

PhD-topic Stefan Herfurth

## **Liberty in the Baltic Sea Region: Development, Perception and Spread of a Culture Pattern**

This Ph.D. project deals with the enlightened idea of liberty in the Baltic Sea region of the 18th century. How did the so called Age of Liberty in the Swedish Kingdom influence the Dominion Swedish Pomerania? The idea of Swedish liberty arrived mainland: Two culture patterns converge in the north of the Holy Roman Empire – the Swedish and the German idea of liberty. At this time Pomerania was regarded as part of the Holy Roman Empire, occupied by the Swedish Crown. Thus Swedish Pomerania ranks among borderlands in double meaning. On the one hand there is the Swedish interpretation of liberty which is understood as a lack of foreign repression. On the other hand there is the absence of an absolutist regent. In addition, the concept of German liberty also rests upon the political idea of independence from foreign rule and the avoidance of any power concentrations within the empire. With the historical context given, my research question is based on the two different concepts of liberty in the Baltic Sea region. Most sources are printed documents and papers conveying intersecting culture patterns. The borderland of Pomerania is the starting point to analyze historical ideas of liberty based on different traditions of power in the setting of one territory.