

Annual Report 2021

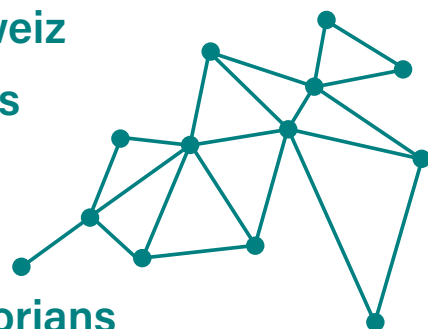
Historikerinnennetzwerk Schweiz

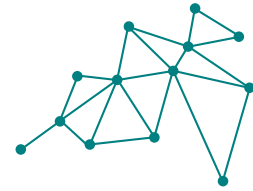
Réseau suisse des historiennes

Rete svizzera delle storiche

Rait svizra d'istoricras

Swiss Network of Female Historians





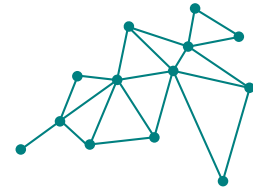
Annual Report for 2021 of the Swiss Network of Female Historians

Board, January 2022

Welcome and Retrospective by the Presidents

The Swiss Network of Female Historians looks back upon a rewarding period. In spite of challenges posed by COVID-19 and personnel changes in the presidency and the board, we grew substantially from approximately 50 to 140 members in the past year. The network had a strong launch in 2019 with a successful network aperitif in Olten, which was attended by almost all members at the time and led to a number of significant enquiries from leading media outlets in Switzerland. In 2020, things quietened down given the pandemic situation, a number of board members resigned due to their heavy workloads, and a new board had to be assembled. Rachel Huber, as president and co-founder, set up first a co-presidency and secondly an administrative office led by Anna de Quervain, before taking a break due to maternity leave. The new co-president, Tamara Widmer, managed impressively to fill the board with new members. The beginning of 2021 therefore marked a relaunch for the network. We continued existing networking formats like the network aperitifs and developed new ones such as the regular digital roundtables. Besides focusing on setting up a new, more complex website, we also established different working groups that implement various projects (see below). One of the highlights of the year was the digital roundtable on 11 October 2021 with filmmaker Petra Volpe („The Divine Order“, „Frieden“) and historian Regula Ludi (Universities of Fribourg and Zurich). Halfway through the year, there was a change in the Co-Presidency with Tamara Widara unofficially stepping down and Zoé Kergomard replacing her. Through the Women's Suffrage Anniversary Working Group under the aegis of Zoé Kergomard and the office manager Anna de Quervain, the Board designed and rolled out a survey on the situation of women in history on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of women's suffrage in Switzerland. We would like to continue these discussions in 2022 and draw inspiration from these exchanges for our future work. Indeed, after the successful relaunch and new projects in 2021, we want to reflect on what we can offer our members and in what directions we wish to evolve in the medium and long term.

Rachel Huber & Zoé Kergomard
Co-Presidents



Website

The new website of the Swiss Network of Female* Historians was launched at the end of April in five languages. Since then, we are slowly but surely filling it with content such as blog contributions, events, a picture gallery or the suffrage anniversary survey. The envisioned project platform and member database remain a desideratum, for which we will be seeking the support of a professional website programmer.

Network Aperitifs

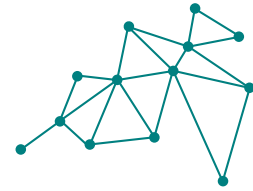
historians from all professions to meet and connect with each other on a regular basis. The goal is to organise regular aperitifs in all major Swiss cities, relying on our respective resident board members. A large network aperitif with national reach attended by over 20 women was held in Olten – the «middle» of Switzerland – in 2019. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we held no aperitifs in 2020, but were able to start up again by the summer of 2021, with four apéros in four different cities:

Berne, August 16, at O bolles

Zurich, August 17, at Rio Bar

Lausanne, September 1, at Brasserie la Bavaria

Basel, October 28, at Silo



Review/Preview of the Women's Suffrage Anniversary Working Group

One of the first working groups formed in the newly constituted Board was the Women's Suffrage Anniversary Working Group. It was born out of the desire to participate, as a network, in the broad public debate surrounding the 50th anniversary of women's suffrage in Switzerland and to provide spaces for historians to discuss the topic. Since the beginning of 2021, the working group has been focused on developing a survey on the situation of women* in Swiss history (both in historiography and the professional field). A test run of the [survey](#) was sent out to network members in the summer of 2021 and, after revision, it was then widely distributed at the end of November 2021. Various [discussion forums](#) are planned for 2022 on the topics of the survey, as well as to reflect on the suffrage anniversary year 2021 in general. In addition, at the symposium of the Swiss Association for Gender Studies (SAGS) at the University of Zurich on the topic of „[Women*s Suffrage and Democracy: Critique, Memory, Visions](#)“ on 27 November 2021, the working group organised a [panel](#) on the politics of remembrance of the anniversary year with the title Comment voulons-nous commémorer „1971“? Bilan et perspectives / Wie möchten wir uns an «1971» erinnern? Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven. Four members of the network (Claire Louise Blaser, Pauline Milani, Jovita dos Santos Pinto, and Francesca Falk) contributed to the panel.

Members: Claire Louise Blaser, Anna de Quervain, Zoé Kergomard, Tamara Widmer

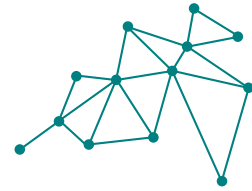
Review/Preview of the Digital Roundtables Working Group

Beginning in spring 2021, the Digital Roundtables Working Group has planned and executed several events. In the past year, it organised three digital roundtables:

- [Corona-Memory: Historical research and the pandemic](#) (in German), 10 May 2021, online, with Sonja Gasser (project “Corona Memory”) and Angela Wittwer (moderator)
- [Public History: How to write a historical novel?](#) (in German), 28 June 2021, online, with Antonia Bertschinger (author of the trilogy Bergünnerstein)
- [History on Screen: Director Petra Volpe in conversation with historian Regula Ludi](#), (in German) 11 October 2021, online, with Petra Volpe, Regula Ludi and Zoé Kergomard (moderator)

More digital roundtables will be organised in the coming year, with the first one on history in the museum being planned for spring 2022.

Members: Rachel Huber, Zoé Kergomard, Angela Wittwer



Review/Preview of the Podcast Working Group

The Podcast Working Group was formed at the end of summer 2021 by board members interested in developing a podcast for the network. In November 2021, several network members joined the working group and is set to finalise a concept for the podcast early in the new year before beginning production of the first season, which should be published later in 2022.

Members: Claire Louise Blaser, Tamara Widmer, Angela Wittwer

Review/Preview of the Trainings Working Group

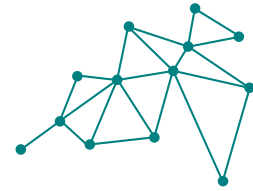
The Trainings Working Group was established in autumn 2021. As a first event, Antonia Bertschinger and Zoé Kergomard are organising a [blog workshop](#) in collaboration with Britta Hermans and Celia Burgdorff of [hypotheses.de](#). It will consist of an introduction to research blogging on January 25, and a writing workshop on February 18. Further trainings and workshops are planned.

Members: Antonia Bertschinger, Zoé Kergomard

Review/Preview Social Media Working Group

During the first half of the year, the Social Media Working Group mainly developed the visual identity for the network's social media channels. Simultaneously with the launch of the new website in April 2021, accounts for the Swiss Network of Female Historians were set up on LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook, run by the presidents and the administrative office. The network already had a strong Twitter presence. The Social Media Working Group has since formulated guidelines for social media that spell out our strategy and will facilitate the transfer of tasks if necessary. Since December 2021, the Social Media Working Group has progressively taken over the responsibility for posting of announcements, insights and recaps (from events etc.) on all channels. In 2022, the working group will focus on more long-term planning and new formats such as takeovers or content creation in accordance with current events or debates.

