

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 44 (2017)
Heft: 3

Inhaltsverzeichnis

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: 05.04.2026

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

A dual identity

- 5 Mailbag
- 6 Focus
The reform of old-age pension
- 10 Politics
A national solution for undocumented immigrants?
- 12 Culture
Francine Jordi turns 40
Panoramic paintings in Lucerne and Thun
- News from around the world
- 17 Literature series
Urs Widmer's Congo
- 18 Culture
The films of the priest Joye
- 20 Science
Flying with "Birdly"
- 21 OSA news
- 25 news.admin.ch
- 28 Images
Swiss tourism posters of yesteryear
- 30 Books
"Kraft" by Jonas Lüscher
- 30 Sounds
"Mozart, Arias" by Regula Mühlemann
- 31 Top pick
- 31 Echo



You will notice from my surname that I have foreign roots. Lehtinen is a Finnish name which is as common there as Müller or Meier in Switzerland. I was born in Finland and both my parents come from the southern part of this northern country.

The small things in life often remind me of this. I have lost count of how many times I have had to spell my surname in my lifetime. When asked, I also explain that the correct pronunciation of Lehtinen is with a soft "h" and not a "kh" sound.

During childhood, it was not just my name that reminded me that I am not actually Swiss. I can vividly recall being the only person dressed as a cowboy at the Basel carnival, which was sacrilege as far as the locals were concerned. I was also the worst skier in my group of friends as a child. On the playground I would occasionally hear the words: "Die spinnen, die Finnen!" (The Finns are crazy).

My parents once told me that they had lost their language and therefore part of their identity by living abroad – they were quite literally "lost for words". Their Finnish became rusty as the years went by and they never perfected German either. This is less of a problem for me. I arrived in Switzerland at such a young age that nobody detects any Finnish accent. I speak German perfectly and Finnish well.

However, what I can empathise with is the feeling of inner conflict and a life between two places. You feel like a foreigner in your old home country but also in the new one. Many people still consider me Finnish despite the fact I am completely integrated and hold a Swiss passport. "You don't say much up there, do you?" "You're bound to be a big drinker!" And whenever I visit my old homeland, I am always considered Swiss. Of course, I have a big bank account and never talk to anyone about it!

When I was young I felt as though I did not have a native country. Today, I see things differently – I have two, not none. This is also a blessing rather than a curse. My two identities have widened my horizons and made me more open-minded and flexible. I can see the bigger picture from two perspectives today and feel an equal bond with both countries.

MARKO LEHTINEN, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Cover photo:
The singer and presenter Francine Jordi.
Photo: Thomas Buchwalder