

Exploring Slave Trade in Asia (ESTA)

The ESTA Database: **Manual & Documentation**

Version 1.0 (November 13, 2024)

Merve Tosun
Pascal Konings



GLOBALISE Linnæus University 



Table of contents

Introduction.....	4
1. Quick guide (exploringslavetradeinasia.com).....	5
Introduction.....	5
Browsing (sub)voyages.....	5
Searching (sub)voyages.....	5
Browsing subvoyage details.....	5
Using the graph function.....	6
Using the maps.....	6
2. Overview of ESTA's variables	7
Introduction.....	7
Subvoyage tab.....	7
Enslaved tab.....	10
Enslaved groups.....	11
Transport tab.....	12
Agents.....	13
Cargo tab.....	14
3. ESTA Database Vocabulary.....	16
Introduction.....	16
Voyage.....	16
Subvoyage.....	16
Enslaved.....	19
Enslaved group.....	21
Transport.....	22
Agents.....	23
Cargo.....	24
4. Variable documentation	26
Introduction.....	26
4.1 <i>Slaving voyage status</i>	26
Example: the enslavement of Zacharias Jansz.....	27
4.2 <i>Location of departure/arrival status</i>	27
4.3 <i>Departure/arrival date status</i>	28
4.4 <i>Conflicting data between datasets</i>	29
Multiple cases of conflicting data.....	30
Conflicting data with conflicting statuses.....	30
5. Documentation datasets.....	31
Introduction.....	31
Ramifications/disclaimer.....	31
5.1 <i>The BGB set</i>	31
5.2 <i>The RT and RTN sets</i>	32
RT set.....	32
RTN set.....	32
5.3 <i>The JH set</i>	33

5.4 The MW set.....	34
5.5 The ML set.....	35

Introduction

Exploring Slave Trade in Asia (ESTA)

Since 2016, a growing group of scholars focusing on slavery and slave trade in the Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds has forged new connections through successful workshops in Amsterdam (2016), Kalmar (2017) and Lyon (2019). The scholars of this emerging network are committed to develop a coherent field of Asian slave trade and slavery studies, including East, Southeast and South Asia as well as East Africa. Key groundwork in propelling both current and future research in the field of Asian slavery studies entails creating the basis for a collaborative slave trade database initiative. Within this wider network of Asian slavery and slave trade studies, we have therefore initiated the project *Exploring Slave Trade in Asia*. ESTA aims to study Asian slave trade as part of larger global flows of slave trade, and in a comparative way; to provide the field with detailed, systematic, and quantifiable figures and reconstructions on slave trade instead of merely rough estimates, and to make full use of the ‘wealth of available historical and quantifiable data’, thus including categories of less-overt sources on maritime slave trade in Asia.¹ In concrete terms, ESTA works towards a collaborative slave trade database for the wider Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago regions slave trade.

ESTA Database Viewer and Editor

ESTA’s front-end database can be accessed through exploringslavetradeinasia.com and has been publicly launched on November 17th, 2023. The back-end of the database is centered around *TIDES*, a user-friendly way to contribute to, as well as to annotate on, ESTA’s database. It enables adding observations and editing data on slave trade (sub)voyages in the wider Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago worlds. This manual annex documentation serves new contributors, as well as interested scholars, students, and amateur historians alike – besides providing an instrument for interpretation and clarification, academic validation, and critique. *TIDES* will be made available for a broader public at a later moment, and is at this moment invitee-only.

¹ Samantha Sint Nicolaas, Matthias van Rossum, and Ulbe Bosma, ‘Towards an Indian Ocean and Maritime Asia Slave Trade Database: An Exploration of Concepts, Lessons, and Models’, *Esclavages & Post-Esclavages [Online]* 3 (2020) §3; Hids et al., ‘Exploring Slave Trade in Asia: First Steps towards an International Database’, *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis (TSEG)* 20:1 (April 2023), 153-172.

1. Quick guide (exploringslavetradeinasia.com)

Introduction

This Quick Guide aims to offer users of the ESTA Database Viewer familiarity with the basic functions and operations of the site.

Browsing (sub)voyages

If you want to browse (sub)voyages, go to [Voyages](#) and either select one from the list, or narrow down your selection by selecting a departure/arrival location and/or a year range. Regarding locations, the terms that these general selection filters search in for departure and arrival locations are the locations as in the sources, their names in standardized form per the [ESTA Database Locations](#) dataset, and the overarching summary. For more specific searches, please see *Searching (sub)voyages* below. Furthermore, please note that pagination is used to limit the results to 50 voyages per page.

Searching (sub)voyages

Searching for particular (sub)voyages can be done by using [Advanced Search](#), which will present you with plenty of searchable variables, including personalia, vessel names and departure/arrival months. Please note that the advanced search bypasses the departure and arrival years by default, since not every subvoyage has a dedicated, standardized departure year attached to it. If you want to search for a specific range of years, please disable this filter. With the filter engaged, you can also search for voyages that were undertaken in particular months; providing, for example, researchers focusing on seasonal shipping ample research tools. Advanced search results can be seen by clicking either on the voyage or directly on the subvoyage details page.

Please note that at this stage, the personalia of enslaved persons/groups/agents, vessel names, and cargo details have not been standardized yet.

Browsing subvoyage details

On the *Subvoyage details* page, the data that the ESTA Database contains on a particular subvoyage is listed in five data sections (for more information on these sections, see *Database Structure* and *Database Sections* in the documentation below). These sections each provide users with coherent data. Functions include presenting the database's Vocabulary definitions by hovering over variables, and showing the data on standardized locations of this subvoyage that the [ESTA Database Locations](#) dataset contains by hovering over location names. When enslaved groups, agents or cargo have been linked to this subvoyage, data on these particularities will automatically show in the aforementioned data sections.

