

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SWISS ABROAD

S W I S S

REVIEW

DECEMBER 2013 / NO. 6



**The impact of foreign
pioneers on Switzerland**

**Hans Rudolf Herren,
a Swiss pioneer in Africa**

**New Olympic sports –
Switzerland is at the forefront**

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Swiss virtues and immigration

INDPENDENT, RESILIENT, CAPABLE and united – these attributes are the basis of Switzerland's success. These virtues, thanks to Friedrich Schiller's "William Tell", have become legendary well beyond Swiss borders. But is Switzerland's success explained by these qualities alone? Of course not. Many ideas conceived by those not of true Swiss origin and implemented by people not of pure Swiss stock have also made a contribution. In our key focus article on page 8 onwards, Jürg Müller describes the huge interest shown by many Swiss during the 19th century in foreign ideas, developments and achievements and illustrates the contribution made by various immigrants to Switzerland's advancement, success and modern-day identity.

Immigration will also play a key role in political debate in Switzerland in the near future. The electorate will have several opportunities to voice its opinion on this subject over the coming year. The first will be on 9 February 2014, when the Swiss people will vote on the initiative against mass immigration. (Further details can be found on page 14). Referenda will also be held on the Ecopop initiative "Stop overpopulation – safeguard our natural environment" and on the extension of the free movement of persons to Croatia.



Many Swiss abroad are clearly anxious about the referendum on the free movement of persons as they are concerned about the ramifications of a No vote. This could have grave

consequences, resulting in the termination of the bilateral agreements with the European Union (EU). Experts in constitutional law are in agreement, and those behind the referendum do not refute the claims either. Whether that is actually their objective, as suggested in some quarters, remains open to debate. Switzerland would unquestionably be left in a very isolated position without the bilateral agreements and would have to renegotiate its relations with the EU states. The Federal Council has strongly warned against such a scenario and believes it would jeopardise Switzerland's economic development in particular. The end of the bilateral approach would also clearly have an impact on many of the over 400,000 Swiss abroad living in a European state.

I would finally like to mention some changes taking place within the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad. Rudolf Wyder, who as Director has been a key figure for the past 28 years in representing the interests of the Swiss abroad to Swiss authorities and politicians, will retire at the end of the year. A review of his achievements can be found on page 26.

BARBARA ENGEL

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Echo

Cover image: Photographer Alessandro Della Bella took this photograph of a moonlit night on Mount Säntis in February. It comes from a new book featured on page 6.

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Flabbergasted

I am an avid reader of the "Swiss Review" which my wife receives. I must say that as a Frenchman I was flabbergasted by some parts of the editorial in the August 2013 issue. In particular, Ms Engel's view that banking secrecy has contributed to Switzerland's stability. Of course, but at the expense of countries whose citizens – as account holders at your banks – are fraudsters, if not criminals. That must stop as the average Swiss person, as I well know, does not benefit.

BERNARD BUISSON, BY EMAIL

Little tolerance nowadays

I wish to express my gratitude for the article on Adolf Ogi. I am no supporter of the Swiss People's Party (SVP) in view of the way it has conducted itself in recent years. It has become a party of loudmouths, know-it-alls and, in

some cases, vitriolic individuals whose loathing is primarily aimed at the general public. The tolerance, respect and altruism demonstrated by Adolf Ogi are unfortunately rarely found. The SVP's ranting has done more harm than good to the party and politics over the long term. We are fortunate to have Dölf Ogi, and I hope that similar figures emerge and establish themselves in our national government. People like Adolf Ogi make me optimistic about Switzerland's future.

EUGEN RINGGER, BENKOVAC,
CROATIA

Utmost respect

I got to know Adolf Ogi in 1963 when he was "secretary of the Meiringen tourist office". His title would probably be "director of tourism" today. I followed the progression of his career from close quarters. I was President of

the Swiss Ski Pool from 1974 to 1976 as the representative of the Swiss ski team's equipment suppliers and he was Director of the Swiss Ski Association. I will never forget the negotiations, which although tough were always conducted in a friendly manner. Adolf Ogi really is as he is portrayed in this article. I have the utmost respect for him!

WERNER OERTLE, KAPOSVÁR,
HUNGARY

Sensible changes

I would like to raise the following question concerning the key focus article on tourism featured in the October issue of "Swiss Review": Do we still need a region that simply carries on in the way it is doing? If you consider and reflect upon the wide range of different opinions and viewpoints of those involved in tourism, just one question unfortunately remains in re-

lation to most arguments and strategies: Have they learned nothing from the unfortunate events in places such as Ötztal in neighbouring Austria? Do the majority of people really believe that the remedy for Swiss tourism lies in alpine fun parks, located over 3,000 metres above sea level, to which a greedy mountain railway lobby would prefer to transport two million visitors a year in future rather than just one million? Do hundreds of Chinese or Indian tourists have to fall from some cliff walk before people come to their senses? We need to move instead towards sustainable tourism and make visitors aware of current and future changes. There are so many alternative approaches and opportunities for shaping and establishing the tourism of the future now before the whole thing inevitably falls down around us!

ROLF OPITZ, MUNICH



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A letter on a journey

IT IS THE STORY OF A LETTER narrated by Abbas Khider, an Iraqi author, now 40 years of age, who, after a long escape, found a new home in Germany and also writes in German. It is the story of a love letter written by Salim, a Muslim, to Samia, a Kurdish Christian. Salim, who spent a short time in prison in Iraq for reading banned books before managing to flee, lives in the Libyan port town of Benghazi. It is 1999, four years prior to Saddam Hussein's downfall, still a time when nobody can envisage the Arab uprisings. Two years have passed since Salim's escape but he thinks about his beloved in Baghdad every day. Sending her a letter by post is impossible. It could fall into the hands of the censors and put Samia in grave danger.

Salim's problem is that of many refugees, and resourceful people have long since found ways of getting letters into Iraq – into the Aubergine Republic, as the Iraqis themselves call their country because aubergines were the only things that were always available in abundance during the trade embargo. Like the smugglers who sneak refugees across the border, the couriers also make their money from people's fears and yearnings. They slip letters past the censors in return for large payments. In Café Tigris in Benghazi, Salim hears about Malik, who – for a fee of two hundred dollars – agrees to pass the love letter to the first courier, the Egyptian taxi driver Haytham. In Cairo, Malik's business partner takes charge of the delivery and sends it on a tour bus to the Jordanian capital of Amman. From there the letter is taken by the lorry driver Latif Mohamed across the Iraqi border to Baghdad.

Each person through whose hands Salim's letter passes temporarily becomes the main character. In seven chapters, six additional characters besides Salim recount episodes from their lives. This provides an insight into everyday life in the Arab world shortly before the outbreak of the revolutions. Khider masterfully switches between tragedy and comedy in his narrative and underlines just how much reality is shaped by perception. The characters are at the same time both victims and beneficiaries of the dictatorial regimes.



"Brief in die Auberginenrepublik" ("A Letter to the Aubergine Republic") is Abbas Khider's third novel. His first novel "Der falsche Inder" ("The Village Indian") was published in 2008, and his second "Die Orangen des Präsidenten" (The President's Oranges) in 2011. Khider in-

corporates many of his own experiences into his novels. He knows the yearnings and fears of refugees, the fatal dangers, the countless risks, the sense of restlessness and the hope for peace and a better life while also appreciating the significance of serendipity. He uses the often sarcastic sense of humour typical of the region mixed with melancholy and opens up a world for readers which these days is almost only ever associated with negative stereotypes.

BARBARA ENGEL

ABBAS KHIDER, "Brief in die Auberginenrepublik". Edition Nautilus, Hamburg 2013. 160 pages. CHF 25, EUR 18.
An English translation of "Der falsche Inder" ("The Village Indian") was recently published by Seagull Books. The translation of "Brief in die Auberginenrepublik" is in progress.

Night landscapes

What does Switzerland look like at night when we are asleep? Could it be even more beautiful between the hours of dusk and dawn than during the daytime? The photographer Alessandro Della Bella allows us to explore the darkness that sometimes seems foreboding but is also magical and peaceful. He spent many nights awake so he could photograph Switzerland, producing spectacular images of mountains, cities and panoramas at night.

Book: "Helvetia by night"; Verlag NZZ libro, Zurich 2013; 192 pages, 100 images with photographic notes in the annex. CHF 84
More at: helvetiabynight.com/



New Year's Eve in Arosa, taken from the Tschuggen on 1 January 2012



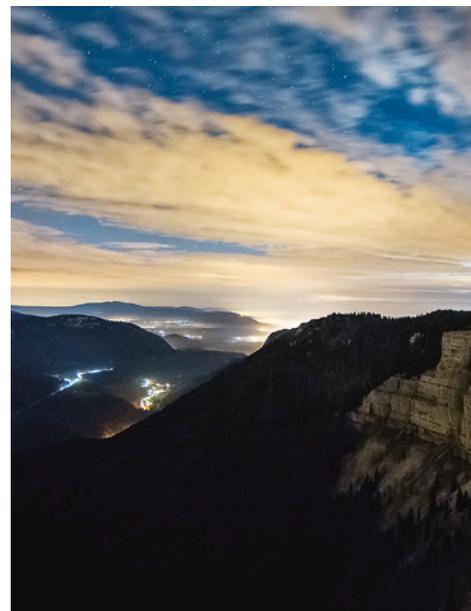
Fog over the Swiss Plateau, taken from the Säntis on 24 November 2011



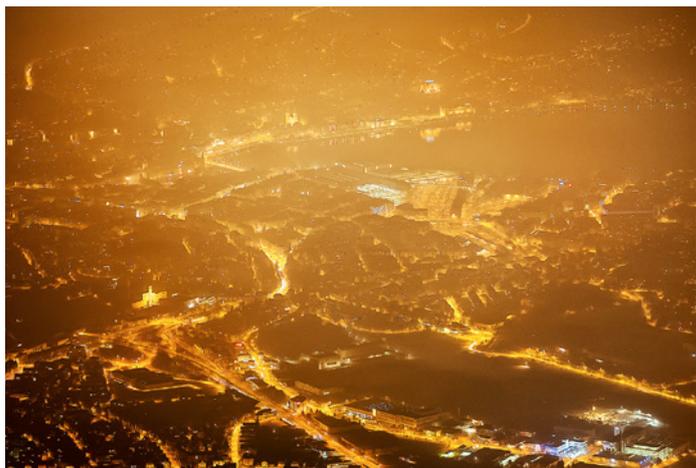
The constellation of Orion above the Eiger, Mönch taken from the Männlichen on 31 January 2011



Snow groomers and snow cannons on the Corvatsch, taken from the Piz Nair on 12 December 2012



Creux du Van, taken on 20 November 2011



Lucerne, taken from Mount Pilatus on 5 March 2011



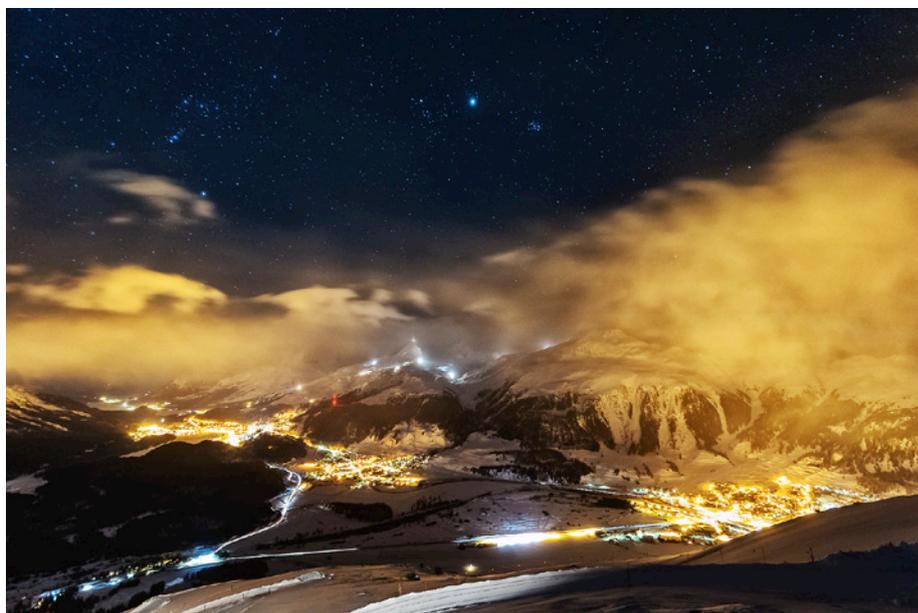
Dusk over Lake Lugano showing Melide, Campione and Lugano, taken from the Sighignola on 11 June 2013



and Jungfrau,



Sea of fog above the alpine foothills, with Mount Pilatus and the Rigi, taken from the Säntis on 24 November 2011



St. Moritz, Celerina and Samedan, taken from Muottas Muragl on 9 February 2013

How foreigners gave Switzerland impetus

Switzerland in the 19th century was a country undergoing transformation politically, intellectually and economically. However, it was not its own impetus that accounted for the change in mood.

