

## CHANGES OF LANDSCAPE STRUCTURE AND SOIL PRODUCTION FUNCTION SINCE THE 18TH CENTURY IN NORTH-WEST SAXONY

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### Abstract

The objectives of this paper are (1) to reconstruct time series of the historical and current landscape structures based on historical documents and serial cadastral maps, (2) to analyse the changes of agricultural production function by the application of historical soil assessments and (3) to analyse the connections between landscape structure and production function in reference to the social and economic driving forces.

The case study area is today an intensively-used agricultural landscape located nearby Taucha-Eilenburg (NW-Saxony), Germany. Arable landscapes in Germany are changing with increasing dynamics: valuable structures and landscape functions of the traditional and multifunctional landscape were lost. New landscape structures replaced the traditional ones slowly or sometimes also in short time steps. Therefore, this paper focuses on the changes of landscape structures and that of the soil production function induced by land use since the 18th century. The changes are analysed on the basis of historical and serial cadastral maps and documents by covering four time steps from 1750 to 2005. The historical maps were scanned, geo-referenced and digitalised in GIS. Thus, quantitative analysis of landscape structure changes on parcel level is enabled. The production function is explicitly reconstructed on the basis of the Prussian Taxation of the real estate of 1864 (Preußische Grundsteuerbonitierung) and The German Soil Taxation (Reichsbodenschätzung) of 1937.

Changes observed on the serial cadastral maps were linked with the social and economical driving forces and the soil production function. Moreover, there is a high demand for the development of methodologies to analyse and to assess time series of landscape structures, land use and landscape functions in the historical context of landscape development.

**Keywords:** landscape dynamics, landscape structure, production functions, soil assessment, GIS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

From the end of the 18th century, social and economic changes had considerable influence on the landscape structure and the soil production function in Europe. Furthermore, land use changes result in less diverse landscapes and the degradation of landscape functions (Antrop 2000). The long term process of structural changes leads to changes in usability of the landscape.

Landscape dynamics is intensively induced by natural and anthropogenic processes. Landscape dynamics is defined as the changes of structure and function of a landscape that caused and steered by “driving forces”. “Driving forces” are the whole of factors that influenced the development of landscape (Bürgi et al. 2004). In case

of the present study area anthropogenic processes are the main drivers of landscape dynamics.

Bastian and Bernhardt (1993), and Bernhardt and Jäger (1985) reflect the anthropogenic impacts on landscapes in the investigated area in four time periods. The increasing impact of man on the landscape is described as nearly logarithmic in the following main periods: the Neolithic revolution, the land use expansion in the Middle Ages, the Industrialisation (19th century) and the scientific and technical era (since 1960).

The landscape dynamics in historical time steps in the study area is discussed in this paper in the context of a today intensively-used agricultural region (Krönert 1996). The aim is to support decision making for landscape and land use planning for a sustainable development in the future (Antrop 2005, Bastian – Schreiber 1999, Bender 1994, Egli 1991, Fehn 1986, Marcucci 2000). Bastian (1987) and Bastian et al. (2002) stress the importance of the analysis of (historical) landscape dynamics to recognize negative landscape changes as soon as possible. Furthermore, the documentation of historical economic time steps and the knowledge about recent cultural landscapes are important for the protection and the sustainable use of cultural heritage. In Germany, similar to other European countries, the environmental law leads by several articles and political guidelines to the protection of cultural heritage (e.g. Nature Conservation Act, Environmental Impact Assessment Act). The European Landscape Convention stresses the importance of the cultural dimension of landscape. Moreover, long-term monitoring of landscape allows conclusions about the effectiveness of economic and political guidelines on a European level (e.g. on the Natura 2000 network, Common Agricultural Policy).

Landscape functions are defined as the goods and services from nature that provided by land use for human being (Bastian – Schreiber 1999: 38, De Groot 1992, De Groot et al. 2002). Landscape functions can be categorised into four main groups: production functions, regulation functions, carrier functions and information functions (De Groot 1992: 13). Production functions in the focus of this study are economic functions describing the availability of renewable resources. It includes the production of vegetable as well as animal biomass (agricultural land, grassland, timber etc.), and water (drinking

water, groundwater) (Bastian – Schreiber 1999: 39f). These productions functions are strongly related to the site conditions of arable lands and grasslands (as a function of climate, geology, slope, soil, water, the cultural technological history and the land use system). Soils are also interpreted as the archive of historical impacts and results of the land use.

The use of time series based on historical maps and land registers combined with historical documents is a common scientific method for the analysis of landscape dynamics and has proven to be very useful (Bender et al. 2005, Haase et al. 2007, Ihse 1996). The study of land use changes and the quantitative analysis of time steps and time series are used to demonstrate how land use changes have influenced landscape structures and landscape functions in historical times. Therefore, we ask how landscape structure has changed in the study area

and what have been the main historic “driving forces” of the landscape dynamics observed? The other main question is how landscape dynamics has influenced the temporal changes of production function? Subject, is the changing potential to biomass production by agricultural land use. Soil as the basis of agricultural land use is evaluated in regard to the natural production by using of different governmental soil taxation results. The feedback of the soil as an archive to land use changes refer to the use of the (several) landscape functions (Bork et al. 1998). These historic soil changes should be used in future landscape planning (Beierkuhnlein 2002).

