

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 12 (1985)
Heft: 2

Artikel: Baba Maggi - the doctor of the tropical forest : it all began over 36 years ago ...
Autor: I.F.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-907711>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. 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. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

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. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

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. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 22.08.2025

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

184. **Quintero** Jose, Bogota
185. **Mejia** Juan Pablo, Bogota
186. **Vollono** Valeria, Bogota
187. **Tobon** Paula, Bogota
188. **Cotrino** Andres, Bogota
189. **Paredes** Juan, Bogota
190. **Röthlisberger** Alexandra, Bogota
191. **Canasco** Carlos, Mexico
192. **Vilalta** Nikolaus, Mexico
193. **Straub** Barbara, Mexico
194. **Garcia Moreno** Astrid, Mexico
195. **Mendoza** Luisa Fca, Bogota
196. **Pacheco** Andrea, Bogota
197. **Gomez** Claudia, Bogota
198. **Posada** Angela, Bogota
199. **Villamizar** Alejandra, Bogota
200. **Gutierrez** José Pompiño, Bogota
201. **Camacho** Roberto, Bogota
202. **Gustavo** Adolfo, Bogota
203. **Urdareta** Guillermo, Bogota
204. **Coplace** Priscille, Bogota
205. **Deletra** John, Bogota
206. **Amore** Claudia, Bogota
207. **Kuster** Maja Luzinde, Bogota
208. **Pena** Zimena, Bogota
209. **Rico** Adriana, Bogota
210. **Lopez** Rafael, Bogota
211. **Nino** Jimena, Bogota
212. **Grigalivnas** Linas, Bogota
213. **Koller** Johann, Bogota
214. **Carrillo** Adriana, Bogota
215. **Serrano** Nicolas, Bogota
216. **Calderori** Andres, Bogota
217. **Higuera** Juan Sebastian, Bogota
218. **Moure** Benjamin, Bogota
219. **Jumenez** Andres, Bogota
220. **Wind** Mariana, Mexico
221. **Lopez** Marcela, Bogota
222. **Escobar** Natalia, Bogota
223. **Matallana** Ana Maria, Bogota
224. **Arango** Luis Enrique, Bogota
225. **Pinilla** Jorge Arturo, Bogota
226. **Bhatti** Luresch, Mexico
227. **Boker** Andres, Mexico
228. **Decaillet** Sylvie, Bogota
229. **Pabon** Mauricio, Bogota
230. **Williams** Jorge, Bogota
231. **Santiago** Riler, Bogota
232. **Bönegi** Cesar, Mexico
233. **Monici** Paula Daniela, Bogota
234. **Garcia** Sandra, Bogota
235. **Willy** Augusto, Bogota
236. **Santiago** Bravo, Bogota
237. **Garanito** Juan Pablo, Bogota
238. **Schultze** Juan Francisco, Bogota
239. **Camargo** César Alejandro, Bogota
240. **Röthlisberger** Diego Garcia, Bogota
241. **Garcia** Josué, Mexico
242. **Bateman** Anamaria, Bogota
243. **Zavala** Arturo, Mexico
244. **Borda** Maria Fernanda, Bogota
245. **Torre** Paola, Bogota
246. **Galuis** Mauricio, Bogota
247. **Medina** Alberto, Bogota
248. **Mendoza** Maria Fernanda, Bogota
249. **Varon** Ximena, Bogota
250. **Alvarez** Irene, Mexico
251. **La Rota** Cristina, Bogota
252. **Coral** Juan Carlos, Bogota
253. **Glauning** Andreas, Bangkok
254. **Saladin** Patrick, Bangkok
255. **Witt** Carolina, Bangkok
256. **Velasco** Sandra, Bogota
257. **Schurter** Marcela, Bogota
258. **Gonzales** Ana Maria, Bogota
259. **Volpers** Walter, Mexico
260. **Sorachet** Uraiphan, Bangkok
261. **Malo** Mauricio, Mexico
262. **Caceres** Jorge, Bogota
263. **Williams** Mario, Bogota
264. **Diaz** Liliana, Bogota
265. **Salamanca** Bernardo, Bogota
266. **Botero** Catalina, Bogota
267. **Tobon** Paola, Bogota
268. **Mooser** Michael, Mexico
269. **Borda** Christine Patricia, Bogota
270. **Rueda** Ariane Camila, Bogota
271. **Verxuquel** Cristina, Bogota
272. **Orejuela** Felipe, Bogota
273. **Navarro** José Mauricio, Bogota
274. **Marquez** Mauricio, Bogota
275. **Grosclaude** Manera Luis, Madrid
276. **Jaritz** Alessandra, Bangkok
277. **Laverde** Ana Maria, Bogota
278. **Forero** Carolina, Bogota
279. **Rutishauser** Sabine, Madrid
280. **Alvarez** Enrique, Mexico
281. **Acosta** Omar, Mexico
282. **Peters** Martin, Bangkok
283. **Bernhard** Samuel, Bogota
284. **Leyra** José Pablo, Bogota
285. **Bösiger** Jorge, Mexico
286. **Umona** Nicolas, Bogota
287. **Christoph** Ninja, Bangkok
288. **Laverde** Carolina, Bogota
289. **Ressel** Dirk, Bogota
290. **Kessler** Daniela, Mexico
291. **Von Allmen** Alexandra, Mexico
292. **Lopez** Liliana, Bogota
293. **Quintero**, Angela M., Bogota
294. **Müller** Roland, Bangkok
295. **Del Campo** Silvia, Madrid
296. **Umana** Maria Andrea, Bogota
297. **Laverde** Julian, Bogota
298. **Lippuner** Nicole, Bogota
299. **Mendoza** Alejandra, Bogota
300. **Borrero** Catalina, Bogota

Baba Maggi – the doctor of the tropical forest

It all began over 36 years ago ...

