The Architectonics of Faith: Metalogic and Metaphor in Zwingli's Doctrine of the Eucharist

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Architectonic:

2. Of or pertaining to construction.
3. Having the function of superintendence and control.

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The arts that rule the other arts are called architectonic, as being the ruling arts.

Thomas Aquinas,
Summa contra gentiles

The sixteenth-century controversy over the eucharist may well have been the most complex and consequential of the early modern era. The pre-eminence of this sacrament and the amount of disagreement it had already engendered during the Middle Ages combine with the interrelatedness of doctrine to explain why renewed dissention in 1524-25 rapidly became serious enough to divide the Protestant camp and repeatedly frustrate hopes for a reconciliation with Rome. Lutheran authority would henceforth be checked and confined as much by the dynamism of a rival Reformed Church as by Catholic efforts to recover what had been lost.

The diversity of mainstream Protestantism was officially recognized when, despite powerful religious and political incentives, the discussions at Marburg in 1529 failed to produce a unified front. Zwingli and Luther could agree upon everything except the Lord's Supper. Both reaffirmed its sacramental status, but denied that it includes a true sacrifice. Participation is not a work meriting grace, though it still brings comfort and strength to many. Its chief virtue lies in a spiritual enjoyment of the body and blood of Christ, and both sides deemed this necessary for every Christian. Communion in two kinds was strongly recommended. They agreed that Christ is really present, though not in a transubstantial manner. How, then? That was the problem. The fifteen articles signed at Marburg represent the

constitution of a united Protestant church until, in its final lines, the manner of Christ's presence is mentioned and discord has to be acknowledged.¹

The eucharist had long been central to the practice of the Christian faith. Disagreement here made even a working alliance impossible. After Marburg, each side wound up contending on its own against the resurgent powers of Emperor and Pope. Neither Zwingli's death in 1531 nor Luther's in 1546 would alter the situation. By 1550 hardliners were ensconced in Wittenberg, while in Zürich Bullinger and Calvin had settled upon a modified Zwinglian doctrine. In 1562 the Second Helvetic Confession described the eucharist in terms still more offensive to Lutherans. These were accepted throughout Switzerland by 1566 and thereafter by the Reformed Churches of France, Scotland, Hungary, and Poland. Agreement with the Lutherans became increasingly unlikely. Despite their eventual moderation, all sides have continued to find the eucharist a major stumbling block in the way of every ecumenical movement.²

One important reason is that the debate grew out of, and revolved around, an ideologically informed conflict of interpretations. Christ's sacramental presence had to be explained in relation to a considerable range of established doctrine resting upon the explication of authoritative sources. These included the Fathers, of course, and the decisions of major councils. But Protestant biblicism inevitably led to a focus upon scripture, and especially upon the words of Christ himself. How were they to be read and understood? What precisely were their implications for the eucharist? The answers were diverse enough to have divided Christianity ever since.

The problem of interpretive methodology thus arises in a forceful way. Unfortunately, this dimension of the controversy has often been neglected in favour of relatively uncomplicated synopses of doctrines and events. Despite their own continual involvement in processes of reading and interpretation, historians have seldom felt obliged to make them an object of investigation. This is doubtless due in part to the still widely prevalent notion that historiography properly consists in a straightforward representation of pure facts-in-themselves. I should like to suggest a different perspective by re-examining Zwingli's theory of the eucharist in a way that brings out its significance both for doctrinal history and for a better understanding of our historically predominant principles of interpretation.

I shall be inquiring particularly into the relation between the explicit and the implicit levels in Zwingli's doctrine. For, as I hope to show, the two do not always work together in perfect harmony. Between them, indeed, there is a degree of tension that has not previously been discerned. What follows can also be regarded, then, as an attempt to describe certain of the more covert ways in which profound intellectual commitments – e.g., to a particular idea of thinking itself – may be simultaneously at work and at

stake during a struggle as momentous as that which attended the upheavals of the sixteenth century.

My principal source will be Zwingli's magnum opus, the *Commentary On True and False Religion*.³ The only comprehensive, systematic statement of his theology, it also contains Zwingli's first, most extensive, most rigorously conceived discourse upon the sacraments.⁴ This is due only in part to the fact that controversies over baptism and the eucharist were already raging in the Empire. Other reasons include: Zwingli's hope of support from François I, to whom he dedicated the *Commentary*; the closely related necessity of good relations with the powerful but deeply conservative and still nominally Roman Catholic city of Bern; his own increasing difficulties with local Swiss and south German radicals, many of whom had begun as Zwinglians and might therefore bring the entire movement into disrepute; similar problems with Zürich's residual Catholic party; and, as a backdrop, the peasant uprisings that had begun in Germany the year before and were often suspected of being a consequence of the contemporary religious agitation. Finally, it was the *Commentary* that first presented Zwingli's own eucharistic doctrine publicly and in detail. Longer restatements might follow, some with important new arguments,⁵ but the *Commentary* still provides the best overall account of Zwingli's position.

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The chapter on the eucharist (773-820) is more than twice as long as any other. It is grounded in a critical discussion of authority, and proceeds by revising the established criteria of religious truth. Zwingli regards any view that depends solely upon human reason or convention as a form of idolatry. The decrees of Popes and councils, the arguments of Fathers and schoolmen, canon law, traditional preaching and practice: none has any inherent right to a Christian's respect.⁶ The word of man becomes authoritative only by also being true. Since, however, the truth derives from God alone, genuine authority belongs only to those whom the Lord has inspired.⁷ They alone can understand and explain His message.⁸ Where different interpretations are advanced, tradition, status, and power count for nothing. A lone individual, of humble station and newly arrived upon the scene, might instead be the Lord's chosen vessel. If so, his teaching would have to be preferred, diverge how it might from established views.⁹ The age of the prophets has entered a hermeneutical stage. Previously God's agents sought only to reveal His holy word. Now they are endeavoring to explain it. Accordingly, Huldreich Zwingli, believing himself called to serve as official interpreter ("the Lord has explained through me"), does not hesitate to break with all existing authority, "however great and excellent," when the significance of the eucharist is at issue (786).¹⁰ "We must

hold," he says, "a different view of the flesh and blood of this sacrament from that which theologians have thus far laid down." The *Menschenwort* of tradition is to be spurned in favour of the true faith, *Gotteswort*, revealed by the Holy Spirit directly to the hearts and minds of elected individuals.¹¹

But how does one determine who is inspired? Can the validity of this inner certitude be demonstrated?¹² How does Zwingli distinguish true from false religion? First, he winnows out all that cannot possibly be true. His obvious means is the *Schriftprinzip*: whatever the Bible recommends must be taught and done; anything that cannot be justified *sola scriptura* must be rejected (669-70, 674).¹³ Since the word of God is inherently true, and since truth naturally forms a perfectly self-consistent totality, Zwingli can expect that there will be no disagreement between its various manifestations. The Spirit never contradicts itself.¹⁴ Every claim to personal inspiration can thus be compared against the pages of Holy Writ. Subjective and objective word express the same eternal truth and must therefore confirm one another. *Schriftprinzip* and *Geistesprinzip* are essentially the same (871).¹⁵ Theoretically secondary to the inner voice of the Spirit, scripture remains normative in practice. A great deal will then depend upon the manner in which the latter is read and understood. The traditional guides have been rejected. How does one proceed without them?

Zwingli has several answers. The simplest is that scripture need only be read. The will of God is clear and certain from His own word, taken just as it appears on the page. Even without special training, one can comprehend its meaning. For, as God is light, there can be nothing obscure about Him.¹⁶ Zwingli thus appeals repeatedly to the judgment of the common people and, despite an early enthusiasm for Erasmus, dislikes the elitist implications of sophisticated allegorical exegesis in the humanist manner.¹⁷

The controversy over the eucharist quickly brought out the inadequacies of this response. All sides appealed to scripture and yet they disagreed. Soon there were disputes over particular passages and ultimately over a single sentence of four small words – *Hoc est corpus meum* – which, it appears, could be read in at least six more or less divergent ways. Clearly it was not enough to cite scripture; one had to argue for one's understanding of it.

There was still the *Geistesprinzip*. The inward testimony of the Spirit brought the enlightenment that guaranteed a correct understanding: "Fides ergo magistra et interpret est verborum."¹⁸ And since truth is one, the inspired elect would necessarily agree. Their consensus derives from and rests upon the power of divine illumination (751, 756).¹⁹ Thus, faith is verified by scripture, but the meaning of scripture is accessible only to the faithful. Opponents might therefore accuse Zwingli of begging the question. Never doubting that the meaning of scripture is obvious to the elect,

Zwingli himself could see that only forceful analysis and argumentation would keep the rest of mankind from distorting it.²⁰ The official doctrine of the true Church is therefore to be elaborated by experts capable of presenting the Reformed case most effectively. Although subject (in principle) to correction by the assembled congregation, these experts take the lead and provide a cogent reading of the sacred texts.²¹

But what is a cogent reading? And what are the principles that govern Zwingli's effort to provide one? He denies the need for elaborate allegorical or symbolic interpretations. The plain, the obvious and natural, sense should always be preferred. Yet Zwingli also rejects the naive sort of literalism that Luther at times espoused. Instead, he maintains the conventional view that one must apprehend scripture's inner meaning and truth – the Spirit that brings life – not just the letter that embodies it.²²

As God's word is true, so is it necessarily one. Scripture, like the true faith it expresses, must accordingly form an integral totality. It contains neither contradiction nor discrepancy.²³ A correct reading will consequently reconcile seemingly disparate elements and reveal the organic unity of the whole. This leads to the first law of interpretive method: passages should never be considered in isolation. That is the main cause of scripture's apparent obscurity and inconsistency. It also helps to explain the existence of rival interpretations. Every passage is related to others with which it must accord. The exact meaning of each is thus determined by its proper context. Taken out of context, no passage can be understood aright. When the context is considered, the true sense quickly emerges. There are, to be sure, some difficult passages. But many are perfectly clear and these elucidate the others. By moving from the simple to the complex even the unlearned can resolve all significant problems.²⁴

Zwingli then supplements these general principles with a variety of secondary criteria (870-2, 885, 898).²⁵ The moral effects a reading has upon the community must be examined, as well as its advocate's character. Among conflicting interpretations, the one that gives most honour to God and least to mankind should be favoured. More important, however, is the appeal to classical logic, and especially to its most fundamental component, "the sure law of contraries." For Zwingli, there are certain elements or species of element that are mutually exclusive by nature. If one is true, present, or applicable, its opposite cannot be. Nothing that violates this rule can possibly be valid. Since being is a unified whole, truth requires perfect consistency. The principle of noncontradiction has therefore been regarded, at least since Plato and Aristotle, as the fundamental law of all thought, the necessary basis of every attempt to think the truth of the world.

And yet, strange to say, it is always in danger of violation. Without strict supervision, logical contraries are apt to engage in illicit, indeed, unnatural

relations in thought. Confusion then occurs and eventually an error is produced. In Zwingli's view, that is just what has happened in the established doctrine of the eucharist. The law of contraries is therefore the weapon upon which he relies in order to chastise his opponents.²⁶ In the *Commentary* he shows how Catholic and Lutheran alike stand condemned "by all sense, reason, understanding, and by faith itself [*omnis sensus, ratio, intellectus et fides ipsa*]" (786).

It is a significant formulation. "Sense, reason, and understanding" on the one hand, and "faith itself" on the other, constitute two separate cognitive modes, each with its distinct domain of objects. This close correlation of epistemological and ontological dichotomies is, I believe, the decisive feature of Zwingli's theological method.

"Reason" and "understanding" are thus associated with the senses. Together they produce what the scholastics called natural knowledge or science. The process of induction from sense-experience was known as natural reason or philosophy.²⁷ In Zwingli's thought, natural reason, or "sense," stands opposed to "faith" as completely as the word of man is opposed to that of God or the creature opposes the Creator. Faith and sense are regarded as distinct means of knowing entirely different things.²⁸ It is the chief fault of both Catholic and Lutheran orthodoxy that, in its account of the eucharist, each has failed to preserve this essential degree of propriety among the primary modes of both existence and thought.²⁹

Catholics say it is necessary to "believe" that in this sacrament one eats "the essential body, or the bodily and sensible flesh, of Christ [*essentiale corpus aut corpoream ac sensibilem carnem Christi*]" (786). This means introducing faith into the domain of sense-perception. Faith, however, "does not spring from sense [*sensu*] or reason [*ratione*], and does not strive for things of sense [*res sensibiles*]." God alone is both its origin and end. But God is pure spirit, and spirit can never be affiliated ontologically with matter. God bestows faith through the agency of His Holy Spirit. The sensible, material objects of this world contribute nothing whatever. They cannot nourish the human soul. They cannot even mediate between it and the Spirit (757-762, 782, 787; cf. 642).³⁰ Therefore, no bodily, sensible thing can ever be an object of faith (785-6, 798).³¹ So "if your eating is a matter of belief [*si credis te edere*], the thing you believe cannot be sensible or bodily" (786).³²

Whatever is sensibly perceptible, moreover, "in that case owes nothing to faith. . . . For if it is bodily, there is no need of faith, for it is perceived by the senses [*Nam si corporea est, fide opus non habet; sentitur enim*]; and things perceived by sense have no need of faith, for by sense they are perceived to be perfectly sure [*sensu enim certissima esse sentiuntur*]." Thus, if the corporeal Body were present, it would be detected by the senses (786-7). Traditionalists, of course, did not say that the flesh and blood of the

eucharist are sensible. God's power to work miracles combined for them with the Aristotelian distinction between substance and accident to explain the idea of a nonsensible body. Zwingli elsewhere brushes this argument aside. Scripture shows that God never causes a substance to be present without its accidents. True miracles are always sensible. Therefore, "all bodily things are so entirely things of sense [*sic sunt sensibilia*] that unless they are perceived by sense they are not bodily [*nisi sentiantur, corporea non sint*]" (786). A spiritual body is simply a contradiction in terms (809, 817).³³

By the senses, then, only objects of sense may be known, while faith pertains only to what is nonsensible.

In short, faith does not compel sense to confess that it perceives what it does not perceive, but draws us to the invisible [*ad invisibilia*] and fixes all our hopes upon that. For it dwelleth not amidst the sensible and bodily, and hath nothing in common therewith.³⁴ (787)

Hence, "to believe and to perceive by sense are essentially contradictory things [*disparata*]," and must be kept apart in all formulations (786). They are mutually exclusive modes of experience, and the purity of their opposition must be protected. To mingle them by contending that it is necessary to "believe" one eats the "sensible and bodily flesh" is to contravene the most basic law of logic.³⁵

To believe that the law of noncontradiction is self-evident, however, and expresses in abstract, universal terms the basis of that proper order of things which God has instituted is not so unconventional. Logic had long been regarded as a formal reflection of the divine nature and will. For Zwingli it is therefore a deeply disturbing doctrine that the Church has devised. Disregarding the fundamental proprieties of both being and thought, it would sanction a liaison between contraries. How could the fruit of so unnatural a union be regarded as legitimate? Self-contradiction is, rather, "a monstrosity of speech [*monstrum orationis*]" (786).

This is no laughing matter. A conjunction of contraries can never lead to truth. To go astray in theology jeopardizes the immortal soul. The traditional teaching is therefore not only "an extravagant fiction," but the ominous consequence [*portentum*] of a perversion that must be exposed and then abandoned (786).³⁶

Others would escape the dangers of the traditional doctrine by contending that "the true and bodily flesh of Christ," though still substantially present, is eaten in a "spiritual manner" only (787).³⁷ But this will scarcely help.

For body and spirit [*corpus et spiritus*] are such essentially different things [*diversa*] that whichever one you take, it cannot be the other. If spirit is the

one that has come into question, it follows by the sure law of contraries [*certa relatione contrariorum*] that body is not; if body is the one, the hearer is sure that spirit is not. Hence, to eat bodily flesh in a spiritual manner is simply to assert that to be bodily which is spirit. (787; cf. 809, 817)

Later Zwingli adds, "There is nothing intermediate [*non est medium*] between what is natural or corporeal and what is spiritual. And even if you bring together everything, both Creator and creatures, then they are either spirit or body." Indeed, "Flesh and spirit are opposites [*Gegensätze, ἀντιθέσεις*]," between which no genuine, organic connection [*naturalis coniunctio*] can ever exist.³⁸

The *manducatio spiritualis* is therefore a logical "paradox," a piece of "nonsense [*ludibria*]" that does not belong in an account of the true religion.³⁹ By teaching such things, established theologians of the eucharist have corrupted the Church and undermined the quest for salvation.⁴⁰ They may differ in other ways, then, but Lutherans and Catholics both defend doctrines in which opposites have conjoined. Offending against the fundamental law of thought, they prove their lack of inspiration. For the Lord who is truth itself does not admit to self-contradiction.⁴¹

The doctrine of a corporeal presence must therefore conflict with scripture as well. Since the text is a formally rational totality, it will provide evidence against any defective interpretation. In this case the most damning is John 6:63, "The flesh profiteth nothing." Zwingli accordingly regards it as the key to a proper understanding of the Lord's Supper (776-7, 780-6, 790-2, 801, 816).⁴²

His well-known "Platonic" opposition between matter and spirit, body and soul (or mind), thus provides the impetus behind his insistence upon logical propriety, rigorously defined in terms of binary antinomies and the principle of noncontradiction.⁴³ The Epilogue to the *Commentary* both stresses the hierarchical duality of body and soul and relates it more clearly to that matter/spirit split that constitutes the dominant axis of Zwingli's theology.⁴⁴

The soul [*mens*] strives to fashion itself upon the pattern [*exemplum*] of Him toward whom it is hastening. . . . The body resists, because by its nature it scorns whatever the soul greatly values; it yearns for things of earth and lets those of heaven go, and has no hope at all of seeing God any more than the very earth has from which it sprang. Accordingly, it follows its own desires, and if it is ever kept by the power of the soul from attaining them, it proceeds to plot and rage against it. Hence that constant battle between the flesh and the spirit [*carnis et spiritus*] which ceases not until we have reached our goal (909).

In fact, material soul and spiritual body are essentially incompatible. Though obliged to cohabit, they remain mutually exclusive modes of

being.⁴⁵ How, then, could the soul be helped to its proper end by a body? Only Spirit could rescue spirit from its earthly prison.⁴⁶ Indeed, since God is pure spirit, there could be no real link between Christ and the bread and wine. The relation is historical and, at most, symbolic.⁴⁷

The fate of mankind is accordingly described in idealist terms. "God willed that amid the numerous and varied progeny of created things, the human race should so dwell upon earth as to strive toward the inheritance established for it in heaven" (909).⁴⁸ To this end, He has bestowed a special gift: "the knowledge of Himself" that leads to a desire for reunion with the One who is pure spirit (907-8, 782).⁴⁹ To achieve its proper end, however, the soul must preserve itself from all but the most necessary contact with earthly matter. The body, of course, resists. Obstructing the ascent of the rational soul, it becomes the locus of sin and a danger to mankind.⁵⁰ God has consequently intervened to assist His chosen creature, "and has always taught him in such a way as immediately to call him back when he seemed to have fallen into forgetfulness of God, that he might not in his degeneracy prefer to perish with the beasts than to live forever with Him" (907). Help is provided by means of special communications, reprimands, benefits, and institutions. These include the sacraments, but also the various laws that the Lord has established. Whether biblical injunctions or the "so-called laws of nature," they act "as a guard rail [*veluti cancellis*]" for all men, "hedging them about" to prevent the degenerate desires of the flesh from carrying them away. All men receive God's help: "For He marked them off from the beasts by bringing their passions into line through laws" (908).⁵¹ Divine law keeps the soul from being overwhelmed in its struggle against the "unruliness of the flesh [*carnis impotentia*]." Given its way, the body would revert to a crudely natural existence. God establishes limits, "that miserable man may not go over to the beasts" (908).⁵²

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Body and soul, matter and spirit: this antithesis provides the conceptual basis of Zwingli's critique. His effort to make and legitimate a break with Church dogma thus involves an implicit reaffirmation of Christian theology's debt to classical philosophy.⁵³ The corollary opposition between human and nonhuman nature, the one essentially spiritual and divine, the other belonging to the earth, may well be older still.⁵⁴ It becomes a fundamental component of the dominant intellectual tradition, however, largely through the writings of Plato. Aristotle and the Stoics, Neoplatonists and scholastics of every sort, all adopt and build upon it in one way or another. Attaining the true, or proper, end of man had by Zwingli's time long been a matter of maintaining a respectable distance between the two realms. This is no easy task. For, however dissimilar and

exclusive by nature, they are at the same time related and tend to intermingle. Explanations only highlight the problematic situation of the soul. A spiritual substance, it serves nonetheless as mediator between material nature and the divine – a role that many theologians obscure by focusing upon the *mens*.⁵⁵ In this, its characteristically liminal position, the human soul simultaneously creates and helps to subvert the essential difference between mankind and the rest of the natural world. By establishing an intimate relation between the divine and mere matter, it contaminates the one, even as it animates the other. The danger is that the *mens* will then sink so deeply into the flesh that it becomes lost forever. Man is thus deprived of the one thing that most clearly differentiates him from other, more simply natural creatures. Reverting to a bestial condition, he forfeits all hope of salvation.⁵⁶

Divine law helps to prevent this by forbidding the intermingling of opposites. Obeying the law means keeping each element in its proper place, thus insuring the integrity of each. The purity of perfect order may be impossible so long as the *mens* is dependent upon a body.⁵⁷ But with God's help, the amount of disorder may be limited. The cleaner our basic components – the better we guard against the improprieties to which they are inclined – the surer each *mens* may be of eventual deliverance.⁵⁸ Failure to respect (and enforce) God's law encourages disorder. The barrier between divinely instituted categories of existence is burst; the spirit is defiled; its hope of a (re)union with the One grows dim.⁵⁹

Properly speaking, then, dialectic safeguards the integrity of all discrete elements and categories involved in the thought process. The law of contraries thus becomes a master precept, informing and regulating all others.⁶⁰ As such, it is invoked, explicitly or implicitly, at every stage of Zwingli's argument.⁶¹ Insofar as any casualness about it generates conceptual grotesques, mankind impairs its special affinity with the divine, descending instead into the less real and specifically subhuman world of unreason. In discursive formulations – indeed, in every aspect of existence – intercourse between opposites is a perversion of the natural order of things. As such, it has the profoundest, the most upsetting implications.