The relation between landscape dynamics and production function will be discussed. As a conclusion, an overview is provided about the current and future values of historical landscape analysis.



Fig. 1 The study area (Source: Mannsfeld – Richter 1995)

## 2. RESULTS

### 2.1. Investigated Area and Data

The study area (*Fig. 1*) is located in the northeast of Leipzig in NW-Saxony, Germany, as a part of the municipal region of Jesewitz. The borders of the area are determined by the borders of the municipalities Jesewitz, Pehritzsch, Weltewitz and Wöllmen named in cadastral maps as “Gemarkungen”. The study area is part of the natural region of the Leipziger Land. The area is characterized by precipitations between 550-600 mm/a and the average year temperature of 8.5 °C (Mannsfeld – Richter 1995).

Historical topographic maps provide a suitable cartographic database for the reconstruction of landscape structures. The present investigation is based on historical documents (landscape descriptions, local chronicles) and serial cadastral maps and data sheets from the 18th century and to the beginning of the 19th century (*Table 1*). Geographical information system (GIS) was applied to analyse data and to visualise the results in maps. The quantitative analysis with GIS needs first an examination to determine congruence and comparability between historical and modern maps (Bender et al. 2005, Neubert – Walz 2002, Walz et al. 2004). In this investigation maps of different scales and diverse content in geometry and legends are used. The “Sächsische Meilenblätter” (‘Saxonian mile maps’) and the serial cadastral maps up

to the time step of 1850 have been parallelised and adopted. Thus, for oldest time step (1750) analysed in this study the geometry from the cadastral maps from time step of 1850 was used.

The historical cadastral maps for time step 1850 were scanned, geo-referenced and digitalized on screen by using the GIS-programme ArcGIS9. The information of the cadastral registers was adopted into attribute tables to generate a spatial explicit data set at ownership allotment level. The information of “Saxonian mile maps” was overlaid by vector data of the time step of 1850. The data set and the attribute tables were adapted to the content of “Saxonian mile maps”; and other information of historical documents and regional maps information was added.

For the time steps 1950 and 2005 the vector data of the digital governmental cadastral map of ownership plots (Automatisierte Liegenschaftskarte, ALK) were used. The data set for time step of 2005 have been integrated and revised by the author by field survey mapping in the year of 2005. The data set of the time step 1950 was adopted to the content of cadastral registers, survey maps; information has been added by the interpretation of aerial photographs of the year 1959.

The development of field management practices since the 18th century in the study area is described for the assessment of production function. Two soil assessment maps (1937 and 1864), originally produced for

*Table 1* Input data and data origin of the four time steps 1750, 1850, 1950 and 2005

Time	Data source	Scale	Archive
1750	Sächsische Meilenblätter (1780-1811), Dresdner Ausgabe, Bl. 21/30	1:12 000	Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden
	Petrikarten (ca.1760), Bl. 1-2	1:33 000	Institut für Länderkunde, Leipzig
	Atlas Augusteus (1722-1742), Bl. 21	not known	Staatsarchiv Leipzig
	Schumannsches Lexikon 1813(+)		Institut für Länderkunde, Leipzig
	<i>Geometries: Urkatasterkarten 1864</i>		Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau
1850	<i>Geometries :Urkatasterkarten (1864)</i>	1:2500/1:3000	Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau
	Separationskarten (1810-1840)	1:2500/1:3000	Landesarchiv Wernigerode/ Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau
	Flurbücher des Urkatasters		Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau
1950	Liegenschaftskataster	1:2500	Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau
	Luftbilder (1959), 159/59/111-116	1:12 400	Militärarchiv Potsdam
	Messtischblatt 1905-1912 (2609)	1:25 000	Institut für Länderkunde, Leipzig
	<i>Geometries: Automatisiert Liegenschaftskarte (ALK)</i>		Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau
2005	<i>Geometries: ALK</i>	1:1000	Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau
	Own investigation		

Note: In Cursive: Data source of the geometry for the time series.

land taxation purposes, have been digitalized for the analysis of changes in natural soil productivity. The data sets were overlaid to the data layers described above in the GIS. Thus, a spatial explicit and quantitative analysis and comparison were enabled.

The German Soil Inventory (1937) is available and documented for all agricultural and horticultural land in Germany. Sample points of this inventory are fixed in the soil inventory maps and detail described in inventory books (Schätzungsbücher). Today these data are stored and managed by the German local financial authorities. The data used in this case study is available from financial authority of Eilenburg, NW-Saxony.

## 2.2. Time steps of land use development

The land use categories applied for the comparison of the four historical time steps are arable land, grassland, forest, water bodies, settlement areas, and other land uses. Furthermore, also the changes of the road network have been analysed (Fig. 2).

### *Before the Prussian agricultural reforms*

The hilly landscape of the study area was formed by glacial and periglacial landscape development since the Saale glacial period. Predominantly aeolian sediments of the earlier Weichselian glacial period overlay sandy loess of periglacial origin by an average sediment layer of one meter. The sandy loess is the basis substrate for soil development. Main soil types in the heterogeneous study area are lessivé and brown soils of medium suitability for agricultural production (Meyer 1997).

