

Rubicon: Grant application form 2016

(deadline **1 December 2016, 14.00 hrs. CET**)

Abstract from the Rubicon Grant application 2016-3

0. Basic details

0a. Details of applicant

- Title: Dr., MA.
- First name: Annemieke
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0b. Title of research proposal

Law and Order: Low Countries? The relations between provincial and urban institutions in state-building in the Low Countries 1579-1701.

2. Research proposal

2a. Proposed research

Law and order have been key-issues of all times and places, whether we are talking about ancient Rome or present-day threats of public disturbance, crime or terrorism. Order – or the regulation within society to secure what is believed civility – prevents chaos from erupting and forms a basic necessity to accomplish a good life. In the literature the view is firmly established that some sort of contractual arrangement is needed to secure law and order. The conditions for the peace and security required to allow development are established by mutual agreement. This contractual approach, however, is unable to tell us anything about the historical process through which law and order was generated. In recent decades, most, most historical research has tried to fill this gap by studying the process of state-building and the establishment of law and order. However, these studies have focused exclusively on two forms of government, direct monarchical rule or small-scale city-governments, neglecting the interaction of multi-level governmental forms, i.e. provinces and cities. The latter forms of government were particularly relevant for the experience in the Habsburg Netherlands and the Dutch Republic in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. This omission distorts our knowledge of modern state-building.¹

Therefore, I aim to set the record straight by way of a comparative study on how political institutions organised and safeguarded order in the Low Countries. It will focus on the provinces of Flanders and Holland, as well as the cities of Ghent and Dordrecht. The period to be studied covers the Unions of Arras and Utrecht (1579) up to the War of the Spanish Succession (1701). The 1579-Unions' deepened the rift between the South and North of the Low Countries; following the death of the Spanish King in 1701, a war of succession commenced in which the Republic actively participated and the Habsburg Netherlands' future as part of the Spanish Empire was at stake.

This research then offers the opportunity to compare the institutional development of the Habsburg Netherlands and the Northern Netherlands, as well as many e.g. German principalities. Moreover, it offers a source-based insight to early phases of state-building, which will contribute to a fundamental understanding of what makes some states successful while others fail.

This project explores how provinces and cities interacted, by focussing on three sub-questions:

- 1.) How did provincial and urban governmental institutions shape their jurisdictions in the early phase of the development of the modern state?

¹ E.g.: Kotkas (2014) 17; Härter & Stolleis (1996b) 1-36.

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- 2.) To what extent were city-governments autonomous within the province, and what situations surpassed their authority?
- 3.) How did the Northern Netherlands/Republic and the Habsburg Netherlands differ in the development of their institutional framework?

I conjecture that historians (and political scientists) underestimate the importance of provincial institutions and their relations with urban governments.

Scholarly background

The Low Countries form an ideal test-case for investigating early modern state-formation, for achieving long-term survival with and without any indirect princely rule. The research cases consist of the provinces of Flanders (Ghent) and Holland (Dordrecht) as both had many autonomous cities and strong political institutions and were situated along the coastline leading to economic and social similarities.

With the Union of Arras (1579) the southern provinces of the Low Countries pledged their loyalty to the Spanish crown. In the North, dismay was uttered with the religious politics and the attempted centralisation policy in the Union of Utrecht. It was not until 1609 that the Dutch Republic that had resulted from the Union of Utrecht, was formally acknowledged by the Spanish Habsburg government when they negotiated a truce.

The Northern Netherlands/Republic and the Habsburg Netherlands each went their own political-institutional way. Having to appoint a stadtholder, or having to deal with an allotted regent shaped the provincial government. How these changes were perceived is hitherto unknown, but they undoubtedly had an impact on state-building. Historians have focused on either the overarching 'national' institutions – the Estates General, the Vogt, or the Collateral Councils, or urban history, as each of the autonomous cities could uniquely pronounce their own inhabitants' rights and privileges. The continuing importance of the Dutch Republic as well as the Habsburg Netherlands has been taken for granted and little has been done to compare their institutional similarities and differences.

Moving away from such an selective approach of state-building, I propose to study come to a comparative synthesis which 1) takes into account the relationship between provinces and cities and 2) compares the Habsburg and Northern Netherlands. The aim of *Law and Order: Low Countries* is to gain a better understanding of how provincial and urban institutions co-existed and developed legislation to uphold order. With this approach, the project will greatly contribute to the current scope of research.

