CONCEPTIONS OF POOR RELIEF IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY STRASBOURG

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In a review article of recent trends in social history, Thomas Brady claims:

> The urban reform for the moment takes its place beside the "Weber Thesis" as a central topos of the social history of the Reformation.[1]

Historians have generally agreed on the importance of the social and urban aspects of the Reformation, yet there has been considerable debate over the religious dimensions of the Reformation and urban corporative and communal mentality. The role of the individual is fundamental to interpretations of the Reformation. Bernd Moeller argues that the urban reformers built on the old civic concept of a sacral corporate ideal as they attempted to correct Luther by using the community rather than the individual as a starting place.[2] Steven Ozment rejects Weber's description of "Protestantism as an 'infinitely burdensome and earnestly enforced' regulation of the whole life," claiming instead that the attractiveness of early Reformation theology lay "in its conformity with Luther's original impulse to free individual and civic life from the onerous religious beliefs, practices and institutions."[3] Ozment argues that, similar to Luther's own self-described experience, the new Protestant theology allowed the individual to be liberated psychologically and spiritually from the bonds of

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an oppressive medieval religion. Thomas Brady ignores the religious dimensions of the Reformation, opting instead for a neo-Marxist conceptual apparatus of class analysis modified by estates theory.[4] He uses prosopographical studies of ruling elites in Strasbourg to argue for the importance of social tensions. Whether the Reformation occurred due to a lingering communal mentality, a need to free individuals psychologically, or due to class conflict, it was an age of vast institutional changes, the remnants of which are still visible.

Modern historians have explained the 1523-25 adoption of the Reformation in Strasbourg according to each of the above mentioned theories.[5] The urban magistrates were able to weather the crisis years of religious reform in Strasbourg without diminishing their control by yielding to popular pressure for reform measures. The popular disturbances were on the surface largely anti-clerical, yet, the deeply entrenched role of the clergy in control of property, in education, in social welfare institutions and in positions of power resulted in concessions that were not just religious: "the regime became willing to go to almost any lengths to bring the popular movement under control."[6] After a period of deadlock, the Rat decided in 1523 to free perpetual rents to rents redeemable at fixed rates. This decision favoring debtors at the expense of lenders "represents a considerable sacrifice by the aristocracy and a (to them) unwelcome restriction of property rights."[7] The concessions culminated in a 1525 tax reform which favored the poorer classes. In spite of these actions, it is clear that Strasbourg experienced a growing influx of poor people, reaching an apex in the bad harvest years of the late 1520's and early 1530's.

In the same year that the council freed perpetual rents they founded a civic welfare fund (Almosen) which replaced the haphazard, clerically administered poor relief. The new system of poor relief also provided closer supervision of the lives of the poor. It is my goal in this paper to evaluate the poor relief system in the city of Strasbourg in order to view the attitude of civic authorities towards the poor and to evaluate how ideological, structural, disciplinary, and pedagogical changes in poor relief reflect changing conceptions of the poor, the community, and the individual.

Much of the early German work on poor relief in Strasbourg sees poor relief as resulting from Lutheranism.[8] Recent German studies, such as Thomas Fischer's, attribute a lesser role to Lutheranism than their predecessors, yet they suggest that Catholic and Protestant cities did in fact differ in their treatment of the poor, not only in the form of propaganda but also in general practices: there was a general forbidding of begging in Protestant cities such as Basel and Strasbourg, whereas Catholic cities strictly curtailed begging but did not forbid it.[9] The consensus in English language research rejects the hypothesis that poor relief resulted from Luther's religion:

> The reform of public welfare was not, then, linked directly to the Reformation. It was a normal outgrowth from preceding developments. The Reformation facilitated the emergence of a new system because it provided an effective ideological formulation and because the breakdown of the monastic units made it easier to institute new agencies. But the demand for change was not a result of the religious crisis.[10]

I explore briefly poor relief in the Middle Ages and attitudes towards poor relief expressed by Humanists and clergy. Then I trace poor relief in Strasbourg from the turn of the century. I examine Luther's theology in search of sixteenth-century attitudes towards poverty, poor relief, and the requirements of a community. I turn then to the theology of the Strasbourg reformer Martin Bucer and evaluate the ideological, structural, disciplinary, and pedagogical nature of the changing poor relief system. Lastly, I trace the remnants of these beliefs and actions in search of intended and unintended consequences. It is my contention that the shift in poor relief laws and usury laws, though instituted by anti-capitalists, did in fact instill a work ethic which drastically changed the role of the individual within the civic community.