Using the graph function

On the [Voyages](#) page, you will also find a graph button on the right. This tool provides an insight into the number of subvoyages and voyages that the ESTA Database contains, as well as the minimum numbers of enslaved people that were transported during these (sub)voyages. The graphs will alter when the selection input is changed. For example, when entering the years '1700' to '1750', and entering 'Batavia' as arrival location, the graphs will change accordingly. The graph function will also be included for the advanced search results in due time.

Using the maps

On the [Maps](#) page, we have multiple interactive maps representing the ESTA Database's data on the number of enslaved persons. All maps have a range function, limiting the years of the selection by dragging its outer limits. This way, and only this way, the 'Play' button can be used as well. By clicking on locations, they will be selected; multiple selections are possible by holding the Shift key whilst clicking, or by typing in locations in the 'Filter by origin and destination...' in the first place. These locations can also be shown as 'Incoming from selected' (enslaved persons to a location) and 'Outgoing from selected' by clicking the cog symbol in the 'Filter' section. Furthermore, hovering over routes or locations will result in total numbers of enslaved people being shown.

Please note that a disclaimer has been included, providing additional documentation on these maps.

2. Overview of ESTA's variables

Introduction

ESTA's database stores subvoyage-related data in five primary data categories, one of which – the **Voyage** – has already been automatically created at this point. Following here are the other four tabs, along with a short description of the variables they contain. The **VARIABLE** names have been capitalized and marked grey. This is followed by a [DESCRIPTION:] of the (purpose of the) variable and the mode of **NOTATION**, which indicates how values have been stored within variables. Depending on the mode of notation and whether a fixed set of values is used, the available Options are presented.

Note that further documentation on variables and values is available in chapter 4.

Subvoyage tab

Subvoyage ID

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Unique identifier for each subvoyage entry**
- **NOTATION: Automatically applied, no action needed**
- Please note that this number differs from any relative subvoyage number (SV1/2/3)

Subvoyage type

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Mode of (forced) transport**
- **NOTATION: Only enter term from standardized list**
- Options:
 - --: Not-yet defined
 - *Sea*: Sea-based subvoyage
 - *Land*: Land-based subvoyage

Location of departure (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Source's location of departure**
- **NOTATION: Enter departure location exactly as presented in source**

Location of departure (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized location of departure**
- **NOTATION: Enter departure location as standardized by author of data or by authorized, registered and logged ESTA editors**

Departure location status (→ see also 4.2)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Status of the departure location, recording any uncertainties or irregularities**
- **NOTATION: Enter departure status from standardized list.**
- Options:
 - *Confirmed*: Departure location is exactly as recorded in the source
 - *Implied*: Departure location is implied in source
 - *Intended*: Location is intended for departure, but is not or cannot be confirmed
 - *Uncertain*: Departure location is uncertain

Departure date (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Date of departure**
- NOTATION: Enter departure date exactly as written in source. Include reference to calendar if other than Gregorian.

Departure day/month/year (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized date of departure**
- NOTATION: Departure date as standardized according to Gregorian calendar

Departure day/month/year alternative (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized alternative date or range of departure**
- NOTATION: Departure date as standardized according to Gregorian calendar

Departure date status (→ see also 4.3)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Status of the departure date, recording any uncertainties or irregularities**
- NOTATION: Enter departure date status from standardized list.
- Options:
 - *Confirmed*: Date is exactly as recorded in the source
 - *Inferred*: Date (often incomplete, e.g., only year) has been inferred in relation to date of departure/arrival
 - *Uncertain*: Date recorded in source but uncertainty indicated (e.g. with question mark in an original dataset) or unknown
 - *Incomplete*: Only part of the date is available but recorded exactly as in source
 - *Range*: Date is approximate within a certain range
 - *Date/Month/Day/Year alternative*: Date is recorded using range cells but indicates one date or the other:
 - *Relative*: Actual moment of transport is relative to the date mentioned in the source (e.g., 'before x')

Departure date relativity (→ see also 4.3)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Source-based indicator of the moment of departure relative to the recorded date**
- NOTATION: Enter departure date relativity as 'Before' or 'After' only when the departure date status has been marked as 'Relative'
- Options:
 - *Before*
 - *After*
 - *[empty]*

Location of arrival (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Source's location of arrival**
- NOTATION: Enter arrival location exactly as presented in source

Location of arrival (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized location of arrival**
- NOTATION: Enter arrival location as standardized by author of data or by authorized, registered and logged ESTA editors

Arrival location status (→ see also 4.2)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Status of the arrival location, recording any uncertainties or irregularities**
- **NOTATION: Enter arrival status from standardized list.**
- Options:
 - *Confirmed*: Departure location is exactly as recorded in the source
 - *Implied*: Departure location is implied in source
 - *Intended*: Location is intended for departure, but is not or cannot be confirmed
 - *Uncertain*: Departure location is uncertain

Arrival date (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Date of arrival**
- **NOTATION: Enter arrival date exactly as written in source. Include reference to calendar if other than Gregorian.**

Arrival day/month/year (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized date of arrival**
- **NOTATION: Arrival date as standardized according to Gregorian calendar**

Arrival day/month/year alternative (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized alternative date or range of arrival**
- **NOTATION: Arrival date as standardized according to Gregorian calendar**