An attempt to cross spirit with flesh, the traditional doctrine of a corporeal real presence offends simultaneously against the nature of faith and the senses, as well as against reason itself. To “believe” that one can in any way eat the “bodily and sensible” flesh of Christ “is not only impious but also foolish and monstrous [*stultum et immane*]” (789).⁶²

Among Catholic responses were those of Bishop John Fisher, who argued that the bodily presence, though truly flesh, is also “modo quodam spirituali,” and must be eaten in an appropriately spiritual manner. Greater precision is impossible, for the sacrament is essentially a mystery and the exact nature of the presence surpasses human comprehension.⁶³

Cardinal Cajetan rejected the matter/spirit opposition and denied that faith could have only a spiritual object. Sensible objects were merely "*extrema rerum creditarum*," and many objects of faith "*consistunt in conjunctione rerum sensibilium cum rebus insensibilibus*." The basic articles of the Christian faith, moreover, require belief in many things of sense, e.g., the Incarnation, Christ's crucifixion and death, His burial and ascent.⁶⁴

Lutherans complained that Zwingli's appeal to sensory evidence and logic gave human reason precedence over faith, allowing the one to determine the contents of the other. But God's power exceeds all merely natural limits. He could not be irrational, but neither was He limited to what the intellect of mortal man could recognize as logical. Faith, therefore, could always tolerate things that natural reason and dialectic considered absurd: the Trinity, the Incarnation, the perpetual virginity of Mary, divine justice and the forgiveness of sins. A bodily presence in the eucharist may be incomprehensible, but that does not make it untrue. The authority of scripture compels us rather to accept it.⁶⁵

It was both the strength and the weakness of the appeal to mystery that it could be used to valorize a simple refusal to explain. The irony, then, is that Zwingli and his followers were invoking a traditional view of God to make an untraditional argument about the eucharist, while Lutherans and Catholics often sought to defend the corporeal presence with a fideism that deviated from the rationalist premises of the prevailing theological tradition. Zwingli is most unusual, however, not for his refusal to espouse the corporeal presence, but for his attempt to turn those premises against that tradition itself.

Confessionally oriented historians have frequently represented him as either a rationalist or a man of faith – the philosopher vs. the Reformer – as if these were mutually exclusive options.⁶⁶ Yet both views may have a certain validity, not because Zwingli was schizophrenic,⁶⁷ but because Christian theology has always had faith in the rationality of God. The real task, then, would be to investigate the interaction of reason and faith in any given theology. Zwingli is commonly thought to have allowed the former too large a role.⁶⁸ In what way, however, remains unclear. To clarify the issue, one must recall that reason was normally regarded as the handmaid of faith. Both dialectic and natural reasoning from sense-experience enabled the theologian to understand, explain, and defend what was already believed. The actual contents of the faith, on the other hand, were defined by revelation and the Christian tradition of belief, prayer, worship, confession, and instruction. Church dogma was supposed to be nothing but a formal epitome of what good Christians had always believed, confessed, practised, and taught.

The contents of the faith were thus determined largely by its own history, whose validity was presumed. Theologians had to accept and profess this

traditional faith before they could begin to comprehend and express it adequately in conceptual terms. Metaphysicians had to do likewise before they could be certain of philosophizing safely. What was held by faith might be confirmed by reasons, but it was still held by faith in the authority of revelation and tradition, not by virtue of those reasons. In their differing ways, both theology and philosophy consisted in a movement through faith to understanding, *fides quaerens intellectum*, not the inverse. Belief alone made a true theology possible, even as it warned the philosopher away from incorrect conclusions when he reasoned his way upward from the data of sense.⁶⁹

Faith, then, established the limits of rational truth, inasmuch as it determined what reason had to accept and endeavor to understand, while itself remaining above the range of criticism on merely rational grounds. Reason was expected only to confirm, never to discover or revise the true faith. At most, it could help to establish the tradition by collecting, comparing, and harmonizing its apparently disparate elements in order to reveal that underlying consensus which was already held to exist. But reason could never criticize or correct it once the faith of tradition had been established. If ever the two diverged, medieval methodology maintained that it was reason, not tradition, which erred.⁷⁰

Precisely how much of the faith could be understood and demonstrated conclusively by unaided human reason was never certain. But there was no doubt that it was perfectly rational. Portions might exceed the grasp of human understanding, but there was no part that right reason would contradict. The validity of the faith, moreover, did not derive from its rationality. Its rationality derived from the fact that it was true. The validity of the established faith derived solely from the fact that it was given by God.⁷¹

Zwingli, for his part, agreed that right reason could not contradict the true faith, but denied that tradition necessarily embodied it. The paradoxical nature of its eucharistic doctrine proved this. Natural reason and dialectic had always been tools for deducing both general and particular conclusions from the basic data of revelation, as well as important, legitimate weapons in the defense of the true faith against heresy and other faiths. Zwingli is methodologically unconventional only insofar as he does not accept the traditional interpretation of those portions of revelation most pertinent to the eucharist and, regarding the established doctrine as heresy, uses rational arguments to attack it. He thus put a traditional tool to un- and even anti-traditional uses.⁷²

This, rather than any peculiar style of argumentation, is what led to the charge of rationalism. Yet Zwingli still employed dialectic only to support a doctrine that was obtained, he said, from the revealed word of God by means of inspiration, and not by logic or human reason in any sense.⁷³

Reason remains the handmaid of faith. That faith is admittedly untraditional, but it is never presented as a product of rational reflection. Zwingli appeals primarily to the authority of scripture and the Holy Spirit who enables the elect to grasp its meaning aright. Reason still merely helps to understand, explain, and defend divine revelation.⁷⁴

In some ways, Zwingli even restricts the role of dialectic more than his medieval predecessors had. For them, the true faith consisted in whatever has been revealed or is logically deducible therefrom. Zwingli maintains that it consists only in what has been revealed, either objectively in scripture, or subjectively to the hearts and minds of the elect. The two reduce to one, since the true meaning of scripture is accessible only to those who have already been inspired directly.

Another way of looking at this is to recall the distinction that Thomism drew between the natural, or unaided, powers of reason and those of reason that has been enlightened by God. The latter is related to the Augustinean concept of illumination. For Zwingli, there is no possibility of unaided means to a true knowledge of God. All dialectic is consequently inspired rationality when employed by the faithful theologian. Zwingli could then make the more genuinely revolutionary point that, as Berengar had said, where reason and tradition conflict, it is the latter that has erred.

To opponents who still defined the faith in conventional terms, placing reason above the tradition seemed to mean placing it above piety and revelation itself. Disregarding his claim to inspiration (which Berengar had not made), they saw Zwingli using reason to determine what scripture must mean and what faith must therefore profess, as if theology should move from understanding to belief. Like Berengar, Abelard, or Scotus Erigena, Zwingli could easily appear to be evaluating the mysteries of the faith according to human standards and asking that the more rational interpretation prevail because of its superior rationality. Where Aquinas had said, in effect, "My faith is traditional, hence true, hence rational," Zwingli seemed to be saying "My faith is untraditional, but rational, hence true." Where convention held that the true faith would be more rational, Zwingli was apparently arguing that the more rational faith would be true. Faith would then depend upon reason in an unacceptable way. When he used reason to overthrow traditional beliefs and establish something else in their place, he was allowing reason to play a part it was not supposed to play. So long as the Christian tradition could be said to embody the true faith, Zwingli's critique was bound to make him appear excessively rationalist.⁷⁵

This is clearly how most Lutherans have viewed him. A strictly Ockhamist education commonly encouraged the anti-intellectual tendencies in Western theology. When pressed, Luther would defend his position on

the eucharist by denying that rational arguments had any necessary connection with faith. One had only to accept and believe the word of God. It need not be understood or explained intellectually, and it certainly did not have to conform to the abstract laws that govern human reason.⁷⁶ Zwingli seemed to disagree. Incomprehensible portions of the tradition had previously been regarded as supra-rational and accommodated. Now they were apparently to be eliminated: "*Deus nobis non proponit incomprehensibilia.*"⁷⁷ Reason determined what may be believed, and since Zwingli did not allow the reason of God to transcend that of man, there was no place left for mystery. Human reason was perfectly adequate to the meaning of revelation.⁷⁸ The traditional conception of the latter would therefore have to be revised to bring it into line with the former. Reason thus became the mistress and judge of faith.

Zwingli, of course, continued to insist that his understanding of scripture was by inspiration, not reason, that the Bible interprets itself, that faith alone was the source of his exegetical analysis (792).⁷⁹ But, since inspiration and faith coincided with reason to so great an extent that there could be no real difference between them, and since the conclusions they reached were at odds with tradition, his disclaimers were simply discounted. They were even somewhat beside the point. For, if revelation cannot exceed the grasp of reason, and if reason can establish a new interpretation in place of the traditional one, then Zwingli is still more rationalist than his opponents, and more than medieval theology in general, even if the substance of that new interpretation had been given by inspiration, with reason serving only to support it.

Zwingli and Luther agreed, on the other hand, that scripture is the only objective criterion of faith and inspiration. In the debate over the eucharist, however, it was precisely the meaning of scripture that had come into question. Zwingli's critique of tradition seemed overly rationalist. But dogmatic theology is no longer just a process of drawing conclusions from the data of revelation once it becomes apparent that the data itself requires interpretation. Reason cannot easily be restricted to a supporting, confirming function so long as it also participates in the constitution of those same basic premises from which conclusions are then to be deduced. The eucharistic controversy acquired and retained its significance, then, largely because it raised serious doubts, not only about particular doctrines, but about the foundations of all doctrine. It brought home the fact that the meaning of revelation could never be taken for granted, and that no procedures existed that would guarantee a consensus of opinion about it.⁸⁰

* * *

Zwingli's critical relation to tradition is, however, enhanced by an attempt to discover the proper alternative. Having eliminated the false eucharistic

doctrine, he is compelled to identify the true. This he would do by faith alone: the true, inward faith that can be acquired only by grace operating directly through personal inspiration (797-8).⁸¹ For subjective faith may also be objectified as doctrine and practice. Its truth, moreover, can be demonstrated. Zwingli will thus establish and defend it against the non-elect. How does he proceed?

The matter/spirit opposition will not by itself suffice, since there are others who employ it to defend unacceptable conclusions.⁸² Scripture provides the necessary rule of faith, but, since there are many whom the Spirit has not enlightened, its proper meaning has not always been recognized. An interpretation is clear and certain, however, to the extent that it puts all the relevant pieces together without self-contradiction. Scripture "explains itself" inasmuch as the larger context makes each portion comprehensible, and related passages clarify one another. That doctrine is inspired and true which not only eschews natural reason and things of sense, avoiding the tangle of crossed categories that these would create in theology, but also presents itself as a "beautifully harmonized whole [*belle concinnatum corpus*]" in which "everything squares [*ut omnia quadrent*]" (798).⁸³ In the dispute over the eucharist, a fully consistent interpretation is achieved only when the words of institution are read in a figurative manner. When Christ says, "This is my body," He really means "This signifies my body," or "is a symbol [*symbolum*]" of it (798).

In the pages that follow, I want to examine some unfamiliar aspects of this figurative reading, particularly its relation to the logic inherent in the theory of language that it presumes. Naturally, I shall not attempt to determine whether Zwingli's symbolic doctrine is indeed the most faithful to the true meaning of scripture. But I do hope to show that it is implicated in what occurs upon this "metalogical" level.⁸⁴

In certain respects this may already be apparent. The distinction between human and nonhuman nature, for example, quickly proves more than Zwingli's oppositional logic can handle. "Human nature" has, indeed, always been a problem for Christian theology. As a way of explaining our participation in both the spiritual and material spheres, it usually functions less as a point of contact than as the field upon which they collide and begin their "constant struggle and contest." The opposition between mankind and the beast should be less severe than that between spirit and matter. Yet in essence it is the same opposition. The body and its appetites may thus be viewed as something fundamentally inappropriate for mankind, something un- or even anti-natural for what is truly and distinctively human in us. Eventually, the term "nature" can signify both what is proper and what is most improper for a being whose true essence is spiritual and ultimately not of this world. The more pertinent question, however, is whether anyone who has denied the separability of substance and accident

could feel wholly at ease discussing the issue in terms of a radical difference underlying all apparent affinities.

A further complication stems from the fact that reason itself cannot be located exclusively on the side of human nature. Following in the mainstream of Western thought, Zwingli distinguishes mankind by its orderliness and consequent capacity for reason. Our possession of a rational soul, the *mens*, is the basic difference between human beings and the rest of material creation, where the passions of the body hold sway. This conventional distinction is disturbed, however, by the universality of natural law. Instituted directly by God, moreover, that "so-called" law will also be perfectly rational. Mere nature too will then be governed by the principle of noncontradiction. Logic thus emerges on both sides of what was to have been the great ontological divide. True, human reason is not the same as that which rules over the natural world. The question is, whether the difference amounts to a distinction as sharp as Zwingli (and not only Zwingli) would like.

Similarly, reason does not respect his division between faith and sense. The law of noncontradiction is the primary formal criterion of truth itself. It is consequently vital to both theology and philosophy. The distinction between natural reason and dialectic will not help here, for Zwingli has insisted that faith and the testimony of sense-experience have nothing whatever in common. They are "essentially different" means of knowing "essentially different" things. Yet both are governed by a single principle or set of principles for the formulation and interrelation of statements. The true faith must be self-consistent, but so must natural reasoning from sense. The difference between them, between theology and philosophy, was established by logic on ontological grounds. Logic protects that difference with its formally rational laws. But this logical "distance" will be crossed after all, by formal rationality itself. Transgressing in this way the very limits that it sets up and maintains, reason also "cancels" the boundary (or "guard rail") between spirit and matter. Their conceptual purity is tainted in reality if the principles and procedures that are proper to the one are applicable, indeed, natural and necessary, to the other as well. The two are conjoined by reason and a mingling of contraries, condemned on the level of explicit argumentation, accordingly takes place on the methodological level.

Presuming, however, that matter and faith belong to different worlds, Zwingli revises the eucharistic tradition along nonmaterial lines. The Body is not required, and would clearly be out of place, at this sacrament of faith. Yet Christ's own words suggest that it is present all the same. It is certain, therefore, that these words have been misunderstood. To grasp their true meaning one must be inspired with true faith and consequently able to read them in an appropriately "spiritual" manner (785-8).⁸⁵ What

Zwingli does not perceive is that, to provide a figurative interpretation, he must adopt, and thus in some sense reaffirm, the logic of his opponents. How so?

Since the meaning of the sacrament is essentially spiritual, Zwingli decides that "in our passage we must consult faith." With faith (and therefore the Holy Spirit) as our guide, we discover that here, as in so many places, Scripture requires a non-literal reading (792, 798).⁸⁶ Once again, Zwingli is turning traditional means to radical ends. The classical distinction between the spirit and the letter (or substance and accidents) of a text had long been acknowledged, with theologians generally agreeing that "one must go beyond the explicit language of the Bible to its deeper intent."⁸⁷ In addition to a straightforward narrative of events and prescriptions, there were a variety of non-literal, suprahistorical dimensions (allegorical, tropological, anagogical, etc.). By the late medieval era, as many as six had been identified. They provided a deeper, fuller understanding of the word. The text had merely to be read in an appropriately "spiritual" manner.⁸⁸

For Zwingli, only in this way did the *viva vox Evangelii* become accessible, through which Christ presents Himself to the reader or listener in a spiritual sense.⁸⁹ Thus, he may have disliked the esoteric quality of humanist allegorical exegesis, but from Erasmus he gained an interest in the rhetorical and figurative dimensions of the text. There were times, indeed, when nothing else made sense, and among them Zwingli included the words of institution (795ff.).⁹⁰ Theologians had, of course, always recognized the existence of tropes in the Bible. If a literal reading was possible as well, however, it too would normally be acknowledged. In other words, the spiritual reading supplemented the literal: transcending, but never negating, it. Even Erasmus, whose own interpretation tends in that direction, never sent so far as to deny the literal version of Christ's eucharistic words. In Zwingli, the spiritual and the literal are incompatible.⁹¹

True faith tells us that "is," the most important word, "must be taken in the sense of 'signifies [*significat*]' " (796-8, 799-801). The bread and wine are therefore only "symbols" of the Body and Blood (798, 807).⁹² Accordingly, the rite itself does not impart grace. It merely signifies the fact that God's saving grace has already been imparted, once and for all, through the sacrifice of the Cross (761, 807).⁹³ The Supper is therefore not a true reenactment, but only a (Platonic) representation (*adumbratio*) of those historical events. It is a commemorative ceremony (*commemoratio*) in which the faithful thankfully recall and proclaim their spiritual salvation in an especially vivid manner, bear communal witness to their faith, and commit themselves to a life of Christian virtue (802, 805, 807).⁹⁴ At most it strengthens their faith and commitment by symbolically reassuring them of divine forgiveness.⁹⁵

In the light of this basic insight, other passages requiring that one eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son can be explained in similar fashion. They refer metaphorically to the act of faith itself: "edere est credere." Believing means that one receives the word of God into one's heart and mind (*spiritum ac mentem*). Believing in Christ and his historical accomplishment, one "ingests" his spirit, upon which the soul is nourished. Nourished by Christ, one begins to live a Christian life. He dwells within us and we in him – but spiritually only, never in a fleshly way (776-784, 807, 818).⁹⁶ The faithful are those who "feed" upon the Spirit, not those who profess their "belief" in the presence of a mysteriously nonsensible object of sense. A proper understanding of the sacrament is thus achieved at last.⁹⁷ Together with the literal reading, the sensual, creaturely ritual is overthrown. In its place, we have a purely spiritual faith in God alone (781-2, 785ff.). The erroneousness of the former is proved by both scripture and common sense. The propriety of the latter is shown by the fact that only through metaphor and symbol can perfect clarity and consistency – hence the truth – be obtained.⁹⁸

Now, the manifest framework for this theory is Zwingli's doctrine of the sacraments (757-762).⁹⁹ Here he combines a Reformer's belief in the sufficiency of the Cross with a Platonist's mind/body opposition, to produce a philologically grounded redefinition in terms of classical semiotics. The effort is legitimated, however, less by its humanist-inspired philology than by the fact that, at least since Augustine, each sacrament had customarily been viewed as a sign or figure: *sacrae rei signum, invisibilis gratiae visibilis figura sive forma*.¹⁰⁰ Zwingli accepts the conventional view, but gives it an unconventional twist by emphasizing the premanence of the gap or distance between *signum* and *res*, as well as the consequent impossibility of any substantial, objective union between them. If it actually contained the sanctifying grace that it signifies, the sacrament would no longer be a sign; it would be the thing itself: *sacra res*. But then, perforce, it would cease to be a sacrament: *sacrae rei signum* (757).¹⁰¹

