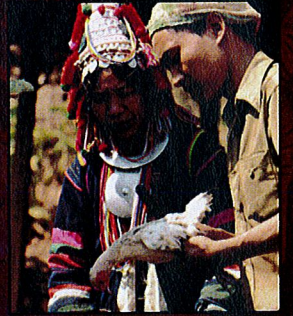
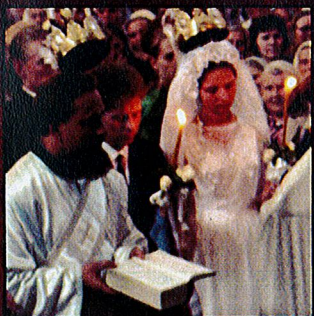


COUNTRIES AND THEIR CULTURES

❧ VOLUME 4 ❧

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SWITZERLAND

CULTURE NAME

Swiss

ALTERNATIVE NAMES

Schweiz (German), Suisse (French), Svizzera (Italian), Svizra (Romansh)

ORIENTATION

Identification. Switzerland's name originates from Schwyz, one of the three founder cantons. The name Helvetia derives from a Celtic tribe called Helvetians that settled in the region in the second century B.C.

Switzerland is a federation of twenty-six states called cantons (six are considered half cantons). There are four linguistic regions: German-speaking (in the north, center, and east), French-speaking (in the west), Italian-speaking (in the south), and Romansh-speaking (a small area in the southeast). This diversity makes the question of a national culture a recurring issue.

Location and Geography. Covering 15,950 square miles (41,290 square kilometers), Switzerland is a transition point between northern and southern Europe and between Germanic and Latin cultures. The physical environment is characterized by a chain of mountains (the Jura), a densely urbanized plateau, and the Alps range, which forms a barrier to the south. The capital, Bern, is in the center of the country. It was chosen over Zurich and Lucerne because of its proximity to the French-speaking region. It is also the capital of the German-speaking canton of Bern, which includes a French-speaking district. Bern had 127,469 inhabitants in 1996, whereas Zurich, the economic capital, had 343,869.

Demography. The population in 1998 was 7,118,000; it has increased more than threefold since 1815, when the borders were established. The birth-

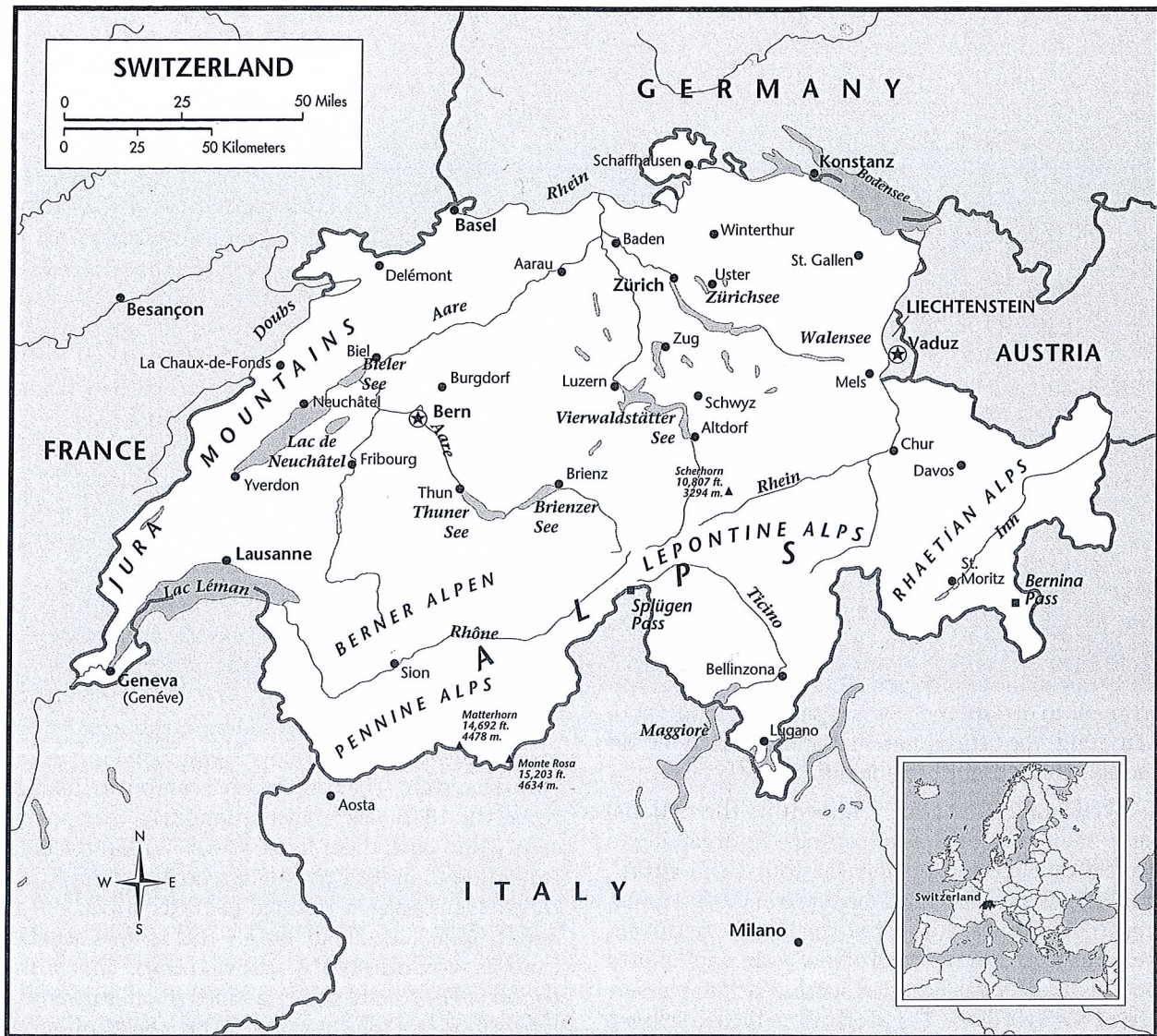
rate has been decreasing since the end of the nineteenth century, but immigration plays a major role in increasing the population. Since World War II and after a long tradition of emigration, Switzerland became an immigration destination because of its rapid economic development, and has one of the highest rates of foreigners in Europe (19.4 percent of the population in 1998). However, 37 percent of the foreigners have been in the country for more than ten years and 22 percent were born in Switzerland.

