



# Ganz oben

## Top wealth and the 1% in Switzerland since 1890

MA Seminar | Fall semester 2022 | Tuesdays 10-12 | room K02 F-153

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In recent decades, rankings of the richest individuals and families (e.g. the «300 richest Swiss» annual special issue of the business magazine Bilanz, published since 1990) have become a media ritual. Renewed research on income and wealth distribution (see, for example, the data on Switzerland in the World Inequality Database > <https://wid.world>) has also blossomed. Heated debates about social inequality and the role of wealth in our society are also on the agenda (e.g. the «99% initiative» which was turned down in a popular vote in September 2021). But in a longer perspective, what do we really know about the nature and level of high incomes and wealth? This research seminar will examine the profile of top wealth using tax records and other 20<sup>th</sup> century unpublished sources. Who are the rich? Where do their assets come from? How did they accumulate their wealth? Does one become rich through inheritance or through work? What are the social and familial structures of the top wealth strata? Participants of the seminar will explore these topics and contribute to answering these questions by working on original sources.

### Requirements, grading and deadlines (12 ECTS)

- We expect regular **attendance, preparation (i.e. reading) and active participation**. Please send us a short email in advance to announce your absence.

Students who will not be able to attend the first session on September 20 should imperatively contact us without delay.

Students who do not attend the first two sessions (September 20 and 27) will have to write a short report (2 A4) on selected readings.

- Your final grade will be made of two parts (**Portfolio format**)

#### 25% (fall semester 2022)

Writing and presenting **two (cumulative) preliminary research contributions**. These contributions will be posted on OLAT Forum and serve as foundations for the final research paper. Not handing in these contributions and/or not presenting them will result in a failed grade for the first 25% of the final grade

#### 75% (spring semester 2023)

Preparation and writing of a **research paper**, based on secondary literature. **This research paper can be co-authored (highly recommended option: Collaborative research and writing is a great way to sharpen your historical skills!)**

**co-authored paper** 35-40 pages, around 87'000-100'000 signs (spaces included), without bibliography.  
**solo paper** 20-25 pages, around 50'000-62'000 signs (spaces included), without bibliography.

- Research proposals as well as your final paper can be written in either English, French or German. Please choose the language in which you are the most proficient.
- Please take note and abide to the following deadlines
 

<b>21.10.2022</b>	Preliminary research ideas (1 A4)	
<b>09.12.2022</b>	Preliminary research dossier (3-5 A4)	= 25% of the final grade
<b>05.05.2023</b>	Final research paper (solo/co-authored)	= 75% of the final grade

## Seminar program

Unless otherwise indicated, readings will be made available on OLAT.