Arrival date status (→ see also 4.3)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Status of arrival date, recording any uncertainties or irregularities**
- **NOTATION: Enter departure date status from standardized list.**
- Options:
 - *Confirmed*: Date is exactly as recorded in the source
 - *Inferred*: Date (often incomplete, e.g. only year) has been inferred in relation to date of departure/arrival
 - *Uncertain*: Date recorded in source but uncertainty indicated (e.g. with question mark in an original dataset) or unknown
 - *Incomplete*: Only part of the date is available but recorded exactly as in source
 - *Range*: Date is approximate within a certain range
 - *Date/Month/Day/Year alternative*: Date is recorded using range cells but indicates one date or the other:
 - *Relative*: Actual moment of transport is relative to the date mentioned in the source (e.g., 'before x')

Arrival date relativity (→ see also 4.3)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Source-based indicator of the moment of arrival relative to the recorded date in the source**
- **NOTATION: Enter arrival date relativity as 'Before' or 'After' only when the arrival date status has been marked as 'Relative' – otherwise leave empty**
- Options:
 - *Before*
 - *After*
 - *[empty]*

Slaving voyage status (→ see also 4.1)

- [DESCRIPTION:] Slaving status of subvoyage, recording any uncertainties pertaining to the presence of enslaved persons in subvoyage
- NOTATION: Only enter term from standardized list
 - *Confirmed*
 - *Probable*
 - *Possible*
 - *Projected*

Subvoyage notes

- [DESCRIPTION:] Additional notes for details such as mutiny, shipwreck etc.
→ N.B. These notes were taken over from the original datasets
- NOTATION: Free text

Subvoyage source

- [DESCRIPTION:] The source of data referring to this subvoyage, along with the dataset initials and the handle referring to this dataset
- NOTATION: Enter complete source reference

Enslaved tab

Total number of enslaved (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] Total number of enslaved persons in this subvoyage
- NOTATION: Enter total number of enslaved as recorded in the source, including associated terms or words like 'some', 'many', 'around 200'

Total number of enslaved (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] Total number of enslaved persons on this subvoyage
- NOTATION: Enter total number of enslaved persons numerically in appropriate field(s)
 - *Min.:* minimum number of enslaved in **Total number of enslaved (source)**
 - *Max.:* maximum number of enslaved in **Total number of enslaved (source)**
 - *Total:* singular total of enslaved in **Total number of enslaved (source)**

Total number of enslaved status

- [DESCRIPTION:] Status of total amount of enslaved persons, recording any uncertainties or estimates
- NOTATION: Only enter from standardized list
- Options:
 - *Confirmed:* Total number in source, no doubts or indications of approximation
 - *Approximate:* Total number is an estimate
 - *Range:* Total number falls within a range
 - *Unknown:* Total number is unknown

Type of forced relocation

- [DESCRIPTION:] Type of forced relocation
- NOTATION: Enter type of forced relocation as recorded in source

Type of forced relocation (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Type of forced relocation**
- **Notation: Only enter term from standardized list**
- **Options:**
 - *Slave trade:* Buying and selling of enslaved persons
 - *Penal labour:* Forced labor/relocation as part of imprisonment
 - *Tributary:* Relocation of persons as part of tribute
 - *Prisoners of war:* Persons captured in war
 - *Other*

Mortality (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Mortality of enslaved persons on voyage**
- **NOTATION: Enter mortality as recorded in the source, including phrases like 'nearly half' etc.**

Mortality (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Mortality rate of enslaved persons on (sub)voyage**
- **NOTATION: Enter mortality rate as a percentage of Total number of enslaved (standardized)**

Notes on the enslaved

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Additional notes for details, including availability of any (other) details about the enslaved recorded in source, like individual names, sale prices, etc.**
→ *N.B. These notes were taken over from the original datasets*
- **NOTATION: Free text, including source references to specific data where possible**

Source(s) on the enslaved

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Source reference(s) to the data on the enslaved persons, in case this differs from the main (subvoyage) source**
- **NOTATION: Enter complete source reference**

Enslaved groups

Individuals that share the same gender, ethnicity, physical state and age can appear clustered; named individuals must always be submitted separately.

Number of enslaved in group

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Number of individuals in group**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field(s)**

Number of enslaved in group (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Number of individuals in this group, standardized**
- **NOTATION: Enter standardized number**

Gender of enslaved in group

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Gender of the enslaved people in this group**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**
- **Options:**

- *male*: recorded in source as man, male, boy
- *female*: recorded in source as woman, female, girl
- *mixed*: recorded as a mixed group, without specific numbers per sex
- *unknown*: no specification in source of sex quota

Age of enslaved in group

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Age category of this group as recorded in source**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**
- Options:
 - *adult*
 - *child*
 - *infant*
 - *unknown*

Ethnicity of enslaved in group

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Ethnicity or socio-cultural identity of group as recorded in source**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field(s)**

Physical state of enslaved in group

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Physical state of group as recorded in source**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**
- Options:
 - *Healthy*
 - *Impaired*
 - *Pregnant*
 - *Other*

Notes on this group

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Additional notes for details, including availability of any (other) details about the enslaved group as recorded in the source, like individual names, sale prices, etc.**
→ *N.B. These notes were taken over from the original datasets*
- **NOTATION: Free text, possibly including source references to specific data where possible**

Transport tab

Transport name

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Name of vehicle carrying out transport**
- **NOTATION: Name of vehicle as recorded in source**

Transport name (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized name of vehicle carrying out transport**
- **NOTATION: Name of vehicle as standardized by author or authorized ESTA editors according to (international) convention**

Transport type (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **The means of transport type**
- **NOTATION: Type of means of transport as recorded in source**