According to the 1990 census, 71.6 percent of the population lives in the German-speaking region, 23.2 percent in the French-speaking region, over 4 percent in the Italian-speaking region, and just under one percent in the Romansh-speaking region.

Linguistic Affiliation. The use of the German language goes back to the early Middle Ages, when the Alamans invaded lands where Romance languages were developing. The dominance of German in Switzerland has been lessened by the bilingualism of the German-speaking region, where both standard German and Swiss German dialects are used. These dialects have a high social prestige among Swiss Germans regardless of education level or social class because they differentiate Swiss Germans from Germans. Swiss Germans often do not feel comfortable speaking standard German; they often prefer to speak French when interacting with members of the French-speaking minority.

In the French-speaking region, the original Franco-Provençal dialects have almost disappeared in favor of a standard French colored by regional accents and some lexical features.

The Italian-speaking region is bilingual, and people speak standard Italian as well as different regional dialects, although the social status of the dialects is low. More than half the Italian-speaking population living in Switzerland is not from Ticino but of Italian origin. Romansh, a Romance language of the Rhaetian group, is the only language specific to Switzerland except for two parent languages



Switzerland

spoken in southeastern Italy. Very few people speak Romansh, and many of those people live outside the Romansh linguistic area in parts of the alpine canton of Graubünden. Cantonal and federal authorities have taken measures to preserve this language but success in the long term is threatened by the vitality of Romansh speakers.

Because the founding cantons were German-speaking, the question of multilingualism appeared only in the nineteenth century, when French-speaking cantons and the Italian-speaking Ticino joined the confederation. In 1848, the federal constitution stated, "German, French, Italian and Romansh are the national languages of Switzerland. German, French, and Italian are the official languages of the Confederation." Not until 1998 did

the confederation establish a linguistic policy, reaffirming the principle of quadrilingualism (four languages) and the need to promote Romansh and Italian. Despite the cantonal differences in the educational system, all students learn at least one of the other national languages. However, multilingualism is a reality for only a minority of the population (28 percent in 1990).

Symbolism. The national symbols mirror the attempt to achieve unity while maintaining diversity. The stained-glass windows of the House of Parliament's dome show the cantonal flags brought together around the national emblem of a white cross on a red background, surrounded by the motto *Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno* ("One for all, all for one"). The national flag, officially adopted in 1848,

originated in the fourteenth century, as the first confederate cantons needed a common sign for recognition among their armies. The white cross on a red background comes from the flag of the canton of Schwyz, which has a red background symbolizing holy justice and a small representation of Christ on the cross at the upper left corner. Because of the ferocity of the Schwyz soldiers, their enemies used the name of this canton to designate all the confederated cantons.

After the formation of the federal state, efforts were made to promote national symbols that would strengthen a common national identity. However, the cantonal sense of identity never lost its significance and the national symbols often are considered artificial. The national day (1 August) did not become an official holiday until the end of the twentieth century. The celebration of the national day is often awkward, as very few people know the national anthem. One song served as the national anthem for a century but was criticized because of its warlike words and because its melody was identical to that of the British national anthem. This led the Federal Government to declare the "Swiss Psalm," another popular song, the official national anthem in 1961, although this did not become official until 1981.

