

CHAPTER NUMBER

“SMELLS OF SWITZERLAND”

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“Non Olet.”

Vespasian

“If our gold is dung, our dung, on the other hand, is gold.”

Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*

“We are in Gullen. We smell it, we smell it, we smell it in the air, the Gullen air.” [Wir sind in Gullen. Wir riechen’s, wir riechen’s, wir riechen’s an der Luft, an der Gullener Luft].

Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Visit*

Switzerland, in the minds of foreigners, triggers a variety of stereotypes that tend to fall into a fairly narrow range of topics: how beautiful the country is, how neat and clean – often followed by some comment about the Swiss banks, the universally known export products of chocolate, cheese, and watches and, when talking to men, a remark or a question about the army or at least its famous knife.¹ When visiting the country, especially as a tourist, one can find these things fully in evidence and, wherever applicable, commercialized and ready for sale. Switzerland is a country quite in tune with the stereotypes that circulate about it.

For those who know the country better, it presents itself in many more facets and appears, despite its small size and generally low international news profile, as a rather

intriguing place. In spite of its air of general quiet and reputation for stability, it has over the past twenty years or so, in tandem with broader European developments, changed significantly. Most of these changes can be understood as the country's way of adjusting to the new Europe of the post-Cold War age. Not all the challenges on that path – some of them home-made, others seemingly pushed upon a “land of innocents” from abroad – were tackled successfully. But overall Switzerland has begun to see itself less as a *Sonderfall*, a “special case”; it is integrating into the EU slowly and has developed a self-image of greater suppleness and self-confidence.

The question for this chapter is how to present this rapidly changing, culturally diverse, economically successful, politically conservative, militarily neutral, emotionally restrained, and intellectually pragmatic nation state to outsiders? – Many such attempts have been made, of course, from many different angles of inquiry, often from a tourist perspective broadly construed, generally emphasizing the country's remarkable natural beauty, or from various economic vantage points: the small country, 92nd in the world in terms of population, is ranked 21st for its gross national income and 6th in GNI per capita on a global scale of over 200 countries.²

I suggest a different approach, namely a description of the country in the medium of olfactory perception: Switzerland as a smellscape. The idea is less outlandish than it may at first appear. Olfactory perception is a sensory mode that reveals a lot about its objects, both concrete and figurative, as the thrust of its inquiry tends to be indirect, tied down in materials and substances, spaces and places. Understood as an angle of approach, olfactory perception is prone to extremes, luxurious scents and horrible stench, real and metaphoric at the same time. The city of Vienna for one has organized a series of workshops and conferences on the topic,³ and Switzerland itself recently ventured into olfactory self-representation.⁴ In literature, too there exists a considerable body of works with olfactory content, although one cannot find them neatly categorized that way. J. K. Huysmans's hero, des Esseintes, for one, creates whole landscapes out of scents and, modeled on him, so does Patrick Süskind's mass murderer hero, Grenouille.⁵ Closer to our own theme, Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* builds a roaring-twenties link between money, shady deals, and the wish that their aroma not be too revealing. It is an aroma that also gently fragrances parts of Switzerland as we will see.⁶ Thus while

there clearly are examples of olfaction in cultural and literary media, overall olfaction is still a fairly novel and under-theorized field of cultural inquiry. I therefore want to provide first a brief historical sketch of a more traditional kind of important political, social, and cultural events and shifts in Switzerland over the past two decades. This will reveal an emerging fresher and lighter mood, highlighted against a few darker base notes of longer duration and murkier provenance. The subsequent olfactory-focused section includes both empirical, at least anecdotal, data as well as metaphorical and symbolic aspects. As the study of smells entails the study of many other things and has a tendency toward metonymic dispersion and anecdotal representation, the cultural-historical outline is designed to anchor the olfactory analyses firmly in the fabric of everyday life while highlighting the difficult moments in Switzerland's transition to contemporaneity. The second part of the chapter will then summarily discuss basic parameters and peculiarities of olfactory perception that pertain to our undertaking; and the last part will fill out the framework thus sketched with concrete examples and symbolic generalizations to be drawn from them and introduce the fragrances that pervade Switzerland.

This much can be said: at the material level Switzerland, like most western industrial and post-industrial countries, has become fairly odorless in its public spaces by following the broad thrust of western enlightenment which, for olfactory perception and related fields, such as sanitation and hygiene (both public and private), labor (kinds and places of work), fashion, etc., has led to ever greater vigilance and cleaner ambient air in the broad framework of civilizational progress. This in turn has created the potential for infusion of desirable, pleasant scents *in aestheticis* rather than for merely masking bad odors that was the *raison d'être* of perfumery in earlier centuries. At the metaphoric level, however, Switzerland exudes a peculiar odor of money and its corrupting force. Out of the tension between the wish that money not smell and the fact that it does and therefore often has to be laundered in order to remove its air of dirt and excrement arises the defining aroma of the country. The analysis of this nexus is the goal of part three.

This still leaves one broad question open: how can an inquiry into aspects of Swiss culture, perceived “through the nose,” as it were, and based on textual evidence, be usefully incorporated into the teaching of Swiss culture? Here are a few pointers – but first, a challenge. Unlike, say, the works of a certain author or topics such as “folk dress”

or “the role of women” or “the importance of banking for the national economy,” “olfactory perception” is not a well-established aspect of cultural inquiry that is found neatly packaged in databanks, indexes, or Google searches. There always is a bit of serendipity involved in locating suitable olfaction-related teaching materials. Moreover, smells constitute a transgressive and connective medium that easily skips boundaries and links topics and confirms and enhances the specific factual findings arrived at through other inquiries rather than providing hard evidence *sui generis*. Smells serve to corroborate, rarely to bear the whole burden of evidence of a political, socio-cultural, or other inquiry.