After the Weichselian glacial period and several fluctuations including colder and warmer periods the study region was occupied by a more or less widespread forest of beech trees (*Fagus sylvatica*) and oak trees (*Quercus*). The first settlement activities in the study area are assumed for the Palaeolithic time (Dunkel 1969, 1977, Hanitzsch 1956, 1962, Moschkau 1957, Töpfer 1958). Lüning (1997) proved that settlements since the Neolithic time are stable according their site location.

At the end of the medieval period to the beginning of modern times (1500-1800 AD) the land use structure

and the distribution of land use types were relatively stable (Blaschke 1995). In the study area of a size of roughly 2.639 ha agricultural land still dominated in the time step 1750 by 1.938 ha or 73.4% of the total area. Grassland covered 583 ha or 22.1% of the area. The other land use types are not of high significance by a percentage of 2.2% of forest, 1.1% of water bodies and 1.1% of settlement areas. The road network has been constructed since the medieval period of land colonisation with a length of approximately 34.1 m/ha (Table 2).

### *Separation – Changes in landscape structures*

In the 19th century political, social and economic influences particularly changed the landscape structure (Rakow 2002). After the end of the Napoleon era and the Wiener Congress (1815) the study area became a part of the Prussian kingdom. Induced by the Napoleon wars, Prussia had an economic crisis at this time. During the reformation of Prussian agricultural management systems (1807-1850) a new land ownership allocation and land use distribution (so-called “Separation”) emerged.

The comparison of the time steps 1750 and 1850 results an increasing percentage of arable land from 73.4% to 86.0% in the area studied. Grassland decreased of roundly 43% of the origin level. No dramatic changes occurred in the other land use types. Forest and settlement area increased slightly, water bodies decreased slightly and land use type “others” remained at the same level. The road network increased from 34.1 m/ha to 35.8 m/ha (Table 2).

After the Second World War in the middle of the 20th century the social and political situation changed dramatically. The land management practices have been mutated to the socialist planning regime of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) by following the Russian Soviet example. This organisation led to landscape structural changes with high impacts, for example, on flora and fauna water, soil, recreation or on the production potential of the landscape. Traditional and diverse land use practices have been replaced by a new form of agriculture based on the intensive use of machinery and the increasing input of fertilisers (Baessler – Klotz 2006).

Table 2 Percentages of land use types of the time steps 1750, 1850, 1950 and 2005

Time step	Land use type												
	Arable land		Grassland		Forest		Water bodies		Settlement area		Other		Road
	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	m/ha
1750	1938.0	73.4	582.8	22.1	60.9	2.2	24.7	1.1	29.5	1.1	3.7	0.1	34.1
1850	2270.1	86.0	249.2	9.4	60.3	2.3	24.1	0.9	32.1	1.3	3.7	0.1	35.8
1950	2316.5	88.7	141.4	5.1	70.6	2.7	20.1	0.8	55.2	2.1	14.6	0.6	36.4
2005	2297.0	87.2	110.0	4.2	70.5	2.7	20.1	0.8	106.4	4.0	30.4	1.1	28.7