William Tell is widely known as the national hero. He is presented as a historical figure living in central Switzerland during the fourteen century, but his existence has never been proved. After refusing to bow to the symbol of the Hapsburg power, Tell was forced to shoot an arrow at an apple placed on the head of his son. He succeeded but was arrested for rebellion. The story of William Tell is a symbol for the bravery of an alpine people who reject the authority of foreign judges and are eager for independence and freedom, perpetuating the tradition of the first "Three Swiss" who took the original oath of alliance in 1291.

Helvetia is a feminine national icon. Symbolizing the federal state bringing together the cantons, she often is represented (for example, on coins) as a reassuring middle-aged woman, an impartial mother creating harmony among her children. Helvetia appeared with the creation of the confederation in 1848. Both symbolic figures are still used: Tell for the independence and freedom of the Swiss people and Helvetia for the unity and harmony in the confederation.

HISTORY AND ETHNIC RELATIONS

Emergence of the Nation. The construction of the nation lasted six centuries, after the original oath in

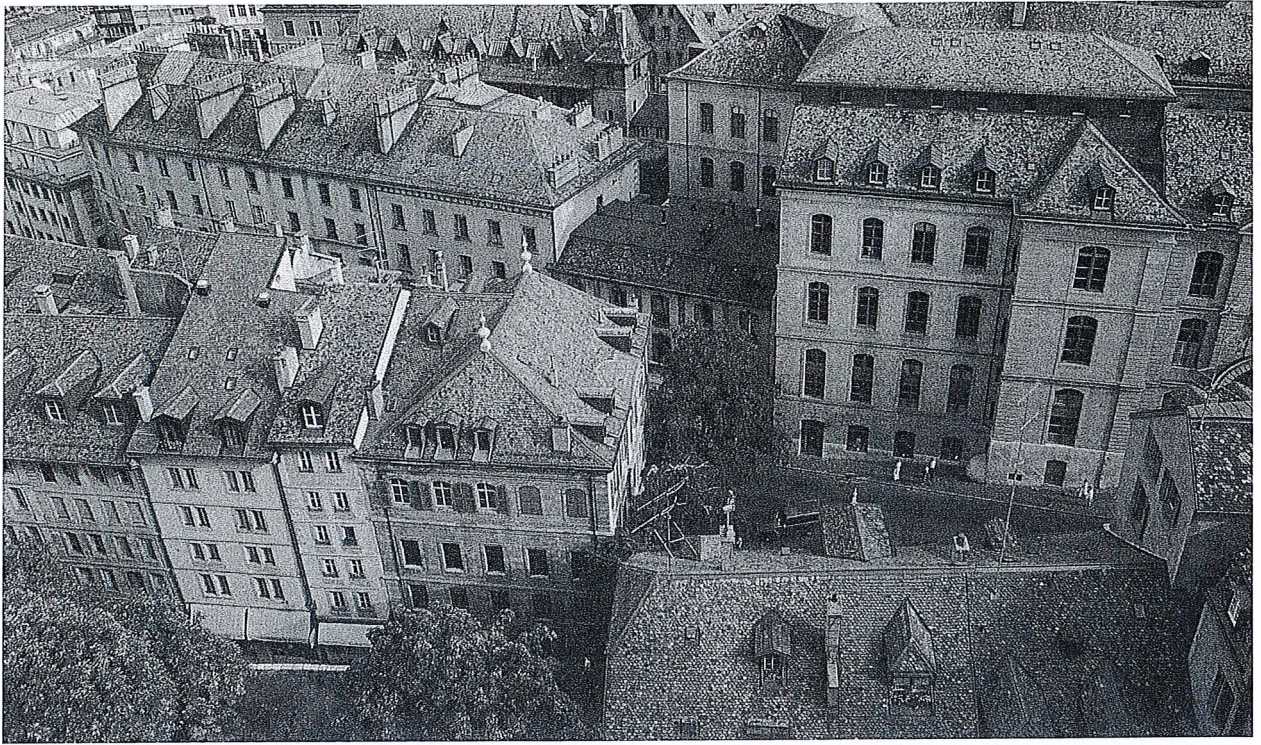
1291, when the cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwald concluded an alliance. The different circumstances under which the cantons joined the confederation account for differences in the degree of attachment to the "nation," a term rarely used in Switzerland.

The model of a united nation was tested by the Helvetic Republic (1798–1803) imposed by Napoleon Bonaparte, who tried to make Switzerland a centralized nation. The republic abolished the domination of some cantons by others, all cantons became full partners in the confederation, and the first democratic parliament was established. The inadequacy of the centralized model rapidly became evident, and in 1803 Napoleon reestablished the federal organization. After the collapse of his empire in 1814, the twenty-two cantons signed a new federal pact (1815), and the neutrality of Switzerland was recognized by the European powers.