Transport type (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **The means of transport type, standardized**
- **NOTATION: Only enter term from standardized list**
- **Options:**
 - *Non-vehicular (i.e., by foot, horse, etc.)*
 - *Boat*
 - *Ship*
 - *Wagon*
 - *Train*

Transport capacity

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Capacity details of means of transport, such as tonnage**
- **NOTATION: Capacity as recorded in source**

Transport designation (source)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Designation of means of transport, such as nationality or flag**
- **NOTATION: Designation of vehicle as recorded in source**

Transport designation (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized designation of vehicle, in English**
- **NOTATION: Designation of vehicle in standardized spelling by author or authorized *ESTA* editors according to (international) convention**

Transport notes

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Additional notes detailing the means of transport**
- **NOTATION: Free text**

Transport source

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Source reference(s) to the data on the means of transport**
- **NOTATION: Enter complete source reference**

Agents

Number of agents

- [DESCRIPTION:] **The number of agents recorded**
- **NOTATION: Enter numerical or text value in appropriate field**

Name of agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Name or identification of agent(s)**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**

Alias of agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Alias of agent(s), if specified**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**

Gender of agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **The gender of agent(s), if specified**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**
 - *male*
 - *female*

- *mixed*: both male and female
- *unknown*: no specification in source of sex quota

Role of agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Role of agent(s) in relation to (group of) enslaved and/or the (sub)voyage**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**
 - *Vehicle operator*
 - *Vendor*
 - *Purchaser*
 - *Translator*
 - *Commissioner*
 - *Investor*
 - *Insurer*
 - *Outfitter*
 - *Nominated functionary*
 - *Bookkeeper*

Presence of agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Presence of agent(s) at this (sub)voyage**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**
 - *Yes*
 - *No*
 - *Unknown*

Description of agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Description of agent(s), such as profession, nationality or (company-)affiliation, as recorded in source**
- **NOTATION: Enter corresponding qualification in appropriate field**

Notes on agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Additional notes detailing the agent(s)**
- **NOTATION: Free text**

Source(s) on agent(s)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Source reference(s) to the data on the agent(s)**
- **NOTATION: Enter complete source reference**

Cargo tab

Quantity of cargo

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Quantity of cargo, in the source's language**
- **NOTATION: Quantity of cargo as recorded in source including unit**

Quantity of cargo (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] **Standardized quantity of cargo**
- **NOTATION: Enter quantity of cargo numerically as standardized by author or authorized *ESTA* editors according to (international) convention**

Unit of cargo

- [DESCRIPTION:] Contemporary unit used to measure cargo, in the source's language
- NOTATION: Unit used to measure cargo as recorded in source

Unit of cargo (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] Standardized unit used to measure cargo, in English
- NOTATION: Unit used to measure cargo in standardized spelling by author or authorized ESTA editors according to (international) convention

Commodity of cargo

- [DESCRIPTION:] Type of cargo in terms of commodity, in the source's language
- NOTATION: Type of cargo as recorded in source

Commodity of cargo (standardized)

- [DESCRIPTION:] Type of cargo in terms of commodity, standardized and in English
- NOTATION: Type of cargo in standardized spelling

Value of cargo

- [DESCRIPTION:] The value of the cargo
- NOTATION: Value of cargo as recorded in source, including currency

Notes on cargo

- [DESCRIPTION:] Additional notes detailing the cargo
- NOTATION: Free text

Source(s) on cargo

- [DESCRIPTION:] Source reference(s) to the data on the cargo
- NOTATION: Enter complete source reference

3. ESTA Database Vocabulary

Introduction

This vocabulary lists definitions used by the ESTA Database, sorted by data section. Please note that most of these definitions can also be found on the subvoyage detail pages while hovering over variable names.

Voyage

Voyage	A chain of subvoyages unified by a degree of continuity in the transport of enslaved people for sale or exchange. A voyage consists of one or more subvoyages which are linked together.
Voyage ID	The unique numerical identifier for each voyage entry that has automatically been created by the ESTA database.
Voyage summary	The summarized route of this voyage.
Voyage year	Summarised year of this voyage.

Subvoyage

Subvoyage	Subvoyages are single journeys involving the transport of enslaved person(s) for sale or exchange from one location to another, whether the intended or incidental final destination of the overarching voyage or a brief stop on the way. The subvoyage is ESTA's main unit of analysis. Each subvoyage's data is divided into five sections: the subvoyage, the voyage, the enslaved people, the means of transportation and the cargo.
------------------	---

Subvoyage ID	The unique numerical identifier for each subvoyage entry that has automatically been created by the ESTA database.
Subvoyage type	The mode of transport during this subvoyage, referring to either land- or sea-based transport.
Location of departure	The location from which a subvoyage departs, exactly as presented in the source(s).
Location of departure (standardized)	The departure location as standardized by the author of the data or by authorized, registered, and logged ESTA editors.
Departure location status	Status of departure location, recording any uncertainties or irregularities.
Departure date as in source	The date of departure, exactly recorded as present in the source(s). A reference is included if a calendar other than Gregorian is used.
Departure date (standardized)	The (alternative) date of departure, standardized by the author of the data or by authorized, registered, and logged ESTA editors according to the Gregorian calendar in day-month-year style.
Departure date status	The status of the departure date, recording any uncertainties or irregularities, as well as indicating relative dates, date ranges and date alternatives.

