

Editor's note

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Objektyp: **Preface**

Zeitschrift: **Eclogae Geologicae Helvetiae**

Band (Jahr): **73 (1980)**

Heft 2: **Symposium alpine geotraverses with special emphasis on the Basel-Chiasso profile : Lausanne, 4-5 October 1979**

PDF erstellt am: **17.09.2024**

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Editors' note

This special issue of *Eclogae geologicae Helvetiae* consists of the Proceedings of the *International Symposium "Alpine Geotraverses – with special emphasis on the Basel–Chiasso profile"*. This symposium took place, within the framework of the 159th Annual Assembly of the Swiss Academy of Natural Sciences, on 4–5 October 1979 in Lausanne and marks the termination of the manifold activities of the *Swiss Working Group No. 13 "Geotraverse Basel–Chiasso"*, a working group which was established by the Swiss National Committee for the International Geodynamics Project (IGP) in 1974.

The Geodynamics Project is an international programme of research on the dynamics and dynamic history of the Earth with emphasis on deep-seated foundations of geological phenomena. This includes investigations related to movements and deformations, past and present, of the lithosphere, and all relevant properties of the Earth's interior and especially any evidence for motions at depth. The programme is an interdisciplinary one, coordinated by the Inter-Union Commission on Geodynamics (I.C.G.) established by the I.C.S.U. at the request of I.U.G.G. and I.U.G.S., with rules providing for the active participation of all interested I.C.S.U. Unions and Committees.

The constitution and composition of the Working Group "Geotraverse Basel–Chiasso", comprising structural geologists and geophysicists, mineralogists and geochemists, geodesists and geochronologists, provided a unique opportunity to approach the complex geodynamics of the Alps and of its foreland by different techniques.

The symposium in Lausanne was jointly organized by the Swiss Geological Society, the Swiss Mineralogical and Petrographical Society, the Swiss Geophysical Society and the Working Group "Geotraverse Basel–Chiasso". Invited papers as well as contributions of Working Group members were presented. The great majority of these papers is assembled in this issue. The following papers which were read in Lausanne are not included here:

H. Bolli, A. Isler (Zürich), M. Burri (Lausanne), W. Nabholz, Ph. Probst (Bern), N. Pantić (Belgrad and Zürich): *Neue Untersuchungsergebnisse aus den Bündnerschiefern des nördlichen Penninikums zwischen Westgraubünden und Brig.*

P. Stille (Bern): *Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Amphibolite im Simplongebiet.*

H. Masson (Lausanne): *Cinématique des nappes helvétiques en Suisse occidentale.*

A. Steck (Lausanne): *La ligne du Rhône dans la région de Brigue: la cicatrice Helvétique–Pennique.*

R. Plancherel, P. Homewood (Fribourg): *Evolution des Alpes occidentales et leur avant-pays en régime transformant: tectonique et sédimentation.*

Some of them shall appear later in this journal.

The material of these proceedings is organized in the following manner: first, by *Invited Contributions*, the general framework of the Alpine–Mediterranean System is outlined (E. Roeder) and the Geotraverse Basel–Chiasso through the Central Alps is embraced by two reports, each focusing on both sides of the traverse (Western Alps: G. Perrier, A. Guillaume; Eastern Alps: R.E. Oxburgh & P.C. England, G. Angenheister). Then, contributions of the Working Group members on the *Geotraverse Basel–Chiasso* follow, representing the centerpiece of this issue. This part is introduced by a review paper, summarizing the various aspects of the

traverse Basel–Chiasso (L. Rybach et al.). Finally, the new *traverses east and west of the Geotraverse Basel–Chiasso* (St. Gallen–Como, Besançon–Biella) are addressed.

Since all these Geotraverses pass through the complex units of the Alpine system the results, obtained by a great variety of different methods applied by earth scientists from many disciplines, represent a substantial contribution to the understanding of the geodynamics of prominent geotectonic features and thus to the International Geodynamics Project in general. The Bureau of the Inter-Union Commission on Geodynamics has assigned the *IGC Scientific Report No. 69* to these proceedings.

Special thanks are due to the Swiss Academy of Natural Sciences and to its President, Prof. E. Niggli (Bern), for continuous encouragement and for financially supporting the organization of the Symposium in Lausanne as well as the publication of these proceedings.

Zürich, in June 1980

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