Almost a fairy-tale.

Giuseppe Maggi was the son of an engineer who taught him a different handicraft or trade every summer holiday; after a happy childhood in the Ticino and effortless studies in Lausanne and Paris, as well as a few years of practical work in the Canton of Neuchâtel and the Ticino, Maggi suddenly felt the call to go to Africa – as he confessed later, he wanted to see the Kilimandjaro.

Thus he has been in Tanganyika since 1948 as doctor and director of a hospital in the service of the Mission of White Brethren. He got to know the black continent and above all its inhabitants, and this became quite a passion. He also had to face all kinds of sicknesses, those from Europe as well as tropical diseases.

Quick action became vital. There was only one thing that mattered to him: to keep thousands of



people from a dark and certain death. In 1952, he left Tanganyika and went to the Cameroons. There, in the heart of the tropical forest, near Duala, he started work of which nobody ever heard. He built a hospital with his own hands, the first of a long row. In fact, no sooner had he finished one and made it operational, he handed it over to the

local diocese and moved on. Year by year he went on, further north, in stages of 150–200 km, and everywhere he left new hospitals and emergency stations. After St. André it was Omwan in 1956, next Tokombéré in 1959. He might possibly have remained there were it not for a hard blow fate dealt him which later turned out to be a bit of luck for him – a big fire destroyed his work, his house, everything except his glasses!

This dramatic night meant a turning-point in the life of Giuseppe Maggi. The news of the fire spread throughout Europe and also to Switzerland. Several charitable organizations got involved and collected money. Dr. Maggi rebuilt the hospital of Tokombéré, better than before. Since then he has not been alone, his name became known and he knew that help was there for him.

This encouraged him, and he once again started out for the north. In the village of Petté he began a fourth hospital. When it was completed, he gave the keys to Anna Maria Schoenenberger, a Lausanne doctor.

Baba Maggi as many natives call him familiarly, has a new idea, to continue his way to Zinah, the beautiful village in the middle of the savannah. He discovered it one night due to a puncture on his jeep. It is already 11 years now since the hospital there became operational.

A sixth hospital, the last in the row, was opened at Mada-Masaki in 1982, for Dr. Maggi could not be prevented from moving on his way. And he not only treats the sick, but does everything in his power to make sure that the fight will be carried on after his departure.

He is general practitioner and specialist all in one, surgeon, children's doctor, dentist, physiologist, but also an architect, and he knows everything about mechanics, he can picture a building-site in all details, and all this is by no means the end of the list.

On 3rd March 1985, Dr. Maggi will celebrate his 75th birthday and complete 40 years in the service of mankind.

Our best wishes on your birthday, Dr. Maggi, and many thanks! I. F.



has ceased trading

A man in the service of the Swiss abroad



Q: Dr Schuerch, you, like few others, are attached to the work of the Organization of Swiss Abroad. You started your professional career as a young lawyer at the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad, on the staff and as member of various committees from 1934 to 1941. From 1943 onward you belonged to the Commission of the Swiss Abroad,

which you presided over from 1959–1966. What led you to this «vocation»? How did you get involved with the problems of «Fifth Switzerland»?

A: As newly graduated lawyer, 24 years old, I was looking for a job as many other lawyers had to at that time. The Confederation reduced pay at a time of deflation, whilst the Secretariat of the Swiss abroad paid me Fr. 600.– a month, which enabled me to marry my fiancée.

Yet the problems of the Swiss abroad were not entirely unknown to me, for my father had chaired the Commission of the Swiss Abroad for a number of years. In addition, a period abroad at the age of 19 allowed me to get acquainted at first hand with the problems which I later had to face.

Gerhart Schuerch

Born on 23rd March 1910, in Bienne
Lawyer, Dr iur.

1934–1940	On the staff of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad
1943–1984	Member of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad
1949–1953	Central President of the New Helvetic Society
1959–1966	President of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad
1941–1944	Minors' Counsel of the Bernese Oberland
1947–1948	Delegate of the Schweizerspende/Don Suisse
1962–1975	Finance Director of the Municipality of Berne
1962–1971	Member of the Berne Grand Council
1968	Head of mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Civil War in Nigeria (Biafra).
1971–1979	National Councillor
1976–1980	Delegate to the Council of Europe

In the army, he was Colonel on the General Staff and commanded a mountain infantry regiment.

At the Assembly of Swiss Abroad in Basle in May 1984, Dr. Schuerch gave his resignation as member of the Commission. We should like to express our thanks for his devoted work and are sure to do this in the name of all Swiss compatriots abroad, for they were able to benefit for many years from his work in their interest.