

Article

Defending a Legacy: Heinrich Bullinger's Preface to Zwingli's *Opus articulorum* (1535)

Pierrick Hildebrand

Institute for Swiss Reformation Studies, University of Zurich, 8006 Zurich, Switzerland;
pierrick.hildebrand@uzh.ch

Abstract: This article presents the first English translation of Heinrich Bullinger's preface to Huldrych Zwingli's *Opus articulorum* of 1535. This source, which has received little attention in previous scholarship; is placed in the context of efforts to bring Luther and the Swiss Reformed closer together after the death of the Zurich Reformed on the question of the Lord's Supper. Bullinger's preface is an apologetic manifesto in favor of Zwingli's orthodoxy and continuity with the Church Fathers. It is argued that Bullinger's strong commitment should be interpreted as a signal sent to Wittenberg that a rapprochement with Luther was not to be achieved at the expense of Zwingli's theological legacy.

Keywords: Heinrich Bullinger; Huldreich Zwingli; Martin Luther; Lord's Supper; Church Fathers

1. Introduction

In hindsight, the Zurich Reformer Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531) established a distinctive tradition within Protestantism known as Zwinglianism, or more broadly, the Reformed tradition. The development of this tradition, however, would not have been possible without Zwingli's successor in Zurich, Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575).¹ A hitherto neglected source, Bullinger's *Epistola ad lectorem* (later *Epistola*), a translation of which I propose at the end of this article, demonstrates his central role in preserving and cultivating Zwingli's theological legacy. This preface preceded the Latin translation by Leo Jud (1482–1542) of Zwingli's exposition of the 67 theses, the *Opus articulorum sive conclusionum a sanctae memoriae clarissimo viro Huldrycho Zwinglio* (subsequently *Opus*), published in March 1535.² The full title already reveals the editors' intention to commemorate the "holy memory of the most illustrious man", a memory that was highly controversial. After Zwingli's demise in the Second War of Kappel (1531), which he had lobbied for, and the defeat of Zurich against the Roman Catholic cantons of central Switzerland, the achievements of the Zurich Reformer were in danger of being abandoned. At stake was the question of whether the Swiss Reformation, which could not simply be reversed, would continue to follow a Zwinglian path. Zwingli's *Opus* had been originally composed in vernacular language³ as *Auslegen und Gründe der Schlußreden* (afterward *Auslegen*) in the aftermath of the First Disputation in Zurich in 1523. This public dispute saw the Reformer's theses being publicly sanctioned by the Zurich council⁴ and marked the beginning of the magisterial reformation of Zurich, and in the long term, the Swiss Reformation. In his *Vita*, Bullinger recalls that he was highly impressed by Zwingli's *Opus*.⁵

The publication of Bullinger's preface, together with Jud's translation of Zwingli's foundational writing, came at a time when the cities of Upper Germany were attempting to mediate between the Swiss Reformers, led by Bullinger, and the German Martin Luther (1483–1546), who had accused Zwingli and his followers of heresy. Bullinger's letter should therefore be interpreted as a signal sent primarily to Wittenberg, and not only to his Swiss partners. A rapprochement with Luther was not to be achieved at the expense of the theological heritage inherited from Zwingli. As an apologetic manifesto for Zwingli's orthodoxy, Bullinger's preface testifies to Bullinger's strong and deliberate commitment to his predecessor. From the moment he took office, Bullinger strove to present Zwingli's



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life and work in its proper light against the dead Reformer's detractors.⁶ In his later commentaries on the New Testament, Bullinger repeatedly referred to Zwingli as the "Apostle of Switzerland". In doing so, as Luca Baschera has pointed out, Bullinger "is expressing a genuine conviction, namely that Huldrych Zwingli, in his work and also in his person, had a fundamental significance for the life of the Church of Jesus Christ in the Swiss country. Bullinger honors Zwingli's reformatory work by portraying his predecessor as a heroic figure and at the same time placing himself and his own work as a theologian, preacher and [...] as an exegete in continuity with Zwingli's legacy".⁷ Zwingli was for Bullinger the "scholiast",⁸ the expositor of Holy Scripture *par excellence* to be imitated. It is significant to note, however, that Bullinger never referred to Zwingli's *Opus* in his later exegetical work.

Bullinger's *Epistola* has received little scholarly attention until recently. As far as I can determine, Christian Hild alone has discussed Bullinger's preface in his close study on Jud's Latin translation of Zwingli's *Opus*.⁹ Hild places Bullinger's letter in the political-theological context of the attempts in the early 1530s to reach a theological agreement on the importance of the Lord's Supper among the Protestants, a subject to which I shall return. Such an agreement between Wittenberg, the cities of Upper Germany committed to the reformation, and the reformed states of the Swiss Confederation was a prerequisite for the formation of a political front against the Habsburg Emperor Charles V, who opposed the introduction and spread of the Reformation. Earlier accounts of the eucharistic controversy such as Walther Köhler's epochal work *Zwingli und Luther* have overlooked Bullinger's *Epistola*.¹⁰

2. Context

The *Opus* was published 1535 in a context and for a purpose completely different from the text's original setting and intention. The theses as well as their exposition were aggressively drafted to defeat Roman Catholic resistance in a public disputation. In 1523, the Reformation in Zurich needed yet to be enforced. Twelve years had passed, and the *Opus* was no longer intended for a Roman Catholic readership, but instead for fellow Reformers. Zwingli's Reformation had been largely "accomplished". After the disaster of Kappel, however, it was on the defensive against the backdrop of intra-Protestant polemics, especially Luther's.

