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Hooray! We lost!

Next year Switzerland will commemorate the Battle of Marignano. It is 500 years since the confederate forces suffered a devastating defeat by the French near Marignano, which is near Milan and is today called Melegnano. Between 12,000 and 14,000 people lost their lives, most of whom were Swiss. The defeat nevertheless had a positive outcome – Switzerland has never waged a war of expansion since. Marignano is therefore commonly accepted as the moment when Swiss neutrality was born, even if this is contested by many historians.



Numerous intellectuals and artists also dispute this myth. The “Kunst und Politik” (art and politics) network therefore launched the www.marignano.ch website several months ago. Under the title “Hooray! We lost! 499 years since Marignano”, authors from all parts of the country publish articles on the battle and its consequences. The contributors include Daniel de Roulet, Alberto Nesi, Pedro Lenz and Gerhard Meister. There are reflective, defiant, enraged and amusing articles, making it a real treasure trove. Further contributions will almost certainly be added over the coming year.

www.marignano.ch; www.kunst-und-politik.ch

BE

Customised New York



Andreas Leuzinger and Simon Mignozzi, two young Swiss, have ventured

to undertake what many people actually dream of but do not ultimately dare do: they have made a career of something they are passionate about, which is travelling.



They moved to New York, a city that fascinates them, just under two years ago. They now provide tourists with customised advice on the place they have decided to make their home. LOCALIKE is based on the principle of “customised travelling”. Customers list their likes and interests, and LOCALIKE organises the ideal, individual travel itinerary based on these details. Customers must firstly complete a questionnaire on the homepage and create a profile. Here they are asked about their interests, likes, special requests and the duration of their visit. Three options can be booked: Selection, Smart and Personal. Selection comprises a recently researched itinerary of travel modules produced without individual consultation. It costs USD 49



a day. The cost of the other options depends upon the services provided. The positive feedback indicates that the quality of the offering is excellent.

www.localike-newyork.com



A hefty tome with exquisite contents

It is a weighty book in every sense. “Die Geschichte der Schweiz” (The History of Switzerland) weighs two and a half kilograms and is generally regarded as the reference work for the coming decades. Under the leadership of Basel historian Georg Kreis, a team of authors made up of leading academics from all over Switzerland presents the history of the nation, taking account of the latest developments in research. The outcome is a work (unfortunately only in German) that meets many requirements. It serves as a work of reference and teaching aid for teachers and students, but is also a very accessible book for a general readership which largely avoids specialist jargon and, where such terms are absolutely necessary, they are explained concisely in a glossary.

The book has a chronological structure and focuses on traditional political history without neglecting other approaches (social and eco-

nomic history, women's history, etc.). Twenty-two transversal themes are also interspersed as essays, such as “family and relatives”, “foreigners in Switzerland”, “neutrality and neutralities”, “Alps and tourism” and “The Swiss army 1803 to 2011”. The design quality is outstanding: the illustrations, maps and graphics are first-class and provide a wealth of additional information. They also break up the text, give the comprehensive tome a light touch and invite readers to profitably plunge into the book at any page.

JM

GEORG KREIS (ED.): “Die Geschichte der Schweiz”; Schwabe Verlag Basel 2014; 645 pages, CHF 139

