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Editorial

«Geography in Switzerland» was prepared for the participants of the 54. Deutscher Geographentag, Berne, 2003, and the International Geographical Congress, convening in Glasgow in 2004. The geographers of Switzerland would like to present this collection of current research papers, which demonstrate the value of the field of geography, specifically as it is practiced and researched in Switzerland. These state-of-the-art articles present not only an overview of leading edge research in general geography, but also record the development and experience of research in academic and applied geography. This compilation is offered to the international community of geographers, both as a contribution to geographical knowledge in general and as a promotion of communication between geographers and those concerned with the natural and socio-economic environment. «Geography in Switzerland» is directed toward academic and professional geographers, students, the next generation in science and practice, teachers, the general public interested in the subject of geography, the sponsors of science, the academic directors, the general public, as well as experts from other disciplines.

This volume exhibits significant research and lines of work in geography. In so doing, it positions the research of the Swiss geographic institutes/departments, as well as the work of applied geography, at the frontier. Each individual institute/department presents itself not only in the variety of workmanship but also within the totality of the Swiss academic landscape as well as in «Geography». The market niches and the specialties of professional geographers, who work in planning areas and application oriented contract research, are also revealed.

Each of the departments worked in partnership on the central themes, content, research frontiers, as well as on the variety of individual fields of research. This publication is, therefore, not just any collection of essays, but rather an assemblage that, in its entirety, represents more than the sum of its parts. The limitations and biases of the research work presented here must be recognized. The papers do not necessarily cover all aspects of current geographic research in Switzerland. The final responsibility for the selection rests with each individual department of geography and its collective of authors.

We would like to thank everyone who was prepared to collaborate. Even so, the initiators are aware of the precariousness of identifying the «important» topics and also combining physical and human geography as well as methodical geography (GIS and remote sensing).

This collection of papers is published by GEOGRAPHICA HELVETICA. This journal has a political-cultural, socio-economic and physical geographic orientation, and is published in three of the languages of Switzerland and English. GEOGRAPHICA HELVETICA advances knowledge in all facets of geography, in both physical and human geography, in questions from the fields of general and applied geography, in theoretical and conceptual issues, and in the teaching of geography.

We would also like to thank those who have continued to support GEOGRAPHICA HELVETICA. These are

- The Swiss Academy of Sciences,
- The Swiss Association of Geography,
- The Regional Geography Association of Zürich,
- The University of Basel.

For the Editors
Rita Schneider-Sliwa, Basel