The terms "Arm", "arme man," and "armen leute" are used to signify two different conditions of the common people in the Middle Ages and in the

Early Modern period: as social position (Stand) they signified the need for privileges and authority in a relationship of domination or "Herrschaft," and as an economic measure (Lage) they signified the urban economic standing (poor as opposed to wealthy).[11] The personal "Herrschaft" aspect was a rural classification and the "Lage" aspect was the product of thirteenth-century citizenship ("bürgerliche Freiheit"). With the growth of a money economy there developed a new measurement of social wealth such that the concept "arm" became one of status difference between city and country. This dichotomy results in two conditions of poverty: Lebensnotwendige, based on the societally determined 'minimum' nourishment and care requirements, and Standesnotwendige, based on a place of dignity or rank within society.[12] For the purposes of this paper I am only concerned with the urban aspect of poverty where "arm" signifies a position below a poverty level; hence, a societal norm or standard of measurement which is based on the living standard of the guilds and handworkers.

Methods of poor relief, except for those used by a few pious bishops of the eleventh century, were not systematic; rather, they were practices of a state religion requiring good works, above all through the giving of alms (Almosenspenden), in order to obtain forgiveness for sins and to secure eternal life. The result was a generous but unsystematic giving of alms, which did not discourage begging and which distributed money not to those in greatest need but to those who were boldest. In the thirteenth century, the situation began to worsen, especially in cities which experienced a huge influx of outside beggars such as those on pilgrimage routes.[13] Some cities and rulers began to regulate begging and charities, thereby impinging on programs which were previously the prerogative of the church. The city of Strasbourg began taking control of the major hospitals and asylums for the poor (Spitäler) in 1263.[14] These hospitals were for the elderly or for people with specific illnesses such as lepers. They took only those citizens who had paid money consistently to the hospital in a form of insurance, or those citizens whose illness was so severe that they were unable to beg for a living. People who could not secure a place in the hospital begged

if their work did not provide enough income.[15]

In the fifteenth century there was a change in attitudes towards begging. In 1391, 1409, and 1411 laws trying to limit begging were instituted: people should not give to but should scold (bitter zur Rede setzen) those who could work but who chose to beg.[16] This shift reflects changing attitudes towards work: "The medieval church's emphasis on asceticism had stigmatized labor; work was an evil, the burden man bore for Adam's original sin."[17] In the course of the sixteenth century the attitudes towards begging and work progressed further as the issue switched from a call for alms based on the rewards in another world and the eradication of sins to a societal issue concerned with the economic position of the poor and ways to alleviate their poverty. This shift to the removal of causes is first seen in the sixteenth century.

The city of Strasbourg was a Free Imperial City (freie Reichsstadt) which owed no regular obligation to the Emperor either in the form of annual tax or fixed military fee. It is located on the Rhine river and was a thoroughfare of north-south and east-west trade routes. In the sixteenth century it was inhabited by 20,000 people, maintaining its population not by births but by a high immigration rate.[18] Both politically and economically stable, Strasbourg was a center of humanist activity and a hotbed of religious and social reform in South Germany. The Reformation took place in Strasbourg in 1523, and the new religion fell under the guidance of Martin Bucer. As a theologian Bucer is known for his attempts to reconcile differences between Luther and Zwingli. The city was recognized at the time as being generous to poor people and as being more tolerant of radical religious beliefs than were most cities. Many rural workers migrated to Strasbourg in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Most of these new inhabitants (Zuzügler) had no handicraft qualifications and were poor. A chasm developed at the time between guild handworkers and the urban poor due in part to the exodus of the very rich to country estates and the influx of poor.[19]

The number of guilds shrunk in the late fifteenth century in a political move which made the guilds more exclusive and less accessible to the poor. The guild system itself was not a

system of economic equality. Huge differences existed between guilds and within single guilds. A greater differentiation of work developed within guilds: work which was previously done by one person was increasingly accomplished in a hierarchical succession with certain people doing only certain tasks. Levels of guild participation became stratified as lower status and corresponding reduced privileges were offered to those of limited means.