In 1523, the conflict with Luther had not yet been in sight.¹¹ In his exposition of the Theses, Zwingli still assumed that he and Luther shared a compatible view of the Lord's Supper, the stumbling block of later polemics. Zwingli reduced their differences to a matter of terminology,¹² which turned out to be illusory. Zwingli recognized the irreconcilability of their views with his first criticism of Luther's position in his letter to Matthew Alber in November 1524.¹³ This letter was the initial spark that ignited Luther's fury against the Swiss Reformer. The conflict would escalate and, ironically, reach its climax at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529, which was intended to reconcile both parties. I cannot go into the details here, as it would go beyond the scope of this article.¹⁴ Nevertheless, Zwingli's own view (as well as Luther's) evolved over the course of the controversy. Some scholars have distinguished three phases, to which I basically adhere. In the early phase (1523–1524), to which the exposition of the 67 theses belongs, Zwingli's focus was on rejecting the sacrifice of the Mass. In the middle phase (1524–1529), the focus shifted to the mode of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Zwingli objected to a real or bodily presence of Christ in the elements, a spiritual presence conveyed by the faith of the communicant. This expressive approach represents the "memorialist" view, as formulated, for example, in his *Commentary*¹⁵ of 1525, which is often regarded as the classical position of the Reformer. There is, however, a third phase (1530–1531) in which Zwingli recognized through the *fidei contemplatio* [the contemplation of faith] a spiritual and faith-strengthening reality mediated by the celebration of the Lord's Supper.¹⁶

Luther's polemics did not end with Zwingli's fall at the Second Diet of Kappel in October 1531. In a letter to Albert, Duke of Prussia (1490–15), written a few months later (February 1532), the Wittenberg Reformer not only praised Zwingli's fall as God's

judgment but also lamented that the Swiss [meaning the Roman Catholic cantons] had not eradicated the Zwinglian faith in their peace treaty.¹⁷ A high point was reached with the publication in January 1535 of Luther's *Commentary on Galatians*¹⁸ about two months before the publication of the *Opus*, in which Luther harshly attacked Zwingli's followers as false apostles on a par with Anabaptists and Papists. However, because of the common religious-political threat posed by the emperor and the prospect of a Church Council, Protestant political leaders urged a pan-Protestant alliance. The Swiss had not joined the existing Schmalkaldic League, formed in February 1531 after the Diet of Augsburg (1530) between Lutheran princes and free cities of Upper Germany committed to the *Confessio Tetrapolitana*. The Strasbourg theologians, especially Martin Bucer (1491–1551), played a major role as mediators between the Swiss Reformed lands and Wittenberg. As for the Marburg Colloquy, Philip I, Landgrave of Hesse, was the leading political force behind the theological debate.

In her detailed monograph, Judith Engeler has recently shed new light on this period which ultimately led to the *First Helvetic Confession*.¹⁹ Her analysis of Bullinger's attitude toward Wittenberg differs somewhat from Hild's interpretation. The latter interprets Bullinger as emphatically inclined to reapproach Wittenberg and deliberately seeking to reassure his hesitant Swiss Reformed partners of his own commitment to Zwingli. Engeler, on the other hand, argues that there was a definite change in the Swiss disposition in 1535 and points to Bullinger's reserve towards Luther. Our contribution adds new evidence to Engeler's view, arguing for Bullinger's demonstrative affirmation of Zwingli's theological legacy as directed more against its detractors than as support for its defenders. According to Hild, the immediate impetus for the publication of the *Opus* is to be found in Bern's persistent reluctance to accept the *Zurich Concord on the Eucharist* sent to Bucer in December 1534, namely the *Confessio Ministorum Verbi apud Tigurum super Eucharistia sancta ad M. Bucerum*.²⁰ The Bernese saw in Bullinger's search for a formulation suitable for agreement with the Lutherans a departure from Zwingli's teaching and an unacceptable concession to Luther. Letters from Bullinger and Jud followed that did not convince the Bernese ministers, and Hild therefore proposes the following thesis: "In view of the theological and political constellations of the years 1534/35, [the] *Opus* served as a reminder of the theology of the 'early Zwingli', which did not contradict the 'Zurich Concord on the Eucharist'".²¹ Hild notes the "striking parallelity" between Jud's letter²² and the *Epistola*. Accordingly, Bullinger would have published the work in order to demonstrate Zurich's loyalty to Zwingli's legacy and the continuity of its agreement with the original teachings of the Reformer. This motive might have played a role. However, there are other serious considerations that point to a different primary purpose for the preface.