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<b>20.9</b>	<b>Wealth at the top: a short introduction</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> session	Henri Hartig & Pierre Demont : Nos riches, Télévision suisse romande (TV documentary «Temps Présent»), 30.1.1975, 51 minutes) <a href="https://www.rts.ch/archives/tv/information/temps-present/11065998-nos-riches.html">https://www.rts.ch/archives/tv/information/temps-present/11065998-nos-riches.html</a> <b>Background readings</b> on Carl. M. Holliger, Die Reichen und die Superreichen in der Schweiz (Hamburg: 1974). <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Advertisements:</b> NZZ 29.9.1974, Walliser Bote 30.8.1974, Journal de Genève, 30.1.1975</li><li>• <b>Reviews:</b> Andreas Freund: Swiss tycoons. The secret rich, in: New York Times, 3.11.1974; [wb.] Die Reichen und Superreichn. Oberflächlich, in: Die Tat, 14.1.1975; Claire Masnata-Rubattel, A propos d'un livre important. Les riches et les superriches: l'élite?, in: le Peuple valaisan, 5.3.1976; Ligue marxiste révolutionnaire: La bourgeoisie suisse, ça existe ! (Lausanne: 1975) (selected pages); Hans-Ulrich Jost: [book review], in: Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, 64/3 (1977).</li></ul> <i>This first session will also be devoted to a presentation of the seminar program and requirements</i>
<b>27.9</b>	<b>Investigating the very rich: qualitative and quantitative approaches</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> session	Carmen Atzrodt, Verwandte, Bekannte und Geschäftsfreunde – das soziale Netzwerk von Jenny und Sidney Brown. Ein Querschnitt des Jahres 1926. Masterarbeit (Geschichte) Universität Zürich (Prof. M. Leimgruber) 2022 Peter Scott, The anatomy of Britain's interwar super-rich: reconstructing the 1928/9 'millionaire' population, Economic History Review, 74/3 (2021), 639-665.
<b>4.10</b>	<b>Wealthy locations and millionaires' streets: a Zurich walk</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> session	<i>This guided «millionaires' walk» will begin at 10:15 in front of the Zentralbibliothek (Zähringerplatz). It will take us around the neighborhood, and finally to the UZH building.</i>
<b>11.10</b>	<b>Wealth, elites and power concentration</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> session	Charles W. Mills, The power elite. Oxford/New York: 1956 (Chapter 5: The very rich, pp. 94-117, 374-82) Carl M. Holliger, Die Reichen und die Superreichen in der Schweiz (Hamburg: 1974) (selected sections)
<b>18.10</b>	<b>Ongoing historical research on Zurich top wealth</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> session	Geoffroy Legentilhomme & Matthieu Leimgruber: Ganz oben. Top wealth accumulation and transmission in Zurich, 1890-1952. UZH Working Paper, Autumn 2022. Geoffroy Legentilhomme & Matthieu Leimgruber: Top wealth in Switzerland, 1890-1990 Debates, sources, and research perspectives, URPP Equality of Opportunity Discussion Paper Series No.5, September 2022 ( <a href="https://www.urpp-equality.uzh.ch/en/Publications.html">https://www.urpp-equality.uzh.ch/en/Publications.html</a> )
<b>Friday</b>	<b>DEADLINE for handing in your preliminary research proposal</b>
<b>21.10, 2PM</b>	Upload on OLAT Forum around 1 A4, including a provisory title, please <u>do not use PDF</u> format
<b>25.10</b>	<b>Brainstorming session about your research proposals</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> session	<i>Feedback and discussion about your research ideas. We will also encourage participants to work in pairs and/or in thematic clusters to encourage exchange of ideas and collective research dynamics.</i>
<b>1.11</b>	<b>Structuring data and sources: do's and don'ts</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> session	
<b>8.11</b>	<b>Meet the authors: interdisciplinary perspectives on top wealth research</b>
8 <sup>th</sup> session	Roundtable with Enea Baselgia (UNISG) and Isabel Z. Martinez (KOF/ETH) Enea Baselgia & Isabel Z. Martínez: Tracking and Taxing the Super-Rich: Insights from Swiss Rich Lists, working paper CESifo, Munich, 2022
<b>15.11</b>	<b>Top wealth research (I)</b> (feedback: Lino, Mael, Yves, Antonio, Eric, Ona, Sandro)
9 <sup>th</sup> session	Erik Bengtsson & Jakob Molinder: What Happened to the Incomes of the Rich during the Great Levelling? Evidence from Swedish Individual-level Data, 1909–1950. (Lund Papers in Economic History 2021:230) Manuel Weber, The place to live. Wohnen an der Stadtzürcher Zollikerstrasse um 1930, (UZH BA seminar: Ganz oben. Einkommen und Vermögen der bürgerlichen Eliten, Prof. M. Leimgruber, 2020)
<b>22.11</b>	<b>Top wealth research (II)</b> (feedback: Laura, Jonas, Lina, Rudi, Samir, Susanne, David)
10 <sup>th</sup> session	Matteo Pompermaier, Women and wealth in Sweden: the case of Uppsala, 1850–1910, Scandinavian Economic History Review, 2022 Eva Maria Gajek: Sichtbarmachung von Reichtum. Das Jahrbuch des Vermögens und Einkommens der Millionäre in Preußen, in: Archiv für Sozialgeschichte 54, 2014, S. 79-108

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**29.11**      **HELPPDESK**  
11<sup>th</sup> session    *This session will be devoted to collective/individual tutoring, to help you prepare your research dossier.*

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**6.12**      **Top wealth research festival**  
12<sup>th</sup> session    *Each participant to the seminar will have to prepare two of the four articles below (more instructions follow)*  
Martin Lutz & David Warren Sabean: Kinship, conflict and transnational coordination: the Siemens family's globalisation strategies in the nineteenth century, *Social History*, 47:2, 141-168.  
Simone Derix: Grenzloses Vermögen. Räumliche Mobilität und die Infrastrukturen des Reichtums als Zugänge zur historischen Erforschung des "einen Prozents", in: Gajek et.al. (Hg.): *Reichtum in Deutschland*, Göttingen 2019, 164-81  
Sven Beckert: *The Monied Metropolis. New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850–1896* (chapter 8: « The culture of capital»)  
Jens Beckert: *Durable Wealth: Institutions, Mechanisms, and Practices of Wealth Perpetuation*, in: *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2022

**Friday**      **DEADLINE for handing in your research dossier**  
**9.12, 2PM**    Upload on OLAT Forum around 3-5 A4. The expected format and content will be discussed during the semester.

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**13 + 20.12**    **END OF SEMESTER WORKSHOPS**  
*Each participant will (briefly = 5 minutes max.) present his/her research dossier. We have also designated **discussants** who are responsible to open the Q&A session. Please do take the time to read your colleagues proposals.*

**Tue 13.12**      Discussants

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**Wealth at death:** Jonas Gassman (JG) & Laura Schmid (LS)      AG + OB  
**Locations:** Maël Mühlemann (MM), Yves Lamparsky (YL) & Lino Hunter (LH)      SA + SH + EF  
**Varia:** David Grossen (DG) & Lina Zbinden (LZ)      SW + RH

**Tue 20.12**

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**Zurich:** Susanne Widrig (SW), Rudi Hauser (RH) & Samir Hertig (SH)      DG + LZ + LH  
**Basel:** Ona Bosshard (OB) & Sandro von Arx (SA)      MM + YL  
**Bern & Zug:** Antonio Giannico (AG) & Eric Fuchs (EF)      JG + LS

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**KEY DATES**    **4.4.2023**      **FOLLOW UP SESSION** (elective) (RAE/FSW 015, Rämistrasse 64, 16h00-17h30)  
                  **5.5.2023**      **PAPER DEADLINE** (to be sent as a PDF file to both instructors)  
                  **June 2023**     **FINAL WORKSHOP** (elective) discussion of your research papers and final debriefing

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