Fischer uses tax records from Basel and Freiburg to show that there are three occupational groups characterized by high rates of poverty: textile related workers, construction workers, and urban agrarian workers (Gärtnerzunft).[20] Fischer further differentiates the poor into a six level hierarchy: handicraft workers with a house and small workplace, servants and maids, day laborers, alms recipients, people of disrespectful professions and vagrants, and those who could work but preferred to beg and steal. Many of these people supported themselves fully or partially through begging. Begging was not, in and of itself, seen as wrong. The myth of the holy beggar had become an accepted part of society with the establishment of certain religious orders. Poverty for some was a religious calling: "Begging by monks and stationers was looked upon as a divine duty while the giver was encouraged to give primarily as a good work."[21]

One popular topic of social criticism in late fifteenth and early sixteenth century literature was the plague of beggars. Beggars are typical figures in such works as Brant's Ship of Fools (1494), Beber's Triumphus Veneris (1501) and Murner's Narrensbeschwörung (1512). Considered the "most famous book of its time," Ship of Fools (Narrenschiff), went through many publications and was quickly translated into many foreign languages. Its author, Sebastian Brant, was a well known forerunner of German humanism. His poetry represented the new trend of upper middle class German thinkers, Brant himself being an officeholder and proud resident of Strasbourg. Arguing that it is foolish to seek passing pleasure rather than eternal salvation, he offers sketches of fools complete with over one hundred woodcuts. In chapter 63, "Of Beggars", the poem is prefaced by a woodcut of a rather well-dressed woman drinking wine while her husband and

children, also well suited, travel with a horse towards a city. The two are beggars who live well while travelling and then don old garments to beg in the cities. Below the woodcut it says:

> I feared no fools were left for me,
> The beggars then I went to see,
> Their wisdom was of low degree.[22]

Brant viciously attacks clerical attitudes towards begging and lashes out at beggars for not working, for training to beg, for falsely representing themselves to get more money, and for living a good life:

> To beg some men will always choose,
> Though they could work if but they would
> ...
> Their children in their youth they train
> To profit well by beggar's gain,
> ...
> He uses crutches when he's out,
> But not when no one is about;
> ...
> He borrows children by the score
> so he'll have mouths to feed galore,
> ...
> By begging they can get ahead,
> Some even get to eat white bread,
> And they don't drink the cheaper wine...

Brant also complains that "their numbers grow," and mentions the problem in his home town "at Strasbourg."

Shortly after Brant's book appeared, Geiler of Kaisersberg, a popular reforming preacher active in Strasbourg, began preaching about the excessive extent of begging and the inadequate system of distributing alms.[23] In "The Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit," Kaisersberg argues, in agreement with the traditional church position, for unregulated charity which allows alms recipients to receive support without any form of testing or control.[24] Yet, in the thirteenth article of a 1501, twenty-one article memorandum for the council he offers concrete suggestions: the secular government should form new control of poor relief, the city should be divided into six or seven sections with an alms administrator (Armenverweser) at the head of each, and healthy beggars should work.[25] He did

not, however, argue that all begging should be forbidden, merely that healthy people should work instead of beg. In spite of the fact that these articles had virtually no influence on policy at the time, they do reflect an interest in poor relief which had to have been discussed in the council.

The magistrates were interested in reform of the poor relief system and did institute gradual changes. The goal of reducing the number of beggars resulted in a reduction in 1464 of begging allowed by foreigners to a three day stay followed by a required three month absence.[26] In 1506 this was reduced to a limit of one day and one night. There is also record of a 1506 distribution of 'new badges' (nuwe zeichen) which were provided to those who had been deemed legal beggars in the city.[27] All other citizens were encouraged to watch marked people to see that beggars were not getting drunk, or gambling money away.[28]

In the early sixteenth century the right to purchase citizenship was restricted such that the required minimum worth of newcomers was raised.[29] This Kleinbürgerrecht did not offer the full representation of Großbürgerrecht, but it allowed one to be eligible for protection in the city as well as begging and forms of relief. Because of these controls, begging was virtually limited to citizens who were members of the beggars' society (Bettlerbrüderschaft) established in 1411.[30] This organization was slightly restructured in 1469 but functioned until 1523 when it was dissolved as the result of the official decision to end all begging.[31] Although magistrates did show an increased interest in reform of the poor relief system in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the real reform occurred first in 1523 with the complete rejection of all forms of begging and with the establishment of a more clearly defined work ethic.