3. Bullinger's Defense

Bullinger's preface did not really form an introduction to Zwingli's *Opus*, which is referred to only once, and that in the last paragraph. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Bullinger could have written his preface for any of Zwingli's other writings. With reference to a letter from the printer Christoph Froschauer, Hild shows that the *Opus* was already in print on 2 January 1535, at the latest.²³ However, according to Bullinger's autobiographical notes, the preface was not edited until March, when the book was published.²⁴ From a purely chronological point of view, therefore, it is possible that Bullinger was already aware of Luther's commentary, which had been published in January.²⁵ However, he does not explicitly refer to it. In any case, Bullinger's *Epistola* could have circulated independently of the *Opus*, as evidenced by his letter to Oswald Myconius (1488–1552) of 19 March, in which he refers to having sent the *Epistola* to him. Significantly, Bullinger refers to his preface as *Apologia* in the correspondence.²⁶ There are two quotations from Zwingli in the *Epistola*: a first and brief one from Zwingli's *Confessio fidei*, and a longer one from his *Commentary on Jeremiah*. Both texts were written in 1531—that is, by the "late Zwingli". These quotations are therefore difficult to explain within the thesis that Bullinger sought to associate himself with the "early Zwingli" in order to convince the Bernese.²⁷

Second, Bullinger's apology does not deal solely with the question of the Eucharist but also raises the issue of the abolition of images. Iconoclasm had never been a point of contention with the Bernese, and the correspondence mentioned above was silent on the subject. Why mention the images if the epistle was ultimately addressed to Bern? Admittedly, Bullinger discusses images only briefly at the end of his preface. Hild's thesis does not explain this fact. On the other hand, the removal of images by the Reformed was sharply criticized by Luther, as his *Commentary on Galatians* attests. The Wittenberg Reformer called the latter as "sectarians" not only with regard to the "negatio [] corporalis praesentiae Christi in Coena" but also with the "destructio[] imaginum".²⁸ Bullinger's mention of the abrogation of images would have made perfect sense as a response to Luther's continuing attack.²⁹

Finally, and more crucially, Bullinger's main argument was to demonstrate Zwingli's continuity and congeniality with the patristic tradition. Bullinger does more than show Zwingli's compatibility with a kind of *consensus patrum*. He places his predecessor in the patristic tradition, making Zwingli himself a Father of the Catholic Church, not only of the Church of Zurich. Bullinger reveals himself as the tradition-maker of Zwinglianism. Recourse to patristics would not have been of much help in the negotiations with Bern. This recourse, however, was a strong argument against the Wittenberg charges of heresy. Bullinger's own conversion to the Reformation owed much to his reading of the Fathers.³⁰ In his later writings, he would argue abundantly for the antiquity, catholicity, and orthodoxy of the Reformed faith, more so than any Reformer before him.³¹ While the Fathers are not mentioned in Jud's letter mentioned above—why should they be?—the *Epistola* includes quotations on the Eucharist from Jerome, Tertullian, Augustine, and Pseudo-Ambrose. Regarding images, Bullinger refers to the Code of Justinian and Epiphanius. On the one hand, the *Epistola* is one of the rare texts in which Bullinger defends Zwingli against Luther's charges of denying the *vera praesentia* [real presence] of Christ in the Eucharist. Bullinger himself later refrained from using such terminology. On the other hand, Bullinger made absolutely no concessions in his defense of Zwingli's radical iconoclasm. Following the loci method of classical rhetoric, Bullinger collected patristic source material on a particular theological topic, which he often reused in an argument. Nearly all of the quotations in the *Epistola* can be found again in later comprehensive theological writings, such as the *Decades* or the *Summa*.³²

Clearly, the interpretation of Bullinger's *Epistola* as his self-disclosure as a Zwingli apologist, affirming and cultivating his legacy in the face of detractors, offers a better account for the above considerations. Bullinger's *Epistola* has not yet been edited historically or translated into modern vernacular languages. I propose here, for the first time, an English translation of the text that concludes this article. This text shall be recognized by a wider readership as an important testimony to Bullinger's commitment to Zwingli. It was the intention of this translation to keep as close as possible to the wording of the original text. Margins in the original print may, according to the printing conventions of the time, be either the author's or the printer's. They are given here as footnotes. Modern editions of the Latin sources quoted or explicitly referred to by Bullinger in his epistle are given in the footnote apparatus, which also includes references to later uses of these texts in the *Decades* or the *Summa*. There exists only one print run of the text,³³ which, interestingly, would not be reprinted in the first complete Latin edition of Zwingli's works of 1544–45.³⁴ An annotated edition of the Latin text remains a desideratum.

4. Text

Translation of: Heinrich Bullinger, *Epistola Bullingeri ad lectorem*. In: *Opus articulorum sive conclusionum a sanctae memoriae clarissimo viro Huldrycho Zwinglio*, Zürich: Froschauer, 1535, Aa2r-Aa9v [VD16 Z 823].³⁵

Heinrich Bullinger to the pious reader, grace and innocence of life from the Lord.