The present article makes its point in the field of political science and the investigation of the Nazi-Gold affair, throwing light also on the “filthy lucre” of one of the nation’s top economic activities, banking, and thus broadly on money and morals. But the sense of smell appears in many cultural shapes. Thus the teaching suggestion I want to make here involves ethnic (racial) stereotyping and xenophobia – an issue of prime importance in past decades of Swiss social and cultural transformations – rather than the world of money. Foreigners, migrants, the “Other” – from Jews in Nazi Germany to Turks in contemporary Berlin to the early Italian guest workers in Switzerland – have infallibly (also) been characterized through their smells. In Franco Supino’s *Musica Leggera*, the olfactory dimension is subtle and works with established functions: to enhance social/class characteristics, to mark personal/erotic space, and to create the general sensory context for explicit discursive arguments.⁷ The *Secondo* narrator of the novel focuses on migration, biculturalism, and hybrid identity and uses music as the central associative and mnemonic device. He teaches Italian through songs, the *canzoni* by the famous *cantautori* of the 1970s, ‘80s, and ‘90s, and has his students complete the lyrics through, *Lückentexte*, “textual blanks” (155), but warns them that there are more gaps than words, thus alluding to the personal memories that accrue around music – just they do as around smells. The mnemonic-associative setup of *Musical Leggera* can in fact serve as a pedagogical model for structuring smells although, clearly, the latter play only a subsidiary role here.

1. Recent cultural-historical developments

In the early 1980s, serious unrest among the Swiss urban youth led to demonstrations and a deep malaise among the younger generation in a system they considered repressive and stagnating. While the police brutality against protesters stank to high heaven, there was also the unmistakable odor of tear gas in the air on many occasions in the larger Swiss cities, notably Zurich, where veritable street battles were fought over the refusal to finance an autonomous youth center while the city's opera house was generously provided for. The decade also saw the rise of anti-nuclear and peace movements, linked concerns that had been brought into focus by the 1986 Chernobyl accident and the prior decision by NATO to upgrade its nuclear arms in Europe.⁸ These were in fact Europe-wide issues. In 1989 considerable system rot surfaced in the so-called *Fichenaffäre*, the scandal that the Swiss Federal Police had secretly spied for years on citizens suspected of left-wing or anti-state leanings.

The 1990s revealed the extent of the Swiss banks', notably the *Nationalbank's*, cooperation with Nazi Germany. The so-called Nazi-Gold affair thoroughly destroyed the "odor of sanctity" Swiss banking liked to wrap itself in. The revelations were not new to critical historians but only now found broad public resonance as they were imposed on Switzerland from abroad. The country's authorities reacted slowly and defensively. This affair exacerbated social and political tensions, often along generational, but certainly along political, lines as the country undertook some soul searching.⁹ It irrefutably burst the myth the older generation still clung to, that the deterrent of the Swiss army had kept the country out of two World Wars. Instead it became clear that the banks had done Hitler's bidding behind the lines of military defense, as it were. This view provided, in retrospect, a certain justification for a public initiative in 1989 that had called for the abolition of the Swiss army altogether – another highly divisive issue of the time. It was rejected but with a much smaller margin than the country's leadership had expected and thus contributed to the pervasive sense of changing values in the 1990s and beyond.¹⁰

The air slowly cleared after this eruption of repressed WWII history into the present, notably through the announcement of a fund designed to recompense belatedly

Jewish claimants of dormant Swiss bank accounts.¹¹ But Switzerland was still struggling to navigate the rapidly changing present. Especially its relations with a growing and more self-confident European Union came up for intense debate and public votes. In 1992 voters rejected the country's accession to the EEA (the European Economic Area); and in a 2001 referendum the popular initiative "Yes to Europe," calling for the opening of immediate negotiations for EU membership, was rejected too. In a referendum in 2005, Swiss voters agreed however to join the Schengen treaty. As a result of the EU debates of the 1990s, Swiss EU membership no longer figures as an official government goal but is now merely an "option."¹² As a consequence, the country, while still working out bilateral agreements that provide its citizens with considerable rights and opportunities, has begun to fade from unified Europe's media self-representation, both outside and inside of Europe in diverse fields, notably economic, social, and cultural statistics. Those now list EU countries, but not Switzerland.

A significant blow to national self-confidence occurred late in 2001 with the demise of *Swissair*, the highly regarded national airline. While considered a serious loss of international prestige, the fact that this business debacle was turned into a successful feature film says a lot about changing attitudes toward national identity and symbols.¹³ The latest international public relations disaster to befall the country, in 2009, was again brought on from abroad, by the US and Germany, and focused on Swiss banks and their secrecy. And again, Swiss authorities appeared, as in the Nazi-Gold affair, unprepared and on the defensive as they grudgingly promised greater cooperation on identifying and prosecuting international tax evaders. Money may not stink, as the Roman Emperor Vespasian famously said after levying a tax on urine from the city's public lavatories, but from time to time its odor does pierce the bubble of near sanctity in which the Swiss banking industry likes to cloak itself.¹⁴

In sum, the past two decades were times of change for Switzerland and are best seen as part of its struggle to find its place in the post-communist, post-Cold War world. The adjustments have not been easy, as outlined, and the reactions often clumsy, but the changes overall have been in a positive direction toward more openness and a growing "lightness of being." The Swiss, it seems, were developing the possibility of viewing themselves with a bit more distance, a sense of humor and irony, including a greater

plurality of viewpoints.¹⁵ This trend might be characterized as a development from *Schweizertum* to *Swissness*, with the very change of language hinting at broader cultural implications as the country turns from a nation toward a brand.¹⁶ A prime example of this, combining all the points just mentioned, is the charming feature at Zürich airport, the international gateway to Switzerland *par excellence*, where the *Alphorn*, pristine nature, alpine agriculture, and Heidi herself welcome and send off visitors as they glide in their fully automated, driverless and odorless tram through the underground tunnel to or from their terminals. Another such gesture can be seen in the official Ben Vauthier slogan, “Switzerland does not exist” [La Suisse n’existe pas], adopted for the Swiss pavilion at the World Exhibit in Seville, Spain, in 2002. Swiss Federal Councilor Kaspar Villiger’s opening address, however, summarizing the mood in the country, also pointed out the darker sides of that offhand statement.¹⁷

2. Some basics of cultural olfaction

Before focusing on the question of how Switzerland smells we ought to investigate some peculiarities of olfaction from a cultural perspective. And while the question is capable of empirical answers, such answers are legion and contradictory. The study of smell ramifies into the most diverse aspects of an environment, a people, a culture and can produce as accurate, subtle, and complex a picture as any photographs for a tourist brochure or CD’s with “Sounds of Switzerland”¹⁸ or websites of a “Culinary Trip Around Switzerland.”¹⁹ Smell, one of our two chemical senses, is more materially than conceptually based and serves as an indexical signifier, always linking its percepta with their local origin. Linguistically, in expressions such as “the smell of...” or “it smells like...,” that constitute most olfactory descriptions, we replicate this link to the source and as a consequence are largely unable to transcend the messy reality for semantic categories beyond a simple good/bad dichotomy. For this reason olfactory discourse, such as it is, is biased toward extremes, the stench and the perfumes, as it were, of personal, political and cultural life. This simply reflects how olfactory perception ordinarily works, surfacing into consciousness mostly around these two poles and going largely unnoticed and uncommented in the unobjectionable atmosphere of the everyday

surroundings that we in the west have come to take for granted.²⁰ A look into the generalizable semiotic-symbolic dimension of smells seems therefore warranted.