The reform of the begging laws reveal a shift from the regulation and control of begging to an attempt to exclude begging within the city walls. The magistrates decided to break with the Catholic tradition concerning begging, but it is not clear just what the punishments were, or if begging still occurred. It appears that begging did indeed continue merely because discussion concerning the end of begging continued.[32] Secondary sources all claim that begging was

eliminated, yet they make mention of later legislation and memorandums concerning begging.[33]

The major institutional changes resulting from the 1523 ordinances were the removal of poor relief from church hands, the construction of a begging control group (Bettlerpolizei), and the conscious effort to raise community awareness of illegal begging. The ordinance was passed at the same time that the convents and monasteries were being dissolved, yet the council refused to turn control of almsgiving and poor relief to the Reformers:

> First, all the established funds for alms should be requisitioned, and these alms should be delivered over to the Rat, whether [collected] by spiritual or worldly persons, pfleger [sic] or others, so that no one will manage such alms subsequently, and thus that alms will be divided among the poor who are in need, as has been ordered. And so that such alms shall be delivered over to the Rat, as it has been drawn up in writing, it is necessary to assign a house where the revenues can be collected ... and kept.[34]

The reformed clergy did not control the welfare system but their ideas are reflected in the new attitude towards alms. The person to community nexus was restructured: alms giving became a Christian duty which was an expression of faith and of love for one's neighbor rather than being a good work which earns merit and salvation. Citizens were encouraged to give freely according to their abilities. The council installed alms boxes in churches and issued an accompanying edict which mixed the old idea of salvation and merit with the new idea of giving out of love and faith:

> Each person can put his alms therein, to share with the poor and show his compassion, as God has admonished. And as he wishes to obtain mercy from God, then each person who in the situation of this disrupted world is concerned for his needy neighbor and gives to his help, must on the day [sic] of Judgment be given a true recompense, and for the earthly, the eternal will be obtained.[35]

The new system of collection and distribution was headed by a welfare administrator. Lucas Hackfurt, appointed in August of 1523, held the position until his death in 1554. One of the earliest priests to marry in Strasbourg, Hackfurt was later attracted to Anabaptist beliefs although his position as welfare administrator forced him to renounce these. Hackfurt kept weekly records during his thirty-one years as welfare administrator. Carrying the main load of the management, he worked with the poor, made initiatives for a single welfare program, and fought for legislation which he felt would aid the poor. He zealously sought to institute reforms based on his religious convictions, but he was only partially successful.

Hackfurt headed a system which was based on home relief for the poor. Funds were collected and distributed by a committee under his charge to those citizens who could not work to support themselves. The recipients were required to wear shields, similar to those worn earlier by beggars, so that citizens would be able to monitor their moral behavior. There was also a regular system of visitation.[36]

A major problem facing Hackfurt was attaining sufficient funds for the welfare problem. Chrisman attributes the problem to the new concept of giving: "voluntary contributions, given in faith and love, never yielded the same quantity of revenue as that obtained when the donors believed their gifts would guarantee a better life in the world to come."[37] Hackfurt constantly lobbied for revenues from the sale of monasteries and other church property. Budget problems forced Hackfurt to try to cut the number of welfare recipients. Of special interest is the exclusion of foreigners from any form of assistance and the effort not merely to serve the poor but to transform them into working members of society.

Foreign poor, most of whom were from rural areas with no system of poor relief, were previously granted a few days of unmolested begging. The idealistic Hackfurt argued in 1527 that because God had given the city more than the rural areas, the burghers should share it with the poor.[38] He was conscious of the conflict between urban and rural inhabitants and felt that because non-urbanites had no systematic means to

deal with the poor, the urban citizens should obey the Christian command to care for neighbors and should provide help.[39]

The lack of any systematic program of poor relief in rural areas caused acute problems for the urban areas in times of periodic crises. Wars and natural disasters had a large impact on migration and on the size and stability of the work force. Poor harvests in 1529, coinciding with an influx of religious refugees from Strasbourg's territories, from other cities, and from rural areas outside of Strasbourg's domain, resulted in many pleas from Hackfurt. Hackfurt based his requests on the idea that high prices and inflation were conditions which God had sent to punish man for his sins. He also argued that even the asocial foreigners and criminals should be provided for.[40] The city did offer some assistance to nonresident poor during certain crisis years. When the preachers Bucer and Hedio joined Hackfurt in requesting assistance to religious refugees, the city set up a program providing all work capable foreigners with a work place in the city.[41]

Poor relief was no longer a matter of alleviating only immediate needs or of providing help only for the moment; rather, permanent provisions were provided with the intention of helping the needy return to a state of economic self sufficiency. The work offered to foreign poor tended to be on municipal projects such as building the city walls, whereas attempts were made to provide citizens with more meaningful and stable positions. In 1525 yarn was given to poor people and poor women so that they could spin.[42] The city then bought the finished product from these same people. Work places were created and special training for children was provided.

