

The Swiss Reformation

A Reform of the Reformers



Zurich: Ulrich Zwingli



Geneva: William Farel, John Calvin,
Theodore Beza, & John Knox

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Reform or New?

- First Session: “The March of Folly”
 - A little history of issues swirling around
 - 50+ years of papal and curial inaction, inattention, and corruption
- Second Session: “Theological Spark and Secular Timber”
 - Martin Luther – nothing new from Wycliff/Hus
 - How did he escape the heretic’s fate?
- Third Session: “A Reform of the Reformers:”
 - What makes the Swiss Reform different?
 - What are the dynamics between the HR Empire, Rome and the Swiss government(s)
 - What theologies, ecclesiologies, and other issues begin to change?
 - Is this a new phase?
 - A continuation of Luther?
 - A gateway to something else?

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Swiss History

- Located Right in the middle of things
- Carolingian to Hapsburgs (800s up to 1500s)
- A republic form of government since 1280 – longest surviving today
 - *Very different from 16th century Germany*



- Old Swiss Confederacy
- 1291 – Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden
- 1332 – Lucerne
- 1351 – Zurich
- 1352 – Glarus, Zug
- 1353 – Bern
- 1481 – Fribourg, Solothurn

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The Swiss Milieu

Politics and Governance

- 1495 the Old Swiss Confederation defeats the Swabian League (local muscle of HR Emperor)
 - Free of imperial courts, taxation, and interference
 - Takes control of administration of Catholic churches and schools – investiture of things local
 - Pope Julius II forms the Swiss Guard ~ **mercenaries**
- By age of Reformation – **all things are local but discussed nationally**

Swiss Catholicism

- Mixing Bowl
 - Language
 - France, Papal States, Milan, German princes, and a Holy Roman Emperor
 - Things are complicated
- There are diocese and Landeskirchen (Roman Catholic cantonal churches)

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Swiss Church in 1495

- There were
 - Dioceses with a metropolitan
 - Dioceses reporting directly to Rome
 - Canton-land churches *
 - City-state churches *
- Who controlled church taxes controlled the church
- Organized along democratic lines
 - Local pastors appointed by city councils (e.g.)
 - Catholic school professors and teachers appointed the same way
- How does all this compare to the German church vis-à-vis secular governance?
 - Land ownership
 - Control of revenue streams
 - Imperial entanglements
 - Roman Curia influence
- Who controls the Swiss mercenaries?



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All relatively orderly unlike Germany. Why?

Things Swiss

- Swiss local government had far more controls over the Church
 - *...I know a guy*
 - Same abuses still present but to a lesser degree
- Ulrich Zwingli
 - Humanist scholar, Catholic priest ~ multiple benefices
 - Assigned to Zurich
 - Church reform
 - Political reform
 - contra mercenaries (chaplain)
- 1523 – city council of Zurich directs Catholic Churches to reform ala Zwingli
 - Within two years
 - Celibacy dropped
 - Churches stripped of décor
 - State administration of church
 - Priest paid by state
 - Church property taken over
 - Social work of the church taken over

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Zwingli in Zurich

- 1519 – posted to Zurich
- Immediate changes
 - preaches the Gospel of Matthew beginning to end
 - Acts, Epistles, then OT
 - Running commentary on Gospel, theology and reform ala Erasmus
- Out with
 - Veneration of saints and church décor
 - Tithing as divine institution
- 1522 – the “Affair of the Sausages”
 - There are no biblical limits on food
 - Lenten fasting was church obedience and not sin
- Cantons, cities, and bishops weigh in on the position.
- Zwingli’s petition to relax celibacy made to
 - bishop and City council of Zurich
 - *Already co-habiting and about to have his first child*

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Zurich Disputations

- **First Disputation** (Jan 1523)
 - Called by City Council
 - Bishop’s Vicar-general
 - Officials from local area and surrounding Cantons
 - Zwingli
 - Zwingli prepared for theological and Scriptural debate; the Vicar only asserted Church authority
 - Council ruled
 - Zwingli keep preaching
 - All others – only preach what you can demonstrate from Scripture
- **Second Disputation** (Sept 1523)
 - Matters discussed
 - Statues, icons, and décor
 - Mass as sacrifice
 - Infant baptism
 - Attendees
 - All major Cantons and cities
 - The known reformers, Zwingli
 - New group of radical reformers
 - Decree issued by Council to
 - Eliminate statues, icons, etc
 - Eliminate the Mass – *backed down*
 - Rural areas, local church voting

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Swiss Sunday

- In time... Mass with Zwingli (1524)
 - New order of worship
 - Communion 4 times a year with wooden cups and plates, seated at table
 - No music
 - Focus – the sermon
- But there are still Catholic masses in Zurich and the area, but pressure is mounting
- Switzerland is starting to divide
- Luther, Zwingli and Eucharist (*jumping ahead to 1529*)
- Marburg Colloquy (*Zurich with Landgrave of Hesse*)
 - Center of the debate was the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist
 - The Swiss Reformers + new German reformers v. Luther, Melanchthon and the *old school*
 - First major theological split - at core: authority to interpret Scripture.

