In Honor of Friendship:

Function, Meaning, and Iconography in Civic Stained-Glass Donations in Switzerland and Southern Germany

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Toward the end of the fifteenth century a distinctive custom arose in Switzerland and southern Germany. In the Old Swiss cantons[1] and in Germany the emperor and the nobility as well as cities, civic groups, fraternities, monasteries, and convents gave each other and their subjects small-scale stained-glass paintings intended to be viewed from close range and containing heraldic panels (*Wappenscheiben*). These were integrated into small, independent pictorial compositions, and as a rule they bore the donor's name and arms and—unlike medieval sacred stained-glass painting—were made to decorate rooms that were not of monumental proportions. The era in which the main function of stained-glass painting was to fill houses of God with sublimely colored light and remind the faithful of the teachings of the church, the gospel, and the legends of the saints was coming to an end and, indeed, finally came to an end with the advent of the Reformation. With the beginning of the Renaissance, new secular contexts arose for stained-glass painting. Now windows with glowing colors ornamented and imparted an air of social dignity to the cool splendor of darkly paneled rooms in town halls and baronial houses. The inception and zenith of this custom in the sixteenth century consisted of the donation of a window and honorary arms. The donation was usually made at the request of the recipient to celebrate the construction or renovation of a public or private building. The donation included not only the colorful glass painting but also the glazing of the entire window around it with neutrally colored bull's-eye or diamond-shaped panes. The donation of a complete window installation represented a welcome financial subsidy for a building's owner, for secular glass windows were something new and therefore costly. The coat of arms in the upper part of the windows was the illustrious badge of honor whereby the donor identified himself and demonstrated his relationship with the recipient.

A blazon burned into glass was not a modern invention. Heraldry appears in European stained-glass painting, particularly in England and France, in great diversity from the thirteenth century. Because of its clear colors and shapes (originating with its initial purpose of providing easy recognition on the battlefield), heraldry is particularly suited to stained glass. Installed in private rooms at the owner's expense, the coat of arms functioned as the symbol of the lineage of the lord of the medieval castle and, as his personal identification, was a valuable asset. An attack on this highly prized insignia was considered a disgraceful humiliation, and in the sixteenth century the deliberate destruction of a heraldic window was still viewed as an insult to the donor and a challenge to his power and dominion. As an element of medieval church window decoration, the blazon signaled the donor's patronage of the costly glass installation. With the liberation of heraldic panels from monumental church windows and their incorporation as independent stained-glass panels in the civic domain, the meaning and function of the donation changed decisively. For the devout person of the Middle Ages, the donation of a window provided "visible signs of repentance for his sins and at the same time a contribution to the guarantee of his salvation" and was consequently made with a view toward death and the afterlife.[2] Renaissance donations, however, primarily address honor and favor, solidarity and friendship, prestige and power. They were thus oriented to the display of political and social status and to the appropriate self-portrayal of cantons, cities, public offices, guilds, societies, and individuals.

Small-scale stained-glass paintings represent a specialized field of art production in which Switzerland led the rest of Europe for two hundred years, from the early fifteenth to the late sixteenth century. The Swiss produced stained glass in massive quantities, and the popularity of the medium spread through

all social classes, eventually becoming a folk art. In Switzerland, as nowhere else, stained-glass painting developed as a national art that flourishes to this day.[3] Much was produced in southern Germany as well, as in all Habsburg-ruled countries, especially in the Upper Rhine Valley and in Swabia. Accepted by the Reformation, stained-glass painting reached its zenith between 1530 and 1630, subsided greatly in the second half of the seventeenth century, and was almost forgotten subsequently. Not until the end of the nineteenth century was the art revived, under different historical circumstances. Only a fraction of the once huge production is preserved, with only a small part of that fraction still in its original location. Most stained-glass paintings have been destroyed, victims of vandalism, storms, politically related destruction, a loss of the consciousness of tradition, or changes in aesthetic approaches to architecture and space. Many were simply sold.

Interest in collecting these small-scale panels began at the end of the eighteenth century. Romantic yearnings for the Middle Ages led to the historically accurate decoration of Gothic and Gothic Revival castles, which included the installation of medieval and modern stained-glass paintings.[4] In this way, large, principally royal collections were assembled, only one of which has completely survived: the collection of Prince Franz von Anhalt-Dessau in the "Gothic House" at Wörlitz in the German state of Sachsen-Anhalt. It arrived there around 1786 from Zurich, mainly thanks to the efforts of the Zurich pastor and philosopher Johann Caspar Lavater (1741–1801); the large-scale windows of Gothic House resemble, in their overwhelming scope, monumental church windows. The English, who were particularly avid collectors, brought home stained-glass paintings as souvenirs from Switzerland, one stop on their Grand Tours. They decorated their country houses with these new acquisitions. Soon large *bürgerliche* (bourgeois) collections were being formed in Germany and in Switzerland, many of which were dissolved and sold at the turn of the nineteenth century. As a result, newly founded museums profited greatly from this trend, especially in Switzerland, where in patriotic euphoria they seized the chance to buy back cultural treasures believed to have been lost. In this way, the large collections of the Schweizerisches Landesmuseum in Zurich, the Historisches Museum in Bern, and the Badisches Landesmuseum in Karlsruhe came into being. In the course of the twentieth century extensive holdings also found their way to the United States, where today not only numerous museums but also private estates house important collections. Collecting old stained-glass paintings was and continues to be considered a sign of taste and heightened cultural awareness.

