2.20 Switzerland
Libraries in Switzerland[1]

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Looking Back in Time

A timeline of Swiss librarianship might include instances such as the evidence of a separate library room in the plan of the Abbey of St. Gall (820), Conrad Gesner's project of a universal bibliography, the 'Bibliotheca Universalis' (1545–1555), Johann Heinrich Hottinger's 'Bibliothecarius quadripartitus' (1664), an instruction to librarians, Philipp Albert Stapfer's project for a national library system (1800), the foundation of the national library association (1897) or the invention of the World Wide Web by Tim Berners Lee at CERN (ca. 1990).

For a long time, as was the case elsewhere, libraries on Swiss territory were the business of the Church and some wealthy private collectors. Early examples are the library of the Abbey of St. Gall (the monastery was founded in 612), today a UNESCO World Heritage Site, or the Middle High German lyrics collected in the thirteenth century by the Zurich patrician family Manesse, the source for the famous 'Codex Manesse'. In the upheavals of the Reformation, which split Swiss territory into Protestant and Catholic regions, many collections were destroyed or lost, but the Reformation and the invention of print certainly made books more available. School and town libraries, open to the clergy and to educated citizens, were founded in the reformed cities such as Zurich (around 1525), Berne (1528), Lausanne (1537) or Geneva (1559), and the seventeenth century saw a series of libraries founded by citizens. Collections were fed by gifts, often by renowned members of the community. Starting in 1536, the university library of Basel received free copies of the Basel print production on an agreement basis.

From the second half of the seveneenth century onwards, the Age of Enlightenment bridged the religious denominations by making education a responsibility of the state. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, reading societies and commercial lending libraries responded to the rising need for

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1   This chapter focuses on the development from 1980 to the present, with a glimpse into the future. For a more general presentation see: Jauslin, Jean Frédéric & Kellerhals, Andreas (2010). Switzerland: Libraries, Archives and Museums. In: Bates, Marcia J. & Maack, Mary Niles (eds.). Encyclopedia of library and information sciences. 3rd ed. Boca Raton FL, CRC Press: 5086–5095.

public access to literature. Reading societies were also founded in smaller cities such as Lucerne (1786) or Wädenswil (1789).

Private collections thrived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, the focus of private collecting changed from universal to specialist libraries. Many important collections eventually found their way into public libraries: the university library of Basel bought the Amerbach family collection of books and objects d'art (1661); the gift of the private library of Jacques Bongars (1632) doubled the collection of the library in Berne; in 1812, the gift of the library of the historian Josef Anton Felix Balthasar became the core of the rich historic collection of Swiss literature located in the library of Lucerne.

Modern Switzerland is a product of the French revolution, the loose confederation of Swiss territories being forced into a central state by the French in 1798 and formed back into a confederacy, now of equal partners, by Napoleon's Act of Mediation in 1803. Today's balance of power between the sovereignty of the cantons and the central government was reached with the Swiss Federal Constitution of 1848. The libraries of the Swiss cantons, most university libraries and the libraries of the Confederation are part of the infrastructure of the new federal state built up in the course of the nineteenth century: along with developments such as secularization, free trade, the monetary union or the standardization of weight and time went the founding of schools, banks, the construction of railway lines, the postal system, and so on. With the exception of Basel (1416), all Swiss universities are foundations of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. The end of the nineteenth century (1895) saw the establishment of the Swiss National Library, destined to collect Swiss literary production from 1848 onward.

Two years later, in 1897, the foundation of the Swiss library association[2] marked the turn of a century in librarianship. At the birth of the modern state, inventories were needed. Growing collections demanded dedicated library buildings, printed catalogs and, eventually, library budgets. National library statistics had been available as early as 1868.[3] In the nineteenth century, many libraries that so far had only been open to a privileged few became town libraries and part of the communal infrastructure. An increasing number of reading societies, commercial lending libraries and associations were providing books to various segments of the population. The century had seen a dramatic increase in libraries of all kinds. Now, with the twentieth century, the time had come for consolidation and coordination.

At a local level, collections were consolidated by combining existing libraries into large central libraries and by making available central catalogs.

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2   Vereinigung Schweizerischer Bibliothekare VSB / Association des Bibliothécaires Suisses ABS / Associazione dei Bibliotecari Svizzeri ABS.

3   Die Öffentlichen Bibliotheken in der Schweiz im Jahre 1868 (1872). Nach dem von der Schweizerischen Statistischen Gesellschaft gesammelten Material bearbeitet von Dr. Ernst Heitz. Basel, Schweighauserische Buchdruckerei. (German and French).

The establishment of the Swiss Union Catalog of all foreign publications held by Swiss libraries in 1928 was a pre-requisite for a national inter-library lending system. Other instruments were the Swiss national bibliography (from 1901), an inventory of journals and series held by Swiss libraries (from 1928), and – most important – training for librarianship. In the 1960s, the library association also took up bibliographic work, and 1977 saw the publication of a unified set of Swiss cataloging rules.