Departure date relativity	The relativity of the departure date, specified in terms of 'Before' or 'After'.
Location of arrival	The location where a subvoyage arrives, exactly as presented in the source(s).
Location of arrival (standardized)	The arrival location as standardized by the author of the data or by authorized, registered, and logged ESTA editors.
Arrival location status	Status of arrival location, recording any uncertainties or irregularities.
Arrival date as in source	The date of arrival, exactly recorded as present in the source(s). A reference is included if a calendar other than Gregorian is used.
Arrival date (standardized)	The (alternative) date of arrival, standardized by the author of the data or by authorized, registered, and logged ESTA editors according to the Gregorian calendar in day-month-year style.
Arrival date status	The status of the arrival date, recording any uncertainties or irregularities, as well as indicating relative dates, date ranges and date alternatives.
Arrival date relativity	The relativity of the arrival date, specified in terms of 'Before' or 'After'.

Slaving voyage status	The slaving voyage status indicates the probability of a subvoyage constituting a voyage intended to relocate enslaved persons. The status serves to differentiate between levels of certainty regarding the execution of slaving (sub)voyages and to record uncertainties pertaining to the presence of enslaved persons in this subvoyage.
Subvoyage notes	Notes that record details regarding the overall subvoyage or specifically its dates, locations, or success, including events such as mutiny and shipwreck. These notes were taken over from the original datasets, unless marked otherwise.
Subvoyage source	The complete source reference(s) of the data presented, either within the Subvoyage tab cluster or for the entirety of the subvoyage data.

Enslaved

Enslaved person(s)	Person(s) whose body, actions and behavior have been claimed as formal or informal possession by (an)other person(s) or organization(s), supported by a social or legal framework that coercively and involuntarily binds them to what regard as distinct, inferior social conditions with fewer or even no rights.
Total number of enslaved (source)	The total number of enslaved people on this subvoyage according to the source(s).
Total number of enslaved (standardized)	The total number of enslaved people on this subvoyage, as standardized by the author of the data or by authorized, registered and logged ESTA editors.

Total number of enslaved status	The status of the total amount of enslaved persons, recording any uncertainties or estimates.
Type of forced relocation	The type of forced relocation, according to the source(s).
Type of forced relocation (standardized)	The type of forced relocation, standardized.
Mortality (source)	Mortality of enslaved persons on subvoyage, according to the source(s).
Mortality (standardized)	Mortality of enslaved persons on subvoyage, standardized.
Notes on the enslaved	Additional notes for details, including availability of any (other) details about the enslaved recorded in source, such as individual names and sale prices. These notes were taken over from the original datasets, unless marked otherwise.
Source(s) on the enslaved	The source(s) of the specific data on the enslaved on this subvoyage.

Enslaved group

Enslaved group	A group of enslaved person(s), distinguishable by sex, ethnicity, physical state, age or individual details such as names.
Enslaved group ID	The identifier for this group, automatically created by the ESTA database.
Number of enslaved in group	The total number of enslaved individuals in this group, according to the source.
Number of enslaved in group (standardized)	The total number of enslaved individuals in this group, standardized.
Gender of enslaved in group	The gender of the enslaved people in this group.
Age of enslaved in group	The age category of the enslaved in this group, as recorded in source.
Ethnicity of enslaved in group	Ethnicity or socio-cultural identity of the enslaved in this group, as recorded in the source(s).
Physical state of enslaved in group	Physical state of the enslaved in this group, as recorded in the source(s).

Notes on this group	Additional notes detailing this particular group of enslaved persons. These notes were taken over from the original datasets, unless marked otherwise.
----------------------------	--

Transport

Transport	Event in which enslaved people are being moved or are intended for relocation on a particular (sub)voyage by agents that are using specific means of transportation. This includes inconclusive slaving (sub)voyages, as well as subvoyage movements towards enslavement or slave trade locations.
Transport name	Name of the vessel or vehicle carrying out the (intended) transport of enslaved.
Transport type	Means of transport type or category as per source(s).
Transport type (standardized)	The total number of enslaved individuals in this group, standardized.
Transport capacity	The capacity of the vessel or vehicle (e.g., tonnage).
Transport designation	The designation of the vessel or vehicle (nationality or flag).

Transport designation (standardized)	Designation of vessel or vehicle (nationality or flag), standardized.
Transport notes	Additional notes for details regarding transportation. These notes were taken over from the original datasets, unless marked otherwise.
Transport source	The complete source reference(s) of specific data on transportation.

Agents

Agent	One (or more) person(s) or organization(s) mentioned in the source(s) or dataset(s) as having taken part in the funding, organization and/or execution of this subvoyage and acting in the enslavers' benefit.
Agent ID	Identifier for this (group of) agent(s), automatically created by the ESTA database.
Number of agents:	Number of agent(s) involved.
Name of agent(s)	Name or identification of agent(s).
Alias of agent(s)	Alias of agent(s).

Gender of agent(s)	Gender of agent(s).
Role of agent(s)	Role of agent(s) in relation to group of enslaved persons.
Presence of agent(s)	Presence of agent at subvoyage.
Description of agent(s)	The complete source reference(s) of specific data on transportation.
Notes on agent(s)	Additional notes on this (group of) agent(s). These notes were taken over from the original datasets, unless marked otherwise.
Source on agent(s)	The complete source reference(s) of the data on the agent(s) on this subvoyage.

Cargo

Cargo	The commodities carried on the means of transportation during this subvoyage.
Quantity of cargo	Quantity of cargo as recorded in source.

Quantity of cargo (standardized)	Quantity of cargo, numerically standardized.
Unit of cargo	Unit used to measure cargo, according to source.
Unit of cargo (standardized)	Unit used to measure cargo, standardized.
Commodity of cargo	The type of cargo, as recorded in source.
Commodity of cargo (standardized)	The type of cargo, standardized.
Value of cargo	Value of cargo as recorded in source, including currency.
Notes on cargo	Additional notes for details regarding the cargo. These notes were taken over from the original datasets, unless marked otherwise.
Source(s) on cargo	The complete source reference(s) of specific data on the cargo.