Work requirements became a means of social discipline of the poor which brought with it certain problems. Hackfurt argued that people do not work unless they have to work, but he was also faced with the burden of finding work for the untrained.[43] The foreign poor complained in 1544 that the city did not provide work like it used to and that the wages were too low.[44] Although Hackfurt was able to establish one of the best poor relief systems in Europe his inability to establish a methodical system of distributing and providing work, the general inability to limit the number of people receiving

support, and the failure to find adequate funding prevented him from achieving his goals.

Strasbourg did establish one of the most complete and best known systems of poor relief in sixteenth-century German speaking areas. Although the Strasbourg reforms reflected many of the earlier pleas by Geiler of Kaisersberg, they were not consistent with his traditional pre-Reformation notion of the right to practice begging and the nature of alms. Until recently the consensus among many historians was that Luther's theology gave license to the implementation of poor relief reforms such as those proposed by Geiler of Kaisersberg:

> It remained for Luther to connect solutions of the problems of poor relief with the powerful movement of the Reformation, thereby providing a theological basis for the construction of a new system of poor relief, at least in Germany.[45]

This view contends that Luther's conception of justification by faith, of the Bible as sole authority, and of the universal priesthood of believers, places man's relation to God such that a necessary expression of the Christian faith is the obligation to serve the needs of one's neighbors out of love. One sees in Luther's theory about alms and begging many of the same problems and the same calls for change as one finds in the platforms for practical reform instituted in Strasbourg.

In the fourteenth point of "The Long Sermon on Usury" (1520), Luther rejects the giving of alms as he saw it practiced:

> Not what Christ has commanded, but what men have invented, is called "giving for God's sake"; not what one gives to the needy, the living members of Christ, but what one gives to stone, wood and paint, is called "alms".[46]

He argues that the money goes to the church but not to feed the "poor."

In the same work Luther also argues, based on Deuteronomy 15: 4 and 11, that there should be no begging but that one should give to one's "poor and needy brother." In a more theoretical tract he flatly rejects begging: "One of the greatest

necessities is the abolition of all begging throughout Christendom. Nobody ought to go begging among Christians."[47] With his rejection of begging he argues that "every city should support its own poor."[48] The way to provide for the poor is to have "an overseer or warden who knows all the poor and informs the city council or the clergy what they needed."[49] Luther also says that authorities should stop overlapping solicitations of money. A fourth point from "To the Christian Nobility" is his use of Paul's teaching in that "whoever will not work shall not eat."[50] All of these positions are part of the poor relief reforms instituted in Strasbourg.

Luther's views on poor relief do not differ greatly from those of the chief reformer of Strasbourg, Martin Bucer. Bucer's sermons and writings provide a glimpse of his vision of a Christian community and the role of charity and education within society.[51] Scholars familiar with Bucer's thought are unanimous in stressing the importance of ethics in his theology. Bucer's emphasis on good works reflects the strongly ethical nature of his theology. Bucer posits that justification comes from faith alone, apart from works; nevertheless, virtue and good works are the necessary realizations of justification.[52] The role of good works in the life of the Christian is evident in Bucer's concept of double justification: one who has been justified by God through faith will also produce works which are pleasing to God.

Bucer's view of justification requires a Christian to bear ethical fruit. This is manifested in the expression of love for one's neighbor. In one of his earliest published works, a sermon entitled, "That no one should live for himself but for others, and how one may reach this goal," Bucer states: "how gladly do I want to offer (myself) for service to my brother, taking absolutely nothing of his for myself."[53]

The emphasis on love for one's neighbor shaped Bucer's view of the church and society. The "unity of the Church," according to Bucer, "consists therefore in the unity of the Spirit, of love, the word of God, Christ, the sacraments, and the sharing of gifts."[54] The church is a community of individuals consecrated to the fulfillment of the material and spiritual needs of the others. All members of the church are exhorted to use the gifts they have received from

God in order to meet the needs of the others. They are to bring these gifts to the deacons whose duty it is to care for the physical needs of the poor. Mutual assistance and encouragement sanctifies the church as a whole, as well as each individual member.[55]

