authors on Gengenbach. Prietzel has regarded this ‘literary’ or ideological context as important and a systematic attempt is made here to analyse the influence of Brant, Erasmus, Capito, Hutten, Eberlin and Luther.

The relationship between Gengenbach and Sebastian Brant has never been properly explored before, and a significant part of chapter 2 is devoted to developing this theme. Elsewhere, Gengenbach’s ‘nationalism’ and his response to the work of Ulrich von Hutten is considered; the figure of Erasmus, whose work dominated the publishing output of the Basel print industry throughout Gengenbach’s career, constantly looms over any ideological discussion; while the extent to which Gengenbach’s theological publications were a response to Luther in particular, is addressed with a discussion about Luther’s writings that were (or were not) being published in Basel. Prietzel found some very interesting material, particularly in relation to the role of Wolfgang Capito in Gengenbach’s publishing, but nevertheless the extent of Gengenbach’s relations with both Capito and Eberlin von Günzburg, like those with Ulrich von Hutten, are mostly a matter of interpretation.

e. Gengenbach and the Reformation
There has been a tendency to portray the printers of the Reformation years from 1518

39 Künast, pp. 78-85, provides a brief but important exception with the inclusion of a discussion of the attitudes of the printers of Augsburg entitled, ‘Die Drucker zwischen persönlicher Glaubensentscheidung und Geschäftssinn’, (chapter 2.3).

40 The interesting omissions from the list of influences are Zwingli and Oecolampadius, whose names never appear in anything printed by Gengenbach. From late 1522, Oecolampadius was the parish priest of St. Martin, the parish where Gengenbach lived, but there is no information about the nature of their contact.
to 1525 as overwhelmingly Protestant, and to argue that Catholic polemicists had problems finding printers willing to publish their work, for financial or ideological reasons. Certainly the volume of Protestant literature was much the greater, but there is a shortage of studies of individual printers that analyse their ideological standpoints or their publishing records. There has been a tendency to label Gengenbach as a Lutheran, but not every critic has accepted this. One prominent scholar, Singer, argued that none of the pro-reform work published by Gengenbach was actually written by him and contested that Gengenbach took definite sides.  

It is argued in this dissertation that Gengenbach was not an outright reformer - the idea that there was any sort of hard and fast division between Catholics and reformers would have been largely meaningless to him and his contemporaries. Gengenbach’s views about what he thought was the right path for reform never became clear-cut and definite before he died sometime in late 1524 or early 1525. There were at that time probably only a handful of printers who were committed reformers, such as Adam Petri in Basel. Gengenbach was strongly opposed to the Church splitting, and this concern was one of the reasons why he was deeply ambivalent about Luther, whose developing view of the pope as the Antichrist showed a growing determination to promote a division.

The portrayal of Luther varies in the works that Gengenbach published after 1518, and the reasons are explored. Throughout the final part of his life Gengenbach continued to publish literature about reforms that were needed. However, he did not accept all of Luther’s ideas and he printed some works that supported what we now regard as Catholic religious views. He especially disagreed with Luther about ‘good works’ and justification by faith. What is more (as was noted on page 16), in 1521 or 1522, he joined the Schildknechte, reputed for its Marian piety. His ‘confusion’ is evident from his inconsistent portrayal of the pope. The election of Adrian VI in 1522 revived

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41 For a full discussion with comprehensive statistics see: Edwards, pp.14-40.

42 Singer, Werke, p.177.

Gengenbach’s hopes in the papacy just after he had attacked that same institution with great virulence in Die Totenfresser. Ozment’s point, that Gengenbach ably assisted the Protestant cause, needs therefore to be approached with caution. Gengenbach’s intentions with regard to reform may well have been at variance with his actual impact.

f. ‘Die Totenfresser’

The dialogue entitled Die Totenfresser, published in early 1522, is a very important work both as an historical document and as a piece of literature. It marks the first time that theatrical means were used for a full frontal attack on the Catholic Church. It is a powerful critique that was almost certainly the inspiration for Manuel’s play of the same title.

There is no known edition printed by Gengenbach, but it is almost certain that he produced one: his initials ‘PG’ are included at the end of versions produced by other printers, suggesting he was its author, and it would be most remarkable therefore if he had not also printed its first version. A large part of chapter 7 is spent discussing this one work, arguing strongly that Gengenbach did indeed write it and that it is a kind of personal manifesto. The analysis of the last two years of Gengenbach’s life that follows in chapter 8 then uses the themes in this dialogue as its starting point.

III. ATTRIBUTION

Die Totenfresser is one of six titles that Prietzel believes were printed by Gengenbach even though there are no existing original copies.44 Five of them have the initials ‘PG’ or ‘SRF’ at the end of the text, and the sixth, Tod Teufel und Engel, has his full name in the opening lines. Prietzel’s list forms a key parameter for this study, based as it is on a careful evaluation of the physical evidence of the printed text.45 Gengenbach may well


45 This list is given in Appendix B. Prietzel’s fully annotated list is in: Prietzel, AGB, pp.266-98.
have printed more than this: Prietzel, for example, thinks he may have produced a third
edition of the *Hortulus Animae*.
As a printer of popular material, some of it very
lightweight, it is quite possible that other items he produced have not survived either.

While there are some problems deciding what Gengenbach printed, these are nothing
compared to the difficulties of deciding what he wrote. None of Gengenbach’s works
exist in original manuscript form, with identifiable handwriting, and only eight works
clearly print his name as the author. Kaufmann argues that this was a particular feature of
early Reformation literature, although a look at an early sixteenth century anthology of
contemporary popular poems and songs such as Liliencron’s suggests that neither had it
been common beforehand for authorship to be explicit. Nor was this limited to
Germany. In England the same applied to early Elizabethan ballads and broadsheets.
Chrisman estimates that about seventy percent of the 5,000+ pamphlets in the Köhler
microfiche collection of early sixteenth century leaflets and pamphlets have no
publication information. With the early Reformation, prudent printers had additional
good reason to omit this information, especially once Luther was banned: ‘Caution was
essential because the authorities might strike without warning and capriciously.’

Goedeke made the first attempt to define what Gengenbach wrote and included ‘etwa 24

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47 Thomas Kaufmann, ‘Anonyme Flugschriften der frühen Reformation’, in *Die frühe
Reformation als Umbruch*, ed. by Bernd Moeller and Stephen E. Buckwalter, Schriften
des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte, 199 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1998),

Jahrhundert*, iii: 1507-1529 (Leipzig: Historischen Commission bei der Königliche
Academie der Wissenschaft Munich, 1867) - this remains a most comprehensive
collection of poems and songs of the period.

49 Watt says: ‘Most of the ballads, when not anonymous, were signed with initials
only, or credited to names now unknown and meaningless.’ Tessa Watt: *Cheap Print and

50 Chrisman, *Conflicting Visions*, p.12
schriften’ in his edition of the collected works. Since then, a total of at least forty-three different works have been thought to have been written by Gengenbach by various scholars. Table 1 illustrates the problem, comparing Goedeke’s list with the two most recent attempts at attribution by the editors of VD16 and Prietzel. VD16 lists twenty-seven titles while Prietzel believes that Gengenbach wrote twenty-five. Goedeke and VD16 agree on seventeen titles while VD16 and Prietzel agree on nineteen titles, but there are only twelve common to all three lists. Prietzel disagrees with Goedeke over the authorship of twenty-three titles altogether (numbers 14-36, Table 1). A somewhat smaller number of thirteen titles are subject to disagreement between VD16 and Prietzel. Throughout her work Prietzel has carefully detailed the different contributions to the authorship debates.

Many of the disputed earlier works published prior to 1518 could be described as ‘Gengenbachian’ if not actually by him, as the style, the form and the ideological content are similar to other publications that he did write. In these instances little has been said in this dissertation about their authorship as it would be largely repetitive and add nothing to our understanding of Gengenbach. It is unlikely that views about him as a writer would change in a significant way if it turned out in the future, perhaps on the discovery of new evidence, that some or other of these attributions needed changing. Only the Narrenschiff vom Bundischu appears out of tune ideologically and this is discussed in Chapter 2, VI (page 67).

By contrast, most of those disputed titles published after 1518 have been treated more carefully in this dissertation as they are generally more ideological in content and so authorship of these works has been discussed - at length in some cases - in pursuit of a full analysis of his ideas and beliefs.

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51 Goedeke, Gengenbach, p.xvi. In the later Grundrisz Goedeke leaves some of them out.

52 VD16, G1167-G1232.

53 Prietzel, AGB, pp.268-98.
TABLE 1: Attributions of authorship to Gengenbach according to Goedeke, VD 16, and Prietzel. The works are listed by their short titles used throughout the dissertation.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>Goedeke</th>
<th>VD16</th>
<th>Prietzel</th>
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<td>2. Der Bundschuh 1514</td>
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<td>3. Alt Eydgenosz 1514</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>4. X Alter 1515</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Practica deutsch 1515</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>6. Fünf Juden 1516</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Der Nollhart 1517</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Die Gouchmat 1519</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Der Laienspiegel 1521</td>
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<td>10. X Alter 1515</td>
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<td>11. Praxis deutsch 1515</td>
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<td>14. Die Gouchmat 1519</td>
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<td>15. Der Laienspiegel 1521</td>
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<td>16. Die Novella 1523</td>
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<td>17. Evangelisch Burger 1523</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Tod, Teufel und Engel (undat.)</td>
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<td>19. Adda Schlacht 1513</td>
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<td>22. Bileamsesel (undat.)</td>
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<td>23. Bettlerordnen 1513</td>
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<td>24. Jakobsbräder 1518</td>
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<td>30. Drei Christen 1523</td>
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<td>31. Christliche und ware Practica 1524</td>
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<td>32. Glückssbad Blatt 1513</td>
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<td>33. Haus Osterreich 1520</td>
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<td>34. Wiener Prognosticon 1520</td>
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<td>35. Mönchskalb 1523</td>
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<td>36. Anzeigung 1523/4</td>
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<td>37. Novarraschlag 1513</td>
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<td>42. Kürzlich mit der Eidgenossenschaft 1514</td>
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<td>43. Der curtisan und pfurden fresser (undat.)</td>
<td>Z</td>
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Z = Goedeke’s ‘Zulage’, Gengenbach, pp.371-432. He does not make clear who he believes wrote the 8 items in it.
In order to better understand Gengenbach's ideas about his world, the first chapter begins with a biographical discussion which is intended to establish what is known about his social and economic position in Basel, together with a discussion of the developments in the printing industry in Germany and Basel. The discussion in subsequent chapters is broadly chronological, though chapters 2 to 5 look at specific themes so the periodisation is not always hard and fast. The final chapters, 6, 7 and 8, deal with the coming of the Reformation and look at the problems that Gengenbach struggled with as it progressed.
It has been noted already that there is a shortage of hard facts about Gengenbach's life, though this very absence is perhaps informative. Generally speaking, the more important the person the more would be known about him. The fact, for example, that there was no picture painted of Gengenbach, although he worked with artists throughout his life, helps confirm that his social status and wealth were never sufficient to make him one of the elite of Basel society. His origins certainly appear to have been humble.

I. A MODEST SUCCESS

a. Early years

It has been assumed by a lot of previous commentators that his mother was Anna Keßler and his father was Ulrich Gengenbach, a printer who never became established as a master with a workshop in his own right. In 1480 Ulrich appeared in the court records as he brought a successful court case for assault against his employer Michael Wenßler. Wenßler owned the largest print-shop in Basel and it was one of the very few that employed waged labour. The year 1480 was also probably when Pamphilus was born, the same year as Magellan.

Prietzel challenges the casual assumption that Ulrich and Anna were his parents and suggests that it was but one of three possible family origins. The second possibility

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1 Prietzel’s biography comprehensively details the known information about the life of Gengenbach, together with some historical context: Prietzel, AGB, pp.233-61.


4 Prietzel, AGB, pp.234-36.
(which she rejects) was that Pamphilus was the son of the wealthy Hans Gengenbach, which would have made him the brother of Chrysostomus the apothecary who in 1522 became a member of the Basel council executive, the *Kleiner Rat.* That branch of the family's coat of arms was completely different from the printer's mark used by Pamphilus Gengenbach, which makes it seem most unlikely that they had such close relations with him. The third possibility, Prietzel suggests, is that Pamphilus was the illegitimate son of the cleric and academic Johann Matthias von Gengenbach who died in 1486, and that after his father died Pamphilus was then brought up by Ulrich and Anna. Prietzel proposes the name ‘Pamphilus’ as evidence: ‘Der Name ‘Pamphilus’ verweist auf verschiedene pseudo-ovidianische Komödien, die im 15. Jahrhundert u.a. in Humanistenkreisen kursierten.’ Of course, a printer would also be highly likely to come into contact with these texts so Prietzel’s argument is only suggestive rather than conclusive. The fact that Pamphilus ended up in the printing industry strongly indicates that whatever his biological parentage he was brought up by Ulrich and Anna.

Pamphilus certainly learned to read and write and may have learned some Latin when he was young. He probably did not go to University as his name does not appear in the student records of Basel University, which are fairly complete, but he may have undertaken some university studies outside Basel during his *Wanderjahre* which are not

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7 The question of Gengenbach’s capacity in Latin is discussed in chapter 7 (pp. 211-212) as it has a bearing on his role in the production of two late theological works, *Der Pfaffenspiegel* and *Der Laienspiegel*.

known about. Lack of university education is another piece of suggestive evidence that
the Gengenbachs were not wealthy, although the fact that Pamphilus followed his father
into the print industry would not necessarily have been an alternative to higher education
as some printers had indeed attended university.9

The first written mention of Pamphilus is in a letter from the Nuremberg printer Anton
Koberger in March 1499 to Johann Amerbach in Basel, who describes him as a Setzer - a
typesetter.10 It has reasonably been assumed from this letter that Gengenbach worked in
Koberger’s workshop, which was one of the largest in Europe at that time.11 Hartmann,
the editor of the Amerbach correspondence, disagrees: ‘Daß G. in Nürnberg gerade bei
Koberger Setzer gewesen sei, ist bloße Vermutung.’12 There is evidence that he had
dealings in Nuremberg as several years later in 1505 Gengenbach appeared in court in
Basel accused of owing money to the mother of Erhard Hoinig, who was from
Nuremberg and who had possibly been his landlady.13

b. The Gardeners’ Guild

He was listed then in court as a ‘Druckergeselle’ - a journeyman printer - and again in
another court judgement in 1507,14 but soon after he became a Koch at an inn, zuom

9 Künstl, pp.73-75: he found that at least 15 of 54 printers from Augsburg had been
to University. Of 33 Strassburg printers Chrisman found that 10 had been: Chrisman, Lay

10 Die Amerbach Korrespondenz, ed. by Alfred Hartmann (Basel: Universitäts-
bibliothek, 1942), i, p.101 (letter no.96).

11 Koberger had close links with many of the most famous humanists of the day, not
only with Amerbach who had also worked for him in his workshop, but with such men as
Wimpheling and Pirckheimer who collaborated with him as readers: L. Febvre and H.
Martin, The Coming of the Book, trans. by David Gerard, ed. by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith
and David Wootton (London: New Left Books, 1976), p.124; Oscar Hase, Die Koberger:
eine Darstellung des buchhändlerschen Geschäftsbetriebes in der Zeit des Überganges
vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit, 2nd edn (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1885).

12 Hartmann, i, p.101, no.96.

13 Basel StArch: Gerichtsarchiv A 47, f.32v.

14 Basel StArch: Öffnungsbuch VII. f. 122.
rößlin. A Koch could be someone who ran an inn that provided food. This was the job Gengenbach had when he joined the Gardeners’ Guild in 1508 at the age of twenty-eight. The guild was one of the larger of the eleven Handwerkerzünfte - handcraft guilds - with a membership of around 150. There were an additional four Herrenzünfte - guilds for the richest and most influential merchants and master-craftsmen. In the first half of the sixteenth century the Gardeners’ Guild was ranked tenth out of the fifteen guilds in Basel in terms of the average taxable wealth of its members, and it recruited a broad range of occupational groups, including carters and barrow boys, rope-makers, general merchants, innkeepers - and gardeners.

While Gengenbach remained a member of the Gardeners throughout his life other printers in Basel usually joined the Safran, or sometimes the Schlüssel, two of the four Herrenzünfte. One can only speculate about this: Gengenbach could have taken dual guild membership (which was quite common) had he not wanted to cut his ties with the Gardeners altogether. There were not enough printers in Basel for them to have their own guild so the regulation of trading and working conditions must sometimes have been

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17 Füglist, p.2.


19 Geering, p.50, gives figures for the Schlüssel and Safran guilds. Prietzel has a useful footnote on printers’ guild membership: Prietzel, AGB, p.239, fn.86.
problematic. Gengenbach's decision to stay put seems unlikely to be a sign of insufficient status and wealth as Gengenbach does seem to have died reasonably well-off, but it may have reflected his social preferences or perhaps that the guild was not very important to him. He does not appear from the records ever to have occupied an office within the guild.

Most adult working males, and a significant but unquantified number of women, were in a guild. Füglisters estimate that there was an average of 1,410 guild members in Basel during the first half of the sixteenth century, which might have been about four-fifths of the economically active male population. The guilds played an important role in various aspects of people's lives; for example, the members regularly gathered socially for festive meals together, they provided sickness and unemployment insurance and they organised the watch in a designated part of the city.

Once in a guild, the member became liable for military service and levies were regularly raised proportionate to the size of the guild each time the city sent a contingent to join a campaign. Since 1503 Basel had been participating in the Italian campaigns of the Swiss Confederation and it is likely that Gengenbach would have been required to serve.

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21 Wackernagel lists those not in a guild as including day labourers, *Kohlenberger*, shepherds, musicians, soldiers and clerics: R.Wackernagel, p.393.

22 Füglisters estimate of guild membership differs from Füglisters', although not so significant as to matter for this discussion. Geering believes that 25% workers were non-guild members in 1429 and there is no obvious reason for this proportion to have changed much by 1510: Geering, pp.48-52. Schulz gives different figures which put the proportion not in a guild slightly higher, around 30%: Knut Schulz, *Handwerkgesellen und Lohnarbeiter* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1985), p.19.

Wackernagel agrees with Fuglister putting it around 20%: R.Wackernagel, p.393.

24 Kölner, pp.45-57.
in one or more of them. Richer citizens paid for a substitute to fight in their place and it was a sign of Gengenbach's growing prosperity that in 1513 he was able to pay someone to take his place for the attack on Dijon. Prietzel believes that Gengenbach did actually participate in the 1519 Württemberg campaign, a campaign that ostensibly aimed to force the return of Swiss mercenaries from unsanctioned service in Germany.

Diese Rückholaktion steht im Zusammenhang mit den über Jahrzehnte wiederholten, offensichtlich erfolglosen Verboten des Reislaufs, gegen den sich auch Gengenbach bereits in seinen frühen Werken (z.B. Alter Eidgenosse) vehement ausgesprochen hat.

Another function of the guilds was to appoint a Vogt, similar to an executor, to put the affairs of a member in order when he died, on behalf of his family and widow. Gengenbach was appointed to such a role in 1522 for the daughter of Hans Liebenberg, just as Heinrich Grebly, who was a 'Grempper' - a small general merchant - was appointed on 26 May 1525 to support Anna Gengenbach following Pamphilus's own death. In the previous year, a different 'Grempper', Ludwig David, had been given Vollmacht - the power of attorney - over Gengenbach's affairs, presumably by Gengenbach himself, and appeared in court on Gengenbach's behalf. This suggests that Gengenbach was already seriously incapacitated in some way, but it is not known how or exactly when he actually died.

25 Basel StArch: Politisches M 2 Nr.2, f.10. Karl Lendi thinks Gengenbach was at Dijon: Lendi, p.11. He asserts that Gengenbach was listed among the participants from the Gardeners' Guild, but Prietzel has subsequently found that Gengenbach in fact paid a substitute, Hans Huss from St. Gallen: Prietzel, AGB, p.243. Of 224 men in this contingent 141 were paid substitutes according to Wackernagel: R. Wackernagel, III, p.110.

26 Prietzel, AGB, pp.250-51. Her views are based on Basel StArch: Politisches M3, No.1, f.29.

27 Basel StArch: Gerichtsarchiv A 55, f. 91.

28 Basel StArch: Gerichtsarchiv A 56, f. 270.

29 Basel StArch: Urkunde Domstift Nr.484. The case concerned a dispute about a vineyard in which Gengenbach had an interest.
c. Gengenbach prospers

Although he was working as a Koch when he joined the Gardeners in 1508, by May of the following year the records describe him as a 'Buchdrucker', a book printer. Prietzel dates his first publications later, with the first piece of his own writing that has been firmly dated before 1513. This change in occupation may well have been made possible by his marriage earlier that year in January to a widow, Anna Renck, whose husband had been the Koch at the inn until 1507 and who had owned a house. Purchasing the equipment he needed to set up a print-shop would not have been cheap, 700 guilders or more according to Prietzel’s estimate. This was a huge sum that Gengenbach almost certainly would have had to borrow as it would have been inconceivable that Hans Renck’s house was worth that much. As an indication as to just how much it was, two years later in 1511 when Gengenbach became a citizen of Basel he had to pay the four guilders that it cost in instalments. Citizenship was not an expenditure he could really afford to pass up, as it was an essential step in becoming established as an independent craftsman.

It is not known how long Gengenbach worked in, or possibly ran, zuom kleinen rößlin, but Prietzel discovered that it had a new owner, Conrad Renger, who was also named as the

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30 He got into a personal dispute with fellow printer, Nicholas Lamparter, over some money: Basel StArch: Gerichtsarchiv A 49, f.156f.

31 Grimm believes that he published his first Lied in 1509 though he does not say which one: DNB, vi, p.187. Liliencron, iii, pp.28-33, and Baechthold, p.275 among others date his song about the Battle of Agnadello, Adda-Schlacht, as 1509, the year of the battle. Most recently Bezzel also dates it as 1509: Irmgard Bezzel, ‘Johann Weißenberger als Drucker in Nürnberg in den Jahren 1502 bis1513’, in AGB, 53 (2000), 217-62, p.249. Prietzel, AGB, p.245, lists four works that she believes were published between 1511 and 1513.

33 Basel StArch: Historisches Grundbuch, Registerband; and Prietzel, AGB, p. 241. Renck had also had enough money to pay for the services of a doctor.

34 Prietzel, AGB, p.245.

Koch, in April 1511. Coincidentally the records show that there was a performance of a play at Fastnacht that year by 'die trucker gesellen' on the Kornmarkt. One can only speculate that Gengenbach took part. Perhaps it was during his period working at the inn that Gengenbach developed his taste and feeling for popular entertainment. Peter Burke says of the inns in London of the time:

> In London in particular, certain inns - and their yards - were important cultural centres, with the innkeeper acting as impresario or animateur. [...] Leading figures from the entertainment world kept taverns, [...].

This could have applied to Basel. Burke continues: 'it is difficult to say whether the English pub was of unique cultural importance or not. Probably not [...]'. There is a strong tradition in the modern carnival in Basel of touring the pubs and giving poetic recitations, but it is not clear how far back this originates.

Looking at the volume of Gengenbach's known printing it is hard to see how printing alone could have generated sufficient money to live on until 1517 or later. It is known from a court appearance in 1511 that Gengenbach was selling books, which was entirely typical for master printers at the time:

> [...] most printers kept a shop as well and invested the profits they made out of printing books for other people into publishing, either on their account or in collaboration with others.

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36 Basel StArch: Gerichtsarchiv B 18/2, f.184f.

37 Pfrunder, p.293, from Basel StArch: Ratsbücher O2, 40.

38 Burke, p.110.

39 Chrisman estimated that it took two days to typeset a Bogen (eight sides of quarto): Chrisman, *Lay Culture*, p.7. Not until 1519 did Gengenbach print more than forty Bogen a year, which would be eighty days work according to Prietzel's figures for the number of pages typeset each year by Gengenbach: Prietzel, *AGB*, p.301.

40 Prietzel describes the case from Basel Staatsarchiv records and other sources of a dispute which went to court in 1521/22 between Gengenbach and the heirs of the bookseller Andreas Helmut about an agreement made between them in 1511 for the disposal of Helmut's book stock after his death: Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.255-56.

41 Febvre & Martin, p.136.
Whatever his main business it seems to have flourished as barely two years later in 1513, he was able to buy a house, zuom kleinen roten lewen in the Freie Strasse (No. 29) for which he paid a considerable sum, equivalent to 210 guilders, a lot of which he borrowed. In the Freie Strasse the Gengenbachs appear to have been mixing with solid professionals. His next door neighbour was a doctor of medicine, Oswald Bär, whose wife had previously been married to an apothecary. Three years later Gengenbach was to end up in another court appearance, in dispute with the Bärs over his window displays.

To a modern commentator it appears that Gengenbach was in court rather frequently and because the court records are the biggest single source of information about his life it is easy to get a distorted perspective about him. More than one writer has drawn the conclusion that he was a bit wild. Götze, for example, says: 'Sein Leben ist mannigfach durch unbezahlte Schulden und Raufhändel beunruhigt und durch die Akten darüber für uns aufgeklärt.' Before he married, Gengenbach had certainly been in trouble for fighting, but after 1509 Gengenbach’s court appearances were nearly all commercial disputes. Stehlin has listed all the times up until 1520 that printers in Basel appeared in the court records, the Gerichtsarchiv, and this shows that one or another printer was appearing in court at least once a week on average. (Less than ten printers were active in Basel at any one time). Non-payment of bills appears to have been an especial problem that dogged printers. However, by comparison with his fellow printer Lamparter, for example, a man with whom he had frequent dealings, Gengenbach’s business life was a

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42 Basel StArch: Gerichtsarchiv B20, f.5'. Thomas Platter’s annual wage when he was a printer in the 1530’s was 104 guilders: Emmanuel Le Roy LaDurie, The Beggar and the Professor, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago & London: University of Chicago, 1997), p.131. Systematic information on earnings is unavailable, but Schulz, pp.402-33, looks in detail at what is known about local wages and corn prices. For helpful background information on currency and craftsmen’s earnings see: Baxandall, pp.viii-ix.

43 Basel StArch: Fünfergerichtsprotokoll I.64. Prietzel describes the case in some detail: Prietzel, AGB, p.249.


model of sobriety. Although Lamparter’s output was lower, as can be seen from Table 2, Gengenbach is listed thirteen times in the records while Lamparter numbers forty-two. That said, not all Gengenbach’s appearances in court were over routine commercial matters. His arrest on 1 January 1522 was quite a different affair. Together with two other men, one of them Hans Locherer who stood surety for his citizenship fee back in 1509, Gengenbach was convicted and fined for insulting the Pope, the German Emperor and the King of France and this incident is discussed in chapter 7 (page 206).

Despite upsetting the authorities in the New Year of 1522 his business was obviously still doing well for only five days after this incident he was able to buy a more expensive house. This appears to have belonged to one of the richest families in Basel, costing the equivalent of 430 guilders in cash. It was also on the Freie Strasse, but closer to the Marktplatz which was one of the most expensive parts of the city. As well as the better house Gengenbach also had an interest in a vineyard by 1524, so he must have died a wealthy man.

Gengenbach can be seen in some respects as a symbol of his times - between the traditions of the Middle Ages and the emerging conditions of early capitalism. He was a craftsman of humble origins who was able to accumulate capital and who probably ended up employing waged workers to service his growing business. The guild organisation which regulated much of his life was rooted in the Middle Ages, and yet he, like an increasing numbers of others, achieved a level of social mobility that was symbolic of the dramatic social changes that were occurring throughout German society.

46 For a discussion of the records of the sale, see: Prietzel, AGB, p.257.

47 Basel StArch: Urkunde Domstift Nr.484.

48 Basel StArch: Gerichtsarchiv A 54, f.56. In this court case against Melchior Heider it seems an employee of Gengenbach’s gave evidence.
2. THE PRINTER AND HIS TRADE

a. Printing in Basel

The printing industry with its modern technology required new and complex forms of social and economic organisation. The master printer needed to draw upon the skills of various trades to produce a book - those of artists, writers, proofreaders, paper-makers and bookbinders - and a network of booksellers was also needed that tapped into regional markets and beyond. The larger print-shops needed to employ waged labour and as early as 1471 the industry in Basel had experienced another new phenomenon, a strike.49

The complex wider social, economic, cultural, and political implications of the statistics of book production and printing are utterly dramatic. In the years leading up to 1517 a book-buying and book-reading market was developing and for that to happen a series of fundamental changes had to have already taken place - most obviously the spread of literacy to perhaps 30% of the population in Franconia.50 In its turn literacy could only spread on a significant scale if levels of education were growing, and with it a widening of intellectual horizons. Distribution and marketing the new literature was made possible with the growth of urban populations,51 and improvements in reliable and safe transport. Financing had become easier with the expansion of trading facilities like banking and trade fairs, especially the one at Frankfurt. Despite their increased availability books were

49 Schulz, pp.126-27. Strikes were hardly frequent events, however, the next recorded one being in 1539.

50 The level of literacy has been the subject of some discussion. This figure is from Künast, p.13. Engelsing, pp.32ff, puts the figure lower at between 10-30% in the cities and around 5% overall. Clanchy thinks that it may have been as high as 50% in England: M.Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record, 2nd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p.13.

still very expensive, but the growth of sales also demonstrated that the cash nexus was spreading, and that disposable wealth and available leisure time were growing.

Hackenberg’s study of property inventories of deceased artisans, for example, found that pre-1521 only 2 out of 32 (6.5%) mentioned books, whereas 92 of 517 inventories (18%) mentioned books 1611-1620.

The scale of the changes in the conditions in society at the start of the sixteenth century was so great that many historians argue that it marked the end of the Feudal period and instituted a new phase in European history, the Early-modern period. Printing and the spread of the printed word was not only a consequence of change, but also became one of its causes. In Germany one of the effects of these changes was the fracturing of the power of the Catholic Church and the intense intellectual, social and political turmoil of the Reformation, in which printing played a powerful role.

If one had to pick one year as the symbolic watershed between the two historical periods, then 1517 would be an obvious choice. Not only was it the year that Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the palace church at Wittenberg, but it was also the year that saw the beginning of the great publishing wave of pamphlets and tracts that is one of

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52 There is not much information available about the price of books but various figures can be found in: Martin Brecht, ‘Kaufpreis und Kaufdaten einiger Reformations-schriften’, in Gutenberg Jahrbuch, 47 (1972), 169-73; Ernst Zinner, Geschichte und Bibliographie astronomischer Literatur in Deutschland zur Zeit der Renaissance (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1964), pp.64-68; and Künast, pp. 185-93.


55 For examples of longer discussions of these issues see: Elizabeth Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe, chapter 6, ‘Western Christendom Disrupted’ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp.148-86; and Febvre and Martin, pp.287-319 (chapter 8, section 3, entitled ‘The Book and the Reformation’).
the outstanding features of the Reformation. Estimates of the exact volume vary as there is insufficient information about the length of print-runs.\textsuperscript{56}

As much as 90\% of material published in German-speaking territories before 1517 - especially that which had any intellectual weight - had been written in Latin, which is a reflection of the almost total control exercised by the Catholic Church over the written word and upon education in schools and Universities. In just the space of a few years this changed radically with more and more vernacular texts appearing aimed at a new popular market. Scribner estimates that perhaps only 40 texts a year in German were printed in 1500, but by 1519 there were 111 and in 1523 there were 498 - one third of which were of Luther’s writing.\textsuperscript{57}

Religious material dominated the output of Germany’s printers, although there were also quantities produced on astrology and on purely secular topics. Luther’s work alone was to sell over 300,000 copies 1517-1520.\textsuperscript{58} Edwards thinks that as many as 3.1 million copies of Luther’s various works were printed 1516-1546 and in the crucial period 1518-1529 around eighty per cent of these were in German.\textsuperscript{59} During the same period, Edwards believes, other authors on religious topics generated another 3.1 million copies, with Protestant literature outstripping Catholic by a vast margin: 2.5 million copies by Protestant writers and perhaps 600,000 by Catholics. Probably less than half the Catholic publications in the period 1518-1529 were in German.

\textsuperscript{56} Discussions can be found particularly in: Engelsing, pp.15-31; and Hans-Joachim Köhler, ‘The Flugschriften and their Importance in Religious Debate’, in \textit{Astrologi hallucinati}, ed. by Paola Zambelli (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986), pp.153-175. Köhler’s work forms the basis of most modern estimates on the quantity and nature of printing at the beginning of the Reformation.

\textsuperscript{57} Scribner, \textit{For the Sake}, p.2.


\textsuperscript{59} Edwards, pp.39-40.
Basel by 1517 was already a major centre for printing and was producing a similar volume to Strassburg. According to Prietzel's figures, the pattern of output in Basel is comparable to the pattern found by Scribaner for all German-speaking lands. The total number of books and pamphlets printed in Basel rose from an average of just over 20 per year between 1500 and 1512, up to 42 a year 1513 to 1517, and then up to a mighty 118 per year 1518 to 1525. The year 1518 stands out, when the total number of publications printed in Basel jumped dramatically from 54 in 1517 to 105. The average percentage of editions printed in German as compared to Latin was 13% from 1500 to 1512, rising to an average of 19% in the years 1513 to 1517, and up to over 30% during the period 1518 to 1525. Because of the popularity of Erasmus the number of items printed in Basel started to grow as early as 1514 (the year he came to Basel), three years ahead of the growth pattern for the rest of Germany.

The highest number of publications printed in any single year in Basel was 1523 when 142 editions were printed, of which 56 were in German. In that year Basel accounted for more than 11% of all the books printed in the vernacular in the German language areas of Europe. The year 1523 was a record for Strassburg as well, though the figures show a rather higher percentage of books than Basel that were printed in the vernacular in that year, and in fact throughout the period 1518 to 1525.

A. F. Johnson says this about Basel as a printing centre during Gengenbach’s lifetime: 'The [...] period (1510-1526) is the most important in the whole history of the press at Basle [...] Basle printers took the lead in all Europe.' In particular, Johnson reports that Basel was the leading printing centre for Greek and Latin classics, as more recently does

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60 Chrisman, Lay Culture, pp.76-77.
61 All figures for Basel based on Prietzel, AGB, p.432.
62 Prietzel, AGB, p.301.
63 Chrisman, Lay Culture, pp.76-77.
64 Johnson, p.6.
Künast: 'In diesen Literaturgattungen überragte Basel alle Konkurrenten.' The presence of the University played a significant role in this according to Guggisberg. Up until 1525 it was also one of the seven most important centres for the printing of Luther's work as well as being the leading producer of books by Erasmus. Across Germany 1525 marked the climax of the printing boom and it was followed by a sharp fall which affected Basel as much as the other major centres:

> From about 1524 there was a certain decline in the book trade at Basle. New cuts cease almost entirely, there is a much larger proportion of plain title-pages, and production for the next few years drops by about 40 per cent.

Impressive though the print volumes were the cost of books and pamphlets would have meant that normally only a small minority of people were able to buy any of them. Printed matter, however, influenced a much wider audience than just those who could buy and read it. Scribner argues:

> For those with little or no reading ability in the narrow sense, listening or looking would have been the major means of acquiring their knowledge of the Reformation. Concentration on the printed word alone thus offers only limited access to the process by which the new movement was spread to the people. We must, rather, see print in relation to oral and visual forms of communication.

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65 Künast, p. 19.


67 Prietzel has a detailed breakdown of printing of Luther and Erasmus in Basel: Prietzel, AGB, pp.375-77. Edwards, pp.22-25, has produced detailed comparative tables of Luther printing by different cities, broken down in four year periods between 1518 and 1546.

68 Johnson, p. 19. Prietzel reports that the immediate drop in the number of editions was from 142 in 1523 to 85 in 1525 - rather more than 40% - while printing of vernacular texts dropped even more sharply from 56 in 1523 down to 20 in 1525: Prietzel, (thesis), p.403.

69 For a discussion on who owned books see: Chrisman, Lay Culture, pp.59-85 and pp.103-22.

70 Scribner, For the Sake, p.3.
On the previous page Scribner proposes: 'that it was likely as not that most people experienced the printed word only indirectly, by having it read aloud to them'. The way that much material was written in simple verse form and dramatic dialogues lent itself to being read aloud and Gengenbach used these forms a great deal. As the Reformation progressed and the market for theological literature grew Gengenbach in common with other printers used prose more, but frequently in the style of a sermon that still lent itself to reading aloud.

In respect of visual communication it was the woodcut that played the crucial role and many of the more popular publications were illustrated. Artists such as Dürer and Cranach achieved lasting fame with their woodcuts and engravings. In Basel there was Hans Holbein the Younger, his brother Ambrosius, the Meister DS, and Urs Graf who were important exponents of the woodcut and heavily used by local printers. Chrisman’s analysis of the books produced in Strassburg found that 17% of those produced between 1510 and 1519 were illustrated which fell in the following decade 1520 to 1529 to 8%.

Chrisman argues (on the same page) that the function of the illustration changed at quite an early stage: ‘In the period before 1515, they were designed very clearly to elucidate the text. Later they were often merely intended to embellish or ornament the book.’

She argues that the change occurred as literacy spread, whereas Scribner (in the passage quoted above) believed that illustrations continued to play a key role in spreading ideas during the Reformation itself. The difference may be because Chrisman was commenting on the situation prevailing in Strassburg - one of the leading and most cultured cities of the Empire - while Scribner was generalising about conditions across Germany.

Gengenbach’s work had been almost universally illustrated until the 1520s when the percentage of illustrations fell somewhat, especially in his longer theological

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publications.\textsuperscript{73}

\subsection*{b. Gengenbach’s Output}

Gengenbach printed 118 publications, which is modest when compared to the 370 of the leading printer of the city, Johann Froben.\textsuperscript{74} Froben had been in the business at least 8 years before Gengenbach started in 1509, but in the years after 1515 Froben printed 350 of his 370 while Gengenbach printed 101 of his. The comparative number of pages they set shows an even starker contrast - see Table 2 below.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{lccc}
\hline
\textbf{Dates} & \textbf{Publications} & \textbf{Printed Pages (in \textit{Bogen}\textsuperscript{75})} \\
\hline
Gengenbach & 1512-1524 & 118 & 392.75 \\
Froben & 1501-1525 & 370 & 15,988.80 \\
Cratander & 1518-1525 & 130 & 4,274.57 \\
Lamparter & 1505-1524 & 31 & 306.87 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Comparative Output of Selected Basel Printers}
\end{table}


If Gengenbach is compared with Andreas Cratander - a printer who was less prolific than Froben, but nevertheless well-established - the volume of publications from both of them /

\textsuperscript{73} Hieronymus, \textit{Bücherillustration}, contains a great deal of detailed information about the various illustrations used by Gengenbach as well as other authors.

\textsuperscript{74} For a complete list of his known printing see Appendix A.

is much closer. Gengenbach though, produced far fewer pages such was the brevity of most of his material as can be clearly seen in the comparison with Nicholas Lamparter. Of the printers who were in business over a similar period Lamparter was one of the least prolific. Although he printed nearly as many pages as Gengenbach these were for barely a quarter the number of publications. In terms of volume of printed pages Prietzel has calculated that Gengenbach's was the lowest but one of all Basel's printers in the period 1501 to 1525.\textsuperscript{76} The patterns of individual peak years only fit loosely into the city-wide and national picture. Gengenbach's record year was twenty-two publications in 1521; Froben's was in 1518 with sixty; Cratander's was 1520 with thirty; and Lamparter's, oddly enough, was 1505 with six.

With regard to publications in Latin less than a quarter - 26 out of 118 - of Gengenbach's were in Latin, while Cratander's were almost an exact mirror with 29 out of 130 in German, as were Lamparter's 8 out of 31. Froben, the humanist and close friend of Erasmus, printed only 2 items in German out of his lifetime's entire production of 370. The Latin market comprised the intellectual elite which was not Gengenbach's focus. He tried to make his living writing and printing for a popular market that only emerged as the social crisis came to a climax, and he supplemented his income as a bookseller and publican. Almost as fast as that popular market rose it shrank again at around the time that he died in 1525, although it did not fall as low as its previous level.

Most writers in the early Reformation period were theologians like Luther, Eberlin, Murner and Müntzer, while Gengenbach was among a small minority who were not. Chrisman estimates that about one eighth of the five thousand or more pamphlets collected by Kähler were by lay writers.\textsuperscript{77} Brought up as the son of a waged craft-worker,

\textsuperscript{76} Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, p.302. Whereas he was the fifth most prolific in numbers of editions - p.298.

\textsuperscript{77} Chrisman, \textit{Conflicting Visions}, p.3. Chapter 7 of the same book, 'Artisans, Scripture and Christian Practice', pp.159-78, is on pamphlets written by artisans, craftsmen and technicians; and chapter 8, 'The View from Below', pp.180-204, is on material written by other lower class writers.
Gengenbach’s social status was amongst the lowest of any of the writers of the time, certainly much lower than other leading lay authors such as the aristocratic Ulrich von Hutten or the patrician Niklaus Manuel. His early writing shows close affinities to that of another commoner, Sebastian Brant, as will be seen in the next chapter. Brant was not a handcraft worker, but rather had been highly educated, gaining a doctorate and becoming a senior, professional civil servant.
CHAPTER 2: EARLY THEMES - SEBASTIAN BRANT

The underlined reference indicates the version of the work used in the text from which any quotes are drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used for it in the text.

5. **Anon, Dissz sind die Manlehen so den durren Rüttern von dem helgen Concilio zu Basel bestetig sind** (1511-Sept 1513). Basel UB: Einblattdrucke s.XV Nr.23. *(Mannlehen).*

6. **Anon, Liber vagatorum** (1511-1513). No original copy available in Britain or Switzerland. Goedeke. pp 343-70. *(Bettlerorden).*

10/11. **Pamphilus Gengenbach, Der welsch flusz** (End 1513). BL: C.107.b.41. *(Welsch Flusz).*

14/15. **Pamphilus Gengenbach, Der bundtschu** (Jan. 1514). BL: (Strassburg: Hüpfuff, 1514). 11515.b.25. *(Der Bundschuh).*

16. **Kalender** (1514). Basel UB: BroQ 4909. This is a copy.

17. **Pamphilus Gengenbach, Der alt Eydgnosz** (April-July 1514). Köhler MF: 933/2326. No copies available in Britain or Switzerland. The only original is at Wolfenbüttel. *(Alt Eydgnosz).*


22. **Kalender** (1516). Basel KuKab: No number (Graf, Urs).


98. **Pamphilus Gengenbach, Diß ist eine iemerlicher clag über die Todten fresser** (1521/22). BL: (Augsburg: Steiner, [1522 (?)]). 1462.d.1. *(Die Totenfresser).*
No complete original copy. Raillard pp. 131-33. Called *der Mönchskalb vor Papst Hadrian*.

111. Deutscher WandKalender auf 1524 (1523).
No original copies known about.

I. INTRODUCTION

The closeness of Gengenbach’s ideas to those of Sebastian Brant has been largely ignored by previous commentators. Brant had been quite a prolific writer while he had lived in Basel, but within two or three years of his move to Strassburg in 1501 his creative output had fallen off. By the time of Gengenbach’s early publications in 1513 Brant was an elderly man of sixty. Brant was one of the earliest vernacular writers who had deliberately targeted and helped create the new popular reading market. He wrote short, simple rhyming poems and woodcuts issued as single page *Flugschriften* - leaflets - commenting on items of topical interest, about extraordinary natural events and battles, as well as writing hymns.

He also wrote the best-selling book, *Das Narrenschiff*, that was a collection of 112 short, leaflet-like chapters in rhyming verse. In it Brant commented on all aspects of social and political life, and the problems that were caused by the reprehensible

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1 This is not to argue that previous writers have not been aware of the affinity, for example: Raillard, p. 19; and Prietzel, *AGB*, p. 317, fn 81. Although there have been commentaries on *Das Narrenschiff* and on Brant’s legal writings there is surprisingly no biography or critical appraisal of the whole of his work.

2 Heitz published a collection of eighteen different leaflets in twenty-four versions, three of which were in both Latin and German: *Flugblätter des Sebastian Brants*, ed. by Paul Heitz (Strassburg: Heitz & Mundel, 1915).

3 Sebastian Brant, *Das Narrenschiff: facsimile der Erstausgabe von 1494*, ed. by Franz Schultz (Strassburg: Trübner, 1913). The book went to five authorised editions in Basel within the first fifteen years plus a number of pirated ones, and was published in most European languages including two different English editions in 1508 (by Alexander Barclay) and 1509 (by Henry Watson).
behaviour of various types of fools - \textit{Narren}. The idea of using \textit{Narren} in this way was consciously developed from carnival, as Dietz-Rüdiger Moser has recently reminded us.\(^4\)

It was so successful that it sparked a whole contemporary genre of literature, \textit{Narrenliteratur}, to which Gengenbach's carnival play \textit{Die Gouchmat} (1519) belongs. Famous examples of \textit{Narrenliteratur} include Erasmus's \textit{Moriae Encomium (In Praise of Folly)},\(^5\) and Thomas Murner's \textit{Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren}, the best known of several such works by him.\(^6\) While these two examples belonged to the same genre of literature they did not use the \textit{Narrenidee} in the same way.\(^7\)

\section*{II. \textsc{Das Narrenschiff} and \textsc{Liber Vagatorum (Bettlerorden)}}

Brant's normal style was to discuss generalities and pick his examples from stories and personalities in classical or biblical texts. He normally avoided comment on issues of immediate political moment, the perfect civil servant that he was. This reluctance to write about major political controversies was not shared by Gengenbach, who commented on current affairs throughout his working life. A most particular example of Brant's discretion was over the accession of Basel to the Swiss Confederacy in 1501, which coincided with his decision to leave Basel and return to live in his home town of Strassburg. Brant was intensely loyal to the Emperor and he later became a member of


the Imperial Council, so it is likely that Brant did have a view about Basel’s decision. Dünnhaupt believes that Brant left Basel because his opposition to the secession was so fundamental. Yet there is no record that he wrote anything about this, certainly nothing for public consumption.

An exception to this norm was the way that Brant wrote about beggars in Das Narrenschiff, where he was very direct. Brant must have found the beggars of Basel particularly upsetting as his description of them in chapter 63 of Das Narrenschiff, ‘Von Bettlen’, is couched in most hostile terms. He finished it by making clear his view that beggars are really all rich because of their utterly unscrupulous behaviour in pursuit of money (page 157). In the same chapter Brant gives a vivid derogatory description of the Kohlenberg area of Basel and the activities of the large numbers of beggars who lived there (page 156). Robert Jütte describes it like this:

One of the most famous recognised criminal ‘sanctuaries’ of this period was the Kohlenberg district in Basel. This area had the status of a liberty until the beginning of the sixteenth century although it was never a private enclave outside city authority. The Kohlenberg also features in the introduction to the Bettlerorden, one of the works of 1513 or perhaps a little earlier, that was printed by Gengenbach and may also have been transcribed by him into poetry from its original German prose. The work is unsigned and there is no way of being certain that Gengenbach wrote it. It is, however, entirely consistent and possible that he did write it or at least the foreword, given its style and the social attitudes it expresses. Gengenbach added forewords or postscripts to a number of his publications. This foreword to Bettlerorden comments approvingly on the views in

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10 Prietzel lists those authors who think that it was by Gengenbach - Assion, Boehncke, and Jütte. Lendi and Singer are not sure, while Stütz attributed it to a writer close to Gengenbach. AGB, p.378, fn 497.
chapter 63 of *Das Narrenschiff*, echoing Brant’s negative judgements about beggars.

The free rhyming *Bettlerorden* was transcribed from *Liber Vagatorum*, which first appeared in 1510 and has been described by Schanze as ‘das popüllärste deutschhe Gaunerbüchlein’ since the early sixteenth century.\(^{11}\) *Liber Vagatorum*, written by Mathias Hütlin, may have drawn its long list of the deceitful wiles of beggars from the Basel magistrates of the fifteenth century.\(^{12}\) The *Kohlenberg* appears in chapter 8 of *Bettlerorden* itself, but only in passing. What Brant listed of the beggars’ deceits in just the one chapter, *Bettlerorden* does at far greater length - in twenty-eight chapters - each telling about yet another of the beggars’ tricks and disguises.

Brant and Gengenbach were of the view, almost universal in Christian culture at that time, that the rich should share their money with the poor. Brant, for example says in the dedication to chapter 17, ‘Von unnutzem richtum’:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wer güt hat/ und ergetzt sich mit} \\
\text{Und nit dem armen do von gytt} \\
\text{Dem wurt verseit/ so er ouch bitt}
\end{align*}
\]

(p.46).

Gengenbach echoes similar sentiments some years later in early 1522 in *Die Totenfresser*:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Du sprachst wer bsitzen wolt dein rich} \\
\text{Der solt sin almüsen miltigklich} \\
\text{Mittailen armen hie auff erden}
\end{align*}
\]

[p.Aiii].

Brant believed beggars were not part of the deserving poor who were entitled to such alms and certainly the same view is implied in *Bettlerorden*. However, Gengenbach does not make such a distinction in *Die Totenfresser*, in which the words quoted above are spoken by a beggar. It is argued in chapters 7 and 8 of this thesis that the theme of


poverty is central to a lot of other later work by Gengenbach, as well as in Die Totenfresser. Brant in fact gives no indication as to which social groups of the poor he positively felt were ‘deserving’.

Poverty was a preoccupation of local government, and reforms of the relief system and the tightening of controls on the poor were closely associated with the Reformation in city after city. Robert Jütte describes the change taking place during this period:

Things were, however, no longer as simple as in the Middle Ages, when the poor were predominantly seen as a means of salvation for the rich. [...] Even some decades before the Reformation a far-reaching change can be noticed: since then the poor had been considered both blessed and condemned by God, virtuous and sinful, industrious and lazy.

The hardening of attitudes towards ‘indiscriminate’ alms-giving had its effect on the mendicant orders of monks and nuns supposedly living in poverty and dependent on the charity of the public, but who were becoming increasingly numerous and unpopular in many cities. These holy beggars were literally the Bettlerorden - the begging orders - whom Gengenbach includes in his foreword, making reference to the fact that Brant has mentioned them in chapter 63 of Das Narrenschiff:

wie wol jn der hochglert doctor Brant
Kūrtzlich hat geben ein verstand,
In sinem bûch am .lxij. Narren
Düt er gar clorlich von in barlen
wie das der Bettler sigen vil
Die sich all richten vff den gyl

Vnd wend sich all dar mit erneren
Es sigen mûnch, nunnë, oder ander herren.
(p.344, lines 31-38).

The only other group of poor people that Brant discusses are prostitutes, whom he also condemns, in chapter 50 of Das Narrenschiff, ‘Von wollust’.

Despite the views of people like R.H.Tawney that Protestant ideas were the cause of changing attitudes to the poor, there has been a lot of recent work to show that it affected poor relief in both Catholic and Protestant towns. See, for example: Nathalie Zemon-Davis, Society and Culture in Early Modern France, (London: Duckworth, 1975), pp. 17-65, entitled ‘Poor Relief, Humanism and Heresy’ (chapter 2).

Jütte, p.194.
Another common thread running through Brant’s and Gengenbach’s work was their interest in astrological ideas. Brant wrote about astrological events such as eclipses and meteors and believed that such phenomena were warning signs from God, as were also dramatic natural events such as the birth of two-headed pigs. Gengenbach was less interested in such earthbound phenomena, which are discussed below in section V.

Brant’s astrological ideas appear in five broadsides and in chapter 65 of *Das Narrenschiff*, ‘Vo achtung des gstirns’. He also edited and published three relevant books: Augustine’s *De civitate dei* in 1489; an edition of Methodius in 1498 (chapter 5, I); and a best-selling *Hortulus Animae*, produced in 1501, which included recommendations for healthy living and bleeding. He saw no contradiction between his astrological ideas and his belief in God, or in the bible as the Word of God. His firm belief in Scripture he states in chapter 11 of *Das Narrenschiff*, ‘Verachtüg der gschrifl’. Brant connected natural phenomena with political events and although he said he did not believe in detailed astrological prediction, he did connect astrological events with unpleasant earthly consequences. In the case of the first of Brant’s astrological leaflets, entitled ‘Von dem donnerstein gefallê jm xcii iar: vor Ensisheim’, which was published in both German and Latin, he thought:

\[
\text{Rechtlich sprich ich das es bedüt} \\
\text{Ein bsunder plag dem selben lut}\]

---

16 Warburg called these ‘*künstliche*’ and ‘*wunderliche*’ prophecies respectively: A. Warburg, *Heidnisch-antike Weissagung in Wort und Bild zu Luthers Zeiten*, Offprint from Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften (Heidelberg: 1920).


18 Heitz, leaflet no.1, ‘Donnerstein’. 

52
It ran to several editions and established Brant's reputation:

Brant's other four astrological leaflets were prognosticons. The first appeared in 1497 and was about a conjunction of the planets predicted for 1503. The second was also about a conjunction of the planets, this time in 1504 and appeared in early 1504. It was entitled, 'Von den Wunderlichen zamefugung der obersten Planeten', and in it the unresolved tension between the desire to indulge in astrological prophecy and yet not to presuppose the actions and feelings of the all-powerful Deity is apparent. Brant acknowledges that what will happen and how it will affect humanity will indeed be up to God:

Was aber entlich werd dar auß  
Das stell ich hin zu Gott dem herren  
Der well all ding zum besten keren  
Vnd vnn behüten vor den Streichen

Yet the large woodcut accompanying the poem indicates that a consequence of this planetary conjunction will be war, and in the leaflet Brant gives more detail of the expected consequences:

In lannden die ich nit will nennen  
In kurzer zeyt wirdt man sye kennen  
Dern einfluß der Krebs und der Mon  
Mit Irer macht handt underthon  
Die werden leyden groß unseld  
Bewar Got was da wechst Im feld  
Das dem nit Reg noch wassers flut  
Bring etwas das da nit sey gut

The last astrological leaflet of Brant's, written in 1520, was also the last thing he published. It is about the Sindflut - the great flood predicted for the year 1524 - a topic which provoked a whole spate of literature and which is discussed below in chapter 6,
Brant was one of those writers who tried to square the circle between the contradictory impulses of biblical prophecy, astrological prophecy and God’s freedom to do what He wanted. Much of what Brant said in Das Narrenschiff is consistent with the ideas contained in his leaflets. In the three-line verse under the woodcut at the start of chapter 65 in Das Narrenschiff, Brant described much astrology as ‘abergloub’, a word that Gengenbach also used in his two Practiken. This is not the same use of aberglauben as the modern reader would understand: Brant was against ‘abergloub’ as he understood it, as the belief that the stars and the planets had a mind or power of their own. He asserted that God’s will was the final arbiter of events, not the planets and the stars. Brant used Augustine to justify his position, as indeed did Gengenbach who specifically refers to De civitate dei in his Christliche ware Practica (1523).

Gengenbach’s astrological publications during the period up to Brant’s death in 1520 were: his calendars and related publications, the Practica Deutsch (1515); and the two Fastnachtspiele, Der Nollhart (1517) and Die Gouchmat (1519). The calendars and Practica Deutsch are discussed below. In the discussion of Der Nollhart Brant’s and Gengenbach’s ideas about the future and the coming of the Antichrist are compared, in chapter 5, IIIb (page 137), while the relevant discussion about Die Gouchmat is in chapter 4, IIC (page 105). The main discussion about Gengenbach’s astrological publications after 1520 is in chapter 6, IV (page 191)

a) Calendars
Calendars were one type of publication that Gengenbach produced regularly from the start of his printing career to the end. Because of their essentially ephemeral nature it is quite possible that he produced some which have not survived. Almost as soon as printing began, calendars and missals, with their calendars of the Church year, were produced. LeGoff talks of the period as marking a transformation from ‘church time’ to ‘secular time’. The exact measurement of time became a major project, as did the measurement of the stars and the movements of the planets. The town clock increasingly
took over from the sun and the seasons as the regulator of people's lives, a process described by Gerhard Dohm-Rossum.\textsuperscript{21} Another commentator, Ricardo Quinones, argues that:

For the men of the Renaissance, time is a great discovery - the antagonist against which they plan and plot and war, and over which they hope to triumph.\textsuperscript{22}

Calendars at that time included the phases of the sun and moon, the astrological signs, and pictures of the seasons.\textsuperscript{23} Pfister notes that in the research literature calendars are regarded as closely related to \textit{Praktiken} and \textit{Laßtafeln}:

Das ist insofern sinnvoll und gerechtfertigt, als sie wie die Kalandarien aufgrund astronomischer Gegebenheiten erstellt wurden, und wie diese meist für ein bestimmtes Jahr galten. Hinzu kommt, daß sich im Laufe des 16. Jahrhunderts der neue Typus der \textit{Wand- und Schreibkalender} herausbildete.\textsuperscript{24}

She goes on to point out that at the time they were being produced they were regarded as distinct forms and it was certainly not the case that all \textit{Praktiken} and \textit{Weissagungen} had what she calls ‘komputistischen Komponente.’

Gengenbach produced two books of hours, as has already been noted, the first sometime 1513-15 and the second in 1519, and three different forms of calendar. The three forms that are known about were the book calendar, the wall calendar, and the \textit{Regiment der Gesundheit}. He may well have produced or simply printed a fourth type, a \textit{Laßbrief} or \textit{Laßtafel}, mentioned above, which was a medical/astrological timetable of appropriate times to be bled. The evidence for this is in the court records. On 20 December 1519 Gengenbach, Petri and Lamparter ended up in court over a dispute with the \textit{Stadtartzt}


\textsuperscript{23} For a description of contemporary calendars and astrological content see: Zinner, pp.11-23.

Dr. Wonnecker about a *Laßbrief* he had written, but which had not been printed.\(^\text{25}\)

Gengenbach is believed to have been the sole producer of book calendars in Basel during his career,\(^\text{26}\) of which examples of three are known about, for the years 1514, 1516, and 1521.\(^\text{27}\) They are each between forty-four and forty-six pages long. The dedication to the 1516 edition, for example, makes clear the astrological link as well as other key matters:

\[\text{Das regimêt der gesuntheit. } \text{(J)N dysem biechlin findestu } \text{wie sich ein jeglich mensch halten sol mit } \text{essen vnd mit trincken durch die zwolff } \text{Monat deß gantzen Jars } \text{ouch wie mâ } \text{sich haltê sol mit aderlassen.} \)

He produced a single-page wall calendar for the year 1524 and another, two-page, wall calendar devised by Johannes Rüß in 1521. Copies of wall calendars were rather ephemeral and the least likely to survive over time, so it is possible that he did print more. Finally he printed two editions of a *Regiment der Gesundheit*, which were six pages long and written by learned medical practitioners - 'vil hochgelerter doctores der artzny' - and recommended by a King of England - 'zu eren eim kü-/nig von Engellandt'. The opening words describe their purpose:

\[\text{Das regimët der gesuntheit. } \text{(J)N dysem biechlin findestu } \text{wie sich ein jeglich mensch halten sol mit } \text{essen vnd mit trincken durch die zwolff } \text{Monat deß gantzen Jars } \text{ouch wie mâ } \text{sich haltê sol mit aderlassen.} \]

*b) Practica deutsch (1515)*

Prior to *Der Nollhart* Gengenbach had produced another prophetic work, *Practica deutsch* (1515), which claims to be the work of a ‘Doctor Nemo’, but is generally believed to be Gengenbach’s own.\(^\text{30}\) It is a mixture of prose and poetry and a splendid

\(^{25}\) Stehlin, pp.86-87, no 2094.


\(^{27}\) Koegler gives a full description in his article.


\(^{30}\) Lendi is an exception - he thinks that Gengenbach only wrote the rhyming part, but probably not the prose - p.45.
attack on those who believe the specific prophecies of the astrologers. In the first, prose part he gives a spoof prophecy of detailed events to come, but at the end of it makes clear that he is only talking about fun and games with each short chapter relating to a different activity - cards, dice, bowls and bonfire nights.

The game of cards motif, that appears again later in Bockspiel (1520), contains an interesting and detailed echo of Welsch Flusz, the carnival play based on a card game which was published two years earlier in 1513. In Practica Deutsch he writes:

Vnd ist zū besorgen das sich werd ein spyl ansahē dar yn sich werden mischē vier kūng mit sampt dem babst vnd einem eins kleinen standts. Dise vier kūnig werdē stetigs gegen einanderfechten /
[p.Aii']

In Welsch Flusz, shortly following a reference to the prophets: ‘Cyrillus vnd Methodius, Sibill chunea vnd Paulus’ [page Aiii’], and to a prophecy: ‘Wie abbas Joachim hat gesagt’ [page Aiv’], the game commences:

So nun das spyl ist vff der ban
So sicht ye eir den andern an
[p.Aiv’]

Various characters appear, including the pope: ‘Wo dañ ein P das spyl wurd ion’ (p.Aiv’), in which ‘P’ means ‘pope’ as he explains at the end, and four kings: ‘Dañ fier kūng vff der karten sind’ (page Aiv’).

In Welsch Flusz the political prophecies are biblical/religious and are taken seriously, whereas in Practica Deutsch Gengenbach is discussing and mocking astrologically based prophecies. The spoof in Practica Deutsch gives way to a real warning: ‘Dañ sol sich iedermann richtē in ein būßfertig lebē / dañ nahet sich die zeit dz got rechnūg will haben darūb sech sich iedermann für.’ (page A.iii’). And if they do not, then judgement will surely follow. Various specific things are predicted to occur, particularly unrest among the peasantry.

In the opening lines of the second, poetic part the author tells of how nice it would be if one could tell the future - but if we believed that was really possible we would be
disobeying God. We must reject the belief that the planets have a mind of their own: ‘All aberglouben faren lan’ (page Aiv). The last line reads: ‘Got ist meister’. The bible gives us clear examples to follow of faith in God, as we learn from the prophets such as Bridget and St. John - neither of whom were mentioned in the earlier Welsch Flusz - and from Sybylla, who was.

IV. MEDICINE

While there was a close affinity between Brant’s and Gengenbach’s ideas on astrology, they did differ in other important respects. Their views on medicine are a clear example. Brant believed in the application of astrology for medical purposes:

Und bei genauerer Kenntnis dessen, was damals als wissenschaftliche Medizin galt, müßte man den Schluß ziehen, daß Brants Anerkennung der ärztlichen Prognostik eine unausgesprochene Anerkennung der mit der Astrologie verbundenen Bereiche der Medizin bedeutet.  

Brant discusses his ideas in a substantial section of chapter 38 of Das Narrenschiff, ‘Vö kräckê die nit volgê’ (pages 94-97), and in chapter 65 he expresses his views again while acknowledging that there is much chicanery - thanks to indiscriminate printers among others:

Was willen/ zufall der kranckheit
Fräuelich man vß dem gstein yetz seit/
Inn nährheyt ist all welt ertoubt
Eym yeden narren man yetz gloubt/
Vil praktick und wissagend kunst
Gatt yetzt vast vß der drucker gunst/
Die drucken alles das man bringt
Was man von schanden sagt und singt
(pp.164-65)

Or in another example, in his famous leaflet about syphilis written in 1496, Brant explains that the disease’s appearance was caused by the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in 1484.


32 Heitz, leaflet no.17, ‘De pestilentiali scorrâ eulogium’.
Gengenbach, despite publishing calendars with astrologically linked recommendations for healthy living, took a much more critical view of doctors who used astrology. In particular he fiercely attacked a well-known doctor and astrologer, Laurentius Fries, in *Die Gouchmat* (1519 or later) and in *Christliche ware Practica* (1523). Gengenbach argued in the latter work that the power of prayer was more effective for curing people than astrology. The connection between sin and illness was widely accepted.

V. EARTHLY PHENOMENA

Brant was fascinated by the weird and the wonderful, which he regarded as omens and signs from God. The birth of deformed creatures and humans featured in his leaflets - a siamese birth, for example, proved to be a popular enough theme to appear in both Latin and German, and to be reprinted. He also wrote about natural catastrophes, floods and a hailstorm, and illnesses. In chapter 88 of *Das Narrenschiff*, ‘Vō plag und strof gots’ (pages 235-36), Brant regards plagues and natural catastrophes as general signs of God’s displeasure with sinful man.

In his analysis of weird and wonderful phenomena, however, Brant tried to interpret them quite specifically. In a leaflet of 1496, for example, he puzzles over the correct interpretation of the birth of a sow with two bodies:

\[
\text{Aber was dise Su bedüt} \\
\text{Weis ich nit gantz / es gfalt mir nüt}^{35}
\]

He comes down in favour of it meaning a war with the Turks.

Gengenbach was not as interested as Brant in prophecy based on such earthly wonders and produced only one similar leaflet, *Mönchskalb* (1523). This is a ninety-line poem about a monstrous animal born in Freiberg, Saxony in December 1522, whose front half

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33 See chapter 4, IIc (p.109), and chapter 6, IV (p.191).