As a visible sign of invisible grace, each sacrament is at bottom only a sensible image (*exemplum*), reflection, or shadow (*umbras quasdam ac species*) of the transcendent reality that it signifies.¹⁰² Between the reality and the sign, moreover, there is only an historical connection, never a natural, ontological one. Otherwise the higher order would be subservient to the lower, compelled to present itself whenever the latter required. The Holy Spirit, however, is the true mediator of grace, and it cannot be compelled by any creature, nor require the assistance of any material element (761). The Spirit might well become present to the soul or mind, but only through the will of God and never "organically" or as a necessary consequence of anything one may bring, do, or say. The signified is not bound to the signs, so grace cannot be embodied in them.¹⁰³ Indeed, it is basic to

Zwingli's Augustinian/Platonic theory that no sign can ever "cause" what it signifies to become present in any way except spiritually, recollectively, to the mind and never corporeally or "in" any material object (761, 773, 798-801).¹⁰⁴ To maintain the contrary, as the tradition does, is to promote idolatry (761).¹⁰⁵

What, then, is the true function of these sacred signs? First, as a solemn oath or pledge or respect and allegiance (*consignatio, oppignoratio*: the classical meaning of the term), they set a seal upon a conversion through election to grace (759, 761).¹⁰⁶ Thus, they bear dramatic witness to the possession and public profession of faith. Identifying one as a Christian, they secure an initiation (*initiatio*) into the visible Church which, in accepting the believer and sharing his or her oath, reaffirms its own essential unity (807).¹⁰⁷ Subsequently, they represent a renewal of that pledge, hence a repeated confirmation of one's faith, as well as a commitment to God, the Church, and a life of Christian virtue (759, 761).¹⁰⁸

Second, they are a symbolic commemoration of the life and redeeming death of Our Lord. They were instituted by Christ himself and, in performing them, the community of professed believers together recalls and reflects upon the timeless words and historic deeds of the One who has obtained our salvation. As a communal re-enactment, the sacraments have a recollective power that even scripture does not possess and so deserve to be recognized as holy.¹⁰⁹

Thus, after the *Commentary*, but still well before Marburg, Zwingli was able to strengthen his position by arguing that Christ is present in the eucharist after all, but spiritually only, within the soul of the believer, and not in a bodily manner.¹¹⁰ The bread and wine remain unchanged. They are still essentially symbols or signs, and Zwingli always refuses to allow the sort of self-referentiality implied by the traditional doctrine. Following the established sign theory, he argues instead for an idealist alternative. That which is signified remains ontologically distinct. The sign, however, re-presents it in a mysterious way to the properly receptive heart or mind.¹¹¹ It is not a physical presence, but that does not make it any the less real. It is a presence, moreover, of the entire Christ (*totus Christus*). The body is not excluded. It has admittedly been spiritualized – "*Spiritualis est ista corporis praesentia*"; "*Sic in coena Christi corpus . . . praesentia est fidei contemplatione menti*" – but it is still the true body (*verum Christi corpus*), the same that was born of the Virgin and died upon the cross. The faithful receive this body *in mentem* and their souls are fed upon its (spiritual) substance.¹¹²

Zwingli in this way attempted to meet the objection that his tropic/symbolic doctrine removed the sacred from the sacrament by excluding Christ Himself from the Supper. Given his idea of a spiritual real presence, opponents could no longer say that he regarded the bread and wine as

"empty" signs. The true Body and Blood were present, but in a purely spiritual manner (*spiritualis sive mentalis, fidei contemplatione, nur gedächlich, trachtlicher Anschauung*), not materially (*wesentlich, leiblich, naturaliter, corporea*): in the mind and not in the sign; a presence of the Body but not a bodily presence.¹¹³ Materially, the Body has ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father. On earth the only material "body" of Christ is the congregation itself, the true Church or community of Christian believers.¹¹⁴

Like Erasmus, with his similarly spiritualized interpretation, Zwingli was now able to employ many more of the traditional eucharistic formulae of the Church. True, he did not mean what the tradition meant by them. The phrase *unio sacramentalis*, for example, no longer designated a miraculous identity of Body and bread, but a relation in the mind between the eucharistic sign and that which it signified. Yet Zwingli had reduced the distance between himself and his major opponents, particularly the Lutherans. The entire controversy accordingly became subtler and more complicated. The presence itself was no longer the problem. Increasingly it was the question of its precise location and mode.¹¹⁵

For Lutherans and Catholics, both the spiritual real presence *in mente* and the Church as the body of Christ were entirely acceptable, indeed, necessary doctrines. For Erasmian Catholics, a personal, quasi-mystical possession of, or by, the spirit of Christ was both the goal of religious devotion and practically the only doctrine that really mattered. But none of his opponents could accept Zwingli's complete exclusion of a material presence in the elements. Not regarding the two modes as mutually exclusive, they continued to maintain that the true Body and Blood become substantially (i.e., materially) present in, with, or under the elements of bread and wine, even as Christ becomes spiritually present within the souls of those who consume them, whether believer or not.¹¹⁶

Catholics and Lutherans also objected to Zwingli's idea of how precisely the spiritual presence was effected. For Zwingli, the crucial factor was not a technically correct administration of the rite, but the faith of an inspired communicant. Christ becomes spiritually present in response to this faith and therefore only for those who possess it. In them, the rational soul responds to the symbolism of the sacrament by vividly recalling all that it signifies. Their faith is then aroused through contemplation. Christ himself is the object of this faith, and he now becomes present *fidei contemplatione, durch Betrachtung des Glaubens*, penetrating deep within the ecstatically receptive soul (or mind) to bring the act of communion to a climax.¹¹⁷

That Christ's spirit is communally recollected through the liturgy of the eucharist is an idea that was taken for granted by the primitive Church. Zwingli could have derived it from either Erasmus or the Fathers. Acknowledging, however, the doctrine's Platonic roots, scholars have lately begun

to speak of Zwingli's "anamnestic" real presence and to relate him more directly to the idealist tradition in metaphysics.¹¹⁸ By doing so they make it more difficult for critics to describe Zwingli's presence as merely subjective, or that of his opponents as objective and therefore more real. For Zwingli, it is still Christ himself who becomes present within the believing subject, and in each believer the same as in every other. Though it depends upon the pre-existing faith of the individual heart or mind, the presence is not the latter's work. The rational soul does not simply reflect upon the past, and it does not generate the spirit of Christ out of itself. The presence is effected by the Holy Spirit. It is a divine gift, just like true faith and no more subjective than the latter (though also no less).¹¹⁹ The spiritual presence *in mente* is certainly no mere word or *esse apparens*, and it has more than mental existence. Christ, a subsistent reality, also has formal existence *extra mentem*, in heaven at the right hand of the Father and, in His divinity, ubiquitously. For Zwingli, moreover, there is an exact correspondence between the two modes. It is the same Christ in each case, always both body and spirit. Only the modality differs. In heaven it is spiritual and corporeal; in the eucharist and elsewhere it is spiritual only.¹²⁰

Zwingli therefore considered his spiritual presence as objective as anything that Luther or the Catholics could offer. It was simply "located" within the faithful *mens*, a relation of spirit to spirit, and not in, with, or under the bread and wine. It was also not material – "nicht leiblich," "nicht wesentlich leiblich" – but in a Christian context this was not necessarily a disadvantage. Still, the spiritual presence could never quite refute the charge that Zwingli had devalued the sacrament. He did not consider it necessary for salvation. There were other means, sacramental and not, of affirming the solidarity and commitment of the Christian community. Only the eucharist had provided immediate, personal contact with Christ. A purely spiritual communion was not so determinate an experience. It was basic to Zwingli's redefinition of faith in terms of inspiration. He associated both the real presence and the *manducatio spiritualis* less with a particular sacramental situation than with a general belief in Christ and his redeeming sacrifice: "quum igitur fides adest homini, habet deum praesentem."¹²¹ Scripture too contained and could convey the spiritual presence of Christ, especially when it was preached directly to an assembly of believers.¹²² Communion with Christ may remain the focal point of Zwingli's theology; the importance of the Supper was nonetheless diminished.

A second and perhaps more serious problem lies in the relation between the spiritual real presence and the body/spirit opposition. For, without revising the latter, Zwingli had come around to the idea of a noncorporeal, in fact spiritual, Body.¹²³ His opponents complained that this would be no true Body at all, and that Zwingli's spiritual presence was therefore not fully real. Zwingli himself was more troubled by the discord between his

later eucharistic doctrine and the more consistently mind-over-matter metaphysics of the *Commentary*. Where precise formulations were necessary (e.g., in the official confession submitted to Charles V at the Diet of Augsburg), he tended to move back toward his earlier conception by suggesting that a contemplative presence of the true Body meant that Christ's physical being is present only "in a sense," or "in a manner of speaking," and not *per essentiam et realiter*.¹²⁴

In any event, all the sacraments retained only an auxiliary purpose and value in Zwingli's eyes. Faith alone is necessary and it is a divine gift. The sacraments, "properly speaking," presuppose this faith and therefore the grace of God. They cannot engender, or add anything to, either. Divinely instituted, they are nevertheless performed by human hands, and so can never "bring [*conferre, adferre, dispensare*]" anything divine. They do not even convey the forgiveness of sins or any other form of grace, for the Spirit alone does that. The sacraments function only as signs: signs, indeed, of grace, but of grace already granted and bestowed (*factae gratiae signum*). They cannot save us and one may even be saved without them (757-762).¹²⁵

Even as signs their role is limited. They cannot really strengthen or increase one's faith, for example, nor are they able to assuage the troubled conscience (759).¹²⁶ The sacraments serve, rather, as means of disciplining the senses to the service of faith. Material objects and gestures are employed ritualistically to captivate the senses and hold them in check as the transcendent reality of divine will and grace are recalled through representation. Thus, by a sort of holy subterfuge, the senses are harnessed to the religious sentiments of the soul and reoriented indirectly toward specifically spiritual objects. In short, the sacraments have been given as a means of coping with the potentially disastrous inclinations of the body.¹²⁷

Throughout his sacramental theology, Zwingli is inspired by the ideal of consistency, strictly understood as propriety through discretion and grounded in an extreme version of the ancient matter/spirit duality.¹²⁸ This leads to the view that, where "bodily and material" factors are at issue, sense perception has authority and a straightforward understanding will be appropriate. The objects and gestures involved in the practice of the sacrament are indeed what they appear to be. In spiritual matters, on the other hand – the meaning, or essential reality, of the sacrament – faith holds sway and a figurative understanding may therefore make more sense. In his theory of the eucharist, Zwingli accordingly combines a literal interpretation of the physical elements (substantially they are nothing but ordinary bread and wine) with a metaphoric interpretation of the essential language (*est = significat*) to produce a symbolic doctrine (bread and wine are merely signs of the body and blood of Christ).

But the effort to achieve consistency by isolating ontological domains, each with its own epistemological mode and hermeneutical technique,

encounters curious difficulties that relate to Zwingli's conventional view of language. If "is" means "signifies," then reality is something other than what the senses perceive. In the given context, one linguistic entity has actually become another. This is, to be sure, only the standard conception of metaphor. But that conception arises out of classical metaphysics and, in its logical structure, is itself a doctrine of trans- or even consubstantiation: the enduring sensual attributes of one element concealing from the senses the fact that a fundamental change has occurred and, in some essential way, another element is now in truth present. *In speciem* we may still have "is," but *vere, realiter et substantialiter* we have "signifies."¹²⁹

The analogy is improved when Zwingli adds that figurative language is not only necessary ("for we cannot conveniently employ even everyday speech without metaphor and metalepsis [*citra metaphores et metalepses*]"), but also enhances the status of an ordinary entity: "it has a far higher value than if you had left it . . . in its proper use [*in . . . proprio usu*]" (797). Thus, he employs the same logic whose disdain for the most basic of formal proprieties appalls him when it appears in a doctrine of the sacraments. Thrown out the front door, as it were, the "monster" is brought back through the rear to help put the house in order.

Zwingli's appeal to metaphor, and his view of language in general, may be related to the spirit/matter opposition. A valid doctrine of the Supper must include the true meaning of Christ's words (*mentem verborum Christi*). According to sense-experience, the crucial passage contains the word "is." But meaning is not sensuous. Ultimately it is accessible only to the rational soul. Enlightened by faith, and with the aid of dialectic, the human *mens* divines the real, nonsensible nature of the word and therefore the truth of the sacrament. In its linguistic dimension, this is something quite different from what the senses show. For, under special circumstances, the substance of one word may be turned into that of another. Since the material realm is truly known by sense-experience, the bread and wine can never be subject to this mysterious, quasi-magical tropic power. The very idea of a sensuous object that could not be known by sense is simply perverse. It is an offense against the natural, like-to-like order of things and so deserves to be censured in moral, as well as intellectual, terms ("corrumpere, . . . turbare, adulterare ac depravare": 907). Traditionalists appeal to faith. But faith does not belong in the material realm. It cannot do with corporeal bodies what Zwingli would have it do with the words of institution: interpret metaphorically, so that one thing becomes two things at once. Zwingli's critique of the "flesh eaters" thus involves a reassertion of the historically predominant philosophical perspective, at a point where Christian theology tended to turn in other directions.¹³⁰

Up to a point, of course, Zwingli's position has the support of both common sense and experience. Material objects are known by sense perception.

The bread cannot be a material metaphor – and therefore really the Body – because the senses deny it. Language, on the other hand, is composed of intelligible objects with an essentially representational function. Thus, their meaning may be grasped in a more immediate manner. And while experience teaches that any object may represent another, only words can actually be two things at once, since their meaning is their being. Language alone, then, has the potential for metaphor. The consecrated bread and wine can never do more than symbolize Christ, who accordingly becomes present only in an intelligible sense.

In fact, however, the distinction is less than absolute. Words are not purely ideal objects. They normally have a sensible dimension as well. Spoken, they are heard; written, they may be seen or touched. When Zwingli refers to a “body” of discourse (*sermonis corpus*: 798), it is not really certain that this is only a figure of speech. A purely ideal language has in any case never existed and is difficult even to imagine. In all true language, the sensible and intelligible realms overlap, so that every metaphoric usage is already in some ways a physical, sensible phenomenon.¹³¹

Zwingli, however, would acknowledge the possibility only of corporeal symbols and signs. While Catholics and Lutherans attempted to modify prevailing aspects of the metaphysical heritage in ways that would allow for a corporeal metaphor in the eucharist, Zwingli’s more traditional framework closed off access to the often perplexing nature of language. It had to be located on one side or the other of his basic conceptual dichotomy.¹³²

Then, too, Zwingli complains that the traditional doctrine has bound together essentially incompatible modes, whether of being (material bread and spirit of Christ) or knowing (believing one eats the sensible Body and Blood). Yet by calling upon metaphor, that is what he himself must do. For the structure of metaphor is such that it does not work at all unless both the sensuous and the “spiritual,” the literal and the figurative, are actively involved. Like all tropes, it entails a conjunction of categories and is consequently inhospitable to the desire for pure distinctions. Indeed, from the perspective of that desire and the laws of proper reason, there is always something paradoxical, if not uncanny, about metaphor. Its own curious logic is characteristically a form of transgression.

When, for example, John 6:63 is described as a “wall of bronze” that advocates of a corporeal presence can neither surmount nor get around, this is clearly a figure of speech (785). If it is to be successful, however, certain of the literal, sensuous qualities of such a wall must also be discernible within the scriptural passage, perhaps even within the one who cites it.¹³³ The passage in fact becomes two (or more) “things” at once. Similarly, the consecrated bread is understood by traditionalists in a figurative and, simultaneously, in a literal sense: figurative, since they hold it to be in

reality something different from what it seems; literal, since certain qualities of the bread – notably its power to nourish life – are to be found within the body of Christ as well.

The same applies to the relation between “is” and “signifies,” where the latter is a way of saying “makes present to the mind.” Zwingli himself will occasionally acknowledge the existence of a “certain affinity” between the literal and figurative senses of a word.¹³⁴ Christ can be called the “lamb” of God, and Zwingli will explain how this really means only that, in certain respects, Christ is *like* a lamb. He possesses some of the attributes and serves the main functions of this traditional animal of sacrifice and atonement. But in that case the literal meaning still has at least partial validity. There is enough of an overlap for Christ to be meaningfully described as a lamb. For Zwingli, however, even significant affinities do not bridge the ontological gap between distinct identities. He therefore regards such passages as examples of purely figurative usage, in which the tie that binds is nominal rather than real (795-8).¹³⁵

Again, the ritual of the Supper may be a Platonic reflection of certain historical and suprahistorical events. These may even become present in a spiritual manner, “propter significationem et analogiam.” Yet the material rite remains entirely extrinsic to the reality it represents. Earthly signifier and divine signified have nothing in common beyond a certain, purely formal (and therefore insubstantial) similarity.¹³⁶

It is not easy to see how two things could share the same logical structure yet remain utterly distinct. Given his matter/spirit opposition and strict interpretation of identity and difference, one may also wonder whether Zwingli could ever provide a satisfactory account of the symbolic, analogical relations he sees in the eucharist. How could the material elements and gestures of the sacrament have come to represent the purely spiritual realities of the faith in the first place? How could the individual *mens* respond to them, or to any material sign? How, indeed, is signification, and especially symbolic signification, possible at all if the factors involved can only be related in terms of externality and difference? Could meaningful relations of any sort be formed? Zwingli cites historical contiguities: Christ broke bread, gave it to his disciples, etc.; we do the same and are reminded of him. But this is less an explanation than a further dimension of the problem. How are even chance connections possible where pure difference and opposition are the rule? If possible, could they be meaningful enough to be institutionalized? Would sharply delimited and apparently arbitrary historical relations really account for the full range and depth of the symbolism contained in the eucharist, or for its significance? Ultimately one suspects that the symbolic, analogical significance of Christian imagery requires a broader and more complex conception of cultural, and perhaps even of natural, history. Such a conception, however, would

likely raise doubts about the arbitrariness of the sign and the purity of the gap between the elements it relates.¹³⁷

Finally, even in so spiritual a matter as the interpretation of Christ's eucharistic language, Zwingli himself is compelled to mingle sense and faith. Otherwise the critical passage could never be read at all. The copula and predicate may be taken by faith in a figurative sense. But the subject, "This," must still be a literal reference to the bread that the senses perceive. Whatever its significance, that bread will then have to be regarded, even by faith, as a sensuous, material object, or Zwingli's figurative reading will not stand. Of course, traditional doctrine cannot prevent a similar conjunction of sense and faith. It merely reverses their positions: "is" being taken literally (that is, as what the eye shows it to be), "This" being read by the faithful in a figurative manner (and not simply as a reference to the bread). In fact, as far as literality and metaphor are concerned, there is no way to be perfectly consistent and still make sense of the passage. Either "This" or "is" must be read in a "spiritual" manner, but never both at once. One of them must always be taken literally, or the passage will indeed become nonsense, even for a believer.¹³⁸

Zwingli, however, has endeavoured to exclude the sensual dimension. Theologians had always believed that true doctrine must be a "beautifully harmonized body." Zwingli differed only by maintaining that this meant it must be thoroughly spiritualized. Unfortunately, a rather narrow idea of logical consistency leads him to rely upon a theory of metaphor in which that idea is consistently disregarded. In this way, a compulsion to purify the eucharist of "paradox" has inadvertently generated new paradoxes, considerably more complex and still less readily accommodated to Zwingli's point of view.¹³⁹

* * *

The conflict over the eucharist in the sixteenth century was in many respects a conflict between different, yet similar, conceptions of interpretive method, especially regarding the role of formal rationality. The conflict persisted because no side could make an overwhelming case for its own reading of scripture, while there was much to be said in favour of each. Thus, Zwingli would grant that God could do what the literal reading implied, but would not agree that He had, or that the literal reading itself was valid. From the conventional belief in scripture's full organic integrity, he drew rather unconventional conclusions about the significance of John 6:63 and its relation to the sacrament. The impossibility of internal self-contradiction – within a single passage or between one passage and another – made a literal reading of the words of institution impossible. God does not behave illogically. Traditionalists agreed, but could not be compelled to accept John 6:63 as the determinative centre of interpretation.