Theoretical framework

The timing of the proposed research is propitious due to recent developments in the following three fields of research: political science/ political-institutional, urban and legal history. These developments allow me to approach the early formation of governmental institutions innovatively from three complementary angles.

Political-institutional history and political science

There is a marked increase in publications in the field of politics/ political-institutional history, which may have to do with the joint interest of historians and political scientists. Traditionally, the political processes, policy and policy-making of mainly national institutions were studied.² Presently, attention is paid to advisory boards, international treaties, and the foundations of the European Union.³ The Netherlands has less of an academic embeddedness of institutional history than Belgium. There, more history faculties hold chairs in medieval and early modern political history and the Algemeen Rijksarchief stimulates publications in fundamental historical research.⁴

² Fruin (1902), Rijpperda Wierdsma (1937), Fockema Andreae (1961), Van Peteghem (1996), Berkvens (1990-present), Cauchies and De Schepper (1993).

³ De Schepper (2017).

⁴ De Schepper (2017), Aerts (1994).

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Urban history

The celebration of the foundation of individual cities has led to various urban history-publications. Furthermore, historians have published overarching thematic approaches studying multiple cities. Most studies are of a multidisciplinary nature, leading to renewed insights on public facilities, civic identities and citizenship.⁵ To understand how order was created, I will take the lead from e.g. Gabrielle Dorren and Henk van Nierop who concluded that in municipal legislation many regulations came from explicit requests of burghers in the form of petitions during the sixteenth and seventeenth century.⁶ The origin of municipal regulations on order helps the search for the roots upon which provincial guidelines were based.⁷

Legal history

Since the 1990s, legal historians associated with e.g. the *Max-Planck-Institute für europäische Rechtsgeschichte* have focussed upon *Policeygesetzgebung* (i.e. pre-emptive legislation). They have shown that early modern principalities and imperial cities were successful in formulating coercive measurements to protect society from coming to real and imaginary harm.⁸ Governments had to cope with frequently returning issues such as rowdy festivals and consequences of warfare, e.g. disbanded soldiers.⁹ Recognising these potential problems in advance enabled those in office to act swiftly.

In the present-day Low Countries, legal history is most actively studied at the universities of Maastricht, Ghent, Brussels, Louvain, and Hasselt. The researchers are working closely together and with political-institutional historians.

Innovation and implications

This research-project is innovative with its focus upon the Low Countries' provincial institutions, placing them within an already existing international scope. By juxtaposing two provinces and two cities within a two-fold comparative perspective (see figure 1) and, focusing on an entire century it complements existing studies on state-building.

Building on the insights of the various fields of research, this project moves into three new directions. Firstly, *Law and Order: Low Countries* will contribute knowledge about larger successful states without *direct* princely interference. Secondly, knowledge about interconnectedness between various administrative levels of government (cities and provinces) will be added to the scope of research. Thus the applicability of methodology hitherto limited in use is significantly widened and the understanding of the Low Countries' legal foundations becomes congruent. Finally, this project also provides political scientists with a case study of unique historical depth, which helps them to understand the early phases of the decision-making process.

Method

I will adopt a multi-angled comparative approach, examining the development of the Low Countries' legislation and placing it in an international – mainly German – context.

1. *Diachronic approach*: the project will study long-term developments, rather than events that have drawn the attention of historians because of their importance. As such, it will be possible to identify continuity and change regarding the allocation of jurisdictions of the institutions.
2. *Synchronic approach*: both Flanders and Holland, and Ghent and Dordrecht will be

⁵ E.g.: Prak and Luiten van Zanden (2013), Van der Heijden (2012).

⁶ E.g.: Van Nierop (1999); Dorren (2001); Meeteren (2006), Van Groesen i.a. (2014).

⁷ My preliminary study on the province of Gelderland focused on the legislative topics and not on their origin: Romein (2006; 2007).

⁸ E.g.: Härter (1999); Simon (2004), Kotkas (2014).

⁹ Preliminary research on Gelderland by Romein (2006, 2007) endorses these finds mentioned in Härter (1996A).

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studied within this project. This makes it possible to compare both provinces and cities.