Dan Sperber, director of research at CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique), points out key aspects of the olfactory symbolic system by noting that

in none of the worlds' languages does there seem to be a classification of smells comparable, for example, to colour classification. Ethno-linguists systematically describe colour classifications, often containing several hundred terms ordered under a small number of basic categories. ... We would search in vain for a similar work on smells; perhaps this is a sign of lack of imagination on the part of scholars, but more likely it is because there is nothing for such a work to be about. ... There is no semantic field of smells. The notion of smells only has as lexical sub-categories general terms such as 'stench' and 'perfume.' Our knowledge about different smells figures in the encyclopedia not in an autonomous domain, but scattered among all the categories whose referents have olfactive qualities.²¹

The paucity of adjectival and verbal expressions for olfactory phenomena and the peculiarity of linguistic encoding of smells via reference to their source may be an advantage or a disadvantage when drawing on this sensory mode for cultural commentary. That simply depends on the discursive intentions and textual strategies of the speaker or writer. There is no encyclopedic ordering or taxonomic principle available and the communication events around smell tend to be as associative, metaphorical and anecdotal, in short, as random, as their material sources. There are at best some set expressions that provide linguistic structure, sometimes translatable and transnationally relevant but not always. We find an olfactory dimension underlying formulations such as the English "this stinks!" as an expression of unfairness or moral outrage, the German "jemand nicht riechen können," [can't stand a person] or for both languages in the encouragement "to follow your nose," [immer der Nase nach] or the fact that people may "have a good nose," [eine gute Nase] for opportunities and deals. In English, success "smells sweet" – but that only leads to another issue, the transfer of vocabulary from one sensory mode to another, the synesthetic penchant inherent in the chemical senses.

Neither English nor French have a dedicated verb that denotes positive odors. In both cases the basic olfactory verbs, “to smell” and “sentir,” have to be qualified adverbially: “it smells good,” “ça sent bon” (“sentir” also covers perception beyond the olfactory); German at least has “duften” as implicitly positively connoted.

Apart from widespread air pollution or other large-scale atmospheric phenomena, smells tend to adhere to the place from which they emanate, providing presentness and local flavor. In the concrete dimension of olfactory description smells thus provide an ideal matrix for well-circumscribed characterizations; olfactory impressions are individual, immediate, affective, and local. For abstract, symbolic purposes, smells tend to align along the good/bad dichotomy, injecting a moral element, sometimes flavored with a hint of disgust, even outrage. They can also be aggregated for broader historical recollections. In the unique processing of olfactory impressions in our neural apparatus the temporal immediacy and local specificity of smells leads to another peculiarity of that sensory mode, namely its capacity to create tenacious links and deeply embedded memory triggers, able to access emotions, personal histories, the past. This can happen in two ways: materially re-encountering a smell can recall precise scenes from the past; verbal stimulation and a conscious search for answers may reawaken a whole universe of associations. Reactions from a large enough number of subjects may produce enough overlap and mutual corroboration of specific material conditions for the results of such an undertaking to be useful as historical evidence of objects and situations that may well have disappeared in the meantime or been olfactively tamed.²² One more thing needs to be remembered before we head out into the air, as it were: in the starkly binary world of smells generally only good smells are purposely and deliberately created in a process both artistic and industrial in the perfume and fragrance industries.²³ Bad odors, stench are accidental, undesirable, by-products of human activity; they have the capacity to reveal and to betray to the outside world objects and processes that their producers might want to remain unknown.

3. Stenches and perfumes – individual and collective, concrete and symbolic.

In what follows, the chapter pursues both individual impressions and a broader picture, the latter often derived from aggregating the former and combining the concrete and personal with the figurative and general. The first is based on testimony, the second relies on textual and public discourse analysis. The combination will give us a sense of the overall aroma of Switzerland today.²⁴ As it turns out, people's individual, concrete olfactory experiences and memories provide the *poetry of olfaction*; the symbolic, aggregated, generalized odors more often provide jarring *prosaics*. Let us begin with the poetry and hold the stench for last.

Although many olfactory memories and experiences remain individual, anecdotal, even idiosyncratic, there are a few clusters that emerge from my informants' accounts and therefore warrant a closer look. One of them is scents of nature, broadly speaking, that almost all informants mention, generally positively: Switzerland, albeit highly urban and densely populated, has remained a "country of countryside," a country of "landscape and memory."²⁵ Agricultural smells are still surprisingly widespread and there is an almost Gotthelfian enjoyment of the ambient aroma of the land, its fertility, wealth, and an all-enveloping air of pleasing self-satisfaction. There is the smell of grass, of hay in the sun, of linden tree blossoms in late spring, and in summer the faint, fresh scent of river water drying on one's skin after a swim in the bracingly cold greenish Aare. There is warm asphalt under the first drops of a summer thunderstorm; the sharp September odor of open fires in the fields – now no longer legal in most places and, hence, nothing but memory. Leaves decay through a rainy November and their nutty, slightly bitter aroma later gives way to that of fresh cut logs in the forest in winter. There is the cool, soothing scent of snow, of crisp winter air. For one informant the air at the top of a ski run, as she slides off the lift and gets ready for the descent, represents the epitome of freshness. In nature there are also cows, still the national animal *par excellence*, exhaling a more mixed olfactory aura, the warm, moist animal smell up close, the faint odor of cow pads drying in the sun, turning silvery gray on an alpine meadow, remembered from childhood hikes by many informants.²⁶ Some recall cheese, *Bergkäse*, and the smell of the dry, warm outside wall of the chalet against which one leaned during the picnic breaks on those hikes. For one, the Swiss *Mittelland* in spring smells mostly of pesticides

and agricultural chemicals, making him nostalgic for the reek of *Gülle*, cow manure – itself an odorant often mentioned as typical, even emblematic, for the country.