As well as established Swiss figures, a large number of foreigners, immigrants and refugees were involved in this new beginning that enabled Switzerland to make significant progress during this crucially important century.

By Jürg Müller

“Those who have got on the wrong side of the law, embezzled money, cursed their rulers or been involved in botched plots think to themselves: It doesn't matter, I'll go to Switzerland where I'll be safe; the Swiss are stupid and have pots of money – they'll look after me. Bespectacled doctors with moustaches, goatee-bearded communists, literati, writers and teachers are arriving in their droves along with raving-mad propagandists, shoe polishers from Rome and Vienna, uncouth characters and swift-footed freedom fighters.”

(Extract from: “Berns moderne Zeit”, Stämpfli Verlag, Berne 2011)

This was the mood at the election campaign in Berne in 1850, which had taken on a new tone. Switzerland had been a country of immigration since the 15th century, welcoming people from all backgrounds with open arms. A good example are the French Protestants known as the Huguenots. These religious refugees created significant economic momentum in Switzerland. Many persecuted immigrants also arrived in the post-Napoleonic period of the Restoration from 1815. The failed revolutions of 1848 at various places in Europe also drove thousands of political refugees to the emergent Swiss federal state founded in the same year. This provoked a defensive response from the

Swiss people as the pamphlet quoted above illustrates.

Switzerland becoming a place of refuge also led to the first foreign political test of the Federal Council. The major powers condemned the generous granting of asylum to their rebellious citizens. France, Prussia and Austria demanded the handover of refugees, exerted pressure and even amassed troops on the border. Military intervention was avoided thanks to mediation by Great Britain and several deportations. The Federal Council deliberately pursued a dual strategy: it defended its liberal asylum laws but conceded to pressure in some cases. Refugees were magnanimously taken in but asylum seekers who were excessively politically active were expelled.

Pastor Blocher asked: “Are we Germans?”

Switzerland gained a reputation as an archetypical asylum country in the 19th century. And it also pursued an extremely liberal immigration policy, which was not to the detriment of the nation as events illustrated. The immigrants brought dynamism to the republic, and Switzerland was to a large extent dependent on the influx of well-educated foreigners in certain areas. This is highlighted by a look at the university scene that was just emerging at the time. Up to 50

percent of professorships were held by Germans, and foreigners occupied all the lecturing posts at some faculties in Zurich. The University of Berne even dispatched agents to entice highly qualified academic staff to Switzerland from abroad.

The achievements of the Germans – particularly in intellectual life and business – were so highly regarded in Switzerland that a veritable Germanophilia took hold at the end of the 19th century. The admiration for German culture was so great that questions were raised about Swiss identity. Many Swiss people – in complete contrast to the above-quoted pamphlet imbued with anti-German feeling that was produced by conservative factions – were so partial to Teutonism that they asked themselves in all seriousness: “Are we Germans?” This was the title of a publication by the leading publicist in the field and pastor Eduard Blocher (1870–1942). The grandfather of former Federal Councillor Christoph Blocher labelled German-speaking Switzerland a German cultural province. His German roots may have had something to do with this: Eduard's grandfather, Johann Georg Blocher, had emigrated to Switzerland from Württemberg and was naturalised in the canton of Berne in 1861. At the turn of the 20th century there were around three times more Germans living in the city of Zurich, for in-



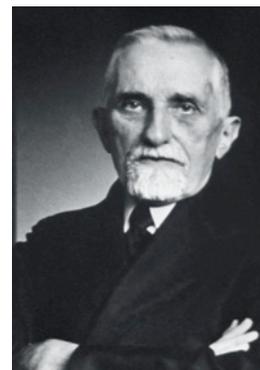
Napoleon



Friedrich Schiller
Author



Heinrich Zschokke
Publisher



Eduard Blocher
Pastor



The three confederates in the Federal Palace symbolise a Switzerland closed off from the outside world – this does not reflect reality

stance, in percentage terms than there are today.

Switzerland – a pan-European phenomenon

The Swiss economy was more oriented towards international trade at that time than during much of the 20th century. “It was scores of foreign entrepreneurs who began to turn ‘underdeveloped Switzerland’ into a modern industrial state,” the economic historian Tobias Straumann recently explained in a newspaper article. And the Germanist and literary scholar Peter von Matt observes: “Modern political Switzerland, which began with the period under Napoleon, was a pan-European phenomenon from the outset.” (Quotation from: “Die tintenblauen Eidgenossen”, Munich 2001). Even leading Swiss figures in literature were heavily influenced by foreign authors: without the example set by German emigrants, “who expressed their political fervour in compelling verse”, writes von Matt, “there would have been no writer by the name of Gottfried Keller”.

It was also Peter von Matt who, at the momentous commemorative celebration “200 Years of Modern Switzerland” in Aarau on 17 January 1998, gave a powerful reminder

to the fully assembled Federal Council and Switzerland of why the nation had reason to be grateful for imported ideas: “It obtained the philosophy of mediation from the political genius of the Frenchman Napoleon, which once again made coexistence possible, and the play ‘William Tell’ from the poetic brilliance of Friedrich Schiller, which colourfully and vociferously testified to the whole world of our glorious past.”

It is not just Switzerland’s federal structure that can be traced back to Napoleon’s mediation of 1803. The modern system of democracy with all its liberties also began to emerge during this period. Schiller’s Tell of 1804 poetically canonised the founding myth in its current famous form. This made a major contribution to enhancing the self-assurance of the emergent nation. The temporal concurrence of the German and French contributions to Switzerland’s self-perception may be coincidental but it nonetheless indicates that Switzerland and even its myths are not home-grown achievements.

Switzerland would not exist without the German Zschokke

Napoleon and Schiller were not immigrants; they shaped the image of Switzer-

land from outside. Every child is nevertheless familiar with their names. The same cannot be said of Heinrich Zschokke (1771–1848), who is a little-known figure. This German from Magdeburg influenced Swiss national identity in many ways. A comprehensive biography (Werner Ort: Heinrich Zschokke, Baden 2013) and an exhibition in Aarau, where he worked for many years and obtained citizenship, have gone some way to raising his profile this year.

Edgar Bonjour, one of the old masters of Swiss historiography, said 60 years ago that the emergence of modern Switzerland would not have been possible without Heinrich Zschokke. Zschokke had an impact in many areas: he was a politician, statesman, exponent of the Enlightenment, revolutionary, author, publicist, philosopher, pedagogue, a member of the Aargau parliament and the Constitutional Council – and he was highly driven. According to his biographer Werner Ort, Zschokke consciously chose to come to Switzerland after spending a brief period in Paris and disappointedly turning his back on France. He believed that what had been “discovered” but had failed in

France was possible in Switzerland, namely the establishment of the postulates of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Besides many other achievements, Zschokke influenced our view of history for generations. His historical work, "Des Schweizerlands Geschichte für das Schweizervolk" (Swiss History for the Swiss People) of 1822, served as the basis for the teaching of history in Swiss schools until into the 20th century. Incidentally, Heinrich Zschokke's work was published by Heinrich Remigius Sauerländer from Frankfurt am Main (1776–1847), the founder of the eponymous publishing house in Aarau. Sauerländer was also one of the key figures in the establishment of modern Switzerland with his publishing activities. He was also President of the Aargau Society for Swiss Culture.

The Snells influenced Swiss political thought

The publishing houses and newspapers obviously played a major role in the liberal transformation, among them the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", which expounded liberal opinion and campaign issues. It and other newspapers gave columns to political refugees from neighbouring countries. These included Ludwig Snell (1785–1854) and his brother Wilhelm (1789–1851). The two brothers from Hesse were among Switzerland's most influential constitutional theorists and exercised major influence over the liberal-radical movement. Wilhelm Snell was the founding rector of the University of Berne, while Ludwig was its first professor of political science. The two brothers, who adopted a radical approach to politics, soon became commonly known as "the Snells", from the German word for

"fast". They actually lost their positions at the University of Berne in a power struggle with the conservatives. Nevertheless, they made their mark on Swiss political thought both legally and philosophically as university lecturers.

A revolutionary from Dresden built Zurich's skyline

Foreigners in Switzerland were also able to shape the universities externally, as illustrated by Gottfried Semper (1803–1879), originally Danish, later German and from 1861 a citizen of Affoltern am Albis (Zurich). Zurich has him to thank for a defining feature of its cityscape, namely the present-day main building of the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), which sits imposingly high above the historical city centre. Architect Semper was also a rebellious figure who had to leave Dresden – where he built the famous Semper opera house – due to his revolutionary activities. In Switzerland, he designed the observatory in Zurich, the city hall in Winterthur and the new steeple in Affoltern, which earned him citizenship there. He also impressed the Federal Council, who bestowed a life-time professorship upon Semper.

A Briton played a key role in railway line management

Switzerland's growing industrial sector also looked for specialists and tradespersons abroad. This was essentially because they possessed technical abilities that the local population could often not yet offer. The great Gotthard (1872), Simplon (1898) and Lötschberg (1907) railway tunnels were mainly constructed by foreigners in the second half of the 19th century.

The Englishman Robert Stephenson (1803–1859), an internationally sought-after

railway expert, played a key role in the design of the Swiss railway network, which proved a major factor in the economic upturn. He was commissioned by the Federal Council to visit Switzerland in 1850 and subsequently put forward a line management blueprint. The essence of his proposal was to create a great cross-shaped railway system stretching from Lake Geneva to Lake Constance and from Basel to Lucerne with Olten as the crossover point. Stephenson thus provided the impetus for integrated railway construction in Switzerland, which began in the mid-1850s.

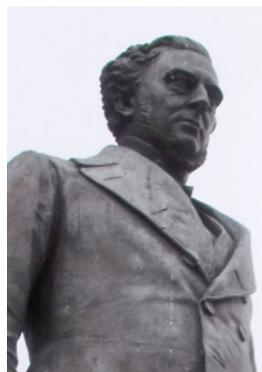
Immigrants proved visionary entrepreneurs

The extent to which the development and essence of the Swiss economy in the 19th century can be attributed to foreign expertise is highlighted by a particular type of immigrant – the technically skilled and often visionary entrepreneur. There were countless creative-minded immigrants who developed into entrepreneurs, establishing Switzerland as a modern industrial nation. Some of these entrepreneurs laid the foundations for world-famous corporations. These included Heinrich Nestle (1814–1890) from Frankfurt am Main, who later called himself Henri Nestlé. He had ended up as a journeyman by Lake Geneva, where he passed his qualifying examination as a chemist's assistant, before ultimately founding Switzerland's largest industrial company today and the biggest food production group in the world.

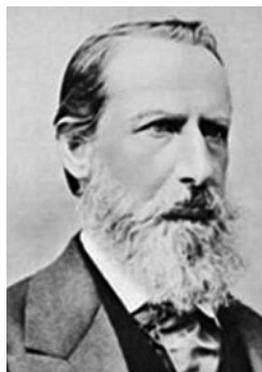
Together with Charles Brown, Walter Boveri (1865–1924) from Bamberg founded Brown Boveri AG, which is today known as ABB and is a leading company in energy and automation technol-



Gottfried Semper
Architect



Robert Stephenson
Railway engineer



Heinrich Nestle
Pharmacist's assistant



Alexander Clavel
Silk dyer



Charles Brown
Machinery designer



Dominating Zurich's skyline: the main building of the Federal Institute of Technology designed by Gottfried Semper, who was expelled from Dresden

ogy. Ciba, one of the companies that preceded Novartis – the second-largest pharmaceutical group in the world – in Basel can trace its origins to Alexander Clavel (1805–1873) from Lyon. Clavel was Switzerland's first and leading manufacturer of aniline inks at his laboratory in Basel.