3. *Two-fold comparative perspective, with a third component*: research on both a province and one of its cities, allows the juxtaposition of the governments studied and their jurisdictions to one another. To this end, the grid below offers the possibility of interpretation and comparison. How did the development of social order in the city of Ghent relate to that of the Province of Flanders? Foreign research enables the third component: the project's outcomes can be compared with existing studies. Based on my previous study on Gelderland, I expect that the legal institutions shaping society will differ little with institutions developed in other countries e.g. German principalities.

	Provincial institutions/ legislation	Urban institutions/ legislation & sentencing
Habsburg Netherlands	Flanders	Ghent
Northern Netherlands (Republic)	Holland	Dordrecht
Foreign research	Principalities	Imperial Cities

Figure 1 Comparative grid.

With this project, I aim to answer the question how provincial and urban institutions interacted while organising order in the Low Countries. The earlier posed sub-questions will each be answered in a peer-reviewed article, using mainly the ordinances and (minute-)resolutions of the States of Flanders and Holland, and the requests and ordinances of the cities of Ghent and Dordrecht. Additionally, I will look into the communications between the governmental institutions. The above described approaches will help to maintain a sharp focus and help distinguishing the unique and the ordinary. With a previous case studied (the Dutch province of Gelderland) and much experience in archives and with legal and handwritten sources, this project offers an innovative research with low risks.

Archives and data

Research will take place in the Rijksarchief Gent, the Stadsarchief Gent, the Nationaal Archief and Regionaal Archief Dordrecht.¹⁰ I will also benefit from printed editions of primary sources.¹¹

Having already visited the Dutch archives, I have established good working relations with the staff. The source material used for Flanders and Ghent are known to Prof.dr. Vermeir. He has introduced me to them when I visited the archives in May 2016 to check the feasibility of this research, after being awarded a Tussenbroek-grant.

Deliverables

I will publish three Open Access articles in international peer-reviewed historical journals. Furthermore, I will organise one workshop and present the ongoing-research at two seminars.

Local, national and international collaboration

Law and Order: Low Countries will be embedded at the Institute for Early Modern History at the University of Ghent. At this institute lively discussions are held with a multidisciplinary approach, with its major focus on the history of the entire Low Countries. The co-operation and strong emphasis within this one institute, makes this place uniquely qualified.

¹⁰ See: RAG, SAG, NA, RAD.

¹¹ E.g.: Janssen (1645), *Hollandts placcaet-boeck*.

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Outside Ghent I will benefit from my network of individual historians who work on the overlapping fields of political, institutional and legal history.

Timetable (drawn for 2 years, 1.0fte; will be spread over 2 ½ years, 0.75fte)

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Work package	Flanders				Ghent				Holland				Dordrecht											
Literature study	■				■	■	■				■	■	■				■	■	■				■	■
Archival visits		■	■	■				■	■	■				■	■	■				■	■	■		
Article												■						■						■
Workshop-						■																		
Conference	■										■		■											■
Seminar					■													■						

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2b. Literature references

List all relevant literature here and include full bibliographical details, e.g. Authors, *Title article*, Title book/journal, ed., year, page nrs.

Primary Sources (archive)

Rijksarchief Gent (RAG) – State Archive of Belgium, location Ghent.

Staten van Vlaanderen (BE-A0514 / GW10)

Resolution-minutes/ indices: 808-814 (1580-1700)

Resolutions: 104-220 (1580-1700)

Letters of correspondence, minutes of resolutions (1619-1789): 835-895

Stadsarchief Gent (SAG) – City Archive of Ghent

Deel I Centrale instituties of the County of Flanders

A. Letters of correspondence (briefwisselingen)

1. Received letters of the Council of Flanders (1550-1794) (7 packages)

9. Letters of the city government to the central (provincial) government (1550-1794)
– Reeks 3: 7 t/m 42 (1580-1699)

G. Staten van Vlaanderen

16. Resolutions of the States of Flanders (1564-1683) Reeks 9 – 22 registers.

Deel III. City government

A. On city government

63. Resolutionbooks of the 'Keure' (1549-1794) - 51 registers en 1 bundle.

64. Resolutions of the 'keure' (1600-1799) -2 registers en 21 bundles

67. City ordinances and rules (1570-1804) -8 bundles.

68. Magistrate's ordinances - 6 registers.

71 Requests (1546-1796).

Nationaal Archief, The Hague (NA):

NL-HaNA, Staten van Holland after 1572, 3.01.04.01

Inv. 10-54 (printed resolutions 1572-1621)

Inv. 325-380 (resolutions, including correspondence 1572-1621)

Inv. 55-85 (printed resolutions 1621-1653)

Inv. 5284-5307 (resolutions series III, including correspondence 1621-1653, with alphabetic index).

