

# **Profile of the Department of History at the Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg**

Historical knowledge is essential to understanding and to explain contemporary societies. The history of science generated as a historical social science from research on past of model-like categories, concepts and theories for guidance in contemporary society: political decision-making, social latitudes, or social and economic conflicts and coalitions can be analyzed more fully in temporally more distant phenomena, since sources are accessible and effects already investigated and contexts can be seen better from a distance.

Stronger than the social science, history examines the social presence as something grown and changeable. The study of past societies with alternative development paths sharpens the look and awareness of past, neglected and even still possible options and thus brings present reality under legitimacy duress. The distancing effect created by the confrontation with other, more or less distant societies from antiquity to the present, transports the understanding and explanation of long term effective change of the present. A profound knowledge about former societies also protects against undifferentiated political enslavement of history as an historical myth donor, which serves as the legitimacy of present power relations and as a justification of decisions.

## **1 Research profile of the Department of History**

The special profile of the Department of History at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg is founded partly on the decidedly European orientation, and also on a differentiated didactics of history. Moreover particular single research is carried out at the department which characterizes its discipline.

(Please compare the lists of publications of department members on their respective homepages.)