The traditional Swiss drink Ovomaltine was also inspired by a foreigner. The chemist Georg Wander (1841–1897) was brought to the University of Berne from Germany. He founded his own laboratory in Berne's historic city centre where he succeeded in developing pharmaceutical

specialities using malt as a carrier for medicinal substances. Together with his son Albert, he created Ovomaltine, which ensured the commercial breakthrough for the company Wander. The company today belongs to Associated British Food.

Even in the entertainment industry, a foreign company set the standard in Switzerland in the 19th century. The "Swiss National Circus of the Knie Brothers" traces its origins back to an Austro-Hungarian family of artists and was therefore originally not as national as its current title suggests. The patriarch Friedrich Knie (1784–1850) founded his own troupe of artists in 1806. The circus regularly visited Switzerland from 1814 before finally choosing Rapperswil on Lake Zurich as its base for the winter season in 1919.

Switzerland conducted innovative technology transfer

So, the influx of people into Switzerland included far more than just profiteers, "bespectacled doctors with moustaches", "goatee-bearded communists", "raving-mad propagandists" and "shoe polishers from Rome and

Vienna", as the pamphlet quoted above from 1850 would have us believe. They comprised many people to whom Switzerland has reason to be extremely grateful. In the period of industrialisation, Switzerland did not just benefit from immigrant pioneers but also made significant use of foreign expertise in general. "In the leading sectors of industrialisation, the textile industry, railway construction and electrical engineering, Switzerland proved innovative insofar as it adopted methods and processes developed in other countries and cleverly adapted them to new requirements," explains the "Historical Lexicon of Switzerland" in rather understated terms. The printing entrepreneur Adelrich Benziger (1833–1896) from Einsiedeln made the point more forcefully at the Swiss Patent Congress of 1882, where he is credited with saying: "Our industry has only reached its current stage of development because it has used other countries – if that is theft, then we are all industrial thieves."



Walter Boveri
Mechanical engineer



Georg Wander
Chemist

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An infant's cry that has never fallen silent

The Social Democratic Party of Switzerland (SP) celebrated its 125-year anniversary in October. What has social democracy achieved in Switzerland and are the party's policies at the time of its foundation still relevant today? An analysis by Hans Ulrich Jost, a professor of history

"The Social Democratic Party of Switzerland, which was baptised last Sunday, could not have begun life with a more delightful infant's cry," wrote the NZZ on 29 October 1888. The "delightful" was, however, meant ironically as the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" bemoaned the lack of commitment to the army in the SP's policy agenda. The newspaper continued: "What right does such a party have to call itself Swiss?"

The SP was effectively ostracised, vilified and monitored by the political police. This nevertheless failed to halt its growth. It was actually the strongest party in the National Council from 1935 to 1943 and during the 1960s and 1970s. However, faced with the block of conservative parties it always remained in the minority and never obtained more than 30 percent of the vote. The SP has reluctantly become accustomed to the role of an unloved junior partner of the conservative parties.

Its good deeds

Despite its minority position and the defeats in referendum campaigns, some of its ideas have gained acceptance. These include the system of proportional representation, the right to vote for women, old-age and survivors' insurance (AHV) and accession to the UN – these were key policies of the Social Democrats long before the conservative majority came around to them. There have also been times when the SP's position has been of monumental importance to Switzerland's destiny. One such occasion was in 1935 when it helped to defeat the initiative for the complete revision of the federal constitution. The fascist factions, the Catholic Conservatives (today the CVP), parts of the BGB (today the SVP) and some Young Liberals were behind the initiative. Adoption would have resulted in an authoritarian corporative state, moving Switzerland towards the fascist camp.

In relation to the current difficulties being experienced by the Swiss financial centre, it should also be remembered that the banking initiative launched by the SP in 1979 would have saved Switzerland much anguish had it been adopted. This provided for the rescission of banking confidentiality in cases of tax evasion and tighter controls over the financial centre. As a result of a large-scale campaign of intimidation by the banks and conservative parties, the Swiss people rejected the initiative by a large majority in 1984.

The SP long perceived itself as a "revolutionary" party – but not, as Robert Grimm underlined in the National Council in 1918, in the sense of seeking a pitchfork revolt. Yet Grimm, the instigator of the national strike in 1918 and the party's intellectual leader, loved expressions like "class war" and "dictatorship of the proletariat". The fact that the conservatives also fought with the gloves off during the industrial disputes at the beginning of the 20th century should not be overlooked either. The entrepreneurs fought a "class war from above" supported by the state, which willingly deployed the police force and the army.

A lot of nonsense has been written about the SP's revolutionary potential. The SP was at most as revolutionary in the 20th century

as the liberals were in 1848. It fought for political change, a social state and restraints on capitalism. A solution along the lines of that in Sweden would have been possible after the First World War had it not been for the militant anti-socialist position of the right-wing parties.

The gross errors

The SP has not been a workers' party for quite some time. Public officials and teachers, for example, have played a significant role since as far back as the end of the First World War. Ernst Nobs, who was elected as the first SP Federal Councillor in 1943, was a teacher and a journalist. However, it should not be assumed that a membership extending into the conservative centre ground automatically means the end of socialist ideals.

The "magic formula" was famously introduced in 1959. This meant two seats each on the Federal Council for the liberals, the CVP and the SP and one for the SVP. There is actually little that is magical about it. The CVP, which presented this solution at the time, was primarily focusing on breaking the liberals' monopoly on power. Two socialists were accepted in return, albeit only candidates acceptable to the conservatives.

People may refuse to believe it but the SP has stabilised the government coalition over the past fifty years and has defended the federal state of 1848. It took Article 2 of the Federal Constitution seriously. This says that federal government shall "promote common welfare" and "ensure the greatest possible equality of opportunity among its citizens". There is no talk of "more freedom, less state" – the slogan of the liberals since the 1980s.

The SP has, of course, also committed gross errors. To give just one example, when it adopted the three-pillar principle in the 1970s, it helped the financial sector to get its clutches on old-age pensions. Not only did this prevent the extension of old-age and survivors' insurance advocated by SP Federal Councillor Hans-Peter Tschudi, it also put the accrued capital of those insured under the second pillar at the disposal of the banks and stock markets. In light of the moral and material decline of the financial markets, this is anything but reassuring.

Embracing its heritage

The SP launched its first initiative – the right to work – in 1893. This sought to give employment the same status as much-revered private ownership in the constitution. The initiative was resoundingly defeated at referendum. However, the principle of work before capital addressed at the time is still extremely relevant today. If the SP does not want to lose its soul, it must continue this fight. The protection of employment and of the people who depend on it from the caprices of the capitalist economy is not just a question of material prosperity. It is a question of the survival of democracy.

HANS ULRICH JOST is a professor emeritus of history in Lausanne. His article first appeared in the "Wochezeitung".

Immigration initiative opposes free movement of persons

The Swiss people will once again vote on the thorny issue of what level of immigration Switzerland can sustain. A referendum will be held on the "Against mass immigration" initiative on 9 February 2014. Experts in constitutional law have issued warnings, and the business community is on edge.

By Marc Lettau

Shadowy figures in black boots trample over a red carpet symbolising Switzerland. This is the kind of image that the Swiss People's Party (SVP) is using to fight immigration. It claims that immigrants are putting pressure on the social security and healthcare systems, making habitable space scarce and expensive, and causing overcrowding in prisons. The "Against mass immigration" initiative does not provide any figures for how much immigration Switzerland can sustain. It calls for controls on immigration by means of quotas set annually and demands that these figures be made dependent on the nation's economic interests.

The explosive element of the initiative is that it aims to prohibit international agreements that stand in the way of such immigration control. In specific terms, this means that those behind the initiative are seeking to end the free movement of persons accord with the European Union (EU). They are particularly critical of the fact that immigrants from the EU do not have to leave if they lose their jobs but are instead entitled to Swiss social security benefits. Their verdict is: "Only those wishing to harm Switzerland can support the free movement of persons."

The initiative combines concerns over immigration-related "density stress" with latent EU scepticism. This is no one-off. In the past, it was guest workers from the south who caused fears over competition, whereas today it is highly qualified specialists from the EU provoking anxiety in some quarters. According to the political scientist Michael Herrmann, this new competition means that criticism of immigration is being voiced by social milieus previously regarded as extremely "receptive to a policy of openness" – scepticism over immigration is currently in vogue among higher earners and the better educated.

The Federal Council and a clear majority of members of parliament oppose the SVP initiative. They are supported by all the major business federations. These are vehemently opposed to the initiative.

There is much anxiety, with experts in constitutional law warning that the rescission of the free movement of persons will put the entire set of bilateral agreements negotiated with the EU in jeopardy, much to the detriment of Switzerland and its economy. The referendum campaign being run by the opposing committees is therefore primarily focusing on highlighting the fundamental importance of the "Bilaterals" to "Switzerland's model of success" and its prosperity.

The next challenges

Further challenges concerning immigration and the free movement of persons are already on the horizon. The Ecopop society's initiative is pending. This is seeking to radi-

cally curb immigration for environmental reasons and to restructure development aid. Ecopop is calling for 10 percent of state development aid to be used for birth control in developing countries in order to stem population growth.

A new development has also emerged in the debate over the free movement of persons – this concerns Croatia, which has been an EU Member State since 2013. Right-wing and conservative groups have already called a referendum against the forthcoming extension of the free movement of persons to Croatia. The Swiss people also look set to have the final say on this issue.

www.masseneinwanderung.ch
<http://bilaterale.ch/>
www.ecopop.ch



FIVE "NO" VOTES IN SUCCESSION

Five popular initiatives aiming to reduce the number of foreigners living in Switzerland have gone to referendum since 1970. The first was the initiative submitted by James Schwarzenbach, a right-wing populist, in 1970. The proposal, which sought to restrict the proportion of foreigners to 10 percent and would have resulted in the expulsion

of 300,000 foreigners, was rejected by the Swiss people with 54 percent voting "no". The National Action's (NA) excessive immigration initiative of 1974 was defeated with 66 percent voting against it. 70 percent of the Swiss people opposed the revised version of the initiative in 1977. In 1988, the NA's "In favour of limits on immigration" initiative

was rejected with 67 percent opposed to it. An initiative that sought to restrict the proportion of foreigners to 18 percent was defeated in 2000 with 64 percent against it.

1.86 million foreigners live in Switzerland today. They make up 23.2 percent of the total resident population. Two thirds of them come from the EU. (mul)



FC 02/10/2013

The people reject proposals from the left and right

On 24 November the “1:12 – For fair pay” popular initiative suffered an emphatic defeat. Rejected were also the Swiss People’s Party (SVP) family initiative and the proposed price increase for the motorway tax disc.

By Jürg Müller

The fierce referendum campaign and the high turnout of over 53 percent were clear indications that Swiss people took a strong interest in the issues put to the vote on 24 November. Few people are apathetic about salary and wealth-distribution issues, family and tax matters and a more expensive motorway tax disc. However, not one of the three proposals was successful.

The Young Socialists’ 1:12 initiative sought to enshrine in the constitution the principle that the highest salary should not exceed the lowest at the same company by more than a factor of twelve. The proposal addressed a major issue of the times – the disapproval of the million-franc salaries received by top management. However, the frontal attack on the wage packets of bosses failed in contrast to the fat-cat initiative in March. The initiative was resoundingly defeated, with over 65

percent of the electorate voting against it. The initiative’s opponents had conceded during the referendum campaign that million-franc salaries were unjustified, but had argued that the initiative represented an excessive infringement of economic freedom. The proposal had triggered widespread debate about fair salaries, but the group behind it shot itself in the foot with its radicalism. Fears over negative repercussions for the economy saw it defeated. The debate will nevertheless continue. Those on the left have two further initiatives in the pipeline concerning wealth-distribution issues – the minimum wage initiative and the inheritance tax initiative.

