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Well-protected feet

Now, when our feet are starting to get cold again in Europe, is the perfect moment to tell the story of Dan and Galina Witting, two Swiss Abroad. Several years ago when Dan was



working for a Swiss company in Indonesia, Galina, recalling her childhood in Russia, began making felt boots, known as valenki, in her garage. She put her products on display at an exhibition, and a large company gave her an order to supply 700 pairs of felt boots. That moment marked the birth of the company Baabuk and today, just over three years later, Baabuk has a 20-strong workforce in Nepal – where felting is a well-known technique – manufacturing boots, sneakers and slippers in a wide range of varieties. In an email to the editorial team, Dan

Witting explained that Baabuk attaches great importance to environmental protection. The shoes are made from wool and recycled, renewable materials, keeping feet warm and snug at really cold temperatures. Prices range from 50 euros for children's slippers to 120 euros for sneakers. BE

Full details about products, the company's history and shipping can be found at www.baabuk.com



An insight into the very "little freedom" of the Yeniche "Kleine Freiheit" (little freedom) is the title Michèle Minelli and Anne Bürgisser have given to their book about the Yeniche in Switzerland. They dedicate the carefully produced publication particularly to the minority who have not permanently settled. Minelli opts for very personal access to her subjects, but at the same time produces a comprehensive and well-founded portrayal of the 3,000 to 5,000 travellers whose "lit-

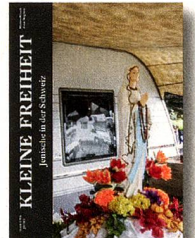


tle freedom" sometimes really is very restricted when considered in the clear light of day. The book does more than paint an atmospheric picture. It



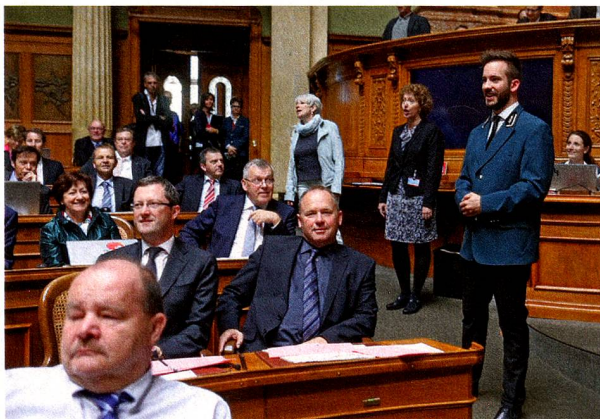
also shows change. Minelli carried out her research right at the time when a change of mood was occurring amongst Yeniche travellers. Since their protests in spring 2014, a self-assured generation of younger Yeniche has emerged who are asserting their rights (also see "Swiss Review" 4/2014). Seen from this perspective, the book is an important and carefully compiled contemporary document. MUL

"Kleine Freiheit – Jenische in der Schweiz", Michèle Minelli (editorial) and Anne Bürgisser (photos); available in German; Verlag Hier und Jetzt, Baden; 2015, ISBN 978-3-03919-359-2; CHF 49, EUR 49



Polyphonic but harmonious Parliament

Just imagine the scene – a group of visitors suddenly break into song in the middle of the National Council chamber, some of the parliamentary secretaries join in and in the end the liveried ushers, photographers and journalists are also part of an impressively melodious choir which brings the business of Swiss government to a standstill for six minutes. One is tempted to say that there has never been such a movingly polyphonic and harmonious exchange beneath the Federal Palace's cupola. The omnipresence of Swiss television cameras in the Federal Palace means that non-parliamentarians can now also



share in the musical event. Viewers will see that the apparently flabbergasted President of the National Council, Stéphane Rossini from the SP Valais, had to abandon the agenda as Parliament looked on in amazement and then applauded generously. But what was it actually all about? An attack on Parliament by musicians? The first flash mob to

gather in the National Council? The secret lies with Rossini, who was only feigning surprise. He had organised the event with the Ardent choir as a genuine surprise gift for Council members who will no longer be there next year. MUL

Link to the National Council choir: www.ardent.ch

