

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 3 (1937-1938)
Heft: 9

Artikel: Why should the Rätoromanic language be recognised?
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943135>

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: 21.02.2026

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

NEW MEMBERS:-

We take great pleasure in welcoming into our midst the following new members :-
Dr. Walter Schmid, Consul of Switzerland,
A. Hochstrasser, Springdale, Waitoa,
Frank Giesler, Turua,
J. Meier, Titoki Park, Opotiki,
T. Ruegg, Titoki Park, Opotiki,
Joseph Chamberlain, P.O., Kaponga.
E. Suter, Waiatu Pa.

=====

WHY SHOULD THE RÄTOROMANIC LANGUAGE BE RECOGNISED ?

It is the mother tongue of 45,000 Swiss citizens living in the many mountain valleys of Graubünden, that is in the Oberland, Mittelbünden, Oberhalbstein, Albulatal, Engadin, Münstertal, as well other smaller valleys. Not only is it spoken in ordinary conversation, but also in School, Church and Court proceedings. Like the French, Italian and Spanish tongue the Romanic originated from Latin. Notwithstanding the very limited space in which this language has always prevailed, it has maintained its long existence. It has its variations in dialects, of which the two chief groups are the so-called Ladinisch, spoken in the Engadin and Surselvanisch spoken in the Oberland.

Romanic chronicles can be traced back to the time of Charles the Great, but in literary speech it seems to go back to the time of the Reformation. The magnitude of its literature is astounding, when you consider the smallness of the territory in which this tongue is spoken. They can boast of four newspapers, and many other publications.

In Old Freerätien and to this day it has always been recognised as legal speech in all cantonal affairs. When our Federal Constitution was founded in 1848, the Rätoromans in their natural modesty omitted to claim recognition of their speech. But conditions have changed since, to a very great extent, due to the ever-growing tourist traffic. Railways were built and caused an influx of foreign speaking element, especially of German and Italian origin. While the German element exercised rather heavy pressure on the Romanic speech, growing interest in this language could be noticed on the Italian side and popular opinion was expressed in these parts that the Italian language should be official. Being continually hemmed in by these two elements, is it surprising that these Mountain people desire protection and recognition?

=====

NEWS IN BRIEF:

Foreign Auto Visitors in Switzerland:

Official Statistics, compiled by the responsible authorities of Switzerland, show that during 1937 about 294,000 foreign motor vehicles brought approximately 1,076,000 visitors into Switzerland. Their stay in our country amounted to 2,8 million days. A quarter of these visitors travelled by Service car at an average of 22 passengers per car. Travellers by automobile stayed 3 days in the country, that is, twice as long as those by Service cars. According to statistics the stay of foreign visitors amounted to 7,946,000 nights, of which 1,726,000 were registered by Auto visitors.

=====

A D V E R T I S E M E N T S .

MR. JOHN STEINER of Eastport Rd., Waihou, has been requested to find Swiss Sharemilkers for some very fine farms in his district, ranging from 80 to 120 cows, at half shares. Good and genuine families of 3 to 4 milkers with a little cash would be readily financed. Applicants may communicate with Mr. Steiner, or Mr. W. Ungemuth, Secretary.

++++++

MR. P. CATTIN; Te Kauwhata, "Scintilla" Wine, Fruit and Honey.
MR. J. MAURER, Cameron St., Whangarei, Jeweller & Watchmaker.
MR. KERLER, 477, Karangahape Rd., Auckland, Prams, Wickerwork, Toys, &c
MR. E. CATTIN, 19, Willis St., Wellington, Jeweller & Watchmaker.

CORRESPONDENCE:- Please address to the Secretary, W. UNGEMUTH,
Clarence St., Northcote, Auckland.