

Mailbag

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Thank you

It was very interesting to read about the history of the Swiss chocolate industry, but I was a bit disappointed that it didn't cover the events of recent times. We were shocked the other day to read on the box of our Toblerone chocolates that Tobler AG is now a subsidiary of the Phillip Morris cigarette company! Globalisation versus tradition? Chockies for the highest bidder? We do appreciate the "Swiss Review", thank you!

ANNAMARIA MAGNUS, TASMANIA



Rey for becoming the next President of the Confederation. I am sure she will take wise charge – long life to her! Thank you again for keeping me in touch with my country that I miss so much. Hopefully my husband

and I will be back home soon, especially for me (but my husband, who is American, loves the food and the countryside of Switzerland).

MICHELE WHITEAKER,
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY, USA

Keep it clean

A page in the 6/06 edition is headed "Review of the Year 2006". On that page there is a short story entitled "Christoph Blocher slips up repeatedly". If it is your intention to give your view on how politicians are doing, please tell me, and I will let you know that I am not interested in receiving your publication. May I suggest you keep it clean and do not go that way? There is plenty of nasty stuff to write about Federal Councillors operating to the left of centre.

PETER SCHAAD, LONDON,
GREAT BRITAIN

Who knows best?

On your Mailbag page in issue 6/06, A. Brandenburg from Canada warned the Swiss about Christoph Blocher and the SVP. They think they know better than the other parties, she said. My question to her is: do the other parties know better? Has A. Brandenburg been taken in by the media, nearly all of which oppose Christoph Blocher? In my opinion, Mr Blocher and the SVP aspire to more down-to-earth, sincere and more sensible policies, and are keen to keep Switzerland as independent as possible for as long as possible.

B. WACHTER, KANDY, SRI LANKA

Homesick heart

How lovely that you chose a Christmas tale by Minu. My "homesick heart" laughed with joy, and I was happy (and a little proud) that it was written by



"en Bebbi". I miss Minu here in Finland. I think about him every year at Christmas while I'm hanging up his red velvet hearts.

E. HUNZINGER-LYHDE,
FINLAND

Congratulations

Thank you so much for keeping me in touch with what is going on in my country. My husband and I read your issue "from A to Z". I especially love your article about chocolate. I will give this issue to my American friends and neighbours to read. Few people here know that Switzerland makes other brands of chocolate beside Nestlé and Lindt. Thank you! I wanted to congratulate Mrs. Calmy-

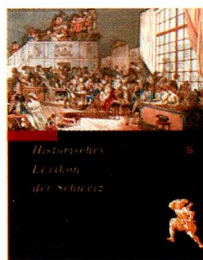
Five volumes have already been published, a total of thirteen are planned. Once the country's most ambitious humanities project ever is completed, some 36,000 articles on people, families, places and specialist subjects will provide a comprehensive overview of the history of Switzerland from the Old Stone Age to the present day. The first volume of the Historical Dictionary of Switzerland appeared with identical content in the country's three official languages – German, French and Italian – in 2002. The encyclopaedia gives all regions of Switzerland appropriate coverage using a fixed key.

The Historical Dictionary of Switzerland has been an ongoing project since 1988, and aims to present the status quo of knowledge about the history of Switzerland in the form of an encyclopaedia. The work is produced by the

Helvetisches Lexikon der Schweiz foundation, which operates under the patronage of the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Swiss Historical Society. The project is funded by the state from tax revenues. The editorial board consists of about 30 people, although more than 2500 writers are involved in the production of this mammoth work. The editor-in-chief is Marco Jorio.

Thanks to modern graphic design, the encyclopaedia is as attractive a reference work as it is well laid-out. About 20 percent of the space is reserved for images, which are backed up and complemented by appropriate texts. Numerous graphs, maps and tables visually illustrate and expand on the presented information.

The encyclopaedia spans all of human history from Man's first appearance in the region to the present day. All periods of history are addressed, although not necessarily in equal measure. The more recent the event, the more space it is given. Some 10 percent of the text deals with prehistory and ancient history, 20 percent is devoted to the Middle Ages, 30 percent to the modern age and the remaining 40 percent covers the 19th, 20th and early 21st Centuries. According to the encyclopaedia's editors, modern historiography has in recent decades shifted away from simply cataloguing political events and their players to presenting in its place an "histoire totale" that considers all aspects of society. Interest in more general structures and processes as well as the everyday lives of all sections of society has increased sharply, they say. This development is taken into account in the choice of material.



The Historical Dictionary of Switzerland is the first reference book on Swiss history since Victor Attinger's Historico-Biographical Encyclopaedia of the 1920s and 1930s.

It is a real pleasure leafing through the pages of the Historical Dictionary of Switzerland, looking at the images, reading the texts and learning about Switzerland in such an exciting

and clear manner. A version of the encyclopaedia has also been on the Internet since 1998, but who wants such information electronically when it's available in such a wonderful printed form? The Historical Dictionary of Switzerland is a delight for all lovers of beautiful books. www.hls.ch

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