

**Zeitschrift:** Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Herausgeber:** Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Band:** 73 (2007)  
**Heft:** [8]

**Artikel:** Firnelicht  
**Autor:** Meyer, Conrad Ferdinand  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-944359>

### **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:** 03.04.2026

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

## The past instead of the future?

The Schwing- and Aelplerfeste are more popular than ever. More and more they are frequented also by townies, young people and women, who are fascinated by the archaic aspects of these traditions that are said to represent "real" Switzerland.

Where does this enchantment with Schwingen and shotput, with yodelling and flagthrowing all of a sudden come from, a celebration of Switzerland as if modernity had never happened, as if we were still a whole nation of cowherds and cheesemakers?

The increasing admiration for tradition and ancient customs has to be interpreted as a reaction to modernity. Internationalisation and European tendencies, migration, www and globalisation have changed our lifestyle and our culture – and they question our national identity.

Many people react to these challenges with a turn to the past and its traditions: Old standards give identity and security in these times of change. That might also be the reason why we are so fond of jubilees, whether it is the Simplon tunnel or the Gotthard railway.

Of course there is nothing wrong with remembering our roots and acknowledging the achievements of our forbears. Many virtues of the past are useful in the present and will be useful in the future. But we still have to face the tasks of our times: "playing ostrich" will not bring back the so-called good old times.

*after Helmut Stalder, TA*

## Swiss Christians criticise Pope

Some Swiss Catholics have echoed Protestant criticism of Pope Benedict XVI's reassertion of the primacy of the Roman Catholic Church. A 16-page document by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith released in July 2007 stated that other Christian communities were either at fault or not true churches and that Catholicism was the only true path to salvation.

Catholics in Lucerne reacted angrily. The governing body of the city's Catholics wrote in an open letter that it was sorry that other Christian denominations were discriminated against by the Church's hierarchy. Most Catholics could not agree with the Vatican's position, and that, if anything, it should encourage more ecumenical dialogue at the local level.

For Swiss Protestants, the publication is an unwelcome move by the pope, who only a few days earlier made a gesture towards traditionalist Catholics by making it easier to celebrate Mass in Latin.

*from swissinfo*

## Rüebli-RS wird wieder eingeführt

Gymnasiasten sollen wieder haushalten lernen. Die grosse Mehrheit des Kantonsrats ist für die Wiedereinführung der «Husi». Eine Volksabstimmung ist kaum mehr nötig.

## Firnelicht

Wie pocht das Herz mir in der Brust  
trotz meiner jungen Wanderlust,  
Wann, heimgewendet, ich erschaut  
die Schneegebirge, süss umblaut,  
Das grosse stille Leuchten!

Ich atmet' eilig wie auf Raub,  
der Märkte Dunst, der Städte Staub.  
Ich sah den Kampf. Was sagest Du,  
mein reines Firnelicht dazu,  
Du grosses stilles Leuchten?

Nie prahlt' ich mit der Heimat noch  
und liebe sie von Herzen doch!  
In meinem Wesen und Gedicht  
Allüberall ist Firnelicht,  
Das grosse stille Leuchten!

Was kann ich für die Heimat tun,  
bevor ich geh' im Grabe ruhn?  
Was geb' ich, das dem Tod entflieht?  
Vielleicht ein Wort, vielleicht ein Lied,  
Ein kleines stilles Leuchten!

*Conrad Ferdinand Meyer*

## YOUR SWISS CHEF, BERTA

TARANAKI'S TOP RESTAURANT  
LODGE - CHALETS - FAMILY UNITS  
FREE PHONE 0800 MOUNTAIN  
(66 86 82)

[www.mountainhouse.co.nz](http://www.mountainhouse.co.nz)



## FAERNWEH? HEIMWEH? WICHITIGI GSCHAEFTSTERMIN?

Looking for a travel consultant with over 22 years of experience in  
The industry that will meet your needs and with whom you can  
Communicate in (Swiss)-German, French or English?  
Looking for a travel consultant that travelled the world and can  
advise out of town experience knowing a lot of destinations personally?  
Looking for someone to organise your trip back to Switzerland or  
Europe to visit the 'relies' as well as your holiday-, business-,  
group- and special event trips?



Try me!!

**Daniela Suter**  
UNITED TRAVEL HAMILTON  
275 Barton Street/PO Box 19263  
HAMILTON  
Phone: 07 838 1100/Fax: 07 834 2032  
Email: [daniela@uth.co.nz](mailto:daniela@uth.co.nz)

  
United Travel