No tax allowances for looking after your own children

The SVP family initiative sparked a fierce row over family models during the refer-

endum campaign. The SVP was seeking tax breaks for families who look after their children themselves. It argued that this was only fair as parents who send their children to crèches can claim tax allowances. Opponents of the proposal criticised tax breaks for “traditional” families with a stay-at-home mum looking after the children because no costs are incurred. There were also warnings of huge tax deficits from various quarters. 58.5 percent of the electorate rejected the conservative popular initiative.

Rather surprisingly, the price increase for the motorway tax disc from 40 to 100 Swiss francs a year also failed to gain acceptance and was rejected by 60.5 percent of voters. This is presumably primarily because the proposal put forward by the Federal Council and Parliament was opposed by two camps with different motives. Automobile associations and the SVP argued that the fiscal authorities already charge motorists enough. The Greens, Green Liberals and some members of the Social Democratic Party (SP) opposed the initiative to prevent further expansion of the road network.

FURTHER PROPOSALS GOING TO REFERENDUM ON 9 FEBRUARY 2014

FABI will regulate railway financing

The Swiss love their railways – in 2012 they travelled 2,274 kilometres by train on average, more than anyone else in the world. The public transport system is constantly being expanded. The Gotthard Base Tunnel, the longest railway tunnel in the world, is set to be connected to the network by the end of 2016. The cost of maintaining the growing infrastructure and the additional expansion nevertheless has to be met. A further milestone in Swiss railway history is about to be set: the Swiss people will vote on the proposal for the financing and expansion of rail infrastructure (FABI).

The operation, maintenance and expansion of the railways are to be financed by a single new railway infrastructure fund (BIF). The existing resources from the fixed-term Finöv fund (kilometre-based heavy goods vehicle duty, fuel duty and VAT) are to be transferred to the permanent BIF. There will also be other sources of financing: the railway companies will pay higher charges for using the network, ticket and rail card prices will rise, the travel cost allowance for direct federal taxation will be limited to 3,000 Swiss francs, the cantons will make a capital contribution of 500 million Swiss francs and federal government will also increase its contribution. A VAT per mille will additionally be levied for a limited period. FABI will at the same time ensure the expansion of the railway network by 2025 at a cost of 6.4 billion Swiss francs.

However, the financial impact on roads will not be greater than at present – on the contrary, some of the fuel duties will be returned to the roads.

In a rare show of unanimity, the proposal is supported by virtually all parties and associations, even the Touring Club (TCS). However, this organisation is calling for a similar financing solution for the road infrastructure. The public transport-oriented Swiss Transport Club (VCS) had exerted pressure with an initiative along the lines of the FABI proposal and has now withdrawn its popular initiative.

Meeting abortion costs independently

The “funding of abortion is a private matter” popular initiative launched by religious and political groups on the right will also be decided at referendum. This aims to stop mandatory health insurance having to cover abortion costs. However, it is precisely this issue that was expressly decided upon in 2002 with the acceptance of the “first-trimester rule”. The initiative’s opponents are calling this a direct attack on the achievements of the “first-trimester rule”. Adoption of the initiative would jeopardise access to abortion for socially disadvantaged women, in turn resulting in more unsafe abortions. Supporters contend that pregnancy is not an illness and that abortion costs should not therefore be met by health insurance. (JM)

“Only a long-term approach will secure our future”

Swiss agronomist Hans Rudolf Herren has been presented with the “Right Livelihood Award 2013”. Herren is one of the world’s leading experts in sustainable agriculture and is credited with saving the lives of 20 million people. He believes the award represents a major affirmation of his vision.

Interview: Barbara Engel

SWISS REVIEW: *How did you react to the news that you would receive the “Right Livelihood Award”?*

HANS RUDOLF HERREN: It is a wonderful feeling and a great honour to receive such an award. And the knock-on effect is that the award gives us the opportunity to fund a project that we might otherwise have been unable to afford.

What kind of project is that?

It’s a joint project between the Millennium Institute and the Biovision Foundation called “Changing Course in Agriculture” and is based on the UN’s 2008 World Agriculture Report. The primary aim is to promote production by small-scale farmers based on eco-friendly principles. We bring all the stakeholders together and analyse the agricultural and food production systems of countries or regions and identify where problems lie. The people then define their objectives, and we assist them with the selection of measures.

Did you have a clear idea about the career you wanted to pursue when you were studying at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH)?

No, many opportunities have arisen and developed along the way.

There is a book entitled: “How Hans Rudolf Herren Saved the Lives of 20 Million People”. How did you save millions of lives?

I would firstly like to point out that I didn’t achieve that on my own. Working with a team, I was able to combat an insect that threatened cassava, the staple food of 200 million people in Africa. The insect, the mealybug, first appeared in the Congo in 1974. It quickly spread across Africa and had reached Senegal, in the far west of the continent, after three years and had appeared in Maputo in Mozambique within another two years. The cassava fields affected were completely destroyed within a year. Chemical treatment across almost the entire con-

continent was not an option and we knew that the cultivation of a resistant plant would take at least ten years, so we looked for a biological method.

How did you go about that?

We quickly established that the mealybug had been introduced from other regions of the world and had no natural enemies in Africa. So we focused on identifying where the mealybug had come from. First of all, we found a “cousin” in Surinam. We then pinpointed five regions between Mexico and Paraguay. There we eventually found a field containing mealybugs, albeit in very small numbers because natural enemies existed in this region. We transported species that could potentially act as control agents to a quarantine unit in the UK and tested them on cassava plants from Africa. After six months or so it emerged that one of these species, the ichneumon wasp, was an efficient control agent that reproduced easily and was well suited to the environment. We bred the ichneumon wasp in large numbers and dropped them from aeroplanes over the infected regions in Africa. The problem was resolved within a year and a half.

Which field are you working in today?

The emphasis of my work has shifted and I now focus on development policy. My path to becoming an expert in development policy also began in Africa. I carried out scientific work and later led projects and, as Head of the Insect Research Institute in Nairobi, managed programmes like the one against the mealybug in the cassava fields. I did that for ten years and realised that conducting good research was not enough. The research results also have to be put into practice, and that requires a positive environment. By that I essentially mean the political environment. The brakes are constantly being applied, and we lag behind the latest findings. I therefore sought a way of approaching issues from the top down

rather than just tackling them from the bottom up.

You now run the Millennium Institute in Washington. Does that enable you to bring about a top-down approach?

The institute focuses on training people from both civil society and government to think systematically. We therefore have the opportunity to address matters from the top down.

What does thinking systematically entail?

We make people aware that everything in the world is interconnected and that every action has a reaction. This may happen immediately or with a delay. We develop system models in which actions and reactions are presented. An example of systematic thinking that many people are familiar with is the computer game SimCity. My back-

Hans Rudolf Herren was born in 1947. His parents lived in Vouvry in Lower Valais where his father managed a tobacco plantation. Herren attended grammar school in Berne and later studied agronomy at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich and at Berkeley (California). When he is not away on business, he now lives between San Francisco and Sacramento in California, which is where his wife comes from.

In 1979, Herren went to Nigeria to work for the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). He achieved significant research success in combating pests by natural means.

In 1995 Herren received the World Food Prize. The prize money enabled him to found Biovision – a foundation for eco-friendly development – in 1998. This aims to sustainably improve the lives of people in Africa and to sustain nature as the basis of all life. The foundation is headquartered in Zurich.

Herren has been President of the Millennium Institute in Washington since 2005. (BE)



ground as an ecologist is very important as there are often very direct reactions to changes in nature.

You are often also described as an expert in sustainability. What is sustainability exactly?

Anything left in a state that is the same as or better than when you first encountered it is said to be sustainable. For example, you can measure the nutrients in the ground in a field. If there are as many or more nutrients after a cultivation cycle without the use of fertiliser, then the production is sustainable. The nutrient or calorie balance must therefore be neutral or positive. We are currently a long way off achieving that in global terms.

There was a mood of optimism when the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) were set out in 2000. Little of that optimism remains. What has gone wrong?

The major error was a lack of proper planning. The UN also realised this after a few years. And this is where the Millennium Institute in Washington now comes into play, as a small NGO and not a UN department. We were tasked by the UN with assessing how the MDG could best be

achieved using Ghana as an example. We developed a model in which the eight goals could be simulated. It quickly emerged that broad planning could save lots of money and enable the goals to be attained more effectively.

What do you mean by broad planning?

In specific terms, this means the ministries, those, say, of health, the environment and agriculture, planning together rather than each ministry formulating plans and projects for its own particular area. Our model allows the countries to assess each year whether they have attained the annual targets and, if not, which factors have resulted in failure to do so. However, this has so far only been used in a very small number of countries, such as Mali and Mozambique.

Achieving the goals worldwide primarily depends on the willingness of the large nations to cooperate. What is their attitude?

There is a general understanding that change is needed, but it is taking a long time to develop the specific measures. However, the Millennium Institute does not produce reviews or reports on countries. We train people, including government representa-

tives, so that they can decide for themselves which is the best or most promising approach to adopt. We provide them with the tools. These planning tools and strategies have long been commonplace in industry but it is just that governments proceed as though they only have an abacus available to them. Our primary objective is to persuade politicians that a forward-thinking strategy and planning are required rather than just four or five-year plans based on electoral cycles. Only a long-term approach will secure a future for all of us.

The global population is set to reach some nine billion by 2050 according to the latest estimates. Can our planet provide enough food for so many people?

Yes, it can and could even do so today. We currently produce 4,600 calories per person per day, which is twice as much as we need. The problem is that the right food-stuffs are not being produced and are being grown in the wrong places by the wrong people. We must seek to establish how we can produce food differently, more diversely and more in line with local requirements. In the USA and Europe in particular, we have excess production supported by many subsidies which is then exported, making survival impossible for farmers in the southern countries because they have no chance against subsidised products. We will only be able to feed the global population in the future if we ensure more and better production – in other words by adopting a sustainable approach – in the countries where people actually live, such as in Africa.

Are you also involved with projects in Switzerland?

The Millennium Institute developed a model for the Federal Office for Agriculture that is being used to define Swiss Agriculture 2050.

You have reached retirement age, but you are still working. Are there particular objectives that you would still like to achieve?

I would like to drive forward a shift towards sustainable development goals (SDG). We adopt a top-down approach to the Millennium Development Goals at the Millennium Institute, whereas the Biovision Foundation focuses on a bottom-up perspective with sustainable development. Combining these two areas still remains a target, and this alternative Nobel Prize obviously gives me a new platform and impetus here. I hope I still have a few years in which to bring policies into line with the work being carried out on the ground.



Elite training facilities for sportspeople

There are five Swiss Olympic Sport Schools in Switzerland. These offer elite training facilities for young sportspeople with high potential eagerly working towards taking part in Olympic Games and swotting up on school subjects at the same time. A visit to the sport school in Engelberg reveals how the young people cope with a 60-hour week.

By Reto Wissmann

Booming drum & bass music blasts out of the loudspeakers. Boys in baggy gym shorts and cool caps are nonchalantly pedalling away on training equipment or balancing on the slackline. But the relaxed atmosphere is deceptive. Hard work is being put in here. The fast rhythms are part of the plan. All the youngsters have their own individual training programme beside them. Emerging young stars of the winter sport disciplines are trained at the sport school in Engelberg, at the foot of the Titlis, where the ski sea-

at the end of January whether he will be going to Sochi.

In any case, Jonas Bösiger will be doing lots of travelling before then. Training camps, competitions and sponsorship commitments will take the teenager all over the world. He has only spent 16 days at school since the summer holidays. Nevertheless, he is not neglecting his studies. "The school-leaving diploma is important," explains the young elite sportsman. After his exams, he will focus entirely on sport but if nothing

like Es- kil Läubli, director of the sport school. Such establishments would be state-funded as a matter of course in Austria. However, in Switzerland people balk at the idea of systematic training for children as young as six or seven.