A short historical overview reveals why the custom of giving windows and heraldic panels spread with such overwhelming enthusiasm, particularly in Switzerland. It begins with the emergence of the Swiss Confederation in the thirteenth century. Among the numerous noble families who were fighting over territorial holdings in present-day Switzerland, the Habsburgs were the most successful. As founder and consolidator of Habsburg dynastic power, Count Rudolf IV (1218–1291; after 1273 King Rudolf I) zealously and tenaciously pursued the expansion of familial holdings from Aargau and Alsace into the Upper Rhine region. Through purchase, liens, clever marital politics, extortion, and, of course, warfare, he struggled to acquire the Swiss middle lands, piece by piece. By age fifty he was the most powerful and feared nobleman in the territory today known as Switzerland. The Habsburg, Wildegg, and Brunegg Castles in Canton Aargau survive as reminders of the former presence of Rudolf and his family in this country. With the expansion of the Habsburg family holdings in the last twenty years of his life (Austria, Steiermark, Kärnten, and Krain), King Rudolf I, who was probably born in Kyburg Castle in today's Canton Zurich, created the geographic foundation of a modern European superpower that under the name of the Habsburg dynasty ruled many of the most important countries on the Continent into the twentieth century. The formation of the Swiss Confederation might be seen essentially as a reaction to the historical power of the Habsburgs.

Resistance to the increasingly threatening stronghold of ecclesiastical and secular princes arose first among the free country folk in inner Switzerland, in the so-called *Waldstätten* (forest cantons): Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden. Their presence in the mountains, far from the focal points of political events, gave them a predisposition to independence. People here had always gone their own way, with the mountains furnishing them with a natural military defense comparable to the walls of a city. Their geographic location meant not only security but also constant confrontation with the harsh forces of nature. The battle against the power of the mountains turned these people into tough, brave fighters and taught them that in emergencies only unity could lead them to victory. This need for alliance was geographically strengthened by the fact that they shared the land along the coves of Lake Lucerne. An important factor was the Gotthard Pass, which had opened around 1200. Trade with north Italian cities brought economic prosperity, organizational expertise, and contact with other peoples and countries, which led to political maturity and determination.

A strong, independent self-confidence developed

here that was less and less respected by the Habsburgs. King Rudolf I acted as both imperial leader and territorial lord, rendering null and void the former confederate policy of imperial independence.[5] Through the purchase of numerous sites along the Gotthard route, the Habsburg hand slowly but surely closed in a choking grip around the seemingly powerless farmers on Lake Lucerne. In this time of greatest need—it is supposed—the people of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden came together to form a first alliance that was confirmed in the *Bundesbrief* (federation letter) on August 1, 1291, the legendary founding day of Switzerland. This is the first preserved document of a common, independent policy of confederation, the first visible expression of the united confederate concept of liberty. Unlike other successful state formations in early modern Europe, the young confederation was a republic of free men and was not founded on the predominance of one family. This alliance, which by 1513 had grown to thirteen members (the "Thirteen Old Cantons" of Switzerland), constituted the foundation for the great anti-Habsburg uprising that began in the foothills of the Alps immediately after Rudolf's death. It was the beginning of the Wars of Independence that lasted almost two centuries, a time during which the Swiss won not only their political independence but also their reputation as the best warriors on the Continent. Sought after and wooed by European princes, they fought on all European battlefields far into the nineteenth century. Brilliant victories over the armies of Charles the Bold of Burgundy (1476) and the Swabians (1499) as well as in the Italian campaigns (1512–13) gave the Swiss a sense of power and self-confidence, strengthened their love of freedom, and made them wealthy. Their combat readiness and military superiority, famous in Europe, opened the doors to the royal courts with which they soon cultivated active diplomatic relations. In this context there awakened in the leading political families of Switzerland a strong need for legitimacy and representation aimed at ceremonial etiquette and social recognition.[6] What would have been more obvious than to adopt the imagery that had fulfilled this function for Europe's aristocracy and chivalrous society for centuries, i.e., heraldry? Successful military leaders, church dignitaries, and influential politicians began buying patents of nobility and blazon ameliorations from the German emperor, the French king, and the pope. Later, ordinary citizens—such as craftsmen, innkeepers, and farmers—adopted their own coats of arms. These endeavors significantly stimulated the Swiss custom of giving windows and heraldic panels. Moreover, the heraldic presentation found an ideal medium in the colored panels of light-flooded glass.

"In honor of friendship," as is stated in a docu-

Figure 1. Diebold Schilling. *The Meeting of the Eight Old Swiss Cantons in the City Hall at Stans*, 1481. Pen and watercolor drawing from the *Luzerner Bilderchronik*, 17 × 18.2 cm.

Photo: Korporations-Verwaltung der Stadt Luzern.

ment from 1547,[7] and as a symbol of confederate solidarity and political independence, the old cantons of Switzerland gave each other stained-glass paintings containing their coats of arms for their newly constructed town halls. The paintings, therefore, are also called *Standesscheiben* (canton panels). As a sign of sovereignty, the canton arms personified the state. Since the late Middle Ages, carved wooden escutcheons had been mounted on public buildings (including bailiffs' or governors' offices, churches, towers, and gates as well as out-of-the-way inns) to document legal sovereignty in the Holy Roman Empire as well as in the Swiss Confederation. In this way, arriving strangers could immediately see whose territory they were treading on. Furthermore, the town hall became the political center of the newly formed city republics and the expression of an independent civic commonwealth. Among all the state buildings the town hall was the most distinguished, and special pains were taken for its decoration. It was "the home of the regiment," in which collective consciousness and action were reflected.[8] Here the emissaries of the "Old Swiss Cantons" met, here guests of state were received, and here the canton panels shone resplendently in the windows. The lovely pen-and-watercolor drawing from the Lucerne Pictorial Chronicle by the Bern historiographer Diebold Schilling from 1513 (fig. 1) illustrates how the panels may have been installed. It depicts emissaries of the Eight Old Swiss Cantons (Zurich, Bern, Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Glarus) convening in the council chamber in the town hall in Stans, today in Canton Unterwalden. Surrounded by bull's-eye glass panes, the colorful stained-glass paintings in which the so-called triple arms of Zug, Uri, Schwyz, Glarus, Unterwalden, and Lucerne can be recognized are set into the top of triple-lancet, late Gothic stepped windows. Also at the top, the carved and painted wooden shields of Obwalden and Nidwalden lean toward each other; in this way, the meeting place is territorially identified.[9]