Most were also unwilling to view the human idea of formal rationality as sufficient for God. A strong concern for logic and universal law may have been a prominent feature of scholastic thought, but in Zwingli it was informed by the combination of Platonist ontology with an equally strait-laced epistemology.¹⁴⁰

This unusual (though consistent) configuration enabled Zwingli to establish the Reformed Church as a vigorous alternative to existing confessional options. Yet his moralistic fervor for conceptual purity and consistency also blinded him to the ways in which the worship of these twin ideals may intensify the very problems they were to overcome. As a Christian theologian of the early modern era, Zwingli had, of course, an historical right to his puritanical view of language, truth, and logic. Today, in a supposedly secularized context, it is less easily justified.

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Notes

- 1 The Marburg Articles (Oct., 1529), in *Huldreich Zwinglis sämtliche Werke*, ed. Emil Egli, et al. (Berlin, Leipzig, Zürich, 1905-), VI/ii 510-23; and Zwingli's notes for a public explication of them, *ibid.*, 532-51. See also Walther Köhler, *Das Marburger Religionsgespräch 1529. Versuch einer Rekonstruktion* (Leipzig, 1929).
- 2 In 1929, members of the Reformed Church met with a congenial group of Lutherans in Marburg to mark the 400th anniversary of the famous colloquy. A common celebration of the Lord's Supper was planned. Then reliving more of the past than they had bargained for, the two delegations fell out over the formula to be used, and the idea had to be abandoned once again (Walther Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther, ihr Streit über das Abendmahl nach seinen politischen und religiösen Beziehungen*, Vol. II: *Vom Beginn der Marburger Verhandlungen 1529 bis zum Abschluss der Wittenberger Konkordie von 1536*, ed. Ernst Kohlmeyer and Heinrich Bornkamm (Gütersloh, 1953), p. 138, n. 6; cf. Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Riddle of Roman Catholicism* (New York, 1959), p. 237 and Gottfried W. Locher, "Discord Among Guests: Lessons to be Learned From the Reformers' Debate About the Lord's Supper For a Contemporary Understanding and Celebration" (1970-2), in *Zwingli's Thought: New Perspectives* (Leiden, 1981), pp. 303-39, which presents a more hopeful view).
- 3 *De vera et falsa religione commentarius* (Mar., 1525), in *Sämtliche Werke* (referred to hereafter as "Z") III 628-911. In quoting I have usually employed the English version found in *The Latin Works and Correspondence of Huldreich Zwingli*, ed. Clarence Nevin Heller, III (Philadelphia, 1929), 43-343.
- 4 *The Commentary* is also generally regarded as the first example of Protestant dogmatics. Surprisingly, there have been few extended studies. Köhler's Introduction (pp. 590-622), August Baur's discussion in his monumental study, *Zwinglis Theologie, ihr Werden und ihr System*, I (Halle, 1885), pp. 380-461, Paul Wernle's in his *Zwingli*, Vol. II of *Die evangelische Glaube nach den Hauptschriften der Reformatoren* (Tübingen, 1919), pp. 143-245, and Rudolf Staehelin's account in his *Huldreich Zwingli, sein Leben und Wirken nach den Quellen dargestellt*, I (Basle, 1897), 419-34 are the most important. None has treated the *Commentary* in quite the way I do.
- 5 *Subsidium sive coronis de eucharistia* (Aug., 1525), Z IV 440-504; *Amica Exegesis, id est: expositio eucharistiae negotii ad Martinum Lutherum* (Feb., 1527), Z V 548-758; *Freundliche Verglimpfung über die Predigt Luthers wider die Schwärmer* (Mar., 1527), Z V 763-94; and *Fidei Uldrici Zwinglii ratio ad Carolum Romanorum Imperatorum* (Jul., 1530), Z VI/ii 753-817, especially 803-12, might all be mentioned.

- 6 The distinction between Creator and creature, hence between *Gotteswort* and *Menschenwort*, is found in Zwingli's thought from the time of his earliest preaching in Zürich, and constitutes the opposition between true and false religion. His first writings (e.g., *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Aug., 1522, Z I 249-327 and *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit des Wortes Gottes*, Sep., 1522, Z I 328-84) accordingly challenged the authority of both the Church hierarchy and its councils. The First Zürich Disputation (Jan., 1523) and Zwingli's subsequent explanation of the sixty-seven theses he defended there (*Auslegen und Grunde der Schlussreden*, Jul., 1523, Z II 1-457) made his position even clearer. The distinction between divine and human authority was, of course, traditional. In Catholic minds, however, the decrees of Popes and councils, etc., represented the former.
- 7 Cf. the *Auslegen*, Z II 25-6. This is the famous "pneumatological emphasis" or "presupposition" that is so important in Zwingli's theology and in that of the Reformed faith in general (Gottfried W. Locher, "The Characteristic Features of Zwingli's Theology in Comparison With Luther and Calvin" (1966), in *Zwingli's Thought*, pp. 147-8, 156; *Die Zwinglische Reformation im Rahmen der europäischen Kirchengeschichte* (Göttingen and Zürich, 1979), p. 208; cf. J.V. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, ed. A. Vacant, et al., XV, 2 (Paris, 1950), col. 3765; Gottfried W. Locher, *Zwingli und die schweizerische Reformation* (Göttingen, 1982), p. 56; "How the Image of Zwingli Has Changed in Recent Research" (1962-5), in *Zwingli's Thought*, pp. 56-7, 67; "Zwingli and Erasmus" (1969), in *ibid*, p. 252; and Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought From Its Judaic and Hellenistic Origins to Existentialism*, ed. Carl E. Braaten (1967; rpt. New York, 1968), p. 272). It derives from Plato, whose doctrine of reminiscence Augustine had transformed into a theory of divine illumination. As such it turns up repeatedly among the more Augustinian theologians, as well as in Renaissance humanism (e.g., in the *Enchiridion* of Erasmus) and Neoplatonism (e.g., in the younger Pico's *De praenotionibus*). In its Christianized form, the doctrine explained all truth, both sacred and profane, as a direct gift of God who, as the "intelligible light," illuminates the mind through the agency of His Holy Spirit, enabling it to perceive both "the relation of created things to eternal supersensible realities," and "the elements of necessity, immutability, and eternity in that relation between concepts which is expressed in the necessary judgment" (Frederick Copleston, *Medieval Philosophy: Augustine to Bonaventure*, Vol. II/i of *A History of Philosophy* (1950; rpt. Garden City, N.Y., 1962), pp. 77, 82; David Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought* (New York, 1962), p. 241; cf. *Commentary*, pp. 664, 853; *Von göttlicher und menschlicher Gerechtigkeit*, Jul., 1523, Z II 475; *Sermonis de providentia dei anamnema*, Aug., 1530, Z VI/iii 72-5; *Annotationes in Evangelium Ioannis*, in *Huldrici Zwinglii Opera*, ed. Melchior Schuler and Joh. Schulthess (hereafter referred to as "S"), Zürich, 1828-42, VI/i 683; *Auslegen der Schlussreden*, Z II 98-9; cf. also Pollet, col. 3776). Reformed theologians went on to argue that not only truth, but election, grace, and faith itself are entirely the work of the Holy Spirit, who communicates directly with the inward heart of man in order to produce or engender them there (*Commentary*, pp. 681, 757-62, 798; *Christianae fidei a Huldrycho Zwinglio praedicatae, brevis et clara expositio*, Jul., 1531, S IV 55; *Annot. in Evang. Ioannis*, S VI/i 702; *Eine Predigt von der ewig reinen Magd Maria*, Sep., 1522, Z I 411; *Auslegen*, Z II 111; *Adversus Hieronymum Emserum antibolon*, Aug., 1524, Z III 260, 263; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 591; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-4; *Annotationes in Evangelium Matthaei*, S VI/i 261; cf. Locher, *Zwingli und die schweizerische Reformation*, p. 56; Jacques Courvoisier, *Zwingli: A Reformed Theologian*, Richmond, Va., 1963, pp. 63-4; Walther Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther, ihr Streit über das Abendmahl*, Vol. I: *Die Religiöse und politische Entwicklung bis zum Marburger Religionsgespräch 1529*, Leipzig, 1924, pp. 487-8). Zwingli thus repudiates the authority of the Church by denying that its hierarchy and traditions are necessarily inspired. In so doing, he is repudiating the established court of appeal, the "rule of faith," that had for centuries been in force. For Zwingli, as for Luther before him and Calvin afterwards, *falsa religio* consists less in erroneous doctrine than in an erroneous criterion or method for evaluating doctrine in the first place: the illegitimacy of the traditional legitimating process.
- 8 Conclusions of the First Disputation at Zurich, Z I 559, 561; *Der Hirt* (Mar., 1524), Z III 22. There is a difference between the word that the Spirit implants into the heart and the word as it is transmitted to the world through the medium of human language. The one is apprehended immediately by the soul. In the second case, the same word has been given more objective

- form in preaching and in scripture. Embodied, it has also been debased, and now requires interpretation. Its true meaning must be uncovered. Only those who have already been inspired with faith can perform this task. Freely given by God, the internal, spiritual word ("interim verbum fidei, quod in mentibus fidelium sedet") has precedence and functions as a precondition for true comprehension of the external word ("exterius verbum," *Antibolon*, Z III 263; see also *Auslegen*, Z II 25-6, *Ad Theobaldi Billicani et Urbani Rhegii epistolas responsio*, Mar., 1526, Z IV 912; and *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit*, Z I 328-84, where "clarity" is related more to divine illumination of the subject than to the nature of scripture. Cf. Pollet, 3775; Locher, "How the Image of Zwingli Has Changed," p. 61; and Köhler, I, 474-5).
- 9 The notorious Berengar of Tours made a similar argument during the eucharistic debates of the 11th-12th centuries. He, however, appealed to learning, and especially to skill in dialectic (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Growth of Medieval Theology, 600-1300*, Vol. III of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, Chicago, 1978, pp. 216-7). Zwingli's emphasis upon subjective inspiration created certain tactical problems as well. Local radicals adopted it in order to justify views with which he himself did not agree, while Catholic and Lutheran opponents related the Zwinglian *Geistesprinzip* to that of outright "spiritualists" such as Schwenckfeld and Franck.
 - 10 Cf. *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit*: "I know for certain that God teaches me" since, after prayer, scripture became clearer by simply reading than by studying philosophy and theology: "a certain sign of God's intervention" (Z I 379). Thus was born that "complete self-confidence" for which Zwingli is renowned. Having received "the assurance that God would use him and direct his steps and thought to His chosen ends," the pastor of Einsiedeln and Zürich concluded that "his opponents were at best mistaken, at worst wickedly and vainly opposing God's chosen instrument" (G.R. Potter, *Zwingli*, Cambridge, 1976, p. 70).
 - 11 Cf. Locher, "The Characteristic Features of Zwingli's Theology," p. 148; *Die Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 202. Previously theology had for the most part regarded Revelation and tradition as coequal and completely harmonious (Pelikan *Growth of Medieval Theology*, p. 217). "Revelation," indeed, meant the interpretation of scripture that had become traditional within the Church. The enduring consensus of practice and belief embodied the divine will itself. To maintain the contrary – to suggest that true faith and tradition were really distinct, or even contradictory, things – implied a fundamental revision of the most important relations imaginable (*ibid*, pp. 98-9, 223-4, 285; Knowles, p. 94). There were, however, precedents. Luther had expressed a similar idea, and Erasmus had for years been emphasizing scripture and the Fathers to the detriment of subsequent developments. Erasmian humanism also helped to popularize the *Devotio moderna's* quasi-mystical idea of true faith as a direct apprehension or experience of divine truth. In the 14th century, William of Ockham had disregarded tradition in favor of scripture and explicit Papal pronouncements, while Wyclif had reduced the faith to the contents of scripture alone. Citing its doctrine of the eucharist, Berengar had held that tradition might be nothing but the institutionalization of an error.
 - 12 Cf. Luther's letter to the preachers of Strassburg, Nov., 1525. See Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism From Erasmus to Spinoza* (Berkeley, 1979), pp. 1-86 for a good account of how the problem later came to center stage in debates between Calvinists and Catholics in France.
 - 13 This had been Zwingli's conviction from the time of his service as "People's Priest" (*Leutpriester*) in Einsiedeln (1516-8), and his earliest writings affirm it unambiguously (see, e.g., *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 262, 269, 306, 324; *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit*, Z I 328, 365; Conclusions of the First Disputation at Zürich, Z I 484, 487-8, 558-9; *Auslegen*, Z I 323, 449; *Antwort auf Johannes Ecks Missiv und Entbieten* (Aug., 1524), Z III 310; *Wer Ursache gebe zu Aufruhr* (Dec., 1524), Z III 379; also *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 564 and *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 773. Cf. Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 154, 158).
 - 14 See also *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 259-61; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 809; *Über Doktor Martin Luthers Buch, Bekenntnis genannt, zwei Antworten von Johannes Oekolampad und Huldrych Zwingli* (Aug., 1528), Z VI/ii 124, 205; cf. *Eine klare Unterrichtung vom Nachtmahl Christi* (Feb., 1526), Z IV 831. All of Christian theology agreed, having assimilated the classical definition of true being in terms of unified self-identity. It was certainly a necessary presupposition of the

scholastic effort to organize Christian doctrine systematically. Self-contradiction implied that one has erred. God, therefore, would never will anything involving logical contraries. It is the only limit on His power that everyone, even the Ockhamists, accepted (*Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 905).

- 15 See also *Annot. in Evang. Matth.*, S VI/i 205; *Antwort über Balthasar Hubmaiers Taufbüchlein* (Nov., 1525), Z IV 602; *Von dem Predigtamt* (June, 1525), *ibid.* 417-9; *In Catabaptistarum strophas elenchus* (Jul. 1527), Z VI/i 168-9. Cf. Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 102, 210-3; and J.V. Pollet, *Huldrych Zwingli et la réforme en Suisse d'après les recherches récentes* (Paris, 1963), p. 86; "Zwinglianisme," 3778. This is the most basic difference between Zwingli and the radical spiritualists, who also stress subjective faith through illumination and reject the idea of a bodily presence in the eucharist, but for whom the living word takes precedence over scripture and, if discrepancies appear, may even supercede it. Swiss radicals, on the other hand, tended toward anabaptism. The *Schriftprinzip* was not very effective against them – indeed, it worked in their favor – and Zwingli was obliged to invoke tradition, the principle of hierarchy, practical expedience, and the norms of effective ecclesiastical policy (see, e.g., *Von dem Predigtamt*, Z IV 395, 427). The town council outlawed rebaptism in 1526, but Zwingli was left in an awkward position. To the radicals he seemed no better than the Pope, while Luther and the Catholics continued to regard him as one of the *Schwärmer*. It would probably be more accurate to say that Zwingli's position, eminently coherent, included at all times a number of different strains – spiritualist, biblicist, rationalist, institutional, egalitarian, hierarchical – that did not simply accord and exhibited various emphases over time.
- 16 See *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit*, Z I 362-3, 376-7, though Zwingli reiterates this idea in many places, from his first days as a preacher of the plain Gospel text, up to Marburg and his final published works.
- 17 Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 68-72; *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 14; "Zwingli and Erasmus," p. 251. Zwingli's relation to humanism, and to Erasmus in particular, is an important but extremely complicated issue that, to my knowledge, has yet to receive adequate treatment (see, however, Locher, "Zwingli and Erasmus"; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3749-54; and Joh. Martin Usteri, *Zwingli und Erasmus. Eine reformationsgeschichtliche Studie*, Zürich, 1885). In most respects, it is also an issue that goes beyond the scope of the present essay. Zwingli was, of course, heavily influenced by contemporary humanism in many and various ways. Erasmus, with whom he was personally acquainted, had an especially great effect, extending from a strongly "Christocentric" conception of the faith to the particulars of eucharistic doctrine. Yet it is well known that this effect could be negative or uncertain as well as positive, and has often been overestimated. The once popular image of Zwingli as a humanist scholar who became a true reformer only under the impact of Luther, and whose conflict with the latter can best be explained in terms of an opposition between the humanism of the Renaissance and the scholasticism of a medieval monk, is generally recognized today as an overly simple, if not altogether erroneous, picture (cf. Locher, "Image," pp. 42-3; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3754-63). Not only was Zwingli's relation to humanism ultimately quite ambivalent; he was also in many ways indebted to the scholastic education he had received. Today, indeed, there are some who would prefer to discuss the conflict largely in scholastic terms (*via moderna* vs. *via antiqua*). Even regarding the many Erasmian elements in his thinking, one can scarcely avoid the conclusion that Zwingli incorporates them into a general outlook and style that is remote from the pious but anti-doctrinal orientation of Erasmus himself. More important is the fact that, contrary to popular belief, contemporary Christian humanism was never completely at odds with the various strains of scholastic philosophy and theology. There are strong affinities, for example, between the Erasmian and Thomist views of the eucharist, as also between Erasmus and Ockham on faith and natural reason. Ideally, any answer to the question of Zwingli's relation to humanism would be informed by an awareness, not only of similarities and differences, but also of the complex and often interrelated "genealogies" that both represent. For affinities can frequently be explained, not only by contact between individuals, but also by their common participation in deeper, older, and more widespread patterns of thought.

- 18 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 663; cf. *Antibolon*, Z III 263: "Sed interim verbum fidei, quod in mentibus fidelium sedet, a nemine iudicatur, sed ab ipso iudicatur exterius verbum"; also *Annotationes in Evangelium Lucae*, S VI/i 564; *Von dem Predigtamt*, Z IV 395; *Der Hirt*, Z III 64; *Auslegen*, Z II 25-6, 74-6; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 773-4; and Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3775; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 210-3; Potter, p. 73.
- 19 Zwingli's comments on *Der drei Bischöfe Vortrag an die Eidgenossen* (Apr., 1524), Z III 78; *Von dem Predigtamt*, Z IV 395; *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit*, Z I 362-6, 370-2, 378-9, 382, 340; *Die christliche Antwort Burgermeisters und Rats zu Zürich an Bischof Hugo* (Aug., 1524), Z III 194; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 564; *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 312; *Auslegen*, Z II 25-6; cf. Potter, p. 72; Courvoisier, pp. 27-37; Köhler, I, 474-5; and Locher, "Zwingli and Erasmus," p. 251. At the First Zürich Disputation, Zwingli related inspiration to interpretation in no uncertain terms: "Ich verstön die geschriff nit anders, dann wie sy sich selbst durch den geist gottes usslegt; bdarff keins menschlichen urteils" (Z I 559; cf. *Auslegen*, Z II 74-6 and Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 24).
- 20 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 626, 672; *Von dem Predigtamt*, Z IV 417. The precariousness of Zwingli's situation should not be forgotten here. Zürich was not a great power and his own position there was never entirely secure. Opponents had to be refuted, not in order to win souls for Christ – for that had already been accomplished by election – but in order to preserve the true faith from repression. Neither François I nor the city of Bern would ever be "converted" by proofs. Only the Holy Spirit could effect a change of heart. It might be possible, however, to secure a measure of practical support by demonstrating the justice of Zwingli's cause and the errors of those who oppose him.
- 21 *Von dem Predigtamt*, Z IV 395, 417, 427, 430.
- 22 *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 306; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 663-4. Cf. Pollet, *Zwingli*, p. 86.
- 23 *Bekentnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 31; cf. Potter, pp. 72-3, 258. Luther, Calvin, and indeed, the entire Christian tradition would once again agree. The unity of scripture had all along been presumed. It was inconceivable that there should be inconsistencies in the word of God (*Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 831; cf. Köhler, I, 622-3; Popkin, p. 8; Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 41, 122, 222-3).
- 24 *Antwort auf Ecks Missiv*, Z III 309; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 831; *Der Hirt*, Z III 22, *Eine Antwort, Valentin Compar gegeben* (Apr., 1525), Z IV 71; *Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 893-941; *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 312; *Von Klarheit und Gewissheit*, Z I 365, 371; cf. Potter, p. 295. Except, perhaps, for its egalitarianism, this view was widely accepted during the middle ages and Reformation era (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, p. 41; Popkin, p. 7). To interpret scripture by means of scripture alone, however, was not. This was Zwingli's practice as People's Priest in Einsiedeln, and he argues for it publically at the First Zürich Disputation (Z I 561, also Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 24).
- 25 Cf. *Der Hirt*, Z III 59; *Eine treue und ernstliche Vermahnung an die Eidgenossen* (May, 1524), Z III 113; *Antwort über Straussens Büchlein, das Nachtmahl Christi betreffend* (Jan., 1527), Z V 482; letter to Ambrosius Blarer (14 May 1528), Z IX 465; *Auslegen*, Z II 62; *Antibolon*, Z III 264, 280; and *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 261. Cf. also Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," p. 189 and "Zwingli and Erasmus," p. 251.
- 26 Since the true faith is necessarily self-consistent, it may be defined and defended in formally logical terms. This is simply a constitutive premise of the dominant tradition in Western theology. It does not conflict with Zwingli's humanist inclinations, since the fundamentals of logic belong to the common classical heritage. Zwingli accordingly appeals to the law of contraries from the start of his differences with the Church (see, e.g., *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 259-61). Eventually this appeal becomes prominent. In late medieval theology and philosophy, a comparable emphasis is most characteristic of the Ockhamist movement (Frederick Copleston, *Late Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy: Ockham to the Speculative Mystics*, Vol. III/1 of *A History of Philosophy* (1953; rpt. Garden City, N.Y., 1962), pp. 134-149; and Knowles, p. 239).
- 27 Etienne Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*, (New York, 1938), pp. 40-1, 74-5; Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 289-90; Knowles, pp. 34, 40, 43-4, 241, 261, 292, 305, 329; Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Aristotelian Tradition" (1955), in *Renaissance Thought: The Classic*,

Scholastic, and Humanist Strains (New York, 1961), p. 37; "The Immortality of the Soul" (1972), in *ibid.*, p. 194; Maurice DeWulf, *An Introduction to Scholastic Philosophy* (1903), trans. P. Coffey (1907; rpt. New York, 1956), p. 133; Frederick Copleston, *Medieval Philosophy: Albert the Great to Duns Scotus*, Vol. II/ii of *A History of Philosophy* (1950; rpt. Garden City, N.Y., 1962), pp. 28, 30-1, 40-6, 219; *Medieval Philosophy*, i, pp. 64-5, 80, 272, 314; and *Late Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy*, i, pp. 74-5, 94-5. Today it is widely acknowledged that, despite his often close relation to several currents of contemporary humanism, Zwingli drew heavily upon the scholastic education he had received. Little is known about that training, however, and analysis has frequently produced different, if not actually conflicting, answers to the question of Zwingli's relation to the diverse strains of scholastic theology and philosophy. The prevailing tendency has been to associate him with the *via antiqua*, and especially with the doctrines of Aquinas and Duns Scotus (for this view see, e.g., the works of Köhler, Locher, and Potter). Yet attempts have been made, with varying degrees of success, to discover certain Ockhamist elements or influences (see Oskar Farner, *Huldrych Zwingli*, I (Zürich, 1943), pp. 217-8; Erich Seeberg, *Der Gegensatz zwischen Zwingli, Schwenckfeld, und Luther*, in *Reinhold Seeberg Festschrift*, I, ed. W. Koepf (Leipzig, 1929), p. 56; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," cols. 3748-9). In general, the image of Zwingli as a highly eclectic thinker, following the one school in some ways, the other school in others, and neither in still others, seems likely to find increasing support. The situation at the universities of Vienna and Basel, where Zwingli studied from 1498 to 1506, allows for this possibility, and a greater familiarity with his writings, particularly by historians with fewer confessional commitments than heretofore, can be expected to provide confirmation. In my own discussion I try to contribute by pointing to the Ockhamism of certain aspects, while not neglecting those that suggest an affinity with the *via antiqua* or a departure from scholastic conventions altogether.