With so much piety, learning, simplicity, and purity, Huldrych Zwingli, once head of the Church of Zurich, spoke and wrote about the main articles or doctrines of

our religion, and while it is neither the place nor the time to pursue it in greater detail, the consensus of all pious people sufficiently proclaim it. I³⁶ do not know whether it is more to be admired or to be regretted that the name of such a great man, who is best deserved among the church and all pious people, sounds worst to many. For you will find those who would close their ears to the name of Zwingli, and others who have a little more understanding, but are still, contrary to reason, as wary of his books as to an omnipresent poison. What shall we say of the ones who spit with full mouths nothing but the vile names of heresies and heretics at him and his books? It is not appropriate, however, to admit the anger in the counsel to judge the best brother rashly, not to mention that many condemn the unknown. For what is more unjust (which Tertullian is also said to have had on his lips) than for people to hate what they do not know, even if the thing deserves hatred? Then, it is deserved not before you know whether it is deserved. But in the absence of knowledge, whence is the hatred justified? It should be considered not on the basis of the outcome but of the conscience. Nor, indeed, should the judgments of others be believed at random. For many are envious, and many are afflicted by vain fame. It is an ancient example of how the noblest spirits were always used to being forced to labor under unjust hatred. And who in the church of Christ, after the apostles and the apostolics, stood out more brightly than Origen? Which one worked harder? Who acted more faithfully? Who has lived more holy? Who has sweated more fruitfully in the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures? But who, on the other hand, was exposed to the slander and hatred of everyone to the same extent as the best here, even at the most innocent age. His age was not taken into consideration, still less his dignity, learning, piety, or diligence. He seemed alone worthy to be overwhelmed by hostile projectiles. And so, the worthiest man of many was treated in the most unworthy manner, ignoring his merits, as if he had never deserved anything from the church and the bishops. But even those who had learned from him what they did not know envied and resented him, for envy is used to forgetting itself and even sticking a tongue of the most dangerous and evil kind against those who deserve the good. And indeed, we can judge more purely of those ancient examples, since they were blinded by the eagerness of party or faction. Most of us today do not see that violence and injustice are being done to Zwingli and the other good men, for the eyes are blinded by the eagerness of party. But the future age will judge more justly and truthfully. If this did not comfort the most correct minds, who would not be petrified at this most unjust ingratitude of all ages? No wonder if the minds of the best men, altogether perverted by flattery, shall be shamefully deflected, for we feel too truly that, as the comedy writer says: "Indulgence makes friends, truth creates hatred".³⁷

Even³⁸ if Zwingli also fell into harmful heresies and considered impurely some doctrines, not all of the writings of such a most learned and pious man were to be despised, rejected, and trampled on as a whole. Origen, also Tertullian, and the most holy martyr Cyprian, are known for error, not to mention Arnobius and Apollinaris. But who is so impudent and ungrateful that he would have all the most sacred writings of these most great men hidden and buried? Hear, I conjure you, to what St. Jerome thought of this matter. He writes to Tranquillus, saying: "I think that the Greek as well as the Latin ecclesiastical writers should be read in such a way that we may choose their good things and avoid their opposites, according to the apostle who says: 'Prove all things, hold fast what is good' [1 Thessalonians 5:21]. For³⁹ the rest, those who are led either to love him too much or to hate him by the perversity of their stomach, seem to me to be subjected to that prophetic curse: 'Woe to those who call the good evil and the evil good. Those who make the bitter sweet and the sweet bitter' [Isaiah 5:20]. For neither because of his learning are false doctrines to be adopted, nor because

of the falseness of doctrines, everything to be rejected, even if he made useful commentaries, he made them on the holy scriptures. If his admirers and his detractors are bent on having a tug of war, one against the other, and if, seeking no mean and keeping no moderation, they should either approve or disapprove everything, I would choose rather pious simplicity to learned blasphemy".⁴⁰ So Jerome.

Further, if we examine Zwingli's teachings against the canonical writings, we will find that nothing deviates from the consensus of the holy Catholic and true Christian Church. This is mainly attested by the book that gives the Emperor Charles an account of the Zwinglian faith. Why then do we drive off someone who does not deserve it with such atrocities of the mind? Why should we slander him as a heretic and an innovator of all things, who stood out as the most careful admirer of antiquity? He thought rightly about the authority of Scripture, about faith, about the Holy Trinity, about Christ as God and man, the redeemer, the sacrifice, the justice, the mediator, and the life of the whole world, about sin, about repentance and the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, the sacraments, and so on about the other principal articles of our religion. With regard to the Eucharist and the use of images, however, he is believed to have most sinned and is said to have denied the real presence of the body of Christ in the Supper, and to have abrogated all images once and for all. For the rest, if we compare the new with the old [teachings], laying down envy and deadening the dishonesty of the soul, we shall find firm unity and no disunity. Zwingli⁴¹ interpreted these holy words of the Lord 'This is my body' as 'This signifies my body'. Or as 'This is the sign, the figure, the remembrance of my body'. Tertullian, however, interpreting the same words of the Lord, said, "that he took the bread and distributed it to the disciples, made it his body, saying: 'This is my body', this is the symbol of my body".⁴² And St. Aurelius Augustine says in the book against Adimantus, a disciple of Mani, chapter 12: "The Lord Himself did not hesitate to say, 'This is my body', when he gave the sign of his body to his apostles".⁴³ In the same way, interpreting the third Psalm, he says almost at the beginning: "And in the history of the New Testament, our Lord's patience was so great and so wonderful that he endured him (Judas) for so long as if good, when He was not ignorant of his thoughts, for he admitted him to the feast in which He committed and delivered to his disciples the figure of his body and blood".⁴⁴ With these do Ambrosius' [statements] agree, which were handed down in these words: "He showed them (he interprets Paul's words in 1 Cor. 11, however) that the mystery of the Eucharist in the midst of the celebration of a supper is not a supper. For it is a spiritual medicine by which, when tasted with reverence, cleans the faithful. For it is the remembrance of our salvation that, by remembering our savior, we deserve to obtain things from him".⁴⁵ And again, with regard to these words, 'You proclaim the Lord's death' [1 Cor 11:26]. He says: "For we have been set free by the Lord's death, and we remember this by eating and drinking the flesh and blood that were sacrificed for us".⁴⁶ You heard truly the interpretation of the three greatest teachers of the Latin Church. But where, I implore you, did Zwingli depart from this? I suppose they did not sin; only Zwingli did. But these [teachers], they say, although they interpreted thus the words of Christ, did not deny the real presence of Christ in the Supper. This⁴⁷, we also profess, who recall that not even Zwingli did rob the mystical meal of the presence of Christ, for it is a slander which says that we defend that nothing is given to the faithful in the Supper but empty signs. Let us hear again what St. Augustine wrote in the third book *On Christian Doctrine*, chapter 9, where, among other things, he discusses the signs during the New Testament era and says: "Instead of many signs, the Lord himself and the apostolic teaching ordained only a few, namely those which are most easy to handle, most holy in their perception, and most

