Abstract of PhD-project in Cologne University

**„Local politics, public sphere, and Imperial rule in the periphery: Riga and Reval in late Imperial Russia“**

The research project proposes to identify the formation process of a new model of urban community governance in the western part of the imperial territory on the cases of the two main cities of the Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire - Riga and Revel. The hypothesis is put forward that during the extension of the 1870 Municipal Statute to Riga and Revel the process of formation and synthesis of a completely different model of interaction between various actors and agents representing urban and local interests and the interests of the empire began. First of all, it is directly related to the centuries-old traditions of class and corporate urban governance, which formed certain traditions. Secondly, with the special legal status and position of social groups in Baltic provinces, which was confirmed by the imperial power for 2 centuries.

The spread of the reform to the cities of the Baltic provinces was one of the turning points in the process of erosion of old forms and governance methods, interaction between different agents, and formation of new models of political relations. The new model of interaction and governance of urban communities at the local and imperial level led to the formation of a new political language, the establishment of other emotional modes and practices of emotional navigation in the new circumstances related to the reform, electoral cycles in urban communities, and new forms of describing themselves.

All this raises the question through which analytical categories and concepts it is possible to analyse the model of relations and political actions that was forming in the Baltic provinces in 1870-1890. The theoretical model of "civil society", as it appears in the paper, presents a necessary conceptual apparatus, which, however, needs to be rethought and adjusted for the case study of Riga and Revel. By adjusting the theoretical and analytical tools, it will be possible to focus more substantially on the actions of different agents in the urban communities of Riga and Revel, to analyse their statements, actions, actions within the framework of different emotional communities or emotional regimes. All this will provide an opportunity to look at the process of formation of a new society and the consequences of urban reform from a different angle, its differences from other parts of the Russian Empire. Moreover, it is on these examples that it is possible to clearly trace the problems faced by different actors in the new circumstances.