- 28 The distinction between supernatural faith and natural reason, the one based upon inspiration or revelation, the other upon sense-experience, is a commonplace of Christian thought at least since the patristic age. It gives rise to the distinction between theology and philosophy, each with its own appropriate method and set of objects. What was never so clear is the nature of relations between them. To what extent did they share the same objects and pursue the same goals? Was a purely natural theology possible? If so, how were relations between it and the theology of revelation to be managed? Could natural reason and faith ever conflict? If so, what then? To these and related questions Christian thinkers had always found a variety of answers. Consensus was possible but never permanent. Major figures tended to differ. Zwingli's strict separation, making faith and natural reason each supreme within its own domain, derives from that of Ockham and the *via moderna* (Gilson, pp. 5-11, 17-8, 78, 82-4, 87-8; DeWulf, pp. 66-7; Knowles, pp. 292, 303, 328-9; Copleston, II/i 316; II/ii 147, 210-4, 224, 242-3, 281; III/i 21, 82-3, 96, 138-9, 149-50, 153-4; III/ii 244).
- 29 Cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3836.
- 30 Cf. *Von der Taufe, von der Wiedertaufe, und von der Kindertaufe* (May, 1525), Z IV 284; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 622, 626; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 808-9; also Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3840-1.
- 31 For Köhler, this is the "basis" of Zwingli's position (Köhler, II, 136; cf. Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 53). See also *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 553, 576, 612, 622, 628, 662, 665, 718; *Subsidium*, Z IV 467, 490; *Dass diese Worte: Das ist mein Leib, etc., ewiglich den alten Sinn haben werden, etc.* (Jun., 1527), Z V 895-8; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 54-6 and 61-3, *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 238-9; *Eine kurze christliche Einleitung* (Nov., 1523), Z II 637; *Annot. in Evang. Matth.*, S VI/i 261, 333, 348, 413; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803, 808-9; *De providentia*, S IV 61-3; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 787; *Von der Taufe*, Z IV 325; *Ad Matthaeum Alberum de coena dominica epistola* (Nov., 1524); the Marburg discussion (Oct., 1529), in Köhler's *Rekonstruktion*, pp. 14-5. Cf. Courvoisier, p. 69 and Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther*, I, 88-9, 92. That material objects of sense are inferior to spiritual objects; that the soul is purely spiritual; that sense-experience is remote from and inferior to the experience of the highest, most real, most important truths; that salvation consists in turning away from the material, towards the spiritual, realm – all this is also basic to the Christian tradition, as well as to that of Platonic philosophy in general. The conviction that natural reason, or philosophy, cannot by itself engender or culminate in an act of faith was generally accepted during the later middle ages. In thinkers who either preceded, or did not fully accept, the Thomist/Aristotelian definition of natural reason in terms of sense-

- experience, and who consequently did not distinguish philosophy and theology so sharply (e.g., Augustine, Anselm, Bonaventure), a closer relation between natural knowledge and faith was possible. For Aquinas, natural reason could still lead to faith, but an intervention of the will and the assistance of divine grace were ultimately necessary. Zwingli, like Luther, follows Ockham in ascribing entirely supernatural, and therefore purely spiritual, origins to faith ("Fides autem . . . a solo dei spiritu est," *Fidei expositio*, S IV 61; "Fides enim cum spiritu divini sit adflatus," *ibid*, 63; see also *Auslegen*, Z II 73, 81; *Christliche Einleitung*, Z II 637; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 622, 628-9; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 787; *Annot. in Evang. Matth.*, S VI/1 261, 333, 348; *Von der Taufe*, Z IV 325). It cannot derive from sense-experience, which pertains only to the natural realm of material creation (cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3799; Köhler, I, 88).
- 32 The influence of Erasmian humanism has often been detected at this point (e.g., Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3752-3, 3800). Zwingli goes beyond the Ockhamists, at any rate, when he insists that, as a direct intuition of spiritual reality, faith can never have a material object. A radical dematerialization of faith, "das Zwingli bewegende religiöse Interesse," thus underlies his aversion to the dogma of a corporeal real presence (Köhler, I, 815; cf. 88-9; II, 152; and Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3800; also Köhler, *Dogmengeschichte als Geschichte des christlichen Selbstbewusstseins. Das Zeitalter der Reformation*, Zürich, 1951, p. 317). Medieval theologians agreed that faith exceeds the experience of the senses and always pertains essentially to "the things that are not seen" (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 12, 215-6, 265). But they viewed this as a justification, not as a refutation, of the corporeal presence in the eucharist. After all, the Body is not seen. For Zwingli, as for Berengar of Tours, this proved it is not present, since the senses are authoritative where bodies are at issue. He accepted the objective definition of faith, but believed that it implied a categorical distinction among objects, while traditionalists did not (cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3831). Even Erasmus, whose own view of the eucharist had already de-emphasized its corporeal aspect, neither elaborated his primarily ethical opposition between material and spiritual factors into an explicitly metaphysical one, nor denied faith every possibility of a material object (Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 291-2; Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther*, I 812). Spokesmen for the Church, moreover, reaffirmed the traditional belief that, once eaten, the body of Christ, now glorified, is received by the soul of the communicant in which, by the power of God, it does indeed produce important effects. The soul does not require a purely spiritual repast (Eck, *Repulsio articulorum Zwinglii*, Jul., 1530, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther*, II 213). Here, the scholastic's more Aristotelian conception of an intimate relation between body and soul conflicts with the puritanism inherent in Zwingli's appeal to the Platonic principle, like-to-like.
- 33 See also *Subsidium*, Z IV 489-92; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 797, 801-10; *Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 907-9; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 594-5. It made no difference when Catholics maintained that the glorified Body was no longer subject to the ordinary laws of nature. For Zwingli a nonsensible body was not a true body, and he accused his opponents of Marcionism (*Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 835-8; *Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 906-8). A commonsensical empiricism determined his position: matter that cannot be perceived by the senses is not substantially there (cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 303-4). In the background, however, stood a commitment to the either/or logic of identity and difference which had long prevailed on all sides in the West, but which in Zwingli's thought opposed a hyper-spiritualized conception of faith to a thoroughly materialist view of the body, and suggested that the one would be corrupted by contact with the other. He never doubted God's power to contravene the natural order, but insisted that He would not if doing so meant involvement in an inherent absurdity. God would never contravene the very principle of order, the ontological basis of reality itself. Thus, when eventually Zwingli did admit a bodily presence in the eucharist, it was still not corporeal (see below pp. 333ff.). More serious was the fact that, in reply to his argument from the nature of scriptural miracles, traditionalists simply cited the words of institution (i.e., Matth 26:26-8, Mark 14:22-4, Luke 22:19-20, and I Cor 11:23-5). Zwingli was then obliged to show that these did not mean what they had for centuries appeared to mean.
- 34 Restricting natural reason to knowledge only of sense-perceivable entities is a late medieval phenomenon associated with those Ockhamists who held that religious truth comes only by revelation and must therefore be taken on faith alone. Zwingli, in other words, follows the *via*

moderna in rejecting the traditional view of relations between philosophy and dogmatic theology. Where Aquinas had held that they differ formally rather than substantively, since there are some truths they hold in common, Ockham and his followers drew both a formal and a substantive distinction by arguing that inductive reasoning from sense can never lead to true knowledge of those supra-sensible objects with which revelation is concerned (Gilson, p. 82; Copleston, II/ii, 31-2, 281; Pelikan, *Roman Catholicism*, p. 147; Knowles, pp. 321-5). For Zwingli, all religious truth and all knowledge of supra-sensible objects in general can only be attained through divine revelation or inspiration. It is a gift of God. Natural reasoning from sense can never attain it at all (*Commentary*, pp. 640-3, 654, 664, 853; *Von göttlicher u. menschlicher Gerechtigkeit*, Z II 475; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 52; *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 72-5, 229-30; cf. Pollet, Zwingli, p. 48; Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," p. 148; Potter, p. 88; John T. McNeill, "Huldreich Zwingli and the Reformation in German Switzerland," in *The History and Character of Calvinism*, 1954; rpt. New York, 1967, p. 76). Thus, despite a reputation for excessive rationalism, Zwingli's actual position is rather fideistic, albeit less so than Luther's. Zwingli continues to discuss the nature and providence of God in philosophic terms and often employs a rationalistic approach to religious problems in general. Yet he does not reason inductively from sense, but deductively from religious concepts given *a priori* through faith, as dogmatic theology had always done. The doctrine of illumination also meant that philosophy no longer provided the fundamental motives for a systematic theology of revelation. Rather, it was revelation that provided the starting point, as well as the ultimate meaning, of all metaphysical speculation (cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3780-1; Courvoisier, p. 47). So long, then, as "rationalism" meant the view that natural reasoning from sense is an adequate means to religious truth, Zwingli was not likely to be called a rationalist. Luther and others who have made the charge, however, were bothered primarily by Zwingli's use of dialectic as a criterion for the interpretation of the sacrament. Not natural, but formal, reason was the point at issue; not philosophy, but dogmatic method. Since Zwingli's critics have not always made this clear, his defenders have seldom come to grips with the problem in its true form.

- 35 Cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 88. See also Zwingli's letter to Oecolampadius and the preachers of Basle (5 Apr. 1525), Z VIII 318-9. That knowledge by faith and knowledge by sense-perception, theology and philosophy, exclude one another is a Thomist doctrine (Gilson, pp. 72-85). To separate the two modes so sharply, however, that nothing known by faith could ever be known from sense, is either "Averroist" or, in the form that Zwingli gives it, Ockhamist. Luther, by contrast, represents the related, but essentially nontheoretical, perspective of popular fideism, for which revelation is a fully sufficient body of truth that renders all natural "wisdom," and human reason itself, largely unnecessary, if not actually pernicious. Zwingli's pre-critical confidence in the senses does not derive from Ockham, though there were Ockhamists who retained this aspect of the *via antiqua*. Zwingli's relative originality consists in explicitly relating the faith/sense opposition to its metaphysical headspring: an equally radical spirit/matter opposition that owes more to Platonism than to any of the scholastics. By (re)combining these two oppositions, Zwingli can argue that whenever it is a question of knowing sensible objects, faith is out of place (cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3800; and Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 88-9). Thus, Zwingli offended Catholics and Lutherans by insisting upon a greater difference between matter and spirit, this world and the divine, than either Aristotle or the Christian tradition would normally allow, but also, paradoxically, by allowing the senses greater authority in theology than heretofore. Since Augustine, the trend had been towards a purer split between natural reason and faith, but one that situated more and more entirely in the realm of the latter. By locating all bodily things completely in the realm of sense, Zwingli makes that of faith smaller than it had been.
- 36 Zwingli first attacked this dogma of the Church during the Zürich disputation of Jan., 1523 (*Schlussreden* 18, Z I 460; *Auslegen*, Z II 111-157). Exactly how far he went at that time and during the next two years is difficult to say, and the question has been extensively debated. It is clear that he had rejected the Mass as a sacrifice, but his views on transubstantiation and the corporeal presence were more uncertain (cf. Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 124-5, 221; *Schweizerische Reformation*, pp. 25, 60; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 1ff., 19-20, 22, 37-8, 73, 76-7; Fritz Blanke, "Zwingli," in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Handwörterbuch für*

- Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, VI, Tübingen, 1955; Courvoisier, pp. 44-7, 72; Potter, p. 158). He first expressed his opposition to the doctrine of transubstantiation in a letter to Thomas Wytttenbach, one of his teachers at Basle (15 June, 1523, Z VIII 84-98). A substantial alteration of some sort remained a possibility, however, and the letter did not define his position on the presence itself (cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 21-2, 37-8; Potter, pp. 150, 158, 290). Neither did his subsequent critique (*De canone missae epichiresis*, Aug., 1523, Z II 556-608) or the Second Zürich Disputation in October, 1523 (Z II 664-803). Not until his famous letter to Alber, in November of the following year, did Zwingli deny the presence of the body (*de essentiali corpore Christi*) in no uncertain terms (Z III 322ff.). The *Commentary*, published only one month before Zürich abolished the Mass in April, 1525, was thus his first public explanation and defence. Henceforth he was openly at odds with both the Roman Church and Luther.
- 37 This idea was popular among both Lutherans and Catholics. It is possible that the latter in particular had been influenced by Erasmus, whose own approach to the sacraments suggested a similar conception of the eucharist (Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 181, 291-2; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 88-9, 97, 114-5, 303, 812-3, 828). In Switzerland, however, many of these Catholics seem actually to have held a position that was nearer to Luther's (Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 63; *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 181; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I 314; cf. *Commentary*, p. 819 and Zwingli's letter to Oecolampadius and the preachers of Basle, Z VIII 318, as well as Köhler's comments, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 97).
- 38 *Ad illustrissimos Germaniae principes Augustae congregatos de convitiis Eckii epistola Huldrici Zuinglii* (Aug., 1530), Z VI/iii 275-6; the Marburg discussion, pp. 14 and 67. Cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 91, 136, 522; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3790, 3831. See also Zwingli's *Antwort über Straussens Büchlein*, Z V 496; the letter to Oecolampadius and the preachers of Basle, Z VIII 318-9; and Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 89. Actually, Zwingli used this argument repeatedly, from the *Commentary* on up through his confrontation with Luther at Marburg (see the letter to Vadian, Oct., 1529, Z X 316-8 and Köhler's account, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 93).
- 39 This does not mean that Zwingli rejected every form of the idea. Properly understood it was basic to his own interpretation of the sacrament. But whereas Luther and the Catholics affirmed a spiritual eating of the substantial Body, for Zwingli it was just a figurative way of describing the act of subjective faith that is merely represented by material objects and acts (see below n. 96). It was this version of the *manducatio spiritualis*, not that of Zwingli's Lutheran or "Erasmian" opponents, that was anathematized by the Council of Trent (L. Godefoy, "Eucharistie d'après le concile de Trente," in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, V/ii, (Paris, 1913), 1329-30, 1334).
- 40 Zwingli's opponents agreed that inconsistency was a sign of error, often regarding it with a similar degree of anxiety (see, e.g., Luther, *Vom Abendmahl Christi, Bekenntnis*, Mar., 1528, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 620, or Joachim am Grüt, *Christlich Anzeygung . . . wider den schedlichen verführischen irthumb Ulrich Zwinglins zu Zürich*, Apr., 1526, cited *ibid*, 314; cf. *Commentary*, pp. 785, 885, 899, and Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 620-3). But without Zwingli's radical spirit/matter opposition, neither Luther nor the Catholics would agree that the spiritual benefits of the eucharist preclude a physical eating of the corporeal Body (Luther's letter to Karlstadt, Nov., 1527, or the *Confutation of the Tetrapolitana*; see also Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 324, 332, and Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 560; II, 81, 91). In any case, what mattered most to Luther and the majority of Catholics was that the word of God be accepted on faith and humbly obeyed, whether or not it could be fully comprehended. Certainly it should never be modified to suit one's own mortal lights. If God chooses to append a physical sense to the spiritual meaning of this sacramental meal, there can be no question of its ultimate rationality and necessity, whatever human reason might say (see, e.g., the Marburg discussion, p. 15).
- 41 Cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3831, 3836. With their doctrine of the bodily presence, the Lutherans were thus too near the Catholics (*Commentary*, p. 787; see also *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 584-5, 754; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-12; cf. Gottfried Locher, "In Spirit and in Truth: How the Worship in Zurich Changed at the Reformation" (1952), in *Zwingli's Thought*, p. 21; *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 316; *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 67). In general, Zwingli worried that the crucial Protestant principle, *sola fide*, was endangered by Lutheran insistence upon

the objective dimension of the sacrament (see, e.g., *Commentary*, pp. 781ff., 785ff.; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 341; Zwingli's first letter to the evangelical party in Esslingen (20 Jul. 1526), Z V 279; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 576, 591, 614, 625, 662, 665, 671, 706, 708, 711, 718; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 783; *Subsidium*, Z IV 467; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 812; *Annot. in Evang. Ioan.*, S VI/i 719; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 902-4, 966; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 70, 94; and Zwingli's notes for an explanation of the fifth Marburg Article, Z VI/ii 549-50). He also thought consubstantiation less plausible than transubstantiation, for it requires that one thing become two things at once ("unam eandemque substantiam fuisse duas inter se diversas," *Subsidium*, Z IV 496). Since antiquity all men have intuitively understood that each thing is always simply the thing that it is and not some other thing as well (*Commentary*, p. 800; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 779; cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 105). One thing may change into another, and God has often caused this to happen miraculously. But even in His miracles God does not perpetrate the sort of nonsense that consubstantiation implies ("stulta opinio," says the letter to Oecolampadius and the preachers of Basle, Z VIII 319; "Wahn," says *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 902-4; "ein offener Frevel," says the *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 798; cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3836; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 89, 98, 819, II, 522). So, if a literal reading of the words of institution were necessary, transubstantiation would have to be preferred (*Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 777-80; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 619-21, 657, 672, 701-2; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 859-63; cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3827). The representatives of the official Catholic position were therefore Zwingli's primary theoretical opponents. In practice, on the other hand, it was always the advocates of consubstantiation against whom he was obliged to struggle most.