The twentieth century also saw the rise of public libraries modeled after the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian open access libraries in the larger cities: in Geneva (1931), Lausanne (1934) or Berne (1947). Already in 1921, between the World Wars, the Swiss People's Library[4] – a central lending library – had been founded in order to compensate for the large difference in library services among the regions. Books were destined to further the education of the general public and to provide quality entertainment for a population, which, due to the regulation of working hours, increasingly enjoyed spare time.[5]

The Drivers of Change

Let us begin with an overview of the major forces that have driven change in Swiss libraries in the last 30 years, from 1980 to today.

First, the *development of information technology* provided Swiss libraries with new approaches to manage their collections, gradually making information services available and affordable online. Library data and services now being widely accessible via web sites and portals, the local card catalog has become the exception even in small libraries. In 2010, 85% of Swiss households had access to the Internet, with an average of 77% of over 14 year olds being regular users.[6] Today, the larger libraries in Switzerland are concerned with putting an ever-increasing amount of digital content online, improving distance services and interactivity on behalf of their patrons.

Information technology has also left its mark on the collaborative structures in the Swiss library sector. At the turn of the century, collaborative efforts at a national level such as the interlibrary loan system supported by the Swiss National Library or the cataloging standards maintained by the Swiss library association lost importance or were abandoned in favor of

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4   Schweizerische Volksbibliothek / Bibliothèque populaire suisse / Biblioteca popolare Svizzera.

5   Many facts in this chapter are taken from the history of Swiss libraries: Senser, Christine (1991). Die Bibliotheken in der Schweiz. Wiesbaden, Ludwig Reichert.

6   Statistik Schweiz (2011). Informationsgesellschaft – Indikatoren. Haushalte und Bevölkerung – Internetnutzung. Online: http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/16/04/key/approche_globale.html (30.11.2011). A regular user is defined as someone using the Internet several times a week.

collaborations within the growing library network communities. Overall, the result has been a certain disintegration of efforts at the national level in favor of new interest groups: the large university libraries and their academic networks, the National Library and the libraries holding heritage collections, the public libraries, and the newly emerging libraries of the universities of applied sciences – each group combining efforts to meet their specific challenges. In this new landscape, for example, the libraries holding regional heritage collections welcomed the National Library taking the initiative in digital projects such as the preservation of Swiss websites or Swiss publications in digital form.

Second, the impact of *new public management* in the 1990s, in combination with the *emergence of a competitive environment in the information sector* driven by companies such as Amazon and Google, strongly encouraged service orientation in Swiss libraries. Switzerland is a highly developed, prosperous, service-oriented country: today, the service sector is the largest employer by far, accounting for 71% of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP).[7] Typically, the contracts of public servants on the Federal level and in the majority of Swiss cantons are in harmony with public employment laws – a development started by the canton of Grisons in 1990 and followed by the Confederation in 2002.[8] To offer library services on a Sunday, for example, is much more likely to be a financial than an ethical or legal issue.

Third, the *foundation of universities of applied sciences* in the 1990s and the subsequent Bologna process furthering coherent systems of higher education throughout Europe have opened up the Swiss academic sector to the professions and encouraged the idea of life-long-learning.[9] The reform has spurred a new network of academic libraries and an increasing demand for library services such as the availability of learning spaces or 24/7 access to resources. The library profession itself was affected by the reform: training for professional librarianship, formerly in the hands of the national library association, moved under the auspices of the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET). Vocational education and training (VET Diploma) has been implemented at the upper-secondary level. On the tertiary level, a range of bachelor's and master's courses are now offered by both universities of applied sciences and universities. However: a significant portion of the public library sector is still in the hands of on-the-job-trained librarians and semi-professionals.

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7   Switzerland (2011) in: CIA, The World Fact Book. Updated 15 November. Online: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sz.html (30.11.2011).
8   United Nations (2006). Swiss Confederation – Public Administration – Country Profile, p. 12. Online: http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan023324.pdf (30.10.2011).
9   The European Higher Education Area: The official Bologna Process website 2010–2012. Online: http://www.ehea.info (30.11.2011).

Name changes often are an outward sign of transformation, new business models and the search for identity: the lending library for Swiss public libraries, the 'Schweizerische Volksbibliothek' (Swiss People's Library) became 'Bibliomedia' in 2002. 'Schweizerischer Bibliotheksdienst' (Swiss Library Service), the cooperative selling ready-made collections and furniture to libraries, became 'sbd.bibliotheksservice ag' in 2001. The Swiss Library Association, which until 1998 used to be 'Vereinigung Schweizerischer Bibliothekare' (VSB), changed its name twice, becoming 'Bibliothek Information Schweiz' (BIS) in 2008, following the merger with the Swiss Documentalists' Association (VSB/SVD). Last but not least, on January 2007 'Schweizerische Landesbibliothek' became 'Schweizerische Nationalbibliothek' – the 'Swiss National Library' in all official languages, overcoming the reluctance to use the word 'national' in German that originated in the political struggles of the nineteenth century.

