

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 2 (1975)
Heft: 1

Artikel: The Canton of Zug
Autor: Letter, Paul / Pro Helvetia
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-907943>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 18.04.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>



Frank Martin †

27th November

In Geneva, 7000 international employees staged a strike during a morning to protest against the fate of retired employees in international public services, whose pensions were losing in value due to inflation and the fall in the dollar.

28th November

In Paris, Switzerland ratified the European Convention on Human Rights, and thus took a step of considerable political importance in the bringing about of a Europe based on the rule of Law.

30th November

The Swiss football team was beaten by Turkey 1:2 in the preliminary round for the European championships. The match took place in Izmir.

1st December

Dr. Roland Doerig from Zurich was awarded the Grand Prix at the Inventors' fair in Geneva for his apparatus for conserving and transporting living organs.

2nd December

The former Federal Councillor Max Weber, decisively responsible for modern Swiss history, died in Berne at the age of 77.

8th December

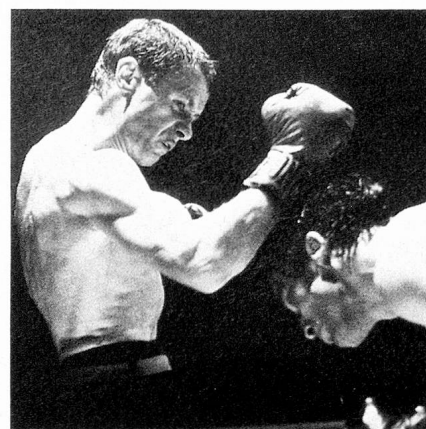
An unpleasant day of federal plebiscites, ending in a triumph of rejections. (See page 7.)

9th December

Once more, a Swiss author is awarded a literary prize. Claude Delarue from Geneva received the «Prix Hermes» for his novel «La lagune».

16th December

The members of the Federation of Swiss Sports Journalists decided on the sports personalities of the year. The racing driver Clay Re-



Fritz Chervet in action. (Keystone)

gazzoni and the skier Lise-Marie Morerod from Les Diablerets were chosen for most important personal achievements.

26th December

The boxing competition at the Wankdorf Stadium in Berne ended in victory for the «Buehler-Team»; Fritz Chervet, Max Hebeisen, Eric Nussbaum and Armin Rindlisbacher all defeated their opponents.

29th December

Two second-hand buses had been bought in Zurich and began to operate in Zermatt, much to the annoyance of opponents to motor traffic in the famous winter resort.

The Canton of Zug

PAUL LETTER was born on 21st October 1922 at Galgenen (District of March, Schwyz), a citizen of Oberaegeri, Canton of Zug. He attended the Humanistic Gymnasium of the Monastery College of Einsiedeln and then studied history, German philology, pedagogics/psychology, economics and geography in Zurich, St. Gall and Fribourg where he graduated with a doctorate. He has been teaching

(Lecturer in pedagogics, psychology), has worked on papers and magazines and for the radio (writer of feature programmes), and as employee in the printing trade. He gives lectures on «People's psychology and culture in Central Switzerland».

The Zug Country lies in the transition zone between the Midlands and the Pre-Alps, at the beginning

of Central Switzerland. Its landscape is rich in variety: The Lakes of Zug and Aegeri, extensive woods and hills with relaxing hiking areas such as the Gottschalkenberg, the Zugerberg, the Rossberg with its protected surroundings of the landslide above Goldau in 1806. At the centre of the pretty villages lies the medieval yet very enlightened lakeside-town of Zug. It was awarded the standard of



Oberägeri's village.

ONST



Zoug: square Kolin and its fountain «Linden».

ONST

honour by the Council of Europe in 1967 for its efforts in European co-operation.

Natural Environment

The elevations of the Zug Country (Zugerberg 1093 m) consist of molass. A large part of the area is covered by moraines. It lies in the lowest part of the molass basin of Switzerland, and according to the latest research, it is possible that drilling for gas and oil may be successful in these parts. Protection of waters and shores are in the best of hands: springwater and subsoil water-pumps assure good drinking-water; central purification plants protect soil reserves; all bathing establishments are under supervision. The Lakes of Zug and Aegeri are well-known for a rich variety of fish: in January is the time for catching whitefish, and pike, too, develops into fine specimens. The lake-char, known as «Roetel» locally, is the most famous of edible fish in the Canton

of Zug. Connoisseurs prefer it to the trout.