There are urban and technical smells, too, mentioned by informants, the worldly scents of Geneva, the perfumes of the stylish Zurich women, smells of the city, of people, of public transport. But overall, repeatedly stated, the smells of Swiss cities, streets, and public spaces tend toward the pleasant, neutral, clean. One theorizes that Switzerland smells of nothing partly because the closeness in which people live and interact has nudged them toward cleanliness, and she illustrates this with the example of Basel, the traditional home of chemical industry, that has lost much of its olfactory aura. Another, however, remembers precisely the metallic chemical odor of that city whenever she opened her apartment windows in the morning: for her it was the smell of home. For yet another, the odor of home, in fact the aroma of his deepest trust in nature and life, is that of fresh cut pine logs piled up along forest roads in winter, when logging commonly takes place. One mentions the acrid mixture of tar, smoke, soot, and hot water of the steam locomotive that screeched to a halt next to her on one of those special antique train runs on summer weekends when she was a child; another, again relating to trains, the now rare oily reek of hot running transformers and the metallic-burnt odor of brake pads in a switch yard.

Food odors are not absent either – the chocolate aroma that enveloped the girl Kāthi in the *Berner Troubadour* Bernhard Stirnemann's song at a time when indeed the Tobler chocolate factory was still operating in northwestern Bern in buildings that are now part of the university. Another informant mentioned the Lindt factory in Kilchberg, Zürich, that he loved and was frustrated having to pass by on the train as a boy. The characteristic dry, slightly acrid smell of roasting chestnuts, sold from enclosed wooden stalls that appear in many Swiss cities in October or November, was on several informants' lists, too.²⁷ Those who still have a bakery in their neighborhood assessed the yeasty early morning aroma ambivalently – it can be too much of a good thing. (For Florescu's narrator it is the quintessential Swiss odor, "The first smell in the morning in Switzerland was the aroma of bread" [Der erste Geruch am Morgen in der Schweiz war der des Brotes] (Florescu 2006, 189). Cheese, another iconic Swiss product with world renown also infuses the atmosphere and memory landscape of many an informant – in its

heated, melted, and thus especially pungent and penetrating form, as *fondue* and *raclette*. In a statement critical of any expectation for literature to help define national identity Peter Utz nevertheless implicates cheese as a quintessential Swiss identity product.²⁸ And cheese and everything associated with its raw material, milk, also lingers in the aura that enveloped the old, now largely gone, small village dairy factories across rural Switzerland. They often were the local gathering places for the evening when the farmers, who brought the fresh milk and their own distinct reek of hard work and barnyard, together with the diesel exhausts from their tractors to one side of the factory while the rest of the villagers gathered on the other as the customers who bought their milk and cheese and ice cream on warm summer evenings and lingered a bit for news and gossip. But there are new food odors, too, such as for one informant and his young nephew who were longing for a kebab in Basel and found a stand down the street simply by following their noses.

Much of the material here reflects memory and, insofar as it is generalizable, historical nostalgia: the alluring scent of fresh handouts, still a little limp with spirit from the ditto machine on the counter at the back of the class has long evaporated but the aroma of school buildings has not lost its hold on many a childhood recollection. Even the thick haze of cigarette smoke in numerous *Altstadtkneipen*, the local pubs, is thinning, the air is clearing. An architect friend, who is familiar with building codes and increasingly strict emissions standards, feels that Switzerland, as a rule, smells of little or nothing. Tomas Mann had made the same observation decades earlier in a curative spirit when the Swiss alpine air served him as the pristine canvas in *The Magic Mountain* on which to paint his large-scale portrait of the European *zeitgeist* and to show himself as a connoisseur of atmospheric sophistication: “Hans Castorp curiously sucked in a deep, probing breath of the unfamiliar air. It was fresh – and nothing else. It lacked aroma, content, humidity, it entered easily but left the soul empty.” [Und Hans Castorp nahm neugierig einen tiefen, probenden Atemzug von der fremden Luft. Sie war frisch – und nichts weiter. Sie entbehrte des Duftes, des Inhaltes, der Feuchtigkeit, sie ging leicht ein und sagte der Seele nichts.].²⁹ It is precisely this fresh but soulless atmosphere that banks require to thrive in. It cleanses, at least dilutes, what many would argue has become the nation’s most pervasive, albeit symbolic, odor: the reek of money. To this we now turn.

One of the key operating assumptions of Swiss banking, but perhaps all banking, is that money does not stink. It is the olfactory version of neutrality and allows for doing one's dirty business equally with everybody. The principle was first formulated by the Roman Emperor Vespasian, as noted above; it juxtaposes money explicitly with excrement, early in the history of western civilization. Vespasian's statement is as much a stipulation as it is an observation, for money *must* not smell in order, precisely, to be able to fulfill its role as the universal medium of exchange, detached from the objects and services through which it is generated and which it sends into their own, separate channels of circulation. The hushed-up nexus of money and excrement has been explored by psychoanalysts and prominently features in Norman O. Brown's *Filthy Lucre*.³⁰ Occasionally, the civilizational efforts at strict separation fail and a stink arises. Typically, there is no predicting where the inquiry into the cause will lead. The chaos of reality, the contagious and contaminating muddle of real objects jostling each other in the real world behind the sterile monetary nexus provides no ordering taxonomy, no verbal distancing and confirms Dan Sperber's observation that smells do not appear as independent categories in the lexicon but permeate the world of all objects with olfactive qualities. Inquiries in the world of finance therefore often lead into dark places and fetid odors.