The Structure of the Swiss Library Sector

Serving a Multicultural Confederation

Located at the crossroads of the German, French, and Italian speaking areas in Europe, Switzerland is a multilingual and multicultural country. 64% of its population (to the north and at the center) are native German, 20% (to the west) native French, and 6% (to the south) native Italian speakers, and there are small Romansh speaking populations in the Alpine region to the southeast (0.5%). The Swiss broadcasting corporation (SRG SSR) provides public television and radio programs for all language regions. Switzerland is at the crossroads of the German, French, and Italian publishing markets. In 2010, the Swiss national bibliography registered a national production of 10,568 titles (55.9% German, 22.3% French, 2.8% Italian, 0.2% Romansh), plus 6,068 titles not controlled by commercial publishing (grey literature).[10]

Since 1980, Switzerland's permanent resident population has increased from 6.3 million to 7.8 million in 2009, with the percentage of foreign residents growing from 15% to 22% in 2011. More than two thirds of foreign residents are of European origin, mainly from Italy, Germany, Portugal, and Serbia. The proportion of non-European nationals has doubled since 1980.[11] As a consequence, public libraries increasingly add material in other

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10   Swiss National Library, 97th annual report 2010, appendix. Online: http://www.nb.admin. ch/org/01549/03761/index.html?lang=en (30.11.2011).
11   Swiss Statistics (2011). Population. Online: http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/ themen/01.html (30.11.2011).

languages, and many of the national websites cited in this chapter offer at least part of their content in English as well.

Switzerland is a federal democracy with law being enacted at three political levels: the commune, the canton and the Confederation. 2,551 communes (January 2011) are grouped into 26 cantons, which together form the Swiss Confederation. Legislation for libraries is enacted at the first, least regulated level: as a principle, libraries are under the responsibility of the communes or the institutions they serve. There is no national library law, and legislation at the cantonal level is rather the exception.

Three important libraries – the Swiss National Library in Berne and the Libraries of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, ETH) and Lausanne (Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale, EPFL) – are under the responsibility of the Confederation. In addition, federal funds flow into Bibliomedia, the foundation providing subsidiary collections for public libraries and schools in all language regions. More recently, the Confederation has provided start-up funding for the development of digital services in academic libraries by supporting initiatives such as the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries and the Swiss Electronic Library 'e-lib.ch'.

Each canton (with the exception of Schaffhausen) maintains a cantonal library responsible for the regional heritage collection. Due to the small size of Switzerland and due to historical reasons, joint-use libraries are well established: in the majority of the cantons maintaining a public university, the university library and the cantonal library are under one roof. The cantonal library may also serve as the town library. The Zurich Central Library (Zentralbibliothek Zürich) is an example for the combination of all three functions: it is the library of the municipality, the canton and the university of Zurich. The university libraries are mainly frequented by students and faculty, but their collections and services are open to the general public.

Although there is no national library legislation, there are some examples of cantonal legislation. Whereas the Confederation does not require a legal deposit at the national level – the National Library receives copies of publications on the grounds of an agreement with the publishers' associations – legal deposit laws for the cantonal libraries are in force in Valais, Vaud, and Geneva. In 1991, the canton Ticino adopted a law explicitly stating the functions of public libraries, school libraries, special libraries and libraries holding heritage collections, and organizing them in a library network: the Sistema bibliotecario ticinese (Sbt).[12] A law, however, is no guarantee for quality. In the public library sector, the guidelines of the Working Community of Swiss Public Libraries (SAB-CLP)[13], an interest group of the Swiss library association

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12 Raccolta leggi del Cantone Ticino. 5.5.2.2. Legge delle biblioteche (dell' 11 marzo 1991).
13 Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der allgemeinen öffentlichen Bibliotheken SAB / Communauté de travail des bibliothèques suisses de lecture publique CLP.

founded in 1972, have therefore proven to be a valuable instrument. The guidelines provide standards and work routines for collection building and library management in public and school libraries, often in the hands of non-professionals. In 1999, the SAB-CLP guidelines for community libraries were complemented with a structure plan ('Bibliotheksplan 2000'), stating quantitative and qualitative goals for libraries according to the size of the population they serve. Today, many cantons create an incentive for progress by providing funds and assistance for libraries following SAB-CLP guidelines. An impressive example for development is Valais, a mountainous canton with French and German speaking areas: building on legislation introduced in the 1990s, a structure plan for the provision of library services throughout the canton was implemented in 2001. Today, the canton's library network is closely knit, featuring a library passport (Bibliopass), an Internet portal (Bibliovalais.ch) and a quality management system (BiblioValais Excellence) in compliance with ISO norms 9001 and 14001.