In 1501, the prominent Zurich stained-glass painter Lukas Zeiner (c. 1454–c. 1515) created a ten-piece canton panel series commissioned by the old cantons for the town hall in Baden. This is considered the first uniformly conceived series of glass panels made at the dawning civic-secular age.[10] In addition, the compositional elements of the series constitute the formal foundation for the heraldic panel type that, apart from developments in period style, remained current in Switzerland and southern Germany for two centuries. Let us illustrate, using the Lucerne canton panel as an example (fig. 2). In the center of the painting is a coat of arms or triple arms flanked by one or two figures. As these individuals often hold shields, they are called shield-bearers. Depending on whether the donor belongs to the sacred or secular sector, these shield-bearers took the form of saints or angels, knights or noblewomen, courtesans or female sutlers, and distinguished burghers and their wives; also bears, griffins, lions, and, as in the Lucerne panel, wild men. The figures and arms are placed in a symmetrically arranged, illusionistic architecture consisting of two framing columns or pillars. An arch or gable, with space in the spandrels for ornamental decoration and figures, connects the capitals or imposts. The background usually consists of glowing monochrome damask, which after the mid-sixteenth century was replaced by picturesque Swiss mountain, river, and lake scenes.

The wild man in the Lucerne panel is a mythical figure from the medieval imagination, depicted in art and literature far into the sixteenth century. Such figures are identified by their coat of hair covering the entire body except for face, neck, hands, and feet. They wear wreaths on their head and often around the hips as well. For weapons they carry a tree trunk torn out of the ground or a wooden club. Good-natured and peace-loving or demonically wild, the forest people were possessed of a dual character. They represented the possibility of a free, unregimented life; they also threatened civilization with the consequences attached to such an existence. The savage stood for longing and punishment, an inheritance from the penitent saints of the Christian church.[11] His popularity as shield-bearer was essentially based on the symbolism of his strength and drive for freedom. Thus he was considered a potent protector of the canton symbolized by the coat of arms and in this way demonstrated its ability to fight.

The most important component of a canton panel is the triple arms. In the Baden cycle this consists of the canton's arms and the imperial shield above it surmounted by the German imperial crown, vertically arranged. The arms are more frequently arranged in the form of a trefoil, as in the canton panels in the Basel town hall (fig. 3). Here two canton shields lean toward each other in heraldic courtesy and are surmounted by the imperial shield and crown. The imperial arms with the haloed double-headed eagle and crown symbolize the imperial independence attained by the confederation after its victory over the Habsburgs in the Battle near Sempach (1386), which had taken legal form in the Sempacher Brief (1393). By this treaty, the then Eight Old Swiss Cantons were placed directly under the king or emperor and received the right of self-administration. The triple arms with imperial insignias found on many municipal panel donations symbolize the city's status as a free imperial city. Although Austria had in the Peace Treaty of Basel (1499) recognized the confederation's independence from imperial ordinances, the depiction of the triple
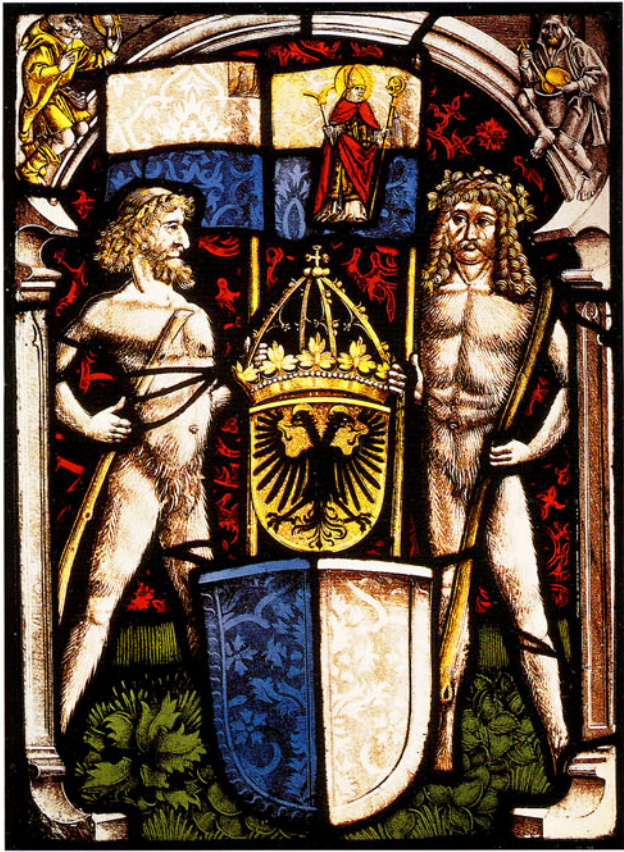
Figure 2. Lukas Zeiner. *Canton Panel of Lucerne.* Zurich, 1501. 47.7 × 34.1 cm. Schweizerisches Landesmuseum Zürich, inv. no. LM 23442.

Photo: Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, Zürich, neg. no. CO 0268.