Tension among the cantons took the form of conflict between liberals and conservatives, between industrialized and rural cantons, and between Protestant and Catholic cantons. The liberals struggled for popular political rights and the creation of federal institutions that would allow Switzerland to become a modern state. The conservative cantons refused to revise the 1815 Pact, which guaranteed their sovereignty and gave them more power within the confederation than their population and economy warranted. This tension resulted in the civil war of the Sonderbund (1847), in which the seven Catholics cantons were defeated by federal troops. The constitution of the federal state provided a better means of integration for the cantons. The constitution of 1848 gave the country its present shape except for the creation of the canton of Jura, which separated from the canton of Bern in 1978.

National Identity. Switzerland is a patchwork of small regions that gradually joined the confederation not because of a shared identity but because the confederation appeared to guarantee their independence. The existence of a national identity that would transcend cantonal, linguistic, and religious differences is still debated. There has been oscillation between a self-satisfied discourse about a blessed people that considers itself a model for others and a self-deprecating discourse that questions the existence of the nation: The slogan "Suiza no existe," used at the Swiss pavilion at the Seville universal fair in 1992, reflects the identity crisis Switzerland faced in 1991 when it celebrated seven hundred years of existence.

A reexamination of the national image has resulted from the country's banks' treatment of Jew-



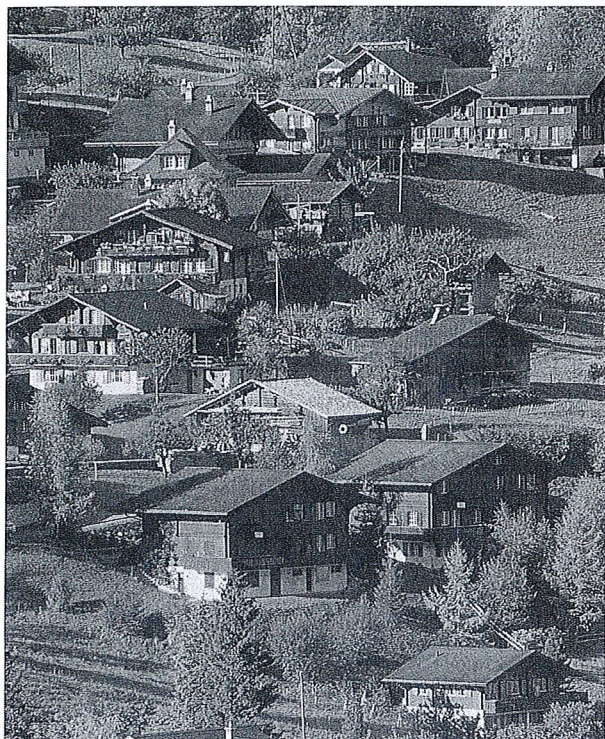
Traditional-style buildings in the old part of Geneva. Preserving the country's architectural heritage is an important consideration throughout Switzerland.

ish funds during World War II. In 1995, public revelations started to be made about "sleeping" accounts in Swiss banks whose holders had disappeared during the Nazi genocide. Historians had already published critical analyses of the behavior of banks and the Swiss federal authorities during a period when thousands of refugees were accepted but thousands of others were sent back to probable death. The authors of these analyses were accused of denigrating their country. It took fifty years for internal maturation and the international accusations for a critical reexamination of the country's recent history to occur and it is too early to assess how this self-examination has affected the national identity. However, it probably represents the acme of a period of collective doubt that has marked the last decades of the twentieth century.

Ethnic Relations. The notion of ethnic groups is rarely used in a nation where the concept of a linguistic or cultural group is preferred. Reference to ethnicity is very rare in regard to the four national linguistic groups. Ethnicity emphasizes a sense of a common identity that is based on a shared history and shared roots transmitted from generation to generation. In Switzerland, membership in a linguistic group depends as much on the establishment in a linguistically defined territory as on the

cultural and linguistic heritage of the individual. According to the principle of the territoriality of languages, internal migrants are forced to use the language of the new territory in their contacts with the authorities, and there are no public schools where their children can receive an education in the parents' original language. The composition of the population in the different linguistic regions is a result of a long history of intermarriage and internal migrations, and it would be difficult to determine the inhabitants' "ethnicity." In addition, many people feel that ethnic differences among the Swiss pose a threat to national unity. Even the concept of culture is looked at with distrust, and differences between regions often are presented as being only linguistic in nature.

