

ESTA Newsletter II  
[30-04-2019]

Dear all,

This is the second newsletter for the Indian Ocean and maritime Asian slave trade database initiative.

Following the fruitful insights and conversations at the conference in Lyon, we would like to update you on the progress of the database initiative and related projects, and on some of the conclusions on the ways forward.

### **Team**

We are happy to inform you that two new members recently joined the Exploring Slave Trade in Asia project at the International Institute of Social History.

Samantha Sint Nicolaas joined the project as Junior Researcher in mid-February to support the network and take up research and curating activities within the database project. She is currently working on developing the conceptual framework and draft database structure in relation to the (Western Indian Ocean) pilot. Some of you will have met Samantha at the conference in Lyon where she presented first findings and developments.

Damiën van Bockhoven has further strengthened the team with an internship in the period March to May. Damiën is a student of the Research Master Global History at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He explores sources on the VOC settlement in Cochin, looking to explore the possibilities of comparing entries in sources on (local) shipping movements (*scheepsbewegingen, passen, licenties*) with existing datasets (especially on transactions and export permits of enslaved people at the Malabar coast).

### **Projects**

In very good news, Claude Chevalyere has successfully applied for funding of a pilot project at CNRS Lyon, titled *Exploring Slave Trade in China, 1400-1900. Scope, networks and global interactions*. The project will use Chinese sources to map and analyse networks of human trafficking in early modern China. We will keep you updated on the progress via this newsletter! For now, many congratulations Claude!

### **Data**

The collection of data is continuously enriched by contributions of existing datasets. Datasets by Jane Hooper, Rafaël Thiébaud and José Capela were deposited at an earlier stage; these datasets are pivotal for the Western Indian Ocean and the first pilot project currently underway. Recently, more unexpected, but no less valuable contributions were made by Wil O. Dijk, on the Dutch trade in slaves around the Bay of Bengal, as well as Hubert Gerbeau, who was also delighted to share his extensive data on the 19th century illegal slave trade to Réunion with our project.

The collected datasets are deposited in a durable way, and- depending on the agreements with the contributors- made available openly or stored under conditions of use. The collected data can be found on <https://datasets.socialhistory.org/dataverse/iomastd>. We would also like to repeat our call to scout for research data or datasets of colleagues who are no longer active, as these are important to recover and preserve. The IISH offers to secure and curate the data or collections.

New contributions and collaborations are always welcome. These can be broader, of course, than existing datasets, but could also be shared lists of observations, references, collections of sources, or suggestions for archives.

### **Lyon conference and future steps**

At the closing discussion of the Lyon conference of the wider slavery and bondage in Asia network, it was decided we will organize panels and sessions at existing conferences along two key lines of enquiry, as a way to convene with (parts of) the network and to draw new colleagues into our discussions. These lines of enquiry are: i): Systems and practices (to compare different systems/regimes/forms of slavery/bondage/coercive asymmetrical dependencies), and ii): Connections and motilities (to explore the circuits of coerced mobility and different links between local (and global) systems).

For our database initiative especially the second line is important. We have proposed a double panel for the *European Social Science History Conference* (Leiden, March 2020). We have received several interesting new paper proposals from colleagues from outside the existing network, and if the session is accepted there are still some open spaces for colleagues from within the network (let us know if you are interested!). We aim to organize a second panel at the *International Maritime History Conference* (2020) for which the deadline for proposals is later this year (more information will follow). We have attached the initial ESSHC call for papers. Feel free to inform colleagues who might find this interesting, or circulate it in relevant circles.

That's it for now, we will keep you updated on future developments and meetings!

Warm regards,

Samantha Sint Nicolaas,

On behalf of the ESTA-team.

For questions or suggestions with regard to the project, data or sources, please don't hesitate to contact us. Alternatively, if you have news you'd like to share with the network, please don't hesitate to get in touch! Contact: Samantha Sint Nicolaas ([Samantha.sintnicolaas@iisg.nl](mailto:Samantha.sintnicolaas@iisg.nl)) or Matthias van Rossum ([mvr@iisg.nl](mailto:mvr@iisg.nl)).