In 1887, the lakeside of the town of Zug disappeared in floods: 27 homes, a total of 38 buildings, vanished, 12 people were drowned, 624 became homeless. Already in 1453, 60 people had lost their lives in a similar catastrophe. The small Lake of Wil near Menzingen was saved from silting up a few years ago and is now self-regenerating. The Canton protects the standing growth of reed, bulrush and water-lilies by keeping the area as a nature reserve.

Many sheltered hollows and the influence of the warm *Foehn* wind particularly favour the growing of cherry-trees. In spring, the whole countryside right to the lakeshores is resplendent in cherry-blossom. The distilled *Kirsch* has become famous, and with it the *Kirschtorte*. On the hillsides of Walchwil, the sweet southern chestnut thrives. In the extensive woods (a total of 263 hectares) there is an abundance of game for shooting.

History

This country, one of the smallest Swiss Cantons, embedded between the Aegeri Valley, the hilly countryside of Menzingen, the plain between the Reuss and the Lake of Zug and reaching right to the southern end of the lake, shows traces of an exciting history. It began in Roman times, which is documented in the archives of the Fraumuenster Church in Zurich. It covered the dominion of the Houses of Lenzburg, Kiburg and finally Habsburg. With the development of the new Gotthard route, the town of Zug arose. It came under the jurisdiction of mighty Zurich, and the alliance of Zurich with the four Forest Cantons of Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden and Lucerne demanded imperiously that Zug was included in the original confederate union system. Habsburg objected for a long time – after tenacious negotiations only, Zug finally became part of the Confederation. The alliance of 1352,

though, was only secured definitely when Zug became freed from the Reich in 1415. The followed centuries of rivalry conflicts between town and country i.e. the three old Communes of Aegeri, Baar and Menzingen. Zug asserted itself in these discords and created a special dependency consisting of the bailiwicks of Walchwil, Hueenberg, Cham, Risch and Steinhäusen. Economically and culturally, as well as administrator, Zug became the centre of the proud country. It was the town's merit to have rounded off the Canton to its present-day size.

In the Reformation of the 16th century, Zug's policies became aligned definitely with Central Switzerland, and it abided by its old faith. Yet the conciliatory and harmonizing attitude was a characteristic of the State of Zug right into the years of the constitutional conflicts and the *Sonderbund* war of 1847. After the creation of the new Confederate State in 1848, the people of Zug tried, together with the other Catholic and Conservative Cantons to adjust themselves to the new circumstances. In later years, Zug has changed from a predominantly rural country to a highly industrialized zone; soon the town and the surrounding communes will form an agglomeration. Its favourable position and not least the national motorway will connect Zug even more with the leading centres of Switzerland. (Partly according to Eugen Gruber's *History of the Canton of Zug*.)

Zuger Fighters – once world-renowned

In 1518, a Papal Envoy wrote to Cardinal Medici: *Nella guerra questi di Zuch sono homini terribili!* (In battle the men of Zug are frightening). The white-blue-white standard of Zug was seen in all Confederate campaigns. When the Reich Army of Emperor Maximilian beleaguered the fortress of

Dorneck in 1499, the troops from Lucerne and Zug arrived and brought decisive help. It was the Mayor of Zug who, with courtly eloquence and flushed with victory, presented the keys of Milan to the Duke of Massimiliano Sforza in the name of the Confederation. On the battlefield of Marignano (1515), Mayor Wernher Steiner sprinkled three handfuls of earth on the kneeling fighters and consecrated them to die in the name of Trinity . . .

On the boundary of Zug and Zurich lies Kappel, where, in 1531, a Zug priest said the following conciliatory words over the body of the Reformer Huldrych Zwingli: «*Though you were of different faith, you were still a good Confederate*».

Shortly before the collapse of the old Confederation, the fighting spirit of the men of Zug flared up once more when the French Revolutionary Army approached; but on the other side, in the Aargau Freiamt, courage left them. In the last fraternal strife of the *Son-*

On the lakeside of Aegeri, this monument has been erected in memorial of the Morgarten's battle. ONST



derbund war (1847), the people of Zug stood at the frontier together with the Catholic troops, after their politicians, together with their friends from Basle, had tried in vain to reconcile the fighting men.

In foreign services, the soldiers of Zug participated on many European battlefields. The Zurlaubens left their blood in the French Wars of the Huguenots near La Rochelle, Dreux and Meaux; in the trenches of Negroponte on the Greek Pelopones, Zug mercenaries fought against the Half-Moon, and on the icy fields of Russia when Napoleon retreated from Moscow in 1812, they were under the command of Colonel Blattmann from Aegeri; it was he who requested his Lieutenant Thomas Legler from Glarus to strike up once more the tune «*Unser Leben gleicht der Reise eines Wandrers in der Nacht . . .*». And then General Andermatt from Baar was encamped with his guns outside Zurich when Austrian–Russian troops fought the French Army.

