

# The Reformation

*Context, Characters*

*Controversies, Consequences*

Class 5: Zwingli and the  
Reformation in Switzerland

# Class 5 Goals

- Examine the life of Huldrych Zwingli and his role in the Swiss Reformation
- Look at debates between Luther and Zwingli on the nature of the Lord's supper.

# Opening Question

- Now that the authority of the Catholic Church has been discarded, who has the authority to determine doctrine for the Church? What is the center of the Church's political and spiritual power?

# The Contagion of Reformation

- Once the break with Rome has begun, how far will it proceed?
- What will the new sacraments of the church be?
  - How will they be defined and conducted?
- How will common doctrine and practice be developed and maintained in the new churches?
- What will be the role of art and music in the new churches?
- How much will ideas about authority, deference, and obedience be altered?
- How does a Reformer maintain humility, while claiming the entire institutional church is corrupt?

# A Word about Erasmus

- The “Prince of the Humanists”
- Prepared updated and corrected Greek and Latin texts of the New Testament
- Attempted to reform Catholicism from within and preserve a Middle Way between Catholics and Protestants.
- He affirmed the reality of “free will.”
- Promoted religious toleration

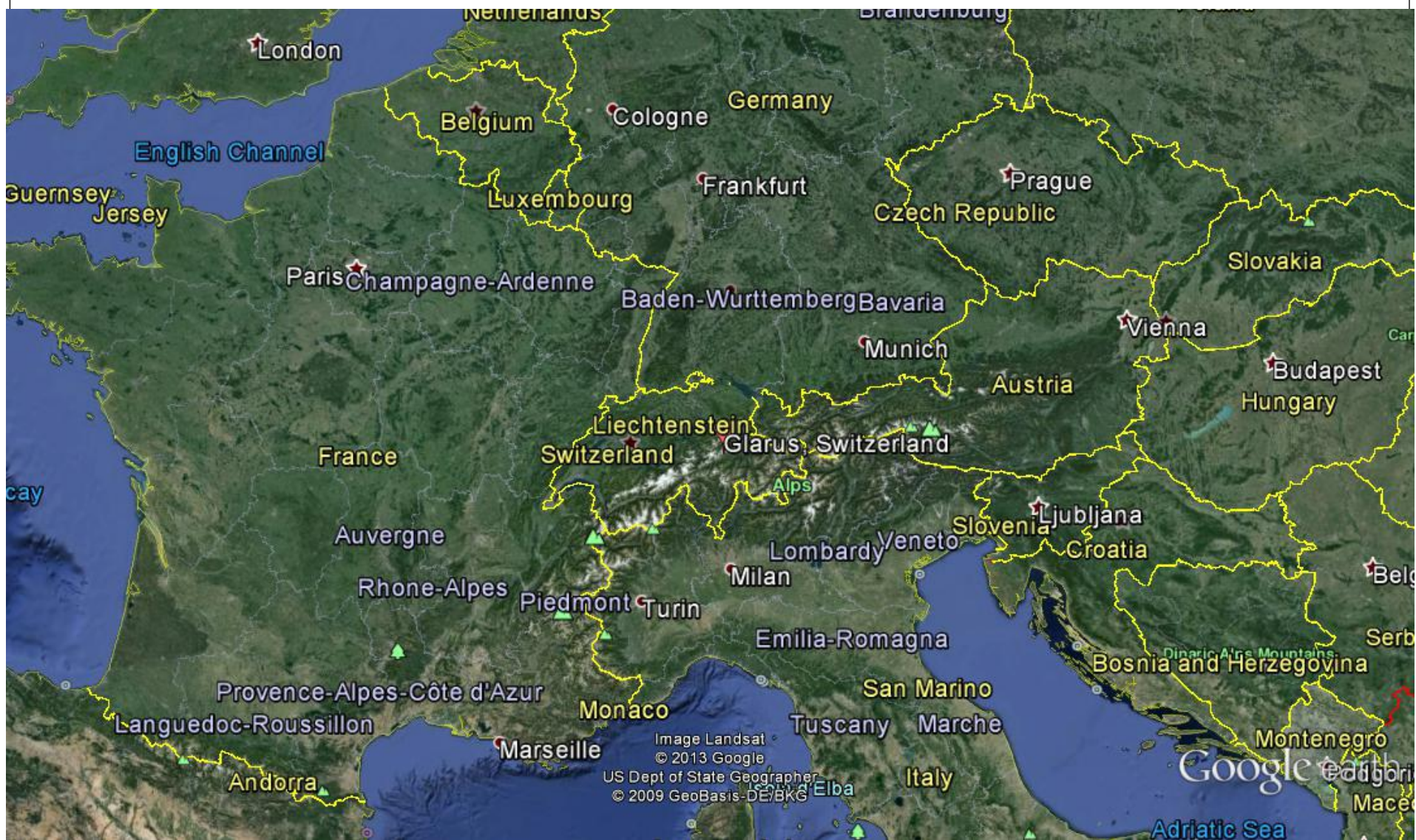


# Huldrych (Ulrich) Zwingli (1484-1531)

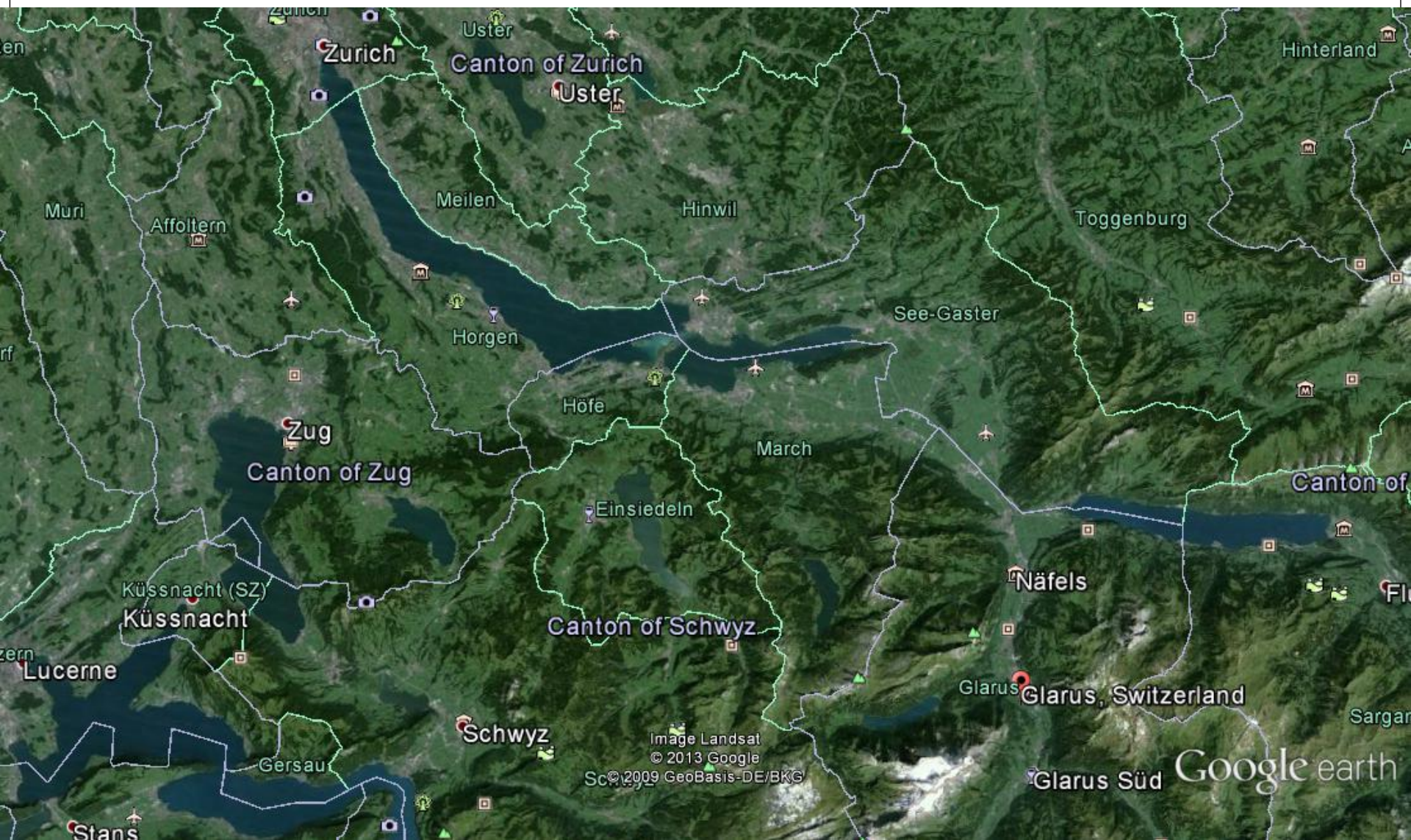
- Raised in Wildhaus, a village high in the Alps to a prominent and politically connected peasant family.
- Studied in Bern, Vienna, and Basel, where he was influenced by Humanist thought
- Became a parish priest in Glarus from 1506-1516.
- Studied Erasmus' Greek New Testament which helped him break from traditional interpretations.
- Presented Jesus as the model for Christian Life













