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Little gems



Rwanda and the Swiss aid workers

Whenever Rwanda is mentioned, the first thing most people probably think of is the genocide of 1994, the massacre of the Tutsi by the Hutu. The film "Wir kamen um zu helfen"

(We came to help) by the Swiss director Thomas Isler also deals with these horrific events but focuses on Switzerland's development aid efforts in Rwanda. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) began developing pro-

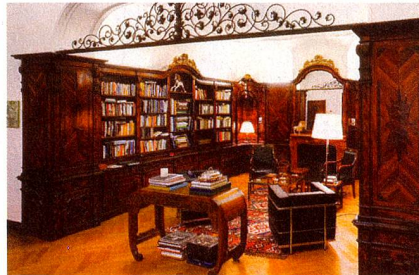


jects in Rwanda as early as 1963 – the country had received almost 350 million Swiss francs by 1993.

Isler's film does not provide a critical review of development aid and the SDC but instead tackles fundamental issues of

development cooperation. Where do superior and condescending attitudes come from? What fantasies of omnipotence lie behind the notion of development aid? The people concerned – aid workers and Rwandans – are given the opportunity to voice their views. The outcome is a fascinating film about an issue that is always contentious. The good news is it is also available on DVD.

DVD original version d/f/Rwandan, subtitles f/d/e; 87 mins; available from maximage, Neugasse 6, CH-8005 Zurich; www.maximage.ch; email info@maximage.ch; tel. +41 44 274 88 66



Switzerland's visiting cards

The Swiss embassies and consulates worldwide are a showcase and visiting card for our country. However, ordinary people rarely get to see inside them – apart from the offices with the counter where the Swiss abroad have to complete their paperwork. A book has now been published that will allow readers to satisfy their curiosity about the architecture and inner workings of Swiss embassies. Thirty-four Swiss representations abroad are presented in an illustrated book published by the "Gesellschaft für Schweizerische

Kunstgeschichte" (Society for Art History in Switzerland) in Berne. The list extends from Ankara to Wellington. The texts are short as the photographs are very revealing. The architecture ranges from conventional to ostentatious, as do the furnishings.

Title: "Swiss Embassies and Missions Abroad"; author: Catherine Courtiau; foreword: Federal Councillors Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf and Didier Burkhalter; publisher: Gesellschaft für Schweizerische Kunstgeschichte, available from www.gsk.ch; bilingual German and French hardback edition CHF 80; English eBook CHF 40

Great words

There are speeches that have gone down in world history – Pope Urban's speech launching the crusades or Kennedy's speech in Berlin. Whether they changed the course of world history is open to question. But they are reminders of the past reflecting the mood, fears and aspirations of a particular moment in time. The historian and journalist Felix Münger put together a highly successful series of broadcasts on SRF Radio in March entitled "Speeches that wrote history" by Swiss people. It fea-

tured Karl Spitteler, Robert Grimm, Marcel Pilet-Golaz, Eduard von Steiger, Hans Peter Tschudi, Emilie Lieberherr,

Aernschd Born, Elisabeth Kopp, Friedrich Dürrenmatt and Christoph Blocher. To coincide with the broadcasts, the hier-jetzt publishing house has issued a carefully produced book with detailed background information and extracts from the speeches. Felix Münger takes listeners and readers on an enjoyable and informative journey through a century of Swiss history.

"Reden, die Geschichte schrieben"; Verlag hier-jetzt Aarau; 320 pages; CHF 39. www.hierundjetzt.ch; series of broadcasts from SRF radio: www.srf.ch/radio-srf-1/radio-srf-1/reden-die-geschichte-schrieben



Bulletins

Yes to law on Swiss education abroad

The federal law on the provision of Swiss education abroad was adopted by the National Council in March. The Council of States had already approved the bill in December. The law enables the 17 Swiss schools abroad to take in more foreign pupils and thus extend their financial basis. The Swiss schools will also be able to offer vocational courses based on the Swiss model.

Ever more cross-border workers

The number of cross-border workers rose by 3.8% in Switzerland in 2013. A total of 278,500 foreign employees were registered as cross-border workers, 64.2% men and 35.8% women. Over half of the cross-border workers (52.4%) live in France, 23.7% travel to Switzerland from Italy and 20.5% come from Germany. Among the cross-border workers 17.3% are employed as support staff, a figure far higher than the Swiss average (3.7%). In contrast, academic professions are extremely underrepresented: 11.6% among cross-border workers, 22.5% in the Swiss workforce.

Giving and receiving compliments

To mark World Compliment Day on 1 March, a survey was conducted in Switzerland among 8,000 Swiss people on their experiences with compliments. Interestingly, there is clearly a huge gap between perception and reality. One in two people surveyed indicated that they give compliments every day, but only one in five receives a compliment daily.

The survey revealed that people in Ticino give the most compliments and German-speaking Swiss the fewest.

Voting by name

A study by two researchers from the Federal Institute of Technology Zurich and the University of Geneva has revealed that during elections in Switzerland candidates with foreign names are eliminated from the electoral ticket much more frequently than those with Swiss names. The discrimination effect stood at 28% in the canton of Zurich where around 5% of candidates had foreign-sounding names – mainly from the Balkans – at Cantonal Council elections. In Geneva, of the 12% with non-Swiss names, it was mainly those with African names who were eliminated from the lists of candidates. The discrimination effect here stood at 5%.

Statistics on immigration and emigration

A total of 1,886,630 foreigners were living in Switzerland at the end of 2013, according to data from the Federal Statistical Office. This represents an increase of 61,570 people compared to the previous year (+3.4%). The majority – 1,248,726 people (just under 66%) – come from EU/EFTA states. Their numbers rose by 4.5% compared to the previous year. A total of 155,401 foreigners arrived in Switzerland in 2013 (an 8% increase compared to 2012). There was also a 6.3% rise in the number of emigrants with 70,023 people leaving Switzerland.

Quotes

"Small nations are punished like little children. Switzerland should not put up with that."

Christoph Blocher, National Councillor and SVP strategist on the EU's stance towards Switzerland

"The only question that the EU is interested in now is: 'Will Switzerland adhere to the agreement on free movement, yes or no?'"

Yves Rossier, Secretary General at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and chief diplomat in the negotiations with the EU after the approval of the mass immigration initiative

"Confuse me not by contradiction. You err as soon as you begin to speak."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), German author

"He who knows does not speak, He who speaks does not know."

Lao Tzu, Chinese philosopher from the 6th century B.C.

"One wishes for laziness in wicked men and silence in fools."

Nicolas de Chamfort (1741–1794), French moralist

"Nothing is more miserable than a Lord dominated by pride."

Miguel de Cervantes (1547–1616), Spanish author

"He who does not want to obey the law should leave the place where it is enforced."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"We can't carry on if things carry on as they are."

Erich Kästner (1899–1974), German author



Swiss athletes won 11 medals at the Olympic Games in Sochi (photos from left to right). Dario Cologna was the most successful, winning two gold medals (cross-country skiathlon and 15km cross-country classic). Gold also went to Dominique Gisin (downhill skiing), Patrizia Kummer (snowboard giant slalom), Iouri Podladtchikov (snowboard halfpipe) and Sandro Viletta (super-combined skiing). Selina Gasparin (biathlon 15km individual race), Nevin Galmarini (snowboard giant slalom) and Beat Hefti and Alex Baumann (two-man bobsleigh) won silver medals. Lara Gut (downhill skiing) and the women's ice hockey team picked up bronze medals.