34 Heitz, leaflet no. 7, ‘Von der wundbaren geburt des kinds bey wurms’.

35 Heitz, leaflet no. 10, ‘Von der wunderbare Su zù Landser im Sundgau’.
was a cow and the back half a calf, and whose head looked like a monk’s. Luther also wrote about it. The anonymous writer of Mönchskalb presents two opposing interpretations of the prophetic significance of the monstrous creature, and so his treatment diverges sharply from Brant. In the title paragraph the reader is told what the pamphlet is about: ‘Der klag etliche geystlichen zuo Rom, vor Pabst Adriano, über das Monstrum.’(page 131). The clerics argue before the Pope that this ‘selzam Monstrum’ (line 2) is a sign that Luther will use violence to bring down the pope himself and that:

Bedeut das er all wält hat gblernt,
Mit siner bösen leer geschendt:
(p.131, lines 13-14).

As their argument progresses they link the appearance of the creature with the spread of Islam:

Dann wir finden klöglich gschriben ston,
Do die Orientisch klich wolt abgon,
Solch geburten man gar vyl ouch sach.
Do kam Machmet auch bald dar nach.
Do fieng an der Türckisch glouben,
Der thet die christlich kirch berouben.
(p.132, lines 31-36).

In the second half of the leaflet, the Pabst Narr tells the assorted clerics to be silent while he gives the Pope a better interpretation: he argues that the creature signifies nothing less than a call to support Luther and to reform the Church. Various parts of the creature had specific meanings, such as the tongue:

36 Martin Luther, Deutung Papstesels zu Rom und Mönchkalbs zu Freiberg funden, WA 11, 361ff. It was a combined publication, together with an article by Melanchthon on another monster of 1496. Scribner has an interesting commentary on Luther and the interpretation of these monsters: Scribner, For the Sake, pp. 127-32.

Die lange zung unss auch bedüt,
Sein guote leer die jetz so wit,
Sich hat gesterkt ind Christenheit.
(p.133, lines 69-71).

And the part that was a cow:

Und das das thier glich sicht eim rind
Zeigt es aber Luter an.
(p.133, lines 76-77).

He then appeals to Pope Adrian:

Darumb frummer Pabst Adrian
Wiltu mit Christo Jesu stärben,
So thuon ab all üppigkeit uff erden,
(p.133, lines 82-84).

And specifically, it is necessary to disband the closed orders, to leave the poor people in peace, and thus make reform possible:

Der Münch und auch Bägutten,
Lass sy all lauffen uss den kutten.
So kumpt das arm volck wider zfriden.
Und wirst in gottes hulden bliben.
Der dich noch lang lass hie uff erden.
Do mit ein reformatz mög werden.
(p.133, lines 85-90).

The reader is left uncertain whether to take this seriously or not. First the assorted clergy and then the Pabst Narr each give detailed meanings to quite arbitrary and unconnected features of the creature. The writer can only be mocking the detail to be found in other such prophecies. By writing a dialogue contrasting a Catholic and an Evangelical interpretation of the creature’s significance, the author has distanced himself from the earnest warnings of such writers as Sebastian Brant. Assuming that Gengenbach was indeed its author it represents a significant gap between the two men. The reader is being invited to recognise these prophecies for what they are - ideological devices. The author’s own position is thereby obscured, a matter which is discussed further in chapter 6, IV (page 191) when looking at Gengenbach’s other publications with an astrological theme.
Turning now to the early political commentaries published by Gengenbach around 1513, although he was much more forthright than Brant their ideas still show a considerable affinity. This section discusses Gengenbach's *Lied* about the *Bundschuh* uprising in 1513 in the nearby town of Lehen (now part of Freiburg-im-Breisgau) and the subsequent execution of two of its leaders by the Basel authorities.

The *Bundschuh*, the typical peasant’s wooden footwear, had been a symbol of revolt that had been appearing on peasant banners since 1439: ‘[…] signifying the unity of protesting commoners and as a symbol of conspiratory rebellion […]’; and its name was given to other major uprisings that took place on the Upper Rhine in 1493, 1502 and in 1517. Scott has given a recent account of the rising in Lehen in 1513 and its leader Joss Fritz, who was a survivor of the events of 1502 that had centred on his home town of Untergrombach. The rising planned in 1513 was discovered before it began and smashed by the Margrave of Baden and the Freiburg authorities. Its leaders fled and three of them - Jacob Huser, Kilian Meiger and Fritz - were captured outside Basel. Fritz escaped again and went on to help organise the 1517 rising, but his two comrades were tried and executed in the city three days before Christmas. Gengenbach published the first edition of the song shortly after.

The opening lines of Gengenbach’s rhyming foreword of *Der Bundschuh* make clear his reaction to the events:

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So ich betracht yetzüd die welt
findt ich eĩ dĩg dz mir mißfeln
Dz ist die groß ungehorsäkeitt
Die in d' welt ist wyt uñ breit
Nymands mer wil gehorsam sein
Ein yeder macht nach gedencken hin
Kein oberkeit sech man me an
Darumb es müss so ubel gon
(p.Aii')

After a justification of obedience to authority based on the Old Testament more than one hundred lines long (lines 51-165) it finishes by urging the need for obedience by city dwellers as much as by the peasantry:

Und auch den buren nit allein
Sunder den burgern in der stat
Das sie gehorsam syen dem rat
Und uff einander haben acht
So ist gott bey in tag und nacht
[p.Av.'].

This stress on obedience to constituted authority refers specifically to the city council and beyond that to the Emperor, but presumably did not extend to obeying the Pope as he is not mentioned. Gengenbach reminds the priesthood of the need to obey God’s laws. What is intriguing is just who were the citizens of Basel that had been disobedient and what was it they had done to be linked with the rebels of the Bundschuh. The poem had already referred to them quite early on:

So vil zwytracht als yetzund ist
Vnd sich erhebt zù aller frist
Bey fürsten herren nit allein
Sunder in stetten ists gemain
Die burger seind wider den rat
(p.Aii').

‘Zwytracht' (Zweitruacht) - sowing dissension and creating conflict - gets a whole chapter in Das Narrenschiff, chapter 7, entitled ‘Vom zwytracht machen’. On the whole Brant avoids giving specific examples of particular Christians who have been disobedient and is more worried about the ideological issues surrounding disobedience. To tolerate disobedience is to tolerate a slide in the high standard of Christian belief that the world desperately needs to save humanity from the apocalypse. Gengenbach in his discussion,
on the other hand, aims his strictures specifically at the *Bundschuh* peasants and (certain) citizens of towns. Perhaps Gengenbach was referring to the citizens in Berne, Lucerne and Solothurn who that year had executed some of their councillors and forced others into exile for taking payments from the French. Or perhaps it was a more general comment like that made by Brant in a letter to his friend Konrad Peutinger in 1504:

> No unity is left in our land, no peace, no law, no friendship. Like lions we prowl on each other; we rob and plunder like wolves. Our bitter internal conflicts fill me with fear and shame.41

But despite his deep concern for social stability Brant did not feel the various peasants’ risings to be important enough to write about. Only in his last major poem, the ‘*Freiheitstafel*’, written in about 1516, is there a direct mention of the *Bundschuh*:

> Was man uns thut von Fryheit sagen
> behertzigen nicht viel bei unszern tagen;
> stehts thut man teutschlands mehr inbeiszen
> von alter libertet und wiszen;
> wihr kommen gar in welsch manier,
> das würdt dem Bundtschuch leiden schier:
> ich sorg er sy bald an der thür.42

Brant regarded disobedience as but one problem in a whole catalogue. It enjoyed no special place unlike the sin of avarice and fixation on money and its widespread corrosive impact, which was a recurrent concern for Brant. A particularly negative effect of avarice on the peasantry was their using money to try and rise above their proper station in society. Brant wrote about this in two different chapters of *Das Narrenschiff* - in chapter 82, ‘von burschem uffgang’ and in chapter 73, ‘Von geystlich werdé’. In chapter 82 Brant portrayed the peasantry as wealthy - ‘Die buren stecken gantz voll gelt’ (p.215) - which they spent on clothes and new fashions; ostentation that was clearly an effort to show

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superiority over social groups higher placed in society. The poor peasants who flooded into the towns in times of hardship to swell the ranks of the beggars were not a class of people that Brant recognised as worthy of consideration.

Der Bundschuh is the work by Gengenbach most focussed on the theme of disobedience. He does return to it from time to time in other writings, but not in quite the same insistent way. Brother Nollhart in Der Nollhart, for example, says:

So nim von mir hie ein verstand
Sächs ding zerstören alle land.
Das ist hoffart / Vngehorsamkeit
Dar zū nyd vnd lychtfertigkeit /
Verzwyfflung vnd auch gydt /
Zerstören gar yl land vnd lüt.
(pp.66-67, lines 1135-1140)

Basel’s ruling elite may have made common cause with landlords to defend their feudal rights against peasant protest, but the ruling guilds-men of Basel had little sympathy for maintaining the political status quo when it suited. Only 15 months later in March 1515 they eliminated the right of the hohen Stube (the ‘guild’ of the Basel patriciate) to choose eight members of the inner council of the city, the Kleinrat. The following year they elected their first ever non-noble burgomaster, Jakob Meyer; and the Ritter - the Basel nobility - shortly lost their right to four places on the city council. Gengenbach reflected this hostility to the nobility in Alt Eydgnosz when he wrote about the Swiss liberation from overlordship:

Also die alten schwitzer hand
In grosser gotzforsch thūn reißen

Von allen herren warens fry
Der gerechtigkeit stūden sie by
Kein dienstgelt dettens nāmen
Wo man syß solt gezigen han
Sie hettens sich thūn schämen.
[p.Aii].

This was frequently illegal. The only book on the topic does not reveal if it was in Basel at this time: John Martin Vincent, Costume and Conduct in the laws of Basel, Bern and Zurich 1370-1800 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkin Press, 1935).
It went on to refer to a widespread breaking-down of relationships:

Als mich die sach ansehen wil
So ist der vntrew also vyl
Under fürsten vnd ouch herren
Vnd ouch dar zů vnder der gmein
Man acht jetz keiner eren.

On the same theme, Brant was more detailed than Gengenbach about the ‘foolish’ ways in which the nobility disrupt society: they were not impartial in their implementation of the law (chapter 46, ‘Vō dē gewalt der narrē’); they allowed corruption among their advisors (chapter 46); they desired to rise in the aristocratic hierarchy (chapter 82); and they failed to provide moral Christian leadership (chapter 99). Neither Brant nor Gengenbach were willing to extend these criticisms to the Emperor himself, however, whom both regarded as above the failings of the other nobility and to whom they looked to institute necessary change. In *Der Nollhart* (1517) Gengenbach expressed a vision that suggests reforms by the Emperor would dispose of nobility and rulers:

All stãnd wirt er do reformieren
Dañ wirt ein volck on houbt regieren
(p.33, lines 235-36).

This could be interpreted as a revolutionary call, but it is more likely to be Gengenbach calling for a Swiss-style solution to end the independent power of the aristocracy. If he was actively advocating the imitation of the confederate states by their neighbours then Gengenbach may have had greater sympathy for the Lehen peasants rising than is otherwise apparent from *Der Bundschuh*. Thomas Brady Jr. has discussed the influence that the Swiss had as a model of freedom from noble oppression on peasant communities outside Switzerland. He argues that the political arrangements in the Confederacy: ‘[…] appeared subversive of law and order to the nobles, who believed that they alone could rightly rule.’

There is no evidence of the confederates actively living up to this image and undermining

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the nobility - they were certainly not in the business of exporting peasants’ rights. Serfdom had not been abolished in Switzerland. The member states of the Confederacy owned land and peasants of their own in the common lordships and in the rural hinterlands of the city cantons. These peasants, in contrast to those of the self-governing rural cantons, were tied into the same sort of traditional feudal contracts as they might be with any noble landlord. From time to time the Swiss cantons had to suppress their own peasant uprisings. The Compact of Stans of 1481 was an early example of the Confederacy’s distaste for popular protest and Basel had no problem about executing Fritz’s co-conspirators of the Lehen Bundschuh - Gengenbach’s Lied is in tune with the opinion of the Basel ruling elite.

There are two further poems and a piece of prose about the Bundschuh, which Goedeke believed may have been written by Gengenbach. As he did not print them and the attitudes expressed in them were not consistent this is not likely.

In the prose piece the writer outlines the main demands of the Bundschuh and adopts a tone that is often descriptive rather than hostile, more like a news report. What is interesting about the poems is that both make explicit reference to Brant; one in its title Das Narrenschiff vom Bundschuh and the other poem, Das Lied vom Bundschuh, mentions Das Narrenschiff: ‘dz narrenschiff ein closter ist irs orden’. This latter poem’s approval of the wise executions and retribution exacted on the Bundschuh was a foretaste of the brutal revenge that Luther was to end up demanding against the peasant rebels of 1525. Its punitive tone contrasts with Gengenbach in Der Bundschuh who admonished

\[45\] Goedeke, Gengenbach, pp.28-31, pp. 387-403, pp. 546-56. The texts are printed as ‘Zugabe’ and not as one of the twenty-four listed by him as by Gengenbach. Hüpfuff (in Strassburg) linked the pieces when he printed Gengenbach’s poem together with the prose as early as 1514 (BL:11515.b.25). For a detailed discussion of these pieces and who may have written them: Peter Seibert, Aufstandsbewegungen in Deutschland 1476-1517 in der zeitgenössischen Reimliteratur, Reihe Siegen: Beiträge zur Literatur- und Sprachwissenschaft, 11 (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1978), pp.180-231.

\[46\] Goedeke, Gengenbach, p.387, line 11.

\[47\] For a short discussion see p.281.
the disobedient, but proposed no punishment.

The next chapter continues the exploration of Gengenbach’s literary roots and influences, examining his carnival plays, which made him famous. While Brant used the carnival character of the fool, *der Narr*, he did not venture to write any plays of his own.
CHAPTER 3: CARNIVAL AND THE FIRST TWO POLITISCHE MORALITÄTEN

The underlined reference indicates the version of the work used in the text from which any quotes are drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used for it in the text.


17. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Der alt Eydgnosz* (April-July 1514). Köhler MF: 933/2326. No copies available in Britain or Switzerland. The only original is at Wolfenbüttel. (*Alt Eydgnosz*).

I. INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

In May 1513 a Swiss Confederate army decisively thrashed a much larger French one - not for the first or last time - but with this particular victory at Novarra: 'the confederates attained the climax of their war-like renown and of their power.' Following the battle the Swiss imposed further humiliation on the French when they forced Dijon to surrender in September, the Swiss only agreeing to withdraw in return for a huge indemnity payment of 400,000 crowns from the French King. The Swiss made the mistake of leaving before they had their money, however, and Louis XII promptly reneged, refusing to pay. Gengenbach’s fury at this deceit no doubt reflected a popular reaction.

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International political events of 1513 dominated Gengenbach’s early publications, all written from an unmistakably pro-Imperial standpoint. In June 1513 he printed and probably wrote a dialogue, *Glücksrad-Blatt*, that contains many of the same characters that appeared in two dramatic pieces that he published towards the end of 1513 and in Spring 1514, *Welsch Flusz* and *Alt Eydgnosz*. He also published a collection of accounts about the meeting between the Confederacy’s two leading allies at the time, Emperor Maximilian and Henry VIII of England entitled *Empfang*. This collection has the distinction of being one of the earliest German *Zeitungen*. It was the first of a number of items published by Gengenbach that reported on topical events.

A song about this royal meeting, *Das ist ein neüw lied võ der gros=ßen niderlag geschehö vor d' stat Terwan*, has been attributed to Gengenbach by Goedeke and the editors of VD16. The writer of this song clearly believed that the meeting and alliance of the two monarchs meant that defeat of the French was now a foregone conclusion - which explains why the event appears to have generated considerable interest in Basel. The editors of VD16 (among others) also believe that Gengenbach also wrote a song, *Novarralied*, about the battle of Novarra. As neither song was printed by Gengenbach it

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4 Gengenbach’s contribution to this genre is discussed in the last chapter. These sort of pieces were just starting to be called ‘*Zeitungen*’. Weller reproduces a piece similar to Gengenbach’s *Empfang* that was published in Nuremberg at the same time: ‘Newe gezeytung ausz Romische Kaiserlicher Maiestat vnd des Konigs von Engelandt Here vor Terebona in Bickhardia’, in *Die erste deutsche Zeitungen 1505-1599*, ed. by Emil Weller (Tübingen: Laupp, 1872), pp.22-26.

5 Köhler MF: No.933/2327.
seems unlikely that he wrote them, though in style and content they were similar to a poem about the battle of the Adda (1509), Adda-Schlacht, that he had published and possibly written a year or more earlier.

II. WELSCH FLUSZ AND ALT EYDGNOSZ

Gengenbach’s first drama, Welsch Flusz, was printed shortly after the events at Dijon in September 1513 and he reprinted it only a few weeks later, so it must have found a strong resonance among the reading public. The word Fluss in German can mean river or it can also refer to a game of cards. After an introductory narration the second part is indeed a card game between the various characters representing the countries active in Italian-welsch-politics. The punning heading, ‘Hie vermerck das spil’ followed by some rudimentary stage directions strongly indicate that it was intended for performance.

Shortly after came another play/dialogue, Alt Eydgnosz, which features Swiss discussions with their ally Henry VIII and it also portrays Emperor Maximilian still opposed to the French, so it is likely to have been written and printed in Spring 1514 (because he changed sides in 1514 as his grandson was to marry Louis XII’s daughter). Alt Eydgnosz was conceivably written for carnival performance before it was printed.

The two pieces, Alt Eydgnosz and Welsch Flusz, contain many of the same characters as each other debating the Italian political situation. Both are short: Alt Eydgnosz is the longer of the two with 373 lines compared with 284, and is much the clearer and more readily understandable in its references to events. Both are structured in the same way: there is a narrative introduction followed by a succession of characters addressing the audience and occasionally speaking to the central character. There are seven characters common to both plays, representing the major powers who were actively engaged in

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6 Götze defines it as ‘Sequens im Kartenspiel ‘flößen’’: Alfred Götze, Frühneuhochdeutsches Glossar, 2nd edn. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1930), p.87. In the play Gengenbach renames the game the powers are playing as flüßliß. He plays on the word Fluss, particularly in lines 137-43, but there is no obvious reference within the text to a specific river.
Italian politics at the time: the Pope, the French King, the Emperor, the English King, Venice, the Duke of Milan and a Swiss (Eydgnosz). The Alt Eydgnosz has only one additional character; the jung Eydgnosz. By contrast Welsch Flusz has several additional players - two popes rather than one (Alexander and Julius), the King of Spain, the Bishoff von Wallisz (Cardinal Schinner), a representative of Mantua, ‘Der von Greyg’ (Geyerz), the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, and Charles of Burgundy.

The balance between the narrator’s introduction and the subsequent dialogue is inverted between the two plays. In Welsch Flusz the introduction, with its biblical and classical references, is more than two thirds of the total length and the subsequent dialogue is so compressed that fifteen of the seventeen characters in it have only three lines each to say. These three lines rhyme, so depart from the simple Knittelvers - rhyming couplets - of the introduction.

In Alt Eydgnosz, the introduction is structured like a song or ballad in five-line verses and is far more economical and comprehensible. Factors which make it more easily understood include: the elimination of most biblical and classical references; the attempt to develop a real dialogue between the characters which is more successful; and the audience is given far more information about the different players’ relationships with the Eydgnosz character. So, although the initial conception of Welsch Flusz as a portrayal of an imaginary game of cards between the powers is much more ambitious and full of dramatic possibilities, the final result is the more primitive and less successful.

The similarities between the thematic content of the two pieces make it tempting to speculate that Alt Eydgnosz was a revised version of Welsch Flusz - early on in Alt Eydgnosz there is a close similarity to the first lines of Welsch Flusz. First, Welsch Flusz:

*Welcher wil sin in disem spyl
Der darff wol bruchen wißheit vyl
Dz in der fluß nit vberyl.*

[p.Ai’].

*Flußliß heiß ich ein nüwe spyl
Dariñ brucht man der vntrew vyl
Von dem ich ein wenig sagen wyl.*

[p.Aii’].
And *Alt Eydgnoz*:

Wer zweien herren dienē wil  
Der darff das er brauch wyßheit vyl  
Dar zū vyl clūger sinne  
Das spil sich hat gar bald vmbgwend  
Vnd steckt er allein dar inne.

[p.Ai”]

Here too is an echo on the theme of ‘zwytracht’ which was in *der Bundschuh*, and a new idea in *Alt Eydgnoz* of ‘wjßheit’ - wisdom - that is developed at some length. But it is betrayal that is the dominant theme that recurs throughout both pieces. Gengenbach puts much of the blame down to money, as for example in this passage from *Welsch Flusz*:

Kein heimlich gelt wurd nit genon  
Dañ es verderbet lyb vnd seel  
Uñ bringt mäch biderman in quel  
Durch semlich niet zū aller zyt  
Werde betrogen gar vyl leüt  
Vergißt auch manch man sinaer eer  
Der dar zū nimmer kummen wer  
Also daß gelt manchen verblendt  
Das er sich und die sinen geschendt  
(pp.Aiii”-[Aii”)].

The same theme of French treachery reappears through *Alt Eydgnoz* - for example the character of that name tells the Pope that:

Der frantzoB har mir verbeissen vyl  
Der er doch keiß nit halten wil  
Er bat ein falschen grunde  
Dar ich wol innen worden bin  
Vor Dysion in burgunde  
[p.Aiv”].

Later, the character of the *alt Eydgnoz* again warns of the corrupting power of money and urging his son *jung Eydgnoz* to stay at home with the wife and children:

Ach du mein aller liebster son  
Kriegen geyt ein bösen lon  
Bin ich offi innen worden  
Durch gold und gelt in kurtzer zyt  
Ist mancher biderb man gestorben  
[p.Biii”].
The victims of the treachery and betrayals arising from bribery and secret diplomacy are the soldiers whose lives are lost fighting for victories that are then sold away.

Gengenbach probably wrote more about soldiers than about any other social group and as has been noted Gengenbach himself may well have served in one of Basel's campaign contingents. A number of Swiss writers and artists of the period did some soldiering - it was a reputable activity - even though the Swiss military contingents were not defending their own Cantons against external aggression, but rather were engaged in mercenary service for foreign paymasters such as the papacy and the Duchy of Milan in pursuit of Italian political goals.

Gengenbach's picture of soldiers is not a hostile one on the whole, although he regarded non-Swiss soldiers as a lower form of life to the Eydgenossen. This is apparent, for example, from his later portrayal of the 'Lantzknecht', a mercenary from southern Germany, in Der Nollhart (1517). Notwithstanding the warning quote above from Alt Eydgnosz, he does not really discuss the negative aspects of war in these earliest plays. There are signs of a shift in his attitudes in his next play written a year later, X Alter, where a young Swiss is warned that war can make wives and children into widows and orphans (lines 320-25).

In contrast to Gengenbach's close interest Sebastian Brant had nothing at all to say about soldiers and their behaviour. Although Basel was not as deeply embroiled in military campaigns during the 1490's, it is inconceivable in such a relatively small city that Brant did not have contact with people who had served as mercenaries. With the dependency of the Swiss economy and the employment of Swiss men in mercenary warfare one might have expected references to it in Das Narrenschiff.

Brant did have views about war, however, which were much more ambivalent than Gengenbach's. On the one hand he wrote an entirely uncritical account of one battle, in the leaflet entitled, Von der erlichen schlacht der Tutschen by Salyn (1493), and in his

\[6\] Discussed in chapter 1, Ia (pp.31-32).
leaflet, *Von der Vereinigung der Könige und Anschlag an die Turken* (1502), he urged the Christian kings to attack the Turks to the glory of God. On the other hand, in chapter 46 of *Das Narrenschiff*, 'Vō dē gwalt der narrē' (pages 112-15), Brant condemned the power politics of the nobility who were too focussed on money and the irresponsible violence of their armies. In chapter 56, 'Von end des gewalttes', he attacked the reliance of the powers on force to achieve one's ends. *Das Narrenschiff* was written at the time of the first French invasion of Italy which involved eight thousand Swiss mercenaries, an invasion which epitomised for Brant the disastrous disunity of Christendom and breakdown of social order. In the letter written later to Peutinger, quoted above on page 64, he said:

Is there any wonder, then, that our society is thrown into wars and civil strife? Like headstrong children who learn nothing without the rod we seek war in peace, and peace in war. [...] How often in this country of ours have we seen wicked rulers wrecking the peace and order of the land! How often have our towns and our citizens been ruined by strife! Armour is more suitable to us than the toga; we are safer on the open field than in the bed chamber.*

III. THE SWISS IN ITALY

Both *Welsch Flusz* and *Alt Eydgnsz* presented the principal political relationships in Italy rather than the day to day progress of the Confederacy's troops. In particular, Gengenbach provided a justification for the Confederate interventions in Italy, so the plays serve a primarily ideological purpose. The nature of this propaganda can be judged by examining Gengenbach's portrayal in the light of the historical facts and events.

For any country to be prepared to fight a war lasting years one would expect very concrete self-interest to be at the heart of its motivation, and the Swiss were no

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7 Heitz, leaflets nos. 5 and 21.


9 Chapter 2, p.65, fn.40. This section of the letter appears in Strauss, p.226.
exception. Self-interest can be identified operating at several levels. For the individual soldier there was plunder and excellent pay; for the political leaders who sent them there were lavish pay-offs; for some of the individual cantons there was new territory to be gained; for the merchants there were trade routes to be secured; and at a Confederate level there were the encroaching power of the French on the Swiss to be opposed, and gain of greater economic and political power from the control of Lombardy. The most interesting problem that historians find hard to agree on is the extent of the imperialist ambitions of the Confederacy as a whole and whether the Federal Diet was interested in outright conquest in Italy.

Based on information gathered by Hermann Varnhagen, Peter Pfrunder describes the economic motive for Reisläuferei:

Feldzüge sind attraktiv; der Monatssold beträgt zu dieser Zeit für den gewöhnlichen Knecht viereinhalb Gulden [...] - kein schlechter Verdienst, verglichen mit den Tages- oder Jahreslöhnen der Zeit. So kommt der einfache Mann auf Feldzügen in kurzer Zeit zu viel baren Geld, ganz abgesehen davon, dass die Hoffnung auf zusätzliche Beute wohl manch einen vom grossen Glück und vom sozialen Aufstieg träumen lässt.¹¹

To try and get the amount of mercenary pay in proportion, Fischer reports that the city council estimated that it would cost them 2s a week to look after an adult elderly person and this was somewhat later, in 1526 in a period of rising prices, but one guilder on this minimal basis would have lasted more than 10 weeks. The strong attraction of mercenary service caused Swiss men all too frequently to enter foreign service without the permission of their canton and this had been made a federal crime in 1503. In Alt Eydgnoz the narrator warns against such behaviour [pages Ai[i - Aiii], and it can be


¹¹ Peter Pfrunder, Pfaffen, Ketzer und Totenfresser (Zurich: Chronos, 1989), p.16.


¹³ 5 pounds = 100s = 4 guilders. i.e. A guilder was approximately 25s. For a detailed discussion: Josef Rosen, Verwaltung und Ungeld in Basel 1360-1535, Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte Beihefte 77 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1986), pp.36-38.
read as a speech against all mercenary service, even when it had been sanctioned by the canton. As a counterpoint to this, later in the piece [on p.Biii], the jung Eydgnoz points out that there is more to the whole thing than just money - honour and prestige are at stake while the alternative would be to sit bored at home.

It was not only the confederate soldier who was paid well. City councillors who agreed to the despatch of contingents in support of this or that paymaster would receive generous pay-offs as well. Taking secret bribes had also become such a problem by 1503 that the Federal diet passed a law forbidding individuals from taking pensions and gifts from foreign powers. This did not stop the practice, of course, and in 1513 there was popular ferment in Berne, Solothurn and Lucerne against councillors who had supported the French and taken pensions from them. It was so intense that some were executed. This was one of the sources of betrayal that Gengenbach was undoubtedly referring to in the two dramatic dialogues. In two nicely ironic verses in Alt Eydgnoz the Frenchman cannot understand why the Swiss is so suspicious and hostile towards him - after he had been paid so well by the French and then the Swiss had stolen Milan from them:

Eydgenoß wie hab ichs vmb dich ûrschuldt
Das ich verlorë hab din huld
Das düt mich wunder nemen
Ich hab dir doch vyl gütz gethon
wiltu es nit erkennen

Ich hab dir geben groß pension
Vnd manche grosse schenk gethon
Von mir hast groß güt vberkumen
Das hat alssandt geholfen nit
Meyland hast mir ingnumen.

[p.Aiv].

There was a Pensionssturm in Basel in 1521 when some councillors were deselected and disgraced for the same crime. Relatively modest payments to the city council of Basel are listed for the years around 1513 but after 1516, when the Confederacy had signed a treaty with France, the volume of payments to the city increased very sharply.\(^{14}\)

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Walter Schaufelberger argues that in addition to mercenary self-interest the security of the Alpine valley routes into Italy were also a crucial motive:

Hinsichtlich der eidgenössischen Beteiligung müssen grundsätzlich zwei Interessenkreise unterschieden werden. Einerseits verfolgten eidgenössische Orte machtpolitische Ziele in den südlichen Alpentalern und darüber hinaus. In diesem engeren Kreis fand die bisherige Südpolitik gegen Eschental, Tessin und Veltin ihre Fortsetzung. In einem weiteren Kreis traten die Eidgenossen als Söldner im Dienste fremder Herren auf.\(^\text{15}\)

Denis regards the security of the southern valleys not so much as an issue for the Confederacy or for entrepreneurial interests as a more parochial cantonal one:

Il est de fait que les cantons de l'Est et notamment Uri, n'ont cessé, depuis le milieu du XIV\(^\text{e}\) siècle, de briguer les vallées de la Haute Italie, tentant de les obtenir tantôt par la force, tantôt en traitant avec le duc de Milan. La maitrîse du trafic des Alpes vers le sud est leur préoccupation majeure.\(^\text{16}\)

In the pursuit of controlling trade routes Swiss domination of Lombardy was obviously logical in that it served to keep the French away from one of Switzerland’s southern borders. Denis thinks that Swiss motives were somewhat confused - certainly they were earning money as mercenaries and fighting against the French, but there was more to it than that and on the next page she says:

[][...], les Suisses semblent jouer un rôle de premier plan, quoiqu’il soit impossible d’en définir les contours précis. Officiellement, ils sont engagés comme mercenaires au service d'une coalition antifrançaise, chargés de la protection du nouveau Duc, Maximilien Sforza. [...] Mais on peut aussi admettre que - forts de leur puissance militaire - ils dictent leurs conditions à la coalition qui, elle, n’est forte que de leur collaboration.

Gengenbach has nothing to say in either play about the trade routes. Indeed he has


nothing to say of any aspect of Swiss self-interest with regard to Milan and Lombardy, but rather the Duke of Milan is portrayed in *Alt Eydgnosz* asking for continued help against France as he cannot trust anyone else:

Darumb ich von gantzem hertzen bit
Auß dinë schirm so laß mich nit
Dañ ich sunst wayß kein fründe
Der mich jetzund beschirmen mag
Vor dem frantzößchen kunge.

[p.Bi³]

Gengenbach explains ten lines earlier that the Venetians were to be distrusted because they had allied themselves previously with the Turks - an act of *groß verräterey* - great treachery. But this was as nothing compared to the profound distrust of the French that went back a long way and had been reinforced at Dijon. Since before the French had first sent an army into Italy in 1494 many Swiss had been wary of French ambitions. In *Welsch Flusz* Gengenbach explains that the Swiss had been sucked into the game by the Pope in fear of French ambitions in Naples [p.Aiii⁴]. Gengenbach does not see the need to fear the ambitions of Emperor Maximilian and the Hapsburgs - the recent Swabian War (1499 -1501) appears to have been of little consequence to Gengenbach.

There had been an ongoing debate in the Confederacy about which alliances would benefit the Swiss most. The dominant faction, which included the majority on Basel council that Gengenbach supported, were in favour of allying with the Emperor and the Pope. The best known advocate for this cause was Cardinal Schinner of Sion, who appears as the *Bischoff vō Walisz* in *Welsch Flusz*, but who certainly did not have it all one way. The French were better payers and had been allies of the Swiss until 1509. They served as a counterbalance to Imperial aspirations to reintegrate the Confederacy into the Empire. In Sion itself, the pro-French faction were strong enough in 1511 to force Schinner to flee to Rome, and in a world of intrigue and shifting alliances the Emperor and the French King actually became allies themselves for a short time. But in late 1511 the Swiss Diet despatched troops on a campaign known as the *Kaltwinterzug*, and again on the *Pavierzug* of Spring 1512, that virtually cleared the French out of Lombardy.
Gengenbach clearly did not like the French at all, propagating the view that their perfidy was the main cause of the war. In Alt Eydgnosz he warns the Pope that peace with the French king is impossible:

Aber mit dem küng von fränkenrych
Do sond ir wissen sicherlich
Kein friden mit im wil haben
Er hat gar oft betrogen mich
Das müß im bringen schaden
[p.Aii"].

But support for the Pope is not unqualified. In Welsch Flusz the narrator warns the Pope that he will be left standing alone because of 'groß symony' - corruption in the Church [page Aiv']. Here indeed is an echo of Sebastian Brant's warnings in Das Narrenschiff about the dangers facing the papacy from within, in chapters 99, 'Vö abgang des gloubë', and 103, 'Der Endkrist', in particular. This is not a singular example as Gengenbach was also ambivalent about the papacy elsewhere.17

Two Italian commentators at the time were Machiavelli and his correspondent, Vettori, who discussed Swiss motives in an exchange of letters that summer of 1513. Vettori thought that Swiss motives for fighting in Italy were pretty straightforward: 'for them it suffices to rake in booty, pocket gold and return to their own land'.18 He did not think they were capable of anything more sophisticated, as they were not sufficiently united among themselves. Machiavelli on the other hand was much more suspicious and fearful, believing that they intended to make territorial gains far beyond immediate security adjustments to their borders. Machiavelli wrote:

As to the Swiss being contented to make a raid and then take themselves off, let me pray you not to believe it, nor encourage others to build upon such notions [...] at first it was sufficient for the Swiss to defend themselves from all would-be oppressors; then they gave their service for hire, the which inspired them with an

17 The other early political poem produced and possibly written by Gengenbach was Mannlehen (1511-13), an ironic view of the Council of Basel 1439 which had been a crucial event in the effort to consolidate the Papacy.

ambitious desire of ruling on their own account. They have now entered Lombardy under colour of re-establishing the Duke, but in fact are the rulers. At the first opportunity they will seize their pikes and act as masters, and then they will scour Italy.\footnote{Villari, ii, pp.58-59.}

Machiavelli’s attitude to the Swiss was contradictory, for the very qualities that made the small, lightly-equipped Swiss armies such a formidable threat were qualities that he expressed admiration for in \textit{The Art of War}, with their more than passing resemblance to the armies of republican Rome.\footnote{N. Machiavelli, \textit{The Art of War}, trans by Ellis Farneworth, Introduction by Neal Wood (London: 1775, repr. New York: Da Capo, 1965), p.35, 61, etc. The text is based on \textit{Arte della guerra e scritti politici minori} (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1961).} As for the papacy, whose funds the Swiss gladly accepted, Machiavelli saw it as a source of division and opposed to every principle of good government:

\begin{quote}
Even outside her special dominions, the Church, with the aid of her religious authority, scattered disorder and confusion everywhere, preventing throughout Italy and obstructing throughout Europe the formation of any nationality.\footnote{Villari, ii, p. 112.}
\end{quote}

Southern describes Julius II’s megalomania:

\begin{quote}
(He) kept alive the papal claim to pull down and raise up princes throughout Christendom. He called in the universal power of the pope to support his Italian policies, and at his death left behind him the draft of a bull depriving Louis XII of France of his kingdom as ‘the enemy of the Holy Roman Church […]’, and conferring both the kingdom and title of Most Christian King on Henry VIII of England in return for his help in the pope’s wars.\footnote{R.W Southern, \textit{Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages}, Pelican History of the Church, 2 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p.150.}
\end{quote}

Gengenbach and Brant both saw the papacy as pivotal to the survival of Christendom from the external and internal threats that it faced, so Swiss support for the Pope therefore made sense to them in those selfless, even idealistic terms. The fact that France was seen as destabilising the papacy was reason for Swiss antagonism to the perfidious French. The two writers chose to ignore narrower material self-interest, preferring to
appeal to higher motives. It makes, after all, better propaganda.

For two years 1513-1515, the Duchy of Milan was under Swiss Protection, but by the end of 1515 Swiss military involvement in Italy was effectively over and neither the Swiss nor the Pope had apparently much to show for all their military efforts. Swiss gains from the Italian campaigns may have been modest, but overall they had made significant advances since the beginning of the century: above all with the admission to full cantonal status of Basel itself and Schaffhausen in 1501, then in the southern passes at the Treaty of Arona in 1503, the acquisition of Neuchatel in 1512, of Appenzell in 1513 and the accession of Mühlhausen in 1515.²³

IV. GENGEBACH AND NATIONALISM

In these first two dramas Gengenbach explained some of the causes and the course of the Italian campaigns, and the involvement of the Confederacy. He also addressed the need for effective controls over the recruitment and deployment of Swiss mercenaries if the Confederacy was to be a political and military power. Theatre here was playing a highly political role, agitating, making propaganda in support of Basel council’s war policy. Theatre, printed texts and their accompanying woodcuts provided a unique means for the city’s ruling elite to reach out and mobilise a popular audience independent of whatever might have been preached from the pulpit. The papacy’s ambitious policies in Italy under Pope Julius II did not enjoy unconditional support as Gengenbach made plain.

Gengenbach’s two dramas supported the majority political position of the Basel council who favoured participation in the campaigns in Italy. It is probably a mistake, however, to regard him as an apologist; when for example the council later agreed to an alliance with the French in 1516, Gengenbach’s hostility to the French did not abate. So, in *Der Nollhart* (1517), the French are criticised and he continued to publicly support the

Emperor enthusiastically at least until 1521.

What is of particular interest about these two dramas is the Eydgnosz character. There was no such thing as an ‘Eydgnosz’, as the Eydgenossenschaft - the Swiss Confederacy - did not have individual membership or citizenship. Soldiers and others on the business of the Confederacy remained citizens of their own canton and subject to the discipline of their cantonal council. When Holbein, for example, travelled to England he remained a citizen of Basel and applied to Basel council for leave of absence, and continued to do so on a regular basis. So what did the concept of an ‘Eydgnosz’ convey to an audience? Can he be regarded as an embodiment of ‘Confederateness’, of ‘Swissness’, of some idea of national feeling? Meyer believed that Gengenbach did express a national consciousness in Welsch Flusz, and in the Fastnachtspiel of 1517, Der Nollhart:


Prietzel believes that Gengenbach’s interest in the Confederation was over by 1515. She says: ‘Eine eigenständige eidgenössische Geschichte und Zeitgeschichte wird nach 1514 bei Pamphilus Gengenbach nicht mehr thematisiert.’\footnote{Prietzel, AGB, p.321.} Certainly the theme became less important for Gengenbach, although this is more likely to date from the humiliating Swiss defeat at Merignano in 1515, the impact of which is discussed in chapter 5, Ila. However, Prietzel’s position is hard to defend as Der Nollhart not only includes a Swiss character, der Eidgenosse, but even the dedication on the front page of the play reads:

Gespilt zü lob dem Römschen reich
Eyr eydgnoschafft deßselben gleich
Das sy dest bewaren seich.


\footnote{Prietzel, AGB, p.321.}
Hobsbawm expresses a widely accepted understanding of Nationalism when he says: ‘Nations [...] are not, as Bagehot thought, ‘as old as history’. The modern sense of the word is no older than the eighteenth century, give or take the odd predecessor.’ This begs the question as to whether the Swiss can be regarded as one of the ‘odd predecessors’. Hobsbawm argues that one feature of nationalism is the urge to conquer territory, to expand, and for a few years the Swiss did indeed pursue expansion into Lombardy before lapsing back into local politics and religious division.

It is interesting that a popular carnival play of this period, the Urner Tellenspiel of 1512 celebrates William Tell. The play draws a parallel between Uri and the republic of Rome and it is from this time that one could date the emergence of Tell as a symbol of the foundation of Swiss political independence. Here are echoes of Machiavelli, but from the side of the militarily competent, republican Swiss that he feared. Urner Tellenspiel was the first of a new type of political play that was special to the Swiss Confederacy, a theme which is explored below in section VI. The national theme is also considered again in the discussion about Ulrich von Hutten in chapter 6, 1c (page 165).

V. THE FASTNACHTSPIEL TRADITION

Quite when these secular political plays would have been performed is a puzzle because of the lack of performance information. It was noted in section I above that although

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28 Given that Gengenbach ignored the Tell story one must assume that it had not achieved anything like the popular interest that it did in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, epitomised in Schiller’s play.

29 Felix Platter’s Tagebuch describes fourteen theatrical performances taking place in the 1540s while he was a child, including a youthful performance of Gengenbach’s X Alter. None of them was apparently at carnival, though two performances in summer
Gengenbach does describe *Welsch Flusz* as a play, it is not clear from the timing of its publication or from other evidence that it was written for carnival. *Alt Eydgnosz*, on the other hand, was published in early 1514 so is perhaps the more likely of the two to have been performed as a *Fastnachtspiel*. Carnival - *Fastnacht* - was the obvious and possibly only opportunity and the plays share the simple structure of earlier *Fastnachtspiele*: the *Reihenspiel* form with no plot, the *Knittelvers*, the brevity, and the lack of any meaningful division into Acts.

The publication of these two dramatic pieces were part of an important development in the history of carnival theatre, a break with the so-called Nuremberg tradition. In presenting actual political events to the public in a dramatic form, Gengenbach was using a new way to reach a wide popular audience. There had been politics in *Fastnachtspiel*, but of a very general nature on such topics as class distinction and anti-clericalism. Carnival had always had a political dimension as it was a time when the world was turned upside down, when the nature of authority was under intense scrutiny, when it was mocked and occasionally, directly challenged. DuBruck, for example, has noted more than twenty fifteenth century carnival plays that presented a negative image of the clergy. A long-lived popular play of the period was *Das Spiel von König Salomon und Markolfo* (1490) by Hans Folz. Markolf is a peasant fool who mimics Solomon's wisdom and mocks the pretensions of the king, demonstrating that Solomon is no wiser or

1546 were in public; 'Susanna' in the *Fischmarkt* (p.83) and 'Conversion of St. Paul' in the *Kornmarkt* (p.82): Felix Platter, *Tagebuch: Lebensbeschreibung 1536-1567*, ed. by Valentin Lötscher (Basel and Stuttgart: Schwabe, 1987). Ladurie has combined the various entries to make a short narrative about theatre in the 1540s in Basel: Ladurie, *Beggar*, pp.93-100.


31 DuBruck, p.46.
socially superior than he is.32

Gengenbach not only presented contemporary political and religious affairs on stage, but in five of his seven plays he portrayed real, contemporary political characters. The Pope, the German Emperor, the King of France, and even Henry VIII do not appear simply as role representatives, but as the actual individuals whose thoughts and deeds were being represented and discussed on stage for the first time. This was a bold step for the theatre, a new form of travesty. Perhaps most shocking would have been the portrayal of the pope (who appears in four of the seven dramas) and the stage discussion of the Word of God.

Michael Bristol documents the opposition generated by quoting the bible in a play (as Gengenbach's characters sometimes did). Many felt that: 'it can only mimic and therefore diminish'.33 Because the Pope, unlike the Emperor, had his very own and very powerful local enforcer in Basel in the person of the bishop, Gengenbach was running a significant risk with these plays, even at carnival time. Not only divine authority was undermined:

An actor is not just someone whose speech is 'dissembling': the deeper problem is that he is most valued for his ability to dissemble convincingly. Because of this, the theater may indeed be the site of a diabolical pedagogy, a 'school of abuse' or at least a setting in which authority may be radically challenged.34

Perhaps because the two early Gengenbach plays did break new ground there has certainly been some confusion among the critics over whether to call them Fastnachtspiele. Goedeke, for example, only describes three of Gengenbach's later plays as Fastnachtspiele - X Alter (1515), Der Nollhart (1517) and die Gouchmat (1519).35 He classifies Alte Eydgnosz as an 'Historische Gedicht' and Welsch Flusz as a 'Büchlein';


34 Bristol, p.113.

why he makes a distinction between them when the content and the structure are rather similar is not clear. Bartsch,36 and, more recently, Van Abbé agree with Goedeke's classification of the three later plays as Fastnachtspiele, but Van Abbé adds Die Totenfresser as a possible fourth.37 Baechtold and Van Abbé did find evidence that the three had actually been performed at carnival whereas no evidence of performances has been found for Welsch Flusz, Alt Eydgnosz, or indeed for Die Totenfresser.38 Because these critics fail to make clear their criteria for defining a Fastnachtspiel, one suspects that Goedeke, Bartsch and Van Abbé each based their categorisation of the three later plays on Gengenbach's own statements in the opening lines of the plays, that they were for performance on Herrenfastnacht.

Catholy takes a 'purist' position, denying that any of Gengenbach's plays were Fastnachtspiele as they did not concern themselves with Fastnacht. He placed them in a category of his own (group c), which he defines as follows:

c). weltliche Spiele die zwar zur Fn. aufgeführt wurden und auch meist als 'Fnspp.' bezeichnet werden, in Wirklichkeit aber mit der Gattung nichts zu tun haben. Sie besitzen keine Verbindung mit Fn.-Unterhaltungen und unterscheiden sich deshalb in Form, Inhalt und Funktion vom Fnsp.39

Brett-Evans is not sure if they would have been performed at carnival, but he did not exclude the possibility.40 He argues that it is a complex problem trying to define what was or what was not a Fastnachtspiel because contemporary use of the term was not

36 Bartsch, pp.566-68.
37 Van Abbé, Drama, p.31.
38 Baechtold, Geschichte, pp.57-58 (footnotes), reports performances of X Alter and Der Nollhart but not of Die Gouchmat. Van Abbé reports a performance of Die Gouchmat in1516 (Drama, p.124), but neither author gives their original source. This is very frustrating, especially in the latter case as most critics believe that Die Gouchmat was not written until 1519!
39 Catholy, p.79.
systematic. This meant that all sorts of plays got described as *Fastnachtspiele*. Catholy believes that this occurred because the carnival tradition in the south-west was losing its distinctive nature in relation to other forms:

In dem so die zur Fn. aufgeführten Stücke denselben Zielen dienen wie die außerhalb der Fn. gespielten Dramen, ist es leicht erklärlich, daß diese 'Fnsp.' sich in keiner Weise formal von der übrigen Dramatik der Zeit unterscheiden.

Catholy wants to emphasise the sharpness of the break with Nuremberg, represented by Gengenbach: ‘Seine eigenen in Basel verfaßten Fnsp. zeigen jedoch keine deutliche Verbindung zu Nürnberg: [...]’. Wolfgang Michael is not convinced and points to Gengenbach’s links with Nuremberg, particularly his apprenticeship there under Anton Koberger when Gengenbach must have seen and even been involved in performances. Catholy is mistaken to ignore the continuities and links. It is argued in the next chapter that two of Gengenbach’s plays, *Alter* and *Die Gouchmat*, deal with themes central to the tradition, in particular with sex and its regulation. Subsequent discussions will examine anti-clericalism, another traditional theme, in two other plays, *Der Nollhart* and *Die Totenfresser*. Catholy reaches the provocative conclusion that if the plays had changed then so had their function: ‘Damit mußte notwendig auch die Funktion der Fnsp. ein andere werden.’ Unfortunately he does not explore this, because the function of the *Fastnachtspiel* was indeed in the process of change.

VI. POLITISCHE MORALITÄTEN

Some of the first stirring of secular theatre in the German-speaking world was in

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41 Brett-Evans, ii, p.143.

42 Catholy, p.77.

43 Catholy, p.75.


45 Catholy, p.76.
Switzerland in the fourteenth century, with the Mai-Herbst-Spiel, along with Des Entkrist Vasnacht, a play thought to have been first performed in Zurich in 1354. Nevertheless there had been no consistent tradition of carnival or other secular plays in Switzerland before the beginning of the sixteenth century such as there had been in Nuremberg and other cities.

Then between 1512 and 1527 a small, unique group of plays appeared in Switzerland, which included Gengenbach’s seven dramatic pieces; the Urner Tellenspiel (1512); Von den alten und jungen Eidgenossen by Balthasar Spross (1513); Niklaus Manuel’s two plays, Vom Papst und seiner Priesterschaft (Die Totenfresser) in 1523 and Der Ablasskrämer in 1524 or 1525, and finally Utz Eckstein’s Reichstag (1526).

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46 Frühe Schweizerspiele, ed. by Friederike Christ-Kutter (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1963).


48 The William Tell theme had in fact previously appeared in a fifteenth century play called Etter Heini. Jakob Ruf later reworked the Urner Tellenspiel as Das neue Tellenspiel. The 1545 edition was republished in: Baechtold, Schweizerische Schauspiele, 1, pp.57-136.


Another play can be added called the ‘Gumpist’ Spiel, that appeared in Basel in 1513 printed by Nicholas Lamparter which Goedeke and the editors of VD16 think was written by Gengenbach.\(^{53}\) It used the same motif as *Welsch Flusz* of the card game being played between the powers. The national representatives do not take over the dialogue until the second half; the first is entirely taken up by a series of ordinary people, including a ‘Helvetius’ rather than an ‘Eidgenosse’. Schanze says of it:

> Es steht gleichrangig neben dem ‘Urner Tellenspiel’ und dem Zürcher ‘Spiel von den alten und jungen Eidgenossen’. Als Beitrag Basels bildet es den Anfang einer Tradition, die sich unmittelbar in den Spielen Gengenbachs fortsetzt […]\(^{34}\)

Schanze does not reject the possibility that it was by Gengenbach, but like other commentators is puzzled why Gengenbach would not have also printed it if he had written it.

The whole group of plays can best be described by the term *politische Moralitäten*\(^{55}\). Brett-Evans says of them:

> Im starken Gegensatz dazu sind aber ganz andersartige Fastnachtspiele anzutreffen, darunter vor allem die ‘politische Moralitäten’ aus der Schweiz, die einen durchaus ernsthaften Ton anschlagen, indem sie brennende Zeitfragen, nicht zuletzt wichtige Angelegenheiten von Staat und Kirche ‘auf die Bühne’ bringen.\(^{56}\)

The first, the *Urner Tellenspiel*, appeared a year before Gengenbach published *Welsch F...* Under the title ‘Combiszt’.


\(^{55}\) Sidler uses the term *historisches Tagesschrifttum*, which suggests the plays were no longer concerned with morality. I would argue that they were indeed about political morality and highly appropriate for the celebration of morality/immorality that was carnival: Victor Sidler, *Wechselwirkungen zwischen Theater und Geschichte untersucht anhand des schweizerischen Theaters vor Beginn der Reformation* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Zurich, 1973), p.18. Bartsch called them *Tendenzstücke* which is equally too bland: Bartsch, p.567.

\(^{56}\) Brett-Evans, ii, p.143.
Flusz. Much closer in content to Gengenbach’s two early plays is *Von den alten und jungen Eidgenossen*, believed to have been written by Balthasar Spross in Zurich in late 1513, only two or three months after *Welsch Flusz* and a month or so before *Alt Eydgnosz*. It was untitled in the manuscript and it was Bächttold who gave it its name. It is an anti-French polemic which scorns the French nobility and praises the Confederacy, that has no overlords and is characterised as a peasant Republic. The Prologue introduces it as a play for the New Year:

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nun ist iezmal die zyett kan /
das iederman thüt fröüwd han /
Sich ergezen ganz vnnd gar /
gegen disem glückhafften nüwen iar /57
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Prior to Brett-Evans, Friederike Christ-Kutter also applies the term ‘*politische Moralität*. She starts from a similar position to Catholy, arguing that *Von den alten und jungen Eidgenossen* could not have been performed at carnival because the content is different from that of traditional plays. There are no stock figures, there is live political debate, and there is a lack of comedy. Christ-Kutter believes that Spross wrote this play for his school students (hence the stage directions in Latin) and not for carnival when it would have been performed by apprentices or guilds-men.

Christ-Kutter believes that the origins of *Von den alten und jungen Eidgenossen* are in part from France, where secular plays had been dealing with political questions since the first half of the fifteenth century, and in part reflect the impact of Humanist political ideas. Spross spent time in Paris on diplomatic missions where, she argues, his theatre experiences influenced him. She takes a number of the *Moralitäten* by three particular French writers and analyses how they relate to Spross’s play.58 No other critic has explored this fascinating possibility of a French connection. She indicates however, that this play might have had relatively little impact on the Swiss *politische Moralitäten* that followed. She believes that there are minimal signs of any influence from Spross on

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57 Thomke, p.60, lines 5-8.

Gengenbach and convincingly details some of the significant differences between them. In his history of Swiss literature published in 1933 Emil Ermatinger argues that Spross’s play led the way, not the earlier Urner Tellenspiel: ‘[Spross] hat mit seinem Stück dem späten Fastnachtspiel den Weg gewiesen und dessen Form vorgezeichnet’. Contrary to Christ-Kutter, he argues: ‘Es scheint denn auch von Sproß’ Stück eine gerade Beziehung zu Gengenbachs Spiel von dem ‘Alten Eidgenossen’ (1514) zu führen’. This seems, however, very unlikely as Welsch Flusz was written two or three months before the Spross play and its links with Alt Eydgnosz have been shown.

Van Abbé puts the work of Spross and Gengenbach into a broader context of change in dramatic forms across the German-speaking lands between the fifteenth century and the sixteenth, the chief long-term change being: ‘the shift in emphasis from devotional performance of Passion Plays to homiletic performance of biblical plays.’ In between there was a gap:

This change was not a simple one; it took place after a cessation of Passion Play activity. There was a gap and then the Passion plays were replaced by a temporary amalgamation of humanist quasi-classical drama and ‘vulgar’ Shrovetide comedy stemming immediately from medieval forms. This transition stage occurred all over Germany but was more strongly marked in the south-west than anywhere else.

Considering the change in secular drama that the politische Moralitäten represent, there has been relatively little discussion about the influences and the possible causes of this phenomenon. It can hardly be a coincidence that the appearance of these Swiss plays coincided with a distinct shift in the Nuremberg tradition itself. Nuremberg Fastnachts spiele turned away from the raucous, earthy travesties of the fifteenth century whose last exponent, Hans Folz, died sometime around 1513. In their place came the

60 Ermatinger, p.137.
tamer and more moral works of writers like Hans Sachs, who wrote his first carnival play in 1517. Both in Nuremberg and in Switzerland, profanity was largely dispensed with, out went the crudity about sex and the scatology, out went the knockabout mockery and the irreverence of stock figures. Instead, more individually differentiated characters began to appear and the two-edged and ambivalent morality that had been the hallmark of carnival was replaced by clear moral messages, biblical and religious teaching.

There were occasional further examples of political plays, but not until quite a lot later, after 1538. From the late 1520's there is a convergence between Swiss carnival plays with those of Nuremberg and the new tradition subsequently survived indistinguishably in both areas until the early seventeenth century. After Gengenbach’s death Basel itself remained an important centre of Swiss drama throughout the whole period with the work of writers like Birck, Kolross, Boltz, and Israel.

In this intervening phase the play became a vehicle for public discussion of current affairs and, with the Reformation’s approach, controversial religious issues. Gengenbach’s Die Totenfresser (1522) is very special because it marks the first time that the theatre was specifically used as a vehicle for promoting demands for religious

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62 Tailby disagrees with this characterisation of Sachs: ‘[...] the generalisation remains valid that Sachs’s Fastnachtspiele were written for enjoyment rather than for the moral purpose which is too often alleged; this enjoyment linked to the portrayal of the topsy-turvy world of Shrovetide represents the essential strand which the Fastnachtspiele of Hans Sachs have retained from their antecedents in the fifteenth century’: John E. Tailby, ‘Hans Sachs and the Nuremberg Fastnachtspiel Traditions of the Fifteenth Century’, in Hans Sachs and Folk Theatre in the Late Middle Ages, ed. by Robert Aylett and Peter Skrine (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), pp. 187-95, p. 195. In the very next essay in the volume Aylett gives a detailed analysis that largely contradicts this: Robert Aylett, ‘Hans Sachs and Till Eulenspiegel: the Taming of the Crude,’ pp. 196-224. Beare suggests: ‘In his better plays he is not primarily animated by a strong moral purpose’: Mary Beare, Hans Sachs: Selections (Durham: Durham University, 1983), p.xciv.

63 It did not entirely disappear from Gengenbach’s plays. E.g. The Einsiedel in X Alter uses the word ‘arßloch’, suggesting that the old man has a skinning knife stuck up it: Goedeke, Gengenbach, p. 71, line 650.
reform. The arguments of the Catholic clergy are parodied and there is no semblance of subtlety in demolishing their position. This is a polemic aiming to explain what is wrong with present practices. Equally direct attacks on the Church occur in both Niklaus Manuel’s plays, Die Totenfresser (1523) and Der Ablaßkremer (1523). In the latter peasants assault and threaten to hang a cleric for selling indulgences - here the world of carnival is no longer symbolically being turned upside down but the people in this play are seen to take direct action to produce real change.

The links between these developments of carnival drama on the one hand and broader ideological shifts and social changes on the other have not been fully explored. At issue here is the relation between theatre and society. Augusto Boal, for example, argues that it is a direct relationship:

\[
\text{(the theatre) in particular, is determined by society much more stringently than the other arts, because of its immediate contact with the public and its greater power to convince.}\]

\[64\]

From this perspective the change in carnival theatre would reflect the political and social upheaval of the Reformation. Pfrunder has argued that the Reformation could hardly ignore carnival as carnival had too important a role in the social and political life of the city.\[65\] Indeed, carnival became the opportunity for popular direct action. In Basel, for example, after years of vacillation the council was forced by a gathering of some 800 armed citizens during Fastnacht 1529 to agree to a Reformation Ordinance and the Cathedral was subjected to an iconoclastic purge by the crowd. Wittenberg during Fastnacht 1522, provides another example. While Luther was still finding refuge in the Wartburg, the Town Church in his home town was likewise subjected to a popular

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It would be a mistake, however, to see the changes in *Fastnachtspiel* as being crudely contingent on the movement for change represented by the religious reform movement. We can see that this is the case because, for example, changes in *Fastnachtspiel* began before the Reformation became a recognisable public event from October 1517. But the origins of the Reformation and a wave of other social and political movements against traditional political and religious authority - the peasants’ risings, the demise of the Imperial Knights, and the struggle of the Guilds for urban political power - go back twenty or more years earlier. The spate of *Bundschuh* peasant risings began in 1493, Savonarola was burned to death in 1498.

If one takes the position that the new-style *Fastnachtspiele* were a response to an increasingly uncertain and disturbed world it explains the overarching theme of Moral Renewal that can be identified in the plays in general and in Gengenbach’s writings in particular. Violanta Werren-Uffer puts it like this:

> Zusammenfassend ist von Gengenbachs Theatertexten und Dialogen zu sagen, dass sie alle ein Abbild des politisch-gesellschaftlichen Lebens jener Jahre sind. Sie offenbaren aber auch des Autors kritische Einstellung und sein Engagement für eine sittliche Erneuerung der Gesellschaft.

With the changes in *Fastnachtspiel* it might be supposed that changes were taking place in the way that carnival itself was celebrated; without *Fastnacht* there would have been no opportunity for *Fastnachtspiel*. There is, however, no evidence of any obvious changes in carnival prior to the final victory of the Reformation in Basel and other cities. Once reformed councils were established, though, Church leaders were ready to try and impose ‘improvements’ on citizens’ moral and social behaviour:

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The whole ritual culture that celebrated the lower body, its drives and pleasures, came under systematic reforming assault. Drunkenness, gluttony, lechery, and violence, that is all forms of disorder, faced the hostility of clerics.68

It took until the early seventeenth century before the Churches succeeded and - to use Burke’s expression - for the ‘Triumph of Lent’ across Europe.69

So, for example, one of the early decrees issued on 27 May 1534 by the Basel city council under the Reformation Ordinance cautioned against the evils of drink and restricted the sale of alcohol.70 Someone who could not pay the stiff fines that could be imposed was liable to be kept in prison on bread and water until he had paid the five pound fine - ‘biß er die fünff pfund straaf bezalt’. Five pounds was as much as a month’s wages.

The changes marked by the politische Moralitäten seem rather a portent of things to come with carnival. The end of the Lachkultur in Switzerland and Germany - in which nothing had been sacred - begins with Gengenbach, who, as Van Abbé says: ‘(made) little concession to the humorous vein of the fifteenth-century traditional plays’.71 In France with Rabelais still to come it was yet to happen. The next chapter discusses the two plays by Gengenbach that most closely relate to the older tradition, X Alter (1515) and Die Gouchmat (1519). Between writing these two plays Gengenbach wrote the far more overtly political Der Nollhart (1517), discussed in chapter 5, sections I, II and III (pages 123-147).

Whereas the social and political context that applied across wide areas of the German-speaking lands supplies a basis for understanding the general shift in Fastnachtspiel, it is


70 Basel StArch: *Straf und Polizei*, F1 1534.

71 Van Abbé, *Drama*, p.33.
important not to forget that the *politische Moralitäten* were a peculiarly Swiss phenomenon. To understand why this was the case, perhaps we need look no further than the specific political crisis that the Confederacy was facing at the time that Gengenbach and Spross started to write. That the Swiss Confederacy was fighting for its very existence comes over very strongly in the Spross play, which is virulently anti-French and anti-noble and identifies strongly with republican Venice. In his first two plays Gengenbach also treated the French as the prime enemy, reflecting widespread anxiety about the threat they posed, and used it to help justify Swiss military intervention in Italy. In subsequent plays the political themes are overtaken by moral and religious ones as the pressure for religious reform mounted.
CHAPTER 4: CARNIVAL AND MORALITY

The underlined reference indicates the version of the work used in the text from which any quotes are drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used for it in the text.


   BL: 11517.c.3 (Augsburg: Schönspereer, 1518), & Köhler MF 933/2324. No original copies of the Gengenbach edition in Britain. (*X Alter*).

   Köhler MF: 1766/4562.

   No original copy can be found. P. Wackernagel, *Kirchenlied*, II, pp. 1084-85, nr. 1317. (*Gotes Ursprung*).

   Köhler MF: 964/2410. (*Jakobsbrüder*).

   No original copy can be found. (*Fromme Hausmagd*).

   No original copies can be found. Copy in Basel UB: Bro 36.802. (*Der welt*).

49. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Disz ist die gouch=\mat/ (early 1519?).
   BL: 11517.c.16. and Thomke, pp. 94-137. (*Die Gouchmat*).

   BL: 11517.c.55(6). (*Anzeigung*).

   The only copy is in the Stadtbibliothek Worms, but it could not be found on request. (*Neues evangelisches Lied*).

   No original copy can be found. Goedeke, pp. 32-38. (*Tod, Teuffel und Engel*).
I. X ALTER (1515).

X Alter, Gengenbach’s third play, was most definitely a Fastnachtspiel, first performed at Fastnacht 1515 in Basel and then in ‘ganz Oberdeutschland’, according to Heinrich Grimm.¹ It turned out to be his most popular play, reprinted in twenty-six editions between 1518-1681 with twenty known performances.² Gengenbach himself only printed the one edition which appeared at around the same time as the first performance,³ and the only reprint in Switzerland during the sixteenth century was not until 1575 (in Basel by Apiarus), despite the fact that performances took place in various Swiss towns such as in Winterthur (1530), St.Gallen (1555 and 1564), and Rägiswyl (1599).⁴ Six reprints appeared in other cities during Gengenbach’s lifetime. It was reworked after Gengenbach’s death by Jörg Wickram in 1531 and his edition accounts for all fourteen of the subsequent reprints of the play during the rest of the century.⁵ Four reprints in the seventeenth century included two of the original Gengenbach version.

In common with his other plays and the wider tradition, it is a Reihenspiel written in simple rhyming couplets. It is 846 lines long excluding the final dedication to the citizens

¹ DNB, p.188.
² Prietzel, AGB, p.394, fn.637. She gives a complete list of reprints: Prietzel, AGB, pp.416-20. A summary list of the 16th century reprints of Gengenbach’s works by other printers is in Appendix A of this thesis.
³ Prietzel is clear that the printed version would have appeared after the performance: Prietzel, AGB, p.322, fn.192.
⁴ Baechtold, Geschichte, pp.57-61 (‘footnotes’).
of Basel. *X Alter* and the later *Die Gouchmat* bear a closer family resemblance to the Nuremberg tradition than his others, both very much about personal moral behaviour and using proto-typical characters. *Die Gouchmat* focuses on one area of moral behaviour, sex and the importance of marriage, portraying a series of stock figures who are led astray and reduced to begging by Venus; while in *X Alter* the foolishness of Everyman - *Jedermann* - is portrayed through the ten ages of his life.