But Es- kil Läubli is not complaining. The school founded in 1994 is flourishing, constantly expanding and yet remains far from able to offer places to all applicants. And this is despite the fact that the parents of the young sports stars have to dig deep into their



The sport school in the former sawmill of Engelberg monastery



Head teacher Eskil Läubli



The coordination hall where jumps are practised

son runs from October to June. They are all talented young athletes who might even compete to win Olympic medals for Switzerland in Sochi.

The dream of Sochi

Jonas Bösiger will sit exams for his Swiss school-leaving diploma shortly but has his mind on other things at the moment. "I want to compete with the best in the world," says the 18-year-old snowboarder. He is one of the Engelberg protégés with hopes of taking part in the Winter Olympic Games in February. He became Swiss champion last year in Zermatt, finished third at the junior world championships in Turkey this year and won the World Rookie Fest Final Slope-style in Ischgl, Austria. There are still a few qualifying events to go before he finds out

comes of that he will need a plan B. The Engelberg sport school is providing him with support in that respect. It organises the snowboarder's hourly, weekly and yearly schedule so that sport and education can be combined.

Little financial support

Engelberg is one of five schools in Switzerland to have been awarded the label of "Swiss Olympic Sport School" (see box). It offers exceptionally gifted young sportspeople optimal training conditions while ensuring that they also achieve their educational objectives. These private institutions do not benefit from this financially. There is no money from Swiss Olympic. "Switzerland is very different in this respect from a winter sports-mad nation like Austria," reveals Es-

own pockets. A study place costs almost 14,000 Swiss francs per year. Further contributions are made by the pupils' home cantons via the funding scheme for highly talented individuals. The sizeable training costs, standing at 37,000 Swiss francs, are ultimately met by additional sponsors.

Exceptional facilities are provided in return: the so-called "powerhouse", the former sawmill of the Benedictine monastery in Engelberg, contains everything that alpine skiers, snowboarders, freeskiers and now also biathletes and cross-country skiers require for their training. In addition to a gymnasium, there are weights rooms, large trampolines and half-pipes for the "off-snow training" and, of course, a physiotherapy suite. 34 teachers and trainers focus on the 82 pupils virtually around the clock. In order to keep up, the

youngsters also receive individual tuition in addition to lessons in small classes. They can even do their school work in a training facility on the other side of the world thanks to an electronic learning platform.

Rigorous selection

The talented young sportspeople are under tremendous pressure in some respects. With lessons, training, exam preparation, equipment upkeep and self-marketing, many have to put in a 60-hour week – while going through puberty. Eskil Läubli nevertheless says that few problems arise. One reason for this is the “extremely rigorous selection procedure”. The school only accepts those who possess the personal, academic and sporting attributes to deal with such a workload.

The youngsters are highly motivated: “they all ultimately want to be the best in the world,” explains Eskil Läubli. Some of them

have already achieved that goal. The alpine skiers Dominique Gisin, Silvan Zurbriggen, Wendy Holdener and Fränzi Aufdenblatten, the freeskier Jonas Hunziker and the skier Sanna Lüdi are just some of the alumni of this sport school in central Switzerland. The elite freeskiers Kai Mahler and Fabian Boesch are still at Engelberg.

Preparation for life

Is such extreme focus on top-level sporting performance actually good for young people aged 13 to 19? Or in attending a sport school like the one in Engelberg, are they growing up in a world that bears little relation to normal life? Eskil Läubli, who was once a skier and trainer himself, does not see any issues. Elite sport is a good teacher. The young athletes have quickly learned that nobody will wait for them there and that they will be told immediately if their perfor-

mance level slips, he says. Some pupils might find this very traumatic. The school nevertheless helps them to deal with such situations. “Even though the pupils here live under exceptional circumstances, they are definitely well prepared for life after school,” remarks Eskil Läubli.

Four years ago, the school set itself the target of ensuring that at least one pupil qualified for the Winter Olympic Games. “If you can dream it – do it!” is the slogan on the gymnasium wall. Perhaps Jonas Bösiger or another talented young athlete will succeed. However, it might be that Engelberg is not represented in Sochi. The sport school will then set itself a new goal for the next Winter Games and again work hard to achieve it in a relaxed atmosphere.

RETO WISSMANN is a freelance journalist living in Biel



Three pupils with genuine hopes of qualification for Sochi: Fabian Boesch in freeskiering, and Jonas Bösiger and Verena Rohrer in snowboard freestyle



The two freeskiers Kai Mahler and Jonas Hunziker studying together

EXCLUSIVE LABEL

In addition to the one in Engelberg, four other establishments have Swiss Olympic Sport School status. The title is bestowed by the umbrella organisation of Switzerland's sporting associations upon schools that combine sport and academic education in an ideal fashion, employ their own trainers and have boarding facilities.

■ The High-Alpine Institute Ftan in the Engadine offers such conditions to almost 60 talented youngsters, mainly in snow sport disciplines. The young athletes attend the school from year 7 until they sit exams for a school-leaving diploma in technical, vocational or academic subjects. Dario Cologna, who went to the institute and was crowned Olympic champion in 2010, is a source of great pride.

■ At the Swiss Sport-Gymnasium Davos, over 120 young elite sportspeople attend classes while at the same time striving for sporting success. Here, too, the emphasis is on snow sports. The

“wall of fame” includes names like Markus Keller and Iouri Podladtchikov (snowboarding), Marc Berthod and Tamara Wolf (alpine skiing) and Toni Livers (cross-country).

■ The Kollegium Brig, a bilingual sport school, accepts gifted artists as well as young elite sporting talent. The sport intake is also dominated by winter disciplines. Around 130 youngsters are currently enrolled. The biathlete Benjamin Wenger, the snowboarder Patricia Kummer and the ski racer Elia Zurbriggen are just some of the school's alumni.

■ The Nationale Elitesportschule Thurgau in Kreuzlingen has a unique role to play among the Swiss Olympic Sport Schools in that it focuses on summer sports, such as athletics, tennis and swimming. But ice hockey players also find ideal training conditions here. The establishment educates its pupils to the point where they complete obligatory secondary schooling and then arranges an apprenticeship for them or tuition at a school that teaches at the next level.

New sports at the Olympic Games

Three spectacular disciplines will make their Olympic debut at Sochi: the ski halfpipe and ski and snowboard slopestyle. Swiss athlete Virginie Faivre, world champion in the ski halfpipe, stands a good chance to win a medal.

By Alain Wey

What's new at the Sochi Olympic Games in February 2014? A raft of new snow sport disciplines, including the ski halfpipe and ski and snowboard slopestyle. The course involves a series of jumps over various obstacles and rails. A jury evaluates the tricks for their difficulty and style. These additions are sure to get the adrenaline pumping and make the spectacle even more exciting than usual, especially since Switzerland has regularly won gold when a new discipline has made its debut at the Olympic Games: in Nagano in 1998, snowboarder Gian Simmen won in the halfpipe and Dominic Andres' men's team was triumphant in the curling; in Turin in 2006, Tanja Frieden took gold in snowboard cross, and in Vancouver in 2010, Michael Schmid was victorious in ski cross. It remains to be seen how our athletes will fare in the new spectacular sports.

Impetus from the Winter X Games

The American Winter X Games undoubtedly leads the way in snow sports, smashing Audimat records every year. So it is no surprise that the most popular disciplines at the American event are usually soon after admitted to the Olympic Games. Following on

from the snowboarders, skiers found themselves at home on the halfpipe slopes. "Until 2010, there was no Swiss team or official training," says Christoph Perreten, head of freestyle skiing at Swiss-Ski. "The ski halfpipe was officially integrated into Swiss-Ski in May 2011."

Skier Virginie Faivre, from Vaud, is the linchpin of the Swiss team. World champion and winner of the World Cup in 2009 and 2013, she also won the World Cup stage in the Sochi Olympic halfpipe in February 2013. The Olympic team is also likely to include Mirjam Jäger from Zurich, who came fifth in the World Cup in 2013, and Nina Ragettli from Grisons, who was sixth in the New Zealand stage last August. For the men, Nils Lauper from Berne, Frederick Iliano from Grisons and Jannic Lerjen from Valais could potentially qualify for selection by Swiss-Olympic. "We will know who has been selected for the Games in January 2014," says Christoph Perreten. It is possible to send four athletes for each discipline and genre, but no more than 26 all told. And there are five Olympic disciplines in freestyle skiing: mogul skiing, aerial skiing, ski cross, halfpipe and slopestyle. The goal for halfpipe skiers is to reach the final,

where 12 athletes battle it out. "From that point on, anything is possible," adds Perreten. The Swiss-Ski expert also has his eye on two young stars, Joel Gisler (aged 19) and Fabian Meyer (aged 20), both from St. Gallen.

As for ski slopestyle, it has followed a similar path to the ski halfpipe within



Virginie Faivre, the world champion in halfpipe

"I love the Sochi halfpipe!"



Twice world champion and winner of the World Cup (in 2009 and 2013), Virginie Faivre, aged 31, is one of the favourites for a medal in the ski halfpipe at Sochi. She has been skiing since the age of two, and has been participating in halfpipe and slopestyle competitions since 2003. Since 2009, she has been focusing solely on the halfpipe.

The Olympic Games – is that a dream come true?

It is. When the snowboard halfpipe became an Olympic discipline, we were a bit jealous of the snowboarders. We thought we would be

able to participate in the Games in Vancouver, but that didn't work out. When we heard that Sochi would include the ski halfpipe and ski slopestyle, we almost weren't expecting it. There had never previously been a ski halfpipe team in Swiss-Ski. We were completely independent at the World Cup competitions. Since the announcement of our Olympic status, we've had a proper structure, with a trainer and support from the federation. The Games have always been the stuff that dreams are made of. We've been preparing for them for two years. But if we get injured, we'll be watching them from the sofa!

Tell us about the famous Sochi halfpipe.

I love it! The first time I skied it, I had a big smile on my face. It's steep and that suits me well. As I have a small build, I achieve more amplitude in this type of halfpipe.



skiing, in action

Swiss-Ski. Kai Mahler, born in 1996, is one of the youngest athletes and has the greatest potential among the men. And then there is Elias Ambühl, born in 1992. They are the driving forces in the team. So far, Kai Mahler has achieved his best results in Big Air. In January 2013, he tore the cruciate ligaments in one of his knees in the

Winter X Games, where he secured silver by completing his best jump while injured. "If he manages to recover from his injury and builds on the good start he had to the season, he has the potential to win a medal," believes Perreten. Laurent de Martin from Valais, Fabian Bösch from Obwalden and Jonas Hunziker from Berne are also on the national team. For the women, Eveline Bhend from Berne is the only athlete on the national team. She was forced to take some time out in the second half of last season due to an injury. Christoph Perreten sees her in the top five all the same: "She could win a medal." Christoph Perreten is also following the careers of Camillia Berra from Valais and the very young Giulia Tanno from Grisons (born in 1998), who is starting her first World Cup season. And who are Switzerland's rivals in Sochi? "In the halfpipe and slopestyle, the United States are the frontrunners," says Perreten. The Canadians and French are strong in the halfpipe and the Norwegians are good at slopestyle. New Zealand and Australia also have good athletes in both disciplines.

Jumps, tricks and snowboard

Following in the footsteps of Alpine snowboarding, halfpipe and snowboard cross, it is now slopestyle's turn to make its Olympic debut. "We have had a snowboard slopestyle team since the decision was taken in 2011 to make it an Olympic discipline," says Franco Giovanoli, head of snowboarding at Swiss-Ski. "In the women's competition, the best Swiss athlete is clearly Sina Candrian from Grisons who won silver in

Stoneham (Canada) in January 2013. She has a chance to win a medal." There is also Isabel Derungs from Zurich, who has improved a lot over the past two years. They will definitely be in Sochi provided they are not injured.

