Global Privateering

Applicants

Eligible proposals must have at least two applicants from Humanities, preferably with an interdisciplinary approach.

Supervisor Name	Discipline
Prof Cátia Antunes	Social and Economic History
Dr Gerhard de Kok	Maritime History/Digital Humanities

Project description (300 words)

Global Privateering is a digital humanities project that bridges the gap between citizen scientists, IT interns from vocational colleges (mbo's*)* and academic researchers. A citizen scientist kindly donated his extensive dataset on Dutch ships captured by French privateers from St. Malo in the 17th and 18th centuries. During the pilot phase, four mbo interns developed an online tool for browsing the data contained in this dataset. The underlying database scheme has been developed to be able to capture social, economic and legal information on privateering court cases from a variety of sources, not just those on French privateering.

To increase the usefulness of the online tool for researchers, the project is now looking to extend its scope to a truly global scale by including new data on captured ships from multiple nations sailing on continental and intercontinental routes from the Middle Ages to the Modern period. The project aims to create a valuable tool for students (as the data is appropriate for the development of innovative research questions), scholars (the data can be used as basis for large project/grant applications for a variety of disciplines) and the general public (interested in maritime, local and regional histories).

The first step towards transforming this pilot onto a global endeavour has already been set. Dr Eva Guillorel (University of Rennes) has committed to providing complete data from the St. Malo privateering registry for non-Dutch ships. Following up on her efforts, this current application proposes to include data from legal documents on privateering from the High Court of Admiralty (London – original documents available online with Brill) and records from the collections of the main European chartered trading companies (VOC, WIC and EIC).

The day-to-day coordination of this collaborative project has been performed by Drs Tessa de Boer (History) who will continue fulfilling this role for the upcoming years.

Research Trainee Profile

The trainee(s) will be assigned the following tasks:
1) Reading of primary source materials (in different Western European languages). Preferential candidates will have knowledge (or be willing to acquire knowledge) in palaeography
2) Input of data according to a pre-designed database scheme and upload/feed to online open access environment
3) Use of aggregated data for:
    a. Scientific contribution (co-authored article for peer review)
    b. Public history contribution (communication of findings to a large public)
4) On-the-job training on methodologies and technologies surrounding *Global Privateering*
5) Possibility to make use of data sets for own research (particularly BA and/or MA theses)

In view of the tasks and specific training offered, a combination of an excellent BA3 student and a MA student would be preferred. The group will work as a team as to allow trainees to experience a combination of solo/individual work and work in the context of a team.

Collaboration (300 words)

This application stems from three trends in research in the Humanities: 1) joint-ventures with citizens and producers/developers of information technologies; 2) the application of digital tools for historical research; 3) open access resources for researchers, students and the general public.

This application aims to intensify the integration of digital humanities and historical research, by involving trainees and researchers in the development of an online research tool. Furthermore, it opens the academic research world to collaborations with technical schools in the Netherlands, actively contributing to closing the social gap between academics (especially in the humanities) and society in general. The potential of the project in this regard was established by our successful collaboration with the mbo *Nova College* in Beverwijk during the pilot phase.

Our project holds sinergies with various academic initiatives regarding the so-called 'Prize Papers' from the High Court of Admiralty archives. These initiatives focus both on historical and linguistic research on seized documents from captured vessels. Our database differs in scope and enquiry, since we focus solely on privateering court cases worldwide, being the British papers one set among others. Nevertheless, in the future we will consider making connections between our database and other datasets built upon the captured letters of the Prize Papers, preferably using Linked Open Data techniques.

The cross-pollination between digital humanities and history will support strong academic intervention in three particular debates:
1) The role of (digital) infrastructures and data sets in the research within the humanities
2) Creating repositories of structured data that can be used to facilitate research across various fields of historical inquiry (i.e. maritime, economic, cultural, environmental)
3) Understanding the use of knowledge in a broad sense and integrating non-academic knowledge, techniques, methodologies and know-how into academic outcomes

Deliverables (200 words)

We expect three types of outputs:

1) Delivery of a dataset to *Global Privateering* (with author recognition for the trainee)
2) Article (co- or single-authored) where the methodologies and content of *Global Privateering* stands central to intervene in current scholarly debates. This article will be submitted for peer review in a specialized journal
3) Support and supervision towards the development of a BA and/or MA thesis plan based on the data sets available in *Global Privateering*. In the case of (RES)MA trainees this option is opened for the development of a PhD pre-proposal

Planning (150 words)

The planning of the standing activities is as follows:

Timeline	Task	Place
February 2023	Paleography Training and Methodological Approach	Leiden
March 2023-June 2023	Data collection onto existing matrix and data upload	The Hague (archive), Leiden, and/or online
June 2023-July 2023	Development of co- single authored article	Leiden
August 2023	Development of (PhD/MA/BA) thesis proposal/plan	Leiden

Coordination and supervision for tasks related to data collection and data sets will be done by Drs Tessa de Boer (already experienced with current pilot) and Dr Gerhard de Kok. Supervision for development of scholarly article and development of thesis proposal will fall directly under Prof Cátia Antunes's purview.

Student Application

A general text framing the institute and the already existing project will be followed by a clear definition of the tasks required and the development opportunities offered by this traineeship. Particular attention will be paid to the use of language and deadlines, whereby inclusion stands central to recruitment.

Applicants will be required to send:
1) Motivation Letter
2) *Curriculum Vitae*
3) Sample of writing (research paper, chapter of a theses or thesis)
4) Statement of Purpose (stating the interest of collection of this particular data to one's own research ambitions/learning process of a specific set of skills)

Applications can be sent to: c.a.p.antunes@hum.leidenuniv.nl . Selection will consist of a committee of four people (the applicants Antunes and De Kok, the daily coordinator of the project De Boer and one student assistant from the History Department).