As a consequence of distributed responsibilities, Swiss librarianship as a whole is relying to a large extent on pragmatic cooperation. The availability and the quality of library services may differ a lot between one region and another. Yet it may be said that the need to cooperate has grown due to the increasing mobility of the population and the need to combine efforts and resources in order to tackle the digital age.

On an international level, the library association, the National Library and a number of institutions traditionally link to IFLA, whereas the university libraries are more engaged in the Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche (LIBER). Libraries and the information sciences departments of the universities of applied sciences are increasingly looking across the borders for conferences, cooperation, and projects. GASCO, the German, Austrian and Swiss Consortia Organisation, is an example of a joint initiative. Switzerland is not a member of the European Union, but bilateral agreements and the Bologna process have opened the borders for labor, research, and education.

Swiss Library Statistics

The last inventory of libraries in Switzerland dates back to 1959/60 (!). For decades now, the number of libraries in Switzerland has been quoted to be 'around 6,000', including libraries of every type and size. Up to the turn of the century, the annual library statistics – a collaboration of the Swiss Library Association and the Federal Statistical Office – compiled data of a varying selection of libraries said to be the 'most important public libraries' in Switzerland. In 2004, statistics were set on new foundations, in line with international standards. From 2003 onward, data is available for the following segments:

- libraries with a national mandate: Swiss National Library, Swiss National Sound Archives, Swiss Film Archive;
- university libraries;
- university library networks;
- university of applied sciences library networks;
- public (municipal) libraries: libraries in cities with a population of more than 10,000;
- special libraries: an illustrious selection of special libraries open to the public such as the CERN Central Library, the info center of the Swiss Federal Railways' info center or the library of the Abbey of St. Gall.

With regard to academic libraries, the new structure mirrors a growing need to know more about the libraries within the university networks. It also makes it possible to observe the development of the library services of the eight universities of applied sciences, which were established in the second half of the 1990s.

Following a new initiative, eight cantons agreed to deliver the complete cantonal statistics of their public and combined public and school libraries, starting in 2008. Due to federalism, the participation of the cantons is optional and must be gained. The aim is to integrate and harmonize locally available statistics, in order to obtain a more complete picture of the diverse Swiss library landscape. It is also a first step towards filling the statistical void regarding school libraries.

Invisible as a group in the public library statistics is the segment of the libraries of the international organizations located in Geneva: the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) or the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). With AILIS (Association of International Librarians and Information Specialists), they have their own interest group. In collaboration with the National Library in Berne, the CERN Central Library in Geneva is host to the high-profile 'Library Science Talks'.

All together, the new road taken by the library statistics already allows considerably more meaningful and reliable analysis. Since 2004, Swiss library statistics are published on the website of the Federal Statistical Office.[14]

Library Automation and the Dawn of the Digital Age

The Genesis of the Swiss Library Networks

A comprehensive list of Swiss online catalogs is managed by SWITCH – the provider of information and communication technology for the Swiss

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14 Statistik Schweiz (2011). Bibliotheken. Online: http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/
index/themen/16/02/02.html (30.11.2011).

universities.[15] SWITCH was founded in 1987, 'to create, promote and maintain information and communication technologies in Switzerland at the service of education and research'.[16] The Swiss library networks were born at about the same time.

Prominent developers of automated library systems were the main library of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich – the ETHZ-Library – with ETHICS, and the library of the Canton and the University of Lausanne, with SIBIL. Whereas the former was predestined for such development by the nature of its institution, the new university campus planned in Lausanne-Dorigny was the driver in the case of Lausanne. In 1985, SIBIL and ETHICS were both ready to launch their OPAC. SIBIL had already been adopted by other libraries. By 1985, SIBIL libraries in western Switzerland were ready to found the first Swiss library network, the "Réseau Romand" (RERO). From 1988, ETHICS started to operate as a network. It was joined by the ETH research and faculty libraries and mainly by science and technology libraries.

The progress of library automation in the 1990s was marked by the transition to commercial integrated library systems. In 1980, the library of the University of Zurich's newly built natural sciences and medicine campus (Irchel Campus) had been first in Switzerland to introduce a commercial system (IBM's DOBIS/LIBIS). In 1993, the Swiss National Library began automation introducing VTLS, a new player on the Swiss library automation market. Shortly afterwards, VTLS was also adopted by RERO. The networks in north and central Switzerland launched a joint evaluation process for a new library system and began to introduce ALEPH in 1998. Unfortunately, library automation in the 1990s was often a matter of competition. There was much political talk of harmonization, but little funding to provide an incentive for cooperation at a national level.[17]

Although SWITCH's list of library catalogs mentioned above is long to look at, there clearly are two main players today:

These days, *RERO* (now 'Réseau des Bibliothèques de Suisse Occidentale') counts approximately 220 libraries, the majority of libraries of all types in the cantons of Geneva, Fribourg, Jura, Neuchâtel, Valais, and Vaud. RERO is the network of western (French speaking) Switzerland. At the heart of RERO are a union catalog and the integrated library system VTLS/Virtua. RERO is

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15   SWITCH (2011). Swiss libraries. Online: http://www.switch.ch/edu (06.11.2011).