Franco Giovanoli believes that the best Swiss male athlete is Pat Burgener from Valais. "Unfortunately, he was injured last season and couldn't participate in most stages of the World Cup, so he still needs to achieve a good result if Swiss-Olympic are to select him." Giovanoli also sees Jan Scherrer from Grisons as a potential qualifier. If the halfpipe heavyweights do not participate in the slopestyle competition in Sochi, it's for the simple reason that it takes place before the halfpipe. For Christian Haller or Iouri Podladtchikov, an injury in the slopestyle would prevent them from taking part in the halfpipe competition. "It's just not worth the risk!" says Giovanoli. There are still two competitions that could lead to Pat Burgener and Jan Scherrer being selected: Copper Mountain in December and Northstar in January. "The slopestyle team is still being put together, so we don't have as many athletes as in the halfpipe." Be that as it may, we are in for an amazing display: the athletes will risk everything and will treat us to just as many crazy acrobatic and vertiginous tricks on the jumps as in the halfpipe.

ALAIN WEY is an editor at "Swiss Review"

You must have to be slightly crazy and reckless to launch yourself into a halfpipe...

I'm often asked how I ended up participating in this sport, which demands so much of you. You start out slowly, and gradually you build up more and more fluidity, height and amplitude. I had a very good technique in alpine skiing, which was an advantage. Nowadays, halfpipes are huge – six to seven metres in height. Before launching yourself into big tricks, you have to get used to the curve and get your bearings. A fall is very painful and it's best not to think about it.

You seemed to hit a slump between 2009 and 2013. What happened?

I still got onto the podiums, but I was injured several times: a cracked tibia, concussion, a fractured shoulder blade, broken ribs,

etc. An injury quickly throws you off course. You have to regain confidence to get back to the level you were at previously.

So you haven't had any new injuries since the 2012-2013 season?

If only! I had a serious head injury in March 2012. I had to have physiotherapy, I suffered from vertigo and I was unable to ski. I had to learn again how to turn and jump. It was a bonus to be able to start this season, but I had problems with my head until the end of last winter. I almost missed the World Championships in March because I fell on my head again a week earlier. I was going to give up but in the end decided to give it a try. When I was standing on the first step of the podium and heard the Swiss national anthem, it was all worth it. You forget the pain when you have moments of happiness like that.

An excellent way of encouraging reading

The "Schweizerisches Jugendschriftenwerk" (SJW), a Swiss organisation publishing literature for young people that was founded over 80 years ago, still focuses on ensuring affordable and attractive literature for young people in multilingual Switzerland.

By Charles Linsmayer

Klaus Merz, one of Swiss literature's living greats, has kept all of the 76 SJW books he was given as a child and, when he picks up no. 552, "Mit dem Düsenflugzeug durch die Schallmauer" (An Aeroplane Goes Through the Sound Barrier), he still recalls his first middle ear infection when his mother forbade him from reading further because she feared that his ear drum would burst. His colleagues Franz Hohler, Etienne Barilier and Giovanni Orelli also go into raptures when they remember their first encounters with the books of the "Schweizerisches Jugendschriftenwerk (SJW)", which also exists in the other national languages under the labels of OSL and ESG.

Countering smut and trash

The organisation was founded in Olten on 1 July 1931 by a group led by Fritz Brunner, a schoolteacher from Zurich, whose mission was to combat "smutty and trashy literature". To counteract "trashy novels" effectively, their outward appearance was replicated as far as possible. An edition had 32 pages, cost 25 cents and had an illustrated colour cover. However, the first 12 books were unable to compete with John Kling's sensational crime novels. In 1932, in addition to stories for very small children, a biography of Edison, a report from South Africa and a case for the "sleuths' club"

were published. It took another 50 years before SJW found the courage to publish crime novels. However, with the help of teachers, it succeeded in selling large numbers of copies. The publishing house employed illustrators like Gregor Rabinovitch and Paul Bösch from the outset who were later followed by well-known artists, such as Hans Witzig, Isa Hesse, Alois Carigiet, Meret Oppenheim and Hanny Fries. The small volumes are therefore also significant from an art history perspective. The programme included texts by Swiss authors – Olga Meyer, Elisabeth Müller and Hans Zulliger – alongside works by teachers that told Swiss history from the pile dwellers to the withdrawal from the Beresina.

Intellectual defence of the nation

Four books were published in French for the first time in 1935, and the first titles in Italian and Romansh appeared in 1941. At the same time, a new initiative was the publication of a book, "650 Jahre Eidgenossenschaft" (650 Years of the Swiss Confederation), in all four national languages. 614,900 copies were handed out to Swiss children free of charge. After the war, when the intellectual defence of the nation had had its day, SJW failed to recognise the sign of the times. The publications did not include any political or social topics until well into the 1970s and also practically over-



Three examples of books from the SJW's latest publishing

looked the everyday realities facing the young readership.

The situation improved when Heinz Wegmann, a secondary schoolteacher from Zurich, took over the management of the publishing house in 1977. There was even a title on AIDS, sparking angry public protest. The comic also became acceptable, and authors such as Franz Hohler and Niklaus Meienberg were allowed to take a critical look at Switzerland and its history. A book entitled "Drogen? Ich nicht!" (Drugs? Not Me!) came out in 1990 and one on sexuality and contraception in 1992.

Financial crisis

The company ran into difficulties in the 1990s for financial reasons and because in 1990 it had broken away from Pro Juventute,

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programme

which had been responsible for sales, warehousing and accounting. In 1991, to celebrate “60 years of SJW”, it published 60 new titles and organised a lavish celebratory event – this resulted in a dramatic net loss that used up all its financial reserves and left the publishing house in a precarious position. Production was scaled back massively, and sales fell constantly from 439,158 copies in 1994 to 272,277 in 1999.

Give up or carry on?

In 2005, it looked as though the foundation board would have to wind up the company sooner or later. However, after much deliberation, a proposal was finally approved to continue the publishing house with an attractive new programme and to introduce measures to modernise the sales system and reduce costs.

This had been strongly advocated by the filmmaker Margrit Schmid – and a miraculous turnaround was achieved! With the unveiling of a series of previously successful books and four new titles – including one in German, French, Italian, Romansh and English – Margrit Schmid started a new chapter in SJW’s history in 2006. This was a chapter in which the expansion of the sales network was just as important as cooperation with young authors and various outstanding artists and designers. Just a year later, with 27 new titles in all the national languages, the publishing programme had returned to the scale of the 1990s,

though it covered a much wider range of interests and target groups and – with its attractively presented and modern image – bore little resemblance to the unadventurous layout of the editions during the war and post-war period. The financial situation has today been stabilised.

THE NEW PROGRAMME

The 2013/14 programme includes 24 new titles. A collection of stories by Robert Walser appropriate for young people with original illustrations by Anna Sommer entitled “Der Räuber”, published in German, French and Italian, is the most spectacular among them. Another classic, “Der Lebhag”, based on a story by Meinrad Inglin, is available in German, French and Romansh. Nadine Spengler colourfully illustrated this story about hedgehogs under threat in their natural habitat, which remains relevant to this day.

“Salzkrebschen”, a brilliant educational book that serves as a guide for young amateur breeders, is writ-

ten by science journalist Atlant Bieri and illustrated by Anna Luchs, and published in German, French, Italian and Romansh.

There are, of course, also new titles that appear in just one language. In German, Anita Siegfried excitingly continues the “pile dwellers” tradition at SJW with “Lelech und Nardu. Pfahlbauer am Zugersee”; Sabina Altermatt has written a new crime novel entitled “Der nächtliche Besucher”, which is enigmatically illustrated by Adrian Tobler, and Lorenz Pauli and Kathrin Schärer contribute a gem for small children – “Eine schlimme Geschichte” about a cat that ends up in an eagle owl’s nest. “Lilly

Margrit Schmid was awarded the Swiss Youth Book Prize in 2009 for repositioning SJW and making it a serious player in Swiss publishing for young people.

CHARLES LINSMAYER is a literary scholar and journalist in Zurich

und der Fluss” – “La rivière de Julien” by the trio of writers Henriquez-Droz-Bertschy, which combines two languages in one edition, is also intended for this target readership.

There is plenty more besides – Daniel Badraun’s “Kinderfest auf dem Weissenstein” and four new titles published in Italian. Only a brief overview is provided here. The full list of publications for 2013/14 can be found at www.sjw.ch.

The cost of individual books is CHF 5 to 10. Delivery abroad is subject to advance payment of the invoice sent by the publisher upon order placement.

Between two worlds: books and literary figures among the Swiss abroad

By Charles Linsmayer

Friedrich Glauser disturbingly saw foreign countries, where he spent half of his life, "from the bottom"

The now legendary author of "Wachtmeister Studer" ("Thumbprint") and "Matto regiert" ("In Matto's Realm"), spent 20 of the 42 years of his life abroad. The first and longest period was 1896 to 1909, his childhood years in Vienna as the son of Swiss grammar school teacher Charles Glauser and his Austrian wife Theresia, née Scubitz. His mother died in 1900, and his father's new marriage resulted in turmoil. After facing expulsion from grammar school, Glauser was sent to boarding school in Glarisegg (Thurgau) in 1910. His first period in Switzerland lasted 11 years and saw him thrown out of Glarisegg, continue his schooling in Geneva, sit his school-leaving examination, begin a chemistry degree in Zurich, write his first literary works with the Dadaists, come into ruinous contact with morphine, become incapacitated (1918) and embark on an endless sequence of addiction and treatment for his dependence in Witzwil, Münsingen and Burghölzli (Zurich). In 1921, he fled to Mannheim, where his father was now living, to join the foreign legion.

Legionnaire, pot washer and coal miner

His second, gruelling stint abroad lasted four years, initially taking him as a legionnaire to Sidi Bel-Abbès, Sebdu, Oran and then to Gourrama, which provided the title for his novel about the legion in 1929. Declared unfit for military service in 1923 due to a heart condition, he worked as a pot washer in Paris and then as a coal miner in Charleroi. He started taking morphine again and ended up in an asylum in Tournai from where he was forced to "return home" in 1925 to be placed under the care of the hospital in Münsingen. It took him seven years before he once again succeeded in escaping to France. He was then imprisoned in Witzwil jail, but his stories were now being published in the "Bund" newspaper and he was soon working as a gardener's assistant in Liestal, Basel and Winterthur, before falling in love with the dancer Trix Gutekunst, finishing "Gourrama" and obtaining gardening qualifications in Oeschberg – all constantly interrupted by relapses into drug-taking and courses of treatment.

Journalist and farmer in France

In 1932, he finally managed to travel with Trix to Paris to work as a corre-

spondent. But he was short of money, so he tried to borrow from his father in Mannheim who showed him no compassion and had him taken back to Münsingen. He did not manage to depart again until 1936 by which time he had completed "Wachtmeister Studer", spent many months in Waldau hospital and finally been declared sound by a new warden. He went to Angles near Chartres, accompanied by the nurse Berthe Bendel, with whom he managed a small farm. Although it was barely tolerable in winter, he wrote some of his best stories here. In February 1937, he headed for La Bernerie in Brittany, where he worked on "Der Chinese" ("The Chinaman"), staying until December 1937. He then decided to emigrate to Tunis but lingered in Marseille, moving to the fishing village of Collioure. In early 1938, he arrived completely exhausted in Basel and underwent treatment for addiction at Friedmatt hospital.

Nervi, Italy, 8 December 1938

But he sought to leave Switzerland once again, and in April found accommodation in Nervi near Genoa where he worked on a Swiss novel for the 1939 Swiss national exhibition. He intended to marry Berthe and arranged for all the necessary paperwork to be sent. The wedding was due to take place on 6 December 1938. However, Glauser collapsed unconscious over dinner on the evening before and passed away in the early hours of 8 December. He was cremated in Nervi but was not laid to rest on foreign soil. His ashes were taken to Zurich where a sombre funeral service was held at Manegg cemetery attended by Felix Moeschlin, the president of the writers' society.

On 18 November 1938, three weeks before his death, Glauser had written to the actor Heinrich Gretler: "I don't want to reach the top but instead to lie low and tramp around this filthy world as inconspicuously as possible. I've always been interested in seeing what a country looks like from the bottom. That's how I've always lived and intend to continue living."