Figure 3. Antoni Glaser. *Canton Panel of the City of Saint Gall.* Basel, 1520. 71.2 × 54 cm. Basel Town Hall, Great Council Hall.

Photo: Hans Hinz, Basel.

arms remained in use in stained-glass painting. Even after the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), when the secession of the confederation from the empire was legally sealed, the imperial eagle and crown defined the iconographic program of Swiss canton panels until the end of the seventeenth century. As a symbol of freedom and independence, the triple arms long remained an important component of the national iconographic tradition.[12]

Distinguishing features of the Baden panels are the pairs of shield-bearers, who carry banners in the colors of their canton and look like a festive parade marching past the eyes of the viewer. The primary function of the banners, or flags, was their military use in war to mark the position of troops. In addition, the standard-bearer communicated with the troops with the flag, signaling, for example, the length of the battle. In Switzerland the canton banners were venerable symbols of the battles for independence and were held in great respect and esteem. Because of their importance, the custom of dedicating flags and swearing allegiance to the flag developed in Switzerland. The close relationship of the troops to their flag was based on this oath, and the flag thus became a mili-

Figure 4. Hans Funk. *Canton Panel of Bern*. Bern, 1528; monogrammed. Lausanne Town Hall.

Photo: Claude Bornand, Gal. Benj. Constant, Lausanne.

tary symbol for loyalty and honor. Losing a banner in battle was tantamount to defeat, and capturing an enemy flag was tantamount to victory. The pope bestowed decorations in recognition of military services in the form of corner quarters, showing religious themes pertinent to a particular canton and which were sewn onto the upper-left corner of the flags. In the corner quarter of the right-hand banner on the Lucerne panel, for example, the Savior Jesus Christ kneels in prayer at the Mount of Olives (see fig. 2), a decoration awarded by Pope Sixtus IV in 1479. Lucerne's patron saint, the Bishop Saint Leodegar, appears on the left-hand banner with his attributes, the crosier and drill. Such an inclusion of a patron saint in a canton banner is unusual. As a protector in times of peace and war, the saint usually stands next to the donor's arms. This unusual iconography in the Baden cycle's particular iconographic arrangement may have resulted from the confederates' awareness—especially after their victory over the Swabians—of the decisive role played by divine aid. With this veneration of the saints, the Baden cycle takes on the dimension of salvation history.

While the cycle from the Baden Town Hall is today no longer in situ, one of the most important canton panel series has been almost completely preserved in its original site in the Basel Town Hall. The cycle is of invaluable significance for the cultural and artistic heritage of Switzerland, not only for its location but also as a testament to the Renaissance decorative style that emerged in German-speaking lands at the beginning of the sixteenth century. While the cycle itself was carried out in 1519–20, the commission was issued around 1517 by the Basel City Council to Antoni Glaser (before 1500–1551), who between 1510 and 1531 was the official stained-glass painter for the council. A contemporary of Urs Graf, Hans Holbein the Younger, and Niklaus Manuel Deutsch, Glaser, in his panels, shows numerous iconographic and stylistic debts to the graphic work of these artists. Especially manifest is an affinity to Urs Graf, which is not surprising, as the latter lived and worked in Basel from 1509 to 1527.

The panel donated by the city of Saint Gall, an "Allied District"[13] of the confederation since 1454, is of special significance (fig. 3). This glass painting, considered the most perfect of the entire cycle, is the canonical example of an early Swiss canton panel, even though it no longer contains any colored glass but rather consists of colorless glass with grisaille and silver-stain painting. It must have fascinated nineteenth-century glass painters, for it was copied numerous times. Two soldiers dressed in fashionably slitted mercenary costumes in silk and damask (*Reisläufertracht*),[14] imported from northern Italy, appear in an
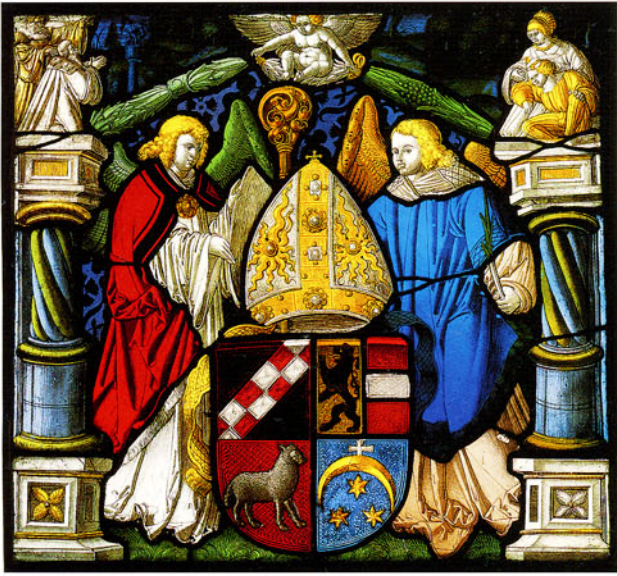
Figure 5. Conrad Wirz von Erlenbach. *Heraldic Panel
of the Salem Cistercian Monastery*. Zurich, 1521. Mono-
grammed; 45 × 49 cm. Cloister Wettingen. West v 1.

Photo: Werner Nefflen, Ennetbaden.

Figure 6. Christoph Stimmer. *Heraldic Panel for the City
of Mengen*. Konstanz(?), 1524. 32 × 22 cm. Pfullendorf
Town Hall.