Inv. 54-133 (printed resolutions 1653-1700)

Inv. 299-304 (secret resolutions 1653-1714)

Inv. 5308, 5310, 5312, 5314, 5316, 5318, 5320, 5322, 5324-5325, 5327, 5329, 5332, 5334, 5352, 5355, 5358-5378, 5386, 5392-5395, 5398-5378; continuation of inv.nr. 5284-5307 (resolutions series II, including correspondence 1653-1700)

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Regionaal Archief Dordrecht (RAD) – Regional Archive Dordrecht

3 (Republiek, Verenigde Nederlanden) in particular 3.944: verzoekschriften aan het stadsbestuur (requests to the city-government);
9 (Oud-rechtelijke archieven) in particular 9.36a resolutions of the 'Oudraad' and Court ;
134 (Collectie Keuren en verordeningen).

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3. Host institute

Employed by a Dutch institute and seconded to a foreign Host institute (if applicable)

3a. Full name and address of the host institute

The Institute for Early Modern History at the University of Ghent.

3b. Website of the host institute

<http://www.iemh.be/>.

3c. Name, position and email address of the supervisor at the host institute

René Vermeir, Professor Early Modern Political History and Program Director of the History Department.

Rubicon: Grant application form 2016

(deadline **1 December 2016, 14.00 hrs. CET**)

4. Knowledge exchange and impact

Max. 400 words excluding literature references or figures

4a. Relevance of the results and/or insights from the research for and the contribution to solving economic, societal, cultural, policy-related or technical challenges.

The Dutch government spoke about creating a 'super province' existing out of Utrecht, Flevoland Noord- and Zuid-Holland, until the project's suspension in June 2014. Furthermore, it is common parlance that the government is 'too far removed to understand and respond to the citizens' needs. This claim is especially made about the 'redundant' provincial government. Many citizens are completely unaware of the contributed value a provincial government has. Politicians fail, while promising to bring politics closer to the people. I expect that researching the roots of provincial state-building and the provincial contribution to creating stability and order will lead to a better understanding of the longevity of our current governmental institutions. This project will help understanding the past and contribute to explaining the relevance of institutions and their decision-making processes.

4b. Describe the effectiveness and feasibility of the proposed approach for knowledge exchange and impact with respect to meeting the need(s) of third parties within and outside of the academic sector.

This project can help understand the start-up phase of state-building and determine the relative value of factors contributing to a well-organised state and with this help understand 'failed states'. *Law and Order: Low Countries* provides a longitudinal, source-based foundation for such knowledge utilisation.

4c. Indicate the period in which possible knowledge exchange and impact is expected to occur.

My knowledge utilisation activities will take place within the timeframe of the Rubicon project. The impact of my knowledge utilisation is expected to occur between the end of the project and five years thereafter.

4d. Describe how the researcher might intend to contribute to the realisation of the possible knowledge exchange and impact.

To achieve my knowledge utilisation objectives I have three strategies:

- I will organise two interactive webinars (web-seminars) for interested (lay-)people regarding the ongoing research. These will, consequently, be made available as webcasts.
- I will write a popularising article about the lessons we can learn from the development of city legislation in Ghent and Dordrecht. Mr. Sigmond and Mr. Brysse, of *Oud Dordrecht* and the *Ghendtsche Tydinghe* respectively, have declared their editorial board's intention to publish such articles. Both historical societies have a readership of more than a thousand people interested in their city's history.
- Knowledge utilisation includes making research findings in a certain academic discipline available and relevant for another field. On the basis of my historical research I will work with a small group of people to set up a database to generate accessibility to the early modern sources. This database itself will enable historians, sociologists, legal professionals, political scientists, and linguists alike – to access and search currently solely locally kept sources. In addition to disclosing information via open access (fundamental research), it consequently opens the possibility of doing comparative research on a large(r) scale, as overviewing vast amounts of information becomes possible.