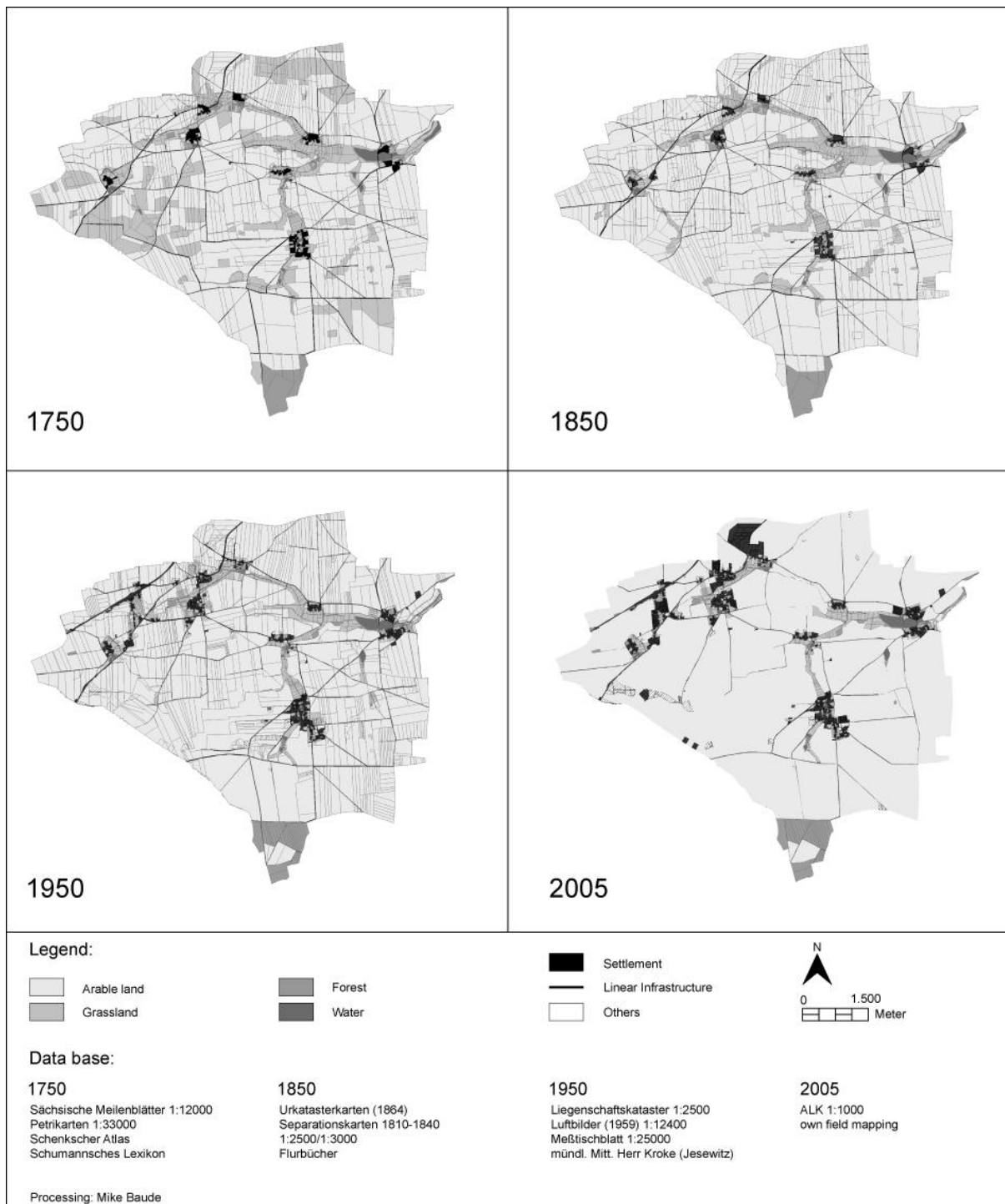


Fig. 2 Landscape dynamics in the four time steps 1750, 1850, 1950 and 2005 (digitalisation and processing have been carried out by the authors)

*Landscape changes since the middle of the 20th century*

Two main steps of land transformation can be observed. In the first period until the 1950th grassland decreased with roundly 43%, and the arable land increased around 2% (1850=100%). At the same time, there was no significant change in the percentage of forest and water bodies. The settlement area increased with 72%. Slight changes in the road network can be as well detected. However, the extensive management practices with multiple crop rotations and a lower level of techniques and fertilizer promoted a high biodiversity after the Second World War until 1960 (Baessler – Klotz 2006).

The second time step of 2005 shows that arable land has nearly the same amount as in the 1950th. Nevertheless, grassland still decreased with 22% in comparison with the earlier time period. The intensification of agriculture by changing the landscape structure into very large-sized fields, the melioration, the irrigation and the application of pesticides and fertilisers have steered increases in food production over the past 50 years (Matson et al. 1997). The road network was accommodated to the technical field management practices and decreased from 36.4 m/ha to 28.7 m/ha. Since 1990 the total amount of land that used for agriculture is declining because of the impacts of the common agricultural policy of the European Union by the promotion of set aside, and also due to market changes. Additionally, intensive settlement activities of the urban sprawl of the city of Leipzig have been observed since 1991. Thus, settlement

area increased from 55.2 ha to 106.4 ha, complies roundly 93%. The percentage of forest and water bodies remained on the same level. The decrease of land use type “others” since time step 1850 has been effected by the exploitation of sand and gravel (Table 2).

*2.3. Comparison of the soil assessments of 1864 and 1937*

In the middle of the 19th century the first soil assessment was executed in Prussia by the order of the Prussian Law of real estate tax (“Preußisches Grundsteuergesetz”) from the 21st of May in 1861. The Prussian Taxation of real estate was based on soil attributes and economic values. The Prussian taxation is distinguished in eight classes (Fig. 3). The first class indicates soils with very good production services; class eight indicates soils with least production services. The high of classification tariffs (“Klassifikationstarife”) for the eight several classes and various land use types (e.g. agricultural land, grassland) were determined by the local market situations (Fig. 3, shown in elapse). Thus, soils assessed in the first class have the highest tariffs and so on. The classes described the quality of natural soil fertility depend only on the natural soil attributes (without economic values). The Prussian Taxation of real estate was introduced in the study area around 1864. Similarly, the sample points of this assessment have been extrapolated to the allotment level located in the cadastral maps of the year 1864. These maps also contain other soil parameters. The assessment level of natural productivity is classified in 8 levels of scoring. The soils evaluated into level 1 are of the highest natural productivity. For more details about the Prussian Law of real estate tax and their execution see Amend (1997).

In the study area the German Soil Inventory was introduced in the year 1937, according to the Law from 1934 (Bodenschätzungsgesetz). The German Soil Inventory database describes various soil parameters down to 1m depth. Furthermore, there is also data on the geological origin, humus content, soil texture and other parameters (Syrbe et al. 2007). The database divides the soil parameters and aggregates these different aspects into a scoring-index between 0 and 100. Soils with the index of 100 are of the highest natural productivity in Germany (e.g. Magdeburger Börde). For the comparison the soil numbers (soil numbers between 0-100; soil with soil number 100 have the most natural soil fertility) were used. The explicit description of the methodology of the soil assessment comparison is demonstrated by Baude and Meyer (2006).

In Figure 4 the distribution of the Prussian soil assessment in the study area is presented. The borders between the classes from classification tariffs of the

**Klassifikationstarif.**

Reinertrag für einen Morgen in Silbergrößen.