- 42 The unified nature of the text, the necessity of reconciling related passages, of using the clearer to explain the more obscure so that a comprehensive, self-consistent totality emerges – these were well-established principles of interpretation in both theology and canon law (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, p. 225; see also *Ad Bill. et Rhag. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 894-7, for an explicit statement of this synthetic method; cf. *Subsidium*, Z IV 467; *Responsio ad epistolam Ioannis Bugenhagii* (Oct., 1525), Z IV 559; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 842; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 735, 739; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 778; Luther's letter to Karlstadt, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 560; or his *Bekenntnis*, cited *ibid.* 622-3). Problems arose, rather, over their application. The dispute could not be resolved because there is nothing in these common principles that would decide which passages are related, or how precisely interpreters should relate them. Thus, Zwingli's elevation of John 6:63 to the status of master text, "reliquos locos explicans," begins as early as the letter to Alber and quickly becomes a crucial part of his argument (see, e.g., *Auslegen*, Z II 141-4; Zwingli's notes for the Bern Disputation in Jan., 1528, Z VI/i 336-7; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 181-191; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 808, 811, 895, 959ff.; *Ad Bill. et Rhag. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 896-9; Marburg discussion, pp. 13-4; cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 76-7, 87-8, 90-5; Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, pp. 62, 67; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3775). It is in fact an old idea, discussed by Peter Lombard in his *Sententiae*. Traditionalists generally denied that the passage referred to the eucharist at all, or else maintained that Zwingli erred in giving it priority over the words of institution (see Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 496-9; II, 81, 87-8, 97 for the Lutheran reponse; II, 209-10, 213 for that of the Catholics). For Zwingli, on the other hand, both the meaning and the status of the passage were obvious, and he never tried to demonstrate either. It was proof enough that he could provide an interpretation that supported his own view of the sacrament. The fact that his opponents could do the same never gave him pause. A similar situation arose when traditionalists invoked John 6:54-6, "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, etc." Zwingli saw this as a reference, not to the eucharist, but to faith. Each side was thus able to produce contextual support for its own interpretation of the words of institution, only to find that this did not put an end to the debate. It did not suffice to insist upon consistency if a harmonious doctrine could be obtained in different ways. And when in each case auxiliary proofs themselves proved open to diverse interpretations, they simply re-raised the problems that context was supposed to clear up.
- 43 Zwingli's "Platonist" metaphysic is often regarded as evidence of his comparative distance from the scholastic tradition, as well as of the influence that Erasmian humanism and Renaissance Neoplatonists such as Pico had upon him (see, e.g., Locher, "Zwingli's Theology,"

- pp. 153, 226; "Image," pp. 53-4; "Zwingli and Erasmus," p. 241; *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 67-8, 201; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 813; Tillich, pp. 261-2). An emphasis upon contemporary influences has, however, tended to obscure Zwingli's debt to the Platonist theologians of the patristic era, especially Augustine and Origen, as well as to the Pauline epistles, which also employ a spirit/flesh opposition (cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3750-1, 3836; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 120; and Köhler, *Huldrych Zwingli*, 2nd ed., 1954; rpt. Zürich, 1984).
- 44 Cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3853ff., especially 3855; and *Zwingli*, p. 42, n. 1.
- 45 Cf. *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 115ff.; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 57; Zwingli's letter to Fridolin Landauer (Oct., 1524), Z VIII 236; also Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3790, 3799. In its broad outlines - spirituality and immortality of the soul, which is the essential, or even the true, man; its ontological nearness to, and temporal separation from, God; the goal of a reunion; self-perfection through purification as the means; the body as a hindrance; the ensuing tension or struggle between body and soul - this dualistic anthropology is a commonplace of the Christian tradition, particularly its more Augustinian-Platonic strains. Zwingli was the first, however, to employ it against the corporeal presence.
- 46 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 553, 622, 736; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 808-11; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 34-5, 55; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 789; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 895; the Marburg discussion, p. 14.
- 47 The rigor of Zwingli's metaphysical dualism also threatened to lead in more awkward directions. That the soul and body combine at all, e.g., could be difficult to explain, and the resurrection of the latter seems impossible. It is partly for this reason that the medieval Church came to prefer the more moderate Aristotelian dichotomy. The Christological implications were also troublesome. Here Zwingli's either/or logic carried the matter/spirit opposition in the direction of a recognized heresy, and he was repeatedly accused of impugning the doctrine of a substantial union between the two natures of Christ, much as the 5th-century Nestorians had done (Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 527, 552, 627-8, 661, 663-4, 684; II, 137, 521; *Die Geisteswelt Ulrich Zwinglis. Christentum und Antike*, Gotha, 1920, p. 101; Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 174, 176-7; *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 54; *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 206-7; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3794; *Zwingli*, p. 51). Zwingli countered, as the Nestorians had, with explicit affirmations to the contrary (*Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 790-3; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 48, 52; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 652, 657, 671, 679; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 924; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 828; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 129-30, 149-50, 172-5; see also Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II 133). Yet he continued to insist upon an essential difference between the divine and human natures, the one purely spirit and the other a thing of the earth, until it seemed that no truly integral relation existed. Certain of Christ's deeds, attributes, and functions (e.g., His suffering and death upon the cross) he would then predicate of the human nature alone. Others (especially His status as Savior and object of faith) he attributed exclusively to the divine (*Fidei expositio*, S IV 52-3; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 827-30; *Subsidium*, Z IV 496; *Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 906-9; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 627-9, 651-8, 671; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 917-25; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 137, 146; the Marburg discussion, pp. 26, 91-2; Zwingli's notes for an explanation of the third Marburg Article, Z VI/ii 549; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 807-8; cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 521). This was precisely the practice for which Nestorius had been excommunicated, for it granted to each nature all the qualities of an independent *persona*, thus contradicting the doctrine of a hypostatic union (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*, Vol. I of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, 1971; rpt. Chicago, 1975, pp. 236, 246, 255-61, 264, 267-8, 275-7; *Medieval Theology*, pp. 116-7, 147; Tillich, pp. 83-4). There would then be two Christs - one human and fleshly, the other purely spiritual and divine ("Christus spiritui, hoc est: sibi deo vitam tribuit; carnis ergo esse non potest," *Amica exegesis*, Z V 612; cf. Luther's complaint in his *Bekenntnis*, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 627-8, and renewed in his *Kurzes Bekenntnis* of 1544, cited in Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 318; see also Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 135-6). It also meant there had been no true Incarnation, but only an *assumptio carnis*. This was in fact the term that Zwingli favored, and it related to both the Adoptionist heresy of the mid-3rd century and the doctrine of the Indwelling Logos that Nestorius and many of his followers in the Antiochene tradition had defended in vain. Similarly, Zwingli's own idea that, since Christ's body is purely human, natural, earthly, it has only historically delimited significance

and cannot convey supernatural grace or be worshipped without idolatry (letter to Wyttenbach, Z VIII 88; *Bekentnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 209-11; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 629, 651-7; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 782-3, 788) also seemed to impair the unicity of the Person. Zwingli shared with the Nestorians a strong desire to preserve the divine spirit from any taint or degradation it might otherwise incur through close relations with the bodily, material dimension of existence.

- 48 Cf. *Fidei expositio*, S IV 57; letter to Landauer, Z VIII 236; *Von Klarheit u. Gewissheit*, Z I 347-50; *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 115ff.
- 49 The similarity between this basic knowledge, to which all mankind has access, and the Renaissance idea of a natural religion, or universal truth, in which all religion and philosophy participate, has often been noted. In Zwingli, however, such knowledge is not innate, but given through illumination. Thus he is also remote from the schoolmen who for the most part held that knowledge of all basic truths, e.g., the existence of God, is obtainable by natural reason. Only the Ockhamists maintained that all knowledge of God comes only through revelation (Knowles, p. 323).
- 50 Cf. *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 115ff.; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 57; and Köhler's discussion of Zwingli's commentary on the Epistle to Romans in *Forschungen zur Kirchengeschichte und zur christlichen Kunst* (Leipzig, 1931), pp. 86-106. See also Locher's description of the similarly Platonist anthropology that Erasmus espoused ("Zwingli and Erasmus," p. 244). Contemporary Catholic and Lutheran apologists, by contrast, held a rather less exclusively spiritual notion of salvation (see, e.g., Bishop John Fisher, *De veritate corporis et sanguinis Christi in eucharistia*, Mar., 1527, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 518ff.).
- 51 Zwingli's attitude toward divine law should be related to his use of the conventional idea of man as *imago dei* (see in particular *Von Klarheit u. Gewissheit*, Z I 342ff.; *Annot. in Evang. Matth.*, S VI/i 241ff.; and *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 134-7; cf. Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Dignity of Man," 1972; rpt. in *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*, ed. Michael Mooney, New York, 1979, p. 170). True to its classical idealist heritage, Christianity normally regarded human reason as the peculiarly god-like element in the species, setting it apart from all other living things. With his own emphasis upon the rational soul (*mens*), Zwingli follows in this tradition and consequently stands nearer here to Thomist rationalism than to the voluntarism of Scotus or Ockham. Zwingli also says that it is a capacity for religion that makes man unique (*Commentary*, p. 907). This alternative occurs in the anthropology of the Renaissance Neoplatonists (e.g., in Pico). For Zwingli it constitutes an elaboration, rather than a contradiction, of the distinction in terms of God-given values and norms. Reason, law, and faith, all spiritual in nature and supernatural in origin, converge to make and to mark the essential difference among creatures.
- 52 Zwingli's positive view of the law and its place in the dynamic of sin and salvation is often regarded as a distinctive feature of his theology. Certainly it contrasts with Luther's attitude, as well as with that of the Spiritualist and Anabaptist circles (cf. *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 78-83, 139-40; *Annot. in Evang. Matth.*, S VI/i 241; *Auslegen*, Z II 76-9, 105-7, 159, 232, 262, 324-6; *Christliche Einleitung*, Z II 634; *Von göttlicher u. menschlicher Gerechtigkeit*, Z II 492; also Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 214-5; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3808-9; Tillich, pp. 258-9, 262; and Wernle, *Zwingli*, p. 58). This difference has been variously explained in terms of background and influence. Thomism, Ockhamism, Stoicism, Augustine, Origen, and the medieval tradition in general, all either have been or could be invoked to account for Zwingli's tendency to regard both God's explicit commandments and the natural law of morality as perpetually valid works of the Spirit, and to associate them with, rather than oppose them to, the Gospel of Christ (see, e.g., Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3751, 3787; Köhler, *Forschungen*, pp. 86-106; Tillich, pp. 258-60).
- 53 Ockham's equally radical division between faith and sense was not bound to so dualistic an ontology. Thus he could see nothing inconsistent about a corporeal real presence in the eucharist. Several likely sources for Zwingli's Platonism have been identified, including Erasmus, Pico, Augustine, Origen, and other of the Church Fathers (Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3750-2, 3761; *Zwingli*, pp. 22, 46; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 201; *Schweizerische Reformation*, pp. 15, 52; Potter, p. 40; and Christoph Sigwart, *Ulrich Zwingli: Der Charakter seiner*

- Theologie mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Picus von Mirandola dargestellt*, Stuttgart, 1855). But Zwingli's scholastic education should not be forgotten. The fact that it was heavily Aristotelian does not mean it was not also heavily Platonist in less explicit ways.
- 54 Frederick Copleston, *Greece and Rome*, Vol. I/i of *A History of Philosophy*, rev'd ed. (New York, 1962), p. 48; *Greece and Rome*, Vol. I/ii, rev'd ed. (New York, 1962), pp. 239-240.
- 55 *Commentary*, p. 780; cf. *Eine Antwort Valentin Compar gegeben*, Z IV 106; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 95; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 53-4; *Brevis Commemoratio mortis Christi ex quatuor Euangelistis*, S VI/ii 10; see also Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3767, 3790; Copleston, I/ii 233. *Mens* (mind or intellect) was the term used by Latin theologians to designate the highest, most spiritual dimension of the soul, its rational, intellectual, and therefore most god-like component, which the human being alone possesses. It is the term that most often translates both Plato's το λογιστικον and the Aristotelian or Neoplatonic nous, το διανοητικον. Much of the soul is still concerned with the body and its carnal operations. *Mens*, however, is remote from them. The lower faculties are accordingly present in animals as well, while *mens* makes the human soul unique, a rational soul. It can therefore be called our specific essence. Not surprisingly, Zwingli will also use *mens* in the sense of διανοια, to designate the exact meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., "mentem verborum Christi," *Commentary*, p. 780), which is then grasped and understood by *mens* in the more subjective sense of vovs. True communication, as well as true communion, is thus based upon the principle, *mens-to-mens*. There is, of course, nothing unusual about Zwingli's deployment of this term. Later medieval psychology generally did insist upon the ontological unity of the soul's components, so that Zwingli's real distinction might have caused some discomfort. But there were precedents among the Fathers and the more Augustinian scholastics (e.g., Bonaventure), while even the Aristotelians maintained the quasi-divine nature of *mens*, together with its consequent primacy within the soul.
- 56 The intellectual and cultural histories of the West have indeed been marked in various ways by a dread of contamination and corruption that would entail the loss of essential differences. It is fairly explicit throughout the dominant theologico-idealist tradition. It is present as well in many who are in other respects remote from, or even antagonistic towards, that tradition. And certainly, the fear of contamination has more than once played a prominent part in socio-political relations. The important point is that it relates ambivalently, on both the ideal and the practical levels, to loss. For this particular anxiety is typically generated in situations where the attainment of identity through affirmations of radical difference must content with an awareness of the degree of significant interinvolvement that inevitably complicates relations between putative opposites. What then threatens to emerge are the similarities that have been denied and yet continue to accompany the difference.
- 57 Christian theologians commonly locate the origin of sin in that moment when the created will first begins to "turn away" from the one transcendent Source of all measure, distinction, and proportion (see, e.g., Augustine, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church*, cited in Copleston, II/i, 100). Platonism, moreover, regards the soul's union with a body as a misfortune and, following the Pythagoreans, describes it in terms of a debasement or fall.
- 58 An emphasis upon purity and self-purification, especially of the soul, can be traced through the history of Western thought, beginning at least with the Pythagoreans. It was to some extent characteristic of all classical philosophy, and of Neoplatonism in particular. In the later middle ages, it can probably be said to reach its fullest expression, both in metaphysics and in logic, with the Ockhamist movement, where distinction typically means pure difference (Copleston, III/i, 79-80; Tillich, pp. 78, 200).
- 59 Cf. *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 140. Zwingli's emphasis upon divine law reminds of Aquinas and the *via antiqua*, but may well owe more to the Augustinian tradition, which not only attributed all order and measure to God but, following classical philosophy, also explained sin as a consequence of psychic turmoil (Copleston, II/i, 100). God's greatest opponent is accordingly "Satan, the spirit of disorder" (*Commentary*, pp. 785, 885, 899). Zwingli's traditional law and order God may in any case be contrasted with Luther's view, which owes more to the voluntarism of Scotus and the Ockhamists.
- 60 This was also the classical view (see Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book IV, 3-8; Plato, *Republic*, Book IV, 436b-437a; *Phaedo*, 103aff.). The dominant theological tradition has always concurred

(see, e.g., Augustine, *Contra academicos*, III, 10, xxiii; or even Matth 12:25-6). By the ninth century, even conservatives considered dialectic the "discipline of disciplines," and Scotus Erigena maintained that it is "not the product of human invention, but has been established in the nature of things by the Author of all the arts" (cited in Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 95-6). Nevertheless, human use of dialectic was not easily placed on the side of *Gotteswort*. At Marburg, for example, the Lutherans tried to turn the tables and label Zwingli's symbolic doctrine "fleischlich" because of its reliance upon worldly reason. One is tempted to ascribe this difference to the influence of Ockhamist voluntarism on Luther and of traditional scholastic rationalism upon Zwingli. The problem is that Ockhamists too took the absolute status of noncontradiction for granted. The divine will would never contravene the very essence of truth. In practice, moreover, their attack upon traditional doctrine was sustained by a heavy reliance upon noncontradiction, underwritten by a strict interpretation of identity and difference (Copleston, III/i, 106, 111-2, 134, 137-8, 140-2, 148-9; Tillich, p. 78).

61 Cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3831; Zwingli, p. 42, n. 1.

62 Cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 119.

63 Fisher, *De veritate corporis et sanguinis*, cited *ibid*, 522-3. Cf. the Council of Trent, cited in Godefoy, 1345.

64 Cajetan, *De erroribus contingentibus in Eucharistiae sacramento* (Dec., 1525), cited in Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3841-2.

65 See, e.g., Luther, *Dass diese Worte Christi "Dass ist mein Leib, etc." noch feststehen wider die Schwärmegeister* (Apr., 1527), cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 497; his *Grosses Bekenntnis*, cited *ibid*, 626; or his comments at Marburg, p. 15. Cf. the *Syngramma Suevicum*, a confession composed in October, 1525 by a group of Lutheran pastors in south Germany and published in January, 1526 with subsequent German translations, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther*, I, 131, 299; and the anonymous Lutheran treatise of 1529, *Von dem rechten wahrhaftigen Verstand der Worte des Abendmahls*, "Das ist mein Leib, etc.," cited *ibid*, II, 67-8.

66 See, e.g., Wernle's *Zwingli*; Otto Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, III (Göttingen, 1926); Reinhold Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, IV/i, 4th ed. (Leipzig, 1933); also Pollet, *Zwingli*, p. 95; Courvoisier, pp. 47, 69; Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 154, 156, 158-9, 188-9, 227; "Zwingli and Erasmus," pp. 251-2; "In Spirit and In Truth," p. 21; "Image," pp. 56-7, 59, 67; *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 123, 212-3, 224, 299, 318; *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 62; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 474, 487-9, 497, 812; *ibid*, II, 138; Potter, p. 331; L. Cristiani, "Zwingli," in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, XV/ii (Paris, 1950), *passim* 3716-3744; G.W. Bromiley, ed., *Zwingli and Bullinger: Selected Translations with Notes*, Vol. XXIV of *The Library of Christian Classics*, ed. John Baillie, et al. (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 37.

67 The image that emerges both in Wernle and, to a lesser extent, in Köhler.

68 Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3831. Luther felt this way even immediately after the near reconciliation at Marburg (Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 66). Cf. Potter, p. 313; Courvoisier, pp. 44-7, 72; Wernle, *passim*; McNeill, "Zwingli," p. 76; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3776-7; L. Cristiani, "Réforme," in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, XIII/ii (Paris, 1937), 2072.

69 Gilson, pp. 15-25, 29-32, 72-3; DeWulf, pp. 64-7; Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 256-62, 285-6, 297; Frederick Copleston, *Late Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy: The Revival of Platonism to Suarez*, Vol. III/ii of *A History of Philosophy* (1953; rpt. Garden City, N.Y., 1963), p. 247; II/i, 18, 46, 64, 274, 276-7; II/ii, 30-3, 277-8; III/i, 12; Tillich, p. 139; Knowles, pp. 101, 267-8.

70 Gilson, pp. 15-7, 23-5, 29-31, 75-6, 83-4; DeWulf, pp. 61-7; Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 216-7, 289-90; *Roman Catholicism*, p. 149; Knowles, pp. 98, 101, 125-6, 262, 267-8, 323, 325; Tillich, pp. 138-9; Copleston, II/i, 46-7, 64; II/ii, 32-3, 277-8; III/i, 16-7, 142-3; III/ii, 240-1, 243, 247.

71 Copleston, III/ii, 247; II/i, 18; Tillich, pp. 138-9.

72 Scotus Erigena and Berengar of Tours had each been accused of the same: replacing, rather than reinforcing, traditional authority by dialectic (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 95-6, 256-7; Knowles, pp. 94-5). A less remote antecedent can, I think, be found in the philosophical revolution that occurred during the two centuries prior to the Reform. Ockham and his followers had employed dialectic in a similar fashion in order to formulate a highly effective

critique of the accepted fundamentals of natural theology and metaphysical psychology. The spirit of critical analysis from a logical point of view is at any rate comparable, and it too is directed at the officially sanctioned ideology (cf. Copleston, III/i, 22, 134ff., 148-9; Knowles, p. 332). Like Zwingli in the realm of dogmatic theology, the *via moderna* saw its own assault upon the philosophical tradition as a defense of faith. Where dogma was concerned, however, the Ockhamists were more conservative. It was for them an ultimately incomprehensible authority to which one must simply submit. The truths of the established faith could not be judged or even justified by reason. Ockhamist stress upon the freedom and power of God's will thus culminates less in Zwingli's rationalism than in the fideism of Luther and his adherents (Gilson, pp. 32-3; Copleston, III/i, 60; Tillich, pp. 139, 201).