4. Variable documentation

Introduction

The ESTA Database contains several variables that deal with observational, temporal, spatial, and numerical uncertainties. As the meaning and functioning of most variables will undoubtedly be clear to users, we will discuss the most relevant, possibly problematic ones below; these include **Slaving voyage status**, **Location of departure status**, **Location of arrival status**, **Departure date status**, and **Arrival date status**. Hereafter, ESTA's approach for conflicting data will also be discussed.

4.1 Slaving voyage status

Found within the tab *Subvoyage*, the 'drop-down' variable **Slaving voyage status** yields the following optional slaving voyage results:

- -- (empty)
- *confirmed*
- *probable*
- *possible*
- *projected*

The purpose of this field is to differentiate between levels of certainty regarding whether a slaving voyage (or rather subvoyage in this case) has actually been carried out.

- *Confirmed*

Confirmed means first-hand logged in a source, preferably by some kind of authority, e.g., in the relevant ship's (or port's) log. The source confirms the presence of enslaved persons in the subvoyage (by either numbers or other indications, e.g., 'noirs').

- *Probable*

No clear confirmation of enslaved persons in the subvoyage, but the trading vessel/route/[other interpretation] is known to be involved in slave trade. Eyewitness accounts should also be logged as *probable* ("Ship A saw ship B unload enslaved persons"), as well as slaving voyages where some doubts remain whether a part of the voyage has been undertaken.

- *Possible*

This value should be used when sources or datasets have logged third-party accounts, i.e., slaving movements not witnessed by the original source ("X heard from Y that Z was enslaved"). Also used when the presence of enslaved persons cannot be ruled out, but there is no definite eyewitness report

- *Projected*

The value *projected* notes whether a source or dataset presents an intended slaving voyage, while it remains unclear whether the voyage has actually taken place.

Example: the enslavement of Zacharias Jansz

A clear demonstration of three different slaving voyage statuses within one account is the Dutch East India Company (VOC) report of one Zacharias Jansz, who was enslaved in 1712 near Batavia and subsequently freed after four years of slavery in southern Sumatra, and who related his account to VOC officials after his return. Subvoyages referring to Jansz' own movements – i.e., first-hand – have been logged in voyage 3565 as *confirmed*. However, Jansz did also record meeting other enslaved persons, including an enslaved VOC sergeant (voyage 4226). Here, subvoyages have been logged as *probable*, as Jansz's account presents a second-hand perspective on the sergeant's enslavement. Lastly, Jansz spoke to several enslaved persons about other enslaved persons and enslavement tactics. The source relates the following (translated to English and with modern interpunction for clarity):

“Furthermore, he, the relater [i.e., Jansz], had heard at that place [Lampon Poeti] from a certain Mars and Maria, both from Bengal – the former a freed slave of skipper Croon, and the latter a slave of the ‘mardijker’ Cordion of Batavia – that on Lampon Bawiaan, two Dutch girls were being held in slavery. They were sisters, 12 and 13 years of age, whose parents were said to be living in Batavia just outside of the Nieuwpoort. Upon further inquiry, the Lampon people told him that these girls had been sold two years ago for 200 [Spanish] reales to a Javanese man from Bantam, who had transported them from there”.

National Archives (The Hague), 1.04.02, inv.no. 7673 (1716–1717), fo. 8/scan 308.

It can therefore be concluded from this case (voyage 4227) that its **Slaving voyage status** should be logged as *possible*.

4.2 Location of departure/arrival status

Located on the tab *Subvoyage*, the drop-down fields **Location of departure status** and **Location of arrival status** present *Editor* users with the possibility to log several levels of certainty regarding the locations referred to in the source(s) or dataset(s). The following options can be selected:

- *Confirmed*
- *Implied*
- *Intended*
- *Unknown*

Departure location is exactly as recorded in the source(s). Typically, this is a location that has been first-hand logged in the used source(s), or marked as being this location beyond any doubt in the original dataset(s).

- *Implied*

Departure location that is implied in the source(s). Locations that can be derived from the source(s).

- *Intended*

With the value *Intended*, arrival/departure locations that were intended or projected according to the source(s) can be marked. Whether the slaving (sub)voyage was actually carried out from or to a certain departure/arrival location is either unknown, or its original goal has been thwarted by, for example, shipwreck, faulty navigation, or adverse weather conditions.

- *Unknown*

A location should be logged as *Unknown* when a source or dataset does not present us with a clear location. An empty *Location of departure/arrival* text entry field thus results in an *Unknown* status.

4.3 Departure/arrival date status

The *departure* and *arrival date status* drop-down menu allows for the follow options:

- *Confirmed*
- *Inferred*
- *Uncertain*
- *Incomplete*
- *Range*
- *Date alternative*
- *Year alternative*
- *Month alternative*
- *Day alternative*
- *Relative*

Using this feature, a wide array of dates can be logged in *ESTA*. Please note that multiple options derived from the same date notation might apply, though only one can be chosen.

- *Confirmed*

Confirmed means a first-hand logged date entry in a source, preferably by some kind of authority, e.g., in the relevant ship's (or port's) log, or marked as such in a field expert's dataset.

- *Inferred*

Inferred dates are dates that can be derived from other dates, while specific dates have not been mentioned. For example, 'ten days before 23-08-1774' means an inferred date of '13-08-1774'.