The title of the play, *X Alter*, and the sub-headings given for each of the ten ages of man came from an old saying reprinted on the front page of the Augsburg edition (not the original):

- Zum ersten / zehen Jar ain Kind
- Zwainzig Jar ein Jüngling
- Dreyssig Jar ain Man
- Vierzig Jar Stillstan
- Fünffzig Jar Wolgethan
- Sechzig Jar Abgan
- Sibenzig Jar / Dein Seelbewar
- Achtzig Jar Der Weltnarr
- Neunzig Jar Der kinder Spott
- Hundett Jar Nun gnad' dir got

Everyman’s sins are listed in a comprehensive *Vorred* by ‘der Einsidel’ (*der Einsiedler*), a simple holy man or hermit, who speaks throughout the play as the representative of pure Christian behaviour, commenting on Everyman’s lapses. In this introduction it is made clear that each age was played by a different actor:

- Der merck auff disse zehen person
- Wie sy dann nach ainander ston
- Seind yezt die alter dyser welt
- Merckt eben wie sich yedes helt

(p.Ai).

At each stage of Everyman’s life ‘der Einsidel’ patiently explains to the reprobate why his behaviour is wrong - this motif within the play is very much carnival versus Lent and a clear sign of the moral shift in *Fastnachtspiel* away from paradox towards the straight condemnation of sin. The choice of an ‘Einsidel’ to deliver the Christian commentary on the behaviour of Everyman is most interesting: on the eve of Lent and Easter, arguably
the holiest period in the Christian calendar, it is not a conventional priest or other explicit representative of the Church who is putting Everyman on the straight and narrow.

If the central character, as the upholder of Christian morality, had been a priest then Gengenbach’s intention would probably have been understood by his audience as ironic. Wilhelm Oechsli describes the low moral state of the local clergy:

The purest character among the Swiss bishops was that of Christoph of Uttenheim, bishop of Basel, who honestly endeavoured to secure better discipline in his bishopric, which had been formerly reckoned the liveliest in the great “priests’ alley” of the Rhine. But his very edicts bear eloquent testimony to the moral depravity of the Swiss clergy.^  

These edicts included strictures against gambling at funerals, receiving stolen property, keeping drinking booths and engaging in horse dealing. Ozment found something else to add to the list:

It is alleged that some 1,500 children were born annually to priests in the diocese of Constance, for each of which the bishop received a cradle fee of four gulden [...] Required additionally are concubinage fees and special payments to legitimate children born of such unions.  

Gengenbach did not intend to be ironic however. The device of having the leading figure be a wandering holy man outside the mainstream of the Church was used again by Gengenbach in his next Fastnachtspiel, Der Nollhart (1517). For that play he adopted a more explicitly critical symbol of the Church’s materialism - a Lollard, a follower of the movement founded by John Wycliffe.

The discussion in X Alter proceeds earnestly as a debate between the spiritual and the fleshly, the holy and the profane. The range of behaviour that is discussed and condemned by the ‘Einsidel’ in X Alter is considerably wider than the obviously carnivalesque. In his opening lines, the list of sins that the ‘Einsidel’ warns against is a long one. As the play unfolds, he gives us a lot of biblical examples to illustrate the right

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6 Oechsli, pp.65-66.

7 Ozment, Reformation, p.59.
way and to condemn the immorality of Everyman: as a son who does not honour his mother and father; as a parent who spoils his child and fails to set a good example; as a husband who lets his wife go naked while he chases other men’s wives as an adulterer - like David, Solomon, Aristotle, Vergil and Samson who were also blind about women; as a soldier who goes to war, robbing from monasteries and killing like Cain, creating unhappy widows and orphans; and as a successful old man of wealth and power.

A central place is given to the condemnation of the self-indulgence that typifies carnival itself. Catholy is wrong to argue that Gengenbach's plays are not concerned with carnival - this one most certainly is. The ten-year-old talks of: ‘Mit fullen/prassen/tag vnd nacht’ [p.Aiii']. This is echoed by the twenty-year-old, who has a simple view of the good life:

Es sy mit spylen/zeren/prassen
Des nachts so lauff ich auff der gassen
Alle büberey die sach ich an
Wa ich junckfrawen bscheyssen kan
Gang ich jn nach bayd tag vnd nacht
[p.Aiv'].

This hedonist wants nothing to do with the world of work which his parents inhabit:

Vatter vnd mütter ich wenig acht
Was sy mit arbeit gewinnen hand
Verthün ich jn mit grosser schand
[p.Aiv'].

The thirty-year old is spoken to firmly by the ‘Einsidel’ on the subject of work in a manner that echoes the ‘Protestant ethic’:

O gueter freund ich wil dich leren
Mit deiner arbayt solt dich neren
Wann got selber gesprochen hot
In deinem schwaß so nuß dein brot
So wirt dir hy vnd dort wol werden
Du wirst sunst zu aim betler werden.
[p.Bii']

The desire to indulge the appetites is a recurring theme. The sixty year old says regretfully:
Nach weyben thün ich wenig streben,
Weintrincken will mich nymmer leyden
(p.Cii').

And by his eighties he can only look back on past achievements:

Was ich hab getriben mein jungen tag
Do ich allzeyt der bülschaft pflag
Vnd was allzeit ain werder gast
So bin ich yetz ain überlast.
[p.Civ'].

The morality of hard work and making money, however, is also problematic. The sixty-year old who could no longer chase after women focusses instead on wealth and honour:

Ich tracht allain nach gut vnd eer
Frag nit wie es doch kumme här
(p.Cii').

But for doing so he is told by the 'Einsidel' that he is like Judas:

Wär stelt nach eer wirt selten alt
Du verkaufft in müter leib das kind
Judas warlich wol dyn fründ.
(p.Cii').

The issue of secret pensions, 'heimlich gelt', being paid to council members by foreign powers is alluded to seven lines later. The eighty year old remains arrogant of his wealth and power:

Niemandt darff reden wider mich
Darumb ich den gwałt in henden han
Vil neüwer satzung fah ich an
Damit der arm man wirt beschwört
Den witwen weysen bin ich hörß
[p.Civ'].

Sebastian Brant's deep suspicion of money and its power to corrupt finds its echo here in Gengenbach. Greed and envy are the very depths of evil: 'Durch neyd der Teüfel kam auff erdt', says the 'Einsidel' [page Civ'] and on the same page: 'Durch neyd ward gmartert Jesu christ'. On page [Diii'] the book of Ecclesiastes is invoked, whose theme is
the vanity of riches and the search for wisdom.\(^8\) In some of the final lines of the play, money is identified as all that people are concerned about:

\[
\text{Kain gütz auff erden man yetz hört}
\text{Als schnöd vnd böß ist jetzt die welt}
\text{Allain ir sach stat nun auff gelt}
\text{[p.Div']}
\]

Concrete contemporary politics largely appear to be missing from the play however. The messages are couched as generalisations about what does and does not conform to biblical example and Christian teaching. The play marks, as noted above, the shift in Fastnachtspiel to the explicit defence of morality, moving away from the traditional play that explored moral boundaries rather than pronouncing on them. This begs the question of whether X Alter was really one of the politische Moralitäten or whether it was rather a forerunner of the type of morality plays that Hans Sachs was about to start writing in Nuremberg.

Sidler has argued that the play engages in one of the crucial political issues of the moment in Basel. He has proposed a link between the performance of this play and the ‘coup’ against the hohen Stube - the representative organisation of the Basel patriciate - that took place shortly after on 8 March 1515 when they lost their power in city government.\(^9\) He argues that the play contains ‘offensichtliche Ständekritik’; but the weakness of his argument is that in the play the attack on money and greed is very general, and the condemnation of conspicuous consumption, ‘prassen’ and ‘üppigkait’ are age-based, targeted at idle youth rather than at a specific social class. It is carnival after all when good citizens lament the hedonism of the young. An attempt to see this as a specific attack on the idle rich by sober hard-working citizens rather than as a general lament is to read too much.

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\(^8\) 'Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.' Ecclesiastes, 2.11.

\(^9\) Sidler, p.84.
Muted though it is there is a political message in the play. *X Alter* and *Der Nollhart*, which was Gengenbach's next and most intensely political play, are both concerned with the sin that threatens to bring the end of the world. The apocalyptic vision of the approaching final hour in *X Alter* is not so powerfully invoked, but it is there: ‘So sich nohen die letzen zeit’ [page Aii]. It is echoed again right at the end: ‘Es nahe sich dem iüngsten tag’ [page Div]. The ‘*der Einsidel*’, like the Lollard in *Der Nollhart*, is a John the Baptist figure warning of the imminence of God’s coming to earth. *X Alter* concentrates on the social impact of personal immorality and the threat of the end of the world - a bit like a stage version of *Das Narrenschiff*. *Der Nollhart* looks at the impact of contemporary international politics, containing characters like the Pope, the Emperor and kings who only make a brief appearance in *X Alter*:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Warlich er vnß got wilkumen wär} \\
\text{Er sy bapst / kayser / künig frey} \\
\text{Dem selben wir dan stünden bey} \\
\text{Sehen die gerechtigkait nit an} \\
\text{Darumb es müß so vbel gan} \\
\end{align*}
\]

[p.Div]

*X Alter* and *Der Nollhart* both contain criticism of mercenary soldiering, ‘*Reisläuferei*’. Switzerland was at the height of its military power in early 1515 and so it is possible that Gengenbach's position in *X Alter* may not have been popular, but it is more likely that he was reflecting a war-weariness in the popular mood even before defeat and humiliation at the hands of the French at Merignano later that year [page Biii].

II. *DIE GOUCHMAT*

The other of Gengenbach's more traditional *Fastnachtspiele, Die Gouchmat*, deals with the very popular carnival theme of promiscuity, *Unkeuscheit*, and adultery. The ‘*Gouchmat*’ was, according to Grimm; ‘die matte, auf der die gauche verliebten narren, zu einem feste zusammenkommen.’*10* Written in *Knittelvers* like all his others, these traditional rhyming couplets are subject to some irregularity. By the time he came to

publish Die Gouchmat Gengenbach had established a reputation for his plays - so he tells us in his introduction:

Durch bit ward ich gefochten an /  
Ich soll diß fasnacht nit hinlan /  
Solt machen yn ein nüwes spyl /  
So jetz doch wer des vnmûts vyl.
(p.95, lines 1-4).

Gengenbach must have enjoyed a certain level of official approval in order to have his plays performed, although none were seriously controversial until Die Totenfresser in 1522. Die Gouchmat shifted public debate on sexual morality to a much more serious, less paradoxical level. Sex, immorality and hypocrisy had always been a popular subject of carnival plays, but for laughs.¹¹ Now Gengenbach appears as the killjoy, attacking those who fail to realise promiscuity is a sin:

Wie das vnkeüscheit sy kein sündt /  
Diser ist gantz verstockt vnd blindt  
(p.95, lines 13-14).

Not much is known about the play's impact. Derek Van Abbé in his later book notes a performance in Basel in 1516, which would seem to be impossible in the face of the evidence as to when it was written, and a probable performance in Winterthur in 1527.¹² One further edition of the play was printed, in 1582 by Müller in Strassburg.

The play features six different Gâuche, fools for love drawn from a variety of social backgrounds: the youth, the husband, the soldier, the doctor, the old Gauch and the peasant. Baechtold describes their fate: 'Alle werden sie von dem Gesinde Venus [...] bis auf die Haut ausgebeutelt und, nachdem sie einen Tanz auf der Gauchmatte getan, elend heimgeschickt.'¹³ The doorkeeper - Der Narr - tries to persuade each character in


¹³ Baechtold, Geschichte, p.279.
turn not to go in to see Venus and plays the part of an all-knowing commentator on the weakness of man.

a. Dating the play

The date of the play is unknown and there are a number of interesting problems that arise when trying to fix it, so different commentators have come up with different answers. The dating of the work is more than a technical problem; it matters because it affects our perception of its relationship with works by other writers. Goedeke, Bartsch, Creizenach and Van Abbé believe that it was published in 1516, which would mean that Gengenbach would not have known or been influenced by the Hans Sachs play, *Hofgesind Veneris* (1517) or Thomas Murer’s *Die Geuchmat*, which appeared in April 1519 in Basel and from whom Gengenbach could at least have taken the title. Lendi, Thomke, Hieronymus, and Ermatinger dated Gengenbach’s play as 1521 and Van Abbé also accepted that date subsequently. Thomke, Hieronymus, and Ermatinger tie this date to the appearance of a work by another writer, Laurentius Fries, in late 1520 (see below c).

The date is also of interest for its relationship with Gengenbach’s other work: it would be curious if *Die Gouchmat* were not Gengenbach’s next play following immediately after *X Alter* (1515) because its content can be regarded as being more traditional than that of *Der Nollhart* which we know was published in 1517. Goedeke certainly believed that 1516 was the year of publication.

b. The titlepage

One of the key arguments for a later date is based on the woodcut borders of the titlepage


_‘Die Geuchmat’, in* Thomas Murners Deutsche Schriften, (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1931), v, pp.1-237. All quotes from the play are from this edition.

_Prietzel lists the various discussions about the links with these two plays: Prietzel, AGB, pp.396-97, especially footnotes 651 and 659._

_Goedeke, Gengenbach, p.xxi & p.618._
which are by Ambrosius Holbein and are known as the ‘weibermacht’. They show the same characters - Solomon, Samson, Aristoteles, Vergil - that Gengenbach named in *X Alter* who were fools for love - ‘An wyben auch waren erblindt’ [page Biii'] - led astray by heathen women. Ambrosius Holbein came to Basel in 1515 and began to produce work in 1516, probably in the workshop of Hans Herbst, but he only became a member of a guild and able to produce work under his own name in 1517.¹⁸

Hieronymus reports that this *weibermacht* woodcut first appeared in June 1517 in Gengenbach's edition of Horace's *Epodon liber* and that he continued to use this border until 1522.¹⁹ It seems highly unlikely that Gengenbach wrote *Die Gouchmat* for carnival 1517 as it is known for certain that *Der Nollhart* was printed and produced that year. This being the case then the later date for *Die Gouchmat* of *Fastnacht* 1521, would be possible - at least in respect of the printed version with the titlepage woodcut.

The other woodcuts in the published play are by mostly by Conrad Schnitt, with some also by Holbein, and Herbst. Hieronymus believes that they also point to a date of 1519 or later:

> Auch die übrigen Holzschnitte deuten eher auf spätere Entstehung. Alle übrigen Drucke im zeitgenössischen Basler Sammelband sind von 1519. Wohl Mitte 1519 und datiert im September und Dezember 1520 finden sich die ersten Wiederverwendungen einzelner Bordüren.²⁰

As Ambrosius Holbein disappeared without trace in 1519 that would have been the latest that he could have drawn them, although not the latest, of course, that Gengenbach could have used them. Lendi also thinks that the woodcuts indicate a later publication date.²¹

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¹⁹ For more details about the use Gengenbach put this border to, see Hieronymus, *Bücherillustration*, p.183, no.210.

²⁰ Hieronymus, *Bücherillustration*, p.337.

²¹ Lendi, p.39.
On line 771 (p. 122) of the play we are told that Laurentius Fries was the model for the foolish doctor in *Die Gouchmat*: ‘Ich gloub worlich du seist der frieß’. Fries wrote *Ein kurzze schirmred der kunst Astrologie* that first appeared in November 1520 and it was Baechtold who first argued that *Die Gouchmat* was published after it. Lendi, Hieronymus and Thomke agree with Baechtold. Thomke says: ‘Die Polemik, welche die *schirmred* auslöste, scheint also für die Datierung der *gouchmat* ins Jahr 1521 zu sprechen.’ In a further argument against Goedeke and others who think that *Die Gouchmat* was published in 1516, Hieronymus points out that Fries would hardly have taken until the end of 1520 to respond to Gengenbach if *Die Gouchmat* had been written in 1516, and so 1521 seems much the likelier date. It seems that Goedeke, in dating the play as 1516 did not know about the Fries publication of 1520, as he only mentions Fries’s work of 1523 in his *Grundrisz*.

Fries’s publication of *Ein kurzze schirmred der kunst Astrologie* in November 1520 was his first known astrological work, although he had earlier published a medical book in 1518. Thomke suggests that not all of Fries’s works are necessarily known about so it is possible that Gengenbach was responding to an earlier publication. Gengenbach could also have been stimulated by one of Luther’s writings: Luther published his condemnation of Astrology in 1518 in *Decem praecepta Wittembergensi praedicata populo*. Gengenbach’s astrological ideas and this aspect of *Die Gouchmat* are discussed in chapter 6, IVc (page 194). Baechtold also favoured 1521 because Gengenbach

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22 See also the section on Gengenbach and Fries in chapter 6, IVc.

23 Line 953 in Goedeke, but line 884 in Thomke (ed.).

24 Lendi, p.39.

25 Ermatinger, p.142.

26 Thomke, p.973.


28 Martin Luther, *Decem praecepta Wittembergensi praedicata populo* (*Zehn Gebote*), *WA* 1, pp.398-521.
mentions Johann Virdung von Haßfurt (on line 953):

[...] ich glaube die erste Druckausgabe auf 1521 aussetzen zu sollen, und zwar deswegen, weil V.953 auch der bekannte Johann Virdung von Haßfurt genannt wird, dessen ‘Auslegung und Bedeutung der wunderbarlichen Zeichen’ ebenfalls 1520 in die Öffentlichkeit trat.²⁹

After Gengenbach’s rude portrayal of him in Die Gouchmat, Fries countered with Ein zu sam en gelesen vrtheyl auf den alten erfar nen meistern der Astrology, which appeared in Strassburg in 1523 or 1524. Gengenbach responded immediately to this later work in Christliche ware Practica (1523 or 1524), reprinting the same woodcut that was in Die Gouchmat showing the doctor as a donkey.

d. ‘Hofgesind Veneris’ (Sachs) and ‘Ein Spil von fürsten und herren’ (Rosenplüt)
Some similarities in the thematic material have been remarked between Die Gouchmat and two other plays; Hofgesind Veneris by Hans Sachs written in 1517, and the fifteenth century carnival play Ein Spil von fürsten und herren which has been attributed to the Nuremberg playwright, Hans Rosenplüt.³⁰

If Goedeke was right that Die Gouchmat was written before then perhaps Sachs was influenced by Gengenbach when he wrote Hofgesind Veneris. There are thirteen characters in the Sachs play and twelve in Gengenbach’s, but only four of them appear in both - Venus, the doctor, the peasant and a soldier. The Sachs play is much the lighter, less didactic piece, much less focussed on the debates among religious reformers about immorality, marriage and adultery. It is much closer to the old Nuremberg tradition in that its moral position remains much less overt - it is more like a ticking off for errant males than Gengenbach’s rather full-blooded moral lecture.

The closing words of Sachs’s play said by Venus apply mainly to men although women are not exempted as she urges everyone to join in the Dance:

²⁹ Baechtold, Geschichte. p.280.

Venus’s court in Sachs’s play sounds very like carnival itself with the odd obscenity to sustain the humour:

Da werd ir grosse wunder schauen,
Von einem Thurnieren und Stechen,
Mannich Ritterlich Sper zubrechen
An meinen Hof fechten und ringen,
Tantzen, Hoffieren unde singen,
Auch mannig susses Seitenspiel,
Sonst ander kurtzweil ohne ziel,
(p.25, lines 202-208).

By contrast Gengenbach asserts from the start of Die Gouchmat that vnkeüsheit:

Verfüt die welt / vnd lestert got /
Kein sünd vff erd / red ich on spot
Schwerlicher got je gastroffet hat.
(p.95, lines 15-17).

Throughout his play Gengenbach is the greater misogynist, apparently putting much of the blame for immorality on the deceit of women, for example in line 73 (page 97) in the narrator’s introduction is the first of several mentions of ‘wyber list’. The play acknowledges that it is the foolish men who abandon reason, but then blames women for it:

Hör was Gregorius seit dar von /
Wilt der wyber nit müssig gon /
Sie machen dir thumb sinn vnd mût /
Der vernunfft vnküsheit we thût.
Dein frien willen dir befleckt.
Dein recht verstentnüß ouch bedeckt.
Das hirn dir auch dar von wirt leer.
(pp.102-103, lines 223-29).

Although they are thematically close, there is little real evidence of one author influencing the other.

31 Michael and Crockett, i, pp.17-27, p.25, lines 199-201.
Thomke suggests that there is a close link between *Die Gouchmat* and a second play, one of those attributed to Rosenplüt, *Ein Spil von Fürsten und Herren*. This features Aristotle as a love fool who is finally left standing like a donkey. Women are portrayed as purely animal, uncontrolled by higher reason, who will entrap a man if he lets them. *Maister Aristotiles* says:

Kein man auf erd so weis mag sein,  
Ein weip efft in, ob sie wil;  
Sie kunnen sußer wort gar vil  
Und thun sich auch gar hubsch aufpflanzen;  
Sie machten ein munch im kloster tanzen.\(^{32}\)

This typical medieval perspective was shared by Gengenbach as shown above in *Die Gouchmat* and indeed by Luther: 'Luther betrachtet die Frauen deutlich als unterlegene Geschöpfe, die durch grobes Verhalten leicht einzuschüchtern und zu verwirren sind.'\(^{33}\)

e. Marriage, prostitution and the Protestants

Luther published his first sermon on marriage in 1519 which was printed by Petri in Basel that same year.\(^{34}\) Sexual morality and marriage was becoming important in contemporary debates across what were to become party lines. Usually the theme is associated with the agenda of Protestantism, if only for the attack on priestly venality and the demand for clerical marriage. In this early work of Luther’s there are no real surprises:

Sich, umb der ehr willen, das vormischung mans und weybs eyn bo groß ding bedeut, muß der eelich stand sulchs bedeutniß genießen, das die böße fleischliche lust, die nimant an ist, yn ehlicher pflicht nit vordamlch ist, dye ßonst außerhalb der ehe allezeht todlich ist, wan sie vorbracht wirt.'\(^{35}\)


\(^{34}\) Martin Luther, *Eyn Sermon von dem Elichen Standt, WA 2*, 166-71.

\(^{35}\) WA 2, p. 168.
He goes on to tell married people they must remain true to their vows and not deceive one another. Luther’s more revolutionary theological arguments about marriage not being a sacrament and the marriage of priests appeared the following year in 1520.

Gengenbach took a close interest in Luther’s ideas as will be further seen in chapters 6 and 7 (though he did not always agree with them), but there is no indication from arguments used in the play that Gengenbach was directly influenced by Luther’s writing on marriage. The play uses biblical texts to back up its arguments and like Luther was obviously influenced by St. Paul’s view that man and woman, ‘sind zwei in einem Fleisch’. But, one of the important ideas in the first part of the 1519 sermon, for example, is Luther’s view that there are three kinds of love - false love, natural love and married love, whereas in the play there are two - marriage and sexual foolishness. There is no reference at all in the play to Luther, which we might perhaps have expected if *Die Gouchmat* was indeed written in 1520 or 1521.

A central theme of the play is prostitution, a topic that Luther did not write about in 1519-20. Control of and the banning of prostitution was to become a key element in the early actions of Protestant city councils. The dedication of the play on page 91 is: ‘Wider den Eebruch vnd die sünd der vnküscheit.’ It certainly suggests that Gengenbach was in favour of banning prostitution. Venus is only interested in any of the foolish men who come to her so long as they have money. When their money runs out, she turns them all out and she has no interest in the effect that this behaviour may have on others. The obsessed married man will give Venus anything. Echoing the words of the forty-year old man in *X Alter* [p.Bii’], he says to Venus:

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Wib vnd kind wil ich verlan/
Vnd wil allein dir hangen an.
Dir kouffen röck mäntel vnd schuben /
Mein fraw lassen die finger sugen /
Ob sie schon müssen bätlen gan /
Do leit mir worlich wenig an.
(p.110, lines 427-32).
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To which Venus replies bluntly:
Ein rechter gouch bistu für mich /  
Circis die kan wol leren dich /  
Din wyb vnd kind zü bätler machen /  
Darnach din Spotten vnd ouch lachen.  
(p.110, lines 437-40).

The idea that Venus is no more than a brothel madam, is supported in lines said by the  
the master of ceremonies, ‘Der Hoffmeister’, in his first appearance. He sets the scene  
and describes the people from all walks of life who come to Venus on Der Kohlenberg,  
(Basel’s red-light district that featured in the earlier poem Bettlerorden):

Auch was den Colenbarg hat bsessen  
Zü Basel / sollen nit vergessen  
Sond kummen auch vff diß gouchmat  
Sie sigen krum / lam / grindig oder glat.  
(pp.98-99, lines 112-15).

To highlight this reference to the Kohlenberg, Gengenbach subsequently uses a few  
words of rotwelsch, which was the dialect associated with the area. ‘Der Hoffmeister’,  
for example, talks on line 125 (page 99) of ‘gugelfrantz’ - the monk - as visitor to the  
Kohlenberg, and on line 129 of ‘gugelfränztzin’ - the nun. ‘Gugelfrantz’ is used again in  
line 310 (page 106), this time by Der Narr. At the end of the play ‘Der Hoffmeister’ tells  
the audience on line 1178 (page 136) that Venus has opened up shop in the ‘Malentz  
gassen’, which was in the Kohlenberg and where there actually was a brothel.36

Until the very end of the play, the references to the morality of the priesthood - which  
occur throughout - are only made in passing, simply including them in the categories of  
people who succumb to Venus. In ‘Der Hoffmeister’s’ closing speech there is a more  
specific reference:

Jung alt munch vnd pfaffen /  
Was gern godt vff der gouchmat gaffen  
Wider vnd für ind winckel iuken /  
Vnd durch die kleine fensterlin gucken /  
Ouch was den geüchen thüt zü keren /  
Wil sie die rechte kunst erst leren.  
(p.136, lines 1190-95).

36 Thomke, p.994.
The importance of this short section is enhanced by a woodcut showing a monk with a
cuckoo (the symbol of the *Gauch*) on his shoulder. There is no suggestion that
Gengenbach thinks that clerical marriage, which Luther favoured, would assuage the
temptations to which those in holy orders were prey. Another difference between the two
writers is that Luther does not reflect on the role of alcohol as a cause of sexual
immorality, unlike Gengenbach in the *Vorred*:

Spricht das der win zù aller frist
Ein anfang der vnküscheit ist.
(p.96, lines 55-56).

*f. Thomas Murner*

Another potential source of influence on Gengenbach was Thomas Murner, whose much
longer pamphlet of the same name, *Die Geuchmat*, is thought to have been largely
completed in 1515. However, it was prevented by censorship from being printed in
Strassburg and it first appeared in Basel in 1519 while Murner was studying for his
doctorate in Law at the University. The relationship between it and Gengenbach’s play
has provoked some discussion. There are some obvious resemblances, not least in the
titles. It is possible Gengenbach took the title from Murner and but it is also possible that
Murner’s work was printed following the successful presentation of Gengenbach’s play
at carnival in 1519. More coincidentally perhaps, they both have a woodcut by
Ambrosius Holbein on their title pages.

Fuchs’s introduction to Murner’s play discusses the roots of the work in *Minnesang* (the
courtly love lyric of the High Middle Ages), Brant, Geiler von Keysersberg, the bible,
and *Fastnachtspiel*. With the exception of *Minnesang* these other influences were
important to Gengenbach too. Fuchs firmly rules out the possibility that Gengenbach’s
play influenced Murner’s poem: ‘[…] “Die Gouchmat” kommt als Quelle für Murners
Satire nicht in Betracht’. Depending on the date of Gengenbach’s play Fuchs does
accept a possible limited influence the other way - of Murner on Gengenbach. Specific

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37 For a detailed discussion of the history of the work see pp.XXV-XXXVII of Eduard

instances of this influence include the title, some common use of examples, and some
echoes of Murner’s language in the play. He continues:

Soweit das nicht allgemein gebrauchte Redensarten sind, könnte man wohl daran
denken, daß der Verfasser der Gouchmat Predigten Murners über die Geuchmat
gehört hat. Daß damals Prediger über das Geuchmatthema in Basel sprachen, sagt
Gengenbach uns selbst: [...].
(pp.LXII-LXIII).

Fuchs then quotes lines 809-20 from the play about theologians, the last four of which
say:

Schryt vff der kantzel tag vnd nacht /
Der wirt täglich durch sie veracht /
Kein Theologus mag vor me in bliben /
Sie verachtens all in jrem schriben.39

If Gengenbach is referring in these lines to preaching by Murner, this would be evidence
that Die Gouchmat was published later than 1519 after Murner came to Basel, but Fuchs
does not draw that conclusion. He rather ends up agreeing with Goedeke that the two
plays were not related. Baechtold is equally decisive: ‘Murners ‘Gauchmatt’ nun und
Gengenbachs Fastnachtspiel stehen durchaus in keinerlei Abhängigkeit zu einander
[...].’40

Before accepting this view however, the relationship between the plays is worth looking
at in a little more detail. Murner’s play is entitled, ‘Die geuchmat zü straff allen
wybschen mann’en. Both works are misogynist, dealing with love and sex between men
and women with Venus as a central character, supported by Circe and Cupid. Circe’s
fascinating powers are described in Geuchmat:

Sie kan die man all transformieren
Vnd vff die geuchmatt hie har fieren.
Das hatt sy alls vor zyten thon.
Sy müß ietz anders underston,
Die mann ietzund zu geuchen machen;
Denn sy ist geschicktx in dissen sachen.
(p.28, lines 595-600).


40 Baechtold, Geschichte, p.280.
Venus and her acolytes lead all men astray whatever their station in life, including those in holy orders. Surprisingly, Murner does not limit himself to humble clerics, but he has Venus lead a pope Johannes astray (in chapter 20), as well as nuns (in chapter 57, entitled ‘frouw Venus berg’). Murner praises Mary in chapter 3, however, whereas Gengenbach in his play does not.

Murner is more interested in relations between men and women in general whereas Gengenbach focusses on adulterous love and sex. So, Murner describes foolishness within marriage as well as outside it, for example: ‘Es sol ein gouch syn wyb regieren lassen’ (line 1 of section d entitled, ‘Underthenig geuch’), which is a similar view to Brant’s in Das Narrenschiff (especially in chapters 32, 33, 50, 62, and 64). Murner’s Venus doesn’t necessarily do it for money. In chapter 9, entitled ‘Den gouch berupffen’, he discusses those that do:

Die wyber manchen geuchschen tropffen
Der maß entblötzen und beropffen,
(p.57, lines 999-1000).

And later in the same chapter:

So bald der gouch entpfendet der hitzen,
Gold und sylber müß er schwitzen,
(p.59, lines 1027-28).

Carnival is a time when a man can be betrayed:

Der fastnacht müß der hencker walten.
Macht er ir do nit mút und freyd,
So nympt sy sich an hertzens leyd
Und trurt und trurt dag unde nacht,
Biß er mit goben freyden macht.
Dann müß er doppel geben me,
Denn er gegeben hat vor ee.
(p.59, lines 1034-40).

Masked figures appear in several of the woodcuts which are further evocative of carnival.

Part of the problem about this discussion of the two pieces, is that nothing is known of what direct links there might have been between Gengenbach and Murner, whether they
even met during Murner’s stay in Basel. *Die Gouchmat* is not the only work of Gengenbach’s linked to Murner. The close relationship between Gengenbach’s *Meisterlied, Die fünf Juden* (1515), and Murner’s *Die Enthüllung Mariä* (1514) is referred to chapter 5, IV (page 145). There is a discussion of Gengenbach’s publication of Murner’s *De quattuor heresiarchis* (mid-1521 to mid-1522) in chapter 7, III (page 213). In this latter pamphlet, Murner attacks the Dominicans for their role in the *Jetzer* scandal, a religious scandal in Berne, that began in 1507. Later again, in 1523, Gengenbach was to write *Die Novella* which is a not entirely hostile reply to Murner’s famous attack on Luther, *Von dem grossen lutherischen Narren* (1522). It is speculative to conclude that Murner had some influence on Gengenbach, but it is worth noting the possibility, especially when discussing Gengenbach’s views on the reform movement.

**g. The development of Gengenbach’s dramatic writing**

Lendi and Van Abbé have some perceptive comments about the play’s artistic merit, which have a bearing on dating it. Both critics argue that *Die Gouchmat* showed significant progress on Gengenbach’s previous dramatic works. Lendi argues that it was clearly written after *Der Nollhart* and *X Alter*: ‘Die ‘Gouchmat’ bedeutet gegenüber den andern zwei Spielen einen merklichen Fortschritt.’ He notes on the next page that Gengenbach included his first proper stage direction in this play, after line 985 (p. 129). Van Abbé expands on this theme and is more extravagant in his praise than any other commentator has been:

The steady progression in Gengenbach’s capabilities as a dramatist is marked. The popular forms the poet adapted were gradually elevated to the level of artforms; [...]  

He describes the characterisation of the Old Man as ‘brilliant’, and argues on pages 59-60 that ‘notable’ artistic progress was made by Gengenbach over his previous *Fastnachts spiele:*

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41 Lendi, p.42.  
42 Van Abbé, *Development*, p.60.
Not only does it leave far behind the revue-technique of the *Zehn Alter*, and the two or three simple scenettes of Der Nollhart, but there is right from the beginning [...] a definite plot (which) unfolds itself. There is even some kind of tension, in the attempts which the Narr makes to hold up the catastrophe, to keep the victims away from their fate.

While Lendi is terser: ‘Sie zeigt einmal entschieden mehr Handlung.’ (page 44). Only these two critics have grasped the very visual dramatic devices that are possible in this play: dividing the stage into two parts, with the *Narr* trying to prevent movement through a ‘door’ from one part to the other; having one of Venus’s two attendants Circe or Palestra dance with each customer and physically strip the clothes off them as the dialogue with them progresses; and despatching the stripped and humiliated *Gauch*, covered only with a dismissively tossed rag, or women’s clothes in the soldier’s case, back through the doorway to the rueful commentary of the *Narr*. Thomke argues that Gengenbach’s portrayal of the *Narr* is special:

Die Narrenfigur ist eine eigenständige Schöpfung Gengenbachs. Im Gegensatz zu den herkömmlichen sündhaften und lasterhaften Narren, Gäuchen und tölpsichen Toren ist er ein kritischer und warnender Narr, wie er in der Folge für viele eidgenössische Dramen kennzeichnend werden sollte.  

He goes on to make an interesting point that this change in the character of the *Narr* had been anticipated by Spross: ‘Im *Spiel von den alten und jungen Eidgenossen* war er schon vorgebildet.’

The traditional *Fastnachtspiel* dance with which the play usually ended - as did, for example, Sachs’s *Hofgesind Veneris* - is adapted in an innovative way in *Die Gouchmat*, away from the carnival spirit. There is a dance, but it appears to exclude audience participation, turning them in effect from a carnival audience to a group of static, passive onlookers. Whether the audience were prevented from joining in on the night is a matter of speculation.

**h. A play out of its time?**

The artistic developments in the play provide further evidence that Goedeke - who knew

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43 Thomke, p.976.

119
Gengenbach's works as well as anyone - was wrong to date the play earlier than the less artistically sophisticated Der Nollhart, which appeared in 1517. While rejecting Goedeke's dating on balance, the alternatives remain unsatisfactory. Although love and marriage was an important Protestant theme, and certainly the use of biblical references in the play is extensive, nevertheless the ideological content of the play suggests that 1521, or even 1519, is rather late. The play's theme of love and its treatment has a close affinity to traditional Fastnachtspiel and the writing seems somewhat light of touch for the writer of 1520 or later who was developing an increasingly stern religious perspective.

III. TOD, TEUFEL UND ENGEL

Although it is not a carnival play, Tod, Teufel und Engel would readily lend itself to a dramatic presentation and, like Alter and Die Gouchmat, it deals with sinful behaviour. It is an undated song, probably by Gengenbach, 228 lines long, with an irregular six-line rhyming scheme, that could be sung or spoken. It is apparently based on a real and salutary story which occurred in May 1517 (page 32, lines 21-22). At face value this is a piece of poetic journalism which Gengenbach probably wrote shortly after the story was heard in Basel, the kind of story about a young heroine foiling vicious young criminals that would still command headlines today. Three young villains dress up as death, the devil, and an angel, in order to scare an inn landlord into handing them his money. The landlord is so taken in by the three apparitions and their demands that he believes that he is giving his money as an act of contrition so that God will spare him:

\[
\begin{align*}
die Schlüssel nam er bey der wand, \\
vnd gieng da er ein kisten fand, \\
Sprach Gott sey globt ewiglichen. \\
Der mich erlöß hat von dem todt, \\
vnd auch vons Teuffels hende, \\
die Kisten schloß er auff gedrot, \\
nach dem gut griffen sie behende, \\
(p.36, lines 162-68).
\end{align*}
\]

Luckily his daughter wakes up and is not so easy to fool so the young men are duly exposed and punished. The moral of the tale, in the last 27 lines, starts simply enough
with a warning to young men to work hard like that which was heard in *X Alter*:

Solch kauffmanschatz gibt bösen lohn,  
jr jungen Gsellen lond darnon,  
thund euch mit arbeit neren,  
boß gsellschaft thut gar selten gut,  
(p.37, lines 201-204).

The ending is a modified version of the Lord’s Prayer whose last lines are:

Ach Herre Gott in ewigkeit,  
gib gnad vns deinem kinde,  
behütt vns vor solchem hertzeleid,  
vñ vergib vns vnser Sünde,  
die wir begond auff diser erden  
läß vns darinn nit sterben,  
behütt vns vor helle glut  
vnd die drey gsellen gut.  
AMEN.  
(p.38, lines 223-28).

The dressing up that fools the landlord emphasises the warning message of the song against gullibility, suggesting that it is an attack on religious superstition. It may even be criticising the Church for its exploitation of these traits for its own benefit. The Church’s misuse of its wealth was a recurrent theme from now on in Gengenbach’s work. The central character in his next play, a Lollard monk called *der Bruder*, was a symbol of clerical poverty and simplicity that sharply contrasted with the Church that most people knew.

IV. SONGS

As well as *Tod, Teufel und Engel* Gengenbach wrote and printed a wide range of songs - not surprisingly as they were an important popular medium of expression. These songs did not serve any one specific function for Gengenbach, unlike Luther, for example, perhaps the most famous popular ‘songwriter’ of the generation who was clear that vernacular hymns were an important way of promoting religious and moral ideas. Some of Gengenbach’s were on religious themes: *Von dem heiligen Sakrament* published in 1511 or 1512 (number 1 in Appendix A), *Gotes Ursprung* from 1516 (number 26 in Appendix A), and *Der goldene Paradiesapfel* which is undated (number 117 in Appendix A). The first two were of fourteenth century origin, the last more recent but not
written by Gengenbach.\textsuperscript{44} Very late in his life Gengenbach also produced a simple hymn, \textit{Neues evangelisches Lied} (number 114 in Appendix A). Another song, also anonymous, \textit{Der welt} from 1518 (number 47 in Appendix A), was not really a religious one but is concerned with moral frailty. Prietzel sums up its theme: ‘Man kann es der Welt nicht recht machen - und soll es daher gar nicht erst versuchen.’\textsuperscript{45}

There are four longer pieces that were stories written in rhyme that describe events and behaviour from which a religious/moral lesson was drawn: \textit{Fünf Juden} (1515), which is discussed in chapter 5, IV (page 147); \textit{Jakobsbrüder} (1518), which is discussed in chapter 6, IIb (page 172); \textit{Anzeigung}, which is discussed in chapters 5, IIIb (page 138), and 8, IIIe (page 262); and \textit{Tod, Teufel und Engel}, discussed above. The first and the last of these he wrote himself, and describes them as \textit{Lieder}. \textit{Anzeigung}, whose authorship is uncertain, even has a line of music printed on its front page. \textit{Jakobsbrüder} was a story of fourteenth century origin which Goedeke thought that Gengenbach had rewritten. It is in verse, but there are no indications as to whether it was intended to be sung. The fact that Gengenbach was producing these various pieces may suggest that there was a local \textit{Sangschule} in Basel, but Nagel says there is no evidence either way of such a school at this time.\textsuperscript{46}

There were also a few songs published by Gengenbach that were entirely secular: drinking songs: \textit{Rebhänslin} (number 9 in Appendix A), \textit{Weinschlauch} (number 118 in Appendix A), or on love: \textit{Alda} (number 32 in Appendix A), \textit{Vier hübsche Lieder} (number 116 in Appendix A); or on important events such as \textit{Adda-Schlacht} which is described in its opening lines as a \textit{Lied} and which was referred to in chapter 3, 1 (page 71).

\textsuperscript{44} Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, p.406.

\textsuperscript{45} Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, p.392.

CHAPTER 5: POLITICS AND RELIGION - DER NOLLHART & FÜNF JUDEN

The underlined reference indicates the version of the work used in the text from which any quotes are drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used for it in the text.

25. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Dz ist ein erschrockenliche history || von fünf schnöden Juden* (1516?).
Köhler MF: 1766/4562. (Fünf Juden).

BL: 11515.bb.8 and Werren-Uffer, *Der Nollhart*.

BL: 1226.b.6, and in *Flugschriften*, ed. by Laube et al., ii, pp.227-42. (Drei Christen).

BL: 11517.d.37(2). (Anzeigung).

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I. DER NOLLHART (1517): INTRODUCTION

*Der Nollhart* is a *Fastnachtspiel* written for carnival 1517 that intertwines the political and the religious. On the one hand, in its discussion of the political situation it is reminiscent of Gengenbach’s first plays, *Welsch Flusz* and *Alt Eydgносz*, although it is longer and more complex. A range of characters appear that were in both those other plays - the Pope, the Emperor, the King of France, the Venetian, and the Confederate. Those plays also included characters specifically relevant to the Italian political situation, whereas the additional characters in *Der Nollhart* shift the focus to ‘German’ politics: the Bishop of Mainz, the Pfalzgraf (the Count Palatine), the Turk, the Landknecht and the Bruder Veit (two names for a German mercenary soldier), and the Jew.

On the other hand, there is an equally important religious dimension in this play that is missing from the earlier dramas. In *Der Nollhart* the political characters discuss their future with four prophetic characters: *Der Bruder* (the Lollard); with *Methodius*, the Bishop of Olympia martyred in 311 A.D. whose alleged thoughts first saw light of day in
the seventh century; and with the prophetesses, Birgitta (St.Bridget), the Swedish saint who lived 1303-1373, and Sybylla Chumea, the origins of whose thought are more obscure. Following the traditional Reihenspiel structure each of the play’s characters enters the stage in succession to have discussions with the prophets who have an apocalyptic vision of the future. The apocalyptic was a hugely important theme in this period, not least in Luther’s writings. A huge variety of prophecies and manifestos appeared, some containing intensely apocalyptic visions.

Nearly fifteen hundred lines long, Der Nollhart is considerably longer than any of Gengenbach’s other plays and some of the individual dialogues in it are longer than in any other play. The longest single speech (after the Introduction) in Alt Eydgnosz, for instance, is twenty-five lines long (lines 128-153) - whereas several in Der Nollhart exceed fifty lines. While the character of der Bruder has the anchor role as narrator and commentator, sustaining the dialogue throughout, the structural role of the other three wise people is less clear as they ‘dip’ in and out of the discussion. The Sybylla has only two short speeches (lines 219-38 and 246-56) before she disappears from the play. Birgitta lasts until halfway - her last line is line 695. Methodius makes one quite substantial fifty-six line contribution (lines 553-609) in the first half and then resurfaces in the second for a relatively lengthy 169 line debate with the Turk.

The play represents a significant advance in Gengenbach’s dramatic technique. Van Abbé argues that:

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1 The sybils were pre-Christian classical prophetesses, but sybilline prophecies appeared during the Middle Ages relating to the Turks, the Christian Empire and the coming of the Antichrist.


3 Translations of a selection of manifestos, and a contemporary description of the 1513 rising in the Breisgau, wrongly attributed to Gengenbach, can be found in: Strauss, pp.144-69.
The scenes are not merely simple dialogues between two personages alone [...] (but) The protagonists are bandied about between the 'prophets', so that the stage, despite the length of individual speeches, must have presented a lively picture of movement all the time.\(^4\)

The play's prophecies have relatively loose links with the real prophecies of (or those previously attributed to) the prophets whose characters appear in it. For one thing, as Raillard points out, prophets who lived in the Middle Ages and earlier were hardly likely to have much to say about the Swiss Confederacy, so Gengenbach just wrote it in:

\[
\text{Da keine alten, auf die Zukunft der Schweizer gemünzten Weissagungen vorliegen, müß sich Gengenbach selbst helfen, und das fällt ihm keineswegs schwer.}^5
\]

Violanta Werren-Uffer has made a detailed analysis of the text's sources. She estimates that 4.5% of the verses were 'borrowed' from original prophetic texts, but that much higher proportions were based on the 1488 *Prognosticatio* of Johann Lichtenberger and Wolfgang Aytinger's *Methodius*, which accounted for some 8% and 13% respectively.\(^6\) Significant though Lichtenberger's ideas were, his eschatology was considerably darker than Gengenbach's and far more astrologically based. Peukert says of Lichtenberger's ideas:

\[
\text{Der Untergang ist vor der Türe und seine Wirbel ergreifen jeden Menschen dieser letzten Zeit; selbst der, der widerstrebt, wird in das Kreisen und das Saugen dieses immer stärker und zu immer furchtbarer Gewalt ansteigenden Stromes gezogen. Selbst der, der widerstrebt, doch so und so viele widerstreben nicht; sie überlassen sich dem Strom; sein Tosen und Jagen fasziniert sie, ihre Augen halten unverwandt und unablässig an den in den Abgrund zielenden Strudeln; ja es ergreift sie eine Wollust, die Abgründe noch um vieles dunkler zu erkennen, als sie es wirklich sind. Ein solcher, der alles dunkel sich noch dunkler machen muß, ist jener pfälzische Astrologe Lichtenberger.}^7
\]

In the Vorred of *Der Nollhart, der Bruder* tells us that his original prophecies were made

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\(^4\) Van Abbé, *Development*, p.56.

\(^5\) Raillard, p.24.


in his book of 1488 and astronomical events are regarded as warnings to people that they should heed biblical ones:

Btracht ich groß färlicheit vnd plag /
Die mirs Ecclipsis do anzeigt
Vnd es bißhar sich hat geëuït /
(pp.23-25, lines 33-35).

The reference to astrological signs reappears some lines later:

Hend gsehen wie sich Sun vnd Mon
An den hymel hand verkert
Deßglichen ouch blütige schwert /
Dar zü sind kon groß wasser brüch /
(p.27, lines 89-92).

Lichtenberger’s book of 1488 featured a ‘Bruder Rainhart der Lollhart’ to which Gengenbach’s Bruder Nollhart was a very clear reference. Raillard lists the three thematic links between the Prognosticatio and Der Nollhart as: the astrological; the idea that the Apocalypse can be prevented through repentance; and Church Reform. Of these the astrological theme is the least important, despite Lichtenberger’s influence: after the lines in the Introduction noted above there are only two further references in the play to astrological signs, which in both cases mention the Eclipse again.

The links with Methodius are focussed on the prophecies relating to the Final Days. A frequent motif in various pseudo-Methodius prophecies was of a resurrected, reforming emperor who would level the mighty landlords and usher in a period of plenty. Not surprisingly the Bundschuh and other peasant conspiracies frequently drew upon these and Gengenbach faintly echoes this in Der Nollhart with such lines about the emperor as:

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8 Raillard, pp.27-28.

9 Werren-Uffer, Der Nollhart, p.87, line 378 (Der Bruder to the Der Babst); and p.90, line 507 (Der Bruder to the Der Keyser).

10 For more discussion on the various pseudo-Methodius prophecies see: Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium (London: Secker and Warburg, 1957), pp.72-74; and Peuckert, i, p.165ff.
Brant reproduced Aytinger's version of the Methodius in 1498 and it was very popular, but in their own writings neither he nor Gengenbach showed much interest in the fantasies of a resurrected Frederick II or other symbols of a mythical past golden age. In Der Nollhart Gengenbach focuses rather on the need for the present emperor, Maximilian, to play a central role in tackling the problems of Christianity.

The treatment of a mixture of political and religious themes in Der Nollhart was an ambitious project and it was the first time a writer had attempted it on the stage in German-speaking Europe. The nearest plays to deal with such themes are the religious Last Judgement Plays that were performed throughout this period, sometimes at carnival.\(^{11}\) Hans Sachs, for example, wrote one entitled Tragedia mit 34 personen, des jüngsten gerichtes, auß der schrift uberal zu sammen gezogen, und hat 7 actus.\(^{12}\) In acknowledging the different strands of thought that he drew on throughout the play, Gengenbach has the narrator say in the Vorred:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nit allein durcht Astronomy} \\
\text{Sunder durch manche prophety} \\
\text{Als dañ Methodius auch erklärt} \\
\text{Joachim vnd Cyrill der werdt} \\
\text{Birgit / Sybill / vnd noch vyl me /} \\
\text{Gen byspil vyl der alten ee /} \\
\text{Hat als nüt gholfen noch biß har/}
\end{align*}
\]

(p.27, lines 70-77).

Scribner describes the prevailing intensity of apocalyptic expectation:

> The emotive force of eschatological references for a sixteenth-century reader can be understood only by examining the greater sense of immediacy about the last days which prevailed at the beginning of the sixteenth century. [...] the

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\(^{11}\) For further discussion, see: Bernd Neumann, Geistliches Schauspiel im Zeugnis der Zeit: zur Aufführung mittelalterlicher religiöser Dramen im deutschen Sprachgebiet, 2 vols (Munich & Zurich: Artemis, 1987).

Reformation occurred in an apocalyptic age, an age which expected a great change in the world. This may have been understood as the end of the world or as the coming of a new epoch of the world’s existence. In either case, the imminence of this great change was proclaimed continually by prophetic works found in rich abundance during the two generations before the emergence of an evangelical movement.\(^{13}\)

Scribner goes on to note that one of the vital elements that contributed to the apocalyptic fervour was: ‘a strong sense of pessimism and fatalism’.

II. *DER NOLLHART* (1517): POLITICAL THEMES

a) Merignano

Werren-Uffer views the play as essentially fatalistic, written in response to the Swiss defeat by the French at Merignano in September 1515:

> Solch fatalistische politische Haltung lässt sich wohl weitgehend als Ausdruck einer durch das Debakel von Merignano ausgelösten ‘Selbstbewusstseinskrise’ Gengenbachs deuten.\(^{14}\)

One problem with this analysis is that Merignano is not directly mentioned or dwelt upon in the play.\(^{15}\) This is not conclusive, but it means that it is possible that other important contemporary events not directly mentioned could also have contributed to the feeling of fatalism. This is not to argue that the defeat at Merignano was not a real blow as far as many people in Basel were concerned, but the crisis in society went deeper, locally and internationally.

Here is an extract from the diary of Fridolin Ryff (a Basel citizen) from the year *Der Nollhart* was published:

> Im jar alsz man zalt noch der ghurt unsere erlösers 1517, kam ein groser sterben mit grosem houptwe, das die lut in grosse doubsucht fiellen, und kam die pestilenz

\(^{13}\) Scribner, *For the Sake*, pp.116-17.


\(^{15}\) *Der Babst* refers to a ‘Schlacht’ near Milan, line 342, p.37.
A plague that kills thirty per cent of the city's population is a major disaster - although arguably it was one of the 'normal' quota of life's hazards. Ryff compares its impact to the Swiss defeat at the battle of Merignano eighteen months earlier (the 'Schlacht'), although far fewer people actually died in the battle than in the plague. Basel's total contingent at Merignano was twelve hundred strong and if their losses were similar to the overall Swiss casualties of around twenty-five per cent, then some three hundred men died there.17 The main damage was psychological as previously smaller Swiss armies had nearly always managed to defeat the French. This unexpected humiliation proved to be a decisive blow to Swiss military and political ambitions.18 The resulting divisions among the confederates worried the Eydgnosz:

Wañ durch vntrew sind sie enstanden
Die man dañ treib yn iren landen
Durch die oberkeit / merck mich eben
Thet sich ein solcher bundt erheben /
(p.66, lines 1110-14).

These were years full of critical events for Basel. The plague lasted at least six months and appears to have broken out after carnival 1517 so it would not have influenced


17 This figure of twenty-five per cent casualties is taken from: 'Die Anonyme Chronik der Mailänderkriege 1507-1516', published in Basler Chroniken, 6 (1902), 23-72, p.68. However, another report puts Swiss losses at over fifty per cent - 16,535 men out of a force of 30,000: 'Newe warffaffte gezeitung der kriegßleuff so zwischen de Aidgenossen vnd khunig von Franckreich ergangen sind ja dem M.CCCCC xv. jar.' in Emil Weller, Die Ersten Deutschen Zeitungen (Tübingen: Laupp, 1872), p.29.

18 Fully described in: Schaufelberger, Marignano. In the past, Swiss pikes had proved a match for French armour. The Swiss were not a match, however, for the rapidly improving French artillery and this is why the change in the balance of military power signalled by Merignano was relatively permanent.
Gengenbach when writing *Der Nollhart*.\(^{19}\) He would not have missed the high grain prices that prevailed from 1516 to 1518.\(^{20}\) Here is how another anonymous diarist reported their impact: ‘Anno 1517 was gar ein grosse thury und gelt ein viertzel korn zu Basel 3½ lb. Do thetten die von Straszburg ein kasten uff, sunst were es den armen lutten ubel gangen’.\(^{21}\)

The whole period from 1490 until 1525 was also characterised by intense class conflict across Switzerland and Southern Germany. It was particularly critical in Basel between 1515 and 1517. The Guilds’ struggle for complete control of the city council took a decisive step in 1515 when the majority of councillors, who represented the leadership of the guilds, successfully attacked the privileges of the patrician *Hohe Stube*, who had had the right to appoint eight councillors, the *Achtrburger*. The end of the domination of council affairs by these appointees and the four *Ritter* appointed to the council by the nobility was signalled in 1516 when the council appointed their first ever non-noble *Bürgermeister*, Jakob Meier.\(^{22}\) High levels of social conflict are indicated in the first lines of *Der Nollhart*:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nun hören zù mein lieben leüt} \\
\text{Was ich eüch kürzlich hie bedeüt} \\
\text{Von ettlichen stenden dyser wält} \\
\text{Der sich doch keiner me recht helt.} \\
\text{Geystlich / wältlich / ritter / knecht} \\
\text{Vnd dar zù och als fröwisch gschlecht.}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{23}\) lines 2-7).

\(^{19}\) Dating the 1517 plague exactly is a problem as is dating the publication of the two editions of the play. The plague was probably over by September 1517 because Ryff reports that the Forest Cantons invited Basel to a shooting contest to help cheer them up. The Appendix to ‘Der Anonyme Chronik der Mailänder Kriege’, cited above (footnote 17), says: ‘Dise pläg weret ein halb jär, und kam glich daruff ein grosser sterbet der pestilenz und starb vil volck.’ (p.84).


\(^{22}\) See also chapter 2, IV, p.66. Meier fought at Merignano and his election is now remembered because he commissioned Holbein the Younger, then aged nineteen, to paint the portraits of him and his wife Dorothea that hang in the *Kunstmuseum* Basel. It was Holbein’s first commission while he (and his brother Ambrosius) was still a journeyman in Hans Herbst’s workshop: Wilson, pp.54-57.
The Guilds’ drive for power reached its climax in 1521 when a new city constitution was drawn up which reduced the combined council representation of the Achtburgertum and the Ritter to two and simultaneously eliminated the power of the Church, abolishing the oath of allegiance to the Bishop of Basel.

A significant prelude to the Guilds’ victory had been the decision to join the Swiss Confederation in 1501, marking a political move away from the Emperor - the act which is believed to have prompted Brant to leave to live in Strassburg. Up until 1520 Gengenbach continued to vigorously support the Emperor, to whom Der Nollhart is dedicated jointly with the Confederacy. As we shall see below, in the play and in other works of Gengenbach’s, the Emperor is allocated such an absolutely central role in saving Christianity that one wonders whether Gengenbach had doubts about Basel’s accession to the Confederacy.23

On the land across southern Germany in particular the peasants were resisting the widespread efforts of the landlords (ecclesiastical and temporal) to impose new labour duties and to withdraw common rights to hunting, grazing and gathering fuel. Basel council was deeply involved because the city itself owned considerable land and large numbers of peasants in the surrounding areas. There were also widespread demands from the peasants about tithes and parish priests. Just north of Basel - as was described in chapter 2 - the Breisgau had been a centre of Bundschuh revolts in 1502 and 1513; and in September 1517 plans were discovered for another, rather more sophisticated, rising under the same Joss Fritz who had been a leader in 1513.24 The impending uprising of 1525 was to pose the greatest threat of all to Basel’s council, when peasants sacked the monastery at Liestal and marched on the city while the weavers were rioting within. For one brief moment on 3 May 1525 it looked as if the peasant rebels might succeed in

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23 For a useful discussion of this see: Raillard, pp.37-39. Raillard is perhaps more emphatic on page 36 than I would be when he says: ‘Daß Gengenbach ganz und nur Schweizer ist, beweist er in dem Werk aus seiner Frühzeit, [...]’


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forming an insurrectionary alliance with the weavers.\footnote{For further details see: Philip Naylor, Peasants and Protestants, Rebels and Reformers: Class Struggle in Reformation Basel, Socialist History Working Papers, ed. by Enid Fox, Keith Flett, and Dave Renton, 6 (London: London Socialist Historians Group, 2000).}

The peasant disturbances do not appear in Der Nollhart, but there is further evidence of the contemporary social tensions. The Pfalzgraff in his opening lines complains:

\begin{verbatim}
Den fürsten / solt mercken eben
Vmb die man doch wil gantz nüt geben /
Kein ghorsamkeit wil jetz me sein /
(p.54, lines 812-14).
\end{verbatim}

Der Bruder warns the Pfalzgraff that he must listen to what he has been taught: the nobility have been guilty of 'leichtfertigkeit vnd tyrany' (line 837). But it is the threat from below that provokes the Der Bruder again a little later in his discussion with the Eydignosz. He makes a forty-five line speech, full of biblical proofs, explaining that, 'Sächs ding zerstören alle land', which are not the traditional seven deadly sins but rather more like a list that a father - or a town council - might spell out to his naughty children:

\begin{verbatim}
Das ist hoffart / Vnghorsamkeit
Dar zū nyd vnd lychtfertigkeit /
Verzwyflung vnd auch gydt /
Zerstören gar vyl land und lūt.
(pp.66-67, lines 1136-40).
\end{verbatim}

Of particular concern in the discussion between them is not peasant unrest, however, but 'Reislauferei' and money (themes appearing in X Alter which have been previously discussed in chapter 4, I - page 98). In Spring 1516, financed by English gold, a Basel contingent took the field against the French for one last time as part of a group of five dissident cantons who refused to agree with the confederate majority's acceptance of peace with France at the Treaty of Gallarte. However, when the dissidents' ally, the Emperor, withdrew his army Basel finally agreed to sign the Treaty of Eternal Friendship with France at Fribourg. It would mean from then on that the city council would receive payments from the French to remain allies, but there would be a fall in the level of
military activity from which citizens could earn money. This too must have caused considerable social tension.

b) International politics

As a consequence of the new alliance with France very considerable sums were paid to the Basel council, which became in due course a major scandal and a cause of popular riots (the *Pensionsturm* of 1521). In *Der Nollhart* Gengenbach condemns money and the corruption associated with it for the damage it was doing to the whole Confederacy:

Dañ vnß das gált also verblent
Ein gantze eydignoschafft es gschennt /
Dar durch wir lyb vnß läben wogen
Vnd werden doch allzyt betrogen /
Das schafft allein das heimlich schmiren
Dar durch sy vnß täglih verfüren /
(p.68, lines 1192-97).

*Der Bruder* introduces a new political argument against mercenary service:

So dorffst nit dienen fürsten herren /
Möcht dich ocht kein böß gelt verfüren
Wilt aber dich nit selb regieren
Vnd wilt verderben leüt vnd land
(p.69, lines 1216-19).

The brutality of war - which was the key argument against being a mercenary in *X Alter* - is not forgotten. *Der Bruder* accuses the *Landknecht*, the German mercenary:

O ho bist du der brüder Vyt
Von dem ich ghört hab lange zyt
Der so vyl witwen weisen macht
Der tüfel hat dich vff erden bracht /
Kein land vor dir nit sicher ist
Jñi allen due gewesen bist.
Darum ich red on allen spot
Du seist des Endkristis vorbot.
(p.75, lines 1323-30).

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26 The income paid to the council in ‘gifts’ and other payments from various foreign powers is listed in: Harms, 1, p.385 (1510-11); 1, p.389 (1511-12); 1, p.394 (1512-13); 1, p.399 (1513-14); etc. See also p.55 about the *Pensionsturm*. 

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The *Landknecht* protests that he has served the Emperor well and helped to fight the French in Italy and in the Low Countries.

Widows and orphans may have concerned *der Bruder*, but for Gengenbach it seems that signing peace with the French was too high a price to pay. A strong anti-French theme recurs within *Der Nollhart*, in particular over the way the activities of the French had damaged the Church since their invasion of Italy in 1494. The Bishop of Mainz is warned of further forthcoming miseries and so too is the Pope: 'Rom wirt dañ sein in grosser pein,' (line 319). The Venetian also complains about the French 'cock':

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Ein anhab was der han für wor
Das vnser land also jst gschent
Zerschleifft / zerissen / vnd verbrent
Vnd so vyl witwen / weisen gmacht /
```

(p.57, lines 880-84).

There are frequent calls on the Emperor to prevent further damage. In the same speech by *der Bruder* quoted above, for example, he says:

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By Machabeo wol verstand
wirt ein keyser sein vB dütschem land
welcher den gwalt von got wirt han
Jm mag auch niemandt widerstan.
```

(p.36, lines 315-18).