As sketched above, this happened twice in Switzerland's recent past, in the Nazi-Gold affair and in the recent German and American demands that the Swiss provide support against tax scofflaws. In both instances the separated flows of money and goods and services – whose beauty as well as economic usefulness lies precisely in their separation – became entangled and the often murky sources of the money in question was revealed. The Nazi-Gold affair is the case I want to analyze in some detail, the uncanny proximity of Auschwitz and Switzerland that Adolf Muschg provocatively posited in a public reply to then-Federal President Jean-Pascal Delamuraz. The latter had complained that, given the acrimonious debate surrounding the affair, one might even think that Auschwitz was located in Switzerland. Muschg maps out convincingly, albeit arguing figuratively and morally rather than geographically and concretely, that this was indeed the case. Before turning to this controversy, though, a glance at Friedrich Dürrenmatt's 1956 play, *The Visit*, will reveal broader links of money, morals – and excrement, in the

very name of the town, Güllen, where the plot is set. But let us start with Victor Hugo, who had explored the connection of money and excrement in paradigmatic fashion in *Les Misérables* as a satire on nineteenth-century economic positivist rationalism.³¹

Hugo ties the wealth of nations closely to the nexus of fertilization and production in agriculture. In an argument that pits city and countryside against each other but also links them and explicitly equates money and excrement, he posits that “[i]f our gold is dung, our dung, on the other hand, is gold.” He rhapsodizes over the vast economic benefits the closing of the cycle could bring that connects (human) manure with (rural) agricultural fertilization and production, followed by (urban) consumption and excretion. This cycle is now wide open and allows a city like Paris to throw “twenty-five million a year into the sea” (Hugo 2008, 1030). The waste, muck, and sewage of a big city, Hugo asks, waxing poetically, “do you know what all this is? It is meadows in flower, it is green grass, it is parsley, sage, marjoram, and thyme, it is wild game, it is cattle, it is the satisfied lowing of great bullocks at evening, it is fragrant hay, golden wheat, it is bread on your table, it is hot blood in your veins, health, joy, life” (Hugo 2008, 1031). This purple passage of socio-geographical psychoanalysis touches on key links between excrement (and its odor) and money. The subsequent description of the sewers under Paris gives an excellent account of the genesis of *disgust* that arises out of the collapse of the strict borders between categories of the object world that civilization both creates and relies on for its existence. The mixing and mingling of the incongruous, the breakdown of distances and demarcations between things that must never come together is the essence of the disgusting, the filthy, the unspeakable.³²

What is fascinating is that these links, including the agricultural, are clearly perceptible and viscerally alive in contemporary Switzerland. Despite the small fraction of the population still working in agriculture and the country’s high degree of urbanization, the Swiss still understand themselves as a people closely tied to land and nature. My inquiry revealed this juxtaposition in the number of instances where odors of nature and the outdoors were identified as key formative and memory experiences. Swiss agriculture has been a controversial political issue for years as it survives only through massive federal subsidies, but it appears entirely indispensable emotionally and nostalgically. People are aware of agriculture, so visible in its signature animal, the cow,

which has moved from a symbol of backwardness to a veritable mascot of the newer and lighter national identity – on t-shirts and packaging materials, as urban fiberglass sculptures, in advertising, etc. The animal's waste product, too, is in plain sight throughout the countryside, lending credence to Hugo's nexus of fertilizing, growing, harvesting/consuming, and excreting. In fact, cow dung is noticeable in both solid and liquid form, as the pile of solids traditionally found beside, or even in front of, Swiss farm houses, and as *Gülle*, the liquid component of cow manure – each with its unmistakable odor wafting through the countryside every spring. This creates eye- as well as nose-sores and constitutes nowadays perhaps more of a perversely persistent folkloristic streak than strict agricultural necessity. In agriculture, the disgust nexus of excrement and produce is mediated in the process of fertilization; in business, the analogous nexus between (clean) money and (dirty) goods and services is negotiated by keeping their flows separate. When this separation breaks down, a public outcry and moral disgust sometimes follow, at least for a while, and Switzerland, the epitome of neat and clean, is forced to re-establish its proper image at high propaganda costs and its laundry business at considerable expense of added camouflage. In psychoanalytical terms, large sums of repressive energy must be generated and spent.

In Swiss literature Dürrenmatt's *The Visit*, set in the dilapidated and demoralized town of Gullen, provides the template for linking money and morals and wraps them, through its allusive town name, in the latent aura of excrement. Dürrenmatt could have named his imaginary town differently but only Gullen adds the intended atmospheric element of (cow) excrement and countryside. While the Gulleners are everymen and their plight is universal, the town's name points to Switzerland as the original imagined location for the play. While the malodor from *Gülle* is far from a central point of plot or argument, the nexus of money, moral corruption, excrement and stench is hard to miss. Apart from the passage used as a title quote to this essay, there are only two explicit mentions of odors: the first contributes both to the provincial-agricultural atmosphere that surrounds many Gulleners (Hofbauer, for one, is a hog, dealer) and helps paint an intimate landscape of memory for Claire Zachanassian, as she meets in farmer Peter's barn, the "Petersche Scheune," with the town's notables. "I love this barn, the smell of hay, straw, and axle grease. Memories," she says [Ich liebe diese Scheune, den Geruch

von Heu, Stroh und Wagenschmiere. Erinnerungen], emphasizing the personal beside the general and atmospheric.³³ The second instance serves to mark, through the quality of the cigars, the “bad old days” in Gullen that are juxtaposed in the final chorus-like paean to the “brave new world” of wealth and abandoned morals. The singers remember their “stinkin’ weed between their lips” [stinkendes Kraut zwischen den Lippen] (Dürrenmatt 1980, 132) and are happy that now everyone “is smoking a better brand” [schmaucht ... besseres Kraut] (Dürrenmatt 1980, 133). In the “Randnotizen” to *Der Besuch*, written for the playbill of the opening night in Zurich – a humorous alphabetical list of terms relating to the play itself as well as to Dürrenmatt’s dramaturgical concepts and providing fictitious statistical data for Gullen – Dürrenmatt hints under “Gullen” at a proposed name change for the town, in line with its newfound wealth from Claire’s generous infusion of money into the local economy. “The name of the town is to be changed, at the citizens’ request, to Gùlden” [Der Name der Stadt soll auf Begehren der stimmfähigen Bürger in *Gùlden* (i.e., “golden,” italics HJR) umgewandelt werden] (Dürrenmatt 1980, 139). Yet if anything, the play shows precisely that not everything that glitters is gold.