chaste in their observance as of the sacrament of baptism and the celebration of the Lord's body and blood. Everyone who, having been initially instructed, perceives what they refer to, recognizes that they should not be worshipped with carnal servitude but rather with spiritual freedom. However, as to follow the letter and receive the signs for the things which are signified by them is servile weakness, so is to interpret the signs as useless an evil wandering error".⁴⁸ And so forth. Zwingli,⁴⁹ following to call this moderation or discernment of evils, said at the beginning that the body of Christ is signified by the bread and the wine, lest the one who is bound to the letter with servile weakness receive the signs for the things that they signify. But then, lest the signs should be interpreted as useless, that is, the sacrament should be made void, so that there would be no mystery behind the bread and wine, that is, that it would be nothing else than bread and wine, he added that through faith and Spirit the flesh and blood of Christ are truly present and eaten in the action of the Supper. Zwingli's clear and brief words, if anyone requires them, are these: "We assert that the body of Christ is eaten in the Supper, but not so carnally and grossly as the papists maintain when they say that it is eaten to the same extent as when he hung on the cross and lay in the tomb, but we believe that the true body of Christ is eaten in the Supper sacramentally and spiritually by the religious, faithful, and holy mind, as St. Jerome also thought".⁵⁰ So far, we reviewed the words of Zwingli, but what can you miss in these? Did not all the ecclesiastical writers think this way about this sacred thing? For he professes that he cannot speak so carnally of the eating, or even of the presence of the body and blood of Christ, as the Papists have spoken. That he drew from Augustine himself, who in the third book *On Christian Doctrine*, chapter 16, discusses figurative and non-figurative speech.⁵¹ He says: "If the prescriptive speech is either prohibiting an abomination or a crime, or enjoining a usefulness or a kindness, it is not figurative. But if it seems to enjoin an abomination or crime, or to prohibit usefulness or kindness, it is figurative. [Jesus] says 'Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you' [John 6:53] and seems to command an abomination or a crime. It is therefore a figure prescribing that the passion of the Lord should be shared and pleasantly and usefully kept in memory that his flesh was crucified and wounded for us".⁵² See, reader, how carefully and holily Zwingli spoke in the manner of the ancients, how carefully he took care not to sin on the other side, either by bringing too much into the sacrament or removing from it. He seems to remove from it, you say, as he confesses that the sacraments are only symbols and only give true food to faith. For by faith, it may be permitted to eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood a hundred times a day. And so, the consequence will be that symbols are uselessly instituted. But⁵³ listen to how Zwingli formerly responded to these things, writing on the 27th chapter of Jeremiah: "What would have been the effect of this paradigm or demonstration, would it not have been enough to warn with a word, if such acts did not move many senses to receive even more strongly the warnings than when only one sense is moved? If Jeremiah had only preached, the hearing alone would have been struck, but when what he preaches presents to him a similar display to the sight, two of the noblest senses are already struck and he is broken, insulted, and driven away yawning. Thus, at the Lord's Supper, the mind is led more strongly to the contemplation of what is taking place, while external symbols suggest to the sight and taste the same thing as the sermon to the ears. However, since all these things are external, faith alone, which sits and reigns at home, receives the power of these things. For if it is lacking, hearing a word, seeing an action, tasting a symbol move nothing but laughter. For the foolishness of the unbelieving nations is the gospel, [...]"⁵⁴ just as it seems in the present place. Those who are admonished by the prophet and led with the outstretched hand, as they were alienated from the fear of God