Photo: Foto Clemens, Pfullendorf.

open arcade decorated with side pillars, socle frieze,
and segmented arch in imitation of the fenestration of
late medieval rooms (see fig. 1). Standing in elegant
foot-guard pose, they turn toward the triple arms of
their city. Each has a pike displayed next to him. The
left figure sports a youthful pageboy under a beret
decorated with billowing ostrich feathers. He wears
leather armor and a wide chain of honor, a symbol of
military success and material wealth. On his hip strap
hang a Swiss dagger and a so-called "one-and-a-half-
handed" sword, the standard weaponry of a Swiss
soldier in the sixteenth century. The figure to the right,
undoubtedly older, has his hair cut short underneath
his beret and wears an Italian sword with sheath, a
Swiss dagger buckled to one side, and a brace on his
left arm. In the arch frieze, Swiss mercenaries fight
against German lansquenets,[15] and in the upper span-
drels imperial horsemen overrun two Swiss foot sol-
diers who are lying on their back, helplessly flailing
their arms and legs. The lower frieze depicts a mas-
sacre in the last stages of battle. Visible through the
arcade is a bizarre landscape with mountain range,
gnarled dying tree, and castle. The Habsburg attri-
butes of the castle (the domicile of nobility) and the
lansquenets (the imperial war machine)—recognizable
by their slouch hats and cut-off trouser legs—the
horsemen as well as the arm shields as a part of their
armor here refer to war booty. They are reminders of
Saint Gall's unflagging struggle for freedom during the
fifteenth century, which had been repeatedly under-
mined by the prince-abbot of Saint Gall Monastery, a
loyal Habsburg subject. The richly decorated clothing

Figure 7. Christoph Stimmer. *Heraldic Panel of Christoph Stimmer.* Konstanz(?), 1525. 32 × 22.5 cm. Pfullendorf Town Hall.
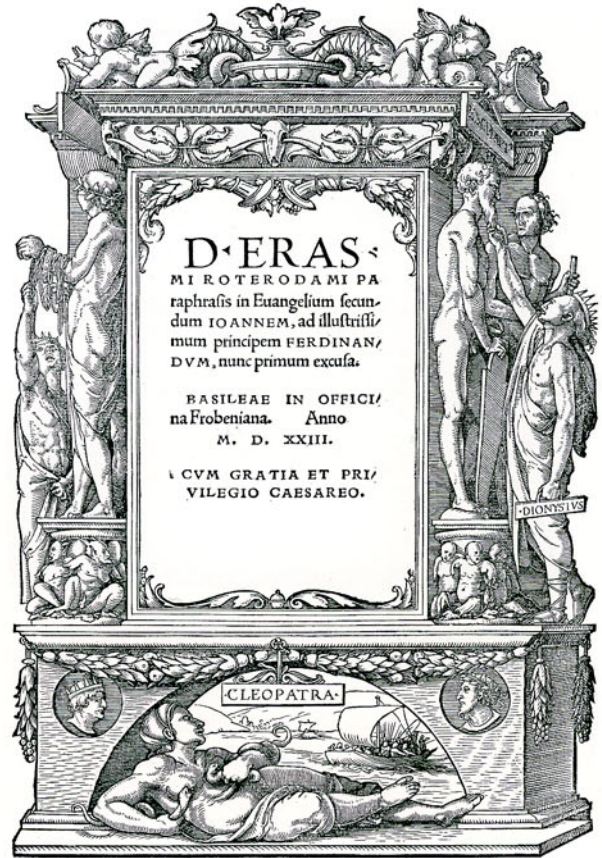
Photo: Foto Clemens, Pfullendorf.

Figure 8. Hans Holbein the Younger. *Title Page Border with Dionysios and Cleopatra* for *Die Paraphrase des Johannes-Evangeliums von Erasmus von Rotterdam*; Johannes Froben, Basel, 1523. Woodcut, 22 × 15.5 cm. Basel University Library.

Photo: Universitäts-Bibliothek Basel.

of both warriors, together with the small, barely visible trunk, hidden in the greenery behind the canton arms, suggest that Saint Gall had also acquired wealth by participating in the Italian campaigns. This glass painting reflects the drama and cruelty of war, the pride of the Swiss in their combat readiness and wealth, and their love of ostentation and haughtiness. Despite their defeat near Marignano (1515), the military fame of the confederation remained undiminished. This gripping narration employing a visual language rich in symbols and gestures renders this glass painting a brilliant historical document.[16]

Another outstanding series of window and heraldic panel donations to public buildings is the small, six-part group from 1528 in the Lausanne town hall. It was executed by the glass painter Hans Funk (before 1470–1539), who came from Zurich and worked mainly in Bern (fig. 4).[17] In the panel of the city of Bern two lions support triple arms in their paws. Together with soldiers and bears, lions were the most commonly used shield-bearers in Bern panels. Known for their strength and boldness as well as their violence

and ferocity, lions were considered potent protectors of the canton, symbolized by the triple arms. An example of donations across borders occurs in the Cistercian monastery of Wettingen, located near Zurich in Canton Aargau, which houses the most comprehensive such collection preserved at an original site (fig. 1, p. 2; cat. nos. 131, 141, 143). Among the donations by the confederate cantons and Swiss subsidiary monasteries, by burghers and noble families, by sacred and secular officials from the monastery surroundings and the city of Baden, there is also a donation from the subsidiary monastery in Salem (fig. 5), on Lake Constance, and one by the city of Breisach near Freiburg im Breisgau.[18]

Across the Rhine, cycles have been preserved in the town halls of Endingen (1528–29), Rheinfelden (1532–33), and Pfullendorf (1524–25).

