

PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

for the Advanced Seminar 'Global Exchanges and Maritime Trades'

Prato (Italy), 13-19 May 2018

The paper should be submitted **ultimately 28 February 2018** by sending it by e-mail to nwp@let.ru.nl. The paper should not exceed 25 pages A4 and should be submitted in digital form (PDF). The paper of course has its own title, but for uploading, the document should be named [Surname].pdf (e.g. Boerrigter.pdf).

The following instructions should not be interpreted in any strict way as separate questions that need to be answered one by one, or in the same order as they are listed below. Rather, the guidelines should serve as points of orientation and reflection. You are requested to introduce your entire research design and/or present a particular case study within a larger project.

- A) the central research question and hypothesis;
- B) the national context of your research question;
- C) the historiographical context;
- D) methodological issues;
- E) issues relating to sources and data coverage;

A) The central research question and hypothesis

1. What is the primary focus/central research question and the central hypothesis of your research project?
2. What sub-questions and sub-hypotheses are derived from the central research questions?
3. Indicate why it is precisely these sub-questions and these sub-hypotheses that are being developed in your study rather than others?
4. What is the purpose/motivation of your project, or what is "the goal" of your research?

B) The national context of your research question

1. What is the relevant national context of your research topic? Do your central research questions link up with important debates within the history of the country/region, and if so, which debates?
2. What are the basic facts we need to know about the history of the country/region in order to understand the national historical context in which your research question is situated?

C) *The historiographical context*

1. Do your central research questions and hypotheses link up with important debates within the field of history or the social sciences, and if so, which debates?
2. Do you yourself explicitly depart from a theoretical perspective or approach?
3. What is your “analytical frame”?
4. Do you intend to question certain positions in known debates or is your first intention to develop a new point of view?
5. How would you describe the nature of your research: positivistic, hermeneutical, narrativistic, comparative, or a mix of these?

D) *Methodological issues*

1. Do you want the results of your study to be generally applicable to other times and/or places?
2. In what way do you aim to achieve this, and what type of generalizations do you have in mind?
3. Is your approach quantitative (meaning: aimed at discovering correlations between variables), or qualitative (meaning: aimed at discovering causal explanations for specific cases)?
4. What are the dependent and independent variables that are central in your research? What are the correlations and causal connections that you wish to discover and what is the evidence you hope to bring forward?
5. Do you intend to carry out “theoretical sampling”?
6. Do you employ a comparative perspective in your research? If so, in what way do you intend to make comparisons and with what purpose?
7. Why did you choose that particular time period and place for your study?
8. Do you make use of certain models or ideal types and, if so, why and how?
9. How do you make the central concepts of your research operational?
10. If you wish to apply research methods and/or techniques: describe which ones and why do you think they are useful?
11. Do you aim to give a reconstruction in your dissertation of the way in which the historic actors themselves experienced history or do you rather aim to provide an analysis after the event of structures that most likely have escaped the attention of the historic actors? Or do you attempt to develop a combination of both?

E) *Issues relating to sources and data coverage*

Make an inventory of the source materials that you intend to use and provide titles and, if possible, the archival locations (title of book, article, archive and inventory number).

1. Provide a short description of the content that may be expected and the volume of the sources. In addition, provide an estimation of the extent to which it will be feasible to process all this material.
2. Indicate why you choose to use these sources rather than other materials.
3. Indicate the possibilities and shortcomings of the source materials and literature that you will be using.
4. Indicate clearly whether you will be using your source material in a quantitative or qualitative way, or in a combination of both.