- 73 This is a main theme of all Locher's work, but also found, as Locher notes, in Köhler, e.g., in *Dogmengeschichte*, pp. 316-7 and Zwingli u. Luther, I, p. 812. See also Potter, p. 303; Courvoisier, pp. 44-7, 72.
- 74 *Von Klarheit u. Gewissheit*, Z I 379; *Auslegen*, Z II 25-6. Cf. Gottfried Locher, who makes this point repeatedly in vol. I of *Die Theologie Huldrych Zwinglis im Lichte seiner Christologie* (Zürich, 1952).
- 75 One must be careful, however, to distinguish between natural reason and dialectic. In Platonism, and consequently in most Christian thinkers prior to the scholastic golden age, the highest form of intellectual understanding is obtainable only by pure reasoning on the basis of concepts given *a priori*, never from the data of sense. Following in this tradition, Zwingli denies that anything at all can be known about God solely from sense-experience of the natural world. He diverges somewhat, and stands forth as a true Reformer, when he maintains that certain knowledge of the highest things can never be obtained by any ordinary means. Knowledge of God comes only as a special divine gift. Dialectic simply helps to explain and defend what has been received in this way. Here Zwingli is nearer to Luther than to the Catholics, but also nearer to Ockham than to Aquinas, Augustine, or Anselm (cf. Leonhard von Muralt, "Zwinglis dogmatisches Sondergut," in *Zwingliana*, V, 1932, p. 364; also Courvoisier, pp. 44-7, 72). The schoolmen, indeed, divided the realm of sense increasingly from that of faith, allowing natural reason to know less and less of the latter until, with the *via moderna*, literally nothing could be known about God except through faith. In this respect Zwingli is less rationalist than the majority of medievals. For Luther and other fideists, of course, all reason was in some sense "philosophy" and therefore useless, if not actually dangerous, in questions of faith (cf. the discussion of Catholic fideism in France in Popkin, pp. 66-82).
- 76 Unlike most Catholics, then, the Lutherans were not seriously troubled when Zwingli complained that the doctrine of a corporeal presence is paradoxical. This merely demonstrated the transcendent nature of the divine power. In their view, the entire faith was essentially supra-rational, so that the traditional quest for understanding was really only an example of human vanity and pride (see, e.g., *Von dem rechten wahrhaftigen Verstand*, discussed by Köhler in Zwingli u. Luther, II, 67-8; also Luther at Marburg, pp. 8-9, 18, 26, 55-6). Zwingli's greater "rationalism" is often explained as a consequence of his early admiration for Erasmian humanism, so that the way historians react to the one is largely determined by their judgment of the other (Köhler, Zwingli u. Luther, II, 137; Locher, "Zwingli and Erasmus," p. 251; *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 57; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3776). The picture is complicated, however, not only by the fact that it is not really *human* reason that Zwingli esteems, but also by the fundamentally rationalist orientation of the scholastic tradition in which both Erasmus and Zwingli had been educated. When Zwingli and Luther disagree about the role of dialectic in theology, this may indeed be a conflict, less between late scholastic philosophy and Renaissance humanism, than between different aspects of late scholastic philosophy itself: Luther relying upon the fideistic dimension of Ockhamism, Zwingli upon the rationalism inherent in both the *via moderna* and the *via antiqua*. It is worth reiterating, however, that Luther's respect for tradition belongs to the mainstream of Western theology no less than Zwingli's appeal to reason, and that their conflict therefore makes apparent the existence of important unresolved tensions within that long sovereign perspective.

- 77 Zwingli at Marburg, p. 72; cf. pp. 16, 71. See also Köhler, *Dogmengeschichte*, p. 316, or Zwingli u. Luther, I, 77, where the goal of Zwingli's theology is described as "die Ausmerzung alles Abstrusen."
- 78 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 618-9.
- 79 Cf. Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 158-9, n. 42b, 188-9; *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 212-3; *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 62; "Zwingli and Erasmus," p. 251; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 489; Courvoisier, p. 69.
- 80 To strengthen his own case Zwingli subsequently introduced a variety of Christological arguments that would show why a bodily presence in the eucharist is impossible, not only for reason, but also for faith. The most important was an appeal to the sufficiency of the historic sacrifice upon the Cross. If what occurred on Calvary had satisfied divine justice "once and for all," as scripture said, then the act could never be repeated. Zwingli employed this argument at the First Zürich Disputation in order to refute the sacrificial character of the Mass (*Schlussreden*, Z I 460; cf. *Auslegen*, Z II 111ff., 119ff., 142-4). Soon he was using it, as Ratramnus of Corbie had done in the 9th century, to refute the corporeal presence as well: "Christus non esus sed caesus nobis est salutaris" (*Commentary*, pp. 780, 782, 803; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 340-2, 351; Zwingli's "Predigt" in Bern, 19 Jan., 1528, Z VI/i 476; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 117; *Subsidium*, Z IV 467; *An die Gläubigen zu Esslingen*, 20 Jul., 1526, Z V 279; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 812; *Responsio brevis ad epistolam satis longam . . . in qua de eucharistia quaestio tractatur*, Aug., 1526, Z V 356; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 576; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 896-7; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 810; letter to Capito and Bucer, 12 Feb., 1531, Z XI 340-2; *Antibolon*, Z III 281-2; cf. Locher, "Discord," pp. 315-6). This emphasis upon the unique meaning and value of the Cross has accordingly been seen as proof against the charge of rationalism (*Commentary*, p. 792; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 618; *Antwort über Straussens Büchlein*, Z V 502; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 880, 884; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 206-11; cf. Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 226-7; "Spirit," p. 21; *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 224; *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 62). Yet, as Zwingli's "Nestorianism" indicates, his Christology is still determined by a classical logic that seeks to address complex problems in terms of absolute difference between pure identities whose integrity is policed by the law of noncontradiction. The same logic is operative in the view that a sacrifice in the Mass would contradict that of the Cross. The two sacrifices would be separated by space and time. Therefore they are not the same, but different. Since Christ's atonement is a unique event, we are faced with a choice: either the Cross or the sacrament of the Mass, one or the other can procure the grace of salvation; both cannot. Previously theologians had held that the Mass does not "repeat," so much as it re-presents, the events of the Cross, such that "the passion of the Lord is the sacrifice which we offer." The historical sacrifice was indeed a unique and sufficient atonement. The Mass merely pleads the merits of that sacrifice as each day the faithful offer up "the same body that bore our sins" upon the Cross. The two actions are distinct, yet also in some sense the same. Indeed, they are identical, though different (Pelikan, *Roman Catholicism*, pp. 117-8; *Catholic Tradition*, pp. 169-70; *Medieval Theology*, p. 190; Johannes Cochlaeus of the Sorbonne reiterated this argument in response to the Marburg discussion: cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 162). Zwingli's second proof relies upon the dogma that, physically, Christ has ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father until the day of judgment. Now, Christ's body belongs to His humanity, and no human body can be in two places at once. If it is in heaven, it cannot also be physically present in the sacrament without contradicting the logic of identity and difference, which God would never do (*Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 773 827-41; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 798; *Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 904-9; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 49-50, 51-2; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 654, 691-701; Zwingli's notes for the Disputation at Bern, Z VI/i 372; "Predigt" in Bern, 19 Jan., 1528, Z VI/i 469, 478-9, 482, 486; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 277-8; *Subsidium*, Z IV 467; *De eucharistia quaestio*, Z V 354; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 807-9; the Marburg discussion, pp. 14, 24, 26, 30-2, 91-2; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 137; letter to Franz Lambert and the evangelical party in Strassburg, 16 Dec., 1524, Z VIII 276; Zürich's rejection of the *Tetrapolitana*, Feb., 1531, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 268; cf. *Commentary*, p. 691; Köhler, *Geisteswelt*, p. 101; *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 102, 307, 663-4; II, 137, 519-22; Godefoy, 1351; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 207; "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 176-7; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3792, 3839; *Zwingli*, p. 51). Calvin later borrowed this argument, which had also been used by Wyclif and Berengar.

Lutherans and Catholics responded by appealing in different ways to the omnipotence of God and the hypostatic union of Christ's two natures. God, they said, was not subservient to the ordinary laws of space and time. Zwingli was again trying to make human reason into the measure of divine power (Luther, *Dass diese Worte*, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 497; *Grosses Bekenntnis*, cited *ibid.*, 626-8; and at Marburg, pp. 8-9, 12-3, 15, 25-6, 32, 41-2, 89-91, 115; cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 136; II, 522; Potter, pp. 325, 328. For the Catholic position see the *Confutation of the Tetrapolitana*, cited by Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 209; Fisher, *De veritate corporis et sanguinis*, cited *ibid.*, I, 527; Cochlaeus's critique of the Marburg discussion, cited *ibid.*, II, 162; the Council of Trent, cited in Locher, "Discord," p. 306 and Godefroy, 1345, 1351; see also Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 117, 193-5; *Catholic Tradition*, p. 272). In fact, his Christology comes near to reproducing the logic of his eucharistic doctrine. This is not surprising, inasmuch as the Lord's Supper and the person of Christ represent similar problems. In each case, two elements, one entirely natural and profane, the other supernatural and sacred, are miraculously and invisibly brought together within a third, not entirely distinct, element that is nonetheless fully sensible. Curiously, theologians were not obliged to discover analogous explanations. Catholics, e.g., teach transubstantiation in the eucharist, but in Christology a form of consubstantiation: the divine and the human natures forming a single *persona* comprising them both. This difference seems necessary, since the logic of transubstantiation would lead to either the docetic or the monophysite heresy. Yet transubstantiation did not become eucharistic dogma until after the Christological question had been settled. It is consequently not for this reason that consubstantiation lost out. Luther is somewhat more consistent. In Christology he retains the established doctrine. Regarding the eucharist he adopts a consubstantial position. Yet Lutherans hold that the substances of the bread and wine are merely supplemented by those of the Body and Blood, while continuing to exist alongside the latter. There is no analog of the hypostatic union. In Christology, therefore, Luther's eucharistic logic would produce, not the doctrine he actually professed, but something resembling the Adoptionist heresies of both the third and the eighth centuries. With its enduring ontological distinction between components, this logic also recalls that of Zwingli's Nestorianism. It is interesting that Nestorius and his associates were themselves troubled by the "inconsistency" between their traditional eucharistic doctrine and the dyophysite Christology they espoused. The one was therefore "adjusted" to parallel the other (Pelikan, *Catholic Tradition*, pp. 238, 251-2, 267-8). In his own versions of both the Supper and the person of Christ, Zwingli keeps the natural and supernatural components as far apart as possible. In the eucharist, the divine component (which Zwingli ultimately does profess) is not present within the material bread and wine, but only in the *mens* of the believing participant. No exact parallel is possible in the case of Christ, but Zwingli does increase the distance between the Son's two natures beyond what tradition would allow. The important point is that in both cases he understands the central distinction (between matter and spirit, the natural and the supernatural, the human and the divine) to be a pure difference, or even opposition (*disparata*, ἀντιθέσις), whose severity safeguards the integrity of each component. In particular, the spiritual must be preserved from contamination through intimate contact with the bodily, the earthly, the material and profane part.

81 See also the *Auslegen*, Z II 25-6; *Von Klarheit u. Gewissheit*, Z I 365, 379; and Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 92; Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 158-9, n. 42b; *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 210-3; Potter, p. 72. Cf. Luther's appeal to personal "conscience" and Calvin's "light of inner persuasion." In each case the institutionalized conception is reshaped charismatically when immediate subjective certainty becomes the ultimate criterion of religion knowledge (Popkin, pp. 2-3, 10).

82 The most noteworthy were local radicals who by 1525 had evolved into a loose federation of small, more or less independent groups, characterized by their repudiation of infant baptism (Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 131-6; *Schweizerische Reformation*, pp. 37, 40; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3813, 3820-1; *Zwingli*, p. 66; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 81-2, 823; Courvoisier, pp. 63-4; Potter, pp. 156, 228; McNeill, pp. 39-45). Zwingli argued against them, but the affinities were strong enough for conservative opponents to regard him as their master (Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 68; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3819-20; Potter, pp. 167, 228).

- 83 Cf. Potter, pp. 72-3, 295. This does not mean that reason replaces faith as the essential interpretive agent. But it does mean that for Zwingli, as for most theologians, formal rationality is the norm of scriptural exegesis, while a correct reading of scripture remains the principal means by which the true faith may be demonstrated. Of course, a great deal still depends upon what one considers an inconsistency, and traditionalists continued to stress the difference between divine and human rationality.
- 84 I shall also begin to offer a more critical view of Zwingli, even "building a case" against him. Some may object that this is "not the function of the historian," but I cannot agree. Neutrality towards the past is itself an historically determined ideal that has won favor in Reformation studies largely out of embarrassment over the excesses committed by the confessionally motivated scholarship of the past (cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 8-15). This is commendable, however, only insofar as it does not diminish one's critical faculties by restricting them to the tasks of disciplinary self-reflection. For some features of the past may still be worth criticizing, especially if they continue to be prevalent. Special pleading and moralistic blame or praise are of course obnoxious. Yet even the most tendential approach may offer insights not readily accessible to disinterested, "value-free" investigations. To the extent that it approaches value-neutrality, on the other hand, historiography risks becoming mere reportage: a series of descriptive or analytic discussions, perhaps with some ultimately synthetic intent, but no rationale or significance that historiography itself could account for. Without countenancing distortion, unfairness, or the arrogance of judgmental presentmindedness, I should prefer a revival of that often intensely critical spirit of earlier scholarship. Accurate descriptions and analysis are certainly indispensable. But historiography, and intellectual historiography in particular, should, I think, be more than a strictly documentary exercise. It should aim to affect the world, not just to describe it.
- 85 Cf. Conclusions of the First Zürich Disputation, Z I 559, 561; *Der Hirt*, Z III 22; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 564, 581ff., 710, 732-3; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 773.
- 86 For the idea that faith alone is the master of meaning and authorizes figurative readings, see also *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 581-3, 663; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 773; and Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3772, which regards Zwingli's use of the form/content distinction as just one manifestation of a "dialectique de l'extérieur et de l'intérieur" that runs through his entire theology. What Pollet and others do not sufficiently stress is the role played by the law of non-contradiction in determining why faith requires a figurative reading particularly in this case.
- 87 Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, p. 41.
- 88 *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.
- 89 Pollet, *Zwingli*, p. 86; Locher, "Das Geschichtsbild Huldrych Zwinglis," in *Theologische Zeitschrift*, IX, 1953, 284.
- 90 See, e.g., *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 345; *Subsidium*, Z IV 480-2; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 842-4; also Potter, p. 43.
- 91 Traditionalists always gave approximately the same response: It might be possible to read the chief eucharistic texts otherwise than they have usually been read, but it is not necessary to do so. There is no compelling reason why the literal should be abandoned. It is as possible as any figurative reading, and amongst equally possible readings that which tradition and the Church approves, said Catholics, is to be preferred. Luther favored the simplest, most obvious reading, which in this instance was the traditional one. In the absence of clear scriptural passages to the contrary, "This is my body" meant what it seemed to say. Zwingli, for his part, always believed he had found compelling proof, both in scripture (John 6:63) and in the fact that a literal reading would involve onto-logical self-contradictions. Without his hierarchical opposition between spirit and matter, however, Luther and the Catholics could never be forced to concede the point. They agreed that the bodily presence exceeded the grasp of the ordinary rational mind, but would never allow that it was actually contrary to reason.
- 92 Cf. *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 739; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 778; *Responsio ad epistolam Bugenhagii*, Z IV 575; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 345, 351; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 844-7; *Fidei Expositio*, S IV 46-7; 53-4; *Subsidium*, Z IV 470-2; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 253-8; letter to Capito and Bucer, Z XI 340-2; also Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 92-3. Apparently having come

- by himself to a symbolic conception of the eucharist some time during the early 1520's. Zwingli borrowed the tropological interpretation of the words of institution from a letter containing a brief treatise by Cornelis Hendrixzoon Hoen (Honius), a Dutch lawyer and disciple of Wesel Gansfoort. The letter (Z IV 512ff.) was not addressed to Zwingli, and reached him only after Luther, Bucer, and Oecolampadius had seen it. Hoen's treatise is in fact remarkable for the extent to which it anticipates Zwingli's eucharistic doctrine.
- 93 Cf. *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 673; *Antwort über Straussens Büchlein*, Z V 500; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 336-43, 351; letter to Myconius, Z VIII 276; Zwingli's notes for an explication of the 5th Marburg Article, Z VI/ii 549-50; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 253-6, 265, 271-3; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 53; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 200; *Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 902-3; letter to Capito and Bucer, Z XI 340-2; also Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 215, n. 325, 216; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 80; II, 136.
- 94 Cf. *Schlussreden*, Z I 460; *Auslegen*, Z II 127, 130, 137, 142-4; Zürich's *Christliche Antwort . . . an Bischof Hugo*, Z III 227-8; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 346-9, 351; *De canone missae*, Z II 579-83, 585; *Ad Bill. et Rheg. epistolas responsio*, Z IV 902-3, 938; *Antwort über Straussens Büchlein*, Z V 471-2; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 777; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-6, 811-2; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 54; *Brevis commemoratio*, S VI/ii 10; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 253-6, 271; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 202.
- 95 The idea of the eucharist as God's means of confirming His remission of sins is characteristic of Lutheran theology. It appears in Zwingli's early work (e.g., the *Auslegen*, Z II 122, 125, 127, 134, 142-4), but only seldom thereafter (e.g., *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 249-91). From the time of the letter to Alber, Zwingli considers Christ Himself to be both *gratia praestita Dei* and our own *pignus gratiae* (*Commentary*, p. 787; cf. Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 296; *Schweizerische Reformation*, pp. 61-2; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 429).
- 96 Thus Zwingli was able to employ the notion of a spiritual repast (*manducatio spiritualis*, *spiritualiter edere*) while denying it to his opponents. These still maintained that the corporeal Body is actually ingested, whereas Zwingli saw only a rhetorically compelling manner of describing the nature and effects of a belief in Christ.

To eat the body of Christ spiritually is nothing other than to trust with heart and soul upon the mercy and goodness of God through Christ, that is, to have the assurance of an unbroken faith that God will give us the forgiveness of sins and the joy of eternal salvation for the sake of His Son, who gave himself for us and reconciled the divine righteousness to us (*Fidei expositio*, S IV 53).

The soul can be nourished only a spiritual, purely ideal manner. Every physical, bodily component is strictly excluded. God is pure spirit and so has no ontological relation (*naturalis coniunctio*) to the physical, material elements of bread and wine. There is neither a physical eating nor a spiritual eating of a physical body, but only a spiritual "eating" of pure spirit. Scriptural references to the Body and Blood could, on this understanding, be taken as references to the word of God which is the true "substance" of faith. Zwingli had apparently begun reading this way as early as the explication of John 6 in his *Auslegen* (Z II 43, 141-4), and the notion of a purely spiritual repast is fairly well defined in the *Commentary*. See also *De canone missae*, Z II 592; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 53-4; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 336-43; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 576; *Brevis commemoratio*, S VI/ii 10; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-12. Cf. Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 324; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 321-2, 815, 819; II, 152, 522; Courvoisier, p. 71. After Marburg, and apparently under Bucer's influence, Zwingli also reintroduced the idea of a sacramental eating (*Sacramentaliter edere*), having first redefined it ("quum proprie volumus loqui") to mean the action of representing publically by means of symbols that which one does inwardly through the act of faith (*Fidei expositio*, S IV 53-4, 74). In this sense, the entire sacrament became a material figure, a mere reflective image of the true meal, which is internal and spiritual only.

- 97 The conception of the rite as a symbolic commemoration is also present in the letter from Hoen. His association with the *Devotio moderna* brings Erasmus back into the picture (Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 63-4). Despite the relative moderation and, to some extent, the

uncertainty of his position, scholars have commonly regarded the Dutch humanist as Zwingli's true inspiration for both this doctrine and the necessary re-reading of scripture (see, e.g., Baur, *Zwingli's Theologie*, II, 268ff., Adolf Zahn, *Zwingli's Verdienste um die biblische Abendmahlslehre*, Stuttgart, 1884, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 1-2; Friedrich Loofs, *Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte*, Halle, 1906, p. 798; and Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 56). Both were also suggested by Wyclif, however (Reinhold Seeberg, *Dogmengeschichte*, III, 792), and in the 12th century Peter Lombard had stigmatized the symbolic doctrine in his *Sententiae*. For Berengar of Tours, while nearer in many respects to Lutheran consubstantiation, had maintained that the Body eaten from the altar is not the true, historical Body, but only a "shadow," a "figure," or a "sign" thereof (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, p. 219; cf. pp. 186, 188-9, 192; also Knowles, pp. 94-5). He may also have proposed an appropriately figurative interpretation of the words of institution (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, p. 201). Followers of Berengar went further, maintaining that no Body and Blood are present at all; that it is the bread and wine that are "figures"; that there is no sacrifice in the Mass, since Christ can die but once; that the words "This is my body" should be understood to mean "This is a sign and remembrance of the suffering of my body," etc. (*ibid*, pp. 206, 234-5). In the 9th century, moreover, John Scotus Erigena had taught that "the sacrament of the altar is not the true body and the true blood of the Lord, but only a memorial of His true body and blood," a "type," a "symbol," or an "analogy" of our "spiritual participation" in Christ who, though still actually present according to both natures, is only sacrificed in a "spiritual" manner, His flesh being eaten by the participants "mente non dente" (*ibid*, p. 96). And finally, at roughly the same time, Ratramnus was teaching that the bread and wine become the true Body and Blood virtually only and not substantially, so that the Body and Blood in the eucharist cannot be identified with the historical, corporeal Body and Blood. The one merely "resembles" the other which alone could be called "real." The divine force of Christ is indeed present within the consecrated bread and wine, but they in themselves are properly called an "image," "appearance," or "figure" of the real Body and Blood. In the words of institution, *est* means *figurat* (*ibid*, pp. 75-80, 186; McNeill, pp. 46-7).