The splendid series of thirteen heraldic panels in the council hall of the Swabian town Pfullendorf was a gift from Emperor Charles V and his brother Ferdinand I and from befriended imperial cities and monasteries to celebrate the newly built town hall in the year 1524.[19] Just as in the Baden and Basel cycles, the panels in Pfullendorf are the work of a single glass painter; this was owing to the great importance attached to the artistic unity of the window decoration in public buildings. Characteristic of the series are asymmetrically arranged architectural elements, richly embellished with foliage ornamentation, grotesques, and puttos. Shield-bearers stand in a sweeping pose next to the donor's arms in front of a colored vine-scroll damask background. The asymmetry of the composition is strongly emphasized by the placement of the shield-bearers, who overlap the architecture on one side. Unlike the Swiss mercenaries in the Basel panel (see fig. 3), a German lansquenet in his typical war dress (with leather cap, "hacked-up clothes," cut-off trouser leg, and short and wide lansquenet sword at the hip) appears in the heraldic panel for the city of Mengen (fig. 6). His efforts to impress and his warlike bravado are in no way inferior to those of the Swiss adversaries.[20] In addition, the Pfullendorf cycle contains an entirely unique element. The glass painter Christoph Stimmer (d. 1562), father of the famous Schaffhausen draftsman Tobias Stimmer (1539–1584), made a personal monument to himself in the form of the panel he donated to the series and placed at its end (fig. 7). Standing in front of an illusionistic architectural setting, a naked female shield-bearer clad only in a feather hat presents the Stimmer family arms. With her knee-length, curling blond hair blowing in the wind, she is reminiscent of Fortuna. Her right hand

rests on the shield. Over her left hand is draped a white robe, which she has lifted as a favor to the viewer. At the bottom of the panel, inscribed in Latin interspersed with Greek, in a letter form known from the paintings and woodcuts of Hans Holbein the Younger, the glass painter immortalized himself, proudly yet modestly, with the salutation: "I, Christoph Stimmer, have painted these pictures and coats of arms of my own accord, even if they are more than a far cry from the art of one Parrhasius and Apelles. Farewell, readers! In the year of our Lord 1525."[21] In this statement Stimmer not only identifies himself as the glass painter of the panel series but also as an educated man of his time. In admitting that he cannot paint as well as the greatest painters of Greek antiquity, he asks the viewer not to measure his glass paintings by the work of the ancients. Yet at the same time he does compare himself with these great role models, if self-deprecatingly. In so doing, Stimmer portrays himself chiefly as a painter and a descendant of famous ancient precursors (particularly Apelles), veneration for whom had reached its high point in the 1520s. This comparison with ancient painters is closely connected with the glass painter's striving for fame, status, and immortality.[22]

In this context, one should point out that the lateral scenes in the architecture of the heraldic panel

Figure 9. Ropstein workshop(?). *Heraldic Panel of Alexius von Pfirt*. Freiburg, 1529. 46.5 × 37.5 cm. Endingen Town Hall.

Photo: Corpus Vitrearum Deutschland, Freiburg i. Br., Akademie der Wissenschaft und der Literatur Mainz.

Figure 10. Ropstein workshop(?). *Heraldic Panel of Emperor Charles V.* Freiburg, 1533. 63.5 × 55.5 cm. Rheinfelden Town Hall.

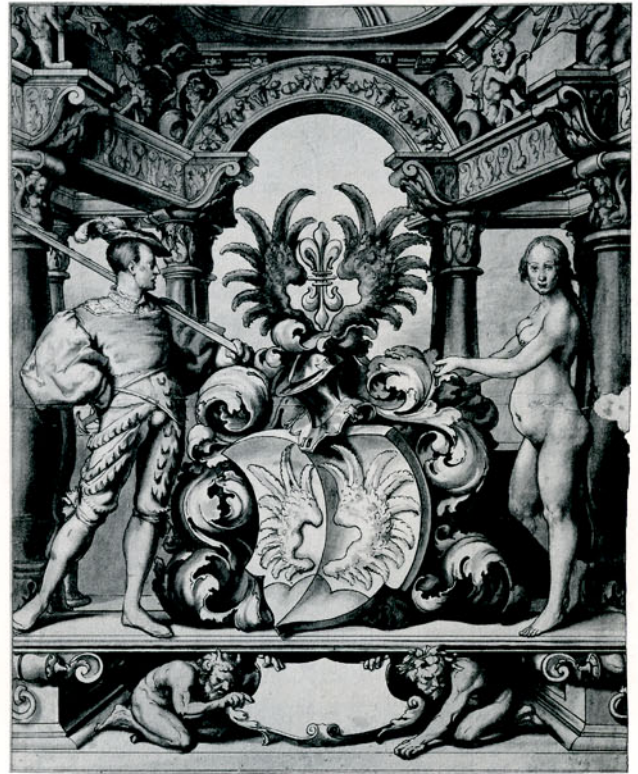Photo: Corpus Vitrearum Deutschland, Freiburg i. Br., Akademie der Wissenschaft und der Literatur Mainz.

Figure 11. Hans Holbein the Younger. *Design for a Stained-Glass Panel with the Arms of the Lachner Family.* Basel, c. 1520–30. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum (inv. no. 48).

Photo: Nationalmuseum Stockholm.

for the city of Mengen (see fig. 6) are based upon the border on the title page to the *Paraphrase of John* by Erasmus of Rotterdam. The woodcut was designed by Hans Holbein the Younger and had been published in Basel in 1523 (fig. 8).[23] It depicts the tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse: on the right as he is about to rob Asclepius and Apollo of their natural "jewels" (golden beard and golden hair) and on the left as he steals the gold chains and rings from a god's statue. Both acts allude to the corrupt ruler's constant requisitions to finance his regime. Several ancient authors accused him of the blasphemous theft of temple treasures, the golden locks of an Apollo statue or Asclepius's golden beard, for example. Cleopatra's suicide is depicted at the bottom of the page. In the woodcut she is reclining; in the glass painting she is standing upright, almost covered by the right arm of the lansquenet and thus only identifiable by the snake placed in the left portion of the architecture. The Egyptian queen was then considered to have had an unquenchable thirst for power. These scenes, therefore, symbolize the negligent ruler, who, to reach his or her ambitious goals, will not spare the sacred and does not consider the welfare of the people. Such themes in town council chambers served to remind officials to

Figure 12. Civic hall in Rheinfelden Town Hall.