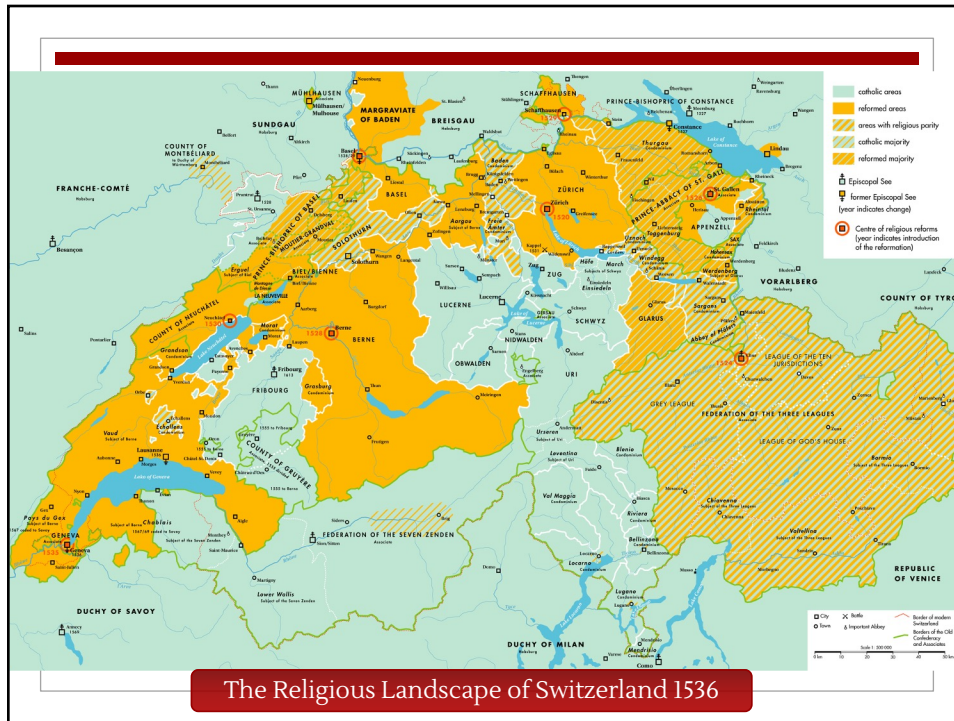
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The Confederation

- The Five States Alliance (1524)
 - Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, and Zug
 - Protection against Zwingli's reform
- The Baden Dispute (1526)
 - 9 of 13 confederation members vote against Zwingli
 - Deep rift revealed
- The Christian Civic Union (1529)
 - Reformation alliance
- The Kappel Wars (1529-31)
 - A reformed preacher executed in an Alliance area
 - Zwingli calls for war but armistice arranged with Civic Union posed for victory
 - Zwingli demands strong

- By the end of the Kappel Wars, the political and religious boundaries of Switzerland are in place.
- The first evidence of Swiss "religious" neutrality is in place

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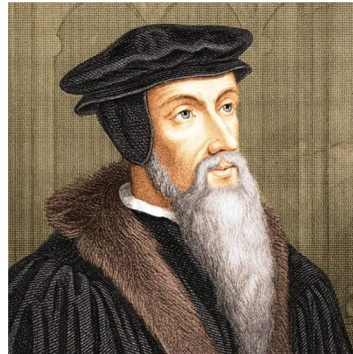
John Calvin

- French born and educated
 - Lawyer, humanist, and scholar
 - 1533 conversion
 - Affair of the Placards (1534) forced him to seek refuge in Switzerland
- Timeline
 - Geneva with William Farrel
 - *Institutes* (1536)
 - Strasbourg (1538-1541)
 - Geneva (returned in 1541)
 - Law, discipline and resistance
 - Michael Servetus affair (1553)
 - Uncontested power (1554-1564)

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Calvin's Theology

- Hierarchy of Authority
 - Scripture in matters of faith
 - Church in matters of discipline
 - Law in all secular matters
- Theological Change/Reform from German Reformation
 - Double predestination
 - Eucharist – not Luther or Zwingli
 - Role of Virgin Mary
 - Imputed righteousness
 - Austerity of worship
 - Persecutions and inquisitions



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Anabaptists

- In Zurich during time of Zwingli
- Fundamental difference in the authority of Scripture
 - If proscribed in Scripture – do it. If it not forbidden – reflect upon and do it if it seems good (Zwingli)
 - If not delineated in Scripture it is human tradition and forbidden
- Infant baptism | Re-baptism
 - 1200 year old discussion
 - Sacramental nature of baptism
- Issue in Munster and Peasant's Revolt – and with the Zwickau prophets
- Felix Manz (d. 1527)
 - Infant baptism was affirmed at 2nd Disputation in Zurich
 - Affirmed in follow-on disputation
 - All children ordered to be baptized
- January 21, 1525 - Manz
 - Adults re-baptized
 - Movement formalized
 - Preaching on the issue
- January 1527 died a "heretic" at hands of Reformers of Zurich.
- Movement spread to Bohemia and Low Countries

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Calvinism on the Move



Where is the Catholic response in all this?
 If the Council of Trent is the response to the Reformation – it is still 18 years away

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