and the faith, neither the word nor the deed, which was similar to the word, could do anything. It is therefore certain that whatever things are attributed to the symbols, they are principally of the faith, for they are attributed in a just and equitable manner, since they are a part of the sacrament (although inferior as being external. For the sacrament consists of a spiritual and a physical thing), and they signify the same things to the senses as the Spirit to the mind, whereby they restrain the body from what is hostile to the Spirit and make it compliant to what the mind does. Wherefore, no one is so rough as to be offended by such excess: the true body of Christ is also truly eaten at the Supper when the bread and wine are offered. For he assumed a true body, not a false one. A faithful mind eats truly when it does not receive Christ insincerely, when it truly trusts in Christ. But see, whether all these things said about symbols are not directed by the power of symbols but by the operation of the Spirit and faith? What is attributed by a figure of speech to the power of symbols, we should recognize to be of—if we want to cut the matter alive—the other part of the sacrament, to faith alone. Therefore, when it is said that we eat the body, we understand that true body which was brought to heaven. But we do not eat it naturally, as though because it is itself natural, we should also eat it naturally, but we eat here spiritually what is there naturally”.⁵⁵ All these are the words of Zwingli, which agree in every way with Augustine’s words in the third book of his *Questions on Leviticus*, chapter 84. He says: “It must be noted that he says: ‘I am the Lord who sanctify him’, speaking of the priest as he also said this to Moses, ‘And you shall sanctify him’. How, then, does Moses and the Lord sanctify? For Moses is not the Lord. But Moses [sanctifies] through the visible sacraments, by way of his ministry, the Lord through the invisible grace of the Holy Spirit. Where is the WHOLE fruit of the visible sacraments? Of what use are the visible sacraments without this sanctification of the invisible grace?”⁵⁶ And so forth. For he joins several of this kind clearly and fluently. But from all this the equitable reader will easily gather that Zwingli did not depart from Augustine even by the width of a stalk, and therefore did not empty the sacrament of the Lord’s body and blood, although he attributes all the fruit to inner power. For Christ alone gives us the true bread from heaven; he feeds us with his flesh and makes us drink with his blood, and he presents himself to us, however invisibly through faith in Spirit and power. The minister administers to us the body and blood of the Lord in visible sacraments, but in his own way, that is, ministerially or sacramentally. Hence, the ancients, speaking circumspectly about this matter, said that the sacraments of the body and blood of the Lord were administered by the ministers. For it is certain that hypocrisy does not participate in the matter of the sacrament, but only in the sign. For whoever ate the flesh of Christ and drank his blood in him Christ abides and he himself abides in Christ. Hypocrites,⁵⁷ however, do not abide in Christ, therefore they did not eat nor drink his flesh and blood, but only participate in the sign because, as they did not ignore the sacrament of the body and blood of truth, that is, not of the bread and wine, but of the body and blood once afflicted and poured out on the cross, they became guilty. But I discussed this matter more abundantly than I had planned, for I only wanted to point out that the opinion which Zwingli followed in the matter of the Eucharist was not a recent one, but an ancient one which St. Aurelius Augustine handed down to the churches as Catholic, to which Zwingli also subscribed in a letter to the princes of Germany concerning everything in this cause. Therefore, it is envy and slander and whatever [sort] of injustice; the innocent and good man withstands this cause of grace even if he is dead. He did not deny the presence of Christ in the Supper, nor did he make void the ministry of the word and the sacraments, but he spoke separately, simply, and plainly about things and signs against various errors, as befits a faithful servant of the Lord. Certainly, so that in the later age the

amphiboly and subtleties of words do not give occasion to becoming blinded and straying from the truth. Through this remarkable faith he certainly deserved to be whistled and driven off as the most harmful heretic. Here, of course, someone has not undeservedly cried out: "O what times, O what customs".⁵⁸

Now⁵⁹ we will say a few things about the abrogation of the images, whereof it is said by some that he [Zwingli] sinned more than capitally. But not even in this did he sin in any way against the laws of God or Caesar; nay, nothing against the example of the greatest writers in the church. For it is hidden from no one what God prescribed in Exodus 20, what the prophets and apostles perceived who interpreted this law, Isaiah in chapters 40 and 44, the psalmist in Psalm 115, Paul in Romans 1, John 1, and John 5. The emperors Valens and Theodosius Augustus wrote to the pretor in command in this way: "As we have the diligent office to protect the religion of the heavenly deity in all things, we do not even permit anyone to fashion, engrave, or paint the sign of Christ the Savior with colors, stone, or any other material, but⁶⁰ we order EVERYONE found to be removed, punishing those who attempt anything contrary to our decrees and authority empire with the most severe punishment".⁶¹ Peter Crinitus also cited this law in the ninth book *On Honest Discipline*, chapter 9.⁶² Yet nothing could have been said or written more clearly and religiously and more ecclesiastically. For Epiphanius himself, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, is said to have done what is prescribed by the law of God and Caesar. For he, who is himself the interpreter of St. Jerome, relates that he entered a church in Syria to pray, found a veil hanging there (we use his own words) at the doors of the same church, colored and painted, and having the image of Christ or a saint, and tore it to pieces. He says: "For⁶³ when I saw an image of a man hanging in the church of Christ AGAINST THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURES, I tore it down and gave further advice to the guards of the same place to wrap the poor dead man in it and carry it out".⁶⁴ But if you do not know whether this Epiphanius⁶⁵ was Catholic or heretic, listen about this from the testimony of St. Jerome: "Epiphanius was always so venerated that the reigning heretics thought it would be their disgrace to persecute such a man". This [man] wrote books against all the heretics. An honorable mention of this man is made in the ninth book of the *Tripartite History*, chapter 48.⁶⁶ Truly hear what the great man added in that letter which we quoted above and which Jerome translated into Latin: "I beg (he says to John the Patriarch of Jerusalem) that you prescribe to the priests not to hang such veils, which are contrary to our religion. For⁶⁷ it behooves your honesty to have this concern more to remove the SCRUPULOUSNESS which is unworthy of the church of Christ and the people who have been entrusted to you".⁶⁸ Zwingli, therefore, concerned with the church that was entrusted to him by God, took up the images of Christ and his saints after the example of Moses, the apostles, and Epiphanius. What? Shall we blame in this [man] what the saints have praised in others? You see, evidently, that the name and writings of Zwingli are not overthrown by reason but by envy.

