



Natural hazards and their historical records. Landslides as a case study

A. Dix, M. Röhrs

University of Bonn, Dept. of Geography, Historical Geography

a.dix@uni-bonn.de/Phone: *49-228-73-5871

A survey of the present state of the art of historical research shows a very different situation. Climate history, historical earthquake catalogues or the investigation of floods are well established fields of scientific research. The paper presents a short and systematic overview about the present situation and the most important questions.

Against the background of this situation the case study of landslide hazards in the region of the Swabian Alb in Southwestern Germany presents another view. The geomorphological research of the last decades produced a large amount of data about the spatial distribution of landslides, their classification and the geological processes behind. But there is a distinct lack of dated events, information about the human impact as a trigger of landslide events on the one hand side. On the other side our knowledge about the reaction of human societies in history, damages and losses is very poor.

The case studies presents some details of the analysis of sources from regional archives. It became clear, that the major part of our records have not been read in some cases for a couple of centuries. A big number of landslide – events were not known before. More landslides are younger than stated in the recent literature. Also we were able to find out major turning points in the history of perception of landslides and adaptation-strategies.