Before turning to the societal implications of Bucer's system of giving it is worth examining briefly his ideas concerning the promotion of Christian growth in the individual members of the church. Bucer's attempts to strengthen the church and its members through education and church discipline result in the call for a new lifestyle which will enable Christians to live well and happily (bene beateque vivere). Education and discipline are not solely the responsibility of the church, as both the church and the Christian magistrate are to work together, although each in their proper sphere, to further the kingdom of Christ on earth. Bucer offered open theological lectures which eventually led to the development of the Strasbourg Academy, later the University of Strasbourg.[56] Bucer's strong support for both secular and religious education is a product of his belief that one can live a life worthy of Christ only if one has first been taught how to live such a life.[57] In Bucer's Strasbourg, the individual is not complete outside of the community because the community defines the individual as needing education.

Bucer advocates church discipline, in the form of pastoral care rather than punishment, as a tool for encouraging Christians to live a life worthy of Christ. In his 1538 treatise, On True Pastoral Care, he defends the need for discipline within the church and presents five different ways of exercising discipline, depending on the spiritual condition of the individual. Underlying his methods of disciplining church members, be it by the civil or church authorities, is Bucer's concern first to awaken genuine faith in Christ and then to encourage the believer to greater commitment and growth in sanctification.

Bucer's ideas concerning discipline, pedagogy, the structure of charitable giving, and the underlying ideological basis for giving may seem to be idealistic and unattainable to the modern critic; nevertheless, based on the written record that he and Hackfurt have left behind, it seems

that the Strasbourg clergy did believe that the potential existed for a society eradicated both of begging and of unemployed able-bodied people. The municipal leaders were interested in creating a city where all could work and where everyone could care for himself or herself at home, without the visible presence of begging.[58] In the pursuit of this end, the city of Strasbourg instituted means of restricting and regulating poor relief which involved ideological, structural, disciplinary, and pedagogical changes.

The decision to remove the administration of poor relief from the church's hand and the subsequent council control was the structural change with the greatest impact. The implications of a shift from a universal church's responsibility to that of a geographically limited area's concern for its own poor, effect concepts of community and the individual. Restrictions were imposed on non-citizens and the availability of burgher status shifted in a move which further isolated the community from outsiders. The land-city differentiation was further exacerbated in times of poor harvests and crisis.

The decision to distinguish between foreigners and one's own poor took on a new meaning when the ideological basis for giving shifted from a means of earning salvation to the love of one's neighbor. The result of this ideological shift was not only a change in the community-individual nexus, but also a shift in the geography of begging. The most visible difference was the exclusion by Protestants of all forms of begging from within the confines of the city walls. The seclusion of the poor from the public's eyes and the distancing of the community from the poor was much greater in Protestant than in Catholic cities. The Protestant establishment of a general alms fund, which administered to the poor within the confines of the poor peoples' homes, not only sheltered the poor from the public eye but also institutionalized a change in the nature of transactions. One no longer gave directly to poor people who were a visible part of one's environment, as in Catholic lands; rather, one gave to a black box.

The change in the motive of giving brought with it an assurance that only those who could not support themselves would be recipients of

one's gift. The city was able to decide who would and who would not receive aid. This change and the establishment of a group to distribute the funds established opportunities for discipline and the emergence of a system of surveillance. The establishment of a begging control group, of a bureaucratic system of distribution, and of a welfare administrator allowed for the supervision of the poor in the form of regular visitations. Because these officers had to answer directly to the municipal council it gave the council greater power and more social control. The council became the watchdog concerned with regulating the undesirable aspects of society.

Control was established through disciplinary and pedagogical actions which attempted to direct and control the poor. The council was able to recode the poor population such that many were forced to work while the now limited recipients of municipal alms were more strictly prevented from taking part in certain activities, such as drinking and gambling. The new poor relief system's work requirement established a communal definition of the responsibility of able-bodied individuals who wished to function within the community. This duty to work was founded on the belief, demonstrated above in Luther's work, that "whoever will not work shall not eat." While some work places were created, the important thrust was the demand that people seek work and the establishment of pedagogical opportunities for the poor. Education programs for the poor and for the children of the poor were an important platform of the new poor relief leaders.[59] It is through these ideological, structural, disciplinary, and pedagogical alterations that society established a new emphasis on work which had a lasting impact on the Protestant lands.

