



The development of geology as a discipline of science in the German south-west as a mirror for a changing point of view on Landslides at the Swabian Alb within the 19th and beginning 20th century

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The scot James Hutton and the german Abraham Gottlob Werner are considered as the male midwives of geology as an independent scientific discipline. Both develop their work at the turn of the 18th to the 19th century. Already at an early stage development of the discipline was supported and embodied at the German south-west by some men which mostly started studying theology, but considering themselves as scientists at the end of their career. Some of the best known are F. A. Quenstedt, C. C. v. Leonhard or O. Fraas.

From middle of the 19th century, the following generation started as studied Geologists. Meanwhile, professional scientific investigations are supported by a rising number of Universities teaching Geology, Mineralogy or Natural History, the establishments of state offices for statistics and geology and last but not least by private investigators. Within this period, investigations in geology or palaeontology get very popular within the cultured classes.

Especially in the former Kingdom of Württemberg, the investigation on the local geology was accompanied by a strong emphasis on local heritage studies and a component of a more popular science. The basis of this special focus can be found in the fact that the young discipline is still seeking for a justification which is seen in popular education and that still some of the geologists did not start as scientists. Also, the private

supporters of the discipline rambling around digging, collecting and writing contribute to this specific focus of the geology. This led to a rich variety of books and papers published during the 19th century dealing with geology or nature phenomena's in the German south-west.

Parallel to the development of the discipline and of the knowledge of the scientists themselves a change of perception and description of the natural risks, like landslides at the western front of the Swabian Alb can be recognised. They drifted from a mere description of points where to find fossils through the ideas about the cuesta development to a perception of natural risks. More detailed information about the landslides, including magnitude, structure and stratigraphic layers involved, was not recorded until the end of the 19th century.

Further investigations should include more citations about landslide phenomena, even those early ones having low information. The present study reflects examples of selected location descriptions and content of information.