One of the key elements of international political instability and crisis was the breakdown of the Church's political and moral authority, and it is a central concern of the play:

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Das ichs nit lenger mocht verschwigen/
Vnd wolt solichs ochten offenbaren
Vff sich dest baß könten bewaren
All ständ der gantzen christenheit /
```

(p.25, lines 37-40).

The conflicts among the western powers - especially over Italy - were evidence of the political crisis of Christendom. *Der Bruder* may have held the French responsible with their invasion of Italy in 1494, but the papacy shared some of the blame with its own overt political ambitions, especially under Pope Julius II. It went wider than the
jockeying for power in Italy. The Church’s role as a temporal power was not just under attack in Italy, but also within individual states and cities like Basel who wanted to consolidate their own political control at the Church’s expense. As landowners and members of the feudal aristocracy, the ‘Princes’ of the Church in Germany were hugely powerful and it was against one of them that Sickingen directed the Knights’ Revolt in 1522. The inability of the Christian powers to unite and resist the renewed westward push of the Turks is seen in the play as part of the religious as much as the political crisis.

III. DER NOLLHART (1517): RELIGIOUS THEMES

a) Religious Criticism and Doubt

With the advent of printing and the explosion of scientific and practical enquiry the Church was losing the struggle to control knowledge and its dissemination. Papal Bulls on censorship were increasingly difficult to implement. The religious teachings of the Church were becoming the subject of intense criticism. The Church was no longer all powerful, infallible. In the same year of 1494 that the French invaded Italy, Sebastian Brant had warned the Pope in Das Narrenschiff that the Church needed to put its house in order, saying that: ‘Sant Peters schyfflin ist im schwangk’ (page 280). Of course the Church had been criticised before, but Das Narrenschiff marked a new period of public critical discussion about the Church that had not been seen since before the Council of Basel (1431-1449).

Basel was at the centre of this wave of scepticism and it was here that Erasmus came to stay in 1514, where he could be relatively free to write and publish. The 1515 edition of his ‘Adages’ contained one of his most important essays on Church Reform, Sileni Alcibiadis (that was to be republished, changed and expanded in later editions). In it Erasmus condemns the extravagance and arrogance of the clergy. He says of the popes, for example:
I wish them to be fierce warriors, but against the real enemies of the Church, simony, pride, lust, ambition, anger, irreligion. Christians must always be watching out for, and attacking, Turks such as these. 27

On Church wealth, he asks, 'Why evaluate the successor of St. Peter on those very riches which Peter himself gloried in not possessing?' (page 289). His solution four pages later is blunt, 'Leave worldly things to the world [...] The more you add in the way of worldly goods, the less will Christ bestow of his own'. These were ideas that Gengenbach clearly shared.

The moral crisis of the Church grew ever deeper the longer the implementation of reform was delayed. One of the key messages of Der Nollhart is that there is an urgent need to reform the Church. Several times the demand is repeated, sometimes in quite drastic terms:

Das vyl vnkrut dar jā vffgodt /
Darumb es worlich wirt sein not /
Das dyser acker werd gerūt
Mit einem ysen das wol schnit /
Dar nach gereinget wol mit fewr /
(p.31, lines 171-75).

These words are spoken by Birgitta and reflect the real views of the saint herself. She prefaces this attack with a statement of her belief in the underlying goodness of the Church: 'Rom ist ein acker güter früchten/' (line 167). Gengenbach focusses the call for reform on the priesthood and not, as Erasmus did and Luther would, on the Pope himself. There are only two mentions of specific aspects of the Church’s activities that should be reformed. In the first passage, Der Bruder says:

Die Symony mag dañ nit blihen
Die jetz zū Rom ist der stat
(p.41, lines 468-69).

Here again there are echoes of Birgitta and of Erasmus too. In the second passage he refers to those aspects of the Church’s wealth accumulation that were central to

contemporary popular dissatisfaction with the clergy and refers yet again to the key role of the Emperor in reform:

Als du dem keyser hast geseit
Hat mich auch wol dar vff bereit
Wañ er die pfaffen reformiert
So wolt ich auch haben zů gschniert
Vnd wolt yn do vergolten han
Was sie den meinen land getan
Die yn zinß rent hand müssen geben /
O daß mich got so lang ließ løben
Das jch mich möcht an ynen rächen
Wañ sie nit können anders fächten
Dañ mit irem brieffen vnd ouch bannen
Jch wolt jn baß die seiten spannen
Das sie nit wurden also feißt /
( pp.71-73, lines 1272-84).

b) The Antichrist

Quite who the Antichrist was and his exact relation to the Final Days varied according to different commentators, despite the detail that was known about his biography. Certainly the Antichrist's impending appearance was a sign that the Final Judgement was at hand, but, as Scribner notes, there were two key dimensions that were subject to varying interpretations:

First, it was unclear whether he was to be regarded as a single person or as a collectivity. Second, the appearance of the Antichrist could signify either that the world would end with this defeat, or that this defeat would inaugurate the millennium before the end of the world. 28

Brant, writing about the Antichrist in chapter 103 in Das Narrenschiff, warned that:

Der endkrist sygt jm grossem Schiff
Vnd hat sin Bottschafft vB gesandt
Falscheit verkundt er/ durch all landt
Falsch glouben/ vnd vil falscher ler
Wachsen von tag zů tag ye mer
(p.280).

28 Scribner, For the Sake, p.149.
To Brant and his contemporaries the Antichrist was the embodiment of evil, who was manifested through one or more of the seven deadly sins. Brant wanted the Church to change not to be destroyed. He feared the downfall of the Catholic Church would pave the way for the Antichrist - a view broadly shared by many humanists. This is how the coming of the Antichrist is portrayed in *Der Nollhart*: echoing Brant, *der Bruder* in the introductory lines tells his audience that God has given plenty of warnings to forsake sin. Humanity has, however, remained blind to these signs:

Kürztlich/ noch sind wir also blind /
Das wir von sünden nit wend lon /
(p.27, lines 87-88).

Whereas Brant looked to the Pope to sort out the problems of the Church, Gengenbach portrays a tension between Pope and Emperor and he hoped that the Emperor would carry through reform: ‘Der wirt straffen die christenheit’(line 573). The important shift that Luther made by 1520 was that in his eyes the Pope himself was the Antichrist and that the Roman Church could not therefore be saved, it had to be destroyed:

Ich hoff, der jüngst tag sey fur der thur, es kann unnd mag yhe nit erger werdenn, den es der Romische stuel treybt. Gottis gepot druckt er unter, seinn gepot erhebt er druber: ist das nit der Endchrist, szo sag einnder, wer er sein muge. 29

In the Lutheran canon the Pope became variously the Antichrist, the Devil, the whore of Babylon, a seven-headed beast, rapacious warrior prince, a dragon (sometimes with three heads), and a beast with two horns. 30

c) The Turk and the Antichrist
Luther reflected popular beliefs about the Turks and appeared sometimes to conflate the


Pope and the Turks as the Antichrist.\(^{31}\) Scribner's description of the general confusion nicely encapsulates the uncertainty apparent in the portrayal of the Turk in *Der Nollhart:*

> In late medieval tradition the mystical Antichrist could be discerned in heretics, bad Christians and un-believers. It was natural enough for an age plagued by incursions from the Turk to link him to the diabolical, most commonly with Gog and Magog, the hordes of Satan. The question of whether the Turk was the Antichrist or merely his servant was a pertinent question. Luther thought seriously about the problem, and evangelical theologians debated it.\(^{32}\)

Whoever he is the Turk in *Der Nollhart* is unequivocally evil. *Methodius* tells him: 'Du bist worlich der hölisch hund', (line 929). *Methodius* goes on, saying that he is the dragon described in the Apocalyptic prophecies of the Book of Revelations, the beast with seven heads and ten horns.\(^{33}\) This dragon is the 'Devil, and Satan' according to St. John. In the woodcut accompanying the text of *Der Nollhart* the Turk is not portrayed as the dragon himself, but rather as accompanied by such a creature.

Gengenbach's portrayal of the Turks shifted away from this traditional view in the two later publications, *Drei Christen* and *Anzeigung ze eroberen die Türcky.*\(^{34}\) Both were published in 1523 or later. In these the image was much more positive, particularly in *Drei Christen,* where the religious tolerance and sound political order of the Turks were favourably compared with western regimes. The *Anzeigung* is altogether a more curious document; despite its title its central concern is not Turkey at all but how to deal with the surfeit of monks and nuns emerging from monasteries and convents to wander the streets of Germany. The Turks are portrayed just as heathens rather than Satanic hordes.

That the Turks could only successfully threaten the West because of the Church's

\(^{31}\) For a discussion about Luther's variable attitude to the Turks, and also the Catholic writers of *Türkenbüchlein* who were generally much less eschatological, see: John Bohnstedt, 'The Infidel Scourge of God', in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society,* 58 (1968), part 9, 23-25.

\(^{32}\) Scribner, *For the Sake,* p.181.

\(^{33}\) *Revelation of St. John,* chapter 12, vv. 2-9.

\(^{34}\) For full details and discussion see chapter 8, III\textit{d} and III\textit{e} (pages 259-65).
decadence was not a new idea. In *Das Narrenschiff* Brant argued that Christendom would be able to withstand the Turks only if Christians were united and god-fearing. Brant was saying this in 1494 when the Turks had been relatively peaceful for many years having withdrawn from Otranto in 1481, and when they did not appear to be actively preparing further western adventures. Subsequently, as anxiety about the apocalypse intensified, the Turks had become increasingly demonised in the popular imagination in the early years of the sixteenth century. This imagined threat took on a real form once more in the latter half of the second decade with the conquest of Syria and then Egypt, and the consequent change in the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean.

*Der Nollhart* was written as the revival of Turkish expansionism became apparent and the practical military need for Christian unity became an urgent reality: *Der Bruder* in discussion with the *Pfaltzgraff* laments:

> Das durch der fürsten vneinigkeit  
> werd kon der dürck biß an den Rhin  
> (p.56, lines 862-63).

John Hale quotes Henry VIII's response when he was asked for help against this new Turkish threat by the Venetian ambassador in 1516:

' [...] you are wise, and in your prudence will understand that no general expedition against the Turks will ever be effected so long as such treachery prevails among the Christian powers that their sole thought is to destroy one another.'

Venice in some ways epitomised the disunity. The Venetian in *Der Nollhart* is taken to task for having made an alliance with the Turks (lines 892-99), the cause of the Battle of the Adda in 1509 and a theme in the song *Adda-Schlacht* published by Gengenbach. The Venetians had broken ranks with their fellow Christians (despite the fact that these self-same Christians were at war with one another) and this was clearly still shocking enough in people's memory for Gengenbach to include a mention of it in *Der Nollhart*. The

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35 Brant, *Das Narrenschiff*, chapter 99, lines 1-12 in particular.

Veneitan is described as a ‘verräter’, a traitor (line 896).

The Turkish threat was to intensify under Suleiman the Magnificent and by 1522 they had captured Rhodes and advanced across the Balkans as far as Belgrade. Brant and Gengenbach were among many others who wrote leaflets about the Turks: in the first fifty years of the sixteenth century throughout Europe over nine hundred editions of leaflets, sermons and other Türkенbüchlein were published. Twenty-six of these were of Luther’s writings. Bohstedt comments:

If there was any aim that most of the pamphleteers had in common, it was to bring about the moral and spiritual regeneration of the Christians as individuals and as a society. The existence of the Turkish peril provided them with a particularly strong argument to the effect that the Christians must, “mollify the paternal heart of God” through repentance, reform, and prayer, thus persuading Him to forgive their sins and accept them once again as His dear children [...]38

d) The Jew as Antichrist and anti-Semitism

Gengenbach’s version of the biography of the Antichrist is recapitulated in lines 1403-22 of Der Nollhart by der Bruder. It tells how the Antichrist was understood to be a Jew from the tribe of Dan:

Es wirt ouch ein künigin von Mason
Mit vyll der iudën zu im kon
Meinendt ir messias sy vff erden
Gar fast sie sich dañ frowen werden.
Vyl zeichen wirt er thûn die zyt
Do mit er dañ betrügt die lüt
(p.79, lines 1417-22).

Werren-Uffer believes that Gengenbach’s source was the pseudo-Methodius: ‘Den ‘Lebenslauf” des Antichrist muss Gengenbach ebenfalls aus dem pseudo-Methodius kennen.’39 Scribner tells us that such a biography had its obscure origins in the history of early Christianity: ‘It drew skilfully on the classic apocalyptic texts - the Book of Daniel,

38 Bohnstedt, p.31.
The Jews were not just heathens like the Turks, but had rejected Christ as the Messiah - indeed they had killed him - and were still actively awaiting the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies about the arrival of their own Messiah. The Red Jews, the ten lost tribes, would form a massive army under the leadership of their Messiah according to the *Jüdenbuchlein* written by Victor von Carben in 1509:

> Beyond Babylon in the east, in the Caspian mountains, is our king, who is descended from the true line of Judah. And those whom he commands are also called genuine Jews [...] and are now called in the vernacular tongue the red and most mighty Jews, who are far more numerous than all Christians combined.

This army would invade and overwhelm Christian Europe.

Associating the Jews with the Antichrist was common in popular works of this period. Other stereotypical characteristics were highlighted to elaborate their demonisation, such as their appearance and smell, their supposed rituals. Gow discusses various examples of popular literature, including a section about *Der Nollhart* (pages 127-28). It is interesting that Gow is the first writer to describe this part of *Der Nollhart* as anti-Semitic. Only Werren-Uffer had previously discussed this aspect of the play, attempting to place it in context with the whole piece. She treats this section somewhat differently from Gow, arguing that it is essentially focussed on the apocalyptic and not intended as a specifically anti-Semitic diatribe:

> Gengenbach lässt den Juden weniger aus politisch-antisemitischen Erwägungen auftreten, als dass er vielmehr anhand dieser Figur noch einmal auf die schon im Zusammenhang mit dem Kaiser erwähnte Endzeit hinweisen will.

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41 Translated and quoted in: Gow, p. 137. Von Carben, a converted Jew, was a member of the same Dominican circle as Johannes Pfefferkorn, whose efforts between 1509 and 1520 to have Hebrew books destroyed were resisted by Johannes Reuchlin. The resultant international controversy became known as the ‘Reuchlin Affair’. See the next section (IV) for a further discussion.


The central role of the Holy Roman Empire and the Emperor as the true chosen instrument of God is again asserted in this section, in the discussion between the Der Bruder and Der Jud, the Jew. Der Bruder explains that the Jews were no longer God’s chosen people, having rejected Jesus:

O wie ein schnöder jud du bist /  
Weist nit das er lengst kömen ist  
Gab Jacob dir nit zű verston  
von Juda wurd nit der zäpter gnon  
Es käm dañ der / der zstenden ist  
Lüg ob das nit sy Jesu crist  
So ward der zäpter von eüch gnummen /  
Das do gschach durch das Römisch reic  
(p.81, lines 1433-41).

As Der Nollhart was an account of contemporary apocalyptic prophecies, Werren-Uffer is correct to locate this section of the play in that context. Gengenbach’s audience would arguably have felt that the discussion of the Antichrist was incomplete without the inclusion of the Jews. However, that does not excuse the critic from analysing its explicit anti-Semitism and trying to understand the popularity of anti-Semitic ideas about the Apocalypse.

An historian like Goldhagen might argue that the anti-Semitism in Der Nollhart was normal as it is part of the German psychic heritage. There is certainly plenty of evidence to support the view that anti-Semitism was common currency - its appearance in Der Nollhart was entirely unexceptional. Prominent Humanists such as Erasmus were routinely anti-Semitic - as indeed Luther was to become. However, it certainly was not in every popular writer’s psyche. Sebastian Brant was not anti-Semitic, for example.


45 Erasmus’s hatred of the Jews is discussed in Hilmar M. Pabel, ‘Erasmus of Rotterdam and Judaism: A Re-examination in the Light of New Evidence’, in Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, 87 (1996), 9-37. Martin Luther’s earlier tolerant views are in the 1524 pamphlet, Daß unser Herr Jesu Christus ein geborener Jude war, WA 11, 314-36 and an example of his later views are in: Von den Juden und ihren Lügen, WA 53, 417-552.
There are problems with Goldhagen's argument when applied to Gengenbach, however. The period saw a growing fascination with the Apocalypse and apocalyptic theories that described the Jews as the army of the devil. The numbers of expulsions and attacks on Jews rose. Yet despite the intensification of popular apocalyptic anxiety, anti-Semitism disappears from Gengenbach's work after 1511. Goldhagen's theory is static and does not help us very much to understand these changes in the levels of apocalypticism and anti-Semitism over historical time.

Gengenbach does not discriminate between heathens in Der Nollhart; he is hostile to Turk and Jew alike. Anti-Semitic expressions in Der Nollhart show a level of hostility and abuse from der Bruder that is not necessarily any higher than that expressed towards the Turk. A useful test would have been his views about converted Jews and whether or not he subscribed to the official policy of the Church to welcome them (as did Luther), but these are not known.

The economic insecurities of peasants, craftsmen and merchants in Basel in the early sixteenth century were not based on competition from a real group of Jews that they - or a faction - wanted to eliminate out of material self-interest. Basel had been a city without a Jewish population since 1397. In 1517 there simply were no tangible resident targets so the basis for the anti-Semitism of the guilds and of Gengenbach must have lain elsewhere. The obvious location was among the same wider social conflicts and strains

46 See chapter 7, IIb (page 208) on Der Laienspiegel which discusses the teachings in Romans on the significance of circumcision in relation to faith.

47 Goldhagen believes that the innate level of anti-Semitism remains constant, but that its outward expression varies: 'it becomes) more or less manifest, owing primarily to altering political and social conditions [...].' p.39.

48 Following the Black Death the first Jewish community of Basel suffered an appalling pogrom in 1349, as they were blamed for poisoning the wells and causing the plague - as they were in many cities throughout Europe. The second community was established shortly after, but fled in 1397 for fear of further persecution. Nordemann reports: 'Während der nächsten 400 Jahre, vom 14. bis Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, bestand in Basel keine eigentliche Judenniederlassung.' Theodor Nordemann, Zur Geschichte der Juden in Basel - Jubilaeumschrift der Israelitischen Gemeinde Basel aus Anlass des 150 jährigen Bestehens (Basel: Israelitische Gemeinde, 1955), p.30.
that Scribner believed had generated the increased contemporary fascination with the apocalyptic.

Increasing economic pressure from the landlords and the expansion of the exchange economy was driving the peasants to increasingly frequent revolts and was also driving them into the hands of the moneylenders. Rising prices in the towns and the intensification of competition was putting the smaller craftsmen and those working for a wage under growing pressure as well. With the role of many Jews as usurers, Abram Leon argues that these circumstances were conducive to anti-Semitism: 'It is easy to understand the hatred that the man of the people must have felt for the Jew in whom he saw the direct cause of his ruin [...]'.

Competing Christian bankers and moneylenders were only too happy to stoke the fires of hatred. The anti-Semitism of Folz's play, *Ein Spil von dem Herzogen von Burgund*, can be understood in just such a context as it was written to support the expulsion of the Jews from Nuremberg. Leon argues that with the emergence of capitalism in Western Europe the social role of the Jews as usurers was becoming increasingly precarious:

Later, when exchange economy will have penetrated into the rural domains, the Jewish usurers will be crowded out by these great invading Christian banks. Just like precapitalist commerce, which exchange economy drives out of the cities, the usurer is dislodged by the penetration of capitalism into the feudal domain.

However, Gengenbach does not make a connection in *Der Nollhart* between the Jews and money, let alone with usury. Nowhere does Gengenbach put any blame on the Jews' role in the financial system. For him it is their religious beliefs that are the problem. Gengenbach wrote about money's corrosive impact on society as has been shown in

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50 'Ein spil von dem Herzogen von Burgund', in Keller, *Fastnachts spiele*, 1, pp.169-90. Gow argues that the play was part of a concerted, long-term campaign by the city council and ruling elite supported by such middling citizens as Hans Folz to get rid of the city's Jews: Gow, p.126.

51 Leon, p.168.
Welsch Flusz and in Alt Eydtgnosz, and there are further examples in *Der Nollhart*. While he does not make the connection between the Jews and money he does make it between the nobility and their destructive use of money, as in this example from *Der Nollhart* where *Der Eydtgnosz* says:

Wañ all vntrew wyl fahen an /  
Das machen allein fürsten herren  
Die vnß also das land zerstören  
Mit jrem bösen gält vnd gold  
Vnd jst vnß dänocht keiner hold /  
Dañ vnß das gält also verblent  
Ein gantze eydtgnoschaft gschendt /  
(p.68, lines 1187-93).

It is not unusual for an apocalyptic theory to explain a crisis as the consequence of a scapegoat’s activities on whom the blame for people’s problems can be heaped and whose elimination will solve the crisis.\(^{52}\) In *Der Nollhart* Gengenbach’s perspective is much more pragmatic. His is a multi-causal analysis of the parlous state of the Christian world, putting blame on various factors such as money, on the Church, on the Turks and on the King of France (in particular), as well as on the Jews.

Prietzel, quoting from lines 1244-49, argues that really the play is about just one cause - the breakdown in upbringing:

Wie im *Zehn Alter*-Spiel erscheint auch im *Nollhart* die gegenwärtige Verderbtheit letztlich als unvermeidliche Konsequenz von Erziehungsfehlern, die bereits in der Jugend das Fundament eines verhängnisvollen, nicht zu korrigierenden Fehlerverhaltens gelegt haben.\(^{53}\)

This is to oversimplify a work that is more complex than anything Gengenbach had previously attempted. Upbringing is a factor according to one of the characters, but the different figures in the play represent and illuminate different dimensions of the crisis. In

\(^{52}\) Modern Nazi theories were derived from writers of this period such as the so-called Oberrheinischer Revolutionär: Conrad Stürzel, *Das Buch der 100 Kapitel und 40 Statuten*, ed. by A. Francke and G. Zschaebitz (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1967).

\(^{53}\) Prietzel, *AGB*, p.323.
Der Nollhart the prophets are delivering a warning about how things cannot go on as they are in the present, and how change through the agency of the Emperor is urgently necessary.

Evidence about the impact of Der Nollhart is rather limited. Gengenbach reprinted it twice in 1517, so it must have been well received at the time. It was reprinted three times during his lifetime by other printers - in 1517 and 1522 in Augsburg, and then an edition in 1525 (discussed below in section V). In 1544 Cammerlander in Strasbourg produced a new version of the play called Der alt vnd new Bruder Nollhard that compared the contemporary situation with that of nearly thirty years earlier. Cammerlander subsequently reprinted this edition once. As to performances of the play, the only reference to be found is in Baechtold, who lists a performance in Solothurn in 1527. This limited evidence suggests that the play did have an impact beyond Basel into southern Germany, though nothing on the scale of XAlter.

IV. FÜNF JUden

Two years before he wrote Der Nollhart, Gengenbach wrote an anti-Semitic Meisterlied called Fünf Juden. It focussed on the dangers of Jewish religious belief, its hostility towards Christianity in general and towards the Virgin Mary in particular, making no connection between usury and the Jews. Gengenbach located the story outside his audience’s normal geographical horizons, as he did with Tod, Teufel und Engel, this one in Hœnengowe - Hainault - which was part of Hapsburg Flanders (on the present Belgian-French border). It was clearly modelled on Murner’s piece, die Enthürnung Mariae.

54 Werren-Uffer (1983), p.167. The first two reprints have been ascribed to J.Schönspurger of Augsburg.

55 Werren-Uffer (1983), pp.172-84, gives further details and an analysis of the changes.

56 Baechtold, p.5.
written shortly before, but Gengenbach shortened it and intensified the drama. There has been little discussion of this work by the critics - an embarrassed silence perhaps - though it has some problems in interpretation which make it rather interesting.

In his opening dedication on the first page Gengenbach explains why he wrote it:

Welche History ich Pamphilus Gengenbach zū lob vnd eer der jückfraw Marie / vnd zū schmach vñ schand dë schnôdë judë in ein New lied gesetzt hab vñ jns Spâtë thon gesungë.

Its opening theme is the hostility of the Jews towards Christianity, rather than starting from the more usual perspective of Christian hostility towards the Jews as the executioners of Christ. It tells of a group of five Jews who desecrate a picture of the Virgin Mary in a Church, one of them stabbing it and causing it to bleed. The Jew explains that his motives for attacking the picture of Mary are religious and political:

Das ist das öd verflüchte wyb
V%B welcher bösen wichten lyb
Ist vnb här kon all vnser kyb
Sie spuwten jn die edle keyserinne
Wañ sie vnb hat den falschen man geboren
Dar durch wir hand als vnser land verloren
Vnd sind allsandt also jns ellend kummen
(p.Aii7).

A smith discovers the Jew’s act of desecration and is determined he will be punished; but successively a monk, an abbot, a priest, a count and a meeting of the count’s counsellors are unhappy to act on the smith’s word for it that the Jew was responsible for the attack. The smith is only able to pursue his task because he prays for guidance after each setback and receives it, first from an angel and then from Mary herself. In the end justice is done in a thoroughly medieval way, through trial by combat.

The subjection of the Jew to trial by combat to determine a ‘just’ outcome seems a

57 For a discussion, see Adam Klassert, ‘Zu Thomas Murners Entehrung Mariä durch die Juden’, in Jahrbuch für Geschichte, Sprache und Literatur Elsäß-Lothringens, 22 (1906), 255-76. Prietzel discusses the differences between Murner’s piece and Gengenbach’s. AGB, pp.402-404.
puzzling bit of medieval superstition. Trial by combat was an alternative to trial by ordeal that the Church had condemned at the Lateran Council of 1215 and which had largely died out. Perhaps it symbolises the individual struggle with the forces of evil that cannot be avoided through reliance on temporal or Church authorities. An alternative and more sinister explanation is that it justifies action against the Jews outside the normal judicial process of the courts. Certainly the clerics and the count to whom the smith appeals for justice are shown to vacillate chronically, illustrating perhaps how the authorities were getting soft on iconoclastic and heretical acts, and soft on the heathenism of the Jews.

Gengenbach’s story is highly symbolic, more so than any other of his work. Very much an action song, 537 lines long, the images of the story follow a positive/negative cycle as if intended for the audience to alternately boo and cheer. It is interspersed with a lot of derogatory language about the Jew, being called ‘schnöde schalck’ and such like, so there is no argument that it has plenty of anti-Semitic content.

Against the odds the steadfast smith held out for true Christian behaviour. This would suggest that Gengenbach’s smith was a rabid anti-Semite. Like the story of the avenging cop, ‘Dirty Harry’ in the modern tradition, the smith refused to be hamstrung by mere rules of evidence and standards of proof: the smith knew his man was guilty and was sufficiently determined to get him. Meanwhile people like the count made ‘excuses’ about the Jew’s rights and did nothing:

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wie wol das er ein jud doch ist geboren
Noch müß im recht darumb nit sin verloren
Ich müß jm recht als wol ein christen halten
[p.Bii”]
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In fact the Basel authorities did not tolerate Jews, but actively excluded them from the

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city. This was not the case in many cities where taxation of the Jews was a lucrative source of income and whose authorities had been known to defend Jews from popular attack.

The timing of the publication of *Fiinf Juden* is interesting. Perhaps entirely coincidentally, in 1514-15 there was renewed debate about the so-called Reuchlin affair in theological and academic circles throughout Germany.59 Two books appeared in support of Reuchlin: *Letters of Famous Men (Clarorum Virorum Epistolae)* in 1514 probably written by Reuchlin himself,60 followed by the anonymous publication of *Letters of Obscure Men (Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum)* in 1515.61 These books were popular, especially in centres of humanist thought like Basel, and as part of the debate on Judaism and its sacred texts Gengenbach may have felt moved to contribute *Fiinf Juden*.

*Fiinf Juden* could be interpreted as arguing that as the Jews were hostile to Christianity - just look at how they treated Jesus - then Christians were foolish to show any respect for Judaism. There is, however, no evidence of Gengenbach’s involvement or interest in the Reuchlin affair. He was not a member of the humanist circles that were caught up in it and - more to the point - the dispute was conducted in Latin that limited its popular interest.

*Fiinf Juden* is anti-Semitic, but spreading anti-Semitism may not have been Gengenbach’s only intention in writing it. Gengenbach’s text could be understood as a model example of unswerving Christian belief in the face of disbelief, the resolute


60 There appears to be no modern printed edition of *Clarorum Virorum Epistolae*. It is due to be published in volume 4 of Johannes Reuchlin, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by Widu-Wolfgang Ehlers (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzberg, 1996-).

61 *Epistolae obscurorum virorum*, ed. and trans. by Francis Griffin Stokes (London: Chatto and Windus, 1909), which contains both the Latin text and an English translation.
defence of Mary’s honour by the smith as an example of the Marian piety that is a recurring theme in Gengenbach’s work. Prietzel thinks that this was Gengenbach’s intention (as he had expressed it in the opening dedication) in contrast to Murner’s hostility to Judaism itself:

Bei Murner hingegen ist die Diskriminierung des jüdischen Verhaltens von zentraler Bedeutung, während es für ihn sekundär bleibt, die Marienfrömmigkeit des Schmieds als vorbildhaft darzustellen.\(^6^2\)

The first of Luther’s *Judenschriften*\(^6^3\) can be similarly regarded according to Kenneth Hagen, who proposes: ‘Perhaps instead of a Judenschrift this book should be classified as a Marienschrift [...]’.\(^6^4\)

Another theological message could also be identified in the smith’s use of prayer and the role of direct spiritual communication. The smith remained true to the instructions from the visions he had, first from the angel and then Mary. He had to ignore the half-heartedness of both religious and temporal authorities and implacably pursue the defence of Mary’s honour: the extremity of her violation symbolised by the actual bleeding of her picture when it was stabbed. The key message from the song may not be to punish heathen Jews at all costs, but perhaps to follow the guidance received from direct prayer and one’s conscience, even in defiance of priests and the law. This was the theological path that Müntzer and other radicals would take. A few years later Reform theology would reshape the relation between conscience, prayer and the priest. Here, in this song, Gengenbach may be giving these themes an early, popular presentation.

If we accept this view of *Fünf Juden* then perhaps Gengenbach was playing to his audience’s anti-Semitic views to assist him to obtain sympathy for the smith’s somewhat heretical theology. The smith was portrayed as responding to an overwhelmingly evil act

\[^{62}\text{Prietzel, AGB, p.403.}\]

\[^{63}\text{WA 11, pp.314-336.}\]

\[^{64}\text{Kenneth Hagen, ‘Luther’s so-called Judenschriften: a Genre Approach’, ARG, 90 (1999), 130-58, p.138.}\]
of desecration, and he repeated his description of that act three times to remind the
audience of the horror of it. By posing it as a response to ‘Jewish’ behaviour, the smith’s
defiance of the Abbot, the parish priest and the count, and his reliance instead on prayer,
are portrayed as all the more understandable and necessary.

Taking this view, neither Fünf Juden nor the final section of Der Nollhart were written
with the prime aim of attacking Jews so much as the heathenism of their religion. In
both cases anti-Semitic ideas were being used to pursue arguments about the Christian
religion and its decadent state. Der Nollhart and Fünf Juden contain substantial levels of
criticism of the Church and its inability to resist the forces of evil. Der Nollhart, the later
work, explicitly calls for Church reform.

This is a different representation of the Jews from Shakespeare’s Shylock in the
Merchant of Venice, the Jewish usurer whose obsession with money is portrayed as the
antithesis of (medieval) Christian values. It is his failure to behave in a ‘Christian’ way
rather than his failure to believe in the Christian God that condemns him, whereas
Gengenbach is interested in the Jew as a religious symbol. It need hardly be added that
the subtlety of the characterisation of Shylock and the ambivalence of his guilt, is entirely
absent from Gengenbach’s crude portrayal of Jews.

V. RELIGION AND POLITICS COMBINE

As well as criticising the Church, Der Nollhart also criticises the King of France, with
whom the Swiss Confederacy had just signed a Treaty of Eternal Friendship in the
aftermath of Merignano. It is worth considering the extent to which these attacks in the
play against two such great political powers might have placed Gengenbach in danger.
These were extraordinary times; as was argued in chapters 3 and 4, political and social
criticism in public drama was a new phenomenon in Basel. For all his apparent

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65 Wenzel argues a similar view of Folz’s anti-Semitic writing: Edith Wenzel, ‘Die
worden die Juden alle geschant... ’: die Rolle und Funktion der Juden in spätmittelalter-
commitment to obedience and loyalty, was it possible that Gengenbach could contemplate opposition to constituted authority?

Victor Sidler has drawn attention to the 1525 reprint of Der Nollhart. The foreword proposes that the play’s apocalyptic prophecies were being realised by the events of that year:

Dass das politische Fastnachtspiel der Zeitstimmung und einem Bedürfnis entsprach, beweisen die Neudrucke von 1522 und 1525, wobei die Ausgabe von 1525 den bezeichnenden Titel trägt: ‘Der Nollhart. Disz synd die propheceyen Sancti Methodij vnd Nolhardi, welche fas erfült, vnd ytzund von tag zu tag (so man vor augen sihet) erfülltet werden. 1525.’ Dieser neu formulierten Titel von 1525 zeigt, wie sehr das Stück als zeitgemäss empfunden, wie sehr die Prophezeiungen nicht nur als Theater, sondern als Wirklichkeit erfasst wurden. Nollhart behielt über Jahre seine politische Wirkung, indem der einstige Spieltext acht Jahre später als eingetroffene Geschichte gelesen wird.66

Gengenbach himself would have been horrified to think that his forebodings could in any way have been regarded as a justification for the Peasants’ War and religious schism. All the evidence in Der Nollhart and elsewhere is that Gengenbach throughout his life consistently supported the authority of Basel’s city council. Gengenbach’s condemnation of the sins of disloyalty and disobedience to authority, ‘Zwietracht’ and Ungehorsamkeit, had appeared in his first political work, Der Bundschuh. Gengenbach wanted the Emperor to change things, not the common people. Criticism of the Church and the demand for religious renewal was one thing, social revolution quite another.

The use of prophetic forms to enable a writer to voice religious criticism was already a common technique during this period. Thomas has drawn attention to the relationship between prophecy and rebellion.67 Lerner has developed this idea to argue that many prophetic writings produced during the late Middle Ages were in fact expressions of religious dissent. His description of a prophecy by a German called Theodorius, written


in 1463, could apply to *Der Nollhart*:

Characteristic is his sharp anti-clericalism and warning of bloody chastisement soon to come. Characteristic too is his ambivalence towards Rome: his dissatisfaction with present conditions but ultimate faith in the institution of the papacy and hope for its miraculous purification. Characteristic, finally, is his hope for the imminent coming of a completely reformed era, standing at the end of earthly time, when all the enemies of the faith would be subdued and when Christianity would prevail from sea to sea.68

Theodorius was not a religious radical and Lerner describes a number of other similar dissenting prophecies that: 'expressed deep dissatisfaction with the state of the church, warnings of coming chastisement for the corrupt clergy, and hopes for religious reform in the future' (page 20).

McLaren, however, argues that prophecy is not necessarily about demands for change:

[...] the discourse of political prophecy is about power. Through its use individuals and groups compete with one another to establish their own interpretation of people and events as congruent with the meaning of the prophecies.69

He goes further (three pages later) to assert that it is a: 'view too commonly held [...] that prophecy was necessarily and inevitably the discourse of opposition and radical dissent.' (page 35). The discussion that has raged about the interpretation of More’s *Utopia* is an example of the problem that McLaren is raising - More was not an oppositionist and a radical, yet his book has been treated by Kautsky and others as a founding document of socialism.70

At the time of its first publication neither *Der Nollhart* nor *Fünf Juden* represented


exceptional critical positions within the political spectrum of contemporary Basel. In this respect McLaren's view that 'the discourse of political prophecy is about power' and not necessarily about dissent, is preferable. The positions on the Church that Gengenbach presents in Der Nollhart were by no means new, they were criticisms that went back to St.Bridget and before, and belong in the late medieval tradition described above by Lerner. They were common currency among leading Humanists in Basel and across German-speaking territory. The choice of a Lollard as the central character strongly underlines that the playwright felt confident enough to present an open and deeply critical view of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless the papacy had been an ally of Basel, consistently paying for contingents of Basel's troops through the years of Italian campaigns, and the Bishop of Basel was politically powerful. Gengenbach therefore ran risks in voicing these criticisms.

At least two things made it unlikely that the city authorities would suppress either Fünf Juden or Der Nollhart. First, the council was preparing to curtail the political power of the Bishop of Basel and any propaganda that justified their action would be likely to be welcome. Second, the guild leaderships who were obsessed with protecting their privileges were entirely likely to have welcomed the anti-Semitic sentiments of both works. Gengenbach ran far fewer risks presenting this play than challenging the Imperial Ban against Luther in May 1521 when he printed Verhörung Luthers which reported Luther's defiance of the Diet and the Emperor at Worms.

Likewise the attacks against the French king - while not necessarily enjoying universal support in Basel - did represent the view of the ruling group in the council. They may have signed a Treaty of Eternal Friendship with the French, but it had only been done (even though it meant they would receive considerable sums of money) once it was clear that it was necessary to prevent the Confederacy from splitting. Merignano and the treachery of the French King at Dijon were two good reasons why 'friendship' would still

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71 For a discussion about the history of the various words in German that mean 'Lollard' see: Dietrich Kurze, 'Die festländischen Lollarden', in Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, 47 (1965) 48-76, pp.54-76.
have been an ironic word for many Basel citizens, and many of them undoubtedly would have preferred to maintain the alliance with the Emperor.

Time and again throughout the play, *der Bruder* argues that change will only come through the action of the Emperor. Werren-Uffer comments:

> Die Tendenz des Stückes ist offenkundig: es ist eine pro-kaiserliche Propaganda. Das bedeutet aufgrund der in Basel herrschenden Parteung, dass der Bruder die einen in ihrer Politik zu bestätigen, die anderen hingegen für diese zu überzeugen haben wird.\(^2\)

As with so many of his ideas, Gengenbach’s was in harmony with Sebastian Brant, whose views on the Emperor can be read in the 99th chapter of *Das Narrenschiff*. Gengenbach, however, was to grow increasingly more sceptical than Brant about successive popes.\(^73\) Already by 1515, in the *Practica Deutsch*, Gengenbach could write: ‘Unnd ist zu sorgen das de babst mit helff des tüfels grossen zywtracht werd machē.’ (page Aii\(^i\)). By focussing their hope for change on the Emperor, both he and Brant were reflecting a growing popular aspiration that appeared in many writings and in many forms. A feature of Gengenbach’s writing by 1517 was a detailed interest in Scripture and biblical prophecy that can be found in *Der Nollhart*, in the apocalyptic material in the Books of Daniel, Ezekiel, Thessalonians and Revelations.

Werren-Uffer argues of *Der Nollhart*: ‘Dass das Stück eine Sonderstellung in Gengenbachs Werk einnimmt, soll der Vergleich mit weiteren Texten des autors zeigen.’\(^74\) In coming to this conclusion she limits herself to an analysis of five other dramatic texts - *Welsch Flusz, Alt Eydgmosz, X Alter, Die Gouchmat* and *Die Totenfresser*. If any work deserves the description of ‘Sonderstellung’ then *Fiinf Juden* is a better candidate. The form is not at all usual for Gengenbach. It is a parable, using symbols, a story full of action and meanings that could easily be a short play. We can


\(^73\) Gengenbach printed a song in 1517-18 which was extremely pessimistic about the possibility of changing anything, entitled, *Lied, daß man es der Welt nicht recht machen kam* (Basel UB: Bro 36.802). Prietzel discusses it briefly, *AGB*, p.392.

hear the characters speaking as Gengenbach constantly lets the narrator (singer) slip into
direct speech. As a parable about prayer and conscience it comes five or more years
before any other of Gengenbach's popular theological works.

Nevertheless, Der Nollhart does mark an important development in Gengenbach's work
and the themes in it can be traced occurring throughout his other publications of the next
four years. Of the four themes that dominate Gengenbach's work over the years 1517-21,
three can be found in Der Nollhart: the Emperor's role; the Church and its reform; and
astrological and apocalyptic omens. Along with these three themes a fourth will emerge:
the influence of the humanists, particularly Erasmus, Capito and von Hutten, with their
interest in education and in religious reform. The next chapter looks at Gengenbach's
output during 1517-21 within a framework of these four themes. Under the impact of the
events and new ideas in these years, it is argued that Gengenbach reached something of a
watershed around 1521.
CHAPTER 6: 1517-1521 THE EMPEROR FAILS TO DELIVER.

The underlined reference indicates the version of the work used in the text from which any quotes are drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used for it in the text.


41 & 42. Martin Luther, SERMO de Pe=||nitentia P.|| (April-Aug.1518). Köhler MF 1901/4867. (Sermo de poenitentia).


Basel Kupferstickkabinett: Inv.Nr.1947.405. *(Hortulus Animae).*


Only incomplete original is at Gotha. Bube, *Zwei Gedichte von Pamphilus Gengenbach*. *(Bockspiel).*

Only original is in Zurich ZB (not seen). Facsimile in Fehr (Tafel 9) and Raillard, pp.128-130. *(Wiener Prognosticon).*

Basel UB: A N VI 107. *(Sieben Alter).*

Basel UB: Einblattdrucke saec. XVI Nr.9. *(Haus Österreich).*


92. Luca Gaurico, *... Prognosticō Ab incarnatio Christi (Feb. 1522)
Köhler MF: 920/2287. *(Gaurico Prognosticon).*

No complete original exists. Raillard pp.131-33. *(Mönchskalb).*

No original copy in England or Switzerland (three in German libraries). Raillard, pp.116-127.
I. THE EMPEROR’S ROLE

a) The Emperor as agent of change

Sebastian Brant had urged the Emperor Maximilian to take on reform of the Church, but despite the hopes of many, few appeared to really believe that Maximilian would actually do anything. As late as 1517 Gengenbach was promoting the reforming role of the Emperor in Der Nollhart. With Maximilian’s approaching death hopes rose that his grandson Charles, who was widely expected by Germans to become the new Emperor, really would be prepared to tackle the crisis of Christendom. There was a wave of publications on this theme that included several pieces in both German and in Latin produced by Gengenbach. Gilly describes Gengenbach’s enthusiasm for Charles V: ‘Es war vor allem der Frankreichgegner Pamphilus Gengenbach, der keine Gelegenheit ausließ, um für Maximilians Enkel zu werben.’* When Charles was elected in 1519 Gengenbach is believed to have written three of the pieces that he published in the new monarch’s honour: Lied von Carolo, Bockspiel and Haus Österreich.

Gengenbach has named himself as the author in Lied von Carolo, but it is uncharacteristically sycophantic. It is a song that triumphantly celebrated Charles’s election victory over the rival candidate the French king in June 1519 and its fourth verse gives something of the flavour:

Carle der wirt regieren/
in grosser strengikeit/
die gerechtigkeit wirt er zieren/
zü kriegen sin bereit/
kein ungrechtigkeit wirt er nit lon/
jr rychstet thünd eüch fröwen/
das es ist dar zü kon.

(Tafel 1).

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Bockspiel, written in the same year, has more the feel of Gengenbach about it.² It is a short seventy-two line poetic dialogue with thirteen lines of prose in the introduction and conclusion. The word ‘Spiel’ in the title points to a double meaning; suggesting the piece could have been a play as well as being about a card-game. The card-playing theme is strongly reminiscent of Welsch Flusz and a strong indicator that this piece was written by Gengenbach.³ Indeed the opening line spoken by King Charles is: ‘Dem fluß bin ich zu iung gewesen’, which could be an ironic reference back to that earlier play and the events contemporary to it, when Charles was only thirteen. The Flüsspiel was a French game, the Bockspiel a German. ‘Dz heist der Bock nach teütscher art’ (line 5), reflects the victory of Charles over the French King Francis in the Imperial election.

This new piece, much shorter than Welsch Flusz, has a large cast of nineteen characters, who only have a few lines each and only speak once. Many of them are familiar from the early politische Moralitäten: the King of France, the Venetian, the Turk, the King of Bohemia, Duke Ferdinand, the Pope, the King of England, the Confederate, the (Arch)Bishop of Mainz, the Count Palatine, the Duke of Saxony, the Margrave of Brandenburg, a Brother Veit (the mercenary who appeared in Der Nollhart), a peasant, the Landknecht and most interestingly Franz von Sickingen. The piece has a notable, elaborate illustration complete with two-headed German eagle.⁴

It is a fast-moving, at times amusing review of the change that Charles’s election has brought to current affairs. Sickingen is bluff and direct about the need for reform:

Ein hauptmann bin ich yn dem rych,
Geystlich wältlich gilt mir glych,
Würd noch gar vyl thün reformieren,
Ich hasses als thun nit hoffieren.
(p.129, verse P).

² Bockspiel was first published by Bube, ‘Zwei Gedichte’. Bube’s introduction notes that Goedeke had not known about it when he had published the collected works three years earlier. Most critics have continued to ignore it.


⁴ For a discussion about the picture and its creator see: Heinrich Röttinger, ‘Der Bockspielschnitt des Basler Meisters DS’, in Gutenberg Jahrbuch, 26 (1951), 94-100.
The Bishop of Metz’s response is tart:

Das sind wir all wol innen worden  
Du fürst ein wüsten rüters orden.  
Ich hoff du werdest dran erworgë.  
(p.129, verse Q).

The tone of the whole piece is altogether far less blandly supportive of the new King and so it contrasts markedly with the *Lied von Carolo*, although they were probably written within a few weeks of one another. *Bockspiel* has the full ‘flavour’ of Gengenbach with his ability to use words and images fluently, playfully. The Swiss confederate’s loyalties to the new king are purely pragmatic, as he observes dryly:

Als mich der Bock will sehen an,  
Wend wirs Frätzosen mussig gan  
Und auch küng Karle hangen an.  
(p.128, verse K).

Bube’s publication of *Bockspiel* was accompanied by another poem, which he also identified as Gengenbach’s. It is based on the same model - a large cast of characters, the alphabet in sequence at the start of each of the even shorter verses, but this time the game is not a *Bockspiel*, it is called ‘Fluß’. If this was not Gengenbach’s, or a draft, it certainly appears to have been derived from *Bockspiel*.

*Haus Österreich* (1520) was only discovered in Basel in 1975. The whole is a large single page piece that could almost have been posted up around the town and like *Bockspiel* has a very detailed illustration. Although Gengenbach may well have printed this, the text appears to be much more oblique and unfocussed than his other writings about Charles V, leaving some uncertainty that he wrote it. The full title is: ‘Hie merckent wie das loblich hausz Osterich an die edlen grafen von Hapksburg ist kumen.’ Although Charles V was elected in 1519 he was not actually crowned as king until

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5 Adolf Bube, ‘Zwei Gedichte’, pp.165-67. This second poem is untitled. It is surprising that Bube is so far alone in attributing its authorship to Gengenbach given its close similarity to *Bockspiel*.

6 It has not been published and can only be seen in the Basel Universitätsbibliothek: Basel UB: Einbl. 16 Jh. No.9.
October of the following year and Hieronymus, who identified Haus Österreich, believes that it was printed around the time of the coronation.

It tells some history of the first Hapsburg King of the Romans, Rudolf of Hapsburg, and his election in 1273. Before Rudolf of Hapsburg became the first Hapsburg King of the Romans there was a confused Interregnum following the death of the last Hohenstaufen Emperor, Frederick II, in 1250: 'In den selben zyt en was kein Römscher Keyser / vnd das rych. xxii. jar on houpt gestanden / vñ wz vyl widerwertigkeiitz zwischin den herë und stetten.' We are told that he brought stability: 'er hielt auch guten fryd in allë landë.' It tells that Rudolf was a good man and it recounts at length his encounter with a poor priest to whom he gave his horse. The contribution made by Basel and Zurich to his accession is noted (it was during the Interregnum period - in 1263 - that Basel received its constitution as an Imperial city.) The last six lines, which are damaged and therefore incomplete, gallop through the intervening two hundred and fifty years. The ‘message’ of the piece is somewhat elliptically presented, but in summary it says that Rudolf was a god-fearing man who had a positive, stabilising role and hopefully there will now be another godly regime.

**Haus Österreich** strikes the modern commentator for what it omits. The author’s uncritical representation of Rudolf contrasts with the emerging ‘Swiss’ myths surrounding William Tell, of his defiance of one of Rudolf’s bailiffs and the oath of Rütli taken by the three forest cantons in 1291 just before Rudolfs death. These were events that by Gengenbach’s time were being seen as crucial stepping stones made by the Confederation during the thirteenth century to assert greater independence from Hapsburg rule. There is no hint in **Haus Österreich** that relations between the Confederation and the Hapsburgs had not always been amicable during the intervening 220 years, not least in the very recent past with Maximilian. His attempt in the Swabian War to try and forcibly re-establish Swiss feudal obligations towards him as their Hapsburg overlord were explained in his declaration of war:

Anfänglich haben sich etliche örter in der Eidgnoschafi, nämlich die von Ure, Swytz und Underwalden, wider ir erst eid und alt harkommen, wider ir recht natürlich herren und landfürsten, die herzogen zü Oesterich, als grafen der alten
Despite this hostility towards the Swiss, the Emperor was still being portrayed in loyal contemporary publications like *Haus Österreich* as a distant symbol of justice and love for his people. Abuses by feudal overlords were explained as the actions of lesser nobles. Even revolutionary writers put the Emperor above society: the *Reformation Kaiser Sigmunds* (1439) and Stürzel's *Das Buch der 100 Kapitel* (1498-1510) are two of the more famous German examples. Stürzel called on the poor to violently root out *luxuria* and *avaritia*; to eliminate the clergy and the Pope; and for property to be held in common as the reincarnated Emperor of the Black Forest would lead the people to confiscate church property and expropriate the rich. Only the Emperor could impose taxes or rents:

This man was convinced that in the remote past the Germans had in reality 'lived together like brothers on the earth', holding all things in common. The destruction of that happy order had been the work first of the Romans and then of the Church of Rome.  

Not all social revolutionaries needed such myths, but even men like Joss Fritz, the *Bundschuh* leader from the Breisgau, were unwilling to challenge the legitimacy of the Emperor or indeed the pope. Their intentions as to the fate of the nobility were somewhat unclear, for it was after all the landlords who were causing all the trouble as far as the peasant revolutionaries were concerned. For sure the unjust could be overthrown. The *Urner Tellenspiel* (see chapter 3, IV - page 84) thought that the overthrow of tyrants was holy work:

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9 Chapter 5, footnote 52 (page 146).

10 Cohn, p.123. Stürzel also argued that all non-Christians should be executed - although his view of Christianity was full of heathen concepts.
Das wir keinen Thyrannen mee dulden,
Versprechend wir by unsern hulden.
Also sol Gott vatter mit sim Sun,
Ouch heiliger Geist uns helffen nun.\textsuperscript{11}

The freedom for the three forest cantons was the achievement of their heroes, not something bestowed by the Emperor whose role is left unstated - but neither is it challenged in the \textit{Urner Tellenspiel}.

Gengenbach, although he was not indifferent to the impact of tyranny and venality upon the gmein man, had always turned his face against political disobedience and violence by the common people against the established order. He could see the need for the Emperor to lead a reform of the religious sphere and for some social reform, but no need for political change. His devotion to the Emperor expressed in \textit{Haus Osterreich} remained solid at this stage.

\textit{b) Latin printing about the Emperor}

There were six publications in Latin printed by Gengenbach between 1517-19 about the Emperor Maximilian and Charles V, his successor. These were the years that the Turkish re-emerging threat to western Christendom coincided with uncertainty about the contested Imperial succession. The six works deal with one or other of three themes which relate to these conditions: the Turks; Charles V himself; and prophecies of the Apocalypse.

There are two pieces about the Turks: \textit{Omnia} (1518), that contains three short reports on the Turks' campaigns which appeared in various German editions,\textsuperscript{12} and \textit{Ciolek Oratio} (1518), which is a reprint of the speech by the representative of the King of Poland, Erasmus Ciolek, at the Augsburg Reichstag, appealing to the Pope and Maximilian to lead a united campaign against the Turks.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Urner Tellenspiel}, p.36, lines 465-69.

\textsuperscript{12} Appendix A, no. 37. See: VD 16 O 739-O 744, as reported in: Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, p.329.

\textsuperscript{13} Appendix A, no. 45.
There are two works about Charles V: *Marilanus Oratio* (1517), a piece in his praise by Marilanus, a Milanese humanist who served as a secretary at the court of Charles V,\(^{14}\) and *Modus eligendi* (1519), which includes an illustration by Ambrosius Holbein and concerns the election of Charles V.\(^{15}\)

Finally, the two apocalyptic pieces, also about Charles V, are: *Fuit inventum* (1519), a leaflet containing a vision of the coming of the second Charlemagne (Charles V), purportedly written by a doctor Cobola in 1440,\(^{16}\) and *Alofresant Prognosticon* (1519), a very popular prognosticon of the time that appeared in a variety of editions.\(^{17}\) The *Alofresant Prognosticon* was a prophecy about the four heirs of the Burgundian Duke John the Fearless (the fourth one being Charles V) and their struggles with the French and the Turks. It was probably written around 1510 although the Gengenbach edition is now the earliest known about.\(^{18}\)

c) *Ulrich von Hutten*

The seventh political work that Gengenbach printed in Latin, entitled *Phalarismus Dialogus*, is of rather greater literary significance than the other six. Written by Ulrich von Hutten, it was primarily an attack on the tyranny of Duke Ulrich of Württemberg. Gengenbach had raised the theme of aristocratic tyranny occasionally in his own writing. In *Der Nollhart*, for example, he warned the nobility:

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\(^{14}\) Appendix A, no. 31.

\(^{15}\) Appendix A, no. 51.

\(^{16}\) Appendix A, no. 52.


\(^{18}\) Prietzel, *AGB*, p.332. She points out: ‘Auffällig ist, daß die Geschehnisse bis gegen 1510 historisch korrekt mitgeteilt werden, danach geht die Schilderung nahtlos in die Prophetie über.’
In Hutten’s own German translation of *Phalarismus Dialogus* one of the characters, Mercurius, gives a comprehensive list of those aspects of tyranny that he condemns:

> Aber du Teutzscher höre eines von mir. Nit allein sollen Tyrannen genendt werden, die sich etwan in einer freien stadt oder landschaft, mit vertruckung der freiheit eines regiments geweltiglich vnderwunden haben, sunder auch die jhenen so verlassen die grechtigkeit, miltikeit, starckmütigkeit, got forchtickeit, messigkeit, sanftmütigkeit, barmherzickeit, vnd andrer künigliche uнд flirstliche tugent, haben, in gebrauch gewendt, grimnickeit, geitzigkeit, vngeschickllickeit, weibisch uнд weich geber, vnreinickeit, vnmschничliche hartigkeit, vnd der gleichen böß sitten.\(^{19}\)

*Phalarismus* was first published in 1517 in Latin at Mainz, where it ran to three editions within the year. Gengenbach’s edition was printed in 1519. This was the same year that a contingent from Basel joined the army of the Swabian League against Duke Ulrich after his attack on the Imperial city of Reutlingen. Prietzel has found new evidence that Gengenbach actually participated in this campaign, although at the age of 39 he would have been rather old and he was rich enough to afford to pay a substitute, as he had before in 1513.\(^{20}\)

If he participated, it remains a puzzle as to why Gengenbach produced nothing about the experience or about Duke Ulrich other than this work by Hutten. Previous military activity involving contingents from Basel generated various publications from Gengenbach, but he makes only one mention of the events in Württemberg, in two lines of *Wiener Prognosticon* (page 129, lines 34-35), as one of a list of conflicts that had caused death and destruction that boded ill for the Germans. He warns: ‘Ir teutschen send guot acht druff han,’ (line 49). It is, however, not clear to which events in Württemberg


he refers. Talkenberger thinks he means the Armer Konrad risings in 1514,\(^{21}\) not the campaign of 1519.

Hutten definitely participated in the 1519 campaign against Duke Ulrich, a man he hated for having killed his cousin Hans in pursuit of an obsession with Hans’s wife. There is no evidence of any contact between Hutten and Gengenbach, either during the military campaign or later when Hutten fled to Basel after the Knights’ Revolt in late 1522. This suggests that despite an ideological affinity they were not in direct contact with one another and that Gengenbach published either without permission or through a third party. One of the leaders of the campaign against Ulrich von Württemberg was Franz von Sickingen, with whom Hutten became close and who features in the drawing and the text of Gengenbach’s *Bockspiel*.

It is ironic that at the same year of 1519 as Gengenbach - the populariser - was printing the *Phalarismus* dialogue in Latin, Hutten translated and published it in German. This was the year that marked Hutten’s shift away from writing in Latin towards the vernacular and a much wider popular audience.\(^{22}\) Hutten wrote in *Clag und vormanung* about this change:

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Latein ich vor geschriben hab,
das was eim yeden nit bekandt.
Yetzt schrey ich an das vatterlandt
Teütsch nation in irer sprach,
zù bringen dißen dingen rach.\(^{23}\)
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Gengenbach published one other work of Hutten’s, *Trias Romana* (1519/20), a poem


printed on four pages, and this time in German. This full-frontal attack on the Church was published anonymously and has also been attributed to Crotus Rubeanus, but it was views of this kind that led to Hutten’s excommunication in June 1520 along with his friend Pirckheimer and with Martin Luther, with whom he had just begun to correspond. There is some disagreement about the date of publication of *Trias Romana*, but it seems that Gengenbach’s version appeared fairly soon after it became available in German.

German liberation from the oppression of the Roman Church became a central theme in Hutten’s work - the throwing off of the Roman yoke and echoes of Tacitus’s history of the Germans a thousand years earlier. Hutten made a nationalist (as opposed to religious) attack on the papacy, picking up on the popular resentment of the Roman Church for milking the Germans to pay for the building of St. Peter’s. By contrast with the tough restrictions placed by more centralised states, the Emperor had given the papacy a relatively free hand to raise money in Germany, through the sale of indulgences and clerical posts. Gengenbach’s willingness to publish a work like *Trias Romana* indicates how deep his disillusion with the Catholic Church must have become

Some lines from Hutten’s *Argumentum et Prologus* of the work give the flavour:

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Rhom will diß büchleyn preysen,
Nach dem seyn büchstaben außweysein:
Reuberey, hürey zu Rhom zm grösten ist,
Oberkeyt an recht, darzu mit argem list,
Mißhandelung aller stend ist zu Rhom keyn sünde.
Ach gott, wers nit, furwar es besser in der welt stunde.
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26 Hutten is perhaps best remembered as one of the founders of German nationalism with his work on *Arminius*, the German hero leader who defeated the Romans. Although this was completed in 1519 it was not published until after his death in 1529.

Hutten’s solution to this corruption of the Roman Church was for the newly elected Charles V to take immediate steps to end all papal power in Germany:

Yetzt ist die zeit, züheben an
vmb freyheit kryegen, gott wils han.28

Roland Bainton affirms Hutten’s crucial role in creating the idea of the German nation:

Hutten did much to create the concept of German nationalism and to construct the picture of the ideal German, who should repel the enemies of the fatherland and erect a culture able to vie with the Italian.29

II. GENGEBACH AND CHURCH REFORM 1518-1521

a) Luther and Gengenbach
Luther too became increasingly virulent in his attacks on the Church, but against its theology rather than its suffocation of national independence. Luther’s position on church reform at that time was contained in one of the most famous pamphlets of the period, his An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation (1520).30 This was a direct appeal to the nobility and in particular to Charles V to reform the Church by means of a special council of the Church convened for the task. Luther argued that it would not be the first time such a council had been called and it would be entirely within the traditions of the Church:

Auch das beruhmtiste Conzilium Nicenum hat der Bischoff zu Rom noch beruffen noch bestetiget, sondern der Kehszer Constantinus, unnd nach yhm viel ander Kehszer desselben gleichen than, das doch die allerchristlichsten Conzilia geweszen sein.31

Although a full general council of the Church was not called, a special Diet at Worms


30 Martin Luther, An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, WA 6, pp.404-69.

31 WA 6, p.413.
was finally announced for Spring 1521. A Diet embraced far wider social forces than just the Church, which indicates that Luther’s proposal had enjoyed considerable official as well as popular support.  

Gengenbach had been very quick to publish two editions of Luther’s *Sermon von Abläß und Gnade* in 1518. As well as publishing Luther in German, Gengenbach also printed three early Lutheran works in Latin: two editions of Luther’s *Sermo de poenitentia* (1518), Karlstadt’s *Apologeticæ propositiones pro Martino Luther* (1518), and Johannes Wildenauer’s *Apologetica responsio* (1518) which had a foreword by Luther. Of the seven editions of Luther’s work printed in Basel in 1518, Gengenbach produced four of them, including the only two in German.

With the *Wiener Prognosticon* (1520), which he wrote and printed, Gengenbach was publicly advocating his own support for Luther at a time when the Pope was about to issue *Exsurge Domine*, the Bull to excommunicate him. *Wiener Prognostikon* is a ninety-eight line poem in simple rhyme preceded by a fifteen line poetic dedication to Charles V that urges him to save the Church by following Luther:

Das nit sant Peters schyff versinck,
Und auch der gloub so fast nit hinck,
Werd nit betrogen der gmein man,
Luterus ist uff rechter ban,
Dem soltu frölich hangen an.

(p. 128, lines 11-15).

Gengenbach went a step further in the body of the poem by praising Hus, an echo perhaps of the Lollard brother from *Der Nollhart* as Hus was a follower in Wycliffe’s steps. Hus, whom the Church had condemned and executed in 1414 as a heretic, appears

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32 Murner, for example, one of Luther’s fiercest opponents in public on behalf of the Church, wanted a formal presentation of grievances to the Pope to be made by Charles V: Thomas Murner, *An den Großmechtigsten und Durchlächtigsten adel tütscher nation* (Strassburg: J. Grüninger, 1520). A modern edition can be found in: Murner, *Deutsche Schriften*, vii. ii (1927), pp. 56-117.

33 Wildenauer’s pamphlet was printed on the wishes of Erasmus, according to a letter from Wolfgang Capito to Luther: *WABr.* (I) 1501-20, pp197-200 (letter no. 97), p. 199.
in the seventy-eighth line of the poem when the monastic orders, 'Ir ordens leut', are warned:

Hüten euch vor dem bömschen gsatz,
Vor euch der adel nit mag bstan,
Johannes huss ist uff der ban,
Des darff sich Rom worlich nit fröwen.
(p. 130, lines 78-81).

This work is much the most interesting of Gengenbach's tributes and dedications to Charles V, reworking those key themes of Der Nollhart three years earlier, though in a much shorter form. There is a somewhat different balance to the themes: Der Nollhart has far less astrological content than the main body of the Prognosticon, which is a prophesy based on astronomical happenings - 'disse wunderzeichen' as he calls them in his introduction - that were seen during January 1520 in Vienna by thousands of people. They were a dire warning of floods that would occur in 1524 - even as far as England - the Sintflut. Previous warnings of disaster had been ignored. Gengenbach details how a whole series of gloomy events had occurred in 1514 (lines 20-44), after astral warning signs had appeared over Urach in Württemberg.

The warnings of a great flood were not a quirk of Gengenbach's alone. A whole body of literature about it was produced in German, but before discussing this further in section IV below there is some more to be said about the development of his views on Church reform.

b) Devotional literature and religious views

Notwithstanding his initial publication of Luther in 1518 Gengenbach's theological views remain opaque. Certainly there are examples that indicate his ongoing support for church reform: he named Luther and Hus in Wiener Prognostikon; he published Hutten's Trias Romana; he called again for Church Reform in Die Gouchmat; and he published an anonymous, religious poem in Latin, a Pasquillus (1520), which was critical of the Church.\(^\text{34}\) But Gengenbach also published various other religious and devotional works

\(^{34}\) A Pasquillus was an established form of lampoon from Italy and from where this one may well have come. For a useful discussion about them in this period in Germany, see: Kurt Stadtwald, Roman Popes and German Patriots: Antipapalism in the Politics of the German Humanist Movement from Gregor Heimburg to Martin Luther (Geneva: Droz, 1996), pp.59-70.
such as *Jakobsbrüder*, *Hortulus Animae*, and *Sieben Alter* that taken together show what appears to be a confusing mixture of views.

Gengenbach reprinted *Jakobsbrüder* in 1518, a story by Kunz Kistener written in the mid-fourteenth century. It is 1130 lines long and is a long moral tale, rather like the two *Meisterlieder, Tod Teufel und Engel* and *Fünf Juden*, so it may well have been recited or sung in a public place. Like these other two pieces, *Jakobsbrüder* is set elsewhere than Basel, this one starting in *paier landt*. Theologically very Catholic, the poem portrays Saint James with the power to intervene in the affairs of men. It starts as the tale of a married couple who finally resort to asking St. James’s help to have a child after twelve years of trying, a request that he grants. It gets rather gory with the father being required to cut his son’s throat as a mark of obedience to God:

> Er sprach nun wil ich doch schniden  
> Zü eren dem gottes liden  
> (p.253, lines 833-34).

The conclusion of the piece praises those who serve Saint James who in turn will help them achieve everlasting life:

> So wil vnB got nach disem läben  
> Das ewig hymelreiche geben  
> Deß hellig vnß der milte got  
> Vnd der güt herr sant Jacob.  
> (p.261, lines 1130-33).

It also urges its readers to do good works:

> Das ist wol ewer sele heil  
> Ir thünd es on schaden wöl  
> Güte wärck man triben sol  
> Gemein jn aller christenheit  
> (p.260, lines 1095-98).