The impact of this changing work ethic was not consistent with the intentions of the poor relief reformers. The opinion of the religious and poor relief reformers was that usury and speculation were contributing to poverty. Beyond Luther's disdain for usury, he clearly attacks usurers and rejects capitalism in his tract "Trade and Usury."[60] In the same years that Luther was attacking capitalism and usury, there was a tremendous increase in legislation in Strasbourg concerning usury and speculation of food

prices.[61] Whether one attributes the reform of poor relief to Luther or whether one sees it as a step in a centuries long process, it is clear that the theology and legislation of people who wished to control capitalists and usurers also rejected the traditional interpretation of alms and the virtue of poverty. As one now gave out of love, so too one worked out of duty. The need to work became as important as the need for nourishment. These people strove to instill a work ethic within citizens such that the role of the individual within society shifted from that of giving for one's own benefit to giving out of love, and the role of begging and poverty shifted from an accepted part of Christian society to sometning to be eliminated. The role of the individual changed, taking on a new mentality or work ethic in a society which sought to alleviate the causes for poverty by requiring people to work.

NOTES

[1]Thomas Brady, "Social History," in Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research, ed. Steven Ozment (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1982), p. 167.

[2]Bernd Moeller, Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays. trans. H.C. Erik Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards (Durham, North Carolina: Labyrinth Press, 1982).

[3]Steven E. Ozment, The Reformation Cities: The Appeal of Protestantism to Sixteenth Century Germany and Switzerland (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 119, p. 9.

[4]Thomas A. Brady, Ruling Class, Regime and Reformation at Strasbourg, 1520-1555 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978).

[5]All three of the works mentioned above refer frequently to Strasbourg, with Brady's work based solely on Strasbourg. Miriam Usher Chrisman's analysis supports Moeller's thesis: Strasbourg and the Reform: A Study in the Process of Change. Yale Historical Publications, Miscellany, 87 (New Haven,Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1967). A fourth tradition of Reformation research which sees anti-clerical sentiment as the moving factor is supported in William Stafford's work Domesticating the Clergy: The

Inception of the Reformation in Strasbourg 1522-1524. American Academy of Religion Dissertation Series, no. 17 (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1976).

[6]Brady, Ruling, p. 207.

[7]Ibid., p.206.

[8]Otto Winckelmann, Das Fürsorgewesen der Stadt Strassburg vor und nach der Reformation bis zum Ausgang des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts (Leipzig: Verein für Reformationsgeschichte, 1922; reprint ed., New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971).

This book comprises two volumes bound into one, with the second volume comprised of source materials. Since most of the documents are from this book, endnotes will refer to I or II, followed by page and document numbers.

[9]Thomas Fischer, Städtische Armut und Armenfürsorge im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert. Hrsg. von Wilhelm Abel und Karl Heinrich Kaufhold (Göttingen: Verlag Otto Schwartz & Co., 1979), p. 181.

[10]Chrisman, Strasbourg, p. 277. Chrisman's position is consistent with that of Natalie Z. Davis, Henry Kamen and Brian Pullan.

[11]Fischer, p. 17 ff.

[12]Ibid., p. 28.

[13]Winckelmann, "Über die ältesten Armenordnungen der Reformationszeit (1522-1525)," Historische Viertelsjahrschrift 17 (1914/15): 188-196.

[14]Ibid., p. 190.

[15]I, p.61.

[16]Winckelmann, "Über die ältesten," p. 192.

[17]Chrisman, Straßbourg, p. 276.

[18]Jean-Piere Kintz, "Notes sur quelques aspects demographiques de la ville de Strasbourg," in Strasbourg au coeur religieux du XVIe siècle, ed. Georges Livet and Francis Rapp (Strasbourg: Librairie Istra, 1977), p. 13.

[19]Fischer, p. 69 ff.

[20]Ibid., p. 67.

[21]Harold Grimm, "Luther's Contributions to Sixteenth-Century Organization of Poor Relief," Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte 61 (1970): 224.

[22]Sebastian Brant, The Ship of Fools, trans. Edwin H. Zeydel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), p. 208.

[23]I, p. 63. For more on Geiler of Kaisersberg's views on begging see I, pp. 197-202.

[24]Major portions of this text are provided in the "Quellen und Materialien (in Übersetzungen

von Rolf Müller)" section of Sachße Christoph, and Florian Tennstedt, Geschichte der Armenfürsorge in Deutschland: vom Spätmittelalter bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1980), pp. 57-59.