Quotation:

"When my case has been resolved, I'd like to work and save for six months. You, too. And then we'll go to Paris together. That is my hope. To turn my back on Switzerland. Awful country!" (To Liso Ruckteschell, 20 August 1920, in "Tagebuch aus dem Irrenhaus" in "Morphium", Arche-Verlag, Zurich 1980)

CHARLES LINSMAYER is a literary scholar and journalist in Zurich

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Glauser's works are available in German from Limmat-Verlag and Arche. Details of translations can be found at <http://opac.admin.ch>



OSA advice

How and where can Swiss television and radio programmes be received abroad?

The programmes of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SRG SSR) are generally transmitted via satellite and most are encrypted. This is because the broadcast rights for many programmes only apply in Switzerland and not abroad. The programmes of SRF info – the repeats' channel of Swiss television – are broadcast unencrypted. These are in-house productions which are not subject to copyright restrictions. Reception via satellite is also confined to Europe and some regions of North Africa. SRF programmes cannot be received via satellite anywhere in the Americas, in central and southern Africa, Australia, Oceania or Asia.

To receive the programmes via satellite, in addition to a conventional TV set, you need a satellite dish, a satellite receiver and a Sat Access card. This card is required to decode the programmes. Sat Access cards can only be issued to Swiss households abroad and to persons residing in Switzerland. Official confirmation, for example from a consulate, that a person is a Swiss citizen abroad is not required but this must be confirmed by signature when ordering the card.

The application for a Sat Access card can be sent by email or by post to the SRG customer service department. The order form can be found at www.broadcast.ch. Alternatively, you can register by telephone on the SRG SSR helpline and receive the form for signing by post.

The card costs 180 Swiss francs for the first year and 120 Swiss francs for every year after that. Payment can be made with a credit card or via a bank account in Switzerland.

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Order form for Sat Access card at: www.broadcast.ch. All technical details can also be found on this website.

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Educational and training advice now with educationsuisse

The Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) and education-suisse, which represents the interests of Swiss schools abroad, have decided to work more closely together in future and to merge as of 1 January 2014.

Fifty years after its founding, AJAS carried out a review and came to the conclusion that exploiting synergies with educationsuisse would be beneficial to both organisations.

For educationsuisse – an association that primarily has experience abroad – the cooperation with AJAS presents important networking opportunities with the education system in Switzerland. AJAS' vast experience in providing advice on education, courses and grants to young Swiss abroad who wish to continue their education in Switzerland will in future also be directly available to pupils at Swiss schools abroad.

Information is available from:

*Fiona Scheidegger, Director of AJAS
ajas@aso.ch, from 01.01.2014 fiona.scheidegger@educationsuisse.ch*

Irene Spicher, Director of educationsuisse irene.spicher@educationsuisse.ch

Summer camps for 8 to 14 year olds

Registration process for summer camps will begin in January 2014

The exact details, such as location, date and age groups, etc., for the various summer camps run by the Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA) will be published in "Swiss Review" from February 2014 and at www.sjas.ch. You will also find the registration forms there. Anyone requiring an overview of the offers in paper form can order the brochure from the office from January 2014.
*Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA), Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, Switzerland
Tel. +41 31 356 61 16, Fax +41 31 356 61 01
Email: sjas@aso.ch, www.sjas.ch*

Offers of ASO Youth Service

OSA offers young Swiss abroad a wide range of opportunities for visiting Switzerland

There are still places available in the following camps:

■ Winter sports week for adults in Davos: 29 March to 5 April 2014

A skiing and snowboarding camp for adults aged 18 and over in the famous winter sports resort of Davos has everything that winter sports enthusiasts could ever desire. The OSA team will be on hand to provide tuition on the slopes, to act as guides in the vast ski area and to organise entertainment.

■ Swiss excursion "Across Switzerland": 19 to 26 April 2014

On this journey we make a stop wherever there is something of interest to see: The Rhine Falls, Lake Lucerne, the irrigation channels in the canton of Valais and the Aare river are examples. Those taking part will discover many cities and regions as well as Switzerland's transport network.

Educational offers:

Our offers enable holidays to be combined with learning. Young people who wish to know more about Switzerland's educational institutions receive individual advice on educational opportunities. Students can drop in at Swiss universities. Friendly host families look forward to welcoming visitors from abroad.

Offers for young people at www.swisscommunity.org

SwissCommunity.org is the platform for Swiss abroad run by the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad. All offers for young people can be found on SwissCommunity. On the website, young people report on their experiences, post photos and videos and can exchange information with each other.

Information on the offers for young people can also still be found at www.aso.ch or obtained from:
*Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Tel.: +41 31 356 61 00
youth@aso.ch*



Farewell to Rudolf Wyder

AFTER 28 YEARS AT THE HELM OF THE ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD, RUDOLF WYDER WILL STEP DOWN FROM HIS POSITION AT THE END OF THE YEAR AND OFFICIALLY ENTER RETIREMENT.

GEORG STUCKY, HONORARY PRESIDENT OF OSA, TAKES A LOOK BACK AT THESE EVENTFUL YEARS.

IT WAS 1991, THE YEAR BEFORE THE EEA REFERENDUM. The issue was all everyone was talking about. There were even groans about the scores of readers' letters in the editorial departments of small local newspapers. And, of course, the meeting of the Executive Board of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad and the Council of the Swiss Abroad by Lake Geneva also focused on the arguments for and against accession to the European Economic Area.

It was the first time I had attended an OSA congress, and I attentively observed how masterfully Rudolf Wyder navigated his way through the storm. It was not so much the EEA but a minor organisational matter that provoked controversy at the time. Outraged participants swarmed around, gesticulating and arguing with one another. And right in the middle stood our Director, calm and composed, with a facial expression that I saw many times again later and which I called his "biting the bullet" expression. Ruedi Wyder called for a break, got reorganised, spoke with those on the left and right and finally restored peace to the proceedings. I was not aware at the time of what had long been obvious to others – an extremely gifted diplomat was at work. Later, as President, I would often benefit from this strength possessed by "my right-hand man".

A MEMORY FOR FINE DETAIL

Diplomats are maligned for being long-winded and obsessed with protocol when dealing with third parties. In this respect, Ruedi is no diplomat although he is fully versed in the rules of etiquette, perhaps due to his hotel background in Diemtigtal. Dealing with people in this remote alpine valley, Ruedi presumably learned from a young age to adopt a direct and honest approach. In discussions with close friends and colleagues, he unceremoniously gets to the heart of the matter. But he can also be shrewd and

asks astute questions to extract important information from someone he is speaking to. Ruedi has a good head for names and facts. I have often been astonished at how far back he is able to recall the details of negotiations or solutions found and the names of those involved. He is also extremely accomplished, very much the diplomat in this respect too, at expressing himself precisely and elegantly and is well versed in the art of presenting convincing arguments. His contributions and reports make pleasant reading, and his proposals are usually approved.



Ruedi Wyder the diplomat is also a realist. When he took up the reins in 1985 in Alpenstrasse, there were around 400,000 Swiss residing abroad – today, there are over 715,000. It is not just the constant rise in the number of Swiss abroad that presents a major challenge for OSA, so too do the changes in the reasons for emigration. The notion of the Swiss emigrant setting off for the USA by

ship, leaving his homeland behind forever, is long gone. In the modern day, emigrants leave Switzerland for educational reasons, for fixed-term secondments at their employers' subsidiaries or for a less expensive life in the sun in old age. This changes the relationships between the Swiss residing abroad. Interest in existing institutions and Swiss clubs is declining, contact with Swiss who have long lived in a foreign country is only sought occasionally – mainly just to take advantage of their experience and network.

Ruedi Wyder recognised this development at an early stage and as Director constantly raised the question of whether the 750 or so Swiss clubs were sufficient as the basis for relations. He urged the Executive Board to consider new strategies, and the expansion of services was one of his main preoccupations. He also pushed for the election of the Council of the Swiss Abroad via the Internet. Ruedi will not experience this innovation as OSA Director but that does not diminish his achievements.

Rudolf Wyder with Federal Councillor Pascal Couchepin and Georg Stucky at the 2003 Congress of the Swiss Abroad

RIGHT TO VOTE CHANGES RELATIONS

The introduction of the right to vote by post in 1992 changed relations between the Swiss abroad and Switzerland in two ways. On the one hand, the Swiss abroad were able to co-determine Swiss issues, which strengthened their relationship with their homeland, and, on the other, Switzerland became more aware of the Swiss abroad. This is especially true of the political parties, who suddenly had new potential voters and increasingly focused attention on them. After all, 150,000 voters – roughly the number registered on the electoral rolls – equates to a medium-sized canton, such as Fribourg or Solothurn.

In 1994, I set the objective of 100,000 voters registered on the electoral rolls. Ruedi Wyder told me back then that I was a dreamer divorced from reality as federal government was estimating just 25,000. Ruedi smiles today when I remind him of that. The fact that we actually exceeded my target – thanks of course to the tremendous efforts of OSA – is of great satisfaction to us all.

The Director of OSA has had to perform new tasks and rise to new challenges in view of the electorate abroad. He has taken this on courageously and proactively and has achieved remarkable success. His persuasive efforts in the Federal Palace and the good relationships he has maintained with members of parliament and staff at the federal administration also go a long way towards explaining why the Swiss schools abroad have not been financially starved, why “Swiss Review” continues to receive federal government funding and why the Swiss Abroad Act is extremely likely to soon become a reality.

MAN OF THE PEOPLE

Of course, there have been and continue to be disappointments. When, for example, federal government announces

the closure of another consulate, I see the “biting the bullet” expression on Ruedi’s face. The arguments, contrary to the facts, which resulted in the restriction of voluntary old-age and survivors’ insurance, hit him particularly hard. He doggedly opposed this and foresaw the negative consequences. These were clearly illustrated, for example, by the crisis in Argentina ten years ago. Many of the 14,000 Swiss living there were badly affected. Ruedi Wyder travelled to Argentina and organised effective support. He also helped man the emergency hotline in 2004 when the campaign to assist the tsunami victims in East Asia got underway over the Christmas period.

In his position as OSA Director, Ruedi Wyder is also the head of a “household full of women”. Men are very underrepresented on the OSA team. Managing such a team is no easy task. However, the boss involves his staff in the processes, sets them objectives, purposefully assigns them responsibility and is capable of acting very decisively when neces-

sary. When the Executive Board once criticised him, saying that staff turnover was too high, he firstly showed – with his usual composure – his “biting the bullet” expression. He then pointed out, backed up of course by figures, that there was a “very productive” working environment at Alpenstrasse 26. On countless occasions during Ruedi’s “reign” there were celebrations because one of his staff had given birth.

And now two women from his team will succeed him – Sarah Mastantuoni and Ariane Rustichelli. They are assuming a wonderful legacy but also a challenging task in many ways.

Dr Rudolf Wyder would have received a medal abroad. In Switzerland, the gratitude of the republic in spirit must suffice. We are certainly most grateful to him, and his former president, who would not have achieved half the level of efficiency without him, wished to express that here in writing.



Honorary representations: to do or not to do – that is the question

In addition to Switzerland’s professional representations abroad (such as embassies, consulates general, missions, cooperation offices of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC etc.), the FDFA also maintains a network of around 200 honorary representations worldwide.

Can honorary consulates issue Swiss passports or visas? Can they conduct marriages or legalise documents? These are just a few of the questions that honorary representatives are often asked. This is continually highlighted at the honorary consul conferences – most recently held in Sydney in March 2013.

Honorary consuls are always assigned to a Swiss representation and represent the ambassador or consul general. They act as the eyes and ears of the Swiss authorities locally. In this role, they also represent Switzerland at local events, such as national holiday celebrations and other official occasions.

Honorary representatives maintain a network of contacts at local level – in the administration and in business, cultural, educational and scientific circles. They are in regular contact with the embassy or consulate general and provide information about opportunities to represent Swiss interests in their geographical sphere of influence. They

also provide a link to local Swiss communities abroad and help the Swiss abroad to keep in touch with one another and with Switzerland.

Local Swiss societies are in direct contact with the embassy or consulate general without using the services of the honorary representation. However, they are obviously part of the network of the honorary consuls on a social level.