Tensions between the linguistic, cultural, and religious groups have always generated a fear that intergroup differences would endanger the national unity. The most difficult relations are those between the German-speaking majority and the French-speaking minority. Fortunately, in Switzerland the religious dimension crosses the linguistic dimension; for example, areas of Catholic tradition exist in the German-speaking region as well as the French-speaking region. However, with the decrease in social importance of the religious dimen-



A Swiss alpine village in the Jungfrau Region of Switzerland.

sion, the risk of focusing on the linguistic and cultural dimensions cannot be ignored.

URBANISM, ARCHITECTURE AND THE USE OF SPACE

Switzerland is a dense network of towns of various sizes, linked by an extensive network of public transportation and roads. There is no megalopolis, and even Zurich is a small city by international criteria. In 1990, the five main urban centers (Zurich, Basel, Geneva, Bern, Lausanne) contained only 15 percent of the population. There are strict regulations on construction, and the preservation of the architectural heritage and landscape preservation are taken very seriously.

The architectural styles of traditional regional houses have great diversity. A common neo-classical architectural style can be seen in national public and private institutions such as the railway company, the post office, and the banks.

FOOD AND ECONOMY

Food in Daily Life. Regional and local culinary specialties generally are based on a traditional type of cooking, rich in calories and fat, that is more

suited to outdoor activity than to a sedentary way of life. Dairy products such as butter, cream, and cheese are important parts of the diet, along with pork. More recent eating habits show a growing concern for healthy food and a growing taste for exotic food.

Basic Economy. A lack of raw materials and limited agricultural production (one-fourth of the territory is unproductive because of mountains, lakes, and rivers) caused Switzerland to develop an economy based on the transformation of imported raw materials into high-added-value finished products mainly destined for exportation. The economy is highly specialized and dependent on international trade (40 percent of the gross domestic product [GDP] in 1998). The per capita gross domestic product is the second highest among the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development countries.

Land Tenure and Property. Land can be acquired and used like any other goods, but a distinction is made between agricultural and nonagricultural land to prevent the disappearance of agricultural plots. Land speculation flourished in the 1980s. In reaction to that speculation, measures have been taken to limit the free use of privately owned land. Precise land planning was established to specify the possible uses of plots. Since 1983, nonresident foreigners have faced limitations in buying land or buildings.

Commercial Activities. In the last decades of the twentieth century, the Swiss economic structure was deeply transformed. Core economic sectors such as machine production declined considerably, while the tertiary sector experienced considerable growth and became the most important employer and contributor to the economy.

Trade. The most important exported industrial products are machines and electronic instruments (28 percent of exports in 1998), chemicals (27 percent), and watches, jewelry, and precision instruments (15 percent). Due to the lack of natural resources, raw materials are an important part of the imports and are vital to industry, but Switzerland also imports all kinds of goods, from food products to cars and other equipment goods. The major trading partners are Germany, the United States, and France. Without being formally part of the European Union or the European Economic Area, economically, Switzerland is highly integrated in the European Union.



Swiss cities, such as Bern (shown here) are densely populated but fairly small.

Division of Labor. In 1991, over 63 percent of the GDP consisted of services (wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and hotels, finance, insurance, real estate, and business services), over 33 percent was accounted for by industry, and 3 percent by agriculture. The historically very low unemployment rate rose to over 5 percent during the economic crisis of the 1990s with important differences between the regions and between nationals and foreigners. The economic recovery of the last years of the decade reduced the unemployment rate to 2.1 percent in the year 2000, but many workers in their fifties and workers with low qualifications have been excluded from the labor market. The level of qualification determines access to employment and thus to participation in a society that values work highly.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Classes and Castes. In one of the wealthiest countries in the world, the richest 20 percent of the population owns 80 percent of total private assets. Yet the class structure is not particularly visible. The middle class is large and for its members, upward or downward social mobility is rather easy.

Symbols of Social Stratification. The cultural norm is for wealth to remain discreet. Too manifest a demonstration of wealth is negatively valued, but poverty is perceived as shameful, and many people hide their economic situation.