Dürrenmatt’s reference to Gullen/Gùlden connects directly to the recent Swiss past, real gold, and a real controversy in the Nazi-Gold affair. From it arises the odor of money and corruption, the faint Swiss background reek. While the controversy was the consequence of international pressure regarding the country’s gold transactions during the Nazi years and (mis)management of dormant Jewish accounts since then, it blew up into a public relations disaster following Delamuraz’s comment that he sometimes wondered whether Auschwitz was located in Switzerland. This comment, together with a strong anti-semitic tone of the subsequent debate, triggered a worldwide outcry and turned into an international embarrassment for the country.³⁴ Muschg reacted in the Zurich daily *Der Tagesanzeiger*.³⁵ On March 5, 1997, the new Federal President, Arnold Koller, made the courageous and somewhat surprising announcement that Switzerland would create, beyond the funds recently set aside for descendants of the original owners of the bank deposits in question, an additional solidarity foundation for various charitable purposes and development aid worldwide.³⁶ It was to be endowed from sales of parts of the gold reserves of the Swiss national bank.³⁷ Muschg’s concern regarding this fund was that under Swiss political rules it required approval by public vote, which might not be

forthcoming. This is the issue at the center of Muschg's "Nachschrift II." He feared that a stink would rise "in case the voters were to refuse to cover the check that the Federal Council had issued on their sophisticated understanding of the situation" [für den Fall, daß die Stimmbürger sich weigern sollten, den Schuldschein zu decken, den der Bundesrat auf ihre anspruchsvolle Einsicht gezogen hat.]³⁸

To call the embarrassment after a popular "no" a pile of shards would be a far too neutral-smelling term for the situation and reputation of the republic. The blocked gold would turn back into the very excrement that psychoanalysis recognizes as its infantile raw material. But the pile of dung that we would thus have produced collectively would be so contaminated by resentment, spite, and self-poisoning that nothing positive could grow on it for a very long time." [Nach einem NEIN des Volkes wäre 'Scherbenhaufen' ein zu neutral riechender Ausdruck für Verfassung und Ansehen der Republik. Das geklemmte Gold würde wieder zu jenem Kot, in dem die Psychoanalyse seinen infantilen Rohstoff erkannt hat. Nur wäre der Mist, den wir kollektiv gebaut hätten, so von Ressentiment, Trotz und Selbstvergiftung kontaminiert, daß darauf lange nichts Grünes mehr gedeihen könnte] (Musch 1997, 24).

Although Muschg literally speaks of a "Scherbenhaufen," "a pile of shards," meaning roughly "the damage done" by such a rejection, he adds an olfactory dimension in "zu neutral riechend" and the stench of "Mist" (in the expression "Mist bauen," to bungle, to wreak havoc), and creates an explicit monetary-excremental nexus. This link between money, stench, Auschwitz, and Switzerland in Muschg's symbolic geography is a delicate one, more atmospheric and based on historical moral responsibility than on anyone's direct personal guilt, let alone actual odors. But it effectively links the Jewish gold in the hands of the Swiss – inodorous, clean, and shiny – and the moral stench that arises precisely from the unjustifiably long time it remains in Swiss hands. It is the kind of responsibility Dürrenmatt portrays and that his Gülleners fail to live up to, arising out of individual participation in collective action that fails to address its historical underpinnings. Muschg's argument is straightforward enough at the discursive level, but

what interests me here is how it is subtly supported by his metaphors that reiterate auratically the concrete historical links. Muschg *senses* that the right word should allude to stench, the moral malodor of a bad decision, the odor of corruption and moral failure, the stench that ultimately lets us exclaim that some behavior or other is “disgusting.” He therefore spells out the psychoanalytical nexus between money and excrement and circles back to the figure of decomposition and its associated ills once more, through the “Mist, den wir kollektiv gebaut hätten,” another “Haufen,” namely the pile of (cow)dung discussed earlier. This time, though, he stresses its agricultural function as both fertilizer and excrement, thereby harking back to Hugo’s positive valuation of manure – but points out that “Mist” would be unable to fulfill that beneficial purpose, due to its (moral) contamination, “by resentment, spite, and self-poisoning that nothing positive could grow on it for a very long time,” if the voters rejected the deal.

What Muschg says about Switzerland in the 1990s, as a center of the banking world, implies a symbolic rather than a real stench. Yet by placing his arguments under the heading of Auschwitz, he unavoidably also calls up the real stench from five decades before that escaped from the burning of the bodies of the murdered prisoners, the legitimate owners perhaps, of the accounts that the Swiss were now finally willing to pay out. That stench had in fact been a veritable Nazis obsession. Smoke and stench are indexical sign, arising as unintended and, in this case, undesirable, by-products of processes that must not be know to the world.³⁹

In conclusion, it can be said that Switzerland is by and large perceived, by its own inhabitants as well as by visitors, as a clean and well-ordered country; its reality matches up closely with the broadly positive stereotypes people hold about it. Its material public atmosphere is olfactively largely neutral, even pleasant, and in terms of personal memories often dominated by aromas of the outdoors and elements of nature. However, at the symbolic level – and this is where our inquiry has produced its most interesting insights – the seeming harmony between reality and (self)perception may well lull people into complacency and, if something unexpected happens, lead to a defensive reflex, for the cultural, political, and moral atmospherics of the country are far more ambivalent, as I have shown.

While not analyzed in depth in this chapter, it is nevertheless a noteworthy fact and a symbolic counterpoint to the present analysis of the money-stench nexus, that the world's two largest artificial fragrance and flavor manufacturers are headquartered in Switzerland. As producers of the good, the delicious, and the luxurious in the world of consumer goods, they mask the malodor that occasionally arises from money. While money and fragrances can thus be seen as symbolically related in a compensatory relationship, money and the manure pile, the nexus at the center of this essay, are linked in a revelatory way. As the banking industry's work has the potential, along the various nodes shown, to cause spasms of moral stink and disgust among the public, even beyond national borders, the manure pile, as the point of mediation between decay and (re)production, the place of commingling of ordinarily separate flows, emerges as a powerful emblem of the country. It gives off an odor equally commingled, aesthetically unpleasant, indeed, but laced with whiffs of fertility and growth and hints of economic gain. Its beauty is in its very ambivalence, its genius in the fact that for Switzerland it also links the concrete with the symbolic, the country's reeking roots in agricultural history with a shiny odorless business future. In the intimate connection between Switzerland, money, and the cleanliness associated with both there is hardly a sensory mode more appropriate than the olfactory to sniff out these crucial semiotic junctures.

Endnotes

¹ John McPhee, *Place de la Concorde Suisse* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), for example, is a humorous exploration of the Swiss Army in an ethnographic vein.

² World Bank statistics for 2008. World Bank Data Catalog. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20399244~menuPK:1504474~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419,00.html> (accessed May 27, 2010).