Photo: Corpus Vitrearum Deutschland, Freiburg i. Br., Akademie der Wissenschaft und der Literatur Mainz.

safeguard the public interest with just laws and to fulfill their duties in a selfless and incorruptible manner. Thus the rediscovery of ancient history, mythology, and poetry was reflected in the graphic art and glass painting of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

To celebrate the town hall renovation in Endingen am Kaiserstuhl in 1527, the emperor and the noble families of the Breisgau region showed their respect in the form of a glass-panel cycle. It is considered a product of the Freiburg stained-glass painting workshop of Hans Gitschmann von Ropstein.[24] As a political, religious, and intellectual center of the Austrian lands on the right side of the Rhine, the cathedral and university town of Freiburg im Breisgau offered refuge for the Basel cathedral chapter and many followers of Catholicism after the advent of the Reformation. Because of these historical circumstances as well as the city's proximity to Basel, a center for the arts and printing, the distribution throughout southern Germany of the graphic work of Hans Holbein the Younger was particularly widespread.

The heraldic panel of Count Alexius von Pfirt, whose family had its home in the Upper Alsace and who served the Habsburgs, is a characteristic example of panel donations from the Renaissance nobility (fig. 9).[25] The donor's blazon, an upright and crowned silver lion on a black ground, is seen through an arcaded window with tastefully ornamented columns and segmental arch. At the top the barred helm supporting a crown signals the noble lineage out of which an armless crowned man emerges. The mantlings billow in wild profusion between crown and helmet, almost displacing the female shield-bearer on the right. Unlike the naked beauty in the Stimmer panel in Pfullendorf (see fig. 7), who self-confidently displays her body and looks the viewer straight in the eye, the elegantly clad lady in the Pfirt panel shyly bows her head and lowers her eyes. Depicted in the spandrels of the segmental arch is the triumphal procession of an ancient ruler, who sits in a magnificent horse-drawn wagon. The elephants walking ahead and the donor's first name suggest an association with Alexander the

Great, who used pachyderms in his war against the Persians. As we know today, the commissioner of a panel often actively participated in its design, so we can assume that Count Alexius personally requested the depiction of the famous hero of antiquity. His admiration and veneration of Alexander the Great seem to have led the count to elect the hero as his name patron; this choice was also probably affected by his disinclination to be identified with the excessively sad and humiliating story of his holy namesake Saint Alexius of Edessa, who supposedly lived unrecognized for seventeen years underneath the stairs of his parental home, doused with slop by the servants, long-suffering and full of patience.

A part of the Swiss canton Aargau since 1803, Rheinfelden previously belonged to Austria. After the town hall burned down in 1530, a larger building was erected a year later. On this occasion the sovereigns Charles V as Holy Roman Emperor and his brother Ferdinand I as king of the Habsburg patrimonial dominions gave heraldic panels, as did their government officials in their functions as governors, bailiffs, and chairmen of the parish councils as well as the four Austrian *Waldstätte* (forest towns): Rheinfelden, Laufenburg, Säckingen, and Waldshut. Like the Endigen panels, this cycle reflects the particularly strong influences of the graphic work of Hans Holbein the Younger. It is also ascribed to the Freiburg workshop of Ropstein.[26] The heraldic panel of Emperor Charles V (fig. 10) closely relates to the design for the panel of the Lachner family in Basel (fig. 11), ascribed to Hans Holbein, which Hans Lehmann discussed in 1940.[27] The imperial arms, with an additional small escutcheon in the center, crested by the imperial crown and surrounded by the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, is placed in front of the same columned hall as the arms and shield-bearer in the drawing.[28] Although the resulting glass painting appears somewhat flat—an impression created primarily by the presentation of the imperial arms and by sporadic paint abrasion—the use of delicate, translucent monochrome glass across large areas lends the work a stately radiance.

Finally, it is instructive to consider the room itself. While in the course of restorations the panel series in Basel, Pfullendorf, and Endingen have been removed from the upper sections of the stepped windows and placed in a lower line at the viewer's level, the fourteen panels in the Civic Hall in the Rheinfelden Town Hall have remained in their original architectural context (fig. 12). Today, as in earlier times, government affairs are carried out in the historical rooms of town halls, and high guests of state and prominent public personalities are received here. Today the function of the rooms has been expanded, as in Rheinfelden, to include civil wedding ceremonies. Time and again the radiant panels in the windows lend events an illustrious, festive ambiance. Although stained-glass paintings have lost some of their earlier significance, they remain today, particularly in Switzerland, a permanent part of a pronounced national and civic consciousness.