The duty of good works as acts of penance was a key issue of difference between Luther and the Catholic Church. Already Luther had questioned the Church’s views on this issue with his attack on indulgences. Two years later in *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen* he was to make into a comprehensive case that faith alone was what
mattered, not good works at all: 'Sie ist fleyßig zu mercken und yhe ernst zubehalten, das allein der glaub on alle werck frum, frey und selig machet, [...].'

The publication of *Jakobsbrüder* within a few weeks of *Sermon von Abläß und Gnade* may or may not have been intended as a direct contribution by Gengenbach to the early debate, but the theological difference on good works was never resolved between him and Luther.

Although *Jakobsbrüder* can be loosely classified as devotional, its length and content distinguishes it from other material that Gengenbach produced that was designed for more private devotional activity such as his second edition of the *Hortulus Animae* (1519). Gengenbach's first edition was published sometime between 1513 and 1515 and had been illustrated by Urs Graf. In the 1519 edition the woodcuts were by Ambrosius Holbein, and it included a *Brigittengebet* at the end.

In 1520, he also published the first of two editions of *Sieben Alter*. This is a simple, pocket-sized and illustrated devotional book about the life of Mary designed to appeal to a popular market, which had appeared in various editions since the 1480's. Two years before, in 1518, Gengenbach had reprinted another old text, *Fromme Hausmagd*, that told the tale of a simple maid whose faith was the envy of someone as holy as a hermit, and that gave details of her daily devotions which could be followed by the reader.

The image of the virgin and of her vulnerable innocence had grown in power and

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35 Martin Luther, *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen*, WA 7, pp.20-38, p.23.

36 Prietzel, *AGB*, p.278, thinks this may have been his third edition and that the second has not survived. For details of the various Basel editions of the *Hortulus Animae*: Prietzel, *AGB*, p.402.

37 Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.405-6, discusses its printing history.

popularity through the Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{39} It seems to have been important for Gengenbach personally, as seen for example, the central function of Mary as the essence of Christianity in \textit{Fünf Juden} (1515), and, a particularly significant indication of his views, his decision in 1521 or 1522 to join the \textit{Schildknechte}, the brotherhood devoted to the honour of Mary.\textsuperscript{40} With modern hindsight it appears to be contradictory for one of the first men who printed Luther to then join an apparently arch-Catholic organisation such as the \textit{Schildknechte} shortly after. With the theological debates and ideas of the reformers at a very early stage, no one would have been aware of such contradictions between the ideas in Gengenbach’s publications. It was not until 1522 that Luther attacked the veneration of Mary and the Saints in his \textit{Sermon von der Geburt Mariæ}.\textsuperscript{41} Certainly when Gengenbach joined the \textit{Schildknechte}, intercession was not a touchstone for traditional belief as it later became. After all, criticism of the Church's materialism and malpractice did not preclude the believer being devout in his or her worship. Raillard - who believes that Gengenbach was to become a Lutheran - argues in respect of membership of the \textit{Schildknechte}: 'Auch das ist sicher kein prinzipieller, katholischer Vorbehalt, sondern ein Zeugnis herzlicher, ohne inneren Bruch fortgehender Frömmigkeit.'\textsuperscript{42}

The strain of theological doubt could have been quite heavy on a relatively conservative man like Gengenbach and it would be entirely understandable if it had pushed him to more intense and more ostentatious devoutness. On the one hand Gengenbach published Luther, who opposed the Catholic view on penance and good works, but on the other he published a tale of penitential acts and good works featuring the intercessionary role of St. James. On the one hand he was an overtly devout Catholic who joined the \textit{Schildknechte} and published devotional literature, but on the other he attacked the venality of the Church and the clergy.


\textsuperscript{40} Previously referred to on p16. (Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, pp.253-54 and fn.228).

\textsuperscript{41} Martin Luther, \textit{Sermon von der Geburt Mariæ}, \textit{WA} 10.iii, pp.312-31. For a brief commentary see Bagchi, pp.152-59.

\textsuperscript{42} Raillard, p.97.
Although there were some contradictory elements at play in his religious publications, there remained much that was consistent. The image of the simple, innocent faith of the young virgin can be seen as part of a consistent Erasmian idea that belief and worship should be simple, transparent, non-materialistic. Gengenbach inveighed against the priesthood’s venality which contrasted with the piety of Mary and other role models like the maid in Fromme Hausmagd, St. Jerome the hermit in Pfaffenspiegel, the Lollard in Der Nollhart, and the pilgrim in Jacobsbrüder (all published during this period).

c) Gengenbach stops printing Luther

In relation to Luther, it stands out that Gengenbach did not actually publish any further works by him at all after 1518, despite the favourable portrayal of Luther two years later in the Wiener Prognosticon and the publication of the Verhörung Luthers in 1521 (see 7, I - pages 207-8). Why this was the case is a matter of pure speculation, but an answer would give us a much clearer understanding of Gengenbach’s intellectual development during these crucial years. Luther’s works sold well in Basel so it was unlikely to have been for reasons of financial risk: for the three years 1519-1521 Benzing’s Lutherbibliographie lists fifty-four editions printed in Basel. With so many editions Gengenbach was clearly - and uncharacteristically - missing out on a commercial opportunity. After all he had been quick enough to start printing Luther ahead of virtually anyone else in 1518. With that many editions it could not have been for reasons of legal risk either - in any case the city delegates at the autumn meeting of the Federal Diet of 1520 had defied the Pope and refused to order the burning of Luther’s works.

It also seems inconceivable that he was prevented from printing Luther’s work through having any sort of agreement not to compete with Petri, Luther’s main printer in Basel. This would have been unprecedented in the chaotic unplanned world of the early printers. There is no evidence of particular links between Gengenbach and Petri besides appearing in court with Petri and Lamparter in an action brought against them jointly by a doctor

called Wonnecker in late 1519. Nor is there evidence that Luther or any of his local supporters like Capito tried to limit printers in Basel from printing unauthorised copies of his work. In the most unlikely event that Gengenbach had accepted such a self-denying agreement it would mean that Gengenbach was in deep thrall to Luther and there is evidence in Gengenbach’s criticisms of Luther that this was certainly not the case.

Nor were there any special practical issues hindering a popular printer like Gengenbach. By 1519 the majority of Luther’s work was being published in German and, although the great works of 1520 were considerably longer than virtually anything that Gengenbach had published, this would not have prevented him printing some of the shorter material. Prietzel argues that Gengenbach’s workshop was simply not big enough for him to remain committed to a single author:

> Dies sollte weder als bewusste Abkehr von einer reformatorischen Position noch als Indiz für fehlendes Marktgesehäft gewertet werden. Wohl eher hält die geringe Kapazität der eigenen Ofizin Gengenbach davon ab, an dem Autor Luther festzuhalten.45

The lack of capacity, however, does not explain why Gengenbach stopped printing Luther entirely. The only explanation left is that Gengenbach stopped printing Luther after 1518 for theological reasons. It is a puzzle that has been largely ignored by other critics, although Prietzel tantalisingly warns: ‘So darf auch Gengenbachs frühzeitige Initiative, Luther-Schriften in Basel zu drucken, nicht etwa als Ausdruck reformatorischer Gesinnung mißverstanden werden; […]’.46 But then she does not pursue the theme.

There has been an on-going discussion as to whether Gengenbach became a supporter of the Reformation or not, but most critics do not acknowledge the contradictions in

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44 Stehlin, pp.86-87, case 2094.

45 Prietzel, AGB, pp.376-77, gives detailed figures and discusses the possible reasons why the volume of Luther printing in Basel peaked in 1522 and then fell off. The total printing output in Basel peaked a year later.

46 Prietzel, AGB, p.337.
Gengenbach’s religious views. König’s analysis shows the sharpest understanding of the conundrum:

[...] Gengenbach schwankt eben - bei seiner im grunde konservativen natur kein wunder - zwischen dem alten und dem neuen glauben: alles, was Luther in religiösen dingen verkündet, sein kampf gegen papst und verweltlichte klerisei, hat G. [...] schon in der eigenen brust gefühlt: [...]47

He believes that Luther was too much for Gengenbach to stomach and continues:

Aber Gengenbach hat als konservativer mann eine starke abneigung gegen volkserhebungen [...] Als nun die gewaltigen sozialen umwälzungen den geistigen bewegungen der frühen tage der reformation folgten, und als Luther im heissen kampfe gegen alle welt seine ‘dämonische kraft zu hassen’ bewies, da wandten sich auch aus dem kreise seiner nächsten freunde einige von ihm ab; wie viel eher konnte Gengenbach an Luthers persönlichkeit irre werden, die ihm viel zu gross war!

König arrived at this view despite being handicapped by the greater uncertainties at the beginning of the last century about what Gengenbach wrote and printed. Now, thanks to Prietzel’s work, we have far more detail about dates and we can see more clearly how Gengenbach’s views did indeed appear to oscillate between 1518 and 1521 in relation to the nascent movement for reform. This continued after 1521 and it reflected the feelings of many other concerned Christians.

d) Luther and the Basel Humanists
In 1518 Luther’s first works were received in humanist circles with great enthusiasm. James Kettelson, in his biography of Wolfgang Capito, says:

Erasmus’ zealous younger followers took Luther’s side the moment they heard of the Wittenberg professor’s attack on the indulgence preaching of Johannes Tetzel. Leo X may have judged the Indulgence Controversy “a monk’s quarrel”, but all over Europe the young humanists considered it another round in the battle between the proponents of good learning and the schoolmen.48

Erasmus was soon to distance himself from Luther. He urged Capito to persuade Luther to moderation: ‘Mehr als die Basler fürchtete er das Ungestüm Luthers, er hatte Angst vor heftigen Auseinandersetzungen und versuchte, durch Capito Luther zur Vorsicht zu mahnen.’ Erasmus bullied his close friend Froben to stop publishing Luther. Although Capito did indeed try to persuade Luther to be more temperate and subtle, it did not stop him organising the publication of Luther’s early works. Capito and some other members of the Basel sodality remained firm supporters throughout the early years. Despite Erasmus’s efforts, Kettelson tells us (page 38): ‘It was the humanists who turned Luther into a popular hero […].’

It is entirely possible that Gengenbach, after sharing the initial enthusiasm for Luther, got cold feet and drew back by the end of 1518. It needs to be remembered that Erasmus remained the towering influence in Basel’s humanist circles and that at least up until 1525 the printed quantity of his work in Basel consistently outstripped that of Luther, and in the number of printed editions Luther only just edged ahead of Erasmus in two years, 1521 and 1522.

If we look at the pattern of Luther printing in Basel in Table 3 we can see in fact that it was not just Gengenbach who was holding back. The city’s printers hardly stampeded to grab a slice of the Lutheran printing market despite the level of demand. Adam Petri printed some seventy per cent of all Lutheran publications in Basel in the crucial early years up until 1525. Even he appears to have taken a little time at the start before deciding to do so. Cratander joined him in a modest way in 1519, but by then Froben, the leading printer of the city and a prominent humanist, had stopped. Gengenbach’s decision to stop may reflect an increasing involvement with the humanists in these years and the narrative now moves on to this theme.


51 For detailed figures, see Prietzel, AGB, pp.375-77.
### TABLE 3: LUTHER EDITIONS PRINTED IN BASEL 1517-1523.

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<td>Cratander</td>
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Source: Benzing, *Lutherbibliographie* (III Lieferung), pp.451-74.52

* Verhörung Luthers - see p.206

### III. HUMANIST INFLUENCES ON GENGENBACH

**a) Gengenbach prints Latin**

Gengenbach probably printed his first book in Latin in 1516. It was a book of Latin idioms by Laurens Rabe that had already been through many editions with other printers.53 The next year, Gengenbach made a remarkable shift away from printing in the vernacular, a popularising trend to which he had contributed so much (as was noted in chapter 1). Of his total output of seven printed works in 1517, five of them were in Latin. The figures for 1518 were six publications in German and nine in Latin, and in 1519 four and four respectively. Then from 1520 his output in German once again constituted the greater bulk of his production: of the eleven works he printed in 1520 only three were in Latin. He printed only one or two Latin works in 1521 - the dating is not exact - out of

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52 The annual total figures in Benzing differ slightly from the figure given in: Prietzel, *AGB*, p.375. These differ again from Edwards, pp.22-25, but it is the pattern that is the important issue.

53 Hieronymus, *Bücherillustration*, p.81, reports that *Latinum Idioma* by Laurens Rabe ran to thirty printings 1498-1523; while Prietzel, *AGB*, p.386, gives the figure of forty-six in fifteen different places between 1503-27.
twenty-two publications in total, and finally three in 1522 out of a total of eleven.\footnote{For a comparison between Gengenbach’s German output and that of other Basel printers see: Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, pp. 304-309. Gengenbach was the only printer in Basel between 1512 and 1525 who printed more than half of his publications in German.}

In all, he printed twenty-five different works in Latin, the majority of them published between 1517-1521, which are divided here into three groups: the political, the religious, and the schoolbooks. The eight works of the first group, the political, have all been discussed in section I of this chapter and the earliest four of the eight religious works have been discussed in section II. The last four religious works - all published after 1521 - are discussed in section II of the next chapter (page 208).

Of those twelve Latin publications discussed so far, their thematic content is almost entirely comparable with works that he printed and that he wrote in German. Politics and religion were familiar territory for Gengenbach, and his publications in Latin in these areas are of interest because they show that he was aiming to widen his market to include a more highly educated and wealthier readership. They do not reveal - with the partial exception of Hutten’s \textit{Phalarismus} Dialogue - any new dimensions to his ideas and views.

\textit{b) Latin schoolbooks}

However, the nine Latin publications in the third group that have been called schoolbooks are unlike those of the first two groups as they are quite distinct from Gengenbach’s publications in German. In this category have been included the four classical works, produced over just the two years 1517 and 1518, and four Latin grammars produced over the full span of his Latin printing, from 1516 to 1522. The ninth work - a love poem - stands somewhat apart.\footnote{Prietzel categorises these nine quite differently as will be described below in (c).}

The four classical works were: \textit{Epodon Liber}, poetry by Horace (1517); \textit{De bello ranarum}, a transcription into Latin of the battle of the frogs and the mice by Homer (1517); some edifying \textit{Sententiae morales} (1518) by a fourth century Church father,
Nilus, translated from Greek by Pirckheimer; and *Fabularum*, an edition of Aesop’s fables (1518). The Nilus proved successful enough for Gengenbach to print a second edition, even though his rival, Lamparter, also produced an edition the same year. Each was suitable for school use. Aesop’s fables occur in examples of curricula right through the century, while works like that of Nilus were used to help teach children how to behave in a civilised way just as catechisms were used after the Reformation. The Horace could been used by the older children while the Homer was a standard work in Greek education, but not normally translated into Latin.

The four grammars include: the early Rabe (1515/16) already mentioned; a grammar by an unknown author, *Introductiorium in octo partium orationis cognitionem* (1517); and two by Erasmus, a Latin syntax, *De octo orationis partium constructione libellus* (1520), and some colloquies, *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae*, which ran to a second edition in the same year (1520). Hieronymus and Koegler believe it possible that Gengenbach printed another text book by Matthias Hölderlin (known as Sambucellus), *Argumentia communia ad inferendum sophistice unamquemque propositionem esse veram vel falsam*, a book that Hieronymus describes as: ‘Das offenbar nicht so ganz ernsthaft gemeinte Lehrbuch der sophistischen Dialektik [...]’ that was printed in 1511. The main evidence in favour of Gengenbach as the printer relates to the titlepage woodcut, but Prietzel’s analysis in relation to relevant typefaces undermines the case. The year 1511 was very

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56 Appendix A, nos. 29, 33, 34 and 36 respectively.

57 This was another popular book that went to various editions since Pirckheimer published it in 1516: Prietzel, *AGB*, p.410.


59 Appendix A, nos 24, 30, 60 and 62/63 respectively. Both Erasmus grammars were successful. By 1522 the *Familiarium* had run to over fifty printings from at least thirty printers: Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.387-88.

60 Hieronymus, *Bücherillustration*, p.46.

early in Gengenbach's career and as there were no known Latin works published by him for another four years or more afterwards, it does seem unlikely to have been his.

Erasmus was just one of many humanists writing text books at this time as their influence on education took a hold. In Basel, for example, Capito produced a Hebrew grammar in 1518 and Oecolampadius a Greek one, while elsewhere in the following year three more prominent humanist educationalists published books: a new edition of Wimpfeling's *Aphorismi* appeared; Melancthon published *De rhetorica libri tres*, and Brunfels his *Aphorismi institutionis puerorum*. Seifert says of the educational reform movement and impact of humanism in the Universities:

Latein-griechisches Sprachstudium, ausgiebige Autorenlektüre, dazu eine 'reine', 'textuale' Philosophie ohne die alten Kommentare, schließlich eine gebührende Berücksichtigung der Mathematik - das waren etwa die Programmpunkte, nach denen sich die deutschen Artistenfakultäten zwischen 1510 und 1520 überall, sei es aus eigenem Antrieb oder unter landesherrlichem Druck, reformierten.  

Fechter reports on the start of the movement to reform the school curriculum in Basel:

Mit dem Ende des 15ten und dem Anfange des 16ten Jahrhunderts begann die Reformation der Schulen; sie sollte das Mittel sein zur Verbesserung der Kirche und zur Veredlung des Staates.  

He reports that this reform was well under way by the second decade of the sixteenth century though still not complete by 1520: 'In den einzelnen Kollegien wurden die Knaben [...] bis gegen 1520 in der Grammatik grössentheils nach der alten Methode unterrichtet [...]’ (page 37), a view echoed by Wackernagel who linked it closely with the upheavals going on in the University at the same time. Wackernagel says:

In allen ihren Betrieben, in der Universität, in den humanistischen Lehranstalten, wird ein neues Leben spürbar und ein Kämpfen geistiger Mächte. Auch niedere

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Schulen formen sich um und veredeln sich, was schon einzelne Lehrergestalten uns vergegenwärtigen: an der Theodor Schule Jacob Brun, Gregor Bünzli, Jacob Galandronius; an der Martinschule Ulrich Zwingli, dann zu St. Theodor und zu St. Peter Oswald Myconius, an der Schule auf Burg Hieronymus Artolf.64

Detailed evidence is sparse about the development of education in the second decade of the sixteenth century in Basel, but it is reasonable to assume that Gengenbach’s decision to print schoolbooks from 1516 was a rational response to change and growing demand in local schools, given the pattern of change elsewhere in German-speaking territories.65 Some years later, Thomas Platter’s diary and letters record some information about the curriculum he followed while he was head teacher of the Burgschule in Basel from 1541.66 This curriculum is similar to descriptions of other schools throughout German-speaking countries at the time. The Burgschule appears to have followed a four-year curriculum whereas Fechter believes that during the earlier part of the century the curriculum was a three-year one. It is apparent from Monroe that three of the authors published by Gengenbach were still being used in one edition or another by Platter.67 Only Nilus is not on the list, but there is Jerome instead - whose Der Pfaffenspiegel Gengenbach had also published (though in a vernacular translation).

Quite who bought and used the schoolbooks that Gengenbach printed is speculative, as students were not expected to buy their own books. The teacher would have a copy - or copies - which the students would copy from prior to learning a passage by rote. It is conceivable that not only teachers were buying these books, but that they may also have been needed by university students at the earlier stages of learning Latin, as Arno Seifert believes: ‘Die Stadtschule lehrte in erster Linie Latein und bediente sich dafür der

64 R. Wackernagel, iii, p.257.

65 Prietzel, AGB, pp.389-90, for full information on the volume of printing of grammar books at the end of the fifteenth century in Basel.


67 Monroe, p.69.
Perhaps Gengenbach himself had been taking Latin lessons and by 1517 he was ready to start printing his own reading list! Thomas Platter had taught himself Latin as a young man on the road to a sufficient standard to become a successful teacher.

The fact that two of Gengenbach’s nine schoolbooks went to a second edition indicates a buoyant market and that perhaps Gengenbach had an arrangement with a school master or indeed with Wolfgang Capito. Capito, who came to Basel in 1515, was a friend of Hutten, Erasmus, and Luther. He became professor of the Old Testament and then Dean of the Theology Faculty at the University, as well as serving as Rector for six months during 1517. Schottenloher describes a good example of an energetic teacher who organised the publication of schoolbooks, with details of the books that were published as a consequence of the appointment of Cochlaeus (the later Catholic controversialist) to the school of St. Lorenz in Nuremberg in 1510.

The main evidence of any direct contact between Gengenbach and Capito is the publication of Karlstadt’s *Apologeticae propositiones pro Martino Luther* in 1518, which was edited with a foreword by Capito and first printed in Basel by Gengenbach - so it would have been rather odd if they had not had contact. There is no way of knowing how significant this relationship was or how long it lasted, but there is further circumstantial evidence of its existence. The year 1520 when Capito was moved from Basel by the Church authorities was coincidentally also the year that saw a sharp fall-off in Gengenbach’s Latin output. Prietzel has suggested that the printing by Gengenbach of the *Ciolek Oratio* indicates that there was some sort of link between Gengenbach and Erasmus’s circle, as the speech was initially sent from Augsburg to Erasmus by a

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68 Seifert, p.224.


correspondent (Jakob Spiegel). In another connection to humanist circles, Prietzel has also noted that Beatus Rhenanus had three items in his library printed by Gengenbach, suggesting that he had visited Gengenbach to buy books.

c) Fachliteratur

The nearest comparable vernacular publications to the schoolbooks that Gengenbach printed are five works of Fachliteratur: four popular medical books and a leaflet about counterfeit coinage printed between 1513-1520. Prietzel’s category ‘Fachliteratur’ includes amongst others these five together with Gengenbach’s four Latin grammars (described here as ‘schoolbooks’) as she argues that they are all concerned with self-improvement.

Fachliteratur was one of the fascinating features of the history of early printing. It is the generic title for informative and practical books and brochures for which there was a flourishing market. Some of the material was published in Latin, but much of it was produced in the vernacular and so was accessible to a much wider readership of the middling sort, of artisans. An anecdotal comment on who the people were who were joining the widening circles of the literate in Basel (and why) can be found in the inscription on the schoolmaster’s signboard painted by one or both of the Holbein brothers in 1516 - probably Ambrosius. It read:

Wer jemandt hie der gern welt lernen dutsch schriben und läsen uß dem aller kurtzisten grundt den jeman erdencken kan do durch ein jeder der vor nit ein büchstaben kan der mag kurtzlich und bald begriffen ein grundt do durch er mag von jm selbs lernen sin schuld uff schribê und läsen und wer es nit gelernten kan so ungeschickt were den will ich um nut und vergeben gelert haben und ganz niu von jm zü lon nemen er lig wer er well burger oder handwercks gesellen frouwen

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71 Prietzel, AGB, p.329.


73 The four medical books are and their numbers in Appendix A are: Charetanus, Schöne Unterweisung und Lehre (no.12); Barter, Regiment wider der Pestilenz; Albrant, Roßarznei (no. 58); and Regiment der Gesundheit (nos. 13 and 23). The leaflet on counterfeit coinage is the Münzverruf der Stadt Frankfurt (no. 20).
The self-improvement theme that Prietzel identifies as linking the Latin grammars and the informative vernacular works gets rather confusing, however, as she also describes Gengenbach’s five calendars and two Practicas and three sundry extras as Fachliteratur as well, which makes up a very mixed collection.\textsuperscript{75} In this dissertation, these calendars and Practicas have been classified quite separately as ‘astological’ and were dealt with in chapter 2, IIIa and IIIb (pages 54-58).

The markets for these various types of book might well have had some overlap, but the Latin readers would have been a significantly smaller, better educated group than the readership of, for example, the wall calendars. Prietzel has perhaps missed the interesting, more specific, possibility raised in this dissertation that both the Latin classical works and the Latin grammars were all produced in the first instance to meet the needs of the school Latin curriculum which was a distinct market of its own.\textsuperscript{76} The readership of the schoolbooks would have therefore been somewhat younger than readers of Fachliteratur, which was material aimed at adults.

With the spread of schools the number of people who could read some Latin as well as German would have been growing, which must have had an impact on the book market.

\textsuperscript{74} The sign is in the Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Kunstmuseum Basel (my transcription).

\textsuperscript{75} The three sundry extras are - the Liber vagatorum; Das Heiligen-Namenbuch; and the Münzverruf. The latter is also on the list of Fachliteratur in this study. Liber vagatorum was discussed in chapter 2, II (page 48) as an example of political commentary and Das Heiligen-Namenbuch (1513), written in German by Dankrotzheim, a 15th century schoolmaster, is probably best classified as a devotional book although it could also be viewed as a sort of calendar, perhaps for teaching purposes (no. 8, Appendix A). Prietzel has dug up some interesting details but fails to establish the links: Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, pp.381-82.

\textsuperscript{76} I am grateful to Dr. Dilwyn Knox, UCL Italian Department, for his knowledge of the Latin school curriculum of this period and the time he spent discussing it with me.
Many may well have wanted to continue practising their Latin after their formal education was over and have bought classics and even the occasional grammar. The fact that there were three editions of Nilus’s *Sententiae morales* all produced within a few months of each other (1517 to 1518) in Basel suggests that its readership was not limited to school students. This certainly applies to the ninth and last publication to be discussed of Gengenbach’s Latin schoolbooks. Illustrated by Ambrosius Holbein and published in 1517, it was the tragic tale of *Alda* by Guarinus Veronensis (Batista Guarino), who was an important early Humanist pedagogue. The heroine is raped and murdered at the behest of Venus it was probably adult reading.

*d) Humanism and Popular Drama*

Gengenbach’s involvement in the Latin market lasted from 1516 until 1522. His growing familiarity with the classics and this pattern of publication point to the conclusion that by 1516 Gengenbach was being drawn closer to humanist circles in Basel. Alternatively, it might be that he was behaving purely instrumentally, pursuing the most lucrative markets where he could find them. It is entirely possible that the popular market in Basel from 1517 was rather weak after the death of some 2000 citizens from the plague and that Gengenbach needed to find some (better-off) customers.

Humanist ideas were a significant general influence on the development of contemporary drama and their impact on popular theatre - and Gengenbach in particular - must be considered. From the end of the fifteenth century, translated plays and other classical works sold widely. The unusual name of ‘Pamphilus’ and the character of that name in a play by Terence was noted in chapter 1. Humanist plays were in Latin and so by definition performed for an educated middle- or upper-class audience, and they appear to have been mainly performed as school or student plays. The late fifteenth century saw the school curriculum begin to change as humanist ideas became more widespread and some schools began to encourage drama as a means of improving students’ Latin. In profound contrast to the writers of carnival plays, humanists were very much interested in improving minds and not concerned with the animal side of human experience. Nevertheless, the forms were not immune from each other.
The inter-penetration of the *Fastnachtspiel* and classical drama began at the start of the sixteenth century. Brett-Evans discusses the example of the *Fastnachtspiel, Spiel vom klugen Knecht* (1505) by an unknown author:

(Die Handlung) findet sich bereits in älteren italienischen Spielen und Anekdoten, ja, ließe sich letzten Endes bis in die Zeit der altrömischen Atellanen zurückverfolgen.  

Appearing eight years later, Spross’s play contains various explicit indicators of humanist influence: the Latin instructions; the inclusion of Hannibal, Scipio, Scaevola and Cocles as examples of Roman virtue; and the division of the play into Acts, however arbitrary. Subsequent popular plays contained classical references and even took classical themes; most notably Hans Sachs was strongly influenced by classical and humanist writing. He wrote, for example, a number of Greek tragedies; he used Boccaccio for ideas and sometimes his Schwänke also showed classical influences, such as his *Drei Schwänke des Diogenes* (1555).

Ermatinger, however, is sceptical about how big an effect classical drama really had on popular plays in Switzerland:

Das schweizerische Volksspiel der Reformationszeit hat mit dem klassischen Drama nichts mehr als die Darbietung eines dichterischen Stoffes durch Handeln und Sprechen vor einer Zuschauermenge gemein. Der Stoff selber, seine innere Motivierung, die Personen, die Art des Spielens sind völlig anders.  

Wyss echoes the same argument, saying: ‘Das schweizerische Theater bleibt ein Volkstheater, der Narr eine typische Volksfigur’. Influence in reverse - that of *Fastnachtspiel* on the humanists - was perhaps more significant, particularly the motif of the fool, *der Narr*. It has already been noted in chapter 2 that the Fool was used by humanists like Brant and Erasmus as a symbol of human weakness. Carnival drama had

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77 Brett-Evans, p.177.


79 Ermatinger, p.130.

always mocked the foolish, but in Gengenbach and thereafter the Fool character in
carnival plays is usually a wise commentator on the foolish ways of the world, just like
the protagonist orator in Erasmus's *In Praise of Folly*. Gengenbach first uses the Fool in
this way in his last but one carnival play, *Die Gouchmat* (1519).

In the early years of writing Gengenbach did not include classical figures and references
in his work; not until *X Alter* do the first classical (Greek) references start to creep in, and
only in a very modest way. 81 *Practica Deutsch*, an astrological work of the same year
(1515), has one reference to Ptolemy. Shortly after he published his first book in Latin,
Corvinus’s Latin idioms, and his first references to classical Roman history occur
halfway through *der Nollhart* published in 1517. In that same year and in early 1518
Gengenbach printed his entire output of classical works in Latin.

In respect of their intellectual content Gengenbach’s plays were more sophisticated than
previous popular drama - and they got more so as he got older. A growing interest in
classical-humanist themes can be traced in the middle period of his working life.
Towards the last part of his life, the themes that dominated Gengenbach’s work were
theological. Many humanists refused to engage in the furious theological debates of the
early 1520’s that so captured the popular imagination. Perhaps this failure caused
Gengenbach to lose interest in Humanism as he was drawn instead into the polemical
whirlpool. The frantic pamphleteering represented in any case a vast new popular market
for Gengenbach.

By 1521 Gengenbach was arguably starting to distance himself from humanist ideas, as a
consequence of his concerns about Church reform. His printing in Latin had all but
stopped. The only direct evidence of negative views about humanism at around this time
is in *Die Gouchmat*, in the exchanges between *der Narr* and *der Doctor*. Most of this
exchange is an attack on the astrological ideas of Fries (see chapter 4, IIc - page 109- and

81 *X Alter*, lines 360-63: Aristotle and Vergil join Solomon and Samson. Then in lines
378-80: Paris, Helen of Troy and Priamus are listed as examples of adulterers along with
David and other biblical characters.

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page 194 below), but in its midst is a contemptuous swipe at another and much wider target, the learned theologians - 'greci', as Gengenbach calls them (line 821):

| O ir theologi wyt vnd breit /   |
| Die do sindts saltz der christenheit / |
| Als Mattheus clorlich thüt schriben / |
| Solten solch geiich nit lassen bliben / |

(p. 123, lines 809-12).

The passage in the Gospel of Matthew referred to is from the Sermon on the Mount:

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 

IV. ASTROLOGY AND THE COMING APOCALYPSE

Astrology is the fourth and last important theme in the years after 1517 that was identified at the start of this chapter as emerging from the discussion of Der Nollhart. His astrological publications tailed off in the 1520's and this section extends the discussion beyond 1521 to the end of Gengenbach’s life in 1524 so that it can include his remaining final publications on this theme.

Astrology is a theme that recurred in his publications throughout his working life. His fundamental views remained unchanged, even if they were are not always consistent within themselves. Elements can be found in his ideas of the unresolved tension between the Church and astrology that had persisted throughout the Middle Ages.

a) Wiener Prognosticon

The appeal to the Emperor to take a lead in reforming the Church in the Wiener Prognosticon has already been discussed in section II of this chapter. This Prognosticon was written as the consequence of some stellar activity seen above Vienna in January 1520. In it Gengenbach makes the link between these astronomical events with a

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82 Matthew 5, v.13.
previous astronomical happening in 1514 over Württemberg and the prophesied events of
1524. Gengenbach describes astronomical events as 'zeichen' (line 23), which
subsequent events showed were warnings open to interpretation:

Vyl straffen über lych und lüt
Als geschehen ist yn kurtzer zyt,
Das ich hie kürälich will bedüten
(p. 129, lines 30-32).

Of the latest events he says they too presage a warning:

Nun merck her nach recht wer do well
Uff diß zeichen die jetz sind gesehen,
Und betracht gar wol wz werd geschehen.
(p. 129, lines 45-47).

Whereas in the Practica Deutsch, and in his other writings with an astrological content,
Gengenbach regards astronomical events as general indicators of God's displeasure, in
the Wiener Prognosticon he appears to accept the link between astronomical events and
specific earthly consequences for human society. Not satisfied with a general warning, he
outlines that these Zeichen of January 1520 would mean widespread flooding. He does
not indicate how he knows that the conjunction of the planets in Pisces will have the
particular effects that he predicts. Nor, of course, is it clear how he knows from the stars
that listening to Luther will enable Christians to avoid the disaster. Virdung von Hassfurt
also connected the three sets of events of 1514, 1520 and the forthcoming ones of 1524.\(^{83}\)
Talkenberger argues that both authors made a connection between the astronomical
events and the peasantry, the Armer Konrad conspiracy and the danger of future
bloodshed:

Bei Gengenbach und Virdung wird der Aufstand des 'Armen Konrad' als
zentrales Beispiel für das Aufbegehren des 'gemeinen Mannes' genannt; [...].
Außerdem sehen beide Autoren die Empörung als Bestätigung der Vorhersagen
von 1514 an, die Astrologie erscheint gerechtfertigt.\(^{84}\)

Other writers at the time, notably Seitz, foresaw popular risings as a possible outcome of

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\(^{83}\) Talkenberger, pp.177-82, discusses Virdung von Hassfurt's Auslegung, (1520).

\(^{84}\) Talkenberger, p.181.
the 1524 crisis.\(^{85}\)

b) *'Sintflut' prophecy*

The prophecy of major events in 1524 had first appeared as early in 1499 in the *Ephemeriden* of Stöffler, who had continued to publish about it thereafter. The specific prediction that this would be another Great Flood, a *Sintflut* - the theme that appears in the *Wiener Prognosticon* - was much more recent.\(^{86}\) With the approach of 1524, the *Sintflut* generated a remarkable volume of publications taking differing views as to whether it would really happen and what its causes were. Talkenberger has identified a total of nineteen authors in twenty-seven printed German works that appeared in over sixty editions.\(^{87}\) In them, the Catholics blamed the Protestants, the Protestants blamed the Catholics, and some blamed the general evil of mankind and the failures of the Church and the political authorities to sort them out. How disastrous the flood would be depended on the writer’s interpretation of God’s promise to Noah and the Rainbow:

In einer Debatte über die Wahrscheinlichkeit einer zweiten Sintflut mag es überraschen, daß nur zwei Autoren - Alexander Seitz und Luca Gaurico - explizit eine Sintflut ankündigen, während alle anderen Astrologen, selbst wenn sie der Zukunft apokalyptische Züge verleihen, um die Relativierung zumindest der Sintflutvorhersage bemüht sind. So wird betont, daß eine universale Flut nicht möglich sei, und die zu erwartenden Überschwemmungen werden auf einzelne Landstriche eingeschränkt.\(^{88}\)

Gengenbach published four of these works - two of his own and two by other writers - a contribution to the *Sintflut* debate that Talkenberger describes as ‘central’ (p.311).

It is interesting that despite Gengenbach’s previous condemnation of specific astrological prophecies, one of the three works that he published after 1521 about the *Sintflut* prophecy was just such a work, Gaurico’s *Prognosticon ab incarnatione Christi anno* 

\(^{85}\) Talkenberger, pp.189-92.


\(^{87}\) Talkenberger, p.155.

\(^{88}\) Talkenberger, p.277.

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1503 usque ad 35. vliturum (1522). Pfister argues that Gengenbach’s publication of the Gaurico Practica demonstrates that he was not against observing and interpreting the stars in itself:


The second work published by Gengenbach on the Sintflut theme was a Practica teü1.sch printed in 1523 and written by Gallianus. It was first published in Strassburg in 1521 and was a pro-reform piece. The second woodcut accompanying the pamphlet would have been much to Gengenbach’s taste as it shows three believers in a boat saved through their faith in Mary. The Schiff Petri recalls the image of the Church that Brant had made so famous in Das Narrenschiff.

The third work, entitled Eine christliche und ware Practica, did not appear in Goedeke, but it has nevertheless been confidently attributed to Gengenbach by most critics. It could well have been the last thing that he wrote, in 1523 or early 1524, and it is largely taken up with a counter-attack on Fries who had been very rude about Gengenbach the year before.

c) Gengenbach and Fries

As was noted in chapter 4, IIc (page 109), Gengenbach first attacked the astrologist Laurentius Fries in Die Gouchmat and Fries counterattacked in Ein zusammengelesenes Urteil aus den alten erfahrenen Meistern der Astrologie über die große Zusammenkunft Saturns und Jupiters in dem 1524 Jahr, which was published in Strassburg in 1523 or 1524. This assault by Fries was in turn answered by Gengenbach in Christliche ware practica in 1524. The dispute between the two has been given quite a lot of coverage in recent publications. 

89 S. Pfister, p. 136.

One of the reasons why the date of publication of *Die Gouchmat* has been difficult to pin down is because Fries did not publish anything on astrology until 1520, the *Schirmrede*. It therefore has been argued that Gengenbach must have produced *Die Gouchmat* after 1520. As was shown in chapter 4, lia (page 107), however, this goes against the evidence of the printers, who prefer the date 1519. Later dating also raises problems with the play’s astrological content as well: *Die Gouchmat* does not contain any comment on the *Sintflut* controversy. It seems entirely unlikely that Gengenbach would not have included a mention of this subject which was provoking so much contemporary argument and publishing activity; indeed the four different works that he published on the *Sintflut* from 1520 represented a significant proportion of his own printing capacity. All of which suggests very strongly in its turn that *Die Gouchmat* was pre-1520. The fact that Fries appears not to have seen a copy of *Die Gouchmat* until 1522 is not conclusive.

Gengenbach’s attack on Fries may not have had to wait until he saw Fries’s *Schirmrede*, but may have been reacting to Fries’s earlier *Spiegel der Artzny*. Thomke thinks not:

> Sein zuerst 1518 gedruckter und dann oft wieder aufgelegter Spiegel der Artzny bekannte sich zwar in allgemeiner Form zur Astrologie als einer Grundlage der Medizin, doch war dies kein ausreichender Grund für Gengenbachs Angriffe.

But in *Die Gouchmat* it is a doctor called Fries who boasts his medical practices are very much a distinctive part of his identity as an astrologer. If we look at *Spiegel der Artzny* there is certainly sufficient in it for Gengenbach or anyone else to raise more than an eyebrow over the good doctor’s treatment plans.

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91 Thomke, pp.971-73.

92 Thomke, p.973.

Aber yetzund so soltu wissen / das ein yeder der ein artzet werden wil so er schon || geschliffen ist in den vor gemelten künsten müß erst anfahren die natürlichen kunst die heiset Physica.
(p.836, lines 93-95).

By which he means Aristotle’s conception of Physics (lines 97-98), and he goes on:

Item der natürlichen kunst / ist not dem artzt das er
durch schiffet hab vil andere bücher / nemlich von dem himel vnd der welt /
(p.836, lines 104-105).

Besides the specifically medical content of the attack in Die Gouchmat, everything else Gengenbach says would have been applicable to any astrologer. In Die Gouchmat the Doctor claims to be able see the future, for example, when wine and corn will be ruined (page 121, line 761). These claims are answered robustly:

Du bist ein gouch das müß man gryffen.
Nun lüg wie ist der win verdorben /
Ich wolt ee das du werst erworgen.
(p.122, lines 767-69).

The line about corn and wine, ‘Wañ win vnd korn verderben sol’, echoes Gengenbach’s Practica Deutsch a few years earlier where the similar line occurs, ‘Ob verderben werd korn oder wein’ (page Aiii’), and an even earlier echo from chapter 65 of Das Narrenschiff (‘Vō achtung des gstirs’), ‘Oder wie/ korn und wein verderb’ (page165).

In Die Gouchmat Gengenbach is dismissive of astrologers as deceitful - very much in the same way as Brant in Das Narrenschiff. They trick many decent peasants as well as others (lines 866-68). Der Narr in Die Gouchmat asserts:

So es allein stöt in gots gwalt /
Vff din kunst ich gar wenig halt.
(p.123, lines 803-804)

The stars should not be blamed:

Das du dem gstirn solt dschuld nit geben /
Allein solch stroff kumpt vß der sünd /
(p.124, lines 832-33).

Brant, Gengenbach and Luther all believed that the stars gave us warnings from God and
He also gave us various kinds of warnings in the physical world - but the connection between the two was invariably confused. The Medieval Church resisted scientific investigation of the natural world, and so did Luther. People like Fries derived their beliefs from heathen (ancient Greek and Arab) astronomers. Luther’s position was outlined in the *Decem Praecepta (Zehn Gebote)*,\(^4\) which was first printed in Basel by Petri in 1520. In his Advent sermon of 1522 Luther condemned people who argued that astronomical events just happened as a result of the laws of Nature unfolding: ‘Laß die unglewbigen tzweylln und vorachten gottis tzeychen unnd sagen, es sey naturlich geschefft, hallt du dich des Euangelion.’\(^5\)

Fries, in his response to *Die Gouchmat*, dismisses Gengenbach as an ‘ölschëcklige hundBmuck’, who was ‘im grund vngelert’, who could neither count nor measure, and so on.\(^6\) Fries pointed out that Gengenbach himself practised astrology in his calendars. When Gengenbach in his turn attacked Fries again in *Christliche ware Practica* in 1523, he accused Fries of being blasphemous when he described the Scriptures as the one source of a Christian astrology. The introductory lines do not mince their words:

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Eine Christliche und ware Practica
wider ein unchristliche gotzlesterige unware practica. Welche ein Bomolochischer stärnensäher hat lassen ußgon uff das M.CCCC.XXIII jar. Inn der, er nit allein die menschen, sunder auch Gott, sine Propheten und die helge geschryfft gelestedt und geschmächt hat.
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(p.116).

If Fries were a proper astrologer then, according to Gengenbach, he would be calling on people to repent: ‘Wärest du ein rächter stärnensäher, so ermantest du das volck zuo eir weren penitentz, welche ein rechte hinderstellerinn ist deß zorn gottes’ (page 124, lines 357-59).

\(^4\) Martin Luther, *Decem Praecepta (Zehn Gebote)*, *WA* 1, pp.398-521.

\(^5\) Martin Luther, *Evangelium am andern sonntag jm Advent (Luce 21)*, *WA* 10.1.2, p.108.

Gengenbach took what would now be regarded as a passionately fundamentalist line against knowledge to be derived from scientific investigation. Fries took a quasi-scientific position, but ended up with the wrong conclusions. Despite his belief that only the Scriptures contained information about the future and God’s will, Gengenbach had nevertheless demonstrated in the past, in *Wiener Prognosticon*, a close interest in the exact nature of the disasters that befell humanity following these astrological events. Now he was rejecting specific forecasts and Talkenberger notes this inconsistency:

(Er hat) einerseits die Astrologie heftig kritisiert, anderseits in seinem Flugblatt zur Wiener Lichterscheinung von 1520 astrologisch argumentiert. Auch später hat Gengenbach diesen Widerspruch nicht völlig auflösen können.⁹⁷

Although Gengenbach’s position on astrology changed towards a much tougher scriptural line - very similar to Luther’s but without the eschatology - it remained unclear and contradictory (as did Luther’s). While Luther accepted that the heavenly signs had a meaning, he resisted that idea that they related to specific events or outcomes.⁹⁸ Luther’s sermon on the second Sunday in Advent, 1522 foresees the imminence of the Last Judgement and he believes that the astronomical signs are one of several indicators of this coming event. The *Sintflut* debate posed the question of the significance of heavenly signs particularly sharply as it involved discussing the significance of the Rainbow seen by Noah, which had supposedly symbolised God’s promise never to bring down such a calamity on humanity again.

In *Christliche und ware Practica* there is barely any hint of the Final Judgement even if it does otherwise read like an evangelical sermon. It is striking that the necessity of church reform and the renewal of faith, which Gengenbach had previously argued for in *Wiener Prognosticon* and in *Der Nollhart*, is not addressed in the *Christliche und ware Practica*. Different conclusions have been drawn about the theology of the piece: whereas Prietzel

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⁹⁷ Talkenberger, p.290.

⁹⁸ For a useful summary of Luther’s position see: Ingetraut Ludolphy, ‘Luther und Astrologie’, in Zambelli, pp.101-107. Talkenberger, p.291, takes issue with Ludolphy, however, for failing to discuss Luther’s Advent Sermon of 1522.
believes this work can be treated as pro-reform, Pfister rejects such a view.\textsuperscript{99} The issue of Gengenbach’s theological views post 1521 will be examined in detail in the next two chapters.

The \textit{Christliche und ware Practica} is remarkable for two other points. First, the great importance given to medicine and doctoring.\textsuperscript{100} Gengenbach says that there are four key elements to a Christian society. The first two of these were unexceptional - a wise council, and a reliable priest. The third element is more surprising - a god-fearing doctor. He only lists the first two briefly and then launches a lengthy attack on doctors. Gengenbach’s guiding principle is simple: ‘Auch kumpt gesuntheit allein von dem willen gots’ (page 123, lines 307-308). Despite his saying there were four elements that he thought were essential to a Christian society, he entirely forgot to list the fourth. One is left wondering if this is the writing of a very sick man near to his death.

The second remarkable and quite probably connected feature of this piece is how much a very personal statement it is: the most obviously so of any of Gengenbach’s works. The author’s own views are unmistakably those expressed - there are no characters to deliver the lines, there is no irony or satire for disguise. Quite in keeping with the man, however, we are left still not knowing which preacher he agreed with.

\textit{d) Conclusions}

Various patterns emerge from this analysis of Gengenbach’s writing and publications on astrology. Throughout his writing on the subject Gengenbach maintained consistent support for biblical prophecy and sustained a greater level of scepticism about astrology than his intellectual mentor Brant. Both drew from Augustine, but Gengenbach’s scripturalism became more intense as he got older and society’s religious crisis deepened. This is a trend apparent in the astrological work and in much of his other later publishing.


\textsuperscript{100} This interest is not entirely an isolated instance. In chapter 9, II, there is a discussion about the \textit{Fachliteratur} that Gengenbach produced on medical topics.
The exception is *Wiener Prognosticon* in which he makes a serious astrological prophecy in favour of Luther, Hus and reform; the bible and the scriptures are not mentioned in it. This is in sharp contrast with his other writing, though he did publish prognostications by other authors, notably Gaurico, which were also entirely serious about their astrology, and he also published calendars.

Although Brant might have been more susceptible to accepting astrological prediction than Gengenbach, he acknowledged the number of charlatans and cheats there were around. The exploitation of gullible peasants is specifically condemned by Brant and repeated by Gengenbach in almost the same language. Brant did not share, however, Gengenbach’s rejection of the link between medicine and astrology. To Gengenbach astrological medicine was a further form of quackery which led him to his extraordinary attack on Fries; extraordinary because Gengenbach had previously only named living people who were political or religious leaders from places outside the Confederation. Fries was almost a local, from Colmar, and certainly neither powerful nor influential. Brant managed to avoid mentioning the names of any living persons in his published writing other than his dedications to the Emperor.

There are changes over time in the content of the astrological material. In *Der Nollhart* the Jews had a role in the apocalyptic crisis, but this idea does not reappear in his later writing. The Turks, too, cease to feature as a source of danger. The last time that Gengenbach published anything about the Turkish threat to the West was 1518 and this was in the two pieces printed in Latin mentioned in section 1b of this chapter. This is curious as the external threat of the Turks was a growing one and very much an element of political reality. Despite the high hopes that Charles V would unite Christendom and drive them back, the Turks continued their new advance and Belgrade fell in August 1521. This was further grist to the mill of the apocalyptic prophecies, but for Gengenbach the coming crisis was increasingly an ideological one within the Christian Church which would have social consequences.¹⁰¹ Those external threats that he had previously seen as helping to generate the crisis have faded and in his last piece, *Christliche und ware*

¹⁰¹ Other writers in the *Sintflutdebatte* were concerned about the Turkish threat e.g Carion (Talkenberger, p.215) and Weissenburger (Talkenberger, p.220).
Practica, the social content had almost all disappeared as well.

The Turks feature in two of his later works, *Drei Christen* (chapter 8, IIId - page 260) and *Anzeigung* (chapter 8, IIIe - page 264), but neither are remotely astrological in content and nor are the Turks portrayed as a fundamental threat. In one of them, *Drei Christen* (1523), far from being a threat to worship Gengenbach portrays the Turkish regime as benign for Christians. This represents a huge shift in Gengenbach’s thinking about the world and its impending end. Whereas *Der Nollhart* represents an essentially traditional, medieval view of the world and of prophecy, *Drei Christen* by contrast is an example of utopian writing about an ideal religious society in the mould of Thomas More. The intense focus in *Christliche und ware Practica* on the scriptures, as opposed to the teachings of various prophets and Church fathers, represents a move away from the medievalism of *Der Nollhart*. This focus on the bible and the drive to teach the people to read it was a hallmark of the reform ‘movement’ as it gathered momentum in the 1520's.
CHAPTER 7: THEOLOGIANS AND RELIGIOUS CORRUPTION

The underlined reference indicates the version of the work used in the text from which any quotes are drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used for it in the text.

59. *Die siben Alt\er* (before Sept. 1520).
   Basel UB: AN VI 107. (No.59).

   BL: 3906.b.57. (Verhörung Luthers).

   BL: 3908.f.35 and Enders, i. pp. 1-170. (Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen).

89. *Die siben Alt\er* (1521). 2nd edn. of no. 59.

   BL: 1226.b.8. (Schweizer Bauer).

92. Luca Gaurico, [*...] Prognosticā Ab incarnatio\ne Christi* (Feb. 1522)
   Köhler MF: 920/2287. (Gaurico Prognosticon).

93. Thomas Murner, *De quattuor heresiarchis* (mid 1521 - mid 1522).

94. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Der Leiéspiegel || sancti Pauli des alten gloubens || wider
den nüwen.* (end 1521 - mid 1522).
   BL: 3905.ee.54. (Der Laienspiegel).

95. Hieronymus, *Ein christlich biech||in deß durchlächtigosten vnd christl=||ichen
pflegers der prophetischē / ewan=||gelischen / vnd apostolischen geschriß=||tē sancti Hieronymi /* (Feb.- mid 1522).
   BL: 3805.a.24. (Der Pfaффenspiegel).

   BL: 11405.c.42. (Planctus).

   BL: 3021.aaa.18. (Novum Instrumentum).

98. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Diß ist eine iemerlicher clag uber die Todten fresser*
   (1521-1522).
   BL: (Augsburg: Steiner, [1522 (?)]), 1462.d.1. (Die Totenfresser).

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I. THE CHURCH STARTS TO LOSE ITS GRIP

Protestant literature was flooding onto the market from 1518. There were 275 editions of Luther's works printed in the German speaking area in 1520, which represented a phenomenal growth from 1517 when there were only six.\(^1\) The Church was deeply alarmed as its monopoly of intellectual exchange slipped away despite its efforts to control all new publications. In 1515, Leo X issued his Papal Bull *Inter sollicitudines*, the last of three largely ineffective censorship decrees, which demanded that nothing be printed without the approval of the local Bishop and the Inquisitor, under pain of excommunication. Every book printed contrary to these regulations was supposed to be burned.

In the face of the huge interest in Luther's writings, Leo X issued *Exsurge domine* in 1520 which summarily prohibited all of Luther's works. It appears to have had an impact - albeit brief - as the number of Luther printed editions dropped from 275 (1520) to 174 (1521), before rising again.\(^2\) There were some public burnings of his books in cities such as Cologne and after the Diet of Worms in April 1521 Luther retreated to the Wartburg until March 1522 in genuine fear of his life. The parallels between Luther's situation at Worms and that of Johann Hus at Constance in 1415 were all too apparent. Hus had trusted in a free conduct granted by the Emperor to travel to Constance to appear before the General Council of the Church, but instead had been turned over to the civil magistrates of Constance to be burned as a heretic. The similarities between the theology of Luther and Hus led many people to believe that Luther was about to be similarly betrayed when he went to Worms.

The attempted repression was wider than just Luther personally. Hutten, for example, was excommunicated at the same time as Luther and he fled too, first to von Sickingen’s Ebernburg and then, with the defeat of the Knights' Revolt in September 1522, he moved

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\(^1\) Edwards, p.18.

\(^2\) Edwards, p.18.
in fear from place to place. He spent a few weeks in Basel at the end of 1522, before moving on again.

Miriam Usher Chrisman has identified a series of pamphlets that were issued around this time whose purpose was to warn Luther and other reformers they were in danger.\(^3\) As well as pamphlets about Hus there were some about the Jetzer scandal in Berne, which included Thomas Murner's *De quattuor heresiarchis* that Gengenbach reprinted in mid-1521. Chrisman argues that the event was very fresh in people's minds:

As recently as 1509, the church in Bern had condemned four Dominican friars as heretics, then released them to the lay magistrates to be burned. The four had perpetrated a hoax to cheat the laity, but despite their guilt and their trickery, people reacted strongly to the burning. However wrong, they had not deserved death. [...] The event was constantly referred to in the Reformation pamphlets. Laymen saw the Dominicans as martyrs, one more example of injustice and violence by church courts.\(^4\)

The Church remained unrelenting and, for example, in Zurich in 1520 ordered a man to be burnt to death for entering a Church and desecrating some of the Church furniture. This was one of the earliest acts of iconoclasm that became a feature of the popular response to the Reformation.\(^5\) Church implacability failed to quell the signs of popular unrest and demands for change. A popular outbreak of iconoclastic destruction which occurred in the town church of Wittenberg during carnival week in February 1522 under Karlstadt's leadership so alarmed Luther that despite the danger to himself he felt impelled to leave the security of the Wartburg to return and bring matters under control.

In the cities of southern Germany, the gathering movement for reform during the period 1520 to 1522 had yet to establish any permanent new structures, but in 1522 Nuremberg

\(^3\) Chrisman, *Conflicting Visions*, pp.50-62, chapter 2 entitled, 'The Fear of Injustice'.


became the first city council openly to invite Lutheran preachers to the city. There the movement was led by a group of reforming priests and intellectuals, notably the city clerk Lazarus Spengler and the theologian Andreas Osiander. The first Swiss city to be fully and formally won to the Reformation was Zurich, which changed its constitution in 1523.

In some areas, pro-reform printers came under heavy pressure from the Church. Lazare Schürer, for example, was forced to leave Sélestat in 1522 and his departure meant there were no printers between Strassburg and Basel. In these circumstances printers as a group had a vested interest in reducing the power of the Church to interfere in their business and it may help explain why printers were among the leaders of the Reform movement in many cities. City councils also had an interest in curbing the Church as they were keen to expand their own areas of political control. Basel’s council was no exception, but it proceeded cautiously:

Basel, however, was not Zürich. It was an episcopal city with a resident bishop: it was a frontier state, nominally within the dominions of Charles V and actually surrounded by Austrian possessions. The city council, which had no love for the bishop, was cautious.

There had been skirmishes with the Church in Basel already. Bernhardin Samson, in charge of the papal drive to sell indulgences across Germany to raise money to rebuild St. Peter’s, had been excluded from Basel by the council in 1519. In 1520 the council had defied the Papal Bull to burn Luther’s books and continued to do so even when Pope Adrian intervened personally in March 1523 to demand their compliance and to expel Lutheran preachers. It meant that Basel’s printers and theologians of whatever persuasion continued to enjoy a considerable degree of freedom to preach and to publish: the tolerance that had attracted Erasmus to the city back in 1514.

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In March 1521 Basel council took a crucial political step against the Church with a reform that effectively eliminated the bishop’s power in city government, and by 1523 he had ceased living in the city altogether. That this happened to Christoph von Uttenheim who was a rarity among bishops, a prominent humanist and a man who had tried to reform some of the worst abuses of the local clergy, gives an indication as to how profoundly the mood had turned against the Church. The city’s military alliance with the Pope reached its end that Spring when the last Basel contingent marched off to the Leinlakenkrieg. In May Basel signed up to renew the alliance with France which was to last - with hiccups - right through the sixteenth century and beyond. The Swiss Confederation’s previous alignment with the Empire and the Papacy was over. This was not an event that Gengenbach was likely to have welcomed, but with his increasing focus on theological publications it went without printed comment.

Now the Kleiner Rat was composed entirely of Guildmasters and Guild representatives known as Die Sechser who were indirectly elected by those citizens who were members of the guilds. The guilds had now eliminated both the nobility and the Church as sources of competition to their political control. The year 1521 also represented a shift of fundamental control from the four merchants’ guilds, the Herrenzünfte, towards the handcraft guilds:

Auch im wirtschaftlichen Bereich äusserte sich die neue Machtverteilung innerhalb des Rates: Die Gewerbereform von 1521 bis 1526 brachte den Handwerkzünften ein Verkaufsmonopol für ihre eigenen Erzeugnisse und damit zum mindesten auf dem Papier den Sieg zünftigen Wirtschaftsverständnisses über die Fernhandelinteressen der Oberschicht.  

Despite the political successes of Spring 1521 and the popular pressure within the guilds, the council did not make any attempt to follow the logic of the secularisation process and to embrace a full religious reform. Agitation from the pulpit had begun as early as 1518, the year that Gengenbach printed Luther, led by priests like Bertschi, Capito, and Pellikan preaching the ‘pure gospel’. Capito, who as well as being an academic had been preacher at the Cathedral since 1515, was moved from Basel in 1520 to go to Mainz.

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8 Alloth, Barth & Huber, p.57.
Such was the tension that there was nearly a riot by his congregation to stop his leaving. Reublin, who arrived to become priest at the Church of St. Alban in the summer of 1521, stoked the tensions and was one of the most confrontational of the early reformers. In the first six months of 1522 he was to provoke three major religious rows.

In these conditions it is apparent from 1521 on that Gengenbach’s theological convictions were changing and he was now willing to write and print direct - sometimes virulent - attacks on the Church. Carnival in Basel 1522 was the moment that Gengenbach published his savage satirical Fastnachtspiel on the venality of the Church, Die Totenfresser. Around the same time, Schweizer Bauer appeared with its arguments in favour of the vernacular and asserting the rights of the laity to consider theological questions. From August 1522 Gengenbach ceased printing in Latin, and his production became heavily dominated by theological works on topics that reflected the ever-sharper debates taking place. Another sign of Gengenbach’s changing attitudes was his appearance in court in the New Year of 1522 when he and two others were found guilty of insulting the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of France - presumably after getting drunk. One of his two accomplices was Hans Locherer, who had stood surety ten years earlier for him when he had purchased his citizenship.

The start of this phase in Gengenbach’s life is marked by his publication of a report, probably from an eyewitness, of the speech Luther made before the Emperor at Worms in April 1521. The Verhörung Luthers was virtually a reprint of the document produced by Hans von Erfurt that appeared while the Reichstag was still meeting.\(^9\) Gengenbach’s edition appeared in May or June and it could be taken simply as another example of a topical news report, a Zeitung, but it reads as a statement of Luther’s views.\(^10\) To publish such a document with Luther already under papal ban and facing an imperial ban was

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\(^10\) So it is included as a work of Luther’s, for example in: Benzing, Lutherbibliographie, i, p.111.
taking a risk. It coincided with the publication of the second edition of Sieben Alter, which was to be the last devotional book that Gengenbach published.

II. THE LAST OF LATIN

Over the next few months Gengenbach undertook his final publications in Latin. The Catholic hierarchy opposed vernacular theology, as they saw no place for the *gmein Mann* in either the determination of theological questions or in the conduct of the affairs of the Church and maintaining all theological dialogue in Latin was an important way of ensuring the exclusion of the lay citizen. The Catholic controversialists, while apparently accepting the hierarchy’s view that all commoners were theologically ignorant, found themselves in the contradictory position of wanting to publicly refute the fallacies of the reformers. They ended up doing so in the vernacular. The substance of Thomas Murner’s attacks on Luther in his pamphlets from 1520 was that public debate undermined all legitimate authority - and yet he wrote in German with the intention of reaching as wide an audience as possible. The hierarchy proved less flexible and in the early years was almost unanimous in its refusal to support such efforts.¹¹

a. ‘Schweizer Bauer’ (1521-22)

This argument about language between the Catholics and the reformers was the subject of Schweizer Bauer, a lengthy pamphlet that Gengenbach printed - and possibly wrote - sometime during this crucial period, 1521 to 1522.¹² It was clearly popular as Gengenbach quickly reprinted it. The central part of this pamphlet takes the form of a dialogue between a travelling monk and a peasant about reading scripture in German, an

¹¹ This is dealt with in detail in: Bagchi, pp.215-37, chapter 8, ‘Establishment Reactions’.

¹² Gengenbach’s authorship of Schweizer Bauer is not at all certain. Blochwitz, p.226, is the only critic who does make the attribution. Prietzel, AGB, p.345, fn.283-88, summarises the literature on attribution; and here it is discussed further in chapter 8, IIb - p.241.
The peasant’s defence of scripture in the vernacular uses the authority of St. Paul:


The peasant’s persistence drives the monk to accuse the peasant of being a subversive, but the peasant makes clear that he believes that it is God’s message that matters, whatever language it is in: ‘Vnd wär die liebe nit hat / der ist ein hasser der helgen geschryfft sie sy latin oder teûtsch /.’ [page Cii^]. The pamphlet is a powerful defence of the vernacular, even to the point of justifying the use of violence, and, market or no market, was a strong indication that Gengenbach was hardly likely to continue to print theological material in Latin.

b. ‘*Der Laienspiegel*’ (1521-22)

Catholic rejection of the vernacular is again explicitly referred to in *Der Laienspiegel*, published sometime in 1521 or 1522, whose text is in German, but the quotes from the Bible to which the writer is referring in the text are printed alongside in Latin. The author explains that he wrote it in both Latin and German in order that he could not be accused of misquoting the scriptures, an accusation that the Catholics made about theological publications in the vernacular:

*Aber das nit etzwan ein vnuerstandner möcht gedêckê es weren nit sant Paulus wort vî meinüg / Hab ich latin vnd teûtsch zûsamê / jedes an ein sunder ort doch gegê ein äder gesetzt / do mit man eins dem andern abgligen möge ob es also sy oder nit. /* (p.Aiij^).

Critics have been divided about its authorship; Goedeke, who thinks that Gengenbach did write it, gets support from Prietzel who thinks he possibly had a collaborator. Of the other commentators who have taken a view nearly all of them have rejected Gengenbach as the author, including Baechtold, Singer, Lendl and Raillard - but none have published

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any detailed arguments. The opening dedication was signed by Gengenbach and it puts him firmly on the side of reform:

Der Leië Spiegel sancti Pauli des alten gloubens
wider den nüwen.
Den rechten gloubë zeig ich an /
Paulû ich für ein fûrsprech hâ /
Bin gemacht zû nutz dë gmeinen man.
[Frontpiece].

It starts with a discussion about divisions within the early Christian community between Christians of Jewish birth who felt themselves superior to converted gentiles; specifically because of the symbolism of circumcision as a sign of faith. Paul discusses this in Romans 4, 9-12 and it forms part of Paul’s wider arguments about justification by faith that Luther so fully embraced. The pamphlet develops these arguments, demonstrating a higher level of engagement with St. Paul’s theology than was characteristic of Gengenbach’s writing at this stage. There are quotes from Augustine, Ambrose and Jerome that suggest the author was widely read in Latin.