³ See the symposium the city of Vienna held in 2009, under the title "Olfaction and the City." It was "dedicated to the perception of the city, conceived as a space of volatile flows" and addressed questions such as "how may the evocative power of smells and the emotions triggered by odours enhance the residents' identification with their city and contribute to their sense of emplacement? What does the 'flair' of a city, as an aesthetic quality, consist of? How can urban smellscapes and microclimates be analysed, described and assessed? The ideal urban space has mostly been defined in terms of visual clarity, distinctiveness and legibility; do the same criteria remain valid for the urban atmospheres? How can divergences between olfactory cultures, values and practices be converted into opportunities in multicultural metropolitan areas? And last, but not least,

how real is the danger of the atrophy of olfaction in contemporary city cultures?” From the conference description 2009. Tast- und Duftdesign. Ressourcen für die Creative Industries in Wien. <http://www.univie.ac.at/tastduftwien/> (accessed May 25, 2010).

⁴ See the Swiss 2003 open-air exhibit “Immer der Nase nach” that offered a *Duftwanderung*, an “olfactory hike, along the Urner See with twenty olfactory stops. Schweizer News-Weltweit.

<http://www.swissinfo.ch/ger/swissinfo.html?siteSect=883&sid=4230090> (accessed July 22, 2009). Moreover, at the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2008, the French perfumer Christophe Laudamiel was invited to fragrance the forum’s conference rooms, presumably in an effort to create a more propitious atmosphere. See “Davos Aromas Deodorize Subprime Stench, Charm Dimon, Kissinger.” Bloomberg.com. <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601086&sid=amVCFL1X76w0#> (accessed May 24, 2010), and “Smelly Davos unveils new world odor.” CNN.com. <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/europe/01/23/davos.perfume/> (accessed May 24, 2010).

⁵ J. K. Huysmans, *Against the Grain*, introd. Havelock Ellis (1884; New York: Dover, 1961); see especially chapter 10; Patrick Süskind, *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* (1985; New York: Knopf, 1986).

⁶ F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925; New York: Macmillan, 1988). As Nick Carraway and Gatsby approach New York, Nick sees the city “rising up across the river in white heaps of sugar lumps all built with a wish out of *non-olfactory money*” (69, italics mine).

⁷ Franco Supino, *Musica Leggera* (Zurich: Rotpunktverlag, 1995). Another literary work that links many of the topics discussed here is Catalin Dorian Florescu’s *Der blinde Masseur* (Munich and Zurich: Pendo, 2006). The narrator sells security locks that can be found in banks, for instance, and characterizes both his country of origin, Romania, and his residence, Switzerland, through smells – among other things, of course.

⁸ For a literary account of Chernobyl with explicit reference to issues of sensory perception, see Christa Wolf, *Störfall: Nachrichten eines Tages* (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1986) where the autobiographical narrator comments on the imperceptible nature of the nuclear threat and considers that a Geiger counter as a new sense organ might be desirable (21).

⁹ The so-called “Eizenstat report” provided the early trigger. William Z. Slany, “U.S. and Allied Efforts To Recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II. Preliminary Study” (Washington D.C.: Department of State Publication 10468, 1997). The Swiss parliament set up a special commission in December 1996, tasked with investigating the provenance and amounts of gold transferred through Swiss banks by the Nazi government and the fate of these assets since then. See Unabhängige Expertenkommission Schweiz – Zweiter Weltkrieg, *Die Schweiz, der Nationalsozialismus und der Zweite Weltkrieg. Schlussbericht* (Zürich: Pendo, 2002) for its final report. Earlier in the same year, the Volcker commission, established by an agreement between the World Jewish Congress and the Swiss Bankers Association, had already launched its own inquiry into these issues.

¹⁰ The whole period and its political and emotional fallout is summarized in Thomas Maissen, *Verweigerte Erinnerung: Nachrichtenlose Vermögen und Schweizer Weltkriegsdebatte 1989-2004* (Zurich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2005).

¹¹ The fund was established in February 1997 and wrapped up at the end of 2002, after disbursing ca. 300m SFr, mostly to descendants of Holocaust victims. For a good, brief account, see Elazar Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 2000), esp. chapter 5.

¹² See “Switzerland and the EU.” Swiss News, Worldwide.

http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/country_profile/switzerland_and_eu/detail.html?siteSect=2605&sid=5247198&sub=yes (accessed May 25, 2010).

¹³ *Grounding: Die letzten Tage der Swissair* (2006), Dir. Michael Steiner.

¹⁴ Money has become proverbially odorless since Vespasian’s famous “non olet,” when he allegedly showed Titus some coins collected as part of the previously introduced tax. Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, *The Twelve Caesars*, tr. Robert Graves (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957), 285.

¹⁵ Humor has become an official concern. Witness the 2009 exhibit titled (in English, in order to make the pun work) “Witzerland.” The Swiss National Museums.

<http://www.witzerland.ch/english.html> (accessed May 25, 2010).

¹⁶ See *Weiss auf Rot: Das Schweizer Kreuz zwischen nationaler Identität und Corporate Identity*, ed. Elio Pellin and Elisabeth Ryter (Zurich: NZZ, 2004).

¹⁷ The opening address of the EXPO 02 by then-Swiss President Kaspar Villiger lists numerous political and cultural difficulties the country had experienced in the 1990s. “Expo.02.” Swiss Federal Administration.

<http://www.efd.admin.ch/dokumentation/reden/archiv/02347/index.html?lang=en> (accessed May 25, 2010).

¹⁸ *Sounds of Switzerland*. Swiss News, Worldwide.

http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/travel/swissmusic/various/index/Sounds_of_Switzerland.html?cid=110592 (accessed June 1, 2010).

¹⁹ Travel Lady Magazine. <http://www.travellady.com/Articles/article-swiss-taste.html> (accessed May 25, 2010).

²⁰ Alain Corbin’s magisterial study focused on the eighteenth-century Parisian olfactory cityscape is still the gold standard for this type of cultural-historical study. Alain Corbin. *Le miasme et la jonquille* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982). Translated as *The Foul and the Fragrant* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1986).

²¹ Dan Sperber, *Rethinking Symbolism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1975), 115-16.

²² For the former, see a list of disappearing objects, functions, and institutions, in “Liftboy, der: Ein Alphabet des Verschwindens.” *du* 782, December 2007/January 2008; for the latter, tighter emissions control and odor abatement laws for numerous industries and the construction businesses lead to contemporary life-worlds with rather different aromas than in the past.