- *Uncertain*

It may occur that a date has not been logged or that a source indicates that the noted date is uncertain or unknown (e.g., question mark in an original dataset), the date status is *Uncertain*.

- *Incomplete*

This value is to be used when only a part of the date is given, for example "8-1734" (i.e., August 1734). Note that other values could also apply, such as *Range* (see below).

- *Range*

Range is used when a source indicates that the departure or arrival date lies between two certain dates. An example would be 'between 01-08-1734 and 31-08-1734'.

- *Date/year/month/day alternative*

This option allows for two dates, depending on the difference between dates. For example, if a source gives '14.01.1645 or 14.02.1645', *Month alternative* is to be selected, while both dates should be fully logged in the designated text entry fields.

- *Relative*

Relative should be used when a date that has been logged as 'before 09-10-1690' or '>1693.09.28'. Users can choose between *Before* and *After*, followed by a date.

4.4 Conflicting data between datasets

It may occur that several datasets have logged a (sub)voyage that has already been included in the *ESTA* database. In this case, the conflicting data of an additional dataset should be recorded after the original data and a semicolon in brackets, as such on the Editor's *Subvoyage* tab:

Departure date as in source
23-06-1734; [01.08.1734]

This is to be followed by the original dataset number and the specific source(s) to which the data in the brackets refer:

Source

MAR/4JJ/86/97, ship journal L'Astree; [JH 104 - MAR 4 JJ/86]

Note that, in this case, the source of the conflicting data has already been included in the original source references. The source(s) within the brackets should specifically refer to the conflicting data(set). The *Source* text entry field of the tab on which the conflicting data are presented is to be used. Also note that the date notation of a certain dataset should be retained.

Multiple cases of conflicting data

If conflicting data of multiple datasets are to be recorded in the *ESTA* database, it should be logged by multiplying the brackets as follows:

Departure date as in source

23-06-1734; [01.08.1734]; [[1734-07-15]]

Followed by a dash and the source reference:

Source

MAR/4JJ/86/97, ship journal L'Astree; [JH 104 - MAR 4 JJ/86]; [[MW 738.1 - NA, VOC, 7673, fo. 6-9]]

Please note that this notation is not in chronological order, as it is meant for both the (future) digital infrastructure (e.g., footnotes or pop-ups), as well as enabling users to refer to and check multiple sources within the *Editor* environment.

Conflicting data with conflicting statuses

If the conflicting and original data share the same status (e.g., *Location of departure status*), no action has to be taken. If not, it is recommended to manually add a note to the relevant source as follows:

Source

MAR/4JJ/86/97, ship journal L'Astree; [JH 104 - MAR 4 JJ/86]; [[MW 738.1 - NA, VOC, 7673, fo. 6-9; Location of departure status: Intended]]

5. Documentation datasets

Introduction

At the time of writing (November 2024), several comprehensive datasets have been added to the ESTA database. In short, along with their abbreviations and *the sources' main focus*:

- Boekhouder-Generaal Batavia (BGB), i.e., *Dutch East India Company's* (hereafter: VOC) Asian trade records, kept in its Batavia headquarters;
- Rafaël Thiébaud's *French/Compagnie des Indes* (RT) and VOC (RTN) sets, centred around Madagascar, the Mascarene Islands and Indonesia;
- Jane Hooper's set (JH) *Anglo-French-VOC* set, centred around Madagascar, the Mascarene Islands and the wider Southeast Africa and Indian Ocean area;
- Mike de Windt & Matthias van Rossum's (MW) VOC set, focused on their intra-Asian trade activities and encounters, including Asian merchants' and private slave trade;
- Menno Leenstra's (ML) VOC set, focused on the Company's intra-Asian trade activities.

The documentation on Menno Leenstra's (ML) set has not been provided.

Ramifications/disclaimer

Keeping in mind the focus areas and origins of the above sets, it is little wonder that the ESTA database at the present shows a Dutch East India Company bias, as well as that of its French counterpart, the *Compagnie des Indes orientales*. Having said that, ESTA aims to retain as much of the original data sets' content and infrastructure as possible, trying to keep interpretation at the latest possible moment. Therefore, the sets have been treated as primary sources in their own right.

5.1 The BGB set

The data of the BGB set was automatically added, after which four student-assistants (Maartje Hids, Pascal Konings, Sam J. Miske, and Hannah de Korte) systematically curated and checked the data. They kept track of mutations to the database. Most BGB voyages consist of one subvoyage. The voyages' **Summary** has been automatically added, based on the departure and arrival locations.

5.2 The RT and RTN sets

RT set

The data of the RT set was automatically added according to the guidelines set out in the mapping, after which the mentioned student-assistants systematically checked the data. After this, many uncertainties and inconsistencies remained, resulting in relatively many mutations to the database and questions to the author, which can be found in the corresponding mutations list. Via the infrastructure of this set, one number of enslaved persons was to be linked with an entire voyage. However, this number has temporarily been linked to the second subvoyage. The voyages' **Summary** has been automatically added, based on the arrival (SV1/2) and departure (SV2/3) locations.