[25]Léon Dacheux, ed., Die ältesten Schriften Geilers von Kayserberg (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1965), p. 30 f.

[26]II, pp. 83-87, #38.

[27]II, p. 85, #38.

[28]II, p. 100, #43. They make the beggars gather to pick up patches and they justify the patches by saying that they serve to protect the people: "solch almusen nit unzimlich verschwendt oder verthan werde oder durch die ihennen, so solch almusen nemen, desto weniger in würtzhüsern, bierhüsern oder uf stuben verzert oder verspielt werden."

[29]Fischer, p. 33.

[30]II, pp. 78-81, #36.

[31]II, pp. 81-83, #37; II, p. 91, #40.

[32]Hackfurt explored possible ways to eliminate begging in July of 1531. II, pp. 144-149, #108.

[33]Chrisman mentions a March 1531 memorandum from Capito to the Rat requesting "action against those who still begged in the streets, suggesting that if the beggars persisted in their habits, they should be deprived of their Bürgerrecht." Straßbourg, p. 281. Other examples are cited in Fischer, p. 242., and Chrisman, "Urban Poor in the Sixteenth Century: The Case of Strasbourg," in Social Groups and Religious Ideas in the Sixteenth Century, ed. Miriam Usher Chrisman and Otto Gründler (Kalamazoo, Michigan: The Medieval Institute, 1978), p. 63.

[34]They did, of course, consult the reformed clergy concerning poor relief ordinances. For my explanation of the ordinances I rely heavily on Chrisman's account, using her translations of the documents. Straßbourg, pp. 277-283, here a portion of a draft of an ordinance, p. 278.

[35]Chrisman, Straßbourg, p. 279.

[36]II, p. 98, #43.

[37]Chrisman, Straßbourg, p. 280.

[38]II, p. 147, #108.

[39]II, pp. 115-116, #71.

[40]II, p. 121, #77.

[41]II, pp. 128-129, #87.

[42]II, pp. 109-110, #58.

[43]II, p. 156, #113.

[44]II, pp. 202-204, #157.

[45]Grimm, p. 224.
[46]Luther's Works, vol. 45, p. 284.
[47]"To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate," in Luther's Works, vol. 44, p. 189.
[48]Ibid.
[49]Ibid., p. 190.
[50]Ibid., p. 191.
[51]De Regno Christi, published 1557 in Basel, six years after Bucer's death, represents the culmination of Bucer's ideas concerning the Reformation and poor relief.
[52]Karl Koch, Studium Pietatis: Martin Bucer als Ethiker (Neukirchen: Neukirchen Verlag, 1962), p. 46.
[53]Martin Bucers Deutsche Schriften (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1960), vol. 1, p. 64.
[54]Martin Bucer, Lectures on Ephesians, trans. and ed. D.F. Wright, The Courtenay Library of Reformation Classics, vol. 4, Common Places of Martin Bucer (Appleford, England: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1972), pp. 201-234, here p. 208.
[55]Koch, pp. 56-58.
[56]Ernst-Wilhelm Kohls, Die Schule bei Martin Bucer in ihrem Verhältnis zu Kirche und Obrigkeit (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1963), pp. 48-50.
[57]Ibid., p. 60.
[58]In the July 19, 1531 Ratsbeschluß auf Grund Hackfurtscher Anträge the council addresses these points: "Siteinmol allenthalb im land genugsam arbeit ... dohär sich menglich bi den sinen wol erhalten und neren kan..." Winklemann, II, pp. 144-149, #107, here p. 144.
[59]One example of this is found in the preacher Casper Hedio's forward to his translation of Ludovicus Vives work "De subventione pauperum." Hedio argues for a strategy which will supply the common man "Education und christlich Zucht...damit er auch das sein thun und dem verarmen so vil an jm ist weren soll." II, pp. 167-172, # 118, here p. 170.
[60]Luther's Works, vol. 45, pp. 245-310.
[61]Laws concerning usury and speculation numbered 12 during the period 1440-1516, 6 during the period 1517-1520, and 32 during the period 1520-1532. Croyants et sceptiques au XVIe siecle: Le dossier des 'Epicuriens'. Société savante d'Alsace de des régions de l'est, Collection "Recherches et Documents" Tome XXX (Strasbourg: Librairie Istra, 1981), here pp. 64-71.