1. The German terms *Ort* and *Stand* denoted individual, fully authorized members of the old Swiss state confederation. After 1798 the term *Kanton* (canton) was used.
2. Becksmann 1975: 65.
3. The Swiss Center for Research and Information on Stained Glass and the Swiss Stained-Glass Museum in Romont are devoted to art-historical research on stained-glass painting and to the promotion of modern stained glass.
4. For the collecting of historical glass painting in the nineteenth century, see Daniel Hess, "'Modespiel' der Neugotik oder Denkmal der Vergangenheit? Die Glasmalereisammlung in Erbach und ihr Kontext," *Zeitschrift für Kunstwissenschaft* 49–50 (1995–96): 227–48.
5. In 1231 the free men of Uri received a *Freiheitsbrief* (letter of liberty) from Emperor Friedrich II and thus attained "imperial independence." This put them directly under the emperor and granted them the right of self-administration. In a letter of liberty from 1240, the emperor thanked Canton Schwyz for its military support in Italy.
6. Anderes and Hoegger 1988: 26.
7. Quoted from Hermann Meyer, *Die schweizerische Sitte der Fenster- und Wappenschenkung vom XV. bis XVII. Jahrhundert* (Frauenfeld, 1884): 17 n. 2. This publication is still considered the most comprehensive study of this custom.
8. Thomas Fröschl, "Rathäuser und Regierungspaläste: Die Architektur als Hauptinstrument republikanischer Selbstdarstellung in Europa und Nordamerika vom 16. zum 20. Jahrhundert," in *Zeichen der Freiheit: Das Bild der Republik in der Kunst des 16. bis 20. Jahrhunderts*, catalogue of an exhibition held at the Bernisches Historisches Museum, the Kunstmuseum Bern, June 1–September 15, 1991 (Bern, 1991): 12.
9. The two differing canton arms relate to a geographic division of the country in the mid-fourteenth century. Not until the turn of the seventeenth century was a coat of arms created combining both insignia.
10. For a definitive treatise, see Schneider 1954; most recently Peter Hoegger, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kantons Aargau*, vol. 6, *Der Bezirk Baden* (Basel, 1976): 225–29.
11. New York 1980: 17, with older bibliographic references.
12. For national pictorial themes in Swiss art, see Hans-Christoph von Tavel, *Ars Helvetica: Die visuelle Kunst der Schweiz*, vol. 19 (Disentis, 1992); for the Baden cycle, see vol. 10, *Nationale Bildthemen*: 88–100, 91–96, colorpls.
13. This term ("Allied District") applies to cities located in Habsburg territory and with which the Swiss Confederation had entered into a military and trade alliance.
14. Swiss mercenaries paid for foreign military service were called *Reisläufer*. The word *Reise* (trip) had a purely military connotation and meant a military campaign. Since the Battle of "St. Jakob an der Birs" (1444) the French were aware of the bravery of Swiss warriors. In 1470 Louis XI established an alliance with them, and in 1494 they accompanied Charles VIII on his campaign to Italy. After the battle near Marignano (1515), in 1521 Francis I signed an "eternal alliance," which bound the Swiss to the French crown.
15. Concerning the differences between Swiss mercenaries and German lansquenets, compare Bächtiger 1971–72: 205–70.
16. Concerning the motif and stylistic references to the œuvre of Urs Graf and Niklaus Manuel Deutsch, see Giesicke 1994: 130–33.
17. Marcel Grandjean, *Les monuments d'art et d'histoire du canton de Vaud*, vol. 1, *La ville de Lausanne* (Basel, 1965): 413–15, with bibliographic references.
18. Concerning the donations between 1517 and 1530, see Anderes and Hoegger 1988: 86–102, 140–59, colorpls.
19. In 1986, three panels were displayed in Heidelberg Castle; see Heidelberg 1986: nos. D20–22, 267–69, with older bibliographic references.
20. The sudden appearance of warlike bravado among German lansquenets is, according to Bächtiger 1975: 240, closely related to their first victory over the confederation in the Battle of Bicocca (1522).
21. We are grateful to Dr. Ueli Dill, Basel, for the translation revision. Compare Hans Rott, "Ein Gang durch das reichsstädtische Pfullendorf," *Badische Heimat* 21 (1934): 318; Dietrich Rentsch quotes Rott in the Heidelberg exhibition catalogue (see Heidelberg 1986: 269).
22. For a comparison with Apelles in Albrecht Dürer's work, see Daniel

Hess, "Dürers Selbstbildnis von 1500: 'Alter Deus' oder Neuer Apelles?" *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 77 (1990): 80–83. For the significance of Apelles in the age of Hans Holbein the Younger, see Oskar Bätschmann and Pascal Griener, "Holbein-Apelles, Wettbewerb und Definition des Künstlers," in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 57 (1994): 626–50, as well as Bätschmann and Griener 1997: 19–22 (the fame of Apelles), 22–35 (signatures and inscriptions).

23. The following is founded on the comments by Frank Hieronymus, *Oberrheinische Buchillustration, 1500–1545,* catalogue of an exhibition held at the Universitätsbibliothek Basel, March 31–June 30, 1984 (Basel, 1984), nos. 418, 452–55; p. 604, ill.

24. Karl Kurrus, "Die Wappenscheiben im Rathaus zu Endingen," in *Schauinsland,* 87 (1969): 5–25, with illustrations.

25. See Heidelberg 1986: 275, no. D27.

26. Hans Lehmann, "Zur Geschichte der oberrheinischen Glasmalerei im 16. Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 2 (1940): 30–39, pls. 13–18, describes the glass paintings in Rheinfelden in detail and relates them to the graphic work of Hans Holbein the Younger.

27. Ibid., 39, no. 14, with illustrations. About the drawing, see Bjurström 1972: no. 48, with comprehensive bibliographic references.

28. The same architecture appears in two other stained-glass paintings depicting the Zurich patron saints Felix and Regula from the year 1557. Both are located in the cloisters of the Muri monastery. This demonstrates that designs were often re-used for decades (see Bernhard Anderes *Glasmalerei im Kreuzgang Muri* [Bern, 1974], 126–29, with colorpls.).