16   SWITCH (2011). The SWITCH foundation and its special mission. Online: http://www.switch.ch/about/profile/foundation/ (30.11.2011).

17   Barth, Robert & Schneider, Gabi (1995). 'Die Zukunft hat noch nicht begonnen' – Die Automatisierung der Hochschulbibliotheken in der Schweiz 1965 bis 1995. In: Für alle(s) offen. Bibliotheken auf neuen Wegen. Basel, Öffentliche Bibliothek der Universität Basel: 26–37.

complemented with a digital repository (RERO DOC) and a meta-catalog giving access to all resources.[18]

IDS (Informationsverbund Deutschschweiz), the network of German speaking Switzerland, is really a 'network of library networks', assembling five independent union catalogs with an approximate total of 450 participating libraries. Partners share services such as a common user file and technology – namely the integrated library system ALEPH – but maintain independent installations. Five associated partners spread the network to Italian speaking Switzerland, to the Principality of Liechtenstein and the National Library of Luxembourg.[19]

RERO and IDS focus on the academic sector, but because of the numerous joint-use libraries in Switzerland, the networks also embrace most of the important heritage libraries such as the University Library of Basel or – less conspicuously – the Lucerne Central Library.

In between these networks, the Swiss National Library maintains an independent installation of VTLS/Virtua. Significantly, the National Library also has a seat in the Swiss University Libraries Conference (CBU/KUB), now the main coordinating body in Swiss academic librarianship.[20]

The Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries

According to Swiss library statistics, university libraries spent almost a third (31%) of their acquisition budget on digital resources in 2010, thus almost doubling expenses since 2003 (17.5%), the year in which the new statistics began.[21]

In 1999, the members of the CBU/KUB founded the Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries, in order to coordinate database and electronic journal licensing. Offices have since been located at the ETHZ-Library. In an initial phase (2000 to 2005), the Consortium received start-up financing from the Swiss Confederation to the amount of 14 million CHF, contributing 50% of license fees. The remaining 50% of fees were paid by the participating libraries. In its second phase (2006–2012), the Consortium is now fully financed by the library members. Altogether, from 2000 to 2010, about 80 million CHF were spent on licenses, about 10 million alone in 2010. The libraries of

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18 RERO. Online: http://www.rero.ch (30.11.2011).
19 Informationsverbund Deutschschweiz. Online: http://www.informationsverbund.ch (30.11.2011).
20 Conférence des bibliothèques universitaires suisses / Konferenz der Universitätsbibliotheken der Schweiz (CBU/KUB). Online: http://www.kub-cbu.ch (30.11.2011).
21 Statistik Schweiz: Bibliotheken (Detaillierte Daten, Universitätsbibliotheken). Online: http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/16/02/02/data.html (30.11.2011).

non-commercial institutions are eligible for participation. The Consortium is now also licensing e-books.[22]
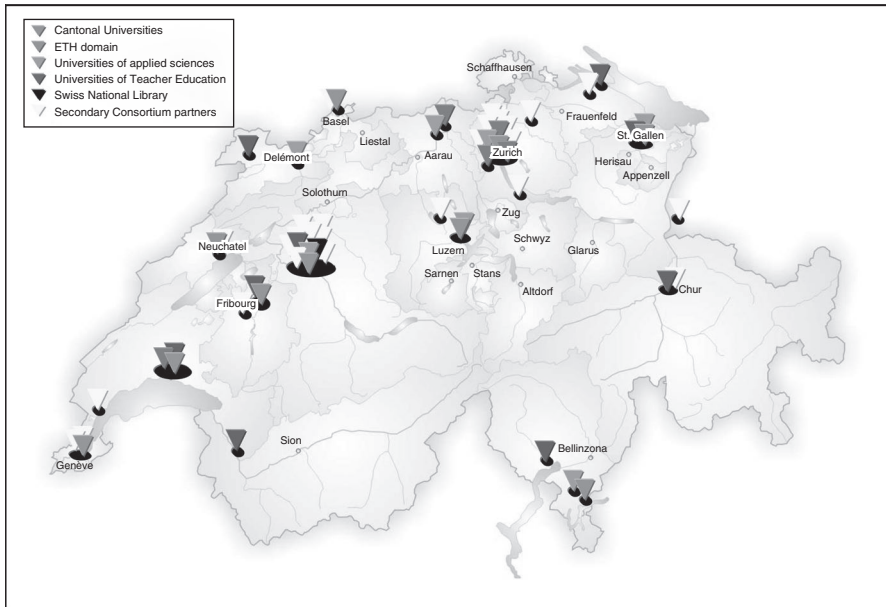
Picture 1: Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries: 53 partner libraries in 2011 (http://lib. consortium.ch/html_wrapper.php?src=lib_map&dir=libraries&activeElement=5&lang=2) (22.09.2011).