Klasse.	Ackerland.	Gärten.	Wiesen.	Weiden.	Solgungen.	Wasserpflüde.	Orbland.
1.	150	200	150	150	120	75	8
2.	150	180	150	120	69	60	7
3.	108	120	120	60	48	45	6
4.	81	90	90	30	36	24	5
5.	54	60	60	18	30	9	4
6.	36	30	30	9	18	5	3
7.	18	15	15	5	7	3	2
8.	6		9	2	2	1	1

Fig. 3 Classification tariffs for the study area (Source: Staatliches Vermessungsamt Torgau)



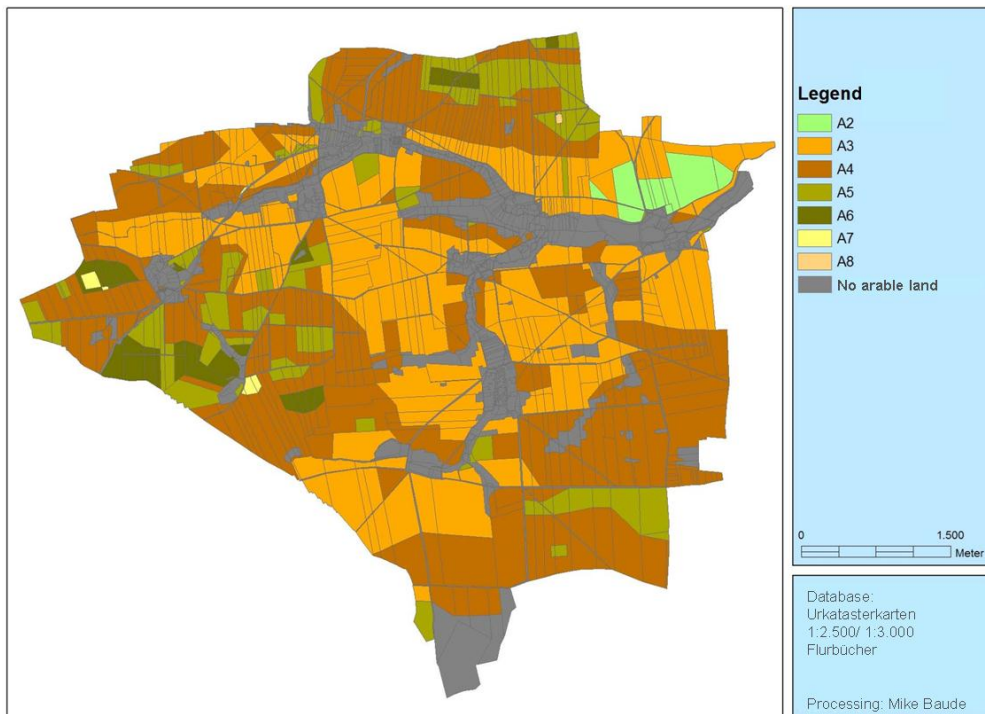


Fig. 4 Prussian soil assessment from 1864 (digitalisation and processing were carried out by the authors)

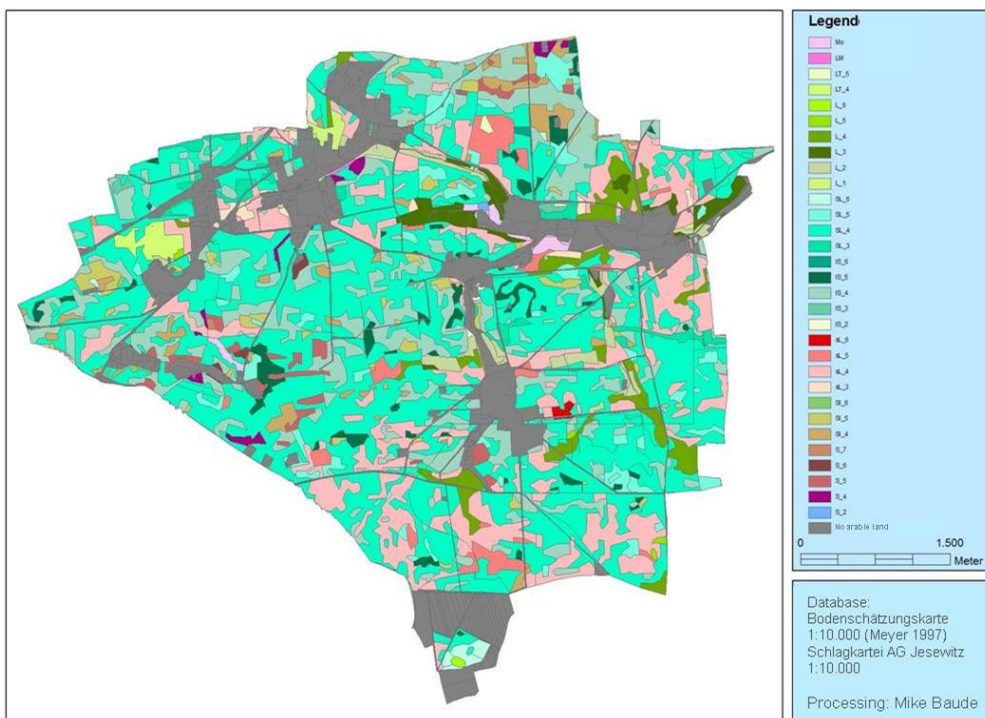


Fig. 5 German Soil Inventory from 1937 (digitalisation and processing were carried out by the authors)

Prussian Taxation were oriented according to the field borders on ownership allotment level. Within these fields plots of the same classification can be found. There is no

specific exploitation raster. The Soil taxation correlated with the field on ownership allotment level. The Prussian Taxation shows the natural character of suitability for

agricultural production, because melioration and fertilization started later, with the industrialisation, after the Prussian Taxation. The differentiation in the map of the German Soil Inventory (in *Fig. 5*) is effected by the exploitation in raster 50x50 m. Furthermore, the extended soil exploitation distinguished 31 soil types with several soil characteristics. Thus, the characterisation of the different soil characteristics is enabled.