The over-riding difficulty about accepting Gengenbach as the author of this pamphlet was that he did not accept the concept of justification by faith, with its attendant theological downgrading of the place of ‘good works’ in a Christian’s life. It seems much more likely that this was written by someone close to Gengenbach like Eberlin von Günzburg, who had already embraced this vital element in Luther’s theology. It was to remain a stumbling block for Gengenbach until the end, as will emerge, particularly in section IV of this chapter (page 219) and chapter 8, III (page 248).

c. ‘Der Pfaffenspiegel’ (1522)
Prietzel believes that Der Pfaffenspiegel and Der Laienspiegel were, ‘als publizistische Einheit konzipiert’. They were published within a short time of one another, with


15 Prietzel, AGB, p.348.
similar titles and titlepages, initiated if not personally written and translated by Gengenbach. Der Pfaffenspiegel is a translation from Latin into German of a letter by St. Jerome to a priest called Neopotianus. Jerome was worried even then about the low standards of the priesthood and it is hardly surprising the Catholic Church in the early sixteenth century opposed the vernacular publication of works like it. Gengenbach added his own eighteen-line afterword endorsing the piece and Luther, who is seen as standing in the tradition of the Church fathers like Jerome. Charles V is urged to take note:

Darumb karle der wält ein herr
Von disem soltu nän ein leer /
Dz nüt núws ist / das man ietz seit
Züm Ewangelio biß bereit /
[p.Civ].

With this appeal addressed to Charles V, and with the piece signed off with a dedication to the Grafen vō Hapkspurk, it was the last piece that Gengenbach published that put any hope in the Emperor as the agent of religious renewal and reform:

Daß Karl V diese Hoffnung nicht erfüllen würde, war dem Basler Publizisten klar, als er 1521 den Bericht von Luthers Verhörung in Worms seiner Werkstatt abdruckte. It might therefore have been expected to have been printed not later than 1521, but Prietzel dates it as printed between February and mid-year 1522.

Der Pfaffenspiegel’s translator from Latin into German remains unknown. Whether it was Gengenbach is the subject of interesting speculation. While he is not sure that Gengenbach translated it, Raillard confidently believes he could have: ‘Gengenbach war an sich gewiß dazu fähig und hat sich mit Hieronymus beschäftigt, […]’. Frank Hieronymus gets the nearest to saying that Gengenbach actually was the translator.

16 Erasmus was also closely identified with Jerome and published an edition of his work.

17 Gilly, p.216.

18 Prietzel, AGB, p.292.

19 Raillard, p.69.

20 Hieronymus, Bücherillustration, p.244.
As was noted in chapter 6, IIId (page 188), Gengenbach came to the classics only slowly, suggesting that he was a self-educated man. In order to print in Latin it would be reasonable to assume that Gengenbach had acquired some reading knowledge, but writing in Latin was obviously far more ambitious. Der Pfaffenspiegel appeared at the end of the five year period in which he printed in Latin so it is possible that his skills had developed sufficiently to be capable of translation, but it does seem more likely that someone else did it.

His interest in the classics remained relatively narrow. There is no evidence, for example, that Gengenbach took any interest in classical drama despite his play-writing skills and his printing of schoolbooks. Latin drama appeared quite early on in the humanist school curriculum as a means for developing speaking skills, though it seems to have been confined to classical writers like Terence. There is no evidence of any new dramas being written and performed in Latin. After the Reformation in Switzerland, schoolmasters wrote biblically based plays for their pupils in the vernacular. In Basel, Sixt Birck a teacher at St. Theodorschule was one of the first and better known who wrote plays in the 1530's that were probably for performance by schoolchildren. Felix Platter as a school student describes various plays that he saw as well as mentioning that he performed in a play written by his father Thomas, which was performed before the council.21

Goedeke is not convinced of Gengenbach’s competence in Latin and in his notes on this work he speculates in passing about Gengenbach’s relations with Eberlin von Günzburg.22 It is entirely possible that Der Pfaffenspiegel was translated by Eberlin whose Latin was certainly up to the task - a few years later he undertook the translation of Tacitus’s Germania into German. Gengenbach was almost certainly in good touch with Eberlin throughout the summer of 1521 as he was producing Eberlin’s Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen. Stylistically, however, the issue is not clear. The relatively short, direct sentences of Der Pfaffenspiegel and Der Laienspiegel contrast with the longer sentences


22 Goedeke, Gengenbach, p.628.
and more elliptical style used in *Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen* to discuss theological matters. That said though, Eberlin’s writing of the rules for his Utopia, *Wolfaria*, for example in the tenth *Bundgenosse*, is much curter and the later *Mich wundert, daß kein Gelt im Land ist* (1524) also employs a much punchier style.\(^23\)

d. *Planctus* (1522)

Gengenbach published Fabri’s *Planctus* at almost the same time as *Der Pfaffenspiegel*. It was a work that had been first published in 1491 or earlier in Memmingen, and was in both Latin and German.\(^24\) Like *Der Pfaffenspiegel* it attacks the venality of the priesthood and is another example of the entirely respectable tradition of Christian criticism of the Church which had existed almost as long as the Church itself, a tradition in which Erasmus and Sebastian Brant belonged, and with which Gengenbach had consistently identified.

e. *Novum Instrumentum*

 Appropriately enough Gengenbach’s last Latin book was a relatively lavish pocket version of Erasmus’s New Testament, published in August 1522. Encouraging believers to read the bible for themselves was one of the touchstones of the reform movement and one with which Erasmus broadly agreed. His translation of the bible was a major publishing event and challenge to the Vulgate. In the preface to his *Novum Instrumentum* he says:

> Christ wished his mysteries to be published as openly as possible. I wish that even the weakest woman should read the Gospels - should read the epistles of Paul. And I wish these were translated into all languages, so that they might be read and understood, not only by Scots and Irishmen, but also by Turks and Saracens. To make them understand is surely the first step.\(^25\)

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\(^{24}\) There is an edition in the British Library printed in Memmingen by Albrecht Kunne, dated 1495 (BL: IA.11146). The German and Latin are alongside each other, line by line.

\(^{25}\) Translated in Wilson, p.40.
Here again, it could be seen as ironic that Gengenbach - the populariser and exponent of vernacular printing - should produce a Latin bible rather than producing Luther’s vernacular version of the New Testament that appeared in the same year. Both these new translations, however, did more to empower the laity than all the hundreds of pamphlets like Schweizer Bauer. These new bibles were to be a bombshell under traditional Christian beliefs and practices.

Prior to the Erasmus New Testament, Gengenbach produced two other Latin publications: the Gaurico Prognosticon, one of the Sintflut publications (chapter 6, IVb - page 193), and Thomas Murner’s De quattuor heresiarchis.

f. De quattuor heresiarchis

Thomas Murner was a humanist and he shared some disquiet about the Church, as this pamphlet shows. However, he became one of the small group of Catholic controversialists who wrote popular theology against the reformers. His publication of four pamphlets at the end of 1520 that vigorously attacked Luther marked his irrevocable commitment to the papacy and the old Church.26 The timing of the re-publication of De quattuor heresiarchis is of some interest, coming as it did at a time of intense theological debate and with Luther and Hutten having just been excommunicated. Whether or not it was printed with Murner’s permission, or whether it was published with the intention of embarrassing him by reminding everyone that Murner too had been a critic of the Church, is not known. It was noted at the beginning of this chapter that Chrisman believes that a rash of such publications were intended to serve as a warning of the Church’s willingness to execute people guilty of blasphemy.

26 These were: ‘Ein christliche und briederliche ermanung’, in Murner, Deutsche Schriften, vii, pp.29-87; ‘Von den Babylonischen gefengkuscz der Kirchen’, in Murner, Deutsche Schriften, vii, pp.91-122; ‘Von dem babstentum’, in Murner, Deutsche Schriften, vii, pp.3-55; and ‘An den Grossmechtigsten und Durchlichtigsten adel tütscher nation’, in Murner, Deutsche Schriften, vii, pp.59-117. All were first printed by Grüninger in Strassburg in 1520 except the second, whose printer is not known.
Könneker thinks that Murner did approve of its re-publication. If it was Gengenbach’s own decision it is puzzling why he chose to publish the Latin version rather than the vernacular. Fuchs, editor of Von den vier Ketzeren, describes the difference between two versions, the Latin being the more learned and the vernacular version consciously popularised:

Auch die Verbindung von Gelehrsamkeit, die mehr in De quattuor heresiarchis zum Vorschein kommt, in den VK (vier Ketzeren) hingegen zurücktritt, mit der Gabe, im Volkstone zu schreiben, verrät den Franziskaner als Verfasser der beiden Berichte.

In other words, the Latin version was not appropriate for Gengenbach’s ‘normal’ audience. On the same page Fuchs continues: ‘Der lateinische Bericht ist von einem Gelehrten für Gelehrte geschrieben, und zwar von einem, der es gern zeigt daß er ein Gelehrter ist’.

In 1523 Gengenbach published Die Novella in response to Murner’s Von den grossen lutherischen Narren, which is discussed in chapter 8, IIIh (page 270), where there are also further comments on the relationship between the two men.

g. Summary.

Here is a summary of Gengenbach’s publication record in Latin following the Diet of Worms: his last four publications in Latin were all theological and they were the Gaurico Prognosticon, Fabri’s Planctus (bilingual), Erasmus’s Novum Instrumentum, and Murner’s De quattuor heresiarchis. In addition, he published and may have had a role in writing three works in German which can be described as ‘Latin-related’: Schweizer Bauer which is a dialogue attacking the Church’s hostility to vernacular theology; Der Laienspiegel which discusses aspects of Paul’s theology using bible extracts in Latin, and Der Pfaffenspiegel which is a translation from St. Jerome.

27 Könneker, Deutsche Literatur, pp.117-18.

Besides these works, three of his vernacular publications of 1521 and 1522 have already been discussed: Kalender of June 1521 (chapter 2, IIIa - page 54), the second edition of Sieben Alter (chapter 6, IIb - page 174), and the Verhörung Luthers (page 206 in this chapter).

The publication of Der Laienspiegel, Verhörung Luthers, Der Pfaffenspiegel and Fünfzehn Bundgenossen (discussed below in section III) during 1521 indicate that Gengenbach had reached the nearest point to becoming an open supporter of Luther since 1518. He was never to get so close again. The overall pattern of publication suggests that - like the city council - Gengenbach was distancing himself from the Church. Several contain criticism or implicit criticism. The last two works that he published during 1521 were rather more forthright and these were Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen and Die Totenfresser.

III. EBERLIN'S DIE FÜNFZEHN BUNDGENOSSEN

The leaders of the reformers in 1520 almost certainly did not have any clear intentions of creating alternative structures of worship, but by the Spring of 1521 that had started to change. In the months after Luther’s defence at Worms, Gengenbach printed a utopian view of an alternative Christian community written by Eberlin von Günzburg, one of the most important Protestant popular writers.^{29} Written and produced anonymously, Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen was one of the most important works of the early Reformation. Eberlin admitted to authorship three years later, but it is only recently that Gengenbach has been identified as the printer.^{30}

Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen was written as a series of pamphlets, printed and published in succession throughout the Summer of 1521 with the last one printed towards the end

^{29} Hieronymus, for example, ranks him immediately behind Luther: ‘Johann Eberlin ist neben Luther wohl der bedeutendste Volksprediger und -schriftsteller der Reformation gewesen.’ Bücherillustration, p.339.

^{30} Dipple, Eberlin, p.93; Kaufmann, pp.231-51.
of August. Eberlin had been living in Basel between 1519 and 1521 and must have met Gengenbach before he moved briefly to Ulm. Writing a year later in 1522 about the unnamed printer of Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen, Eberlin refers to his ‘Verschwiegenheit’ - his discretion - of which Prietzel says: ‘Die Verschwiegenheit Gengenbachs also hat Eberlin offenbar dazu bewogen, sein Erstlingswerk bei ihm drucken zu lassen.’ Eberlin was certainly happy enough to use Gengenbach again to print Denkspiegel when he was in Basel two years later.

Prietzel believes there was a close relationship between Eberlin and Gengenbach. She argues on page 342 that as well writing the accompanying verses on the titlepages Gengenbach actively helped develop Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen: ‘Darüber hinaus ist es möglich, daß Gengenbach auch an der Entwicklung des Gesamtkonzepts mitwirkt.’ Gengenbach, in her view, could have played a crucial role in persuading Eberlin to start writing at all - this was his first work at the age of sixty-one. Peters too thinks that Gengenbach’s role in this publication was decisive. The possibility that they collaborated over Der Laienspiegel and Der Pfaffenspiegel has already been mooted. At a more general level, Ozment believes that Eberlin von Günzburg was close to Gengenbach, influencing him to join the Reform movement. This, however, begs the central question as to whether or not he did.

Despite the experience at Worms, Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen opens with an address to the Emperor, ‘in Hoffnung’. Erasmus’s influence is apparent throughout and there is a lot in it that is rather quaint and medieval - one of the social ordinances prescribes men to wear long beards, and another that servants under thirty should not be given wine. It is

31 Prietzel, AGB, pp.341-42. She argues that they were written after he left Ulm at the end of June, 1521.


34 Ozment, Reformation, p.90. In discussion with Steven Ozment he was unable to remember any specific evidence which had led to this view.
the tenth and eleventh of the Bundgenossen that outline the necessary elements of a Protestant Utopia, which Eberlin called Wolfaria. Not only are the monasteries to be dissolved and turned into schools and poor houses, but also the huge numbers of itinerant beggar monks slaughtered. The line on begging was tough like Luther’s: it was not permitted. The hardening of attitudes towards the poor was a hallmark of the Reformation and was reflected in Eberlin’s demand that all those receiving poor relief should wear identifying badges.35

The seventh of the Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen includes a condemnation of Masses, vespers, and vigils for the dead as being a heavy burden on simple believers.36 The Church and its clergy were very keen to persuade the dying to hand over as much money as possible, or to persuade the surviving relatives to spend on behalf of their dead loved one, paying for intercession on their behalf to get them to heaven. The whole business certainly had grown to a considerable size by the late Middle Ages. C. S. L. Davies reporting on the situation in England says:

About a quarter of all charitable bequests in the 1520s was for prayers for the dead. A great army of chantry priests, clergy with no benefice or cure of souls, existed to cater for the demand. Learned bishops as well as anxious laymen tried desperately to reduce their chances of purgatory; Bishop Skeffington of Bangor arranged two thousand masses for himself.37

On the same page Davies reports that Cardinal Beaufort wanted an amazing: ‘10,000 masses to be said for my soul as soon as possible after my decease’. It was one of many practices that, according to the reformers, had been invented by the Church and could not be justified by reference to the bible. The reformers’ early agitation - beginning with the 95 theses - had centred round the teaching of the ‘pure gospel’, demanding that the Church stop all kinds of extraneous practices, many of which involved taking money off people, money that was then used for personal gain and aggrandisement.


36 Eberlin, Sämtliche Schriften, 1, pp.72-73.

As well as Eberlin's writing in the seventh Bundgenossen, Luther also wrote a long sermon against the various abuses of the mass entitled Vom Missbrauch der Messe\(^{38}\) and this may have influenced Gengenbach's Die Totenfresser.

IV. DIE TOTENFRESSER

a) Introduction

Die Totenfresser is an unrelenting attack on the practice of 'Death Masses'. It is not clear whether Gengenbach would have seen the Luther sermon, for although Luther sent his manuscript to his publisher, Spalatin, in November 1521, it was not actually printed until mid-January of the following year.\(^{39}\) This would be a tight but by no means impossible timetable for Gengenbach, if he wrote Die Totenfresser to be performed during carnival in February 1522. There is, however, also some uncertainty about the date of Die Totenfresser's first publication, for although the surviving printed versions are dated 1522, none of them come from Basel.

It is constructed like a Reihenspiel as the speakers step forward one by one to have their say. This structure is considerably less sophisticated than that of his previous two Fastnachtspiele, Die Gouchmat and Der Nollhart. There is no character development, no shared problem solving, the characters remain representative rather than individual. It is a short work, 235 lines long, written in simple rhyming verse, full of biting satire entirely focussed against the Catholic clerical establishment.

The woodcut printed with the Die Totenfresser portrays the clergy gathered around a corpse and literally consuming its flesh. It is possibly the earliest illustration that connects the consumption of human flesh with anti-social behaviour. There are a

\(^{38}\) Martin Luther, Vom Missbrauch der Messe, WA 8, pp.482-563.

\(^{39}\) Introduction to English translation of 'Vom Misbrauch der Messe', ed. by Abdel Wentz, in Luther's Works, ed. by J. Pelikan and H. T. Lehman, 55 vols (St.Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1955-86), xxxvi, p.130. Vom Misbrauch der Messe was not printed in Basel according to: Benzing, Lutherbibliographie, i, p.119.
number that appeared in the 1520's after *Die Totenfresser*: Thomas Murner's *Von dem großen Lutherschen Narren* published in 1522 contains a number of pictures of *Narrenfresserei*,\(^{40}\) there is a drawing by Matthias Gerung that is another example of *Totenfresserei* but which is a satire on the practice of selling indulgences;\(^{41}\) and a contemporaneous poem about *Prundenfresserei* reprinted by Goedeke was apparently illustrated.\(^{42}\) Wilson draws a parallel between Holbein's *Totentanz* and *Die Totenfresser*:

> The similarity of *The Devourers of the Dead* to Holbein's *the Dance of Death* is much too close to be coincidental. As well as the mortality theme, Holbein also presents a series of tableaux, in which the failings and offences of the clergy and the religious are mercilessly parodied.\(^{43}\)

In *Die Totenfresser* the devil makes a short appearance with his violin which he plays for all the clerical establishment to dance, pipe and sing to as they go down to hell. The devil describes the assorted religious:

> Das sind mein außerwelten kind
> Auff'erd hab ich nit besser fründ
> (p.Aiiif).

**b) Some question marks**

Just as the artist of the woodcut is not known, nor is the play's author, and there has been an ongoing debate about who it might have been. Because *Die Totenfresser* is a landmark - as will be seen - both in Gengenbach's development and in the history of theatre, the question of its authorship is important. Goedeke had no doubt that Gengenbach was the writer,\(^ {44}\) but some subsequent critics have disagreed with the most comprehensive denial being written by Stütz in 1912.

\(^{40}\) Murner, v, 85-282.


\(^{42}\) Goedeke, *Gengenbach*, p.620.

\(^{43}\) Wilson, p.106.

Stütz argued that an analysis of the language of the piece revealed important inconsistencies with the rest of Gengenbach's work. Not until Raillard published his thesis in 1936 was Stütz's view - especially with regard to his dependence on numerical norms to establish authorship - seriously challenged. Raillard compared lines from the play with some twenty examples from other works of Gengenbach's to demonstrate that the style was indeed consistent. The only disappointment about Raillard's otherwise thorough argument is that he neglected to challenge the points that Stütz and others have made about alleged spelling inconsistencies in Die Totenfresser. They argue that these inconsistencies help to show that Gengenbach did not write it; but the fact is that there is no original surviving copy of the play. The various copies extant were printed in Augsburg and Strassburg and spelling inconsistencies would be almost inevitable.

The main post-war commentators, Van Abbé, Schmidt, Hieronymus, and Prietzel have all agreed with Raillard that Die Totenfresser was indeed written by Gengenbach, but there is disagreement about whether or not it is a Fastnachtspiel, a poem, or a dialogue. Schmidt was the first critic to wholeheartedly view the play as a Fastnachtspiel: "Sie sind das erste erhaltene Reformationsspiel; die drastischen Anklagen der neuen Lehre finden hier den ersten dramatischen Ausdruck." A problem about the structure of Die Totenfresser is that its form marks a reversion for Gengenbach as it lacks the internal dialogue that could be found in his two previous plays, Der Nollhart and Die Gouchmat. Gengenbach's fellow Swiss writers, Manuel and Raber, were by contrast being more adventurous, producing plots and giving stage directions. It was Van Abbé who first raised this important problem with the form in Die Totenfresser: "[...] it does seem that a return from Fastnachtspiel to dialogue is a retrogression of form which needs accounting for." Van Abbe prefers to regard the

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45 Stütz, pp.186-90.
46 Raillard, pp.71-77.
48 Van Abbé, Development, p.60.
piece as a dialogue rather than a *Fastnachtspiel*, making a number of very interesting points on the following page about the development of form at this time:

> But, considered *as a dialogue*, a development of the *Totentanz*, it marks a great advance on the earlier dialogues, and shows much greater liveliness and springiness, an attempt to delineate the various speakers according to one general scheme of characterization [...], and a greater immediacy as of *real speech* in the *Sprüche* of the various speakers [...]. Considered as a dialogue, then, it demonstrates the influence of the greater technical resources which Gengenbach had learned from his dramatic experiences in the *Fastnachtspiele*. If this fine distinction is not made, one is bound to be disappointed in the *Totenfresser* considered as the fourth in the number of the poet’s plays.

As he himself says, Van Abbé is making a fine distinction. After all, the form of the piece is the same as that of a traditional *Fastnachtspiel*. Van Abbé’s desire to observe development and progress in Gengenbach’s written output is completely understandable and - given Gengenbach’s abilities - must be regarded as essentially a correct analytic starting point. Dialogue or *Fastnachtspiel*, however, it is reasonable to argue that *Die Totenfresser* was written to be performed. *Die Totenfresser* even includes the opportunity for a dance that the audience could join in, traditional to *Fastnachtspiel*, when the devil makes his appearance with a violin. Although there is no direct evidence that it was ever performed in Basel’s *Kornmarkt* or the *Fischmarkt*, it is most likely that its performance would have taken place at carnival. The most compelling evidence to support this is in its content.

c) The link with carnival

*Die Totenfresser*’s symbolism of the flesh-eating clergy lends itself to several possible interpretations, but the most obvious is the allusion to the central point of carnival, the final orgy of meat-eating prior to the fasting of Lent. The excessive flesh consumption of carnival parallels the excess consumption of the Church. Lent is the period of preparation for the human sacrifice of Christ, which is remembered in the Communion with the consumption of his body and his flesh by his worshippers. The words, ‘This is my body, take eat, etc.’ were at the very heart of the schism between Catholic and Protestant, and between Protestant and Protestant. It certainly appears that the body from which the clergy is feeding is a symbol for the very body of Christ, himself the victim of the priests of his own time. In *Die Totenfresser* the Church is literally ‘taking and eating’ from the body.
Protestant theologians and their supporters in Basel chose the issue of the Lenten Fast to have one of their earliest direct confrontations with the Church authorities. On Palm Sunday 1522, just a month after Die Totenfresser would have been performed, Reublin, two fellow priests and Herman von dem Busche, a leading humanist, sat down and ate piglet at the table of Sigmund von Aug. This was blasphemy of a shocking kind and not long after, in February 1523 when von Aug was caught by the Catholic authorities travelling through Ensisheim, he was promptly burnt as a heretic. In Basel itself the city council dithered in face of Catholic pressure to punish the perpetrators, but finally delivered the Church authorities a rebuff by making only a token remonstrance.

Die Totenfresser represented such a controversial and dangerous attack on Church practices that it could only have been safe to perform in public during carnival. Gengenbach had helped make this possible as he had led the development of the Fastnachtspiel as a vehicle for political debate in Basel. It was in any case the traditional time to present controversy, the safest time when the people had temporary control, the world was turned upside down and traditional authority could be challenged. There has been considerable literature on the topic.

Le Roy Ladurie’s Carnival in Romans, for example, is an excellent narrative of a carnival where the people’s control of the streets led to an attempted revolution. What is especially interesting is that Ladurie reports that the theme of cannibalism appeared during the insurrectionary carnival celebrations of 1580 in Romans. Indeed, Ladurie believes that this was not unique: ‘Scenes of fantasised or occasionally real cannibalism turned up fairly regularly in various popular risings.’

Carnival had once before been an insurrectionary time in Basel itself. Even today the so-

49 R. Wackernagel, iii, p.327.
50 R. Wackernagel, iii, p.360.
called ‘Böse’ Fastnacht of 1376 in Basel is a part of the Fastnacht tradition. More recently, the decision to end the power of the bishop had been made during Lent the previous year in 1521, and shortly, during carnival 1529 came the opportunity to mobilise the citizenry with their weapons to finally force the council to declare Basel a Protestant community.

Another level of explanation for Die Totenfresser’s symbolism lies in the traditions of the comic foundations of the medieval carnival plays although the slapstick comedy has been replaced by savage satire. The comedy content was typically derived from sexual, scatological, and other bodily functions:

Bakhtin regarded the bodily and grotesque elements of medieval carnival plays as the very essence of carnival, epitomised by the work of Rabelais. They had largely disappeared from Gengenbach’s plays, but he resurrected them in Die Totenfresser with the shocking metaphor of cannibalism. Bakhtin’s analysis of the connection between swearing and the human body - specifically the body of Jesus - is fascinatingly apt:

What is the thematic content of the oaths? It is mainly the rending of the human body. Swearing was mostly done in the name of the members and the organs of the divine body: the Lord’s body, his head, blood, wounds, bowels; or in the name of the relics of saints and martyrs [...].

He refers to Eloi d’Amervalle, a writer of the time:

52 The nobility tried to organise their own carnival celebrations in the form of a tournament within the city, but they received short shrift and were physically and bloodily expelled by the citizenry.

53 Catholy, p.45.

The moralist Eloi d'Amervalle condemned the oaths in his diablerie (1507); he clearly showed the carnivalesque aspect of a body rent to pieces which is the origin of most swearing [...] as a man who lived between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, he was familiar with the carnival role of butchers and cooks, of the carving knife, and of minced meat for dressings and sausages.\(^5\)

There may be another way of understanding what lies behind Gengenbach’s decision to portray the clergy as cannibals, for cannibalism was very much associated with the devil. It was a commonly held belief that the Jews, the followers of the Antichrist, ate human flesh as part of their religious practices.\(^6\) Luther was already condemning the Pope as the new Antichrist and it is possible that this is one of the connections that Gengenbach was making, one that his audience would find easier than we do today.

d) The play’s three themes: theological, anti-clerical, and economic.

The objections in the play to Church practices can be put under three headings: the theological, the anti-clerical, and the problem of poverty.

First, the theological: the first eighteen lines of the opening speech by the Pope give an ironic outline of the argument about the meaning of Christ’s death on the cross and the forgiveness of sins. The Pope, so the Church argued, as the keeper of the keys to heaven, was able to forgive people’s sins even after they had died, while they waited in purgatory [opening lines, page A1\(^7\)]. Luther challenged the Pope’s claim to the sole guardianship of the keys to heaven and the right that this conferred on him to forgive sins - Luther argued that only God can do that. As was noted earlier, in his sermon published only a month before this play *Vom Missbrauch der Messe*, Luther particularly challenged the idea that the living could purchase forgiveness on behalf of a dead relative through the saying of commemorative masses. The sermon is solely concerned with the theological arguments about the sacrament of the Mass and, as part of it, gives the reasons why Masses for the Dead were unacceptable:

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\(^5\) Bakhtin, p.193.

\(^6\) See chapter 5, IIId (page 142).
Darumb sollen die pfaffen ynn dißem sacrament gott nichts opfFern noch geben, 
ßondern alleyn glauben und von Gott nehmen. Darauß folget, das man fur keyn 
anndern kan Meße halten.\textsuperscript{57}

Relatively little of the play is taken up with this discussion of the theological 
disagreement between Church and Reformers.\textsuperscript{58} Far more space is devoted to the second, 
interrelated theme, which can be broadly described as anti-clericalism - and in particular 
with exposing the venality of the Catholic clergy and the damaging economic impact of 
\textit{Totenmesse}. Anti-clericalism during the Reformation is subject to much current 
discussion among historians.\textsuperscript{59} Growing discontent about the role of the priesthood 
found a focus in Luther’s ideas about the priesthood of all believers, first outlined in \textit{Von 
der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen} (1520).\textsuperscript{60} He condemned the Roman clergy as anti-
Christian because the Pope was the Antichrist, but drew back from the implicit 
conclusion of \textit{Von der Freiheit} that there was no need for any priests at all. This 
perspective is broadly reflected in \textit{Die Totenfresser}. The Pope is portrayed as utterly 
corrupt; for him Christ is but a means to the good life - the opening lines of the play 
remain faintly shocking even now in the depths of their cynicism about the Pope. The 
Pope revels in the great wealth the Church enjoys at the expense of gullible believers,
which he justifies by a grotesque distortion of Christian ideology (lines 21-37 in 
particular, [page Ai\textsuperscript{e}]).

The Pope has a supporting cast of clerics and a priest’s housekeeper who re-affirm the 
message - material well-being is good for them and Luther’s teachings threaten it (pages 
Aii\textsuperscript{e} and [Aii\textsuperscript{ii}]). The Church is not interested in how much distress their self-indulgence

\textsuperscript{57} WA 8, p.519.

\textsuperscript{58} Matheson, \textit{Argula}, p.37, suggests that the concept ‘\textit{Totenfresser}’ derives from 
Psalm 106 v.28, which reads in the Luther bible: ‘Und sie hängten sich an den Baal-Peor 
und aßen den Opfern für die Toten.’ This is problematic as the psalm is about the whole 
of Israel’s religious decline not just of its spiritual leaders.

\textsuperscript{59} A useful review of the more important recent writing can be found in: Geoffrey 
Dipple, ‘Luther, Emser and the Development of Reformation Anticlericalism’, in \textit{ARG}, 
87 (1996), 38-56.

\textsuperscript{60} WA 7, pp.26-29, ‘theses’ 14-18.
may bring on Christian people. In the opening speeches Gengenbach draws back from naming the Pope as the Antichrist; the nearest he gets - and it is some way off - is in the last line of the Pope's speech (page Aii'), in which the Pope shows a cavalier disregard for the fate of human souls.

The character of the humble priest in the play, representing clerics whom their parishioners and Luther would regard as fit to continue with their calling, expresses the contradiction between his physical material needs and his desire to teach his flock. He desperately needs food and so he faces strong temptations to take money from his congregation like the corrupt priests [page AiV']. Many local priests were in such a disastrous financial situation and were being driven physically as well as ideologically to demand reform. The leadership of the reform movement was full of such men.

The third theme is the economic, more specifically the poverty these practices of the Church caused. The characters from the Third Estate in the play express the material basis for their anti-clericalism and with it their demand for reform of poor relief. The resentment against the behaviour of priests and the Pope is expressed first and foremost in material terms, and not, as a devout Lutheran might wish it, in terms of their corrupt religion. The lament of the Souls in the play is that the money paid for the masses goes to the Church itself and its conspicuous consumption, and not to alleviate poverty [page Aiii']. On the same page the beggar echoes the message. The position that we can extrapolate from Die Totenfresser is: if the practice of bequeathing money for masses for the dead is ended then this will benefit people at all levels of society, avoiding the spread of poverty and ensuring its proper relief. The nobleman argues that the practice was even impoverishing the nobility, stripping people of their inheritance, with painful consequences for all their dependant vassals [page AiV'].

In Vom Mißbrauch der Messe, Luther was not that concerned about the practical consequences of Totenmesse, and did not draw the same conclusions as Gengenbach. All that Luther says in the sermon with respect to the social consequences is:
Darumb ist auch kommen durch das rechte gericht gotts, das alle yhr geltt und
gutt nyrgent zu gebraucht wirt, den zu eytel hoffart, hurerey und fresserey, das sie
müssig gehn, gütte tage haben und niemant nütze sind, wider gott noch der wellt,
und alleyn dem Römischen abgott gehorsam, als es auch würdig ist.\textsuperscript{61}

Elsewhere, however, Luther did write about the question of poverty and church money.
Indeed, it is a sign of just how seriously the reformers took the matter, that Wittenberg
was the first town in Germany to use Church property and monies to reform poor relief.
It happened under Karlstadt while Luther was still in the Wartburg. As early as 1520 the
twenty-first demand of Luther’s in \textit{An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation} was:

\begin{quote}
Es ist wol der grosten not eyne, das alle bettleley abthan wurden in aller
Christenheit, Es solt yhe niemand unter den Christen betteln gahn, es were auch
ein leychte ordnung drob zumachen, wen wir den mut und ernst dazu theten,
nemlich das ein yglich Stad yhr arm leut vorsorgt, und keynen frembden betler
zuliesse, [...].\textsuperscript{62}
\end{quote}

In the next demand, the twenty-second, Luther condemns as useless the high number of
masses being purchased and argues that they be scrapped. In the twenty-third demand, in
an attack on indulgences, he says: ‘Wo aber ein solche were, die gelt zusammen gebe,
arme leut zuspeyzen oder sonst yemand zuhelfen, die were gut, unnd het yhr ablas und
vordinst ym hymel.’\textsuperscript{63}

These views are entirely consonant with \textit{Die Totenfresser}, although Luther is already
showing signs of hostility towards begging which will intensify over time. Luther does
not think begging is necessary - if parish authorities do their job properly, looking after
indigenous poor and expelling the itinerant. The beggar in \textit{Die Totenfresser} is an entirely
uncritically portrayed character in need and (by implication) deserving of the alms
presently denied him. The attitudes revealed in \textit{Liber Vagatorum} and the discussion in
chapter 2, II (page 48), about its authorship, are obviously of interest here as they
contradict this position.

\textsuperscript{61} WA 8, p.520.

\textsuperscript{62} WA 6, p.450.

\textsuperscript{63} WA 6, pp.452-53.
e) Luther on poverty

By 1522, Luther who was not usually involved in writing about the routine of practical politics, became directly involved in drawing up new ordinances for a Common Chest in the town of Leisnig, following a visit there in September 1522. The *Ordnung eyns gemeynen kastens*, the ‘Leisnig Ordinances’, published in 1523, marked a dramatic shift by Luther to a more radical position from that of 1520. In effect Luther now demanded the expropriation of all Church property by the local parish authorities and for it to be administered as a common chest.\(^6^4\) Hardly any wonder that Luther’s enemies regarded him as one of the key spiritual leaders of the Peasants’ Revolt. When the Ordinances for Leisnig were published he explicitly called for the programme of reform to be spread:

> Weil wyr denn hoffen, solch ewer exempl solle geratten, das es gemeyn werde, und daraus denn folgen will eyn grosser fall der vorigen stiftfen, klöster, Capellen und der grewlichen grundsuppen, die sich bis her unter götlichs dienst namen mit aller welt reichtum gefullet hatt, [...]\(^6^5\)

The funds were to be used to maintain those who wished to remain in orders and to facilitate the departure of those who didn’t; to end begging; and to end ‘zins’ - interest - contracts on church lands. The buildings in the cities were to become schools or be converted to housing. When one considers how much land the Church owned it is surprising that the landed classes did not view Luther with deeper misgivings in 1523. He went further, arguing that parish authorities should take upon themselves the power of universal, progressive taxation of all members of the parish, subject to democratic agreement:

> Wo auch die zinße, uffhebung, gefelle und zugenge ym furmöggen und vorrathe unsers gemeinen kastens, wie obin stuckweiße angezeignet, nichgnugsam zu unterhaltunge und versorgunge unsers pfarrambs, kusterey, schulen, der notturfflichen armen und gemeiner gebewhde, yn massen ordentlich nacheinander außgesetz, haben wir Erbarmanne, Rath, viertellmeister, eldesten und gemeine einwoner der stadt und dorffer unsers gantzen kirchspiels, fur uns und unsere nachkommen, yn krafft dieser unser bruderlichen vereynigung einrechtlich beschlossen und verwilliget, das ein yeder Erbarman, burger und bawer, yn dem kirchspiel wonhaftgig, nachdem er hat und vermag, fur sich, sein weib und kinder, ierlichen ein gelt zulegen solle [...]\(^6^6\)

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\(^{6^4}\) Martin Luther, *Ordnung eyns gemeynen kastens*, *WA* 12, pp.11-30.

\(^{6^5}\) *WA* 12, p.11.

\(^{6^6}\) *WA* 12, p.28.
Manifestoes during the Peasants' War were not as radical as this. The second of the Twelve Articles of Memmingen, for example, the most widely circulated manifesto, called for the tithe to be paid into a common fund controlled by elected churchwardens but said nothing of church property or of additional taxation. It is no surprise that the Bundesordnung of the peasant armies assembled at Memmingen in March 1525 put Luther's name at the top of the list of competent people to determine the divine law by which they demanded all temporal and spiritual authorities should live.

When Gengenbach raised the question of poverty again in Drei Christen (1523) the leading character echoed the Lutheran programme for the relief of poverty consistent with the Leisnig ordinances. Given the importance of the matter one would also expect that other leading reformers, including Oecolampadius in Basel, would have written about it, and indeed during 1522, before he came to Basel, a sermon of his on charity had been published, first in Mainz. It appeared twice in Latin and three times in German entitled, Ain Sermonn Il Sancti Johannis Chrysostomi vonn dem Almûsom über die wort Pauli in der ersten Epistel deren von Corinth. Staehelin is clear that this was influenced by the reform of provision for the poor that occurred in Wittenberg in January 1522.

Oecolampadius gave the sermon in Latin and it was translated into German by Johannes Diebold from Ulm. The following year Oecolampadius wrote a pamphlet entitled, Von

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69 Ernst Staehelin, Das theologische Lebenswerk Johannes Oekolampads (Leipzig: Heinsuis Nachfolger, 1939), pp.161-2. The sermon deals with 1 Corinthians 16 in which Paul discusses the provision of funds for members of the Christian community - not the classic passage from 1 Corinthians 13 about charity which begins: 'Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal [...].' (King James version).
Vfiteyhwgdes Almsen, first published in Latin, then translated into German by Peutinger in Augsburg and printed in May 1524 in Basel by Cratander. Oecolampadius’s primary focus, like Luther’s, was theological. The pamphlet calls for proper care of the poor; attacks interest charges on the poor; and condemns other exploitative moneylending practices. Whatever the views of the moneylenders, in 1525 the city council of Basel began to take over the administration of poor relief from the Catholic Church.

f) Conclusions

The three themes in Die Totenfresser are each interlinked with the others. The disposal of the wealth of the dead in the most acceptable fashion was clearly a practical question, but it also needed the stamp of God's approval to be supplied by the Church - as did all important social, political and economic decisions. It was becoming clearer to some of the reformers that fundamental religious reform was not possible without social and political reform. To change prevailing practices was going to challenge the Church, which had a vested interest in the status quo that it defended vigorously. The Church was proving unable to address the practical questions of poor relief, the impoverishment of the peasantry by their depredations, or even to regularise the maintenance of their own clergy. Criticisms of their privileges met with point blank rejection from the hierarchy - only later, after many cities had turned Protestant and pursued reform, was the Church forced to adapt and begin to make practical redress as well as ideological revision. The take-over of church property and charitable funds by city councils in order to carry through reform must have had a devastating impact on the finances and wealth of the Catholic Church.

It is unlikely that Gengenbach was ready to draw any such fundamental implications from the demands contained within Die Totenfresser, which are quite focussed. He was not alone in still believing that the Church could be reformed and so Prietzel’s evaluation

of Gengenbach’s theological stance in this work is entirely reasonable:

So können die Totenfresser nicht als reformatorische Schrift i.e.S. bezeichnet werden, sondern verbleiben vielmehr im Rahmen eines engagiert vorgetragenen innerkirchlichen Reformverlangens.  

With few hard facts it is difficult to tell what Gengenbach’s contribution to the process of change really was. That the idea of the Totenfresser was a powerful one can be seen from what we do know about its popularity: examples of three editions of the play exist that were printed in 1522, two in Augsburg and one in Strassburg. Niklaus Manuel, who understood and further developed the possibilities of theatre as a political instrument, took up the idea, writing a play for carnival 1523 in Berne with the same name and even featuring a coffin in the performance area.

Die Totenfresser did not mark an irrevocable break with Catholicism, drastic though it was in its criticisms. Very few people were ready to make a complete break with the Church by early 1522, even though the reforming tendency was growing stronger and more outspoken. Perhaps it was too late for some to turn back: the Pope had been condemned by Luther as the Antichrist; meat had been eaten in Lent; the mass had been said in the vernacular and would shortly be celebrated in two kinds; Zwingli was about to marry.

As for Gengenbach, he no longer looked to the Emperor as the agent of reform, but his aspiration for change had not yet found a firm alternative focus. His theological loyalties were confused. During 1521 his publications show a deepening sympathy with Luther, but to him good works were not ‘todte ding’ as Luther had argued. Die Totenfresser’s central concern was the Church’s failure to do practical good works and care for the poor. Gengenbach’s views on the papacy were also not firmly aligned with Luther’s. Although he had condemned the papacy so vigorously in Die Totenfresser, he was to shift his ground again on the election of Pope Adrian VI later in 1522. Adrian became, for a short time, a source of hope that change from within was still possible.

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71 Prietzel, AGB, p.351.
CHAPTER 8: GENGENBACH THE RELUCTANT REFORMER

The underlined reference indicates the version of the work used in the text from which any quotes are drawn. A name in brackets at the end of the reference indicates the shortened title used for it in the text.


99. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Ein eleglichs gesprech ge=\schähen* (end 1522). The BL does not have an example printed by Gengenbach, but it does have several non-Gengenbach printings under the title, *Wie der hailig Vater, Papst Adrianus, zu Rom eingeritten ist* - including BL: (Augsburg: M.Ramminer, 1522), 3906.D.12. There is a reprint in Clemen, iii. pp.10-25. (Klägliches Gespräch).


I. THE CHURCH RETREATS

a. Internal policies of the council

The council’s victory over the bishop in Spring of 1521 did not finally settle its relationship with the Church. In a series of conflicts between reformers and the Catholic hierarchy the council picked its way carefully, intervening as often as not to assert its own authority over and against that of the Church. The council’s refusal to accept the Pope’s anti-Lutheran pronouncement *Exsurge domine* was symptomatic of its readiness to defend - within limits - the freedom of the city’s printers and the right of reformers to go quietly about their business whatever the Church wanted.

In November 1522, three humanist refugees arrived in Basel following the defeat of the Knights’ Revolt: Ulrich von Hutten, Johann Oecolampadius and Hartmut von Kronberg. They had been close to Sickingen and were known supporters of reform, yet the council allowed them to stay. Oecolampadius settled and went on to become the leader of Basel’s reform movement, but Hutten continued to feel unsafe and had left Basel again by January 1523.

The limits to the council’s tolerance were reached in winter 1524. There were a number of radical visitors to Basel, among whom was Thomas Müntzer who ate a meal at the
home of Oecolampadius. Karlstadt also came to Basel and whereas Müntzer’s presence did not provoke the council, Karlstadt’s brief visit ended up with his Basel printers - Wolf and Bebel - being put in jail and a censorship commission being set up that December 1524.

Theologically cautious, the council nevertheless conceded to the radical unrest that winter and the following spring on the eve of the Peasants’ War when it suited their purposes. The dissolution of monastic institutions and poor law reform, for example, was a reformers’ demand that gained Basel council’s support. The first monastery to come into its hands was the Augustinian Chorherrenstift of St. Leonhard’s, which dissolved itself in February 1525. This was only shortly after the first voluntary dissolution in Zurich had occurred in October 1524 of the convent of the Mary Minster. The formal take-over of Zurich’s monasteries took place in December 1524, while in Basel this began on 3 May 1525 when the council, under intense popular pressure, resolved to draw up an inventory of the property of the individual monasteries and convents.

Throughout the period 1522 to 1525 there was conflict between the Basel council and the Church over appointments of reformers to new posts in the city’s churches and the University. One such dispute occurred in April 1522 over the Rectorship of the

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1 Oecolampadius claimed he did not realise who it was until Müntzer began speaking; which sounds like a political excuse as it presumably would have been highly embarrassing for Oecolampadius in later years if it had come out that he had happily given hospitality to such a radical. See: Gordon Rupp, Patterns of Reformation (London: Epworth, 1969), p.24.


4 Aktsammlung zur Geschichte der Basler Reformation II, ed. by Emil Dürr and Paul Roth (Basel: Staatsarchiv, 1933), ii,pp.72-73. In September the council resolved on how to assist monks and nuns to return to community life. There are examples in the Aktensammlung of individuals receiving payments from the council, pp.91-96.
University which involved two priests, Wissenburg and Wolfhart, who had both just been involved in eating meat during Lent with Sigmund von Aug and Reublin.5 Wackernagel thinks the two were being deliberately provocative:

Wissenburg und Wolfhart, die beide Dozenten waren, erregten zur selben Zeit einen Aufruhr an der Universität, um die Wahl eines Rektors nach ihrem Willen und sonstige Neuerungen zu erzwingen.6

The Church tried to take action against priests for this sort of blasphemous activity, but the council was rarely prepared to endorse any punishments. One of the most significant confrontations, fully detailed by Wackernagel, occurred in Lent 1523 when the priests Pellikan, Luethart and Kreis were found guilty of promoting Lutheran ideas by a commission led by the Franciscan Provinzial, Caspar Satzer.8 The city council intervened and summoned Satzer and the accused priests. The council consequently expelled the Provinzial from Basel with his two accompanying officials, insisting that the three reformers be left alone to get on with their work - otherwise the council would expel the whole order of Barfiisser (Franciscans) from Basel. The council also dismissed four of the professors who had been responsible for initiating the attack on the three reform preachers in the first place and appointed Pellikan and Oecolampadius to teach Theology at the University.9 This marked a stunning victory for the reformers. Wackernagel suggests that popular support for the three reformers played an important role in influencing the council's decision: ‘Dem Rate schien jedenfalls geboten, auf die Sympathien grosser Teile der Bevölkerung für Pellican und Lüthart Rücksicht zu nehmen [...].’10

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5 See chapter 7, IVc (page 222).

6 R. Wackernagel, iii, p.328.

7 R. Wackernagel, iii, pp.332-33.

8 Provinzial - provincial superior - is the name given to the area supervisor in the case of some religious communities, such as the Franciscans.

9 One of whom was Wonnecker, the doctor with whom Gengenbach had a confrontation in court in 1519.

10 R. Wackernagel, iii, p.333.
In May the council tempered the pro-reform implications of this victory with a decree on preaching.\(^{11}\) Sermons were to focus entirely on teaching the Bible and nothing else - the opinions and arguments of Luther or any other 'doctors' were not to be quoted or discussed.\(^{12}\) The council had previously been impelled to pass a *Predigermandat*, in December 1522, when they had decreed against 'das neue Predigen und die neuen Buechlein'.\(^{13}\) This too had insisted that preaching should focus solely on the Bible, the written Word of God. These decrees were two-edged; they did not necessarily inhibit the evangelical cause as it might appear on first sight, for it was the evangelicals who had been insisting that preaching should focus on the Word of God. Whether or not the council intended these preaching decrees to be enforced, they obviously had problems achieving compliance as they had to pass another in July 1524.

Wackernagel argues that 1523 was the crucial turning point for the Reformation in Basel: 'Es ist in der Tat ein Wendepunkt. [...] Es ist der Moment der Abgrenzungen und Abklärungen'.\(^{14}\) With Oecolampadius's appointment as a professor of Theology at the University in June 1523 the reform movement had acquired a recognised leader behind whom they could organise. One of his first public acts was to announce a public disputation in August, an event the traditionalists did their best to prevent (on the grounds that he was not yet an established professor). That it took place at all marked another victory for reform. In the summer elections to the city council that year the Lutherans made gains.

Significantly, in these conflicts over appointments the Church did manage to get one scalp and that was of the radical Reublin. On his first attempt in early 1522 the bishop failed when he demanded that Reublin be arrested for his oppositional preaching. Reublin's congregation met at the *Barfüsser Kirche* (Luethart's and Pellikan's church)

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\(^{11}\) Reprinted in: Dürr and Roth, i, pp.65-69.

\(^{12}\) Dürr and Roth, i, p.67.

\(^{13}\) R. Wackernagel, iii, p.331.

\(^{14}\) R. Wackernagel, iii, p.335.
and they made clear their intention to oppose Reublin’s arrest, only agreeing to disperse once the council had undertaken to leave Reublin alone. Later that same year, however, on Corpus Christi (19th June) Reublin provoked trouble when he refused to carry his Church’s relics in the street procession as tradition required, but carried a Bible instead. He argued simply: ‘Das ist das rechte Heiltum, das Andre sind Totenbeine’. This offence, together with his philandering, forced him to leave Basel at the end of June.

On directly theological matters Basel’s authorities were far more cautious than Zurich’s and Wittenberg’s. Change in the order of the mass began in 1522 in Wittenberg, three years earlier than Basel where Oecolampadius did not venture to change the order until All Saints Day, 1525. By that time Zurich had abandoned the mass entirely. The marriage of priests also remained an issue over which the council in Basel was not prepared to oppose the Church until relatively late. In January 1524 for example, Stefan Stör, who was to lead the peasant march on the city on 3 May 1525, got married and lost his job as parish priest in Liestal as a result. Later that year on 10 December 1524, when Imelin followed his example, he was suspended. By contrast, in Zurich Zwingli’s ‘secret’ marriage to Anna Reinhart had taken place in 1522 with no adverse reaction from the council and it was publicly solemnised in Church in April 1524. By the time Oecolampadius married in March 1528 - shortly before Basel had formally adopted a Protestant Constitution - the matter was no longer so controversial.

b. Relations with the confederates

It may well have been the same cautiousness that led the council to be tough with

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15 R. Wackernagel, iii, p.329.

16 Reublin went on to become a leading Anabaptist around Zurich and then helped author the Seven Articles of Schleitheim in 1527: James M. Stayer, The German Peasant War and the Anabaptist Community of Goods (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1991), pp.46, 61, 63-65, 72, 76, etc.

17 R. Wackernagel, iii, pp.350-51.

18 Oecolampadius’s wife, Wilbrandis Rosenblatt, had three remarkable husbands. On outliving Oecolampadius she married Wolfgang Capito, the leading humanist scholar who had been a priest in Basel until 1520, and on outliving him in his turn she then married Bucer, the famous leader of the Strassburg Reformation.
Gengenbach when they jailed him on New Year’s Day 1522 for his insulting behaviour towards the Emperor, the Pope, and the King of France. During these years Basel council studiously avoided political confrontation with their neighbours and their treatment of Gengenbach was probably motivated by an anxiety not to offend even their erstwhile allies. The interests of peaceful relations also accounts for the council’s arrest of Adam Petri in 1523 at the request of Lucerne council, who objected to the distribution of a pamphlet in their city that Petri had printed. Written by a reformer, Sebastian Hofmeister, the pamphlet attacked the clergy of Lucerne. It is unlikely that Basel council objected to the contents of the pamphlet, but they nevertheless imprisoned Petri and the case dragged on for some months. Finally he was fined the considerable sum of 200 guilders and had to print a retraction.19

The pace of religious reform in Zurich was a source of increasing tension within the Confederation and by 1524 divisions between Catholics and Protestants were becoming a cause for violence. The other twelve members of the Federal Diet met in January 1524 to discuss complaints against Zurich, which was accused of causing discord within the Confederation because they allowed Zwingli and his followers too much influence. In March 1524 Lucerne council executed Klaus Hottinger, a radical Protestant, and in April 1524, five of the ‘interior’, most determinedly Catholic cantons of Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, and Zug formed an alliance at Beckenried. They were shortly joined by Fribourg and Solothurn as well. Basel took a position in the middle, neither supporting formal religious reforms of the kind Zwingli had pursued, nor prepared to join the Catholic cantons to defend the Catholic Church and its privileges.

Zurich was not immune to the pressure. In September 1524 church decorations were removed by local people from a church in Stammheim, near Zurich, and then, after a threat of Catholic retribution, a Carthusian monastery was attacked as well. To avoid a confrontation Zurich council agreed to the extradition of three leaders of these iconoclastic events on charges of rebellion and disturbance of the peace. Despite Zwingli’s opposition to the extradition and his giving evidence on their behalf, the three

19 R. Wackernagel, iii, p.331; and Prietzel, AGB, pp.373-74.
men - one of whom was a priest - were executed by a Confederate court in Baden. The Protestants of Zurich treated them as martyrs and civil war looked possible that autumn.20

In January 1525 the Great Council in Basel discussed the demands of envoys from the Catholic cantons: to act to turn back the tide of reform; to help crush the threat of rebellion in Thurgau; to stop meat-eating on forbidden days; to expel married priests; and to stop printing heretical books. The council took its time and finally refused.

II. THE CRITICS AND GENGENBACH'S LAST PUBLICATIONS

a. Introduction
From the end of 1522 until his death Gengenbach published fifteen works, none in Latin. Thirteen of them were theological. Of the two non-theological exceptions, one was a wall calendar that has already been discussed in chapter 2, IIIa (page 54). The second, Lannoy, written by the Viceroy of Naples, was the sole example of a Zeitung, a political publication by Gengenbach on a topical matter during the last two years of his life.

Lannoy is a translation of a letter to Charles V's aunt, Margaret of Burgundy. It contains news including information about the conquests of Cortez, and its publication reflects the popular fascination with the latest developments in the Americas.21 The pamphlet is also interesting because it praises Charles V for his wise policies:

Angesichts der aus Gengenbachs eigenen Werken dieser Zeit bekannten zunehmenden Zurückhaltung gegenüber dem Kaiser - nach 1521 verstummen seine einstigen Lobesgesänge, wie überhaupt die Publikation historischen


21 The first of these published in Basel was an edition of Columbus's report on his discoveries reprinted in Latin from the original edition by Stephan Plannck in 1493 or 1494. For a discussion of the literature on Columbus's discoveries: Martin Davies, Columbus in Italy (London: British Library, 1991), pp.7-21; and for the popularity of literature on discovery in Europe 493-1532, see: Hirsch, pp.547-51 (Reprint IX). Prietzsel, AGB, p.327, mentions two later examples published in Basel in the vernacular, one by Furter on Vespucci in 1505 and one by Petri in 1521 on Pietro Matire d'Anghiera.
Tagesschriftums nahezu eingestellt wird! - ist jedoch zu vermuten, daß der Zeitungscharakter dieses Druckes für die Publikationsmotivation bedeutender war.22

Of the thirteen theological publications in the last period, eight have been attributed to Gengenbach as author with varying degrees of certainty. These were: *Mönchskalb*, *Christliche und ware Practica*, *Anzeigung*, *Klägliches Gespräch*, *Evangelischer Bürger*, *Knichel*, *Die Novella* (2 editions), and *Drei Christen*. The first three of these have already been discussed.23

Of the other five theological publications that he printed three were definitely not written by him: Eberlin von Günzburg's *Denkspiegel* (August or September 1523); *Practica Deutsch* (1523) by Gallianus; Mannberger’s *Antwort auf Georg Fener* (between June and the end 1523). The remaining two works were by unknown authors which have not been attributed: *Kurze antwort* (between February and August 1523); and *Neues evangelisches Lied* (between June 1523 and 1524).

b) The problems of attribution

The general lack of conclusive attribution - altogether ten of Gengenbach’s last publications were anonymous - has caused a considerable amount of argument among critics. With a shortage of documentary evidence, debate on the matter became quite intense in the earlier part of the last century. The disagreement about the late theological publications, and about the authorship of five works in particular - *Knichel*, *Evangelischer Bürger*, *Klägliches Gespräch*, *Schweizer Bauer* and *Die Novella* - has been more contentious than over anything else of Gengenbach’s. What follows is a brief overview of the arguments that Prietzel has thoroughly documented in her comments on each of his publications.

There are no hard and fast battle lines between the critics. Various links have been

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23 *Mönchskalb* in chapter 2, V (page 59); *Anzeigung* in chapter 5, IIIc (page 139); and *Christliche und ware Practica* in chapter 6, IVc (page 194).
identified between different works and attributions vary accordingly. At one end of the range of opinions is Singer, who has contended that Gengenbach did not write any explicitly pro-reformation material and in effect argues that Gengenbach only wrote one short piece between 1519 and his death in 1524. This seems highly unlikely for three reasons. First, in those earlier works that Singer agrees were by Gengenbach, such as Der Nollhart and Die Gouchmat, Gengenbach had already raised the question of church reform. Second, Gengenbach had a substantial record of printing pro-Reform literature so why would he not also write some himself? Third, there seems no plausible explanation for Gengenbach ‘drying up’ as an author after 1519. Insofar as Singer repudiated the claims of the Lutherans that Gengenbach was a supporter of theirs he has a good point; Gengenbach clearly had disagreements with Luther and he was still prepared to print a Catholic defence of the mass (kurze Antwort) in the second part of 1523, near the end of his life.

Knüchel has been the pivot of the arguments around the five most debated works. Lots of links have been mooted, but Prietzel and Götze have each identified evidence of links that they take to be definitive. Prietzel has noted that the author of Schweizer Bauer also claims to have written Knüchel, as he says on page Diij. ‘/ ich will in minen sendbriefen so ich schriben wird zu Häs Knüchel von Knutwil witer dar von schriben.’ Götze highlighted the sentence in the text in Knüchel itself in which the author claims to have also written Evangelischer Bürger:

Nun, lieben brüder, ir hand nun ein lange zyt gehört von dem glouben, hoffnung vnd lieby sagen, wie wir die allein sollen haben zü Christo Jesu, vnserem herren, sollichs will ich euch ouch allzit ermant haben, Wann ich eiich solichs gnügsamlich in dem Ewangelischen burger hab zu verston geben, ich sich aber leider wenig dietz zů härten haben genommen.

(pagen 243, line 3).


Matheson makes the interesting point that: ‘Much of the older literature and not a little of the newer is concerned with determining how ‘Lutheran’ writings are, how central the formal and material principles of the Reformation.’ He is not sure that this is worthwhile: Peter Matheson, The Rhetoric of Reformation (Edinburgh: T. & T.Clark, 1998), p.19.
The two sentences could be variously read, though they clearly suggest that the author believes that his audience has a close familiarity with the other two works. The problem is that 'Knüchel' is a fictional character who is claiming authorship. It could simply be the real author's way of describing his character's theological alignment.

Without some form of new objective evidence it is extremely difficult to see how the arguments can be resolved. Computer analysis of the language might prove to be revelatory, but linguistic analysis to date has come up with contradictory, and therefore inconclusive results. König's comprehensive linguistic analysis was subsequently flatly contradicted by two doctoral theses, especially that of Stütz in 1912, but also by Schein in 1926. They in their turn were contradicted by Raillard's analysis.

Richel defended König's arguments about the style and language used in Die Novella, and agreed with him that Gengenbach wrote it:

Dort konnte auch jemand eine solche in gleicher Weise gegen Papst und Luther gerichtete Spottsschrift veröffentlichen; und wenn wir uns unter den Schriften umsehen, die in jener stürmischen Zeit in Basel ans Licht kamen, finden wir eine, die inhaltlich und sprachlich so viele Anklänge an das Gespräch zeigt, daß wir ihren Verfasser auch für unsern Dialog in Anspruch nehmen können. Es ist die geistreiche, derbe Satire Gengenbachs "Novella", nach Königs ausführlichen sprachlichen Untersuchungen [...] zweifellos ein Werk des Basler Dichters.

Because Die Novella was by Gengenbach, Richel therefore firmly believed that he also wrote Klägliches Gespräch, Evangelischer Bürger, and Knüchel. König in his turn supported this conclusion. Richel also argued that the theological position of the author

25 Stütz, pp.171-185.
26 Schein, p.56.
27 Richel, Klägliches Gespräch, pp.6-7.
28 König subsequently wrote the article supporting Richel and the view that Gengenbach wrote Knüchel, Evangelischer Bürger, and Klägliches Gespräch entitled
reinforced the linguistic analysis:

Eine Möglichkeit, dem Verfasser unserer Flugschrift auf die Spur zu kommen, bietet uns seine eigenartige, gänzlich unparteiische Stellung zu der religiösen Bewegung seiner Zeit. Mit köstlichem, gesundem Humor verspottet er ohne Unterschied die Anhänger des alten und des neuen Glaubens.  

Another critic, Blochwitz did not give the stylistic analysis any weight and rather took the content of the pamphlets as his central concern:

Zum Schluß sei bemerkt, ohne daß damit sprachlich-stilistischen Untersuchungen vorgegriffen sein sollte, daß nach ihrem Inhalt zu schließen der Schweizerbauer und der Waldbruder Werke Gengenbachs sein müßten.

Blochwitz described Gengenbach’s position regarding the Reformation as a ‘merkwürdige Stellung’, and believed that Gengenbach was the author of all five works in question. So, for example, Blochwitz saw similarities between Knüchel and Klägliches Gespräch in the author’s sharp criticisms of the evangelicals and the divisions between the Lutherans and the Catholics:

Daß Gengenbach auf Luthers Seite steht, darf nicht so aufgefaßt werden, als ob er für die Rechtfertigungslehre eintrat. In den Totenfressern versteht er Luther als kirchlichen Reformer, nicht als Reformator. Durch Almosengeben glaubt er, seine Sünden tilgen zu können. Das Evangelium ist ihm Lex Christi: die Reinheit der evangelischen leer und geboten ist durch auffgang der menschlichen satzungen wider die leer Christi in ‘Abgang’ gebracht worden, soll nun aber wiederhergestellt werden.

Drawing quite contrary conclusions from the theological content as well as from other evidence, Götze did not accept that Gengenbach could have written Knüchel. Whereas Richel thought that Gengenbach’s biblical knowledge was sufficient, Götze believed Knüchel had to have been written by someone who was theologically trained:

Ist es aus dem nahen Verhältnis des Verfassers zu Bibel, Kirchenvätern und kanonischem Rechte wahrscheinlich, dass er gelehrter Theolog gewesen ist, so

‘Zu Gengenbach’.

29 Richel, Klägliches Gespräch, p.5.

30 Blochwitz, p.226.

gibt es zu denken, dass der Evangelisch Burger in Ton und Inhalt von Anfang bis zu Ende eine Predigt ist [...]

He identified the writer as a cleric based in Berne, Sebastian Meyer. He argues that the mistakes made in the biblical references indicate that the printer was not the writer, arguing that if the writer had set his own text he would not have got them wrong. Götte was convinced by Singer’s arguments that Gengenbach could not have written *Evangelischer Bürger* and that meant that neither could he have written *Knüchel* as there are some close stylistic similarities. The evidence in favour of Meyer as the writer of *Knüchel* is rather thin, based on a pamphlet of his published over ten years later in 1535, *Vom Pfriindmarkt der Kurtisanen*. Götte argued the theological position in this work is one that condemns the split between the papists and the evangelicals, similar to that taken in *Klägliches Gespräch* and unlike the position taken by the author of *Die Totenfresser* and *Die Novella* - so it could not have been the same person:

Wie verträgt sich diese kühne, selbständige Stellungnahme mit der konfessionellen Gebundenheit Gengenbachs, der sich in “Totenfresser” und “Novella” Punkt für Punkt auf die lutherische Seite stellt, der namentlich Novella 181. 202. 385. das kanonische Recht ganz im landesüblichen Sinne nur als Stütze der verweltlichten römischen Kirche kennzeichnet?

(PP.215-16).

Another critic who did not think that Gengenbach was the writer of *Knüchel* was Schieß who, in a long article written in 1930, ignored *Die Novella* and *Klägliches Gespräch* and linked *Knüchel* and *Evangelischer Bürger* with *Schweizer Bauer* and also with *Der Laienspiegel*:


32 Götte, p.218.

33 Schieß, p.328.
Schieß thought that it was likely they were written by someone from outside Basel and rejects Götze's view that it was written by Sebastian Meyer. He came down instead in favour of a Bernese-based priest, Jörg Brunner, from a village called Klein-Höchstetten. The emphasis in three of the five - *Knüchel, Evangelischer Bürger*, and *Schweizer Bauer* - on the role and rights of the laity makes it hard to accept this argument from Schieß and Götze that the author was a priest.

The only critic writing before the Second World War who tried to produce a comprehensive analysis of all Gengenbach's writing in relation to the Reformation was Raillard, who introduced a new argument about *Knüchel*. He contended Gengenbach wrote both *Knüchel* and *Evangelischer Bürger* because of their stylistic and theological similarity with the *Christliche ware Practica*, which he was certain Gengenbach had written. Raillard produced a list of examples of sentences and phrases from the three works about which he says:

> Während manche der angeführten Ausdrücke einzeln ebenso oder ähnlich auch in anderen Werken jener Zeit auftreten, besagt doch die Gesamtheit dieser Parallelen, daß in unser drei Schriften bis in feine Einzelheiten hin völlig die gleiche Art zu denken und zu schreiben vorliegt und daß damit ganz eindeutig Gengenbach als ihr gemeinsamer Verfasser erwiesen ist.\(^{34}\)