98 Cf. *Subsidium*, Z IV 480-2.

99 The importance of this chapter can scarcely be over-estimated, for Bullinger and Calvin were both indebted to it (cf. Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 298. n. 131, and "Zwingli's Theology," p. 224, n. 360, which relate Zwingli's sacramental doctrine to the Heidelberg Catechism). Zwingli's subsequent formulations (e.g., in *Fidei expositio*) deviate only in minor ways (cf. Locher, *Schweizerische Reformation*, p. 53; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3814). Historically, any controversy over the eucharist was bound to have an impact upon one's understanding of all the sacraments, and Zwingli's doctrine of the latter was indeed fully formulated only after his discovery of the figurative/symbolic conception of the former (cf. Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 214-5).

100 Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 207-8; *Catholic Tradition*, pp. 305-6.

101 Cf. *Von der Taufe*, Z IV 217-8; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 793; *Bekentnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 200-2; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 805-6; *Auslegen*, Z II 121-2, 125; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 46-7; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 253-68. See also Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3817-8. Ratramnus had employed a similar argument in the 9th century when he maintained that, as an "image," "appearance," or "figure" of something sacred, a sacrament cannot objectively be, contain, or conceal what it represents (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 75-80). Berengar and his followers repeated this line (*ibid*, pp. 199-200, 206). Luther, on the other hand, shared the orthodox view that the signifying functions of the sacrament do not prohibit the signified from becoming objectively present at the same time (see, e.g., his *Von Anbeten des Sakraments des heiligen Leichnams Christi* (1523), cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 482; Council of Trent (1551), Session XIII, canon 3, cited in Godefoy, 1351; also Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 199-201). The sacraments mediate God's invisibly working power. They convey the benefits of His grace to the soul of the believing communicant. This extraordinary function makes the term "sign" appropriate but inadequate (Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 207-8). It is appropriate because the simultaneous presence of the signified does not mean that the two collapse together. The visible elements remain external, producing their impression upon the senses, while God's saving grace enters the soul in a spiritual way, just as the signified ordinarily does. The

eucharist was admittedly more perplexing, for here it is not only grace, but the more immediate, historical and material, signified, the body and blood of Christ, that becomes present. And this Body and Blood are present together with, or in the form of, the signifying bread and wine. Even here, however, the necessary distance between *signum* and *res* is preserved in the difference between the visible accidents and the invisible substance they signify (Council of Trent, Session XIII, canon 2, cited F. Jansen, "Eucharistiques (Accidents)," in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, V/ii (Paris, 1913), 1450-1; Radbertus, *De corpore et sanguine Domini*, 2, cited in Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 75-6; and numerous others cited *ibid.*, pp. 201-2). Thus, the debate over the real presence could not be settled by the theory of the sign, for all were able to deploy it. The relative futility of their manoeuvres is due largely to the fact that each side was also begging the important question. Classical semiotics maintains the absence of the signified except in the mind of the observer. To view the eucharist in these terms meant presuming that it is a sign like any other. But the theological tradition had always regarded the eucharist as a miracle. The ordinary sign was an inadequate model. Where Zwingli argued that the bread and wine are signs, therefore the signified cannot be physically present, traditionalists simply maintained that, since the signified is physically present, the eucharist is no ordinary sign. Everything ultimately turned upon their reasons for believing the Body and Blood are present: tradition and the words *Hoc est corpus meum*.

- 102 *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 165-7; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 271-5; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 806; the Marburg discussion, p. 30; cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3817-8. For orthodox Catholics, the sacraments both signify the transcendent reality of the spirit and serve as the means by which that reality becomes objectively present. Lutherans retained a good measure of that objectivity, at least in the eucharist (cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 59).
- 103 *Brevis commemoratio*, S VI/ii 10, *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-5; cf. Courvoisier, pp. 63-4; Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 216, 216-7, n. 327.
- 104 See also *Auslegen*, Z II 143; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 811-2; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 200-2; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 253-265; cf. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, II.1; also Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 136. Unfortunately, with few options remaining, Zwingli was obliged to explain the peculiar sanctity and effectiveness of the sacraments largely in concrete historical terms (their institution by Christ himself). Consequently, even Calvin was included in call his doctrine "profane." Today most Protestants are apt to agree that Zwingli went too far in dissociating the sign from what it signifies, the material elements from spiritual grace, so that the relation between them ultimately seems arbitrary and the "essential, underlying unity" of the sacrament's two natures is lost (Bromily, pp. 126-7, 181-2). While this view may be too harsh (cf. my p. 333 below), it is true that Zwingli's doctrine did not enable him to address the question of that more than simply historical relation of which he himself was at times aware.
- 105 Cf. *Fidei expositio*, S IV 46-7. Calvin, while advancing to a more mystical, hence in certain ways more "objective," conception of the Supper, nevertheless held to a doctrine that is more Zwinglian than Catholic or Lutheran, in that all the sacraments are still regarded as sensible signs that do not themselves "contain" the grace that they signify (see, e.g., *Institutes*, IV, 14, i).
- 106 Cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3812-3; also *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-6; and *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 271. Like Luther, Zwingli had earlier regarded the sacraments as a pledge made by God and a seal which the Lord sets upon His gift of grace to confirm it. By the time of the letter to Alber, the direction of this gesture had been reversed and its value accordingly reduced (cf. W. Niesel, "Zwingli's 'spätere' Sakramentsanschauung," in *Theologische Blätter*, No. 11, 1932, cols. 12-8). Calvin's view was nearer to Luther's at this point.
- 107 The logic of Zwingli's view points away from infant baptism, but here he became a defender of established practice and belief (see, e.g., *Von der Taufe*, Z IV 188-337; *Antwort über Hubmaiers Taufbüchlein*, Z IV 577-647; *In Catabaptistarum strophes elenchus*, Z VI 1ff., *De sacramento baptismi*, S III 571ff.; also his discussions in the *Commentary*, pp. 763-73; the *Auslegen*, Z II 103-11; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 800-6; and *Fidei expositio*, S IV 66-7). Theoretically, his case was not very persuasive, especially after the Reformer's own criterion of scriptural precedent was invoked against him. The Council, however, continued to require infant baptism in Zürich.

- 108 Cf. *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-6, 811-2; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 202; *Auslegen*, Z II 143; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 348. See also Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 298; "Zwingli's Theology," p. 215; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 80, 82; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3814-5; Courvoisier, p. 63; Potter, p. 189; Tillich, p. 260.
- 109 Cf. *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 256-62; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 46-7, 55-8; *De sacramento baptismi*, S III 575; *Brevis commemoratio*, S VI/ii 10; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 200. See also pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3814-5; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 80; Tillich, p. 260.
- 110 See in particular *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 587-9, but also any of Zwingli's subsequent discussions, e.g., *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 202; the letter to Capito and Bucer, Z XI 340-2; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 806; Zürich to Basle a propos of the *Tetrapolitana* (Mar., 1531), cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 272. See also the second part of *Eine klare Unterrichtung* (Z IV 810-41), where the idea is already strongly implied. Cf. Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 334; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 5, 817; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3838; Potter, p. 306; McNeill, p. 46. In *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 287, 290, Locher also makes the plausible assertion that Zwingli had believed in a spiritual real presence all along.
- 111 *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 165-9; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 256-65; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 791; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 670-3.
- 112 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 587-9; Zwingli's second letter to the Evangelicals of Esslingen (16 Oct., 1526), Z V 420-2; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 341; *Brevis commemoratio*, S VI/ii 10; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 280-1; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 789-91; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 101, 141-2, 201, 210-11; the 15th Marburg Article, Z VI/ii 523, and Zwingli's notes for a public explication, *ibid*, 551. Cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3839; Courvoisier, p. 69; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 826.
- 113 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 572-5, 586-91, 604-9, 621-6, 660, 671-7; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 789-91; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 141-2, 201-3; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 806; the letter to Capito and Bucer, Z XI 340-2; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 51-2. Cf. Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 10, 819, 826; II, 132-3, 194ff.; Potter, p. 329.
- 114 *Commentary*, p. 807; *Klare Unterrichtung*, Z IV 861; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 640-3; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 348. Cf. Julius Schweizer, *Reformierte Abendmahlsgestaltung in der Schau Zwinglis* (Basle, 1954), pp. 45-6, 50, 58-9, 82-5, 103-4, 108.
- 115 *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 200-2; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 805-6; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 626, 660, 671-7; the Marburg discussion, pp. 131-5; the 15th Marburg Article, Z VI/ii 523, and Zwingli's notes for its explication, *ibid*, 551; Bucer, with reference to Marburg, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 155; and Zwingli's letter to Capito and Bucer, Z XI 340-2. Cf. Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther*, II, 113-7, 132-3; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 332.
- 116 Luther, *Dass diese Worte*, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 496, 501-4; Luther's letter to Karlstadt, cited *ibid*, 560; Luther at Marburg, pp. 18-20, 30-1, 131-5; Eck, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 828; the *Confutation of the Tetrapolitana*, cited *ibid*, II, 210. Cf. *ibid*, I, 822; II, 133, 135-6; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 332. The doctrine of an exclusively spiritual presence had consequently been condemned whenever it had appeared in the past (e.g., in Scotus Erigena, Berengar of Tours, or Wyclif), and continued to be condemned even after Calvin had modified it in traditional directions (cf. Pelikan, *Medieval Theology*, pp. 96, 196; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 291; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 819).
- 117 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 726; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 804-6; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 256-65; *Auslegen*, Z II 136-8, 141, 144, 150; *Brevis commemoratio*, S VI/ii 10; *Freundliche Verglimpfung*, Z V 791; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 141-2, 201-2; the Marburg discussion, p. 30; Zwingli's notes for a public explication of the 15th Article, Z VI/ii 551; his letter to Capito and Bucer, Z XI 340-2; Zürich to Basle à propos of the *Tetrapolitana*, cited in Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 272; cf. *ibid*, 519-22; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 222-3; "Discord," pp. 314-5, n. 24, 315-7; McNeill, p. 46; Tillich, pp. 260-1.
- 118 See, e.g., Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 222, 287, 290; "Discord," pp. 314, 332-3; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 137.
- 119 Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 486, 540, 671, 817, 826, 837; II, 96, 125-6, 132-3, 136-7, 214-5, 272, 431, 520-1, 523; Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 222-3; "Zwingli's Theology," p. 224.

- 120 The logic of Zwingli's doctrine thus comes to parallel that of (extreme) medieval realism regarding the nature of universals and our conceptual knowledge of them. This suggests a further affinity with the older scholasticism. Cf. Pollet, *Zwingli*, p. 87, n. 3, p. 91, n. 4, and Locher's response, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 222 and 223, n. 284. See also Potter, p. 312.
- 121 *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 587-9; *Commentary*, pp. 787, 817; letter to Urbanus Rhegius (16 Oct. 1526), Z VIII 739; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 202, 210. Cf. Locher, "Zwingli's Theology," p. 224; *Zwinglische Reformation*, pp. 223, 332; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 76-7, 484, 817; II, 522; Courvoisier, p. 69.
- 122 *Apologeticus Archeteles*, Z I 319. Cf. Gottfried Locher, "Huldrych Zwingli's Message" (1957), in *Zwingli's Thought*, p. 33; "Das Geschichtsbild Huldrych Zwinglis," p. 84; "Zwingli's Theology," pp. 156-60; "Discord," pp. 307-8; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 94.
- 123 Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 817.
- 124 *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 806; cf. *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 256-61; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 46. See also Köhler, *Zwingli und Luther*, II, 521, n. 3.
- 125 Cf. *Auslegen*, Z II 128-37; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 803-5; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 46-7, 54-6; *Brevis commemoratio*, S VI/ii 10; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 665-6; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 265-75. See also Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3811, 3813, 3816-8; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 80-2; II, 73, 152; Potter, p. 189.
- 126 Cf. *De providentia*, Z VI/iii 165-7; *Antwort über Straussens Büchlein*, Z V 500; *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 673. See also Locher, *Zwinglische Reformation*, p. 332; Courvoisier, pp. 63-4; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 126. In his earlier work, Zwingli retained the idea that the sacraments could strengthen faith (see n. 95 above). Calvin, in restoring it, sided with Luther. He agreed with Zwingli, however, that the sacraments do not confer grace but presuppose it, and that they are not necessary for salvation (*Institutes*, IV, 14, i, xxii).
- 127 *Fidei expositio*, S IV 57; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 271-5. Cf. Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3815-6, 3818; Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 216.
- 128 Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, I, 88-9; II, 136; Pollet, "Zwinglianisme," 3817-8, 3831; Potter, pp. 336-7.
- 129 "Properly" speaking, the "logic" of metaphor is nearer to that of consubstantiation because a word or phrase that functions metaphorically always retains something of its literal sense, combined in a rather imprecise, perhaps ultimately undecidable, fashion with the figurative. It was precisely for this sort of duplicity that Zwingli found Lutheran consubstantiation even more offensive than Catholic doctrine. To the extent that what he himself had in mind was actually a metonymic substitution ("is" stands for "signifies"), his interpretation of the passage results instead in an analog of transubstantiation. Traditionalists condemned every idea of a figurative interpretation, though without reading Christ's words in a simply literal way themselves. Luther's opponents often noted that his consubstantial doctrine required Christ to mean "This is both my body and also bread." To argue, as both Luther and the Catholics did, that the bread and wine signify the Body and Blood and at the same time become what they signify, also implies that the words of institution have a multiple sense. The problem for Zwingli is that he considers the both/and logic of the Catholic and, especially, the Lutheran position to be formally absurd. Yet the same logic is basic to the theory of figurative usage that would justify his alternative. His understanding of the material rite, on the other hand, recalls the old ideal of univocal signification. The bread and wine have only their natural substance. They function merely as symbols or signs. That which they signify may become spiritually present *in mente*, where a union is (somehow) effected with the spiritualized substance of the signifier. The fact that this all takes place only for an already believing subject suggests the sort of relativism that Zwingli's opponents thought they detected in his approach to scripture. The greater "objectivity" of a corporeal presence in the physical elements – a presence for believer and unbeliever alike – would in any case fit better with legitimate theories of metaphor, where figurative meanings are normally not considered entirely dependent upon subjective faith.
- 130 Catholic orthodoxy had no objection to Zwingli's basic metaphysical premise, and consequently preferred trans- to consubstantiation. It got around the problem of self-identity by

appealing to Aristotle, who located true being exclusively in the nonsensible substance and regarded the accident as a mere contingency, devoid of ontological value. Zwingli, for whom this distinction was nominal rather than real, continued to hold that God would never combine the accidents of one thing with the substance of another, for that would still mean that one thing became two different things. The advocates of transubstantiation were for that reason guilty in his eyes of the same error that advocates of consubstantiation committed. Both contradicted the principle of identity.

- 131 One might of course argue that form is extraneous, accidental, and consequently without real significance, while the substance of language, its content, is always exclusively intelligible. That would make sense within the idealist framework that theology has inherited. Since Zwingli repudiated the authority of tradition, however, one may be permitted to wonder whether the existence of this purely spiritual language-in-itself is anything more than a prejudice.
- 132 Catholics simply combined the substance/accident distinction with God's power to perform miracles. Luther was more ambitious. He spoke of a miracle, but also tried to argue that corporeal metaphors are part of everyday experience. If two different things share significant attributes, the one may on occasion be given the name of the other. For Luther this was not a figure of speech or merely conceptual relation. Christ really is a light, a rock, a vine, etc. – only not of the usual sort. When Luther himself is described as “another Hus,” this does not mean that he signifies or represents the latter. He and Hus stand for similar things, resemble one another in crucial, indeed, essential ways. Therefore, Luther really *is* Hus – though not the one condemned at Constance in 1415. Zwingli may likewise by another Korah and Oecolampadius another Abiram: not just *appellatione et significatione*, but in reality. Similarly, when two different objects are joined together in use (e.g., coins in a sack, wine in a cask), they form for Luther a single new entity that is neither one nor the other, but both at once (a coinsack, a winecask). The same occurs in the eucharist, where one has flesh-bread and blood-wine, and the Body to be devoured is neither spiritual nor corporeal simply, but an undecidable combination of the two: “Geist-Fleisch.” Where Zwingli saw only representation, Luther saw “another,” a “different” state of being. A wooden rose was in substance just as much a “real” rose as the flower is, since the two share so many specific qualities. The banner of a king did not merely represent his authority; it actually re-presented the king himself. Ultimately it was the king in something more than a figurative sense and not simply *de nomine*. In one way or another Luther swept aside the conventional logic of identity and difference in favor of his own idea of similarity with difference. He did not deny that there are tropes in the examples he gave, but he insisted that they are grounded in reality. They were just the way language adapts to describe the literal truth. With this unusual perspective (and more ties to medieval realism than one is accustomed to noticing), Luther saw nothing inherently absurd, or even miraculous, about con- and transubstantiation. He found them wherever Zwingli, philosophy, and common sense would see only symbol or figure of speech (Luther, *Grosses Bekenntnis*, in *Werke*, Weimar Ausgabe, XXVI, 271-80, 437-45; cf. *De captivitate Babylonica Ecclesiae* (1520), *ibid*, VI, 510-11; see also Köhler, *Zwingli u. Luther*, II, 93, 135).
- 133 Cf. Jer 15:20.
- 134 “Tropus talis translatio est ac versio, ut vox e nativa significatione, ceu planta e nativa solo, in aliud transfertur, in aliam non sine affinitate quadam accomodatur” (*Subsidium*, Z IV 481).
- 135 Cf. *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 253-8, and Zwingli's attempt to preserve a sharp difference between the divine and human natures of Christ by treating the familiar scriptural proofs of a *communicatio idiomatum* as figures of speech (alloiosis): e.g., in *Amica Exegesis*, Z V 605, 608, 679-81; *Bekenntnis genannt*, Z VI/ii 126ff., *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 794; *Antwort über Straussens Büchlein*, Z V 515; *Dass diese Worte*, Z V 922ff.
- 136 *Auslegen*, Z II 143; *Fidei expositio*, S IV 56-7; *Ad Matth. Alberum*, Z III 340-1; *Fidei ratio*, Z VI/ii 806; *De convitiis Eckii*, Z VI/iii 253-8.
- 137 Cf. the problem of the *chorismos*, or separation of realms, in classical metaphysics.
- 138 The same applies to relations between the words of institution and John 6:63. Zwingli hoped to compel a figurative reading of the former by insisting upon a narrowly literal version of the

latter. Luther and the Catholics preferred a variety of broader, more or less figurative, versions of John 6:63 in order to support their literal readings of "This is my body." Each side had to vary its approach to produce a consistent doctrine. Given his way of reading a particular passage, one might predict how a disputant would read others. But logic alone will not determine the relative value of related passages, which he will regard as decisive, or how he will interpret these primary *points d'appui*. In addition, the supreme value of full consistency is itself more often a presupposition, than a product, of cogent reading. Thus, all parties may have striven for a consistent interpretation of the eucharist, but to understand why, or how precisely each of them set about it, one must look beyond what is stated explicitly in the conclusions that are subsequently reached.

- 139 I should like to make it clear that I am not reproaching Zwingli for his inconsistencies. What I am trying to provide is an analysis of his thinking that combines a continued respect for consistency with an increased attentiveness to the range of its implications, even as an ideal.
- 140 It is worth noting that Zwingli's rigor took social and political, as well as intellectual, form. Under his influence, Zürich became the prototype of Calvin's Geneva.