What⁶⁹ therefore now remains where he sinned so much against God, against equal laws, against holy scriptures, and against ancient and sincere ecclesiastical examples? You have heard that the man did not sin in any way against true religion with regard to the main accusations by which he is most pursued. Nothing remains, then, but to receive the work of the articles with a secure mind, and to add with regard to the contemptible slanders of the rivals the other writings of the excellent man, as he has explained some things here more briefly and obscurely and there more fluently and clearly. Great was always the glory of those in the old church who translated useful books from a foreign language into a more convenient one. I do not think that you will be ungrateful to Leo, our man learned in all things pious and Christian. See that you do not spare any vigilant or devout considerations but continue brightly to be a grateful reader.

Perhaps others of this kind [of reader] will be interested in the study of piety, if they perceive that they are similarly minded readers. Farewell.

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Notes

- 1 This tradition history is best reflected by the term *Spätzwinglianismus* [Late Zwinglianism] coined by the influential Zwingli-scholar Gottfried W. Locher in reference to Bullinger's relationship to Zwingli's work, see [Locher \(1979\)](#).
- 2 Cf. [Zwingli \(1535\)](#) [VD16 Z 823]. A transcription of Bullinger's *epistola ad lectorem*, printed on Aa2r-Aa8v, is available in: [Christian Hild \(2016\)](#), pp. 386–93.
- 3 Cf. [Zwingli \(1908\)](#).
- 4 See [Aktenstücke 1905](#).
- 5 See [Bullinger \(1904b\)](#), p. 126: "Anno 1523. audivi primum Huldricum Zuinglium, cujus libellos prius, imprimis autem Opus articulorum, legeram. Confirmabar maxime hujus doctrina solida, recta et scripturis conformi".
- 6 See [Moser \(2012\)](#), pp. 238–40.
- 7 See [Baschera \(2021\)](#), p. 217: "Vielmehr verleiht er damit einer echten Überzeugung Ausdruck, nämlich dass Huldrych Zwingli in seinem Werk und auch in seiner Person eine fundamentale Bedeutung für das Leben der Kirche Jesu Christi im Land der Schweizer gehabt hat. Bullinger würdigt das reformatorische Wirken Zwinglis, indem er seinen Vorgänger als heroische Figur darstellt und zugleich sich und seine eigene Arbeit als Theologe, Prediger und [...] als Exeget in Kontinuität mit dem Erbe Zwinglis stellt".
- 8 Cf. [Baschera \(2021\)](#), p. 221.
- 9 Cf. [Hild \(2016\)](#) pp. 115–23. See also [Christian Hild \(2021\)](#), p. 205.
- 10 Cf. [Köhler \(1953\)](#).
- 11 For a succinct overview on their relationship, see [Zuliani \(2017\)](#).
- 12 See [Zwingli \(1908\)](#), p. 150: "Iedoch, damit wir widrumb zuo unserem fürnemmen kerind, hab ich das essen und trincken des fronlychnams unnd bluotes Christi genent ein widergedächtnus des lydens Christi, ee ich en Luter ie hab gehört nennen. Und hat der Luter den fronlychnam und bluot Christi ein testament genennet. Sind bede recht und uß dem mund Christi kummen. Das ein ist der wesentlich nam, das ander ein nam des bruchs und der uebung".
- 13 Cf. [Zwingli \(1914\)](#), pp. 335–54.
- 14 For an extensive treatment, see [Köhler \(1924\)](#) and vol. 2 mentioned above, fn. 9. See also the more recent monograph of Johannes Voigtländer, which also offers a brief account of past research: [Voigtländer \(2013\)](#), pp. 1–23.
- 15 See [Zwingli \(1914\)](#), p. 775: Dederunt autem indubie hac causa id nominis, quod tam ex fide quam verborum Christi apostolique vi intelligerent, Christum hac coena voluisse iucundam sui *commemorationem* fieri, gratiasque publice haberi pro beneficio, quod in nos liberaliter expendit". (Italics mine).
- 16 This view is especially developed in Zwingli's *Expositio fidei* sent to the King of France, François I., see [Zwingli \(1991\)](#), p. 160: "*Adiuvant ergo fidei contemplationem sacramenta, concordant cum mentis studiis, quod alias citra sacramentorum usum tantopere tantoque fit consensu*". (Italics mine).
- 17 See [Luther \(1910a\)](#), p. 551: "War ists, das der sieg der Schweitzer widder die Zwingler nicht fast frölich solches grosses rhums wird ist, Weil sie den zwingelischen glauben, wie sie es nennen, jnn jrem fürtrag bleiben laffen und solchen jrthumb gar nichts verdammen, sonbern neben jrem alten ungezweifelten glauben, wie sie fagen, hin gehen laffen, Des sich die Sacramentischen villeicht troesten und stercken. On further reactions of the Wittenberg Reformer, see Jacques [Courvoisier \(1982\)](#), esp. 613–15.
- 18 Cf. [Luther \(1910b, 1914\)](#).
- 19 Cf. [Judith Engeler \(2023\)](#).
- 20 See [Hild \(2016\)](#), pp. 110–11. For the text of the Concord, see [Zürcher Pfarrer und Lehrer an Martin Bucer \(1989\)](#).
- 21 See [Hild \(2016\)](#), pp. 115–16: «J OPUS diene angesichts der theologisch-politischen Konstellationen der Jahre 1534/35 als Erinnerung an die Theologie des 'frühen Zwingli', die eben nicht in einem Widerspruch zu der "Zürcher Abendmahlskonkordie" stehe".
- 22 Cf. [Leo Jud \(1992\)](#), pp. 29–38.