RTN set

The RTN set was added manually to the database by the student-assistants. Although a small set, some uncertainties remained, and the following actions were taken (with the original references to columns in the mapping):

- Student-assistants did not enter the red colour-coded rows of the RTN dataset, as it was unclear why they were colour-coded and they contained almost no information;
- If actors have descriptive elements within their name, like "*esclave Cornelis*", this has been disconnected from the **Name** and transferred to the **Description** within the Actor tab of the database. If the name contained possible references to ethnicity, such as "*Simon d'Arabier*", it has been retained as full name for now;
- The number of enslaved persons listed in the mapping as *Embarked enslaved persons* were entered in the database as **Total amount of enslaved persons** in the subvoyage that left the port listed in column K – i.e., often the second subvoyage, unless there are "via" subvoyages before that. All enslaved persons listed as *Disembarked enslaved persons* were entered in the subvoyage that arrives in the final port of arrival, under **Notes** in the Enslaved persons tab. The "via" ports do not count as last place of arrival;
- The departure and arrival dates (predominantly in columns J and M) need to be read chronologically. If there were less dates than places, the student-assistants matched the dates with the most logical sequence of events;
- If there is only one date mentioned in column J and one mentioned in column M, but there are multiple ports listed in column K, then the date of J was linked to the first place mentioned in K, and the date of M with the last place mentioned in K;

- If there is only one date mentioned in column O, but multiple places of arrival in column U, then the date was linked to the last-mentioned place of arrival;
- Captains and bookkeepers have been logged with their roles in **Description** in the Actors tab, because the database does not support these particular roles yet; their **Presence** has been logged as “Yes”;
- **Sources** have been added to Subvoyage, Enslaved persons and Transport tabs.
- The voyages’ **Summary** has been based on the number within the mapping, coupled with a generalised and abbreviated itinerary, which includes the main departure and arrival location, as well as one or two main ports of call.

5.3 The JH set

Jane Hooper’s set has also been added manually to the database by the student-assistants. Here, the following choices have been formulated:

- Slave numbers have been linked as much as possible to particular subvoyage, rather than a cumulative number linked to one subvoyage;
- All enslaved persons listed as *Disembarked* were entered in the subvoyage that arrives in the final port of arrival, under **Notes** in the Enslaved persons tab. Furthermore, Hooper differentiates between the ‘number of enslaved persons arriving at the first/second/[etc.] place of landing’ and a ‘total enslaved persons disembarked’. When the ‘number of enslaved persons arriving at the first place of landing’ was equal to the ‘total enslaved persons disembarked’, the choice was made to add this number as “Disembarked: x” within the **Notes** section of the Enslaved persons tab. If these numbers differed, they have been logged in the same section of the appropriate subvoyage as “Number of enslaved persons arriving at first/second/[etc.] place of landing: x”;
- When numbers could not be traced to a particular subvoyage, the last subvoyage contains information on the “Total enslaved persons embarked: *cumulative number of men/women/boys/girls*” within the **Notes** section of the Enslaved persons tab;
- No slave groups based on disembarked numbers have been added;
- Captains have been added as Vendors, with “Captain” in the Actors’ **Description**. Their **Presence** has been logged as “Yes”;
- **Sources** have been added to Subvoyage, Enslaved persons and Transport tabs.
- The voyages’ **Summary** has been based on the number within the mapping, coupled with a generalized and abbreviated itinerary, which includes the main departure and arrival location, as well as one or two main ports of call.

5.4 The MW set

This extensive data set called for several solutions to the presented challenges. Because of the vast data and the need for independent, case-based solutions, differences between MW voyages can be attributed to the choices of individual student-assistants, documented as such:

<i>Subject/problem</i>	<i>By?</i>	<i>Solution/mutation</i>
Selection criteria of entries for Editor	All	(1) Movement; (2) presence enslaved people; (3) sufficiently defined timeframe; (4) sufficiently defined geographical location(s).
Entry slave groups in subvoyages	All	Slave groups were only registered once per voyage. If source specified at which subvoyage the slave groups entered the vessel, then the groups were registered to that subvoyage; otherwise, they were registered to the first subvoyage.
Registration VOC	SJM	VOC = designation
	MH	VOC = actor
Actor presence	All	Specified when in database or when primary source had been consulted for other reasons; not specified for those entries made when variable was not available in Editor
Actor role	All	Standardised actor role options were highly limited at time of data entry, meaning that most actors have been registered as 'Vendor' (or 'Purchaser' when relevant). Actor role has been specified in Description.
Type of forced relocation	All	Type 'Slave transport' was not available at time of data entry; 'Slave trade' was therefore used as default and cases of the former have been registered either as the latter or as 'Other'.
Incomplete date of arrival/departure: only year	All	Year was entered on level of voyage but not as date of arrival/departure for individual subvoyages (besides a few exceptions)
Incomplete date of arrival/departure: only month	SJM	Departure/arrival date status was set as 'Range'
	MH	Departure/arrival date status was set as 'Confirmed'
Subvoyage relations	SJM	Specified in case of more than one subvoyage
	MH	Not specified
Source references	All	Entered at Subvoyage tab for each subvoyage
Actors	All	Registered for each subvoyage
Vehicle type	SJM	Registered as 'Boat' unless (primary) source specified 'Ship'
	MH	Registered as 'Boat'
Consultation primary sources	All	In case data entry contains question marks or raises suspicions/questions. All changes to database based on primary sources have been marked in red and, when necessary, specified.
BGB entries	All	Database entries based on primary source BGB have not been entered
Date status	SJM	When there is no arrival/departure date, the 'date status' has been changed to 'uncertain'

	MH	When there is no arrival/departure date, the 'date status' was set on 'confirmed'
Strikethrough text	MH	Not entered
Date of arrival/departure unknown	SJM	When date was unknown, status was set to 'Uncertain'.
	MH	When date was unknown, status was left at 'Confirmed'.

Furthermore, the **Summary** of voyages have been logged with its unique case number from the mapping, combined with the itinerary: the first departure location to the last arrival location.

5.5 The ML set

No documentation has been provided for this set.