

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 27 (2000)
Heft: 3

Vorwort: If we could only build bridges...
Autor: Tschanz, Pierre-André

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 15.03.2025

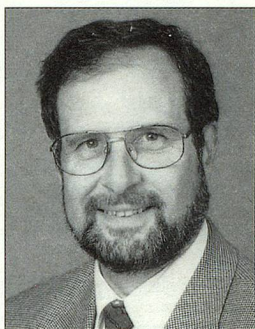
ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

If we could only build bridges...

It is now fifty years since Switzerland last embarked on a major project: the construction of the country's motorway network, which is still not completed. Now it has launched a bold new mammoth project to construct base tunnels for a railway route through the alpine massif.

These new construction projects will increase mobility, enhance the competitiveness of rail transport, relieve our environment of thousands of tonnes of emissions, cut traffic on transit routes, and bring the North and South of Switzerland as well as the continent closer together.

In a recently broadcast report on the role of leading-edge technology in resolving current and future problems, Austrian TV singled out Swiss transport policy and its objectives, i.e. to shift goods



Pierre-André Tschanz

Who keeps an image of the Mont-Blanc tunnel?

traffic from road to rail and to construct a rail tunnel below the Lötschberg and Gotthard passes.

This gigantic dual construction site is highly beneficial to the psychological wellbeing of the Swiss. However, bridge-building would be an even more effective ego-booster since, unlike tunnels, bridges do not tend to have negative associations.

Schiller might have written "Through this black tunnel he must come" when describing unavoidable and demoralising tasks. It is this psychological hurdle which is the greatest enemy of a much more innovative and ambitious plan than the alpine tunnel: the Swissmetro project for a magnetic underground tube railway in a partial-vacuum.

Derived from the Latin *tonna*, meaning "cylindrical vault", the word "tunnel" means "an underground passageway". However, in the metaphorical sense it denotes a difficult phase of life filled with problems or suffering, and people often talk of the light at the end of the tunnel when describing a positive development following a period of disappointment. This may also explain why, even shortly after entering the 17 kilometer-long Gotthard Tunnel, one begins to long for the tunnel exit, which seems so far away in this airless world of sinister darkness. Basically the only time one looks forward to a tunnel is at its opening.

The psychological wellbeing of the Swiss would therefore be better served by building bridges. Bridges are often regarded as works of art. One admires their silhouettes, harmony and the formal beauty of their arches in the same way as one would admire a nude by Renoir or Modigliani. One pauses, admires and photographs them. Most of us have seen the Golden Gate Bridge of San Francisco, the bridge over the Firth of Forth in Scotland or the Pont du Gard in France, even if only in pictures. But who would keep an image of the Mont-Blanc or St. Bernard tunnels?

Pierre-André Tschanz



FOCUS

Mobility in the Alps **4**

OFFICIAL NEWS **9**

OSA NEWS **11**

SOLISWISS **13**

MAILBAG **14**

SRI NEWS **15**

CULTURE

Football stadium plans **16**

POLITICS

11th AHV revision **18**

VOTING

Results of referendum on 21 May 2000 **20**

MOSAIC **22**



No other country has as dense network of motorways as Switzerland: 83 km² of roads, roughly equivalent to the surface area of Lake Zurich. The Oftringen (AG) intersection is one of the busiest axes for long-distance traffic.
(Cover: MARKUS SENN)

SWISS REVIEW

Swiss Review, the magazine for the Swiss Abroad, is in its 27th year of issue and is published in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish in more than 20 regional editions. It has a total circulation of over 355,000. Regional news appears four times a year.

Editors: Lukas M. Schneider (LS), Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad (Chairman); Alice Baumann (AB), Press Bureau Alice Baumann Conception, Berne; Pierre-André Tschanz (PAT), Swiss Radio International, Berne; Dario Ballanti (DB), parliamentary correspondent of *Corriere del Ticino*; Editor of Official News: Robert Nyffeler (NYF), Service for the Swiss Abroad, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, CH-3003 Berne. Translator: Nicolette Chisholm.

Publisher, Editorial Office, Advertising: Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3000 Berne 16; Tel: +41 31 351 61 00, Fax: +41 31 351 61 50, Postal Cheque Account (Swiss National Giro): 30-6768-9.

Printed by: Buri Druck AG, CH-3084 Wabern.

Change of address: Please advise your local Embassy or Consulate – do not write to Berne.

Internet: <http://www.revue.ch> **E-mail:** revue@aso.ch