Although the approach used for the analysis of the German Soil Inventory (1937) has been adapted on the soil assessment of the year 1864, the different data sets cannot be compared without 1:1 GIS-adaptation (Freund 1998). Thus, for the comparison of the two different soil assessments we applied a generalization of the data of German Soil Inventory. The differentiated data set of the German Soil Inventory (1937) were first summarized to five main groups according to the soil numbers and assigned to the “grouping of usability” (‘Nutzbarkeitsgruppen’) (Matz 1956). The grouping composited the soil number according to the soil type. In this case there are five groups of usability with the associated soil numbers. Furthermore, the classification tariffs were composite to five main groups according to the level of their taxation class and assigned to the “grouping of usability” as well (*Table 3*).

This generalization provides a methodology to compare the two soil assessments based on a more summarised character of the different data sets. The comparison based on GIS-analysis of land which was used as arable land between the time periods 1850 and 2005. A quantities analyses of the changes of the soil characters between 1864 (Prussian Taxation) and 1937 (German Soil Inventory) is applied. Validity of results of the German Soil Inventory is applicable to describe the current soil characters when the actual morphological dynamics are integrated (Finke 1994).

The comparison permitted that 97.7% of the comparable agricultural land can be ranged in five groups. *Table 3* shows that the second group of usability dominated in both soil assessments with 66.6% (GSI) respec-

tively with 83.72% (PT). In group 3 there are 22.9% (GSI) respectively 14.07% (PT) of comparable agricultural land. Thus, a significant part of the agricultural land can be associated to the groups 2 and 3. The groups 1, 4 and 5 are without a higher importance for the soil assessments and described 10.5% (GSI) respectively 2.21% (PT) of the comparable agricultural land.

### 3. DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Interpretation of historic maps and soil taxation

The spatial explicit mapping of landscape structural changes is accompanied with uncertainties concerning scales and contents of the information included. The landscape dynamics analysed in the time steps and the interpretation of their impacts on structure and function of recent landscapes should be seen on the background of historical data sets and maps.

Historical landscape analyses on the basis of GIS data offer new views for the knowledge about dynamics, structure and functions of landscapes. Long time series permit landscape assessments of changes related to economic, ecological and social aspects. With regard to their validity historical data sources must be critically checked. While the scale of the data set makes the exact reconstruction difficult, the knowledge about the landscape functioning in the past is very useful to understand recent processes of landscape changes.

In our study, land use changes and the quantitative analysis of time steps are used to demonstrate how land use changes influenced landscape structures and landscape functions. Therefore, we ask how landscape structure has changed in the study area and what have been the main historic “driving forces” of the landscape dynamics observed? The other main question is how landscape dynamics has influenced the production function during time?

*Table 3* Comparison of German Soil Inventory (GSI) and Prussian Taxation of real estate (PT)

Grouping of usability	Soil number		Classification tariffs			
	IS/SL <sup>1</sup>	GSI in ha	PT in ha	GSI in %	PT in %	Arable land
1	64-81(+)	85.8	43	4.09	2.05	1/2
2	49-63	1395.7	1752.9	66.6	83.72	3/4
3	36-48	480	294.6	22.9	14.07	5/6
4	29-35	53.2	3.2	2.54	0.16	7
5	(-)18-28	81.1	0.05	3.87	0	8
	Sum	2095.8	2093.8	100	100	

<sup>1</sup> Main soil type of case study area



In the following chapter, we discuss shortly how the landscape has developed since the Neolithic. Starting with the beginning of the Prussian agricultural reforms we analysed four time steps in the context of the main drivers of landscape change. We proved two periods in change of the production functions in regard to the main driving forces.

### 3.2. *Land use changes in the context of driving forces*

The first permanent settlements of the study area in the Neolithic Revolution were accompanied by the first strong human influences of the landscape. During this period the cultural landscape usage began with common forest pasture and led to first deforestations. However, after this first deforestation began a reforestation period until the Slavic colonisation during the migration period in the 6th century (Gringmuth – Dallmer 1983, Bork et al. 1998). Thus, the human impacts of Neolithic Revolution were without high importance.

The first major landscape changes caused by the Slavic colonisation associated with population growth and an increase on cultural land use. After the beginnings of the colonisation by German settlers, the so called 'East expansion' in the 10th century, the population grew up to decuple. The agricultural land increased in according to further land use practices to a first maximum in the 14th century. During the 'East expansion' the landscape structures changed dramatically. Until the end of the Middle Ages the indigenous forest area decreased by 90%. At that time arable land became the dominant land use type. Blaschke (1995) and Nitz (1995) proved that the distribution of land use types in the study area has not changed after the end of the Middle Ages. However, with the Prussian agricultural reforms the landscape structures changed again distinctly.