Going Digital

In addition to commercial databases and e-journals, heritage collections such as the Ryhiner historical maps collection at the University Library of Berne and dissertations were among the first documents freely available in digital form. Today, the Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR) lists twelve academic repositories in Switzerland, among them – widely known and highly ranked – the CERN document server. In 2010, the University of Zurich was awarded 'Open Access Institute of the Year' by BioMed Central for its open access policy, its repository, ZORA, and its institutional open access information website.[23]

22 For an overview of mission and history, and more details see the website: Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries. Online: http://www.lib.consortium.ch (30.11.2011).

23 University of Zurich (2011). Open Access. Online: http://www.oai.uzh.ch/index.php?mos_ lng=en (30.11.2011).

In 2007, the Library of the Canton and the University of Lausanne (BCU Lausanne) was the first French language library to join the Google Books project. Since then, 100,000 documents of the library's heritage collection have been digitized by Google and are now accessible via the library catalog.[24]

In the twenty-first century, the catalog records of the Swiss library networks are increasingly being enriched with tables of contents, abstracts, covers, and links to additional information. Discovery layer interfaces such as the ETHZ-library's Knowledge Portal[25] or commercial products such as EBSCO Discovery Service (now in Beta at the library of the University of St. Gall) or Aleph Primo ('NEBIS recherche' for the IDS NEBIS network) provide integrated access to library resources. The transfer to the next generation of library management systems is well underway.

In Swiss public libraries, Internet access is now widespread, but the age of digital information has only just begun. In contrast to the internationally-oriented collections of the academic libraries, the main part of public library materials is in the national languages. Yet, German, French, and Italian publishers are hesitant to supply their titles in digital form, and as a consequence, adequate offers for libraries are scarce. Swiss German public libraries are making first experiences with e-book-lending provided by DiViBib. The German provider is comparable to the U.S. provider OverDrive.[26]

Federal 'Hubs': the Swiss National Library and the Libraries of the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology

The Swiss National Library

The delayed introduction of library automation cost the Swiss National Library much of its central status, which – as described at the beginning – must be founded on cooperation rather than law. After 1990, the library underwent major renovation of both organization and building and has been re-winning its position, step by step. Central services include the Swiss National Bibliography, the Swiss virtual reference desk 'SwissInfoDesk', the ISSN Centre Switzerland and the Swiss Gateway to Periodicals (SZP/PSP). The National Library is an active member of IFLA, the Conference of European National Librarians (CENL), and a founding member of 'The European Library'.

In 2009, the National Library completed a 1991 master plan for the renovation of the building by opening the second of two new underground storage

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24   Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire Lausanne (2011). Livres numérisés. Online: http://www.unil.ch/bcu/page50690.html (30.11.2011).
25   ETH-Bibliothek, Knowledge Portal. Online: http://www.library.ethz.ch/en (08.11.2011).
26   Onleihe Schweiz. Online: http://www.onleihe.ch (30.11.2011).

areas. The building, dating from 1930 and the only instance of the 'Neues Bauen' style in Switzerland, was carefully modernized. 11,900 square metres of new underground stacks are in line with the library's high preservation standards. In 2001, mass deacidification of documents started in the federally owned deacidification plant in Wimmis (papersave swiss process). E-Helvetica, a project for the collection of Swiss e-born publications, digitized works, and websites, has re-invigorated the collaboration with the cantonal and university libraries.

Since January 2006, the National Library is managed as an MPMGB institution (management by performance mandate and global budget), on a mandate by the Swiss Federal Council.

The ETHZ-Library: The Project Hub

In 2005, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and its library celebrated their 150th anniversary. With 7,617 million documents (2010), the ETHZ-Library is the largest library in Switzerland. Subjects covered are architecture, construction, engineering and the natural sciences, mathematics, management, and social sciences. The library holds many special collections and an increasing amount of digital documents and journals are an essential part of the collection. In the twenty-first century, much effort has been put into collection management: the seamless integration of records and collections and their availability online. In 2010, the ETHZ went live with its Knowledge Portal, providing integrated access to all collections.

