

PhD-topic Kord-Henning Uber

Averted Confessionalization? Religious Limitation and Exclusion in the Duchy of Courland at 1700. Transformation of a Borderland in the Baltic Sea Region

In my Ph.D work „Averted Confessionalization? Religious Limitation and Exclusion in the Duchy of Courland at 1700. Transformation of a Borderland in the Baltic Sea Region” I investigate the cultural development of three Christian confessions -Lutheranism, Catholicism, Calvinism - in regard to the shape and change of boundaries between these denominations. The Duchy of Courland and Semigallia, as well as the district of Pilten, was located in the southwest of today’s Latvia. Courlands sovereignty as a vassal to the Polish crown lasted from 1561 till the Third Partition of Poland in 1795. The social and political behaviour of the dynasty of the Duchy, the German-speaking, mainly Lutheran nobility and the local clergymen will be analyzed and interpreted from 1650 till 1740. The Couronian politics were often influenced by the different religious agendas of Poland-Lithuania, Sweden, Borussia and Russia. To create an understanding of the relations between the different confessions I concentrate on the position of converts in the Couronian society. Of further importance are scandals connected to religious matters. With this approach I hope to open new perspectives on the development of the religious culture in a Baltic borderland during the Early modern period.