Our spatial explicit analysis, starting in the middle of the 18th century, results that arable land increased significantly at the begin of the 19th century. Up to the middle of this century until today the land use type distribution was relatively stable, when compared with large land cover changes e.g. in Estonia (Mander – Palang 1994). The area of grasslands decreases in our investigation area continuously; forests and water bodies are normally stable, located on the same plots, the area for settlements increased slightly. The linear infrastructure changed with the Separation by the new property situation and the needs for new agricultural methods. The development in the 19th century coursed mainly by the Prussian agricultural revolution, when the economic situation after the Napoleon wars were disastrous and new field management and practices were needed. In the course of the "collectivisation" in the years between

1950 and 1960 the linear infrastructure changed dramatically, when several paths and country roads have been deteriorated and most of the field margins and hedges were destroyed to arrange the countryside in the of form of large field plots for mechanised crop production. Furthermore, another main development period was initiated by the GDR government to copy the Russian Kolkhoz system to Germany. The extension of mechanical and chemical agricultural practices needed large field sizes and less linear infrastructure inside the fields. The heterogeneous agricultural landscape, structured until the 1960s, has been diverted into a homogeneous and intensively-used mono-functional agricultural landscape without clear cultural orientation and coupling the formally agricultural villages.

The development of land use types depends on several driving forces: In the past natural hazards such as extreme weather and intensive rains with high impact on the landscape have changed the land use (Bork et al. 1998). Furthermore, landscape structure changes were influenced by social and political events like medieval diseases, wars (Thirty Years' War, 1st and 2nd World War) and economic crisis (e.g. the agricultural crises at the beginning of 19th century, the collapse of agriculture after World War 2). There are several public reformations such as the Prussian agricultural revolution in the 19th century or the planning economy of former German Democratic Republic which have also influenced the development. Today EU-norms and regulations steer the development of landscape structures, i.e. by the Common Agricultural Policy, the Habitats Directive and NATURA 2000 network.

### 3.3. *Soil productivity changes - Knowledge for sustainable land use*

The production function in the study area is mainly characterised by the agrarian productivity. Thus, this agrarian productivity depends on natural soil productivity in addition to the soil characteristics.

In the period between the Slavic colonisation and the beginning of the Prussian agricultural revolution and the industrialisation in the second half of 19th century the agrarian productivity depended mainly on the expansion of agricultural land. The expansion of agricultural land came to an upper limit when the best lands were cultivated (Mottek 1987).

To the beginning of the Prussian agricultural revolution the growth of production function is also steered by the expansion of agricultural land use. The maximum of agricultural land is achieved. The beginning of the industrialisation defined that the growth of agrarian productivity based as of now on new technical achieve-

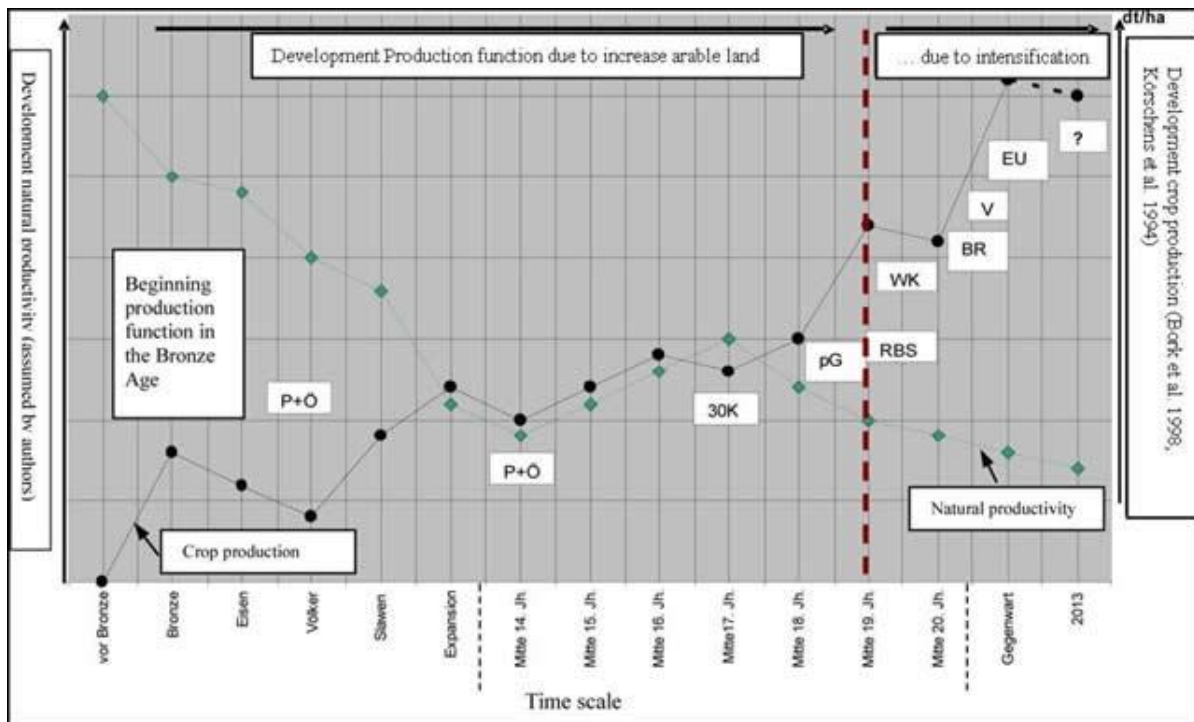


Fig. 6 Development of production function according to main driving forces, Legend: P+Ö=Pestilence and Ecological Changes, 30K=Thirty Years' War, pG=Prussian Taxation, RBS=German Soil Inventory, WK=World Wars I / II, BR=GDR Agricultural Reform, V=GDR "Collectivisation", EU=European Agricultural Policy

ments, modern management practices and the expansion of new mineral fertilizer (Müller 1998).

