

Abstract

According to Manuel Schramm, the 17th century marks a turning point in the perception of nature and landscape in Western and Central Europe. This thesis attempts to trace these changes in the attitude of aristocrats towards their dominions. Based on a sample of Bohemian demesnes of the Dukes of Saxe-Lauenburg, the thesis focuses on the acquisition of estates and the development of residences, sacral (church) buildings, gardens, water infrastructure, forests and farms and their management. The thesis argues that the dominion had three basic functions for its owner (and his family): economic, aesthetic and recreational (leisure). The requirements to fulfil all three functions were often met within same area of the estate. The successful combination of these functions led to the owner of the dominion being portrayed as a good *Hausvater* (householder). In case of the Princesses Anna Maria Francisca and Sibylla Augusta, this was combined with the stereotype of the *good widow*. The dissertation follows the management and changes of the dominion according to the demands of its owner and tries to (re)construct his/her the relationship and attitude towards the dominion.