# Zurich and Womanizing

- Zwingli became controversial in Glarus for opposing the practice of exporting Swiss soldiers as mercenaries.
  - This was seen as a threat to the political and economic order of the area
- 1518 – He was nominated for “People’s Priest for the Great Minster in Zurich.”
  - He was opposed based on his womanizing, but the other candidate kept a concubine and had six children
  - Zwingli claimed chastity was a rare gift of God.
- 1525 Zurich passed a law mandated that priests marry their concubines.
  - Opposed by the Bishop who collected an annual fee which allowed priests to have concubines.
  - In 1524 Zwingli married his concubine Anna

# Great Minster Church, Zurich



# The Political Context of Zurich

- The Swiss Confederacy gained independence from the Holy Roman Empire in 1499 at the Peace of Basel.
- The City of Zurich had a population of 6,000 and the Canton a population of 50,000
- It was governed by the Great Council (representing guilds, nobles, property owners, and merchants) and the Small Council (representing similar groups)
- The appointment of Zwingli created a “symbiotic relationship” between him and the council, both required the support of one another to achieve their respective political and religious goals. (Lindberg 165)
  - Zwingli and the Reformation weakened the power of the pro-papal patrician families.



# The Affair of the Sausages

- 1522 - Lent – Zwingli and the printer Christoph Froschauer were preparing a new edition of the epistles of Paul.
- Froschauer served sausages to his twelve tired workers.
- Having flouted medieval piety and church and public authority Froschauer was arrested by the Zurich town council.
- Zwingli responded by preaching a sermon, “On the Choice and Freedom of Foods” (March 23, 1522)
- Christians are free to fast or not because the Bible does not prohibit eating meat during Lent.

# Zwingli's Religious Reforms

- 1519 – Began preaching through the Gospel of Matthew
  - (Ignoring the prescribed missal readings)
  - Criticized indulgences, honoring of saints and images, and scholastic theology.
- Zwingli claimed everything was to be measured by the standard of Scripture
- 1523 Attended the first disputation challenging Roman Catholic traditions (endorsed by the City Council)
- 1525 – Began weekly Bible Studies called “prophesyings”
- 1525 – Introduced an Evangelical Communion Service to replace the Mass.

# “The Godly Mill”

Starring:  
God the Father  
Jesus,  
The Evangelists +  
Paul  
Erasmus  
Luther  
Zwingli?  
Hans the Hoeman  
Catholic Officials





# Influences on Zwingli

- Erasmus as “secret reformer of Zurich” – Zwingli was clearly heavily influenced by Erasmus’ example and writings.
- The Plague in Zurich 1519-1520 – Nearly one quarter of the population was afflicted, Zwingli nearly died after he contracted the disease carrying out pastoral care for the sick and dying.
- Zwingli had the confidence and support of the common people and the Great Council.
- 1523 – First Disputation: The city government invited other Cantons and the Bishop of Constance to discuss the Reformation:
  - The Discussion was to be in German
  - All final appeals were to be to Scripture
  - The City Council (Not the Church) ran the hearing

# Zwingli's Sixty-Seven Articles

- The Gospel is not dependent upon the “approbation of the Church”
- Salvation by Grace Alone
- Full and Final Authority of Scripture
- Rejection of:

The Pope	Penance
The Mass	Purgatory
Good Works for Salvation	Real Presence of Christ in Communion
The Intercession of the Saints	Use of Music in Worship
Monastic Orders	Use of Art in Churches
A Celibate Clergy	

# Marburg Colloquy (1529)

- Philip of Hesse wanted an alliance between the Lutherans and the Zwinglians to protect against Catholicism and the Holy Roman Empire and promote the Reformation.
- Sought to resolve the dispute between Luther and Zwingli over their understanding of the Lord's Supper.
  - Zwingli – The Supper an act of Thanksgiving for the Gospel
  - Luther – The Supper a concrete offer of the Gospel
- The entire history of the doctrines of Salvation and Communion loomed over the discussions.
- Also a struggle over who would lead the Reformation politically and Spiritually. (Wittenburg or Zurich) (Germany or Switzerland)



# Zwingli's Legacies

- Strove to maintain a Middle Ground between Catholicism and the Radical Reformation (more next week)
- His ideas quickly spread throughout Switzerland and Southern Germany.
- An economic blockade of Catholic Cantons led to a Catholic invasion of Zurich.
- Zwingli was wounded in the battle of Kappel of 1531, he was then quartered and burned.
- Protestantism maintained its hold in Switzerland, but Catholics were in a favored position.
- Influenced the later course of John Calvin

# Next Week

- The Fires of Radicalism: The Anabaptist Challenge