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## Marriage of a Swiss woman

A Swiss woman wishing to retain her Swiss nationality on marrying a foreign national **must** make a declaration in writing to that effect, **before the marriage**, on a form obtainable from the Swiss diplomatic and consular missions abroad.

## The Canton of Basle

### Curriculum vitae of Rudolf Suter

Born 1920. Studied German Philology and History at the University of Basle. Doctorate in 1947 on Basle dialect poetry before Joh. Peter Hebel. Contributor to Radio Basle until 1955. Editor of «Basler Nachrichten» from 1956 to 1971. Since 1972 Lecturer on German at the Engineering College of Baselstadt and Baselland and Vice-President of the Basle State Commission for the Protection of the Homeland. Published numerous writings on Basle history, architecture, art and language. Author of the first grammar in Basle dialect in 1976.

### *A look into the past*

Excavations in and around Basle have brought to light remnants of settlements dating back to the stone age, to Celtic and Roman times. Especially the triangle between the Rhine and the Birsig offered itself to the Romans as a strategically favourable spot for fortification and colonisation. This is where the cathedral stands today, still dominating the old town of Greater Basle. Basle was first mentioned in 374 A.D., at a time when the Roman administrative centre had already been moved from Augusta Raurica (founded 44 B.C. by the commander-in-chief Munatius Plancus) to Basle. Later, at the very latest at the beginning of the 7th century, Basle became a bishopric. After having been destroyed by the Hungarians in 917, the town flourished again. From the beginning of the 13th century, it gained more and more importance, especially thanks to the construction of a bridge in 1225 which, for centuries, was to remain the only firm crossing of the Upper Rhine.

In the middle of the 14th century, two dreadful catastrophes befell Basle: the plague epidemic of the 1340's and the earthquake of 1356 with the ensuing mighty fire. It is due to the latter as well as to a further fire in 1417 that hardly any secular buildings from the High Middle Ages have been preserved. All these afflictions did not manage

to curb the enterprising spirit and industrial activity of the Basle citizens; on the contrary, the town constantly increased in riches and respect.

It was in that period that the battle of St. Jakob an der Birs took place (1444) directly outside the walls of Basle. This battle and the Swabian War in 1499 showed Basle, which was subject to the emperor only, the uncertainty of a closer relationship with the German Empire, all the more so because Burgundy and Austria were dangerous neighbours. All these factors motivated the Basle people to join the League of the Confederates with whom they had already had earlier ties. This alliance was achieved not without misgivings on both sides. Within the new partnership, Basle played a beneficial part as mediator, especially during the denominational altercations in the 17th and 18th centuries. Even after the humiliating separation of the Canton in 1833, Basle always did its duties to the Confederation most loyally and in addition helped to consolidate the structure of the new State in 1848, by providing clever men, especially in the field of finance and customs, post and communications. Over and above it gave the whole of Switzerland many vital impulses by the revival of Rhine navigation at the beginning of the 20th century, the creation of the Swiss Industries Fair (1917) and by its epoch-making social legislation, not to speak of the achievements of science and research.

Science and research crystallized themselves in the university founded in 1460, following the *Konzil*. The university's beginnings coincided with the golden age of Basle printing and humanists like Erasmus of Rotterdam coming to Basle. Together with native scholars, they stimulated spiritual life in the town. The tolerant Basle attitude goes