Raillard also attributes *Klagliches Gespräch* and *Drei Christen* to Gengenbach on the same basis. Interestingly, because *Die Novella* is ambivalent rather than hostile towards the Catholic polemicist, Thomas Murner, Raillard is not so certain about its authorship and he falls back on König's linguistic analysis to decide in favour of attribution to Gengenbach. Raillard was keen to claim Gengenbach for the Lutherans:

> Ueberblickt man die umstrittenen Werke, die Gengenbach zugeschrieben werden müssen, zusammen mit den sicher Gengenbachschen Schriften der späteren Zeit, so steht zunächst fest, daß man von einer wesentlichen Zustimmung zur Reformationsbewegung zu sprechen hat. Das klare Zeugnis dafür sind die Aufforderung zur Abschaffung der Klöster, Rückstellung von Prozessionen, Messe-Halten und Fasten, alles bezahlten kirchlichen Gebets usw., daneben der ausdrückliche Hinweis auf Luther und auf die evangelische Lehre.\(^{35}\)

\(^{34}\) Raillard, pp.59-60.

\(^{35}\) Raillard, p.90.
To reach this conclusion Raillard had to gloss over examples in the late texts that are distinctly hostile to Luther. These undoubted contradictory theological stances within the late works were used very pertinently by Götze to challenge Gengenbach’s authorship of *Knüchel* and *Klägliches Gespräch*.

Since the Second World War there have been two important contributions to this discussion about the late theological publications. The first is from Hieronymus whose voluminous 1983 exhibition catalogue has been frequently referred to in this dissertation. It contains commentaries on a large number of Gengenbach’s publications and their woodcuts (as well as material on hundreds of other items), and is particularly interesting about the printing history of the various publications. While relating only incidentally to the authorship debates Hieronymus’s work has made a major contribution to the accurate identification of Gengenbach’s output as a printer.

Hieronymus’s work was successfully built upon in the second and most important contribution to date, that by Prietzel. She recognises the significance of the contradictory theological positions that emerge from Gengenbach’s publications. Like Schieß, she groups *Schweizer Bauer, Evangelischer Bürger, and Knüchel* into a theologically consistent position that attacks the division of the Church. Unlike Schieß, she thinks Gengenbach did write them, but that he remained unconvinced by Luther:

>Falls Gengenbach der Autor dieser drei Schriften ist, zeugen sie davon, daß er sich in Fortführung eigener Auffassungen intensiv und kritisch mit der Reformation auseinandergesetzt hat. Seine Überzeugung von einer notwendigen “reformatz” der Gesellschaft und vor allem der Geistlichkeit läßt ihn zunächst in Luther einen Verbündeten sehen. Langfristig zeigt sich jedoch, daß seine vor-bzw. unreformatorische Position weitestgehend unbeeinträchtigt von Luthers Theologie bleibt. Seine Sorge um den Verlust der kirchlichen Einheit behält die Oberhand.\(^{36}\)

Prietzel attributes to Gengenbach all eight of the disputed unsigned theological works that he published - *Mönchskalb, Christliche ware Practice, Anzeigung, Klägliches Gespräch, Evangelischer Bürger, Knüchel, Die Novella* (two editions), and *Drei*

\(^{36}\) Prietzel, *AGB*, p.348.
Christen. It is argued in this dissertation that six of these eight are most likely to have been written by him, but not *Evangelischer Bürger* or *Knichel* whose content is incompatible with the ideas that Gengenbach appears to have held.

III. TRACING SOME NEW THREADS

The following analysis of these last theological publications concentrates on the variation in their theological content in the context of contemporary circumstances and debates. It has been argued in this dissertation that after 1521 Gengenbach was prepared to distance himself - sometimes outspokenly - from the supporters of the papacy, but it would be a mistake to assume that he therefore adopted a consistent pro-reform position. He was also prepared to defend Catholic belief and practices. A feature of these last works is a readiness to criticise both sides of the emerging religious divide and this has presented problems for some commentators who have been anxious to characterise Gengenbach’s theological position as either Catholic or as Protestant.

These two sides did not yet exist in Basel. They were apparent in Zurich by late 1523, but this was not a universal experience in German-speaking cities of the southwest. The failure of the emperor and then the newly elected pope, Adrian VI, to pursue much-hoped-for changes aggravated the divisions. Erasmus - who was a friend and ex-student of Adrian’s - was increasingly at odds with Luther. His first major published statement of differences with Luther came in 1524 with his *On the Freedom of the Will*. Bainton’s description of Erasmus’s view could also be of Gengenbach’s:

> He still felt that Luther had done much good, and that he was no heretic. This Erasmus openly said in a colloquy published as late as 1524. But he deplored the disintegration of Christendom.

Previously critics have treated *Knichel* as pivotal, but the starting point for the analysis


38 Bainton, p.195.

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in this dissertation is the three themes of *Die Totenfresser*: the theological, the anti-clerical and the economic problem of poverty. The chronological narrative below shows how these themes thread their way through all the subsequent publications.

**a. ‘Klagliches Gespräch’ (Autumn 1522)**

Having attacked the Pope so strongly in *Die Totenfresser*, it hardly seems possible that the same writer’s ideas could inform the dialogue entitled *Klagliches Gespräch*, published in Autumn 1522. It portrays both Luther and the new pope as scourges of the corrupt practices perpetrated under Leo X. In common with *Schweizer Bauer* the main protagonists meet travelling on a road. An abbot, a papal courtier and a wandering preacher-monk are somewhere near Trent and discuss the newly elected pope, Adrian VI. The courtier hoped that the pope would drown on his way to be enthroned during his journey by sea from Spain: ‘Antwort der Curtisan: jo, got wolt, das yn das már verschluckt hät, vff das er nie gon Rom wär kummen.’ (page 16, lines 8-10). The abbot asks why he feels that way:

Antwort der Curtisan: Der teüfel nem sein geist, er ist mir vnd manchem guten gesellen nummen zü frumm, mir wär vil lieber ein ryffianer pabst dann ein Theologus, [...].

(p.16, lines 12-15).

The courtier believes that Pope Adrian will get rid of all the pomp and ceremony of the papacy and will ‘die ganzte kurt reformieren’. This is a prospect that horrifies him, describing Adrian as the ‘bestia’ seen by John in the desert (page 19, lines 20-24).

Adrian appeared ready to tackle the kind of abuses described in *Die Totenfresser* and in a flood of other pamphlets. Some of the changes that Adrian had already ordered are listed in *Klagliches Gespräch* on pages 18 and 19: the cardinals had to shave off their beards and could no longer grant any further dispensations for multiple livings; nor allow monks to hold a living; nor allow a prelate to be an abbot; nor grant posts to those too young. The aspiration for internal reform as an alternative to a split is strongly expressed in this pamphlet, and because the writer believed the Pope would make reforms it reveals a different attitude to Luther to that in *Die Totenfresser*. Here it is somewhat ambivalent. Both the abbot and the courtier fear the consequences of Luther’s teaching; the abbot
thinks the monasteries could soon be dissolved and the courtier fears for the dispensation of livings (page 17).

The devil dressed as a monk joins the abbot and the courtier on the road and describes Luther as ‘minem friund’ (page 20, line 26), and says: ‘Aber durch den mißverstand, so das gemein volck in siner leer hat, ist er min trüwer diener vnd meret mir mein rych.’ (page 21, lines 16-18). He continues, saying that Luther promotes discord: ‘Zû dem ersten macht das der groß nyd, der die geystlichen vnd wältlichen wider einander hand, darauß noch groß blütuergiessen geschähen wirt.’ (lines 28-29). Under questioning from the abbot the devil presents theological criticisms of Luther. He explains why Luther is his friend and why Luther is ungodly: Luther’s failure to support the requirement on Christians to do good works - specifically the works of mercy which Luther rejected - and to help the poor, is portrayed as a failure to obey the commandment to love thy neighbour. Luther’s lack of interest in prayer and fasting is condemned as they are the means by which evil can be driven out.

Blochwitz, who thinks that Gengenbach wrote Klägliches Gespräch, compares it with Die Totenfresser:

Im Kläglichen Gespräch [...] zeigt sich Gengenbach von einer ganz anderen Seite. Er tadelt da die grobe Kampfart der Evangelischen. Man erkennt den Satiriker der Totenfresser nicht wieder. Er vermisst bei Luther die christliche Liebe. Seine Lehre ist zwar gut und christenlich aber sin stroff nydisch und vnchristenlich’. 39

Adrian’s election is likely to have influenced Gengenbach’s views and made him more optimistic about the papacy and less positive about Luther. The ideas in Klägliches Gespräch are consonant with that shift. This is a piece of writing by a concerned Catholic; a man who believes reform is vital, but is disturbed by the emerging Lutheran theology. It was argued in chapter 6, IIc (page 176), that as early as 1518 Gengenbach was nervous about Luther’s theology and that was the likely explanation for Gengenbach deciding not to print any more of Luther’s work. Gengenbach believed in loyalty and obedience and was anything but a schismatic. What points strongly to Gengenbach as the

39 Blochwitz, p.224.
author of *Klagliches Gespräch* is the mix of ideas - this theological concern together with the focus on poverty and on the abuses of wealth by the Church is the same combination of themes found in *Totenfresser*. All three themes reappear prominently in the next two publications discussed, *Evangelischer Bürger*, published sometime in the first half of 1523, and *Drei Christen*, published between February and August 1523.

The huge publishing success of *Klagliches Gespräch* indicates the mood of hope engendered by Adrian’s election. It was published in eight different German editions during 1522 alone, as well as a French one. It was printed in Strassburg, Erfurt (three editions, two printers), Augsburg, and Stuttgart. The origins of the French edition do not appear to be known. It was a level of success that matched one of the most successful early Reformation dialogues, *Karsthans*, which was first published in Strassburg, January 1521 and went through nine reprints that year. It represents a level of immediate success not enjoyed by anything else that Gengenbach wrote. *X Alter* was longer enduring and finally ran to twenty-five editions by 1681, but only six appeared in Gengenbach’s lifetime.

Hope in Adrian did not last long, however. Even before he had died after rather less than two years in post - some believe poisoned by his many enemies within the Church - it had become clear that he would make no theological concessions to the reformers. Indeed he gave time and energy to organise the counter-attack: supporting, for example, the Catholic controversialists; writing directly to Frederick the Wise demanding action against Luther; and writing to different cities, including Basel, demanding action

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41 Könneker, *Deutsche Literatur*, p.100.

42 For a discussion about this see: Bagchi, pp.222-27.

43 This was printed in its original Latin in: *Tomus primus (-quartus) omnium operum Reverendi Patris D. Martini Lutheri* (Jena, 1564), pp.541-44. In German it appears in: *D. Martin Luthers Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. by J.G.Walch, 24 vols (Halle, 1739-50), xv, No.716. Frederick received a copy of *Klagliches Gespräch* from one of his councillors, but appears to have been unimpressed: Prietzel, *AGB*, p.354.
against the printers of Lutheran works. Adrian certainly acknowledged the need to tackle corruption in the Church and did attempt some steps to reduce it, but for many it was too little, too late and the divisions hardened. It became harder to stay in the middle.

b. 'Evangelischer Bürger' (1522 to mid-1523)
This is a prose piece which is 614 lines long and rather like a sermon in style. It went to three further editions, two in Augsburg and one in Zwickau, so it too was relatively successful. In relation to the discussion about its authorship there has been little examination of its content. The pamphlet opens with an apocalyptic condemnation of the way that Christians have strayed from the truths contained in the Bible and then addresses four themes that were becoming subject to the fiercest contemporary debates: monastic institutions, good works, intercession by saints, and the role of the Virgin Mary in religious observance.

The author’s attack on monastic institutions is a familiar one:

Hüten euch vor denen die do kummen in schoffs cleideren / dañ sy sind inwendig zuckend wöllf. Do wurden alle stet vol clöster / do gieng der gemein man zu grund durch ir gutzlen / do wurden on zal tempel gebuwen in eer der helgen vnd keiner in der eer gots.
(p.Biii).

Strong stuff against monks who dupe money out of people and impoverish them. There are strong echoes here of Die Totenfresser as the writer warns the nobility on the same page against giving their money away to the Church:

O was frummer grosen ritter vnd herren hand das ir in die kloster geben / da durch sie sind zu armen tagen kummen / die sy jetztund durchächtet vnd fressen tag vnd nacht das ir.

The author uses the example and teachings of Pope Gregory I (the ‘Great’) to support his arguments about poverty and church excesses. So far in the pamphlet the writer is not openly committed to a particular confession. However, it then opens up a new theme, an attack on idolatry and images. The author argues that too much attention is given to

\[\text{44 Notwithstanding that Luther's objection to monasteries was different as it was primarily theological, because he objected to the monastic vows: Martin Luther, De votis monasticis M. Lutheri judicium, WA 8, pp.573-669. This was published in 1521.}\]
images instead of focussing on the love we need to have for Jesus inside ourselves. This is considerably more radical than Luther and strongly suggestive of Zwinglian influence:

Nun wie wol wir habë gesehë die grosse zerstörunß der Christenheit vnd aller tempel vnd bildnüß / haben wir unß nit dar an gekört sunder ye meer vnd meer solich bildnüß der helgen här für gezogë / vnd die innerliche bildnüß der lieby, die wir zü Christo Jesu solten haben ganz vöggeschlagë / vnd hat daß gewärt biß vff disen tag.
(p.Ci').

After his condemnation of images the author then adds a strong caveat on the same page against the reader interpreting this view as an attack on the saints themselves or the noble works they have done:

Aber ir uBerwelten liebë burger darûb sôllë ir nit versto / dz ir nut vff die helgen halten sollen / oder sy dar durch verachten / sunder in üweren härtzen sy für groß achten vñ got loben täglich in sinen helgen / das er inen solche gnod verlïhen het / durch welche sy so ritterlich gestritten haben / vnd diemütiglich ir blût vergossen haben /

Having said that, however, the author goes on on the next page to ask what the saints themselves would want done with the money that had been spent on images and temples in their honour. He is sure that they would want the money spent on the poor:

Nein, sy habë ire schätz vß geteil den armen, also sollen ir auch thûn, vñ nit auß lieby so ir zün helgen haben, sunder auß lieby die ir zü üwerem nächsten sollen haben.

Had he advocated direct action to dispose of the icons the author would have been in direct danger of severe punishment, even the death penalty. While Gengenbach's concern for the poor is reflected here, these inflammatory iconoclastic ideas are quite unlike him and not even a hint of a similar position appears anywhere else in his publications.

The question of images had been central to discussions that took place in Wittenberg in the first few months of 1522 when Karlstadt had supported iconoclastic activity in Luther's absence. Luther's position on images and the Veneration of Saints was outlined in the third of his Invocavit sermons of March 1522 which contained a section entitled
‘Von Bildnissen,’ and the *Sermon von der Geburt Mariæ*, which he gave in September 1522. Both were widely reprinted though neither in Basel. Magarete Stirm points out that Luther’s position on icons shifted in early 1522 and that he became much more tolerant of them: ‘Im Anschluß an diese Predigen brachte er alles auf den status quo ante und ging damit weit hinter seine eigenen Forderungen zurück.’

Events and arguments taking place in Zurich, where there was overt popular pressure to remove church decorations, were therefore a more likely influence on the writer of *Evangelischer Bürger*. Zwingli had already expressed his disapproval of holy images in the earlier part of 1523 though he had made clear that he was not in favour of direct action. Some time was spent debating the issue during the second Zurich disputation held in October 1523 shortly after a wave of iconoclastic acts in the city. Following the disputation the council agreed an ordinance that stopped any new images being introduced into churches. They also distributed a booklet by Zwingli to the local clergy, *kurze, christliche Einleitung*, which explained key theological questions including the need to dispose of images. Soon after, in December, the council actually set a timetable.

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47 Luther returned to the theme of iconoclasm in 1525 with a sustained attack on Karlstadt in: Martin Luther, *Wider die himmlischen Propheten, von den Bildern und Sakrament*, WA 18, pp.62-125 (part 1) and pp.125ff (part 2).

48 Magarete Stirm, *Die Bilderfrage in der Reformation* (Gutersloh: Gutersloher Verlaghaus, 1977), p.25. This is a useful analysis of the various theological arguments about icons.


50 There is a very full account of the various incidents in and around Zurich in: Lee Harvey Wandel, *Voracious Idols and Violent Hands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.53-101; but for an account of the outcomes of the Second Disputation, see: Gäbler, pp.76-81.
for their elimination from all the city’s churches.\textsuperscript{51}

Although these events form a relevant background to the publication of \textit{Evangelischer Bürger} in Basel, Zwingli’s influence outside Zurich at this time appears fairly small. Only two pieces of Zwingli’s were published in Basel in this crucial year of 1523, which saw the publication in Zurich of some of the central ideas of his reform theology.\textsuperscript{52}

Material printed in Zurich may have been imported directly of course, and as the year progressed Zwingli was in ever more regular contact with Oecolampadius in Basel.\textsuperscript{53}

However, there is no evidence that Oecolampadius was saying very much publicly about church decoration. In the first Basel disputation held in August 1523 Oecolampadius defended four theses (in Latin), the third of which was an attack on the invocation of saints - but which does not include an attack on their images appearing in churches.\textsuperscript{54}

The publication of \textit{Evangelischer Bürger} is evidence in itself that the popular iconoclastic movement in Zurich had some resonance in Basel during 1523.

After the central section on the saints, the last few pages of \textit{Evangelischer Bürger} are much more in tune with the themes found elsewhere in Gengenbach’s work. There is a restatement of the traditional position on good works - that to show love for one’s neighbour is a practical matter of giving - with its implied opposition to Luther, Zwingli

\textsuperscript{51} Egli, \textit{Aktenammlung}, p.186.

\textsuperscript{52} These were: ‘Auslegungen und Gründe der Schlußreden oder Artikel, auf den 19. Tag Januars in 1523’ (Basel: Petri, 1523), listed in \textit{VD16}, xxii, p.634 (Z820); and ‘Quo pacto ingenui adolescentes formandi sint preceptiones pauculae.’ (Basel: Bebel, 1523): listed in \textit{VD16}, xxii, p.643 (Z885).

\textsuperscript{53} Oecolampadius’s popularity as a preacher was growing: Rupp, p.19. Nevertheless he published almost exclusively in Latin at this stage. The only work of Oecolampadius published in German in Basel in 1523 was his pamphlet on the question of poverty, \textit{Von Vôteylung des Almusens} (Basel: Cratander, 1523) which was actually translated into German by Konrad Peutinger, the Augsburg humanist. See footnote 69, p.230.

\textsuperscript{54} The third thesis that Oecolampadius defended was, ‘Verissimum evangelium est et omni acceptione dignum, peccatoribus etiam maximus ad Christum patere aditum nullique opus intercessoribus. Impium autem est et contrarium evangelio docere, preceptam a Deo scantorum invocationem. Hoc enim est tollere, non augere fidem in Christum.’ \textit{Briefe und Akten zum Leben Oekolampads}, ed. by Ernst Staehlin, 2 vols (Leipzig: Eger und Sievers, 1927-1934), i, p.246.
and Oecolampadius and their ideas of justification by faith:

Durch deß willen sy verlassen haben die eer vnd wollüst diser wält vnd ire schätz vßgeteilt den armen / vnd do mit erzeigt die lieby ires nächstë / zü glicher weiß sollë wir auch thûn.
(p.Cii').

The pamphlet goes on to tackle the thornier iconographic question of the Virgin Mary - a figure who constituted a recurrent theme in Gengenbach’s publications. In 1523 the reformers were still treading most carefully around the question of how to show due veneration for Mary. Only in November 1522, Hans Urban Wyss, a priest from Fislibach not far from Zurich, had preached against intercession by the Virgin Mary. He had been arrested by the Federal Diet and handed over to the Bishop of Constance who had imprisoned and tortured him until he recanted seven months later.

This pamphlet reminds us of how very special she was, chosen by God. On the next page (Cii') it says: ‘Wie wolten wir aber die jückfrawä Maria me eren dañ durch den Engelschen grüß dardurch sy got geert hat.’ The author urges us on the last page (Ciii'): ‘Also vsserwelten liebe brüder vnd burger wellë wir allein vnser hoffnüg vnd trost setzen in den sun der reinen vnd küschen junckfrawë Marie.’ Almost at the very last line the author concedes an intercessory role that he denied the Saints: ‘Vnd lond vnß darnach die müter aller gnodë, mit samt allen vßerwelten bitten, das sy wellë zû vnß ston vnß hälfen bitten Jesum Christum [...].’ Luther viewed the role for both Mary and the saints:

In die eere wollen wir sy setzen, da sy got hin gesetzt hat, aber das wir sy wollen machen zù ainer abgöttin, das wollen wir nicht thûn: für ain fürsprecherin wollen wir sy nicht haben, für ain fürbitterin wollen wir sy haben wie die andern hailigen.55

So much for the pamphlet itself, which sustains such a relatively high level of theological discussion that Götzee thought a theologian must have written it. Yet Gengenbach’s deepening knowledge of both the classics and theology has already been remarked upon and aspects such as the style of writing, the level of Bible reading, and the references to Gregorian pronouncements are not so theologically obscure as to exclude Gengenbach.

55 WA 10.3, p.325.
from being the pamphlet’s writer. This is a far more accessible pamphlet, for example, than Der Laienspiegel published a year or more earlier, which has also been attributed to Gengenbach. What is more doubtful is the compatibility of the ideas in the text with Gengenbach’s.

There is a short, thirty-six-line afterword whose content contrasts with that of the main text and so arguably the same person did not write them both. Of the two texts it is much more likely that Gengenbach wrote the afterword. For one thing it has his initials underneath it, but more importantly the afterword is significantly less radical. It does not mention the attack on icons made in the pamphlet and instead it stresses the pamphleteer’s warning against showing disrespect towards the saints and their works. The words of this warning are repeated almost identically in the afterword, but with the addition of a call for patience and for obedience to political authority: ‘Vnd gehorsam sein vnser oberkeit.’ (page CiV), an addition which only appears in the afterword.

The afterword could be seen as an attempt to downplay some of the content of the main pamphlet with its demands for the urgent reform of theological practice in the matter of intercession and the worship of icons. Catholic criticism of Luther and the reformers made by writers like Murner was that they fostered civil disobedience. Iconoclastic events, such as those in Zurich in September and October 1523, were evidence that they were right. The call for obedience to one’s superiors contained in the afterword of Evangelischer Bürger is one that resonates throughout Gengenbach’s publications from the very beginning of his career.

This analysis, that Gengenbach was the writer of the afterword and was more cautious about the whole issue of icons in the Churches than the pamphlet writer, would be consistent with the idea that Gengenbach was still reluctant to break with the Catholic Church. It supports the view that Gengenbach, after swinging towards Luther in 1521 had swung back towards a political and theological position close to that of the city council. Gengenbach’s decision to print the pamphlet, even though its views were more radical than his own, could be explained as a response to popular interest in the subject matter and in the ‘new’ Zwinglian and radical ideas about Church icons. It is also quite likely
that Gengenbach believed that some change was necessary, that the cult of saints had
gone too far.

Eberlin was in Basel at this time and the fact that the two collaborated once again in 1523
to publish *Denkspiegel* (see below) feeds speculation that Gengenbach's views may have
been influenced by Eberlin von Günzburg on matters such as church decoration. Eberlin
is most anxious to stress: 'Das ist recht die heiligen geeret,'\(^{56}\) but he guards against
intercession and in the tenth *Bundgenossen* in a section entitled *Von helgen bilden* says:

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Kein gegossen, geschnitzt, gehowen bild soll yn der kirchen sein. Alle bild sollen
flach gemalt sein. Kein helgen bild sol sein yn der kirchen dann deren helgen, von
denen meldung geschicht in bibliischen bucherein. Kein kostlich bild aber gemald
soll sein in der kirchen.\(^{57}\)
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Prietzel argues that the title of the pamphlet - *Evangelischer Bürger* - defines its key
theme; that it is a discussion of how one can be evangelical and a good citizen,\(^{58}\) and so
she believes that Gengenbach was its writer. But there is no evidence that Gengenbach
wanted to empty the churches of their icons and strip their decorations, so it has been
argued here that he was not the writer of the main text. He published it having added
some counterbalance in the afterword.

c. 'Denkspiegel' (August/September 1523)

Moderation is a key theme in another afterword that Gengenbach wrote late that same
summer when he printed *Denkspiegel*, his second (known) work of Eberlin von
Günzburg's. Symbolic of the growing confidence of the reformers was that Eberlin
signed his name to *Denkspiegel*, unlike *Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen*, the first work of his
printed by Gengenbach in 1521.

*Denkspiegel* takes the form of an unmistakably evangelical letter from Eberlin to the
congregation in Rheinfelden with whom he had recently stayed for four weeks. Like the

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\(^{56}\) Eberlin von Günzburg, 'Denkspiegel,' in *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. by Ludwig

\(^{57}\) Eberlin, i, p.117.

\(^{58}\) Prietzel, *AGB*, p.346.
biblical epistles, it is a statement of good religious practice. Prietzel argues that Gengenbach’s substantial afterword, which is in prose (whereas his additions were normally poetic) is an important source of understanding about the theological views he held at this stage in his life:

[…] das Nachwort (ist) von großem Wert für die Frage nach Gengenbachs Verhältnis zur Reformation - dies um so mehr, als für die Zeit ab 1521 keine von Gengenbach eindeutig autorisierte theologische Flugschrift existiert, sieht man von der Christlichen und wahren Practica (Nr.112) ab, die aufgrund von inhaltlichen Verweisen (Fries-Kontroversen) Gengenbach sicher zugeschrieben werden kann.59

Gengenbach’s afterword strikes a very similar tone to the main text, reading like a sermon laced with biblical references. However, the theology continues to straddle Lutheran and Catholic ideas with the greater part of the afterword devoted to a restatement of the parable of the sower and the varying fates of his seed. Significantly it makes no comment about the section at the end of Eberlin’s text which is about the justification by faith.

**d. ‘Drei Christen’ (February-August 1523)**

*Drei Christen*, like *Klägliches Gespräch* and *Schweizer Bauer*, is a dialogue between travellers. This one is set in an inn, whereas the other two take place on the open road. It is a dialogue reported in a letter from a man to his brother, a rather sophisticated literary idea that permits a certain distance and apparent objectivity on the part of the writer. Because it makes the presentation more objective in style, it appears to leave it up to the reader to make a final judgement of the ideas it contains, rather than bombarding him or her with the rectitude of one viewpoint.

The writer reports a discussion at table about Christianity between three Christians. There is a noble squire, *der edel knächt*, a merchant from Serbia under Turkish rule, *der Türk* (the ‘Turk’); and a merchant from Bohemia, *der Böhem*. The squire - a Catholic - is challenged by the ‘Turk’ as to why he goes around robbing people, something that people under Turkish rule cannot understand as they believe a noble’s duty is to protect

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the poor. The squire explains that he has no other way left as his parents were driven into poverty by the rapacious demands of the Church, having tried their best to look after their vassals. The scenario of impoverishment that the noble portrays is very similar to that in Die Totenfresser, but in this dialogue the noble is confronted with his anti-social, thieving behaviour that is a reaction to this poverty. Although not stated, this may well refer to the circumstances of the Imperial Knights who had risen in revolt shortly before this pamphlet was published. Their history of brigandage was an important factor in their failure to mobilise popular support from an increasingly restless peasantry who would shortly break out in full-scale revolt themselves.

Whereas the only proposed solution to the problem of impoverishment in Die Totenfresser was to follow Luther, in this pamphlet changes in social and political, as well as religious structures are posed. The ‘Turk’ tells of how the Church had in the past bled his country (Serbia) and failed to help his parents in a war against the Turkey, but how much had since been achieved in cohabitation with the Turkish occupier (page 233, lines 11-16). As a community they had followed Christ’s teachings and had instituted, for example, the community choice of priests, getting rid of monasteries and convents, setting up a community chest to care for the poor and needy, and stopping usury. The pamphlet also includes a rather detailed account of the order of service used to invest a new priest, a digression reminiscent of some parts of Eberlin’s Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen. The ‘Turk’ refers to Pope Gregory the Great’s decrees as part of his theological justification for the measures they had taken.

The leadership of this society described by the ‘Turk’, called Samland, was fully accountable with a bishop elected by the whole community at its head. The duty of the nobility to maintain good order in the community was formally structured, with 50 of their number at any one time forming a salaried cadre living in the Ritterhuf. There they practised their military skills and were prepared to give their lives if required; they had a duty to protect widows and orphans and here they would study as well. The nobility were no longer an exclusive caste as they lived together in the Ritterhuf with fifty boys of the native citizenry: ‘Dann inn das hauß wirt niemandts übländigs genommen’ (page Bi3i’). Twenty-five of the boys could choose where to study ‘in welche universitet er will’, and
would be always at the service of the community - 'unser stat allzyt verpflicht, wie der adel'. The other twenty five boys would be choristers 'zû lob Got dem herren.'

In Samland, like Eberlin's Wolfaria, tithes were abolished, the priests were chosen and paid by their communities, and the priests were allowed to marry. This later utopia of Samland has none of the apocalypticism of Eberlin's Wolfaria and is much shorter and more focussed on the specific problems of the nobility, the poor and the predatory nature of the Church - the three themes of Die Totenfresser.

Wolfaria reflects Luther's view that Church organisation remained subordinate to the State. In the tenth of the Bundgenossen, for example, Eberlin says: 'Der vogt im fläcken und der radt soll gewalt haben uber pfaffen wie uber ander leüt.' In Samland, with the elected bishop in charge, but implicitly still subject to the final authority of the Turkish government, the source of political power is not so clear. It is possible to interpret the political structure as inclined towards the ideas of Zwingli, who favoured a close integration of the political and religious communities. Prietzel thinks that Drei Christen was published between February and August 1523 so it seems unlikely that Gengenbach had seen a copy of Zwingli's highly relevant pamphlet that developed his views on Christian government, Von göttlicher und menschlicher Gerechtigkeit, first printed at the end of July 1523. Only the Anabaptists favoured the community being governed entirely on religious (biblical) principles, with no separation between the spiritual and temporal worlds and this text is not based on such ideas.

Although the actual role of the Turkish overlords is ambiguous, this pamphlet is remarkable for its uncritical portrayal of Turkish religious tolerance. Religious tolerance was in any case rare in Christian Europe, but there were real, rational grounds for fear and hostility towards the Turks in 1523, whose conquest of Rhodes represented a very concrete threat to the eastern borders of the Holy Roman Empire and Hapsburg lands. More's Utopia was one of those few contemporary publications that had also pursued a

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60 Eberlin, i, p.111.

61 Zwingli, ii, pp.458-525.
tolerant line: 'For this is one of the ancientest laws among them, that no man shall be blamed for reasoning in the maintenance of his own religion.' One cannot help but speculate that More's book, available in Basel since 1518, had influenced the writer of Drei Christen. In the same section of his book, 'On the Religions in Utopia', More, the staunch Catholic, also described two other features that appear in Drei Christen: the (forthcoming) election of a priest, and how a ruler was elected.

The three Christians part, with the young noble proclaiming the virtues of the 'Turkish' Christian's belief:

Nach mein beduncken so ist der gloub der türckischen christen der aller göttlichest und fruchtbarest zu der seel säligkeit. Dann er sich gantz und gar gründt uff die liebe Gots und deß nächsten [...].
(p.238, lines 32-35).

Luther is conspicuous by his absence in the pamphlet though the Bohemian Christian talks on the last two pages about Hus and his reforms; about his connection with Wycliffe; about how perfectly reasonable Hus's theology and reforms were; and how that had led to conflict with the Church. Indeed, the Bohemian then asserts that they were neither Lutherans nor Catholics: 'Wir haltens nit gar mit der römischen kirchen, so halten wirs auch nit nach der ewangelischen leer.' (page 238, lines 31-32). He is particularly rude about the mendicant orders and believes like Hus that icons should be removed from Churches: 'Das der helgen gebildnüß solten ab gethon werden.'

With or without Luther, the mix of themes in this pamphlet is once again strongly reminiscent of Die Totenfresser and point towards Gengenbach as its author. Most critics agree with this conclusion except Baechtold and Lendi.

e. 'Anzeigung' (June 1523-1524)

Anzeigung, published a little later than Drei Christen, contains much more warlike

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63 Baechtold, Geschichte, p.282.

64 Lendi, p.69.
sentiments about the Turks than the ideal of peaceful coexistence found in *Samland*.

Already discussed in chapter 5, IIIc (page 139), it is about a meeting in Venice with a Greek merchant who has returned from Eberlin’s *Wolfaria*. The titlepage announces that this is an:

Anzeigung ze eroberen die Türky / vñ erlösung der Christenheit. Auch wie die Insel Mahumeta/durch die ordenslüt deß küngreichs Wolfarie erobert ist. Da by alle ständ Tüescher nation sollen ein vnderwysung nàmen.

In *Anzeigung Wolfaria* is at war with the Turks and, as the titlepage suggests, it tells of the conquest of Turkey by the monks and nuns of *Wolfaria*. The pamphlet opens with a description of how the dissolution of the monasteries is filling the world with wandering preachers and priests, and Christianity is disintegrating. This is creating another problem - the proliferation of beliefs:

Dje Christenheit ist gar zertrännt /
Ewangelisch sich ein jeder nent
Vnd nimpts mit wärken wenig an /
Der gloub deß mauls jetzundts als kan:
Vyl jetzund auß den klötern kummen.
[p.Ai?]

People were going around preaching all sorts of things and they did not even believe in good works. The lessons taught by Christ were getting lost. It would have been better if all these cloistered religious had not been let out, as nothing would be changed by it:

Kein reformatz handts mögen lyden/
Sy weren sunst in clöstern bliben.
[p.Ai?]

This theme of theological confusion is in *Knüchel* as well and is a new development since *Die Totenfresser* in Gengenbach’s views, if he was the author. In *Samland* the nunneries had all been dissolved to be replaced by a temple to the Virgin Mary in which there would live 100 young women, a female mirror of the hundred young men in the *Ritterhuß*. In *Wolfaria* the solution was to mobilise these religious to do God’s work and conquer the Turks.

The dissolution of the monasteries and the convents with more or less compulsion and the use of their resources to help the poor and for education was part of the reformers’ programme that many city councils adopted, whatever their interest in theology and whatever confession they finally embraced. This pamphlet can be seen as a typical Gengenbach response to change: while urgently wanting a solution to the problems of poverty and the corruption of the Church he was worried once more that change is destructive. He wanted to achieve dramatic change, but was not yet ready to pay the price. Reform teaching inevitably undermined the old certainties of belief and was not yet able to provide an alternative, solid and tested body of ideas. While Luther’s ideas for communalising poor relief could satisfy Gengenbach’s urge to help the poor, it would damage the Church, Gengenbach believed and disrupt society.

The solution the author proposes to maintain social and religious order lies with the nobility; it finishes with an appeal to them to act and this is the only time that such a clear call is to be found in a late publication of Gengenbach’s. This is consistent with the paternal, even feudal role that the nobles are portrayed in Die Totenfresser as wanting to play, and in Samland where the noble occupants of the Ritterhüf are responsible for protecting the weak. Nevertheless, it is a surprise coming from Basel where the nobility had been largely divested of their traditional responsibilities and where a municipal solution to poor law relief was about to be embraced.

There are two other notes of caution about Gengenbach’s authorship of this pamphlet. First, there is the obvious variation between the portrayal of the Turks in this and in Drei Christen and although this pamphlet was written up to a year later than Drei Christen, there seems to be no particular reason for the contrast. Second, written in rhyming couplets the pamphlet is quite long and slow, covering thirty-two sides of quarto, and it has more woodcuts than was the norm with Gengenbach’s later pamphlets.

\textit{f. The world turned upside down: ‘Knüchel’ (Whitsun-August 1523)}

The beginning of this pamphlet sets the scene for a discussion about the problems facing the parishioners of the village of Frydhusen in obtaining a satisfactory priest. Die
Totenfresser expressed the anger of Christians who were exploited by a corrupt Church. The manifestos and other literature of the Peasants' War reveal just how widespread the grievances were against the Church: complaining about priests who did not live in their parish; who did not provide the sort of services their parishioners needed; or who left the job to an unsatisfactory, underpaid deputy; and of those who creamed off the income from several such livings. These all fuelled hostility to tithes, complaints about which occurred repeatedly in the manifestoes.

Frydhusen seems to have problems of this kind, but it seems the villagers were also fed up with being given contradictory messages from the pulpit. Catholic priests were not the only problem:

 Dann sy hatten jetz ein münch, dann ein wältlichen priester, vnd was diser hat geleert, hat der ander verkert. Einer war Luterisch, der ander Päpstist, Einer hat gepredigdt menschliche satzungen, der ander die Ewangelische leer vnd göttliche gebot. (page 227, lines 13-17).

The consequence of this was to muddle the villagers to such an extent that we are told on the same page:

 Nun kam es darzu, das die güten fhimmen leiit yn ein solichen irthum kamen, sy hand nit gewüst welchem sy solten nachfolgen, vnd hatten vyl stryt vnt zwitracht vndereinander der prediger halben. (lines 17-20).

This theme of theological confusion had appeared in Anzeigung as well, but in Knüchel a solution is proposed. There is a long discussion on the matter of choosing a priest, and in particular whether or not it would be appropriate for the parish to choose one of their own number, Hans Knüchel, despite his not being in holy orders. The pamphlet picks up the theme of lay involvement in religious debate and the prerogatives of the Church explored in Schweizer Bauer, as well as the theme of community control and accountability of priests that appeared in Gengenbach's publications for the first time in Drei Christen. Many reformers were in favour of priests being local men from the communities that they served.

The argument is pursued in the form of a dialogue between Knüchel and the village.
Schultheiß, the mayor, who speaks on behalf of the community. Knüchel warns him that they will be going against the Church if the village do not appoint a priest approved by the bishop or the Pope. Knüchel puts forward the Church’s arguments against his own appointment which the Schultheiß, who knows his bible (like Knüchel), answers point for point. All sorts of people have preached the Word of God who were neither bishops, priests or prelates: ‘Die salbung ist nüt anders dann der heilig geist’ (page 230, lines 23-24). Neither does one need to be learned in Hebrew or Greek. The passage on pages 231-33, in which the Schultheiß describes the Greci and Hebrei, echoes the brief attack on theologi made in Der Nollhart and is also strongly reminiscent of the debate in Schweizer Bauer.

Much of the discussion is learned: not only is the bible referred to constantly, but the teaching of Gregory, John Chrysostom, and Augustine are invoked as well. It is only after ten pages of the pamphlet that the reader comes to the heart of the matter: the world is full of preachers who do not preach the true Gospel, and this includes both Catholics and Lutherans. The attack from Knüchel is passionate and purely theological:

O lieber Schultheiß, wie vyl sind deren jetzund vff erden, die also durch ir schmeichlery die warheit verschwigen, vff das sy groß pründen vberkummen !
Do werden gespürt Päbsttischen vnd die Luterischen predicanten, Wo sind do die Canonisten ? Wo sind do jetz vnser Ewangelisten ?
(p.237, lines 29-33).

Knüchel stands out from anything else published by Gengenbach as posing the possibility of action from below to solve the crisis of organised religion. Drei Christen portrays a community that chooses its own leader, the bishop, and its priests, but the process by which this kind of society was established is not known to us. The ‘Turkish’ Christian only tells us that the community had been left to its own resources in the aftermath of war with the Turks. Was it established by the existing authorities as Zwingli believed was possible in Zurich ? Or was it established by a popular movement that created the new community by breaking from the old ? Schweizer Bauer was a defence of the laity’s right to think about and contribute to theological debates, refuting the Catholic position that excluded them.
But in *Knüchel* the laity’s right to take control over the appointment of their own priests without reference to outside political or religious authority is being posed. An apparent affirmation of this right by the pamphlet marks a real shift for Gengenbach as its countenance of direct popular action puts it markedly beyond both the Catholic and the Lutheran pale, and on the left of the Zwinglians. As such, one hesitates to attribute it to Gengenbach as the author.

Inevitably the picture is not straightforward: some of the theology in the pamphlet remained essentially Catholic. So, for example, Blochwitz points out some other similarities between *Knüchel* and *Schweizer Bauer*:


One of the sticking points for Gengenbach with the new reform theology, however, which was apparent in *Die Totenfresser* as well as in several other publications, was that of ‘good works’. Gengenbach’s believed that the Church’s failure to carry out its duty of good works for the poor was a manifestation of what was wrong with it; and its failure to do good works was matched by the Lutherans’ failure to believe in their necessity. *Klägliches Gespräch*, for example, expresses this bipartisan criticism and *Knüchel* restates the case: ‘Der gloub on die wärck ist gantz vnnütz vnd todt,’ (page 243, lines 32-32). The passage in *Knüchel* is more than two pages long. Taking a swipe at, ‘frummer doctores’, it specifically attacks the doctrine of justification by faith which both Luther and Zwingli preached: ‘Do sähen ir, das der mensch durch die wärck gerechtfertiget wirt, nit durch den glouben allein’ (page 245, lines 2-3).

On the one hand *Knüchel* insists on good works and contains other material that is strongly suggestive of Gengenbach’s authorship, but it is also a discussion of church democracy that would not normally fit in with Gengenbach’s instinctive political

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66 Blochwitz, p.226.
conservatism. This is a long way from the papal and imperial authority that Gengenbach had been hoping could deliver change. Perhaps his frustration had reached such a point that by summer 1523 he could advocate such an explosive dismantling of the Church hierarchy, but this must be doubted.

g. Good works: ‘Kurze Antwort’ (February-August 1523)

*Kurze Antwort,* which Prietzel thinks was not written by Gengenbach, revisits his concern about the theology of good works. Published between February and August 1523, the same period as *Knüchel,* this prose piece uses the format of a letter to a sibling that was used in *Drei Christen.* *Kurze Antwort* is a letter by a nun to her brother who is a Carthusian monk, arguing that the closed orders were failing to do the will of God. If it really was written by a woman it belongs to one of a very small group of reformation texts. Even the idea of writing it as if it was by a woman, suggesting that a woman had anything relevant to say on theological matters, makes this piece and Gengenbach distinctive.67

The last twenty-four lines are not in prose, but in rhyming couplets summarising the message of the letter in somewhat simpler language than the rather theological, parsonical prose of the main text. It seems likely that these last lines were penned by Gengenbach to broaden the audience appeal of the denser prose text. First the key message is asserted:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Christlich härz hie wol betracht/} \\
\text{Die güten wärck drumb nit veracht.} \\
\text{Der gloub on wärck ist gar vernicht/} \\
\text{Als vnß Jacobus wolbericht.} \\
\text{[p.Bii’].}
\end{align*}
\]

Not for the first time in a Gengenbach publication - Prietzel actually calls it his

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'stereotype Formulierung'\textsuperscript{68} - there is mention of, 'Die sächs würck der barmherzigkeit' demanded by God in the Gospel according to Matthew. The poet goes on to ask of her brother whether genuinely Christian religious are to be found:

\begin{verbatim}
Nun sag mir lieber brüder an
Wo findt man die bin ordens lüten.
Welche do läben jetz zun zyten.
Wo ist ir gloub /barmherzigkeit.
Do von der weiß man clorlich seit /
Das durch die zwey stück hie vff ärd /
Die sünd allein abilcket wärd.
Darumb ich förcht münch / pfaffen nunne /
Werden wenig yn hymmel kummen.
\end{verbatim}

Once again Gengenbach had published a piece that straddled two positions. On the one hand its insistence on the need for good works, which was coming primarily from the Catholics as an antidote to Luther's doctrine of justification by faith. On the other hand, the attack in \textit{Kurze Antwort} on the essential lack of Christianity among the closed orders was very much a hallmark of the reformers. The author of \textit{Kurze Antwort} felt that monks and nuns were not bothered either with faith or with good works.

Bagchi tells us that the Catholic controversialists did not disagree with Luther so much over the theology of justification by faith as over its practical impact:

\begin{quote}
What they found difficult, both with Luther's justification theory and with his sacramental theology, was his apparent disregard for the consequences of teaching the common people that grace could be received unconditionally, without the need of good works.\textsuperscript{69}
\end{quote}

This is the same theological position as in \textit{Kurze Antwort}, \textit{Knüchel}, and \textit{Klägliches Gespräch}, which can be traced back to \textit{Die Totenfresser}. The author of the poem does not ignore the importance of faith: 'Zu got oder zü dem sun gottes kümen wir durch den glouben. Dan der zü got kumen will / der muß glouben [...].' (pages Av\textsuperscript{x} - Av\textsuperscript{i}), but for him it is meaningless unless it is given practical application.

\textsuperscript{68} Prietzel, \textit{AGB}, p.356.

\textsuperscript{69} Bagchi, p.127.
h. Luther reappears: 'Die Novella' (February-August 1523)

This is a poetic, narrative dialogue, 1,095 lines long, using rhyming couplets as Gengenbach did in Anzeigung and Die Totenfresser. In common with Evangelischer Bürger, Drei Christen and Mönchskalb, Die Novella was published sometime between February and August 1523. It is a dialogue between a number of characters and could have been recited aloud by one speaker or by a group. Blochwitz says of the style:

Merkwürdig ist, daß Gengenbach in seiner Novella von 1523 zu dem gehässigen Ton seiner Totenfresser zurückkehrt. Hatte er nicht im Kläglichen Gespräch die schroße Kampfesweise der Lutheraner als lieblos und unevangelisch gerügt?

It feels like 'classic' Gengenbach. The writing is far earthier than anything since Die Totenfresser, at times scatological; it is less intellectually dense in its argument; and its dialogue moves with some pace. It is strongly reminiscent of the style of the Fastnachts spiele and was perhaps performed during Fastnacht 1523. This is a popular presentation of contemporary theology and contemporary theological literature.

In the first 432 lines the characters are discussing the impact of Luther on the Catholic Church. The discussion is quite narrow, focussing on Luther’s teaching on the priesthood and the papacy. Here is an example of a passage that is highly reminiscent of Die Totenfresser:

Die wyl Christus hat selb erklärt/
Welcher well in den himmel gon/
Der müß all zytlich bgird verlon/
Der wält absterben innerlich,

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70 Blochwitz, p.226.

71 Towards the end of Die Novella quite a number of scatological expressions appear in the text close together in lines 922, 938, 941, 942, 963, 973, 978, 993, pp.Dii-Diii v.

72 Die Novella’s language has been subjected to considerable contradictory analysis (see IIa of this chapter). Most recently Weidhase has discovered that the word 'sparnöszlín' used in Die Novella can only be found in one other publication, Eberlin’s Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen. This is a new linguistic pointer towards Gengenbach’s authorship as Die Novella is too light for Eberlin. Helmut Weidhase, Kunst und Sprache im Spiegel der reformatorischen und humanistischen Schriften Johann Eberlins von Günzburg (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Tubingen, 1996), p.47.
Significantly, the next two lines tell us the new Pope Adrian is stopping all this:

Das jetz wol halb damider lyt.
By disem frommen Adrian.

These words are spoken by the pro-reform character, *der Meßner* - the sacristan - who is in discussion with his parish priest, *der Pfarrer*, who laments the negative impact of Luther’s anticlericalism and on the same page accuses the sacristan: ‘Du bist ein rechter paffen haß’. The priest’s views are reminiscent of the papal courtier in *Klägliches Gespräch*, down to his hope that Pope Adrian had died en route to his enthronement.

*Die Novella* and *Mönchskalb*, published sometime in Spring or Summer 1523, both give Luther’s theology greater sustained positive portrayal than other works of Gengenbach’s had done since the publication of *Der Laienspiegel* and *Die Totenfresser*. The intervening period had been marked by the election of Adrian in 1522 and it is significant that the range of Lutheran ideas that are approved of in *Die Novella* remains a narrow one despite Adrian’s betrayal of the hopes his election had raised. It is also significant that the portrayal of Thomas Murner, who appears in the second part of the dialogue, is an amiable satire rather than a destructively hostile one:


The initial dialogue shifts from Luther when the sacristan and his priest start to talk about Karsthans. The appearance of Karsthans serves to remind the audience of the debate that the original dialogue of that name generated, as does the reappearance of the character of Thomas Murner who had also appeared in the *Karsthans* dialogue. Murner’s response to *Karsthans*, entitled *Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren* and published in 1522,

⁷³ Raillard, pp.80-81.
contained the character of the Great Lutheran Fool who had assorted lesser Lutheran fools living in different parts of his body. The fifteen Bundgenossen lived in his belly and the character of Karsthans lived in his backside. Murner’s work has come to be regarded as one of the major dialogues of early Reformation literature. Gengenbach’s Die Novella was an explicit reply and it quickly led to a second edition under the title, Grausamer history von einem pfarrer und einem geyst und dem murner. It shows an intimate knowledge of Murner’s writing and various works of his are mentioned as the dialogue progresses.

So, as the priest and the sacristan talk, a spirit appears whom the priest takes to be Karsthans though it turns out to be the groß Narr:

Der geist sprach, ich bin der groß narr,
Dem der Karsthans im hindern saß,
(p.Diirth).  
Murner is called in to exorcise the spirit, as he is a widely respected expert on fools. Murner is keen to dispose of the supposed Karsthans because he made such a fool of Murner in the past. Eventually the great fool consumes Murner as a replacement fool to occupy his backside where Karsthans used to be. This second part of the dialogue is largely devoid of much theology, but even while he is mocking Murner Gengenbach cannot help a note of caution about the reformers. Karsthans may have been a hero - ‘(ein) frommen byder man’ [page Cii'] - to the reformers, but he harbours dangerous spirits:

Der geist sprach, ich bin der groß narr,
Dem der Karsthans im hindern saß,
Do ir im bsohen in dem glaß
Den harn, vnd funden ein bundtschû’
(p.Diirth).

Hieronymus describes Die Novella as an outstanding piece of literature - ‘überhaupt der literarisch besten reformatorischen Streitschriften.’^74 Ozment shares Hieronymus’s enthusiasm, describing the Murner and Die Novella in the following terms: ‘Murner’s Great Lutheran Fool is not easily excelled in the annals of religious satire, but Pamphilus

^74 Hieronymus, Bücherillustration, p.333.
Gengenbach went a long way toward topping it.\textsuperscript{75}

One of the best it may have been, but this was not an outright pro-reform pamphlet. Raillard puts it well: ‘Man spürt, der Verfasser hat eine gewisse Entfernung von der vordersten Front der Auseinandersetzung und etwas wie ein eigenes Urteil.’\textsuperscript{76} Its literary success at the time was limited to one second print-run which does not compare to the huge impact of \textit{Klägliches Gespräch}. Könneker points out that unlike some of his other work, Murner’s \textit{Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren} was rather less important at the time than it is now:

\begin{quote}
Im Gegensatz zu den früheren Satiren Murners, \textit{der Schelmenzunft, der Narrenbeschwörung} und \textit{der Gouchmat}, war die Wirkung des \textit{Grossen Lutherischen Narren} auffallend gering. Die unmittelbar Attackierten schwiegen sich aus\textsuperscript{77}
\end{quote}

The reason for its limited impact was straightforward. At the time he wrote it, Murner was no longer welcome in Strassburg and this work was confiscated, having only sold a few copies in any event. All the more interesting then that Gengenbach was able to get hold of one. He was the only polemicist to directly respond to Murner’s \textit{Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren}.

In previous chapters it has already been noted that the work of Thomas Murner had affected Gengenbach more than once in the years since 1519, the year when Murner was again studying in Basel. Their links in relation to Gengenbach’s \textit{die Gouchmat} (1519) were discussed in chapter 4, IIf (page 115). The enigmatic re-publication by Gengenbach of Murner’s \textit{Quattuor heresiarchis} between mid-1521 and mid-1522 was discussed in chapter 7, IIf (page 214). Both Gengenbach and Murner wrote for the popular audience, and as Murner was one of the few Catholic publicists who did so it is not surprising that

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{75} Ozment, \textit{Reformation}, p.110.
\textsuperscript{76} Raillard, p.81.
\textsuperscript{77} Könneker, \textit{deutsche Literatur}, p.123.
\end{quote}
Gengenbach (among others) engaged with him.  

Murner also appears in *Evangelischer Bürger*, described in rather hostile lines as ‘*eim
vmuerschampft münch*’ whose lies are directed against ‘*den Ewangelischen Luter*’. The
author describes Murner’s work as ‘üppigen / schandtlichen vnd ryffianischen gedichten’
[page Aiii’], with many more rude comments in the same passage.

**i. Ein neues evangelisches Lied (June 1523-1524)**

Another of the late publications that shared *Die Novella*’s greater enthusiasm for Luther
was this twenty-eight-verse song. Its contents revisit two of the *Die Totenfresser* themes;
verses five, six, nine, and ten attack the Pope for enriching himself through indulgences;
while verses eleven to fifteen expose the hypocrisy of the closed orders who abuse the
ideal of poverty while exploiting the real poor. The writer confidently asserts how
Luther’s ideas now dominate:

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Wär deß Luters leer unrecht/
vff erd man doch ein finden möcht/
der yn thät überwindē/
fürstē herren hend wit gesucht/
vnd können noch keinen finden
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(p.Aiii’, verse 16).

Verses twenty-four to twenty-seven pick on learned doctors, another of Gengenbach’s
targets (elsewhere than in *Die Totenfresser*). Prietzel does not think that Gengenbach
wrote this song, but it certainly fits into his general pattern of ideas.

**j. Antwort auf Georg Fener (June-End 1523)**

This last publication of Gengenbach’s in this group, the *Antwort auf Georg Fener*, was
most decidedly Catholic in its theology, the only one in this final period that overtly was.
Once again good works are one of the themes, putting forward a defence of the mass as a
sacrifice, as a good work, and as a bulwark of the Church - ‘ein umstösslich fester Turm
der Kirche’. It was a response by a Catholic priest, Johann Mannberger, to a sermon by a

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78 In the preface to *Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren*, Murner refers to the
attacks made on him by various authors including Luther.
Lutheran, Georg Fener, which had appeared in 1521. Mannberger remained a Catholic throughout his life - even to the point of losing his job as a priest in 1528 after he had defended the old faith in a public disputation in Berne.

Although the piece makes no direct mention of Luther or any of his writings against the mass, Hieronymus correctly discusses whether this sermon and the sermon by Fener himself were indeed a response to Luther. As well as dealing with the mass in *An den Deutschen Adel*, Luther’s *De Captivitate Babylonica* (1520) had attacked the idea of the mass as a sacrifice as well as the reservation of the chalice and the belief in transubstantiation.

Catholic though he was, Mannberger also criticised those priests who did not serve their congregations, be it through idleness, multiple livings, or sheer ignorance. Despite these concerns, this piece is primarily a defence of the theological status quo against Luther’s revisions, and its publication is an indication once again that Gengenbach’s views on a variety of theological questions continued to be ambivalent. Even Zwingli was not ready to challenge the Catholic form of the mass until June 1523.

III. THE THREE KEY THEMES

This analysis of Gengenbach’s late works has been based on three themes contained in *Die Totenfresser*. It is worth restating the three as an attempt to summarise the core beliefs contained in his last publications.

First of all, Gengenbach looked for a simple direct form of Christian faith and practice. He believed this was shown by practical good works and love for one’s neighbour; with a faith that followed the simplicity and purity of the Virgin Mary; by a Church organised around the principles of Gregory I and the teaching of the early leaders like Jerome. In this faith the Word of God was what mattered above all - more important than pomp and

79 Martin Luther, *De Captivitate Babylonica*, WA 6, pp.484-573.
display or the vast ‘learning’ of pious theologians. Gengenbach’s views on these aspects of faith can be identified as far back as 1517 in publications like Fromme Hausmagd and even earlier in Fünf Juden published in 1516.

Second, he was angry at the failure of the Church to fulfil its ministry: through their venality, incompetence and laziness, the clergy - both pastoral and cloistered - were unable to give the people the simple, pure faith they needed. Rather, they fleeced their flock and exploited their cupidity. This anger was most fully expressed in Die Totenfresser, but it appeared as early as Der Nollhart in 1517.

Third, without reform Christianity would be overwhelmed by the (apocalyptic) forces of darkness: society was being rendered dangerously unstable - the poor were not helped, the nobility were being bled and unable to fulfil their role. The failure of the Pope and the Emperor to pursue reform meant that people were looking elsewhere, but the problem was, where could a solution be found? Luther’s efforts to reform the Church seemed to address some of the key problems, but yet Luther was a source of division and therefore (potential) disorder, to be viewed with trepidation. The apocalyptic elements of Gengenbach’s ideas are some of his oldest and can be traced back to the influence of Sebastian Brant in the earliest of Gengenbach’s publications, but they no longer featured the heathen threat of the Turks or the Jews.
CHAPTER 9: AN ASSESSMENT

I. IDEOLOGICAL UNITY AND THE TENSIONS IN GENGENBACH’S WORK

One of the aims of this study outlined in the Introduction (IIc - page 17) was to investigate the totality of Gengenbach’s printing and writing for its ideological coherence. It was contended that he did not simply print to make money and it has been argued that there were indeed strong ideological threads running through his publications. The growing importance of his religious beliefs became clear by 1517 with *Der Nollhart*, whose religious themes were explored in chapter 5, III and IV (pages 135-147). The analysis in chapter 8 of the ideas contained in the work he published over the last two years of his life confirms that he had become quite well educated theologically and that he had some definite ideas about the Church and Christianity. Some of these can be traced back through his life: for example, his admiration of simple piety (chapter 6, IIb - page 172). Other ideas were new: for example, his championship of theology in the vernacular (chapter 7, II - page 208). And certainly not all his ideas remained static. His views about church reform, about the Pope and Luther were particularly subject to significant variation, as has been shown, for example, in chapter 6, IIc (page 176); and chapter 6, IIIa (page 249).

A commercial printer who prints whatever comes his way frequently produces inconsistent and even contradictory material. There were inconsistencies in Gengenbach’s ideas; but whether or not Gengenbach’s inconsistencies occurred because he was simply a businessman who was not particularly ideologically engaged is a key question to be answered if Gengenbach’s work is to be understood. It has been argued in this dissertation that when he was inconsistent or he changed his ideas these shifts can be explained as an understandable response to political and social conditions, rather than being a result of commercial expediency. Those of Gengenbach’s religious and political ideas that fluctuated concerned the most difficult issues of the times, those that were the focus of huge tensions and arguments in every class and community - even Luther was
unable to avoid changing his views under the pressure of events.

So, Gengenbach’s commitment to the Emperor and the Empire, which had been a consistent thread in his ideas from his very earliest publications, was flagging by 1521. At Worms the hope that the Emperor might lead a reform movement was all but destroyed (chapter 6, Ia - page 160), though even in 1522, in his publication of the letter by Lannoy (chapter 8, Ila - page 240), Gengenbach had not irrevocably abandoned his old loyalty. Likewise, although Gengenbach seemed to have turned his back on the papacy with Die Totenfresser in 1522, the election of Adrian VI, Erasmus’s old teacher, swung him round barely a few months later. In Klägliches Gespräch (chapter 8, IIIa - page 249), Pope Adrian is portrayed as the inheritor of Gregory the Great and Luther is seen as being as big an obstruction to positive reform as the Catholic clergy. But as it became clear just how little Adrian was ready or able to do, Luther is once again portrayed in Die Novella as a source of (some) sound theology and a source of hope (chapter 8, IIIh - page 270).

Some of Luther’s ideas, however, remained unacceptable to Gengenbach - particularly on the question of good works. Kurze Antwort (chapter 8, IIIg - page 268) is a pamphlet that neatly illustrates both Gengenbach’s agreement and disagreement with Luther. This pamphlet attacks the un-Christian behaviour of the closed orders, a common complaint of all reformers, but the attack is based on the failure of monks and nuns to engage in practical good works.

Even though Gengenbach came to accept that the Church would not be refomed by the papacy or the Emperor he vacillated about any alternative. In this he was quite typical. He could see strengths and weaknesses in the Church and also in the arguments of the reformers. Various of the cross-currents found expression in his writing and the work he published. The city council’s position was very similar in its practice, whether through collective conviction of men like Gengenbach or through political prudence (carefully selecting the fights it could win), or through a combination of the two (chapter 7, I - pge 203; chapter 8, Ia - page 234). Whether it is appropriate to describe Gengenbach as an
apologist for the council is problematic. He did not always agree with them: while not directly attacking the alliance with France in 1516, for example, he made his support of the Emperor very obvious (chapter 6, Ia - page 160). A printer motivated solely by profit would have been unlikely to take risks either with the authorities or with his customers and would have printed only highly conformist material. Although Gengenbach occupied the political ‘centre’ ground his views were not always comfortable.

While his condemnations of disobedience (chapter 2, V - page 59; chapter 3, III - page 75) served to support the authority of the council, his conformism by the 1520's did not extend to the authority of the Church. Gengenbach’s concern for the poor drove him to open dissent as he attacked the Church’s failure to serve their needs. The last publications are dominated by this theme (chapter 8, III and IV- pages 248-276). It is not clear from his writing what he thought would solve the problems of the poor. The municipalisation of poor relief is raised in Drei Christen for example (chapter 8, IIIa - page 259), but in Die Totenfresser (chapter 7, IVd - page 225) and in Anzeigung (chapter 8, IIIe - page 267) he appeared rather to treat poor relief as a duty of the Church and the nobility.

Whereas he did not print the work of the radicals he was nevertheless publicly critical of the greed of priests and their collective failure to do their jobs. In doing so he took risks - Die Totenfresser was a bold step into the theatrical and political unknown, the act of an ideological man. Debate about the collapse of Christian morality and the descent of the Catholic Church into endemic venality was not new; it was widely recognised within the Church itself: ‘Throughout the later Middle Ages the call for reform and renewal was near universal in Europe [...]’.1 The Church’s failure had political as well as religious consequences which Sebastian Brant had understood and brilliantly communicated to a mass audience, and his work heavily influenced Gengenbach (chapter 5, IIIa and IIIb - pages 135-138).

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Gengenbach's arrest and imprisonment on 1 January 1522 for shouting insults in the street about the Emperor, the King of France and the Pope was symbolic of the political tensions within his work. On the one hand, he knew that political security was such an important matter for the city and he had shown a great deal of concern about anything that was perceived as a threat to unity and stability: the need for obedience and loyalty was overriding. Yet, on the other hand, here was Gengenbach himself getting put in jail for politically disruptive behaviour.

Similar tensions can be seen in other political positions that he took. While Gengenbach did not disagree in *Der Bundschuh* with the execution of peasant revolutionaries from the neighbouring Breisgau (chapter 2, VI - page 62), he was opposed to tyranny and arbitrary rule. He took pride that the Swiss were not subjects of a monarch in *Der Nollhart*, for example (chapter 5, IIA - page 128). There is another example of these tensions in his views about the mercenary activity of thousands of Swiss soldiers, *Reisläuferei*. While he was proud of Swiss military successes he saw war as a source of division because of the inevitable corruption and treachery by political leaders, and a source of personal tragedy and suffering. In *Alt Eygdnosz* (chapter 3, II - page 71) the opposing positions are expressed by the young Swiss who wants the excitement and rewards of war, while the old man warns of the widows and orphans who will mourn.²

A final example of political tension to be found in his work is in the attitudes towards the Turks. In *Der Nollhart* (chapter 5, IIIc - page 138) and in *Anzeigung* (chapter 8, IIIe - page 267) the Turks were a heathen horde, whereas in *Drei Christen* they are more civilised in their government and religious practice than the Catholic Church (chapter 8, IIId). The fact is that both attitudes were ‘true’ at the time - the Turks were both feared as a conquering horde and yet in some circles their tolerance and skills in government were admired.

² It is interesting that the disastrous Swiss defeat at Bicocca in April 1522, while they were fighting on the side of the French against the Emperor, does not appear to have influenced any of Gengenbach's writing or publications.