After the *Sonderbund* war, arms were laid to rest. Zug was shrewd and made use of the respite to further economic and cultural growth at home. The small, well-run State provided many clever politicians for Switzerland, as well as respected scholars and scientists. From 1934 to 1959, Federal Councillor Philipp Etter from Menzingen was in charge of the Federal Department of the Interior, whose concern it is to look after social insurance, road construction, university education, as well as the promotion of cultural activities. In 1973, Hans Hürliemann from Walchwil was elected to the highest Executive and as head of the same Department.

Schools of Zug

Zug is well known for its state and private schools. Apart from the Cantonal School (grammar school

A few figures (after the census of December 1970)

Surface area:	239 km ²
Population:	67 000 (in 11 Communes; the town of Zug 23 000)
Denomination:	46 000 Roman Catholics 10 000 Protestants
Language:	German (foreign inhabitants not counted)
Agricultural estates:	over 1000
Tourism:	1500 beds
Industrial undertakings:	97 (10 600 employees)
Individual firms:	851
Limited companies:	4331
Income per head:	Fr. 15 900 (Swiss average: Fr. 13 000)

comprising all subjects), there is a *Freies Gymnasium*. Since the 16th century, there is a Capuchin Monastery. And since the Middle-Ages, Cistercian nuns have been working at Frauenthal and Franciscan nuns on the Gubel.

A masterpiece of Swiss Baroque poetry was created in Zug: Johann Kaspar Weissenbach's historic pictorial show «*Eidgenössisches Contrafeth*» (likeness) of the «*auf-und abnehmenden Jungfrauen Helvetia*», first performed on the Kolinplatz in Zug in 1673. In an equally impressive way as Weissenbach, Johannes Mahler (born 1634) warned the Confederates in his plays of the temptation of money and going abroad, Isabella Kaiser (1866–1925) was a gifted narrator in both German and French. Theodor Hafner (1890–1951) excelled in dramatic works, and Franz Hotz (1860–1926) in lyrics. In early Gothic time, the two precious sacral buildings of Saint Oswald in the old parts of the town of Zug and Saint Wolfgang at Ennetsee were created. The net of alleyways in the centre of the town has its own charm. In Baar, the beautifully renovated Rococo interior of the St. Martin's Church and its Romanesque belfry of the 13th century are noteworthy. Next to churches, chapels and patrician mansions of the past, modern

architecture has begun to assert itself. The goldsmith's art of Zug enjoyed an excellent reputation. A famous portrait painter from Baar was Joseph Stocker, trained in Munich.

The People of Zug

Even in the small area of the Country of Zug, the character of its people is not uniform. Two features stand out and complement each other: the incarnate democrat and the aristocrat, the tradition-conscious man attached to the soil with a definite leaning towards individual personality. Underneath diligence and gravity, there is a cheerful joy of living and a gift for sociable festivity. Amongst the old and unremittingly fostered customs, we should like to mention the *Klausjagen*, the ringing of bells on New Year's Eve, the Greeting on New Year's Day rung from all belfries in towns and villages, the *Chropflimeh-Singen*, the *Schwingerfeste*, the dedication of village churches, the autumn horse jumping on the Allmend of Zug, the big bull-market in the autumn (up to 1300 animals present), as well as all the festivities connected with carnival: the historic jester figure of Legor at Oberaegeri and the *Greth Schell*, the main figure in the urban carnival. All over the Canton, excel-

lent folkmusic can be heard. Musical and theatrical performances used to attract large crowds from far and wide to the Casino in Zug. Nowadays, modern shows and new scenic experiments can be seen at the old Zuger Burg. With the Loreto school building, the town has created its modern cultural centre.

A large undertaking in the electro-industry heads the brisk Zug industry and economy. But the people of Zug have not allowed themselves to be overcome by the mighty wave of modern development; they caught it and make use of it in their own special manner. Little Switzerland could take an example from its small Canton in more than one way.

Paul Letter
in co-operation with
Pro Helvetia.

«Zuger Kirschtorte»

A speciality of the Canton of Zug

Ingredients:

- 2 «Japonais» layers (mixture of egg-whites, sugar and almonds)
- 1 egg sponge (eggs, flour and sugar) creamed butter (with vanilla sugar and kirsch liqueur)
- kirsch liqueur for soaking the sponge

Method:

Cover a «Japonais» layer with the butter cream. Put the sponge soaked in Kirschliqueur on top. Cover it with the butter cream and the second «Japonais» layer. Sprinkle with icing sugar.