The 'about' section of the Knowledge Portal gives testimony of an impressive amount of projects and partnerships.[27] At the turn of the century, the university libraries chose the ETHZ-Library as the seat of the Swiss licensing consortium, because the library already had experience with collective licensing. More recently, it has been entrusted with the project management of e-lib.ch: the Swiss Electronic Library. The goal of this joint venture of academic libraries is to set up a national portal serving as the central point of access for the research of reliable scientific information. From 2008 to 2012, 22 sub-projects carried out by partners throughout Switzerland provide the building-blocks for content, technical infrastructure, services and quality standards of the portal. E-lib.ch-projects investigate digital content across the disciplines – e.g. maps, geodata, manuscripts, rare books, journals, or economic information – and developed solutions for procurement, search, usability, long-term preservation, information literacy, and marketing. The same funding model applies as to the initial phase of the Consortium: 50% (10 million CHF) is

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27   ETH-Bibliothek. About us. Online: http://www.library.ethz.ch/en/About-us (30.11.2011).

financed by the Confederation, the other 50% is contributed by the project partners.[28]

The EPFL-Library: The Rolex Learning Center

2010 saw the inauguration of the new library building of the Swiss Federal Institute for Technology in Lausanne (EPFL): the Rolex Learning Center.[29] The new library was planned to be a flagship for the EPFL. 'Learn, innovate, live' is the motto of the building realized by SANAA architects from Japan and financed with the help of prestigious sponsors. Looking from above, the Rolex Learning Center looks like a slightly melted slice of Emmental cheese and quickly had a nickname: 'the Swiss learning cheese'. It is, in fact, a fluid landscape of various habitats, with very few flat surfaces, spread over a space of 20,000 sq m. In its first year, the library counted one million visitors.

The EPFL being less than half the size of the Zurich location, this is a smaller, but no less vibrant library and the cultural hub of the campus. The new building is a re-interpretation of library space in the digital age. Rather than shelf-space it offers room for study and real-life interaction, counterbalancing the digital world. The EPFL Library's mission statement embraces both worlds: 'Whether virtual or material, it is a place of work, study and privileged access to information'.[30]

(Re-) Building Libraries

Looking back, the university campus projects of the 1980s marked the transition from closed stacks to open shelves in Swiss academic libraries: the Irchel campus of the University of Zurich (1980), and the new sites of the Universities of Lausanne (1982) and St. Gall (1989). The library at Lausanne-Dorigny is a standalone building embedded in a hillside, offering a wide range of working spaces overlooking Lake Geneva and a restaurant.[31] It has aged well and the 'Unithèque' is lovingly called 'the banana'. The building up of new collections or – as was the case in Lausanne – the reorganization of a historical collection, introduced new perceptions of collection management. This is especially true for Lausanne, where the project eventually had an influence on overall collection management in the canton of Vaud.

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28   E-lib.ch. Online: http://www.e-lib.ch/en (30.11.2011).
29   Rolex Learning Center EPFL. Online: http://rolexlearningcenter.epfl.ch (30.11.2011).
30   Bibliothèque de l'EPFL. Mission. Online: http://library.epfl.ch/en/lib/?pg=mission (30.11.2011).
31   Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire Lausanne. BCU Dorigny-Unithèque. Online: http://www.unil.ch/bcu/page17028.html (30.11.2011).

Switzerland is too small a country for monumental architecture, but always good for unique and smart solutions: the Lucerne Town Library (1999) – situated in a modern building wrapped around the historical Bourbaki Panorama[32] – the University of Zurich law faculty library (2004) – a wood-lined cathedral by Santiago Calatrava[33], the Cantonal Library of Basel-Country (2005) – a re-structured wineseller's building sporting green color and compost toilets, or the library of the Werner Oechslin Foundation in Einsiedeln (2006) – the result of a friendship between a private collector and renowned architect Mario Botta.[34] There are, of course, many more, less conspicuous examples.[35]

The re-definition of space, from open shelves to public 'living rooms', is continuing in both academic and public libraries. In public libraries, it is accompanied by the fight for more opening hours and political recognition of the crucial function of libraries in a digital world.

The Library Profession

The introduction of universities of applied sciences in the 1990s has also transformed the library profession. Professional training for librarianship, which until the end of the twentieth century was provided by the Swiss Library Association, is now organized along the lines set by the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET): vocational education and training (VET, apprenticeship) following obligatory school education, bachelor's and consecutive master's studies (Bachelor and Master of Science BSc) offered by the University of Applied Sciences HTW Chur and the Geneva School of Business Administration, and masters of advanced studies programs offered by the mentioned schools plus the universities of Berne and Zurich. The bachelor programs are open to holders of a VET Diploma and a Federal Vocational Baccalaureate or by holders of a Swiss Baccalaureate with at least one year of work experience. The BSc may be complemented with a consecutive master's degree (MSc). Holders of a bachelor's degree in another discipline may join the profession via one of the master of advanced studies programs. Jobs are available for holders of diplomas/degrees of every level.

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32 Bourbaki Panorama (2002). The renovation of the rotunda and the new building. Luzern. Online: http://www.bourbakipanorama.ch/pdf-en/The_renovation.pdf (30.11.2011).