- 23 Cf. Hild (2016), p. 100.
- 24 See Bullinger (1904a), 24: “In Martio edidi comment. in 2. ad Corinth. et defensionem Zuinglii praefixam operi articulorum Latine”. (Italics mine).
- 25 The *terminus ad quem* of the print is January 18, see introduction to Luther’s commentary in Luther (1910b), p. 3.
- 26 See Bullinger (1992): “Apologiam, quam pro Zvinglio scripsi, Gregorio Mangoldeo ad te perferendam tradidi atque is nimirum dedit, praefationem puto, quam praefixi Operi articulorum Zvinglii”.
- 27 To publish the *Confessio fidei* in the first place which was done in 1536 and circulated hitherto only in handwritten form could have been in fact more persuasive to Bern.
- 28 Cf. Luther (1910b), p. 354.
- 29 If Bullinger’s intention was all about reaching out for a consensus with Wittenberg Bullinger would have been unnecessarily risking waking up a sleeping dog by defending Zwingli’s iconoclasm.
- 30 See Hildebrand (2024), pp. 112–13.
- 31 Many writings could be cited here. See for example Bullinger (1539a, 1539b, 1552).
- 32 See Bullinger (2008, forthcoming).
- 33 See Staedtke (1972), pp. 37–38 (no. 69–70).
- 34 See Zwingli (1544–1545).
- 35 See <https://www.e-rara.ch/zuz/doi/10.3931/e-rara-689> (accessed on 16 October 2024) for Bullinger (1535).
- 36 Margin: “Unjust hated against Zwingli”.
- 37 Cf. Terentius (1898), 5,41.
- 38 Margin: “The opinion of St. Jerome concerning the reading of the books of those who are suspected of heresy”.
- 39 Margin: “He speaks chiefly of Origene”.
- 40 Cf. Hieronymus (1996b).
- 41 Margin: “Christ’s sentence ‘This is my body’ is explained”.
- 42 Cf. Tertullianus (1954). Quoted in Bullinger (2008), p. 1018.
- 43 Cf. Augustinus (1891), Quoted in Bullinger (2008), p. 1019.
- 44 Cf. Augustinus (2003).
- 45 Cf. Ambrosiaster 1968, pp. 127, 8–13.
- 46 Cf. Ambrosiaster (1968), p. 127, 15–17. Quoted in Bullinger (2008), p. 1018.
- 47 Margin: “Zwingli confesses the real presence of Christ in the Supper”.
- 48 Cf. Augustinus (1962), 86,14–23. Quoted in Bullinger (2008), p. 887.
- 49 Margin: “Why it may be seen that Zwingli denied the presence of Christ”.
- 50 Cf. Zwingli, *fideie expositio*, 92–93.
- 51 Margin: “Christ is not eaten carnally”.
- 52 Cf. Augustinus, *De doctrina christiana*, 91,7–92,9.
- 53 Margin: “The evidence and power of the sacraments and [Christ’s] own presence”.z.
- 54 Margin: “[Zwingli] inserted here more words which I have omitted for reasons of brevity”.
- 55 Cf. Zwingli (1959), pp. 596,13–597,25.
- 56 Cf. Augustinus (1895), 304,20–305,7. Quoted in Bullinger (2008), p. 906.
- 57 Margin: “The unfaithful do not eat the true body of the Lord. For they lack faith”.
- 58 Cf. Cicero (1935), pp. 348–49 [2.4.57].
- 59 Margin: “The iconoclast Zwingli sinned neither against the laws of God nor against the laws of Caesar, nor against any ecclesiastical example”.
- 60 Margin: “The laws of Ceasar punish the manufacturer of images”.
- 61 Cf. Codex Iustinianus (1892), 61 (1.8.1).
- 62 Cf. Petrus Crinitus (1532), 155 (VD16 C 5878).
- 63 Margin: “Observe the hanging image of a man”.
- 64 Cf. Hieronymus (1996a), pp. 411, 11–15). Referred to in Bullinger (2008), p. 138; Bullinger (Forthcoming), p. 70.
- 65 Margin: “Epiphanius was terrifying to all heretics”.
- 66 Cf. Cassiodorus (1952), pp. 577,18–578,34.
- 67 Margin: “Against those who say, they must be preserved to teach and warn”.
- 68 Cf. Hieronymus (1996a), pp. 411,21–412,1.

⁶⁹ Margin: “Reversal”.

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