Gengenbach’s attitude to the Reformation and the reformers has been a constant theme in commentary on his work. It was proposed in the Introduction (IIe - page 20) that Gengenbach was hardly the ‘zealous convert’ to the cause of reform that Ozment and other commentators portray.³ It has been argued here that he had not yet chosen which ‘side’ he was on, that after all the sides were only just starting to be drawn up and neither had very many others made an irrevocable choice. The council in Basel only succumbed to pressure and reformed the city’s constitution in 1529 when many Catholics like Erasmus decided to leave. Gengenbach, like Frederick the Wise, was already long dead, dead even before the defining events of the Peasants’ War reached their climax in the aftermath of Frankenhausen. Frederick the Wise died on 5 May 1525. Gengenbach’s executor, Heinrich Grebly, was appointed on 26 May 1525, the day before Thomas Müntzer’s execution.

He may not have chosen to side with the reformers, but whatever his intentions, many of Gengenbach’s publications questioned the traditional teaching of the Church and de facto contributed to weakening orthodox religion and to strengthening reforming ideas. Because disobedience concerned him greatly it is hard to believe that he was not acutely aware of the implications of his printing. With his conviction as to the need for the Church to change, Gengenbach’s ideas had shifted from religious orthodoxy towards the reformers.

Orthodox Catholics regarded the Peasants’ War as a confirmation of the threat to society posed by Luther and the reformers, an argument with which Gengenbach in Klagliches Gespräch (1522) showed considerable sympathy (chapter 8, IIIa - page 249). Ideas on church reform could be found circulating in the peasant manifestos, helping provide the peasants with an ideological framework for their movement. The Peasants’ War must have represented to Gengenbach the apocalyptic catastrophe that he and so many commentators had foreseen and warned about (especially chapter 6, IV - page 191). The

³ Ozment, Reformation, p.90.
War was not just one more localised *Bundschuh* rising, but involved armies of several thousands assembling across southern and central Germany, the biggest of which was more than 15,000 strong. They confiscated Church estates, sacked monasteries, assaulted castles and fought pitched battles. The War represented a social crisis of a depth that made it comparable with 1848.

The War had a dramatic effect on Luther, who was horrified that his ideas had been used to justify rebellion. On their side the peasants did not doubt Luther, proposing him as a mediator with the princes, but he not only rejected them, he went out of his way to condemn them, calling literally for a bloodbath to purge them of their disobedience.

Basel council’s reaction was far more measured. In the past, both the city council and Gengenbach had hedged their response to calls for change (chapter 7, I - page 203 - and chapter 8, I - page 234) and in 1525 the council did so again. While opposed to the risings it made relatively conciliatory responses to the demands of the local peasants who marched on the city. The council took a tougher line towards its own rioting citizens, throwing various dissidents into prison while quickly conceding to the popular movement a further reduction in Church power. Clerical privileges were abolished and the takeover of monastic institutions began as part of the municipalisation of poor relief. The council’s cautious actions down the road of reform conformed with Gengenbach’s last published ideas (chapter 8, III and IV - pages 248-276) and there were no indications that Gengenbach intended to change his close alignment with the council.

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6 The title of Martin Luther's pamphlet gives a flavour of what it contained: Martin Luther, *Wider die räuberischen und mörderischen Rotten der Bauern, WA* 18, pp.357-61.

III. THE WORK AND THE TIMES

It was proposed in the Introduction (IIa - page 12) to show that the study of Gengenbach provided a unique insight into popular issues and problems, and that his publications reflected the 'mood' of the times. The discussion in the two preceding sections about his ideological concerns has shown that the study of Gengenbach inevitably leads to many of the big issues of the period.

Although Gengenbach presents a picture of a man being pushed against his inclination by the progress of religious and social conflicts he was in one vital respect already completely committed to change: he was a printer who was committed to a new, popular market. Right through his career Gengenbach publicised a whole range of political, social and religious questions in as an accessible a way as possible. The majority of Gengenbach's publications were illustrated, short in length and written in verse, with simple rhyming schemes. It was not until 1522, near the end of his life, that Gengenbach published any substantial prose. It was most unusual for him to publish anything of book length, fully bound. His two highest quality publishing projects, the Hortulus Animae (1515 and 1519) and the Erasmus Novum Instrumentum (1522), were both mainstream religious products. In common with other popular printers at the time he aimed to include those who could not read, illustrating his work with woodcuts by talented artists like the Meister DS, Ambrosius Holbein and Urs Graf (though not Hans Holbein who worked for other printers, especially Froben).*

Religion became more and more important to him and his audience, and dominated his publishing in the last half of his working life. The audience across Germany for literature of all kinds rocketed after 1517. Schweizer Bauer (chapter 7, IIa - page 208) and Die Novella (chapter 8, IIlh - page 270) in particular show his engagement in arguments against the Church about the vernacular as a medium for theological texts. These publications defended the right of the gmein man to practise religion in his own

* For a particularly useful discussion on this see: Scribner, For the Sake, pp.1-13, chapter 1, entitled 'Printing, Prints and Propaganda'.
language. Printing made this a realistic possibility for the first time. Many believed that
the incompetence of the clergy meant that they had no innate superiority to interpret
God’s will: the layman - and maybe even the laywoman in Kurze Antwort (chapter 8, IIIg
- page 268) - could make a go of it themselves if necessary.

Over half of Gengenbach’s output as a writer and printer was designed to serve the
spiritual needs of his buyers. In the first part of his working life, the religious output
could be described as ‘devotional’, designed to assist the faithful to follow the teachings
of the Church. Much of it was unremarkable and could have been printed by any number
of local workshops. These publications include the two editions of his Hortulus Animae
and at the other end of the printer’s range from these relatively expensive books stand
such popular items as the single-sheet wall-picture of St. Anna, Darstellung der Anna,
for people to pray to with just a few words below it to meditate over.

After 1517 Gengenbach began to print material that was more theological in content
(chapter 6, IIb - page 172). Whereas the ‘devotional’ expected the reader to remain
intellectually quite passive the later ‘theological’ material was intellectually thought-
provoking, even argumentative. Some of this later material was distinct to Gengenbach.
In addition to his own writing the printing of Eberlin’s Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen
(chapter 7, III - page 216) stands out from the huge mass of contemporary religious
literature.

Gengenbach may well have been better known among his contemporaries for his
astrological publications - which in many people’s minds were also religious literature.
Astrology was of huge popular interest and Gengenbach more than any printer in Basel
responded to the demand (chapter 2, III - page 52; chapter 6, IV - page 191):

In Relation zum übrigen Basler Druckschaffen aber wird deutlich, daß
Gengenbach der wichtigste, ja fast der einzige Basler Drucker ist, in dessen
Verlagsprogramm kurzweilige Texte überhaupt erscheinen [...] Gengenbach
allein kontrolliert in Basel dieses Marktsegment.⁹

He produced at least six calendars, largely astrological in content, along with five

Prognosticons, three of which he wrote himself. This is not surprising - with lots of pictures calendars were just the thing for a popular audience (chapter 2, IIIa - page 54). Hans Koegler believed that Gengenbach was the only printer of the longer book-calendars: ‘Kalender in Buchform hat meines Wissens in Basel [...] nur Pamphilus Gengenbach gedruckt.’

Printing in the vernacular for a popular market was new and so a lot of the material produced was quite different from the traditional classical and religious items demanded by the humanist market. A distinctive and innovative development were ‘Zeitungen’, relatively short pieces that reported on major current affairs issues. Gengenbach produced them throughout his life and his publications include: Adda-Schlacht (a battle poem), Der Bundschuh (a report on a civil conflict), Bettlerorden (a commentary on beggary), Empfang (about diplomatic meetings and alliances), Ciolek Oratio (a diplomatic speech), Verhörung Luthers (a report about the Diet of Worms), Lannoy (reporting New World discoveries), and Mönchskalb (a feature on the bizarre). Together with the more general pieces on moral decline and the pending apocalypse, good government, and the defeat of the Turks, a good part of Gengenbach’s work reads like a list of articles from a newspaper or news magazine - but spread over 12 years. In this he was quite distinctive in relation to other local printers. Prietzel categorised some of Gengenbach’s work as ‘Historisches Tagesschriftum’, which encompasses these Zeitungen. In her comparison between Gengenbach’s output and that of other printers in Basel she says:

[...] so ist deutlich, daß Pamphilus Gengenbach allein zwischen 1511 und 1524 ungefähr die gleiche Anzahl von Drucken veröffentlicht, die als historisches Tagesschriftum bezeichnet werden können, wie alle übrigen Baseler Drucker zusammen im gesamten Untersuchungszeitraum von 1501 bis 1525.

Doris Stoll’s study of the printer Nikolaus Schreiber from Cologne details a long list of articles - Zeitungen - that he produced over thirty-five years, 1563 to 1598, which were

10 Koegler, p.154.
11 Prietzel, AGB, p.335.

It is apparent that Gengenbach was at an earlier point in the development of this form of popular literature, which were to become the regular monthly and weekly newspapers that first began to appear in Germany and Switzerland at the start of the seventeenth century.

As a popular printer Gengenbach produced a lot of things that treated individually could hardly be described as ideological or as historically significant. He may not have been a simply commercial printer, but he had to make a living and with calendars he occupied a non-ideological niche in the market. His work provides insights into the way the popular market was developing. Another area of popular print that Gengenbach made his own in Basel were the pamphlets of popular knowledge that he published - Fachliteratur (chapter 6, IIIc - page 186). This Fachliteratur was lightweight compared to some of the publications that were appearing from other presses: he did not contribute to the proliferation of groundbreaking secular, technical and scientific treatises by scholars like Dürer, Da Vinci, and Paracelsus whose publications were another sign of the changing times. The contrast between the medical works printed by Gengenbach and those printed by Cratander in Basel illustrates the diversity of this new market.

Cratander reproduced classical texts that contributed to the intense debates that were raging on medicine which would have sold to the most highly educated humanists. Cratander was a sophisticated man with close links to the humanist circles in which

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Oecolampadius and Erasmus moved. He printed Luther, Oecolampadius - who largely wrote in Latin at this stage - and, briefly, Karlstadt. With nearly all Cratander’s printing in Latin, very little of his output was in the vernacular for the popular market.\textsuperscript{15}

Gengenbach’s publications of \textit{Fachliteratur} reveal a keen interest in medicine. In contrast to Cratander his publications were aimed at ordinary people, a type of do-it-yourself medical books. He published five pamphlets on medical themes, as well as attacking the quack doctor and astrologist Lorenz Fries at length in \textit{Christliche und ware Practica}. One of Gengenbach’s publications was a classic of veterinary medicine that had first appeared in the second quarter of the thirteenth century and which still ran to 25 editions or more by various printers during the sixteenth. Another medical book which was almost as old, \textit{Regiment wider die Pestilenz}, was first published in 1300 and was reprinted by Gengenbach in 1519. It is the only reflection in all of Gengenbach's work of the plague that devastated Basel in 1517 and 1518. With some 2000 people dying in a city of only 7000 inhabitants or so, the personal impact alone on his friends, family and business must have been appalling.\textsuperscript{16}

Besides home tutors, Gengenbach was also interested in more formal education at a popular level. He published a number of school books primarily for sale to students and teachers (chapter 6, IIIb - page 181). The expansion of schooling indicates the wider general impact of humanist ideas in Basel, which was an important centre for the whole of northern Europe.

Gengenbach printed in Latin between 1516 and 1522. Alongside the schoolbooks these

\textsuperscript{15} See table 2 in chapter 1 (page 43).

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Felix Platter: Beschreibung der Stadt Basel 1610 und Pest Bericht 1610/11}, ed. by Valentin Lötacher (Basel & Stuttgart: Schwabe, 1987), pp.74-76. Bietenholz quotes sources that put the population of Basel just before the plague higher at 10,000: Peter G. Bietenholz, ‘Édition et Réforme à Bâle’, in \textit{La Réforme et le livre: l'Europe de l'imprimerie 1517-v.1570}, ed. by Jean-Francois Gilmont (Paris: editions du CERF, 1990), pp. 239-268, p.239. In Gengenbach’s younger days the plague of 1502 claimed 5,000 dead, which was over half the city’s population.
publications also included some political and religious material, of which the Erasmus *Novum Instrumentum* was particularly significant. Contrary to wider trends, the proportion of Gengenbach’s Latin printing increased for a time (chapter 6, IIIa - page 180). Until 1517 he had only printed one item in Latin, but between 1517 and 1519 his output of Latin works exceeded his vernacular output. It dropped to zero in 1521 and in the final three years of his life all his output was in the vernacular again, after producing just three more Latin works during 1522. That Gengenbach was able to print in Latin suggests that he had acquired a reasonable proficiency in it, which was unusual and impressive for a man without an academic education.

That some of Gengenbach’s Latin publications were theological - by Luther and Murner in particular - suggests that Gengenbach was briefly drawn into the ‘higher’, more intellectual levels of the Reformation debates possibly through contact with Wolfgang Capito (chapter 6, IIId - page 178). Most humanists strongly disapproved of the use of the vernacular; although a few like Ulrich von Hutten changed their position on the question and it is interesting that two of Hutten’s works were published by Gengenbach (chapter 6, Ic - page 166). All the indications are that Gengenbach had little to do with Basel’s humanist circles. With the exception of that mention by Anton Koberger to Amerbach back in 1499 (chapter 1, la - page 29) Gengenbach’s name is missing from the large quantity of surviving correspondence between humanists, unlike that of his more illustrious colleague Froben.

Prietzel’s analysis of the margin notes made by readers of Gengenbach’s publications found that a significant percentage of these notes were written in Latin even if they were reading something printed in the vernacular. Margin notes are associated with academic readers so this result comes as little surprise. What was more surprising was that there were a lot of margin notes written in German - by people who presumably had no academic training - but who were interested and involved in what they were reading.¹⁷

Most commentaries on printing during this period have been bibliographical, concerned with the provenance of the material printed rather than the ideas of the individuals who did the printing. Not much work has been done to differentiate in any detailed way between the output of individual printers, and to compare those who printed popular material and those who did not. Prietzel’s work on Gengenbach and his fellow printers in Basel is an outstanding exception. Just who the popular printers were in Germany and what common characteristics they may or may not have shared is an investigation yet to be completed.

Prietzel’s exhaustive work has shown that Gengenbach was unique among the printers in Basel. He was in the forefront of producing work in the vernacular in Basel (90 out of his 118 publications - 76.3%, which was 70.6% of the total number of pages that he set for printing), while Adam Petri was the only other Basel printer to have even got near 50%. Gengenbach’s overwhelming focus on the popular market and his engagement in current affairs meant that he dominated certain parts of the market (Zeitungen, astrological material and calendars, and Fachliteratur). A few other printers in Basel showed an occasional interest in this kind of material - Furter and Petri, for example - but none did so consistently. This section explores whether there were other printers like Gengenbach elsewhere in Germany before 1525.

a. Lutheran Printers
Luther grasped the power of printing and is credited with taking the Word of God to millions of new readers with his translation of the bible. He also sold millions of theological pamphlets and books (chapter 1, IIa - page 37; and chapter 7, I - page 203). In order to find popular printers to compare with Gengenbach, an obvious group to look among are those who helped Luther and the reformers achieve this level of popularity. In fact the most important Lutheran printers could not necessarily be described as popular printers in the same vein as Gengenbach. Outside of Wittenberg Petri in Basel and

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Amandus Farkall in Colmar are perhaps representative of these men and they printed for a generally more intellectual and educated market than Gengenbach: their work had fewer crucial popular ingredients such as verse, humour, drama, the vernacular, and brevity.

Karlstadt was the most widely read reformer after Luther and his radical theology appealed to the poorer handcraft workers, peasants and the labouring classes. Even the men who printed him in Basel - Cratander, Wolff and Bebel - were not necessarily oriented on the popular market in the same way as Gengenbach. Cratander continued to produce classical and other humanist texts, as has been noted already, and so too did Wolff and Bebel. (Gengenbach himself printed only one edition of Karlstadt’s early work, in 1518, and never printed any of the other theological radicals.) Outside Basel some of Karlstadt’s printers were focussed on more popular markets. Philipp Ulhart of Augsburg, for example, was more radical than Gengenbach and printed work by Argula von Grumbach, one of the best known women writers of the Reformation, as well as Karlstadt, Zwingli and Leo Jud. Ulhart has been identified as the printer of an Anabaptist tract, Aufdeckung der Babylonischen Hurn, which appeared as late as the early 1530’s. His output of 191 editions in just six years was high, and none were in Latin.

b. The men who reprinted Gengenbach

It is interesting that quite a number of men who printed Karlstadt also printed pieces by Gengenbach, particularly in cities in southern Germany (Appendix B - page 312). They


20 For more about her: Argula von Grumbach, ed. by Peter Matheson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995).

21 Stayer, pp. 119-20.

22 Karl Schottenloher, Philipp Ulhart: ein Augsburger Winkeldrucker und Helferhelfer der ‘Schwärmer’ und ‘Wiedertauffer’ 1523-1529 (Munich and Freising: Datterer, 1921).
include Prüß, Maler, Nadler, Stürmer, Schönsperger, Hölzel, Ramminger, Steiner, and Flach. There is no evidence of any sort of fraternity or links between them, nor is it known how they selected work to print. Printers were already meeting at the Frankfurt fair, although the book fair had not yet been established. Within humanist circles connections could be established through correspondence, otherwise distribution outside the printer's home-town was largely dependent on wandering pedlars.

There are two printers on the list of those that printed Gengenbach who did not print Karlstadt and they seem closest to Gengenbach, Hans von Erfurt in Stuttgart and the Munich printer, Hans Schobser. There is a third name of interest on the list, Johannes Weißenberger, who reprinted *Adda-Schlacht* and who has been the subject of one of the most recent long articles on an individual printer. He was a priest and printed a piece by Hus as well as three editions of Pfefferkorn, but his printing career ended after he got into conflict with Nuremberg's city council and left the city in 1513.

Hans von Erfurt, who reprinted Gengenbach's *Klägliches Gespräch* in 1522, produced approximately the same proportion of Latin to vernacular work as Gengenbach (fourteen out of fifty-eight publications). The ideological breadth of his printing was unusually wide. He was more deeply involved in publishing contentious works than Gengenbach, not only printing Charles V's edict at Worms against Luther and a great deal of Luther himself, but also printing one of the peasant manifestos of the Peasants' War and a pamphlet by Argula von Grumbach. In common with Gengenbach and unlike most other printers, he printed a theological work by a Catholic controversialist, printing Johann

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23 There is a discussion of developments in Germany in: Lefebvre and Martin, pp.216-47, chapter 7, 'The Book Trade'. They report that a joint catalogue of books from printers in Nuremberg and Basel was compiled by Albrecht of Memmingen as early as 1500 (p.231).


Cochlaeus, (the most popular of all of them) as late as 1524.\(^\text{26}\)

Hans Schobser reproduced two of Gengenbach's works, *X Alter* and *Practica deutsch*, and just like Gengenbach he printed some early Luther together with a variety of other theological material. He actually printed more in the vernacular than Gengenbach, only producing two publications in Latin, both by Johannes Aventinus.\(^\text{27}\) Schottenloher could have been writing about Gengenbach when he wrote of Schobser:

> Sein Lager setzte sich in der Hauptsache aus Kalendern, Ablassbriefen, Volksliedern, geistlichen und weltlichen Lehrgedichten, Gebeten, neuen Zeitungen, astronomischen und wetterkundlichen Schriften zusammen.\(^\text{28}\)

Unlike Gengenbach, Schobser lived through the crisis of 1525 and he opted to support the Catholic Church against the reform movement:

> Seit dem Jahre 1524 aber stellte sich Schobser entsprechend der Richtung des bayrischen Hofes ausschließlich in den Dienst des Kampfes gegen die neue Lehre; vor allem sind die zahlreichen deutschen Verteidigungsschriften des Münchner Franziskaners Kasper Schatzger fast alle aus seiner Werkstätte hervorgegangen.\(^\text{29}\)

Like Thomas Murner, Schatzger (or 'Schatzgeyer') was a Franciscan and a Catholic controversialist writing in German who was critical of the papacy. Munich at this time was not a tolerant city like Basel. Political power was in the hands of the Catholic Duke of Bavaria who was not prepared to entertain ideas of reform. Schobser opted to support him. There is no reason to believe that Gengenbach would not have similarly continued to support the ruling party in Basel. Interestingly, after his death Gengenbach's printing


\(^\text{27}\) Johannes Aventinus was a prominent Bavarian humanist historian who was fiercely critical of the papacy, but who, like Erasmus, remained a Catholic: Kurt Stadtwald, *Roman Popes and German Patriots: Antipapalism in the Politics of the German Humanist Movement from Gregor Heimburg to Martin Luther* (Geneva: Droz, 1996), pp.137-151.


press was taken over until 1529 by Hans von Jülich, who supported the Catholic cause.

There is a fourth printer of interest, Jakob Cammerlander, but strictly speaking he is outside consideration here as he worked in Strassburg after Gengenbach’s death, from 1531.\(^{30}\) Two other famous popular printers from Strassburg who were contemporaries of Gengenbach’s, Johann Grüninger\(^{31}\) and Johann Knobloch, did not print anything of his. They both printed Brant’s work, among others.

c. Other printer-writers: Köbel and Folz

Gengenbach was special in that he was a popular printer and a writer. There were arguably only two other men before 1525 who belong in this category, Jakob Köbel from Oppenheim and Hans Folz from Nuremberg.\(^{32}\)

Köbel wrote ten items, mainly Fachliteratur - works of mathematics, geometry, astronomy and law - as well as publishing calendars and astrological work. He printed Hutten and, like Gengenbach, reprinted two of Luther’s early works and then nothing subsequently. Benzing describes his attitude to the Reformation as ‘Umstritten und oft diskutiert’.\(^{33}\) Also like Gengenbach he reprinted works by well-known Protestants - in his case Melanchthon and Hans Sachs - as well as one by a Catholic preacher, Friedrich Nausen. Köbel did not print anything by Gengenbach and Gengenbach likewise printed

\(^{30}\) He reprinted Der Nollhart, Ulrich von Hutten, Sebastian Brant, Lorenz Fries, and work by Niklaus Manuel and Utz Eckstein - these latter both writers of politische moralitaten. Cammerlander printed lots of prognosticons and practicas and only 11 of his 141 publications were in Latin: Josef Benzing, Die Drucke Jakob Cammerlanders zu Strassburg 1531-1548 (Vienna, Bad Bocklet and Zurich: Krieg, 1963).

\(^{31}\) Flood, ‘The Printed Book’, pp. 180-82. Flood illustrates the wide range of Grüninger’s output, which totalled some 500 books between 1482 and 1532, including many popular publications. He remained a firm Catholic.

\(^{32}\) Johann Müller (Regiomontanus) was also a printer-writer 1471-75 as was Johann Schöner 1521-23, but both were more specialised and only active over relatively shorter time spans, producing far smaller numbers of editions.

nothing of his.

Last and most interesting of all was Hans Folz who was active before Gengenbach began his career and died in 1513. They had much in common. First, he was an important dramatist: Folz wrote *Fastnachtspiele* and was one of the leading exponents of the older tradition of plays. Second, he wrote and printed solely for the vernacular market, which was remarkable considering that he began in the mid-1470’s, over thirty years earlier than Gengenbach and only shortly after the first press was set up in Nuremberg in 1470. He began printing in 1479, and although he finished printing in 1488 he continued to write afterwards, with fifteen more editions of his work appearing, produced by other printers in Nuremberg. Why he stopped printing is not known. He was really a barber by profession not a printer. He only printed his own work and Rautenberg thinks he may have done so partly to make sure that he got paid for it. Flood suggests he did it because: ‘(he) probably considered printing an intriguing new craft with which he [...] was curious enough to want to experiment.’

Third, Folz was also a pioneer populariser who made a major contribution to pushing the market outwards, and around 1480 all sorts of new types of popular publication make their first appearances. Spriewald describes some of the innovations that Folz helped introduce:

> Im Zuge dieser Veränderungen entwickelte und verstärkte sich auch frühzeitig der Typus der Flugschrift und des Flugblattes, d.h. (broschüreartigen) Kleindrucks in

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34 The twelve known plays are published in Keller, *Fastnachtspiele*.


37 Rautenberg, pp.33-36.

His range of writing was close to Gengenbach's, but his output was larger: in his nine years of printing he published forty-one items, and over his life wrote a total of sixty-four known works. Folz, who was a _Wundarzt_ like many barbers, shared an interest with Gengenbach in publishing medical literature. As well as such _Fachliteratur_, he wrote on religion, morality and politics, telling salutary tales in the form of _Sprüche_ and _Reimpaardichte_ - poems - and _Meisterlieder_ (which form a larger part of his work than of Gengenbach's). His political writing included anti-Semitic pieces such as the poem _Der falsche Messias_ and the anti-Semitic play _Ein Spil von dem Herzogen von Burgund_, whose role has already been noted (chapter 5, IIId - page 141). Like Gengenbach his ideas were close to those of the city’s ruling group.

Gengenbach and Folz are linked by their significant contributions to the development of popular literature and their carnival plays had a major impact on the genre; but despite their similarities there is no evidence of Folz having any direct influence on Gengenbach. It is quite possible that Gengenbach saw some of Folz’s plays in Nuremberg when he was working at Koberger’s workshop and perhaps the carnival play _Die Liebesnarren_ (chapter 4, II - page 105) provided an idea for _Die Gouchmat_, but no significance can be drawn from any such points of contact. Gengenbach printed nothing of Folz’s.

### V. THE WRITER

#### a. Principal influences

Folz may not have been a major influence, but the investigation into authors who influenced Gengenbach proposed in the Introduction, IIId (page 20) has thrown up several names. It was argued in chapter 2 that one of the earliest and most important influences

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39 Spriewald, p.58.

40 Spriewald, pp.87-103.
was Sebastian Brant and that they shared many ideas about their world. The figure of Erasmus, whose intellect dominated Basel, has moved in and out of the narrative, as has Luther. Gengenbach shared with Erasmus an admiration for simple piety and the rejection of a Church obsessed with the material world, while he was unable to embrace Luther’s determination to actually achieve change. Luther featured in Gengenbach’s writing as a source of contradictory ideas, but always as someone to be grappled with and understood (chapter 6, II - page 170; chapter 7, IVe - page 229; and chapter 8, III - page 248). Murner was perhaps a similar figure, but tugging Gengenbach back towards the Church. Murner, like Brant and Erasmus, was critical of the Church but believed Luther to be fundamentally wrong (chapter 4, IIe - page 115; chapter 7, IIe - page 214; and chapter 8, IIIh - page 270).

As a printer Gengenbach knew and worked with Eberlin von Günzburg and Wolfgang Capito, but it is possible that his relationship with them was closer and more significant. Capito’s role was discussed in chapter 6, IId (page 178), and in chapter 7, III (page 216), and Eberlin’s role was examined in the discussion about *Denkspiegel* in chapter 8, IIIc (page 258). Prietzel believes that Gengenbach was especially close to Eberlin, as evidenced by Gengenbach’s long afterword published with *Denkspiegel*. Although Gengenbach may not have known him, Hutten’s ideas for a ‘German’ Church may well have played a part in shaping his ideas (chapter 6, Ic - page 166). Gengenbach’s rejection of Latin and defence of the vernacular need to be understood as a step towards this position.

Gengenbach was not an intellectual and on the historical scale he was a minor literary figure. He wrote about the world he lived in and, unlike more sophisticated writers, provides few problems of artistic interpretation. Generally, his style and choice of material were subject to relatively obvious influences and his ideas were not especially original. Of the circles he moved in very little personal is known except the name of the man who stood surety for his citizenship payment and ten years later at New Year 1522 went to jail with him for abusing those greater than himself - Hans Locherer. Two dimensions of Gengenbach’s written work stood out at the time and continue to be the
focus of interest, his religious writing and his drama. Although the two are treated separately below they are not exclusive categories.

a. The Religious Critic
Gengenbach was at his ideologically most adventurous when considering lay involvement in the Church, in Schweizer Bauer, Drei Christen and in Knüchel. The last work presents real difficulties in attribution, not because it discusses lay involvement with the appointment of priests, but because of the underlying, more radical, implication that under certain circumstances the congregation could legitimately act independently of external authority to appoint their own priest. It is highly unlikely that Gengenbach favoured direct take-over of the appointment of priests by the congregation, and yet he did print Knüchel and, unlike Evangelischer Bürger, it does not contain a disclaimer in the afterword. Knüchel is consonant with Gengenbach’s other work if we can regard it as a debate about the issues surrounding the choice of priests in the absence of papal authority.

The piece of writing on a purely theological theme that has lasted over time is Die Novella. Praised by critics now, it was successful enough to go to a second edition in 1523, but no further. In the form of a dramatic dialogue it was one of his easiest and most attractive theological pieces and the only one to use humour (not counting the savage satire of Die Totenfresser). This was the work that saw some positive points in Luther and also in Pope Adrian, and treated Murner as an almost friendly sparring partner. It cannot have always been easy for Gengenbach to pick his critical way between the demands for allegiance from the Church and from the reformers.

The list of his work that was reprinted by other printers during Gengenbach’s lifetime shows that his writing on religious themes had the biggest impact amongst his contemporaries, most notably the outstanding success of the eight German editions of Klägliches Gespräch which was also the only work translated into another language. Altogether Gengenbach’s work was reprinted in eight other cities across southern Germany at some point or another during his lifetime. Augsburg’s printers reprinted
significantly more than anywhere else, reprinting no less than fifteen of his works between 1514 and 1522 and publishing them almost simultaneously with his own. The next most important city after Augsburg was Strassburg, the market centre for the whole upper Rhine, which saw five reprints spread between 1514 and 1522. Gengenbach does not appear to have developed a relationship with any particular printer as none of them reprinted more than one or two of his works and each only did so for just a closely concentrated time period.

b. The Dramatist

After his death Gengenbach’s work appeared over a wider geographical area, penetrating from Switzerland as far north as Cologne, but interest in his theological publications ceased. Of the thirty-three reprints that appeared in his lifetime, seventeen were on religious themes, while not one of the twenty-five reprints that appeared after 1525 was. They were all plays or dramatic poems. The reprinting of Alter accounts for seventeen of the twenty-five, of which sixteen were the Jörg Wickram reworking of the play. These statistics support the idea that Gengenbach’s more lasting works were his secular plays and dramatic dialogues.

Gengenbach was the writer who pioneered the use of theatre in Germany to present practical political and religious concerns and arguments rather than abstract moral dilemmas. More than anything else, this has been Gengenbach’s modest contribution to European literature. His Fastnachtspiele and his dramatic dialogues comprise the bulk of a new sub-genre, the politische Moralitäten (chapter 3, VI page 88). These plays not only brought current affairs to the stage, but they also brought a classical and theological dimension into popular entertainment - high culture leavening the low:

41 Künstl analysed two major Augsburg libraries and found that between 1510 and 1525 (Gengenbach’s working life) Basel’s printers supplied them with more books than those from any other city, including even Augsburg itself: Künstl, pp. 175-77.

42 See appendix B for a full list.
Gengenbach succeeded, in the short space of five years, in indicating the possibilities of a new art-form combining the spirit of the people and the greater refinement of the study.\textsuperscript{43}

In doing so he was responding to the social changes and ideological upheavals of the immediate pre-Reformation period.

The dramatic pieces were all relatively short. The longest play was \textit{Der Nollhart}, which is 1,495 lines long. The dramatic dialogue, \textit{Die Novella}, was over a thousand lines, while the other dramatic pieces were all less than a thousand. There is some argument about which of them should be recognised as carnival plays: only \textit{X Alter}, \textit{Der Nollhart}, and \textit{die Gouchmat} are undisputed. They all share certain characteristics: they are in verse, involving more than one voice; they would have been suitable for sung or spoken performance; and they focus on topical issues of social or political interest. The poetic structure is designed for a popular audience - much easier to speak aloud and for the listener to follow. Almost every year from 1513 until 1523 Gengenbach appears to have produced at least one such dramatic verse piece. The \textit{Fastnacht} period was the most likely time that these would have been performed.\textsuperscript{44}

The language used in all of Gengenbach’s writing and printing was not simply the local dialect argues Baechtold:

\begin{quote}
Gengenbachs, des Volkschriftstellers Schriftdialet ist von Formen der Basler Volksmundart durchsetzt, sucht sich indes allmählich dem Gebiete der gemeindeutschen Schriftsprache, welche die Reformation in Basel einbürgerte, zu nähern.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{43} Van Abbé, \textit{Development}, p.62

\textsuperscript{44} A possible sequence could have been: \textit{Welsch flusz} (1513), \textit{Alt Eygenosz} (1514), \textit{X Alter} (1515), \textit{Fünf Juden} (1516), \textit{Der Nollhart} (1517), \textit{Die Gouchmat} (1519), \textit{Bockspyl} (1520), \textit{Die Totenfresser} (1522), \textit{Die Novella} and \textit{Mönchskalb} (1523). \textit{Bettlerorden} (1512) could have been performed by different voices and \textit{Klägliches Gespräch} (1523) has separate speaking parts although it is written down as continuous prose. There are two gaps: 1518 - but because of the plague Fastnacht may have been banned - and 1521, the Spring of political crisis. The \textit{Meisterlied, Tod, Teufel and Engel} is undated and could fit into one of these dates.

\textsuperscript{45} Baechtold, \textit{Geschichte}, p.282.
Moser echoes this view which suggests that Gengenbach had his eye on a wider market than just Basel. This reflected a wider trend across Germany, as printers sought to make their publications as widely marketable as possible. How far afield Gengenbach sold his own printed editions is not known. During his lifetime no-one else in Switzerland reprinted his work, whereas after his death a he was re-published in Basel itself, Mühlhausen, Zurich and Berne. It is conjecture to conclude from this that Gengenbach was distributing and selling his publications in other cities of the Confederacy. Prietzel found some hard evidence that Gengenbach gained access to wider markets when she discovered a letter from Cochlaeus to Aleander that notes that an edition of Eberlin's *Die Fünfzehn Bundgenossen* published by Gengenbach was on sale at the Frankfurt fair in Autumn 1521.

There is a vast gulf between the quality of Gengenbach's drama and his contemporary, Machiavelli, let alone Shakespeare, Cervantes or da Vega eighty years later. Gengenbach's most complex and advanced piece was *Der Nollhart* which attempted to deal with a wide range of political and religious ideas, but remained devoid of much plot or interaction (chapter 5, V - page 152) and it is not now performed. The historically significant *Die Totenfresser* is a far cruder, more polemical piece, whose subject matter remains somewhat relevant, with its vivid, shocking image of clergy picking over a corpse. Ironically, the play that has suffered least from the passage of time is the most traditional, *Die Gouchmat*, which deals with love and sex. Carnival plays as a genre,

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46 Virgil Moser, *Historisch-Grammatische Einführung in die frühneuhochdeutschen Schriftidialekt* (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1909), p.33. He says: 'Während er sich in ersterer eigenschaft durchaus der Alemannischen schriftsprache bediente, zeigen die drucke seiner werke das eindringen gemeindeutscher laute: Neue diphthonge erscheinen vereinzelt 1513 und 1514, häufig sind sie seit 1517 (doch überall meist auf die einsilbigen wörter beschränkt); sonst zeigen sich aber überall die Baslischen züge.'


however, could not survive the Reformation, which was shortly to suppress them and the popular pre-Lenten celebrations that gave them life.
APPENDIX A: WORKS PRINTED BY PAMPHILUS GENGENBACH
IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

The attribution and numbering are after Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.266-98. The short title used in this dissertation is in brackets and a brief designation of each publication is also given. Prietzel’s attribution to Gengenbach of three works is queried in the relevant section of this dissertation: number 94 (chapter 7, IIb); number 101 (chapter 8, IIIb); and number 107 (chapter 8, IIIf).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1511/12</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td><em>Von dem heiligen Sakrament ein hübsches Lied</em> [...]. Religious song/hymn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1511/12</td>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td>[H] (D)as ist das war gebäth das der bapst Alexander der sächste mit sinen henden hat zü Rom angeschlagé [...]. (Anna selbstdritt-blatt). Large religious picture with a short prayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1513</td>
<td>Conrad Dangrotzheim</td>
<td><em>Das helgen Namenbuch</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>end 1513</td>
<td>Pamphilus Gengenbach</td>
<td><em>Der welsch Flusz</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>start 1514</td>
<td>14. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Der bundtschu</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Der Bundschuh). Discussion in poetry and prose of the peasants’ rising of 1513.*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soon after</td>
<td>16. (Kalender).</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.2.1514</td>
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<td>Apr.-July 1514</td>
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<td>Aug.1515</td>
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<td>1515</td>
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<tr>
<td>1516:</td>
<td>22. (Kalender).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1517:</td>
<td>27. Pamphilus Gengenbach, <em>Der Nollhart</em> // Religious/political carnival play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early 1517</td>
<td>28. Pamphilus Gengenbach, <em>Der Nollhart</em> // 2nd edn. of no. 27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1517</td>
<td>31. Luigi Marliani, <em>[...] Oratio in comitijs ordinis Aurei</em> // <em>(Oratio)</em>. Praise for the man who became Charles V.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1517</td>
<td>33. Elisio Calenzio, <em>[...] De bello Ranarum</em> // Latin retelling of Horace’s War of the frogs.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author/Title</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.1.1518</td>
<td>35. Nilus, [...] Sentétiae morales e grç</td>
<td>co in latinum versae.</td>
<td>2nd edn. of no.34.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.2.1518</td>
<td>37. Anon., OMNIA QVE GESTA SVNT IN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oriëte inter Sophi &amp; Maximum Turcarum &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb.-Aug.1518</td>
<td>39. Martin Luther, (E)Jn Sermon oder Predig</td>
<td></td>
<td>von dem ablasz und gnade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr.-Aug.1518</td>
<td>41. Martin Luther, SERmo de Pe=</td>
<td></td>
<td>nitentia P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr.-Aug.1518</td>
<td>42. Martin Luther, SERmo de Pe=</td>
<td></td>
<td>nitentia P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.1518</td>
<td>43. Johannes Wildenauer, Apologetica responsio</td>
<td></td>
<td>A Lutheran work with a foreword by Luther.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.-Sep.1518</td>
<td>44. Andreas Bodentstein, Contra D.Joannë</td>
<td></td>
<td>Eckiū Ingolstadiensem [...] Apolo=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after 31.8.1518</td>
<td>45. Erasmus Ciolek, Oratio per R. Patrem</td>
<td></td>
<td>[...] in celeberrimo Augusteñì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>after early 1517-1518</td>
<td>47. Anon., *Ein hübsch lied: das man</td>
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<tr>
<td>1519:</td>
<td>early 1519</td>
<td>49. Pamphilus Gengenbach, <em>Disz ist die gouch</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jan.-Jun. 1519</td>
<td>51. Anon., <em>Modus eligendi</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mid 1519</td>
<td>52. Dr. Cobola, *(F)uit inuentum in quodā co=</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Work Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>1520:</td>
<td>Pamphilus Gengenbach</td>
<td><em>Pamphilus Gengenbach zu dé aller groszmachtigsten kúng karle</em> [...], <em>Wiener Prognosticon</em>.</td>
<td>Political prophecy based on an astrological event in January 1520.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pamphilus Gengenbach zu dé aller groszmachtigsten kúng karle</td>
<td><em>Wiener Prognosticon</em>.</td>
<td>Political prophecy based on an astrological event in January 1520.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pamphilus Gengenbach</td>
<td><em>Hie merkent wie das loblich hausz Osterich an den edlen grafen von Hapksburg ist kummen</em>.</td>
<td>One page political history with large woodcut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erasmus</td>
<td><em>Familiarium col=<em>LOQUIORUM FORMV=</em>=LAE.</em>* (Familiarium).</td>
<td>Latin adages - schoolbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erasmus</td>
<td><em>Familiarium col=<em>LOQUIORUM FORMV=</em>=LAE.</em>* (Familiarium).</td>
<td>Latin adages - schoolbook.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Erasmus</td>
<td><em>Familiarium col=<em>LOQUIORUM FORMV=</em>=LAE.</em>* (Familiarium).</td>
<td>Latin adages - schoolbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ulrich von Hutten</td>
<td><em>Trias Romana</em>.</td>
<td>Political poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meister Albrant</td>
<td><em>Rosz Artzney</em>.</td>
<td>Pamphlet about horse doctoring.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Meister Albrant</td>
<td><em>Rosz Artzney</em>.</td>
<td>Pamphlet about horse doctoring.</td>
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<td>(Kalender)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 1521</td>
<td></td>
<td>70 - 88. Eberlin von Günzburg, *Ei ne klägliche</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1521</td>
<td></td>
<td>89. Anon., *Die siben Al</td>
<td>er / [...].* 2nd edn. of no.59.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1522:</td>
<td>90. Pamphilus Gengenbach, <em>Der gestryfft Schwitzer Baur</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Schweizer Bauer). Theological dialogue about the laity’s right to discuss theology in the vernacular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mid 1522</td>
<td>1521/1522</td>
<td>98. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Dies ist eine jämmerliche Klage über die Totenfresser (Die Totenfresser). Carnival play attacking the venality of the clergy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>end 1522</td>
<td>99. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Ein cleglichs gespräch ge=</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>end 1522</td>
<td>100. Charles de Lannoy, *Translation vsz hi=</td>
<td></td>
<td>spanischer sprach [...]. (Lannoy). Letter/political report from Lannoy to Margaret of Burgundy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>1523:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb.-Aug 1523</td>
<td></td>
<td>103. Anon, *Ein kurzze antwort ei=</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mar.-Aug 1523 |        | 106. Pamphilus Gengenbach, *Disz ist das Monstrum mit
siner vszlegung wie es || zu Fryburg in Myssen erfunden ist
worden / [...].* (Mönchskalb). Poetic parable/dialogue about reform in the Church. |
| June-end 1523 |        | 109. Conradus Gallianus, *Practica teütsch vff das M:||
| June-end 1523 |        | 110. Johannes Mannberger, Joannes Manberger || *Pfarrher
ze Thun Costenzer by||stumbs: vff dê Leimê thurn Gerg
feners von weil; das die mesz ein opffer sy: Antwort. ||
(Antwort auf Georg Fener). Theological discussion from a Catholic position. |
| end 1523    |        | 111. (Wandkalender)                                                  |                                                                            |
|          | 117. Anon., *Der goldene Paradiesapfel. Song about original sin. |
|          | 118. Anon., *Der win schlauch || (Weinschlauch)*. Drinking song. |
APPENDIX B: SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY REPRINTS OF WORKS WRITTEN BY GENGEBNACH BY OTHER PRINTERS

The attribution and numbering are after Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.266-98. They are listed by the short title of Gengenbach’s original used in this dissertation, not the title used by the printer, which was changed in some cases. The dates given are those of publication by that printer.

| Augsburg pre 1525          | Holl    | 98.4 Die Totenfresser [1522 (?)]. |
|                         | Kröll   | 26.1 Gotes Ursprung (1517). |
|                         | Nadler  | 101.1 Evangelischer Bürger (1523/4). |
|                         |         | 101.2 Evangelischer Bürger [1523/4(?)]. |
|                         | Öglin   | 14.1 Der Bundschuh (1514/15) . |
|                         |         | 14.2 Der Bundschuh (1514). |
|                         |         | 53.1 Lied von Carolo (1519). |
|                         | M. Ramminger | 99.3 Klägliches Gespräch (1522). |
|                         |         | 99.4 Klägliches Gespräch (1522). |
|                         | Schönsperger | 18.1 X Alter (before 1518) |
|                         |         | 18.2 X Alter (1518). |
|                         |         | 28.1 Der Nollhart (1517/18). |
|                         |         | 28.2 Der Nollhart (1522). |
|                         | Steiner | 98.1 Die Totenfresser [1522 (?)]. |
|                         |         | 98.2 Die Totenfresser [1522( ?)]. |
| Augsburg post 1525       | M. Ramminger | 117.1 Goldene Paradiesapfel (1530). |
|                         | N. Ramminger | 18.12 X Alter - Wickram edition (1543). |
|                         | Weißenhorn | 18.9 X Alter - Wickram edition (1534). |

| Basel pre 1525          | Apiarius | 18.18 X Alter - Wickram edition [1575 (?)]. |
|                         | Schröter | 18.21 X Alter - Wickram edition (1594). |

| Berne pre 1525          | Apiario  | 17.2 Alt Eydgnosz (1557). |
| Berne post 1525         | Apiario  | 17.2 Alt Eydgnosz (1557). |

<p>| Cologne pre 1525        | Apiarius | 18.18 X Alter - Wickram edition [1575 (?)]. |
| Cologne post 1525       | Nettessem | 18.20 X Alter - Wickram edition (1590). |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year/Edition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erfurt pre 1525</td>
<td>Maler</td>
<td>94.1 Der Laienspiegel (1522).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>99.7 Klägliches Gespräch (1522).</td>
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<td>99.8 Klägliches Gespräch (1522).</td>
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<td>Stürmer</td>
<td>99.6 Klägliches Gespräch (1522).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erfurt post 1525</td>
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<td>Frankfurt post 1525</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memmingen pre 1525</td>
<td>Kunne</td>
<td>18.5 X Alter (1519).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18.6 X Alter (1519).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memmingen post 1525</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mühlhausen pre 1525</td>
<td>Schmid</td>
<td>18.16 X Alter - Wickram edition (1560).</td>
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<td>18.4 X Alter (1518).</td>
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<td>21.1 Practica zu deutsch (1515).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munich post 1525</td>
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<td>Nuremberg pre 1525</td>
<td>Hölzel</td>
<td>4.1 Glücksrad-Blatt (1513/14).</td>
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<td>Weißenburger</td>
<td>2.1 Adda-Schlacht (1511/12)</td>
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<td>Nuremberg post 1525</td>
<td>Gutknecht</td>
<td>18.10 X Alter - Wickram edition (1537).</td>
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<td>18.11 X Alter - Wickram edition (1539).</td>
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<td>115.1 Tod, Teufel und Engel (1560/70).</td>
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<td>Strassburg pre 1525</td>
<td>Flach</td>
<td>21.2 Practica zu deutsch (1515).</td>
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<td>Hüpfuff</td>
<td>10.1 Welsch Flusz (1513-1515).</td>
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<td>14.3 Der Bundschuh (1514/15).</td>
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<td>Prüß</td>
<td>98.3 Die Totenfresser [1522 (?)].</td>
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<td>99.1 Klägliches Gespräch (1522).</td>
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1 The date given by Bezzel is 1509: Bezzel, p.249.
<table>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Author/Title</th>
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| Strassburg post 1525 | Cammerlander 28.4 Der Nollhart (1544).  
                  | 28.5 Der Nollhart (1544/45).  
                  | Fröhlich 18.7 X Alter - Wickram edition (1531/32).  
                  | 18.8 X Alter - Wickram edition (1534)  
                  | Heyden 18.23 X Alter (1622).  
                  | 49.1 Die Gouchmat (1582). |
| Stuttgart post 1525 |                                                                                |
| Tübingen pre 1525 |                                                                                |
| Zurich pre 1525 |                                                                                |
| Zurich post 1525 | Frieß 17.1 Alt Eydgnosz (1546).  
                  | Geßner 17.3 Alt Eydgnosz (1607).                                             |
| Zwickau pre 1525 | Schönsperger/Gastel 101.3 Evangelischer Bürger (1524).                      |
| Zwickau post 1525 |                                                                                |
| France pre 1525 | Unknown 99.9 Klägliches Gespräch (1522).                                    |
| France post 1525 |                                                                                |
| Unknown pre 1525 (German) | Unknown 28.3 Der Nollhart (1525)  
                  | Unknown 99.5 Klägliches Gespräch (1522)                                      |
| Unknown post 1525 (German) | Unknown 18.15 X Alter [1560 (?)].  
                  | 18.25 X Alter (1681)                                                        |
APPENDIX C: ORIGINAL EDITIONS OF WORKS WRITTEN BY GENGENBACH, and SIXTEENTH CENTURY COPIES BY OTHER PRINTERS, IN BRITISH LIBRARIES.

The attribution and numbering are after Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.266-98. The short title is used.

There are 39 different titles in their original version available in a total number of 57 copies printed by Gengenbach in British libraries. 36 of these titles are in the British Library in London. In the case of a further five works that Gengenbach wrote - numbers 14, 15, 18, 98, 99 - there are no examples printed by Gengenbach himself in a British library but there are versions by another printer produced within 5 years of Gengenbach publishing them. There is a partial handwritten version of number 4 in the British Library.

Frequently the bibliographical information listed by the library about each work varies from the information given by Prietzel, *AGB*, pp.266-98, pp.415-31 and in Pegg.

I have listed the editions by library and shelfmarks. For a complete bibliography of other original editions in non-British libraries of work printed by Gengenbach or contemporary printers, see Prietzel’s exhaustive bibliography.

- Where the library has given different publication details from Prietzel these are bracketed immediately prior to the library’s shelfmark.

- Where the printer gave it a different title this is listed below the Gengenbach short title and these editions are indented. Following Prietzel they have a two-part number.

LONDON: THE BRITISH LIBRARY and THE BRITISH MUSEUM

   4.2 Ein anderes neues Spiel (Handwritten copy by Ludwig Sterner, 2nd April, 1514). **BL:** Add. Mss. 32447, pp.3'-4'.


   14.3 (Strassburg: Hüpfuff, 1514). **BL:** [Basel(?): n.pub., 1514 (?)], 11515.b.25.
18.6 (Memmingen: Kunne, 1519). BL: [n.p.: n.pub.], 638.g.1 (incomplete).

28.4 *Der alte und neue Bruder Nollhard* (Strassburg: Cammerlander, 1544). BL: [1540(?)], 11517.c.35.


41. Martin Luther: *Sermo de poenitentia* (Basel: Gengenbach, 1518).
   BL: The edition listed in the catalogue with the shelfmark ‘Print Dept C139* N.13’ cannot be found.
   British Museum (Dept. of Prints and Drawings): 158*.a.9.

44. Andreas Bodenstein: *Apologeticae propositiones pro Martin Luther* (Basel: Gengenbach, 1518). BL: 3906.dd.10 (1).


   BL: [1522 (?)], 3905.ee.54.
   94.1 (Erfurt: Maler, 1522). BL: [1521 (?)], 3906.i.29 (3).
   **BL:** (Author = St.Jerome, [Gengenbach (?)] as translator; [Strassburg: n.pub.]), 3805.a.24.

   **BL:** (no author; [1520 (?)]), 11405.c.42.

   **BL:** [Basel (?): n.pub., 1530 (?)], 3021.aaa.18; **BL:** [Basel (?): n.pub., 1530 (?)], 1006.b.25 (incomplete).

   98.1 (Augsburg: Steiner, [1522(?)]). **BL:** [Basel (?): n.pub.], T.2209 (10).
   98.2 (Augsburg: Steiner, [1522 (?)]). **BL:** [Basel (?) : n.pub.], 1462.d.1 (1&4).
   98.3 (Strassburg: Johann Prüß d.J., 1522). **BL:** [Basel (?) : n.pub.], 11517.c.58.

   **BL:** (no author; [n.p.: n.pub.]), 3906.g.96.
   99.3 *Wie Der Hailig Vater Papst Adrianus eingeritten ist* (Augsburg: M.Ramnger, 1522). **BL:** [1522 (?)], 1226.b.13; **BL:** [1522 (?)], 3906.d.12.
   99.6 *Wie Der Hailig Vater Papst Adrianus eingeritten ist* (Erfurt: Stürmer, 1522).
   **BL:** (no author; [n.p.: n.pub.]), 3906.dd.29.

   **BL:** (Date = 1524): 3907.b.8.
   101.1 (Augsburg: Nädler, 1523/24).
   **BL:** [Strassburg (?): n.pub., 1524 (?)], T.2205 (10).
   101.3 (Zwickau: Gastel, 1524). **BL:** T.742. (14).


   **BL:** [Zwickau (?) : n.pub., 1523 (?)], 3906.d.10.

   **BL:** (Author = [Gengenbach (?)]), 1073.1.25.
   **BL:** [n.p.: n.pub., 1522 (?)], 11517.d.25.
   **British Museum (Dept. of Prints and Drawings):** 158.d.60

   **BL:** (no author; [Leipzig (?)]: 1530 (?)), 11517.c.55(6).
   **BL:** (no author; [Leipzig (?)]: 1530(?)]), 11517.d.37(2).
NB: Prietzel suggests that the British Library has attributed the following publications to Gengenbach in *AGB*, Appendix A3, pp.428-32, pp.430-31. In fact - his name does not appear in either of the following library entries as publisher, printer or author:

V.3 *Es ist ein Gumpist auf dem Feuer*  
3.3 *Ein frischer Comhiszt* (Strassburg: Cammerlander, 1535). **BL:** 11517.c.39.

V.5 *Der neue deutsche Bileamsersele* (Strassburg: Cammerlander, 1535). **BL:** 11515.c.6.

The following facsimile version has been attributed to Gengenbach by the British Library but is refuted by Prietzel:


**OXFORD: THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY (BDL)**  
**THE TAYLOR INSTITUTION (TI).**

**BDL:** [n. pub.], Tr.Luth.23 (117). **TI:** [n.pub.], ARCH.8o.g.1522 (1).

**TI:** Arch.8o.g.1518 (5).

41. Martin Luther: *Sermo de poenitentia* (Basel: Gengenbach, 1518).  
**BDL:** (Wittenbergij: [n. pub.]), Tr.Luth.85(16).

**BDL:** (Author = Luther; [n.pub.]), Tr.Luth.1 (18).

**BDL:** [n.pub.], Tr.Luth.3 (41).

**BDL:** (Author = St.Paul; Gengenbach listed as translator and commentator; [n.pub.], 1522), Tr.Luth.84 (26).

**BDL:** (Author = Planctus; [n.pub.], c.[1520]), 40 A 93 Th.BS.
   *99.3 Wie Der Hailig Vater Papst Adrianus eingeritten ist* (Augsburg: M. Ramminger, 1522). **BDL:** (author = Adrian VI; [n.pub.], [1522 (?)]), Tr.Luth 20 (82).
   *99.4 Wie Der Hailig Vater Papst Adrianus eingeritten ist* (Augsburg: M. Ramminger, 1522). **BDL:** (author = Adrian VI; [n.pub.], [1522 (?)]), Tr.Luth 20 (83).

   **BDL:** ([n.pub., 1524), Vet.D1 e.297.
   **BDL:** [Basel(?): n.pub., 1524(?)], Tr.Luth.83(13).
   *101.3 (Zwickau: Johann Schönsperger/Gastel, 1524).**
   **BDL:** [n.pub.], Tr.Luth.96 (30*).

NB: Prietzel suggests that the Bodleian Library has attributed the following publication to Gengenbach in *AGB*, Appendix A3, pp.428-32, p.431. In fact - his name does not appear in the following library entry, either as publisher, printer or author:

V.5 *Der neue deutsche Bileamsesel* (Strassburg: Cammerlander, 1535).
   **BDL:** (no author; [n.pub., 1545 (?)]), Tr.Luth.83.

**CAMBRIDGE: TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY (TCL)**

   **TCL:** Grylls.10.55.

   **TCL:** (Author = Aloysius Marlianus), vi.13.197².

**MANCHESTER: JOHN RYLANDS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (JRUL)**

   **JRUL:** [n.pub], R5392.

**EDINBURGH: SCOTTISH NATIONAL LIBRARY (NLS) AND EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY (EUL)**

   *10.1 (Strassburg: Hüpfuff, 1513-15).** **NLS:** (1513), RB.s.156 (2).

   **NLS:** Crawford R.35.
*NLS*: RB.s.164.

**EUL (Special Collections)**: [n.p.: n.pub.], Dh.3.88

**EUL (Special Collections)**: [n.p.: n.pub.], Dh.3.111

**EUL (Special Collections)**: Dh.3.228.

**NB:** Prietzel suggests that the Scottish National Library has wrongly attributed the following publications to Gengenbach as their printer in Prietzel, *AGB*, Appendix A2, pp.427-28. In fact - his name does not appear in any of the following library entries as publisher, printer or author:

**D4.** *Der Tag zur Köln und die Belagerung von Hohenkrähen* (Strassburg, Hüpfuff, [1512/13 (?)]). *NLS*: RB.s.156 (21).


Prietzel suggests that the Scottish National Library has attributed the following publication to Gengenbach in *AGB*, Appendix A3, pp.428-32, p.431. In fact - his name does not appear in the library entry, either as publisher, printer or author:

**V.3** *Es ist ein Gumpist auf dem Feuer*

**3.2** *Es fährt ein neuer Fluß daher* (Basel: Lamparter, 1513/14).
*NLS*: R.B.s. 156 (7).
APPENDIX D: MICROFICHES OF PUBLICATIONS PRINTED BY GENGENBACH


The attribution and numbering are after Prietzel, AGB, pp.266-98. They are listed by the short title used in the dissertation.

The starred microfiches are those publications that are not available in an original printed version in a British Library.

10. Pamphilus Gengenbach, Welsch Flusz, MF: 933/2325
*17. Pamphilus Gengenbach, Alt Eidgnosz, MF: 933/2326
*25. Pamphilus Gengenbach, Fünf Juden, MK: 1766/4562
31. Luigi Marliani, Oratio, MF: 1402/3695
*38. Kunz Kistener, Jakobsbrüder, MF: 964/2410
39. Martin Luther, Sermon von Ablaß und Gnade, MF: 575/1479
41. Martin Luther: Sermo de poenitentia, MF: 1901/4867
*42. Martin Luther: Sermo de poenitentia, MF: 1838/4698.
43. Johannes Wildenauer, Apologetica Responsio, MF: 1565/4056
44. Andreas Bodenstein, Apologeticae propositiones pro Martin Luther, MF:
   1220/3095
*45. Erasmus Ciolek, Ciolek Oratio, MF: 1263/3243
50. Ulrich Von Hutten, Phalarismus, MF: 1931/4931
55. Alofresant, Alofresant Prognosticon, MF: 1242/3151
70-88. Eberlin von Günstberg, Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen, MF: 1584-1585/4092
*91. Pamphilus Gengenbach, Schweizer Bauer, MF: 623/1612
*92. Luca Gaurico, Gaurico Prognosticon, MF: 920/2287.
95. Hieronymus, Der Pfaffenspiegel, MF: 243/671
98. Pamphilus Gengenbach, Die Totenfresser
   98.3 (Strassburg: Johan Prüß d.J., 1522). MF: 244/674

continued....

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Köhler/....

   99.3 *Wie Der Hailig Vater Papst Adrianus eingeritten ist* (Augsburg: M. Ramminger, 1522). MF: 264/745
   99.6 *Wie Der Hailig Vater Papst Adrianus eingeritten ist* (Erfurt: Stürmer, 1522).
   MF: 985/2500


**Works attributed to Gengenbach:**

V1.1 *Das ist ein neiw lied vō der gros=ßen niderlag geschehō vor d' stat Terwan*
   Köhler MF: No.933/2327.
1. BIBLIOGRAPHY: GENGENBACH

Within this section the texts are ordered alphabetically according to the short title used in this dissertation, followed by the original title or incipit. At the end of the reference the number given in bold is Prietzel's chronological number (Pr.) to enable cross-referencing with her bibliography and with Appendix A.

**Libraries:**
- Basel KuKab: Basel Kupferstichkabinett
- Basel UB: Universitätsbibliothek Basel
- BL: British Library
- BDL: Bodleian Library, Oxford

**Collected works:**
- Goedeke, Karl, ed., *Pamphilus Gengenbach* (Hannover: Rümpler, 1856)

**Anthologies:**

**Microfiche collection: (see Appendix D)**

1.1 WORKS WRITTEN AND PRINTED BY GENGENBACH

Pamphilus Gengenbach:


- *Anzeigung. [R] Anzeigung ze eroberen || [S] die Türky / vñ erlösung der Christenheit.* (1523/24). BL: 11517.c.55 (6). Pr.113


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Der Bundschuh. Der bundtschu || 1st edn. (1514). BL: 11515.b.25.  Pr.14


Fünf Juden. Dz ist ein erschroenliche history || von fünf schmöden Juden / [...] (1516 ?). Köhler MF: 1766/4562.  Pr.25


Der Nollhart. Der Nollhart || (1517). In: Der Nollhart, ed. by Violanta Werren-Uffer (Berne: Paul Haupt, 1977); and BL: 11515.bb.8.  Pr.27


Practica deutsch. Practica zu teutsch auf das xv þ. und neue Jahr gemacht durch Doktor Nemo [...]. (1515). Köhler MF: 1240/3137.  Pr.21

Schweizer Bauer. Der gestryff Schätz U Baur || (1521/2). BL: 1226.b.8.  Pr.90


Welsch Flusz. Der welsche Flusz || (1513). BL: C.107.b.41. Pr.10


Works whose attribution to Gengenbach is queried in the dissertation:


Knüchel. Ein kurzer begriff [...] (1523). In: Clemen, i, pp.213-52. Pr.107

Der Laienspiegel. Der Leiē spiegel || sancti Pauli des alten gloubens || wider den niuwen. || (1521/22). BL: 3905.ee.54. Pr.94

Work that may have been written by Gengenbach:

Adolf Bube, ‘Zwei Gedichte von Pamphilus Gengenbach’, in Anzeiger für Kunde der deutschen Vorzeit, 6 (1859), 165-67. The first poem is on pp.127-30 is Bockspiel. This second poem is untitled and its author is unknown.
1.2 WORKS WRITTEN BY OTHER AUTHORS AND PRINTED BY GENGENBACH


Anna selbstdradt-blatt. [H] || (D)as ist das war gebäth das der bapst Alexander der sächste mit sinen henden hat zü Rom angeschlagé [...]. (1511/12). In: Holzschnitte des Meisters DS, ed. by Elfried Bock (Berlin: Deutschen Verein für Kunstwissenschaft, 1924), Tafel XXI - Facsimile edition. Pr.3

Bettlerorden. (L)iber vagatorum || (1511-13). Goedeke, pp.343-70 Pr.6

Bodenstein, Andreas, Apologeticae propositiones pro Martin Luther. Contra D. Joannê || Eckiû Ingolsstadiensem. [...] Apolo=\geticae propositiones proReuercdo patre D.|| Martino Luther || (1518). BL: 3906.dd.10 (1). Pr.44

Dangkrotzheim, Conrad, Das Heiligen-Namenbuch. Das helgen Namenbuch || (1513/14). In: Das Heilige Namenbuch von Konrad Dankkrotzheim, ed. by Karl Pickel, Elsässische Literaturdenkmäler aus dem XIV-XVII Jahrhundert, ed. by Ernst Martin and Erich Schmidt, 1 (Strassburg: Trübner, 1878), pp.77-97. Pr.8

Eberlin von Günzburg, Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen. (E)Jne klägliche || klag [...]. (1521). BL: 3908.f.35. Pr.70- 88


Erasmus von Rotterdam, Novum Instrumentum. Nου̂û ò testamēτ̣û omne [...]. (1522). BL: 3021.aaa.18. Pr.97

Fabri, Johannes, Planctus. Pläctus rui=||nε ecclesiε. (1522). BL: 11405.c.42. Pr.96

Gallianus, Conradus, Practica deutsch. Practica teiütsch vff das M: || CCCCC. vnd .XXiiiij .jar. [...]. (1523). Basel UB: E J IX 34 Nr.5 Pr.109

Gaurico, Luca, Gaurico Prognosticon. [...] Prognosticā Ab incarnatio|ne Christi. (1522). Köhler MF: 920/2287. Pr.92
Der goldene Paradiesapfel. (undated). Wackernagel, ii, pp.1083-84. Pr.117

Guarino Veronensis, Alda. (1517), Basel UB: N F IX 19 Nr.10.; and Alda ... carmen elegaicum, ed. by W. H. D. Suringar (Leiden: Brill, 1867), pp.25-32. Pr.32.

Von dem heiligen Sakrament. Von dem heiligen Sakrament ein hübsches Lied [...]. (1511/12). In: Wackernagel, P., ii, pp.264-65. Pr.1

Hieronymus, Der Pfaffenspiegel. Ein christlich biechlin deß durchlötigsten vnd christlichenpflegers der prophetischen ewan vnd apostolischen geschrieff = ||te sancti Hieronymi / [...]. (1522). BL: 3805.a.24. Pr.95


Kalender. (1516). Basel KuKab: No number (Graf, Urs). Pr.22

Kalender. (1521). Basel KuKab: Inv. Nr. 1920.71 (Graf, Urs). Pr.69

Kistener, Kunz, Jakobsbrüder. Ein hübsch lesé vni grossz \|| wunderzeichen von dem heiligen \|| zwoifbotten sant Jacob / vnd zei̇ Jacobs brüdern || (1518). Köhler MF: 964/2410. Pr.38


Lannoy, Charles, Lannoy. Translation vzu hispanischer sprach [...]. (1522). Basel UB: Hist Conv. 14 Nr.18 (2 Exx.). Pr.100

Martin Luther, Sermon von Ablafi und Gnade. (E)In Sermon oder Predig \|| von dem ablasz und gnade \|| (1518). BL: 3905.ccc.88. Pr.39

Martin Luther, Sermo de poenitentia. SErmo de Pe̖=\niuentia P.||. (1518). BM (Dept: of Prints and Drawings): 158*a.9; and Köhler MF: 1901/4867. Pr.41


Meissen, Hans Von (Fраuенлоб), Gotes ursprung. Meistergesang vor Gott in der Grundweise [...]. (by 1516). In: Wackernagel, P., ii, pp.1084-85. Pr.26

Murner, Thomas, quattuor hesresiarchis. De quattuor heresiarchis || (1521/22). In: Thomas Murner's deutsche Schriften, ed. by Eduard Fuchs (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1929), i, pp.1-160. Pr.93

Omnia. OMNIA QUAE GESTA SUNT IN || Oriëte inter Sophi & Maximum Turcarum & || sultanum [...]. (1518). Basel UB: N F IX 19 Nr.10. Pr.37


Rüß, Johannes, Wandkalendar. [S] (S)O man zalt nach der geburt Christi. (1518). Basel KuKab: Inv. Nr. 1925.25 (Graf, Urs). Pr.48


Verhörung Luthers. (R)Omscher key. Maie=stat verhörung Rede vnd widerrede Do=||ctor Martini Luters [...]. (1521). BL: 3906.b.57. Pr.68


Wildenauer, Johannes, Apologetica responsio. (1518). Köhler MF: 1565/4056. Pr.43
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Protokolle Öffnungsbuch 7 (6.7.1490-23.6.1530)


Politisches
Politisches M 2. Dijoner Zug (1513-1518), Nr.2.
Politisches M 3. Pfeffingerhandel (1520), No.1.

Gerichtsarchiv
A. Schultheißengericht der mehren Stadt. Urteilsbücher. 33, 47, 48, 50, 54, 55, 56.
B. Schultheißengericht der mehren Stadt. Fertigungsbücher. 18/2, 20.
W. Fünfergericht. Protokolle. I.

Ratsbücher O2. Urfehdenbuch II (1509-1523)

Straf und Polizei F1 (1534).

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Historisches Grundbuch, Registerband
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Brant, Sebastian, _Flugblätter des Sebastian Brant_, ed. by Paul Heitz (Strassburg: Heitz & Mundel, 1915).

Eberlin von Günzburg, Johann, _Sämtliche Schriften_, ed. by Ludwig Enders, 3 vols (Halle: Niemeyer, 1896-1902),

_i_ (1896), _Die fünfzehn Bundgenossen_, pp.1-170.


_iii_ (1902), _Mich wundert, daß kein Geld im Land ist_, pp.147-81.


Erasmus von Rotterdam, _Ausgewählte Schriften_, ed. by Werner Welzig, 8 vols (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968-1980),


2. *Phalarismus*, pp.189-205.

Karsthans, ed. by Herbert Burckhart (Leipzig: Verlag Rudolf Haupt, 1910).

Luther, Martin, *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimarer Ausgabe: Böhlau, 1883-1983),
6 (1888), *De Captivitate Babylonica*, pp.484-573.
7 (1897), *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen*, pp.20-38, p.23.
8 (1889), *Vom Missbrauch der Messe*, pp.482-563.
8 (1889), *De votis monasticis M. Lutheri iudicium*, pp.573-669.
10.1.2 (1925), *Evangelium am andern sonntag jm Advent (Luce 21)*, p.108.
10.3 (1905), *Der dritte Predigt am Sinstage nach dem Sontage Invocavit*, pp.21-30.
11 (1900), *Daß unser Herr Jhesus Christus ein geborener Jude war*, pp.314-36
11 (1900), *Deutung Papstesels zu Rom und Mönchkalbs zu Freiberg funden*, 361ff.
12 (1891), *Ordnung eyns gemeynen kastens*, pp.11-30.
18 (), *Wider die räuberischen und mörderischen Rotten der Bauern*, pp.357-61.


Luther, Martin, *Tomus primus (-quartus) omnium operum Reverendi Patris D. Martini Lutheri* (Jena, 1564).


Manuel, Niklaus, *Werke*, ed. by Jakob Baechtold (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1878)


Oecolampadius, Johann, ‘Von der Austeilung der Almosen’ in *Flugschriften der frühen Reformationsbewegung 1518-1524*, ed. by Adolf Laube and Annerose Schneider, assisted by Sigrid Looß (Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1983), ii, pp.1109-22.


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