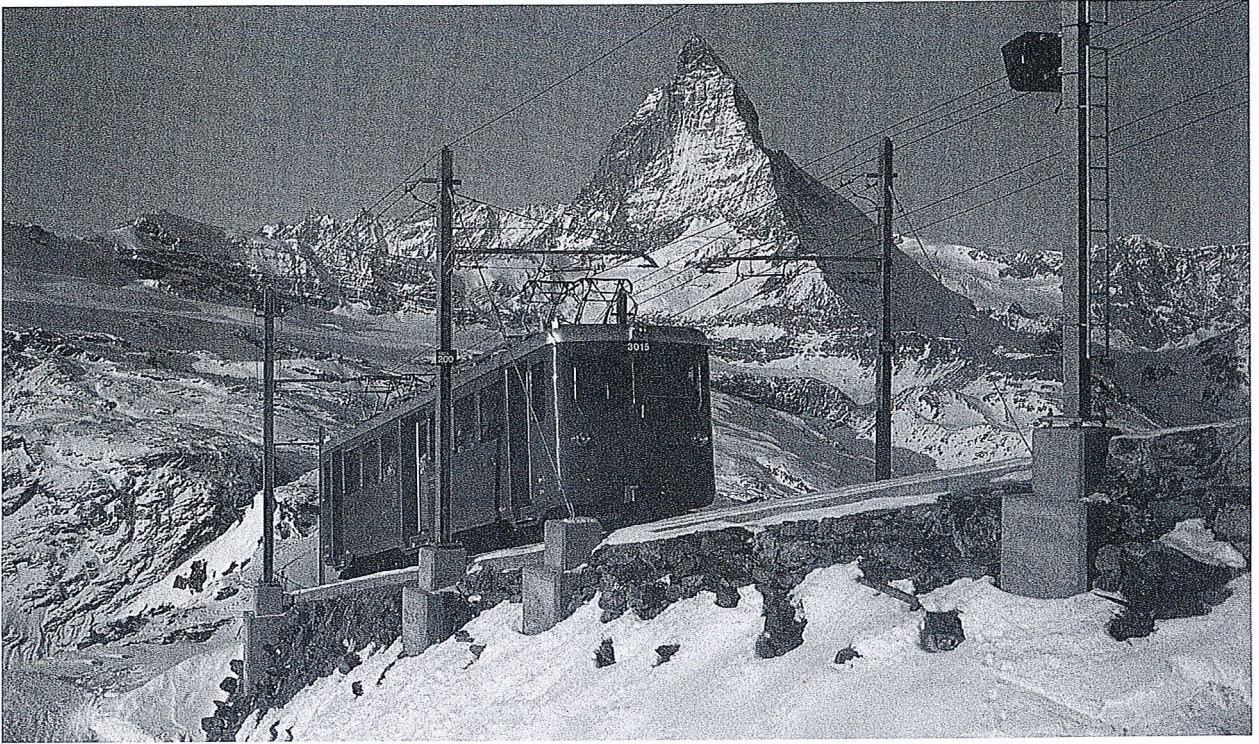
POLITICAL LIFE

Government. Switzerland is a "concordance democracy" in which cooperation and consensus between political, social, and economic groups is valued. Federalism ensures considerable autonomy for communes and cantons, which have their own governments and parliaments. The Federal Assembly has two chambers with equal powers: the National Council (two hundred members elected by proportional representation of the cantons) and the Council of States (forty-six members, or two per canton). Members of both chambers are elected for a four-year term. Laws are subject to referendum or obligatory referendum (for constitutional changes). The people also can submit demands by means of a "popular initiative."

The Federal Assembly elects the seven members of the executive branch, known as the Federal Council. They form a collective government with a rotating one-year presidency mainly for ceremonial tasks. Several criteria are taken into account in electing members of the Federal Council, including political party membership (since the late 1950s, the political composition follows the "magic formula," which gives two representatives to each of the three main parties and one representative to the fourth one), linguistic and cantonal origin, religious affiliation, and gender.

Leadership and Political Officials. Leadership positions can be achieved by being a militant (usually starting at the communal level) in one of the four governmental parties: FDP/PRD (Liberal-Radicals), CVP/PDC (Christian Democrats), SPS/PSS (Social Democrats), and SVP/UDC (a former farmers' party but since 1971 the Swiss People's Party in the German-speaking region and the Democratic Union of the Center in the French-speaking region). Contact with political officials can be relatively easy, but a cultural norm states that well-known persons should be left in peace. The numerous activities of a highly participatory society are considered more appropriate opportunities to meet political officials.

Social Problems and Control. Civil and criminal law are powers of the confederation, while legal procedure and the administration of justice are



The Matterhorn towers beyond a railway as it ascends toward Gornergrat. Skiing and tourism are an important part of the Swiss economy.

cantonal responsibilities. Each canton has its own police system and the powers of the federal police are limited. Fighting modern crime such as money laundering revealed the inadequacy of those fragmented justice and police systems, and reforms are under way to develop coordination among the cantons and give more authority to the Confederation.

Switzerland is safe, with a low rate of homicide. The most common crimes are infractions of the traffic code, infractions of drug laws, and theft. The trust of the population in the judiciary system and the observance of laws are high, largely because the majority of the population lives in communities where informal social control is powerful.

Military Activity. In a neutral country, the army is purely defensive. It is a militia based on obligatory service for all men between ages eighteen and forty-two and represents for many people a unique opportunity to relate to compatriots from other linguistic regions and social classes. Therefore, the army is often considered an important factor in national identity. Since 1990, a few Swiss soldiers have been active in international conflict sites in support activities such as logistics.