The intensity of agrarian productivity became a new dimension after the "collectivisation" around the 1960th. The new farm management system with large field sizes and technical field management practices, and also the intensive melioration of water households lead to a significant growth of production. Jäger (1987) proved that the main growth of production function was between 1950 and 1980. Körschens et al. (1994) identified in according to Jäger (1987) an increase of grain production with 100% between 1902 and 1992.

However, these practices of intensively-used agricultural land led to strong impacts in soil and groundwater ecology because of soil erosion and soil degradation. Bork et al. (1998) postulated for the same time period the increase of soil erosion and soil degradation in several other European regions as well. In order to clarify the situation of the soil productivity function, the Prussian Taxation of real estate (1864) and the German Soil Inventory from 1937 give the soil and land use status before and without the intensive changes from extensive use to intensively-used agricultural land in the second half of the 20th century. However, the comparison of the two soil assessments by this study indicates steps of change. The natural soil productivity decreased to a larger area of soil in a lower group of usability (Table 3).

We distinguish two main periods of the production function development in the investigated area during the last 150 years. We found a first period from 1864 to 1960 with relative stability in comparison to other phases since the middle of 18th century. The distribution of land use types was stable and the changes in natural soil productivity in accordance with the investigated soil assessments were without high amplitude (Jäger 1987). The second active period up to 1960 were characterized by new management practices like melioration, fertilisation and mechanical soil management (Jäger 1987). The increase of the production function (e. g. in the production of cereals) is accompanied with the degradation of natural potential to produce biomass on several fields, because of erosion, soil accumulation, soil compaction and other changes of physical and chemical soil characteristics. To conclude the comparison of the two soil assessments we can say that the natural soil productivity has not significantly changed between the middle of the 19th century and the beginning of the collectivisation (1960). Figure 6 shows the development of natural productivity and the crop production. Furthermore, the main driving forces that influenced this development were shown in context of the time scale.

The increasing landscape dynamics by land use practices and land use changes are in the same time essentially for the development of the production function.

The changes in management practices and the new agrarian objectives of the society have strong influences on the production function. The result of these developments is a highly productive agricultural land use. The adaptation of the landscape structure and the mono-functional land use by preference of the production function is the result of the economic optimisation. This economically optimised land use recently goes on with the ongoing high human input of energy and substances. Thus, the today's stability of the production function depends directly and mainly on the inputs of the farmers. It follows that the ecological equilibrium of the man-managed land is increasingly unstable and vulnerable against such disturbances as natural hazards (Steinhardt 2005). Dabbert (1994) points to the enhanced organic management practices developed in modern agriculture with nutrient balances and increasing soil fertility since the 19th century. Meyer (1997) proved for the investigated study area that the regulation functions as a term of the landscape household of landscapes is still in decline from the collectivisation period.

The biodiversity heavily decreased after the "collectivisation" by the intensively-used agricultural land and the changes of landscape structure (Waldhardt et al. 2003, Baessler – Klotz 2006). In comparison with that the less intensive agricultural land use directly after World War II promoted high spatial heterogeneity and the richness species (Baessler – Klotz 2006). The biodiversity increase is described for the time period until the mid-19th century for cultural landscape followed by a decrease since the beginning of industrialisation of agriculture (Plachter 2001).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Similar to most European countries, the landscape structure changes described in this study follow the comparable fundamental changes especially for the time period after 1960. Landscape structural changes and the development of production function should be seen and combined with results of other disciplines like the studies on climate change, the investigations about the loss of biodiversity, the degradation of arable land and the desertification problem. Furthermore, the results show the linkage between human land use, and landscape structures and functions. The interdependency between landscape structural changes and the development of production function is also demonstrated in this case study. Follow-up impairments, for example soil degradation, soil erosion and the total loss of soil productivity, the society will confront with economic, ecological and social problems with probably high costs.

Thus, for a target-oriented, based on the principles of sustainability and landscape functions to produce

ecosystem services land use planning, the historical information demonstrated in this study can help to bridge the gap between economic and ecological interests. Aspects of historical land management practices confront the discussion with examples how to manage the landscape and that the satisfaction of human needs can be brought in line with ecological interests. This balance between human productive needs and techniques, and the ecological basis is necessary for a sustainable future. The methods to analyse the changes of landscape structure and soil production function induced by land use since the 18th century in North Saxony demonstrated in this study should help to bring the historical information/the data of historical maps in the context of modern methods of landscape analysis.

#### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Financial authority of Eilenburg, and the Cadastral Office of Torgau, providing permission for using the cadastral maps and registers.

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