

Call for Papers

Mighty Ocean — Inland Sea

Connections and Comparisons between the Atlantic and the Baltic, c. 1450-1850

25-27 September 2025, University of Greifswald (Germany)

The study of maritime spaces has produced a diverse and vibrant body of research on human experience on and around the sea. Traditions of research have often been based on the particularities of individual sea and ocean spaces, but the global turn has led to an increasing recognition of their interconnectedness.

The Atlantic Ocean and the Baltic Sea are directly connected by the North Sea. While the Atlantic has given rise to concepts such as the 'Atlantic System' and the 'Atlantic World', emphasizing the interactions between the peoples of three continents, scholars have highlighted the cultural diversity, ecological specificity and geopolitical importance of the Baltic Sea, but also its comparative spatial limitation. The connections between the two, however, integrate the Baltic and the Atlantic into a global space, one made up of both large and small maritime bodies.

Since the Early Modern Period, global connectivity has intensified. Recent research has shown that the Baltic Sea region was not marginal to these changes, but an integral part of the 'Oceanic Revolution'. In some cases, pre-existing structures in the Baltic Sea enabled oceanic interactions to take place. Smaller, seemingly peripheral, enclosed maritime spaces such as the Baltic Sea can thus be seen as preparing, supporting, contributing to and participating in global maritime connections.

The workshop aims to explore these connections, but also the comparisons that can be drawn between the Atlantic and the Baltic, one a vast ocean and the other a relatively enclosed sea, from the age of European ocean exploration to the abolition of the Danish Sound Toll. The aim is to identify themes and concepts that can be used for future discussion and research in order to bring together the historiographical fields of the Atlantic and the Baltic and to open up possible new perspectives for a global maritime history that includes considerations of scale.

We welcome proposals for 15-minute papers on either or both the Atlantic and the Baltic between 1450 and 1850. The workshop has been designed to facilitate ample opportunities for dialogue and discussion. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

Migration	Colonialism
Labour (free and unfree)	Religious Belief & Practice
Trade	Subaltern History
Ecology and Environment	Seaborne Life and Littoral Societies
Culture	Cartography, Navigation and Nautical Knowledge
Intellectual Exchange and Science	Naval History
Diplomacy	

Please submit a title, an abstract of 150-250 words, and a short CV by 15 April 2025. Questions can be directed to the organisers, Prof Sünne Juterczenka (suenne.juterczenka@uni-greifswald.de) and Dr John Freeman (j.freeman@uw.edu.pl).

Funding is available to cover travel and accommodation expenses. Selection of the proposals will be based on topic relevance and on the degree to which the proposal answers the call. Notification of acceptance will occur no later than 31 May 2025.