In agreement with the representation to which they report, honorary representatives can also provide assistance for Swiss citizens in emergency situations, whether due to accidents, illness, theft or arrest. They keep the representation informed about local developments and/or security issues that may affect Swiss citizens abroad and may be of interest for the FDFA’s travel advice.

Switzerland’s accession to the Schengen Area in 2008 significantly changed the position of the honorary representatives. Swiss honorary staff can no longer issue visas, for example. The only administrative task carried out directly for the local Swiss community abroad is the confirmation of life certificates for the Swiss old-age and survivors’ insurance/disability insurance (AHV/IV). All other consular services are provided by the embassy or consulate general.

The FDFA once again wishes to thank all Swiss honorary staff for their invaluable contribution on behalf of Switzerland and our citizens abroad.

Text: Ambassador Marion Weichelt Krupski (Wellington) and Ambassador Marcel Stutz (Canberra)



“Rendez-Vous Bundesplatz” – autumn light show on the façade of the Federal Palace in Berne

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Vorsorgen in Schweizer Franken.

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Entering 2014 full of vigour

The FDFA's Consular Directorate wishes all Swiss abroad a wonderful festive season and every success in the New Year, and looks forward to working with you in 2014!

Front row, left to right: Markus Natsch, Nelly Gagnaux, Peter Zimmerli
Back row, left to right: Thomas Kalau, Gerhard Brügger, Maria-Teresa Minerva, Stephan Winkler



Important notice

Notify your embassy or consulate general of your email address and mobile phone number and/or any changes to them.

Register at www.swissabroad.ch to ensure you do not miss any communications ("Swiss Review", newsletter from your representation, etc.).

The latest "Swiss Review" and previous issues can be read and/or printed out at any time at www.revue.ch. "Swiss Review" (and "Gazzetta Svizzera" in Italy) is sent to all Swiss households abroad registered with an embassy or consulate general free of charge electronically (via email and as an iPad/Android app) or in printed format.

ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA

Three proposals will be put to the vote on 9 February 2014:

- Federal decree of 20 June 2013 on the financing and expansion of the railway infrastructure (direct counterproposal to the popular initiative "Für den öffentlichen Verkehr" (For public transport) – (see also page 15);
- Popular initiative of 4 July 2011 "Abtreibungsfinanzierung ist Privatsache – Entlastung der Krankenversicherung durch Streichung der Kosten des Schwangerschaftsabbruchs aus der obligatorischen Grundversicherung" (The funding of abortion is a private matter – relief for health insurance through the removal of abortion costs from mandatory basic insurance) – (see also page 15);
- Popular initiative of 14 February 2012 "Gegen Masseneinwanderung" (Against mass immigration) – (see also page 14)

All information on the proposals (voting pamphlet, committees, party statements, electronic voting, etc.) can be found at www.ch.ch/abstimmungen.

Further referendum dates in 2014: 18 May; 28 September; 30 November.

POPULAR INITIATIVES

No new popular initiatives had been launched since the publication of edition 5/2013 of "Swiss Review" and by the time of going to press for this edition. The list of pending popular initiatives can be found at www.bk.admin.ch > Aktuell > Wahlen und Abstimmungen > Hängige Volksinitiativen.

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Little gems

Incredible journeys

Fables, legends and myths are the “family history” of a nation or country. They are both a commemoration and a foundation for the present. Stories and legends are told to us as children, and then we continually recount them. Listening to stories and legends is like going on journeys and discovering cities, countries and people. The au-

dio books of legends, which the German publishing house “Michael John Verlag” has been producing for six years, provide a new way of travelling. Forty CDs have been released to date, including a double album of stories and legends from Switzerland. These include the Rütli Oath and William Tell, but also the fable of the glow worms from Ticino. There are also leg-



ends from the cities of Berne and Zurich alongside those from Brazil and New Zealand,

for example. Listening allows you to escape like a child into unfamiliar worlds, not least thanks to the extraordinary storytellers. A booklet containing concise additional information is enclosed with every audio book. (BE)

Price: EUR 14.90 per CD.
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www.john-verlag.de



Finally available in translation

Alfonsina Storni, the daughter of emigrants from Ticino, is regarded as one of the greatest artists of the 20th century in Latin America and enjoys legendary status in her homeland of Argentina. As she herself said, she wrote “to avoid dying”. She took her own life in 1938 aged 46. Storni’s work caused a furore and had a major public impact. Her way of life, a single mother and the lover of a married man, shocked society. (Charles Linsmayer gave an account of her life in “Swiss Review” in June 2013,

as part of the “literature series”).

Other works by Storni – in addition to her love poetry – have now finally also been translated into German. “Meine Seele hat kein Geschlecht” is the title of the book published by the literary scholar Hildegard Elisabeth Keller. As the sub-title indicates, the book contains narratives, columns and provocative works. Alfonsina Storni wrote for weekly magazines and newspapers in Argentina for around 20 years. She watched people in the streets and bars of the city, at social events, while flirting, dancing the tango and at work. She was a critical observer, a campaigner for women’s liberty, and she possessed a keen sense of humour and a penchant for irony. All of this makes her work highly enjoyable reading. (BE)

Alfonsina Storni “Meine Seele hat kein Geschlecht”, Limmat Verlag Zurich, 320 pages. CHF 44, EUR 38

Stories of Swiss emigration

Ilona Shulman Spaar grew up in Engelberg, in the canton of Obwalden, studied art history in Basel and then emigrated to Vancouver, Canada, seven years ago. There she carried out research into contemporary indigenous art and started a family with a Canadian. She has now published a highly impressive book on the destinies of other Swiss emigrants.

She recounts the stories of emigrants to Canada with historical accuracy but also great compassion. These include the marriage between a 22-year-old named Ermatinger from Schaffhausen with a 15-year-old Ojibwa princess Mananowe, whose 30 years of happy wedlock produced 13 children and saw the professional and political rise of this Swiss trapper to the upper echelons of Montreal society in the 18th century. Another story tells of Felix Schellenberg and his modern “cowboy in Canada” dream. Originally from Hilfikon in Zurich, Schellenberg and his wife Jasmin from Basel founded the bio-dynamic Demeter Cattle Ranch in 1979 in the wilderness of the Chilcotin Valley in British Columbia. Three generations live there today. The book is richly illustrated and reveals much about the Swiss pioneering spirit in Canada. (SIS)

Ilona Schulman Spaar “Swiss Immigration to Canada”; 240 pages; available from www.amazon.ca; 25 CAD



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Bulletins

Rudolf Friedrich passes away

Former Federal Councillor Rudolf Friedrich passed away in his home town of Winterthur in mid-October at the age of 90. Friedrich, a trained lawyer, was elected to the Federal Council as an FDP representative in 1982, taking over the Federal Department of Justice and Police. He was forced to step down from office just under two years later for health reasons and was succeeded by Federal Councillor Elisabeth Kopp. Throughout his life, Friedrich voiced his views as a committed citizen on political issues, notably during the referendum campaigns over Switzerland's accession to the UN and EEA.

More and more popular initiatives

Increasingly frequent use is being made of popular initiatives in Switzerland to achieve political objectives. The Swiss people voted on seven initiatives per decade on average between 1940 and 1970. There were 16 from 1971 to 1980, 34 between 2001 and 2010, and 11 from January 2010 till now. There are currently 34 initiatives pending or at the signature-collecting stage.

Several initiatives on agricultural policy

The Swiss People's Party (SVP) launched a popular initiative at the start of November that aims to enshrine Switzerland's level of self-sufficiency in the constitution. Other pending proposals concerning agricultural policy include the Young Socialists' initiative "No speculation with food", an initiative from the Green Party seeking to increase import standards for food and feedstuffs, and the Swiss Farmers' Union's "initiative to en-

hance sustainable domestic food production".

No new canton of Jura

On 24 November 2013, the people of the canton of Jura and of the Bernese Jura voted on whether a large canton of Jura should be formed. In the canton of Jura 77% came out in favour of the proposal, while 72% in the Bernese Jura rejected it. The project will not be pursued as it required the approval of both regions. However, the town of Moutier, which was the only commune in the Bernese Jura to approve the project, may request a change of canton. The contentious issue of the Jura appeared to have been resolved in 1979 when northern Jura separated from Berne and formed its own canton – but the debate has continued, ultimately resulting in the referendum on 24 November.

Against the tax agreement with France

Switzerland's inheritance tax agreement with France has little prospect of being adopted by Parliament. The National Council's Economic Affairs Committee has recommended not entering into it at all by 15 votes to seven with three abstentions. The committee's majority opinion is that an unregulated situation is preferable to the agreement signed by Federal Councillor Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf.

Correction

An error was made in the report on the 1:12 initiative in the October issue of "Swiss Review". Oswald Grubel was incorrectly referred to as Marcel Ospel in the photo caption. We apologise for this mistake.

Quotes

"Nobody is going to gift us anything."

Federal Councillor Schneider-Ammann on international trade relations after a visit to Brussels.

"He who was presented with an ox must give in return a horse."

Chinese proverb

"If you start giving presents, the friendship will soon be over."

French proverb

"Some of us are a bit too virtuous. I'm not always."

Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard on her party, the CVP, and herself

"The sheep is deemed stupid because it's dutiful."

Farming adage

"Darbellay is simply too over-excited, he swings from left-wing populism to right-wing populism from one week to the next."

Michael Hermann, a political scientist, on the CVP's Party President

"I enjoy eating and drinking with the people of Appenzell, but I enjoy being their compatriot even more."

President of Switzerland Ueli Maurer at the "500 years of Appenzell in the Swiss Confederation" anniversary event

"Ultimately, man finds in things nothing but what he himself has imported into them."

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), German philosopher



"Your memory will live on" – "...for millions of years"

The Mühleberg nuclear power station will be decommissioned in 2019, according to a surprise announcement by its operator, BKW Energie AG, on 30 October 2013. The management explained that technical, political and economic factors had led to the decision. Doubts have long been raised about the safety of the Mühleberg nuclear power plant due to numerous incidents and emergency shutdowns, and a popular initiative calling for the "immediate decommissioning" of Mühleberg was launched in the wake of the reactor accident in Fukushima.

The shutdown in 2019 will be followed by a "post-operational phase" during which the highly radioactive waste will be cooled down in cooling installations. It will then be put into transport and storage containers and taken to an interim storage facility where the nuclear waste will be prepared over a period of some 35 years for geological disposal. The final repository has yet to be decided upon. There is huge opposition from the public in regions where geological disposal could potentially take place.



Masks for New Year's Eve in Urnäsch in the canton of Appenzel (AR) on January 13th, Eastern Switzerland / Liechtenstein

Long live the New Year with vibrant winter traditions.

Welcoming the New Year

In Switzerland many different traditions and customs linked to New Year's Eve and winter are celebrated. They often give rise to noisy processions of strange and sometimes terrifying figures, accompanied by the sound of bells or the cracking of whips. It's a way of chasing away evil spirits in order to start the New Year on the right foot, or to see in the end of a long winter.

"Silvesterchlausen" in Appenzell

At dawn on the 1st or 13th of January, strange figures dressed in beautiful costumes invade the whole valley of Urnäsch in the canton of Appenzel (AR). "Wüeschte" (ugly figures), dressed in natural materials, "Schöne" (beautiful figures) and "Schö-Wüeschte" (beautiful ugly figures) ring the small and larger bells that adorn their clothing and go from house to house wishing a happy New Year to the residents within.

The wild ones of Lötschental

The remote valley of Lötschental in Valais has given rise to a number of different stories and legends. These are behind the custom of the dancing, masked carnival figures, the "Tschäggättä", who make their appearance in the valley around the time of Candlemas, scaring all those in their path.

Witches on the slopes

It's the maddest ski race of the season. Kitted out with their brooms, up to 1,000 witches take part in this popular race in the Aletsch region.

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The spirits of Appenzell

In addition to the procession of the "Chläuse" figures through the Urnäsch valley, the Säntis region offers a vast array of winter sports, from trekking in snow shoes to sleigh rides.

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The valley of the masks

An introduction to sculpting the wooden "Tschäggättä" masks is a very original way to round off a stay in Lötschental, the winter sports paradise in the canton of Valais.

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