²³ Switzerland is a leader in scent production. The world’s two largest artificial fragrance and flavor companies, Givaudan (headquartered in Vernier), and Firmenich (headquartered in Meyrin), are both Swiss. Givaudan.

<http://www.givaudan.com/givcom/>; Firmenich. <http://www.firmenich.com/>. For information on both firms, see Leffingwell and Associates, the leading consultancy to the

world's fragrance and flavor industry. Leffingwell. <http://www.leffingwell.com/> (all accessed 6-1-2010).

²⁴ I want to acknowledge gratefully the input of numerous informants who, although not part of a formal or statistically valid sample, contributed generously from their olfactory treasure chests.

²⁵ This is the title of Simon Schama's account of the grounding of European historical memory in the – now physically largely vanished – forests of the continent. Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Random House/Vintage, 1996).

²⁶ The documentary film, *Une histoire vachement suisse*, Dir. André Junod and Pierre Stucki (Télévision Suisse romande, 1991) provides cultural-historical background on the cow as a national symbol.

²⁷ A Google search for “Marronihüsli” yields almost 200 entries.

²⁸ “Ohnehin kann von einer ‘Schweizer Literatur’ – zumindest seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg – höchstens dann noch die Rede sein, wenn man sie inhaltlich auf eine bestimmte geographische oder politisch-historische Topographie bezieht. Da drohen aber intellektuelle Verkrampfung und logische Zirkelschlüsse: Schweizer Literatur müsse man an ihrem Schweiz-Bezug identifizieren können. Schweizer Autoren sprechen aber nur selten vom Schweizer Käse.” Peter Utz, “Aus dem Warten heraus,” *Literatur in der Schweiz*, ed. Heinz Ludwig Arnold, *Text und Kritik. Zeitschrift für Literatur*. Sonderband (Munich: Edition Text & Kritik, 1998), 111-120; here 112.

²⁹ Thomas Mann, *Der Zauberberg* (1924; Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 1967), 13.

³⁰ Norman O. Brown, *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1959). Part of Brown's project is to show a link between psychoanalysis (especially its idea of anality) and capitalist economics (especially its central element, money). He maintains that the reduction of human activity and production to monetary valuation is a perversion. Developing the symbolic equation of money with excrement, Brown draws on Freud but also on Marx and Weber. Brown argues ultimately that civilized life privileges the death instinct over the life instinct and devalues and represses the body. “To rise above the body is to equate the body with excrement” (295). Brown maintains that in civilization “[d]eath is overcome on condition that the real actuality of life pass into these immortal and dead things; money is the man” (286). Further clarification of “the relation between the money complex and the human body” (287) runs via Ferenczi (“Sex in Psychoanalysis”) and his notion that money “is seen to be nothing other than the odourless dehydrated filth that has been made to shine. *Pecunia non olet*” (287).

³¹ Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*, trans. Julie Rose, introd. Adam Gopnik (New York: Modern Library, 2008). Especially relevant are chapter I, “Land impoverished by the sea,” chapter II, “The ancient history of the sewer,” and the beginning of chapter III, “Bruneseau” (1030ff) in part V, Book 2, “Leviathan's Bowels.”

³² For an excellent primer on disgust, see William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (Cambridge, MA, and London, UK: Harvard UP, 1997).

³³ Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *Der Besuch der alten Dame. Werkausgabe in dreißig Bänden* (Zurich: Diogenes, 1980), vol. 5, 87.

³⁴ See for instance Alan Cowell, “How Swiss Strategy on Holocaust Fund Unraveled.” *The New York Times*, January 26, 1997. *The New York Times*.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1997/01/26/world/how-swiss-strategy-on-holocaust-fund-unraveled.html?pagewanted=1> (accessed June 1, 2010).

³⁵ The text of Muschg's response is bundled with two afterwords and three further critical essays in a slim volume, *Wenn Auschwitz in der Schweiz liegt* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1997). References are to this edition.

³⁶ See the electronic documentation on the Stiftung Solidarität Schweiz at Swiss Federal Administration.

<http://www.efd.admin.ch/dokumentation/gesetzgebung/00573/00868/index.html?lang=de> (accessed May 25, 2010).

³⁷ Mark Duckenfield, an independent political scientist, was commissioned by the World Gold Council to analyze and assess the proposals of the Swiss national bank and department of finance. Mark Duckenfield, "The Swiss National Bank and Proposed Gold Sales." Research Study No. 21, October 1998, available as a pdf file from World Gold Council. <http://www.gold.org/search/?q=duckenfield&site=golddotorg> (accessed May 27, 2010). Duckenfield points to a key problem that contributed to the confusion of the public debate and its anti-semitic tone in Switzerland: "In early 1997 Swiss financial institutions and industry, together with the government, agreed to establish a private fund (comprising several hundred million Swiss francs) solely to compensate victims of the Holocaust. In a separate initiative Arnold Koller, then Federal President, promised the government would establish its own publicly-funded Swiss Foundation for Solidarity with victims of humanitarian disasters, including survivors of the Holocaust, entirely separate from the Holocaust fund. ... In the eyes of much of the world's media these two funds have become confused, partly because former President Koller and the chairman of ... the Swiss National Bank (SNB) combined the two issues with the proposal that a revaluation of Switzerland's gold reserves would reveal 'excess' gold, some of which (roughly 500 tonnes out of 1400 tonnes 'excess') could be sold to endow the Solidarity Foundation" (8).

³⁸ Indeed, establishment of the fund was rejected in a referendum on September 22, 2002. Swiss News, Worldwide.

<http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/archive.html?siteSect=883&sid=1351844&ty=st> (accessed May 27, 2010).

³⁹ Here is an example from the diary Rudolf Höss, the long-time commandant of the camp, wrote in jail: "During bad weather or when a strong wind was blowing, the stench of burning flesh was carried for many miles and caused the whole neighbourhood to talk about the burning of Jews, despite official counter-propaganda." *KL Auschwitz Seen by the SS: Höss, Broad, Kremer*, ed. Jadwiga Bezwinska (New York: Howard Fertig, 1984), 122. For a detailed discussion of the stench of Auschwitz and the Nazi perpetrators' reactions, see Hans J. Rindisbacher, *The Smell of Books: A cultural-Historical Study of Olfactory Perception in Literature* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), esp. chapter 4, "From Expressionism to the Shoah."