SOCIAL WELFARE AND CHANGE PROGRAMS

Social welfare is mainly a public system, organized at the federal level and partially financed by an insurance system involving direct contributions by residents. An exception is health coverage, which is obligatory but decentralized among hundreds of insurance companies. Federal regulation of health coverage is minimal and contributions are not proportional to one's salary. Parental leave depends on sector-based agreements between employees and unions. During the last twenty-five years, public spending for social welfare increased more rapidly than the GDP because of the economic recession and increasing unemployment, as well as the extension of the social welfare system. The aging of the population is expected to increase the pressure on social welfare in the future. Nongovernmental organizations often are subsidized and provide complementary services notably in supporting the poor.

NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

Associative life ranges from the local level to the federal level. The rights of referendum and initiative foster active participation by citizens in numerous associations and movements, which are widely



A waiter pours drinks on the Glacier Express, a famous mountain railway that makes a nearly eight-hour journey between Saint Moritz and Zermatt.

consulted by the political authorities. The authorities' search for a social consensus results in a kind of institutionalization of these movements, which are rapidly integrated into the social system. This gives them a chance to propagate their ideas and concerns but also results in a certain loss of pugnacity and originality.

GENDER ROLES AND STATUSES

Division of Labor by Gender. Although women's situation has improved since the 1970s, the constitutional article dealing with equality between the sexes has not been effective in many fields. The dominant model of sex roles is traditional, reserving the private sphere for women (in 1997, 90 percent of women in couples with young children were responsible for all housework) and the public sphere for men (79 percent of the men had a job, whereas the proportion was only 57 percent for women, whose jobs are often part-time). The vocational choices of women and men are still influenced by traditional conceptions of sex roles.

The Relative Status of Women and Men. Switzerland has long been a patriarchal society where women submit to the authority of their fathers and then to that of their husbands. Equal

rights for women and men are relatively recent: only in 1971 was women's right to vote at the federal level established. Women are still disadvantaged in many fields: there are proportionally twice as many women as men without post-secondary education; even with a comparable level of education, women hold less important positions than do men; and with a comparable level of training, women earn less than men (26 percent less for middle and senior managers). Women's participation in political institutions also shows inequality: On the communal, cantonal, and federal levels, women represent one-third of candidates and only one-quarter of those elected.

MARRIAGE, FAMILY, AND KINSHIP

Marriage. Marriages are not arranged anymore, but there has been a persistence of endogamy in terms of social class. Binational marriages represent a growing trend. After a loss of popularity in the 1970s and 1980s, the marriage rate increased in the 1990s. Marriage frequently is preceded by a period of cohabitation. Couples get married late in life, and divorce and remarriage are common. There are no longer any dowry obligations. The possibility of a legal partnership status for homosexual couples is being investigated.

Domestic Unit. Households made of one or two persons represented only one-quarter of households in the 1920s but accounted for two-thirds in the 1990s. The extended family of the beginning of the twentieth century, with three or more generations living together, has been replaced by the nuclear family. Both parents share family responsibility. Since the 1980s, other family models have become more common, such as single-parent families and blended families in which couples form a new family with the children from their former marriages.

Inheritance. The law restricts a testator's freedom to distribute property, since a proportion of it is reserved for the legal heirs, who are difficult to disinherit. The order of precedence among legal heirs is defined by the degree of proximity of kinship. The children and the surviving spouse have priority. Children inherit equal shares.

Kin Groups. Although kin groups no longer live under the same roof, they have not lost their social function. Mutual support among kin groups is still important, especially in critical situations such as unemployment and illness. With increased life expectancy recently retired persons may take care of their parents and grandchildren simultaneously.

SOCIALIZATION

Infant Care. Although the second half of the twentieth century saw the appearance of fathers who take an active part in their children's education, child care is still seen mainly as the mother's responsibility. Women often face this responsibility while being professionally active, and the demand for day care centers is far beyond their availability. Customary practices teach infants both autonomy and docility. Newborns are expected to learn rapidly to sleep alone in a separate room, submitting to a schedule of feeding and sleep that is set by adults.

Child Rearing and Education. Traditional conceptions of child rearing are still strong. This often is seen as a natural process that takes place primarily in the family, especially between a child and his or her mother. Day care centers often are seen as institutions for children whose mothers are forced to work. These conceptions are still prominent in the German-speaking region and led to the rejection in 1999 of an initiative to institutionalize a generalized social insurance system for maternity. Kindergarten is not mandatory, and attendance is particularly low in the German-speaking region. In kindergarten, in the German-speaking region, play and a family-like structure are favored, whereas in those

in the French-speaking region, more attention is given to the development of cognitive abilities.