Members: Claire Louise Blaser, Melanie Burkhard, Tamara Widmer



Review/Preview for the Blog Working Group

The Blog Working Group was the first to make itself known with the launch of the new website and its blog page on April 29. The blog carries three categories of posts: «Research», «Experiences», and «Opinions». The categories seek to answer to the output needs of female* historians in Switzerland. The categories of «Experiences» and «Opinions», in particular, are meant to serve as a space where historians can publish on gendered experiences with, for example, discrimination. With the blog, we also want to provide a low-threshold platform for female* students to garner first experiences in scholarly blogging (in addition to which we offer specific trainings). All blog authors work with multiple editors from within the working group (with at least one of them being a professionally trained academic with a PhD). In the past year, we published four blog entries:

- Huber, Rachel: Noch ein Geschichts-Blog? – Historikerinnennetzwerk Schweiz, Swiss Network of Female Historians, 29.04.2021, <<https://historikerinnen.ch/de/2021/04/29/noch-ein-geschichts-blog/>>

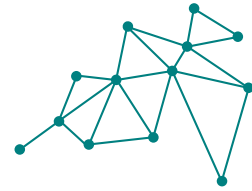
- Kergomard, Zoé: Une historienne en temps de covid-19. Un petit bilan personnel, Swiss Network of Female Historians, 02.06.2021, <<https://historikerinnen.ch/de/2021/06/02/une-historienne-en-temps-de-covid-19/>>

- Lämmli, Laura: Wissen über das unsichtbare Phänomen «Transithandel» vermitteln und reflektieren. Einblicke aus einer Online-Diskussion mit Lea Haller aus der Perspektive einer Studentin, Swiss Network of Female Historians, 20.08.2021, <<https://historikerinnen.ch/rm/2021/08/20/wissen-ueber-das-unsichtbares-phaenomen-transithandel/>>

- Lindenmann, Katja: Blutrünstige Hebammen? – Wenn Forschungsliteratur zum Problem wird, Swiss Network of Female Historians, 17.11.2021, <<https://historikerinnen.ch/de/2021/11/17/blutrunstige-hebammen/>>

Beginning next year, the working group will consist of five women working as editors. The goal is to publish between 6 and 12 contributions per year on a rolling basis, with authors and topics being decided at the beginning of the year. Each contribution is assigned at least two editors.

Members: Tiziana Bonetti, Rachel Huber, Zoé Kergomard



Financial situation and Final Remarks by the Office Manager

We began 2021 full of motivation and with a full to-do list. One of the many changes that came with the relaunch was the establishment of an administrative position (20%) tasked with ensuring everything runs smoothly in the day-to-day business of the network such as meeting preparation, bookkeeping, administration, fundraising, infrastructure maintenance, social media and email communication, etc. The first three months of the year were all about building the new website. This included coordinating the revision of all website texts and their translation into four additional languages. After the network relaunch at the end of April, gaining new members and ensuring the financial viability of the network became the top priorities of the admin office. Although we grew from 50 to 140 members in 2021, it quickly became clear that this would not be sufficient to finance an office position in the form we imagined. In summer, the office manager and the presidents therefore decided to reduce the official workload of the office position to 10% and hand certain tasks (social media, meeting preparation, working group coordination) over to the board. As even the salary for the reduced position can not be covered by the network budget, the office manager position will from next year onwards, be remunerated with a fixed annual sum that covers bookkeeping and administration. All other tasks are the responsibility of the board. In 2022, the focus of the administrative office will continue to be on ensuring the financial viability of the network. One major goal is to facilitate website and member database maintenance through automation and to accrue enough of a budget surplus to create new attractive formats for our members.

Anna de Quervain
Office Manager