33 University of Zurich, Institute of Law. About the IL library. Online: http://www.rwi.uzh.ch/ bibliothek/allgemein_en.html (30.11.2011).

34 Stiftung Werner Oechslin. About the Library. History of the collection, orientation, and architecture. Online: http://www.bibliothek-oechslin.ch/bibliothek-en?set_language=en (30.11.2011).

35 See also: Barth, Robert & Kuppelwieser, Iris (2010). Bibliotheksbau in der Schweiz 1985–2010. Planung, Nutzung, Ästhetik. Churer Schriften für Informationswissenschaft, 39. Chur, HTW.

It is a responsibility of the professional associations, in collaboration with the training institutions of an industry sector, to define the content of OPET-compliant apprenticeships. In the new system, the library association joined forces with the Association of Swiss archivists (VSA/AAS) and the former Swiss Association for Documentation (SVD/ASD): a VET Diploma ('Fachmann/Fachfrau Information und Dokumentation') qualifies for work in archives, libraries and documentation centers. The same is true for the bachelor's and master's degrees: the content of the programs are more accurately defined as studies in information science, with modules geared towards the various branches of the information industry. Each program or school has its specialties, allowing students a choice according to their professional goals: librarian, archivist, documentalist, records manager, researcher, and more.

However, many of the small public libraries in Switzerland still do not employ professional librarians. Wages in these institutions are low, and quite often, voluntary work is involved. The SAB-CLP offers introductory and advanced training courses for staff and managers of such libraries, mostly women.

In this environment, the larger metropolitan libraries play an important role as pivotal institutions for the professionalization of librarianship. They have come to realize that a professional staff is essential to keep up with modern service standards and meet the challenges of the information society.

The Fifteen Years to Come

In 1990, the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) and the Federal Office of Culture (BAK) commissioned a working group to analyze the situation of libraries in Switzerland and propose a policy for library development. The working group's 1993 report gave a detailed analysis of the Swiss library landscape and concluded with twelve recommendations aiming at more coordination at a national level.[36]

Seventeen years later, in 2010, the National Library Commission published the 'Charter of Swiss Libraries', stating the functions and services of libraries in the knowledge society.[37] A key statement reads: 'In a knowledge society, libraries are essential. Laws and sufficient funding enable them to fulfill their public mission'.[38] In the course of its work, the commission went back

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36 Bibliotheken in der Schweiz. Situation, Probleme und Bedürfnisse der allgemeinen öffentlichen Bibliotheken (1993). Bern, EDK/BAK.
37 Swiss National Library. Charter of the Swiss libraries. Online: http://www.nb.admin.ch/org/organisation/03172/03205/index.html?lang=en (30.11.2011).
38 Translated from German: "Bibliotheken sind in der Informationsgesellschaft unverzichtbar. Damit sie ihre öffentlichen Aufgaben erfüllen können, brauchen sie gesetzliche Grundlagen und ausreichende finanzielle Mittel."

to the 1993 report and discussed the impact it had made. In spite of progress, the overall picture was patchy, and the analysis basically the same as then: legislation and coordination at a national level is needed in order to bridge the gaps between academic and community libraries, between languages, regions, professional librarianship and volunteer initiatives. At the request of the commission, the EDK has now appointed a new working group, to investigate the options for a nationally coordinated library policy in the contemporary environment.

Some of the challenges libraries are faced with are digital: in the next five to ten years, the academic library networks will have to be transferred to new systems and standards, the procurement of digital information and its long-term preservation need to be ensured, involving technical as well as legal issues. WLAN and mobile access to resources are becoming an issue for all types of libraries. Other challenges are very much related to the development of Swiss society as a whole. As shown in the "Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey" in 2006, 16% of 16 to 65 year olds in Switzerland are unable to work with a simple text, and 8% are unable to express themselves in the language of the place in which they live.[39] Community libraries and institutions such as Bibliomedia have put much effort in improving services for schools, and libraries are in a very good position to offer advice and public space to tackle these issues. Also, following the pioneering work of the intercultural libraries in Switzerland[40], multicultural collections are finding their way into public libraries. However, political initiatives regarding topics such as the information society or the introduction of media literacy into the school curriculum still have a tendency to be focused on IT.

Swiss economy depends to a large extent on the country's ability to remain competitive by ensuring high education and service standards as well as attractive living conditions in a peaceful society. In the years to come, politicians must be convinced to recognize libraries as essential partners and a good investment in the future.

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39 Notter, Philippe (et al.) (2006). Lesen und Rechnen im Alltag. Grundkompetenzen von Erwachsenen in der Schweiz. Nationaler Bericht zur Erhebung, Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey. Neuchâtel, Bundesamt für Statistik. Online: http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/news/publikationen.html?publicationID=2261 (30.11.2011).

40 Interbiblio. Intercultural libraries of Switzerland. Online: http://www.interbiblio.ch/en/interbiblio.html (30.11.2011).