Higher Education. Education and training are highly valued in a country with few natural resources. The emphasis has traditionally been on vocational training through a system of apprenticeship. The most popular areas are the clerical professions (24 percent of the apprentices) and professions in the machine industry (23 percent). Apprenticeship is more popular in the German-speaking region than in the French and Italian-speaking regions. In 1998, only 9 percent of the population age twenty-seven had an academic diploma. Education is mostly state subsidized, even if university fees have been significantly increased recently. Humanities and social sciences are by far the most popular fields for study (27 percent of the diplomas), especially for women, as 40 percent of the female student population chooses these fields. Only 6 percent of the female student population studies technical sciences. Regional differences exist, with more French-speaking students attending a university.

ETIQUETTE

Respect for privacy and discretion are key values in social interaction. In public spaces such as trains, strangers normally do not speak to each other. Kindness and politeness in social interaction are expected; in smaller shops, clients and vendors thank each other several times. Cultural differences between the linguistic regions include the more frequent use of titles and professional functions in the German-speaking region, and the use of a kiss rather than a handshake in the French-speaking region.

RELIGION

Religious Beliefs. Catholicism and Protestantism are the major religions. For centuries, Catholics were a minority, but in 1990 there were more Catholics (46 percent) than Protestants (40 percent). The proportion of people belonging to other churches has risen since 1980. The Muslim community, representing over 2 percent of the population in 1990, is the largest religious minority. The Jewish community has always been very small and experienced discrimination; in 1866, Swiss Jews received the constitutional rights held by their Christian fellow citizens.

Church attendance is decreasing, but the practice of prayer has not disappeared.

Religious Practitioners. Although the Constitution calls for separation of church and state, churches are still dependent on the state. In many cantons, pastors and priests receive salaries as civil servants, and the state collects ecclesiastical church taxes. These taxes are mandatory for persons who are registered as members of publicly recognized religion unless they officially resign from a church. In some cantons, the churches have sought independence from the state and are now faced with important economic difficulties.

Death and the Afterlife. In the past death was part of the social life of a community and involved a precise set of rituals, but the modern tendency has been to minimize the social visibility of death. More people die in the hospital than at home, funeral homes organize funerals, and there are no more funeral processions or mourning clothing.

MEDICINE AND HEALTH CARE

In the twentieth century, life expectancy increased, and health expenditures have been increasing. As a consequence, the health system is confronted by the ethical dilemma of rationalizing health services. The western biomedical model is dominant among the medical authorities and most of the population, and the use of natural or complementary medicines (new alternative therapies, exotic therapies, and indigenous traditional therapies) is limited.

SECULAR CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations and official holidays differ from canton to canton. Common to the whole country are National Day (1 August) and New Year's Day (1 January); religious celebrations shared by Protestants and Catholics include Christmas (25 December), Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost.

THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Support for the Arts. Several institutions support cultural activities including cantons and communes, the confederation, foundations, corporations, and private donors. At the national level, this is the task of the Federal Office for Culture and Pro Helvetia, an autonomous foundation financed by the confederation. To support artists, the Federal Office for Culture is advised by experts who represent the linguistic regions and are often artists themselves. Pro Helvetia supports or organizes cultural activities in foreign countries; within the nation, it supports literary and musical work as well as cultural ex-

changes between linguistic regions. These interregional cultural exchanges are particularly difficult for literature, as the different regional literatures are oriented toward their same-language neighboring countries. A foundation called the *ch*-Stiftung, which is subsidized by the cantons, supports the translation of literary works into the other national languages.

Literature. Literature reflects the national linguistic situation: very few authors reach a national audience because of the language but also because of the cultural differences between the linguistic regions. French-speaking Swiss literature is oriented towards France, and German-speaking Swiss literature towards Germany; both are engaged in a love-hate relationship with their imposing neighbors and try to create a distinctive identity.

Graphic Arts. Switzerland possesses a rich tradition in graphic arts; several Swiss painters and graphists are internationally well-known for their work, principally for the creation of posters, banknotes, and fonts for printing (for example, Albrecht Dürer, Hans Erni, Adrian Frutiger, Urs Graf, Ferdinand Hodler, and Roger Pfund).

Performance Arts. Besides the subsidized theatres (subsidized most frequently by towns), numerous partially subsidized theatres and amateur companies offer rich programs to their audiences, with both local and international productions. The history of dancing in Switzerland really started at the beginning of the twentieth century, when well-known international dancers and choreographers sought asylum in Switzerland.

THE STATE OF THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The physical sciences receive a high level of funding because they are considered crucial for maintaining and strengthening the country's technological and economic position. Swiss research in physical sciences has an excellent international reputation. A growing source of concern is that many young researchers trained in Switzerland move to other countries to find better opportunities to continue their research activities or develop applications of their findings.

The situation of the social sciences is less positive as a result of low level of funding and a lack of status and public attention.

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