

Little gems

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129 encounters

“I would die if I were no longer able to write,” Julien Green once said. The French author with roots in the USA is one of 129 writers featured in the book “Schreib oder stirb”



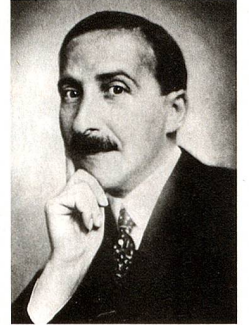
(Write or Die). You will come across many famous names while reading it. These include Heinrich von Kleist, Richard Wright, Franz Kafka and Simone de Beauvoir, but many little known or completely unknown authors, such as Ciro Alegria, Henry Parland and Munsch Premtschand, are also covered. In short portraits, always restricted to precisely two pages, Charles Linsmayer – the author of our literature series on the Swiss Abroad

– outlines the life and work of the writers. Despite the brevity of the articles, Linsmayer succeeds each time in recreating a world. The 129 life stories are 129 encounters of a very special kind.

■ CHARLES LINSMAYER: “Schreib oder stirb! 129 Schicksale von Ciro Alegria bis Stefan Zweig”; Verlag elfundzehn, Eglisau; 280 pages with pictures. CHF 36.00 / € 32.50



Ciro Alegria



Stefan Zweig

Shedding light on Switzerland’s relationship with the international community

Switzerland’s relationship with countries abroad and its international role is a perennial issue. People may sometimes wish, especially since the referendum of 9 February 2014, that it would go away. However, a small book on the subject is highly recommended here. It was written over a year ago by Joëlle Kuntz, one of the most high profile journalists in French-speaking Switzer-

land, and is entitled “La Suisse ou le génie de la dépendance” (Switzerland or the art of dependence). Former ambassador Benedikt von Tscharnern, who was once head of the Swiss mission in Brussels, has translated it into German and written a foreword.



Joëlle Kuntz

Over eight chapters, Kuntz explores Switzerland’s relationship with the international community and the difficult path between dependence, on the one hand, and autonomy and neutrality, on the other. Joëlle Kuntz has a profound

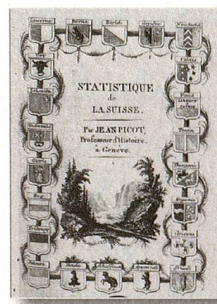
understanding of the topic but writes the book not as an historian but instead as a journalist. She chooses the essay form but also allows herself to make pointed remarks and to take the occasional swipe. This book is an insightful read.

■ JOËLLE KUNTZ: “Die Schweiz oder die Kunst der Abhängigkeit – Zwischenruf”; Verlag NZZ Libro, Zurich 2014.



Multimedia statistics

It has a rich history and provides the media and therefore the Swiss public with new information almost every day – the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO) based in Neuchâtel. How much meat does the average Swiss couple consume? What age do they reach on average? What do they call their children? How many cross-border commuters are there? How healthy are Swiss babies? All of this information and much more besides is documented statistically – the FSO has since 1860 had the task of monitoring Switzerland, its economy and its society and of publishing the results.



From this rich history of the emergence and growth of public statistics in Switzerland, a selection of important milestones has now been made publicly accessible. The application is available online under the name ChronoStat. The story began in 1816 when Jean Picot, a professor in Geneva, published his “Statistics of Switzerland”. Further links are often provided alongside

the details in the timeline, making a great wealth of information accessible.

http://www.portal-stat.admin.ch/timeline/chronostat_de.php#

www.bfs.admin.ch > ChronoStat > Timeline ChronoStat

