

Dear Colleagues,

For Wednesday's seminar I have offered selections from a small book I am putting together, *The Agony of Asar: a treatise on slavery by a former slave, Jacobus Johannes Capitein (1717-1747)*. The core of the publication will be a treatise arguing for the compatibility of slavery and Christianity. Remarkable as the work is in itself, it is all the more remarkable for having been written by someone who had himself experienced slavery as a child on the Guinea coast (modern Ghana). This I have translated, adding some explanatory notes and an introductory essay. It is mainly from the point of view of intellectual history that I have composed this, since my background is in classical studies rather than African or 18th century European history.

I do hope that the selections of Capitein's thesis give a sense of his main arguments and the selected portions of my introduction help to frame some of the critical questions that help in understanding the work and its author.

I am eager to hear your responses to my work, and I look forward to our conversation on Wednesday afternoon.

Yours,

Grant Parker.

*The agony of Asar :
an introduction to the life and work of Capitein*

It may come as a surprise to contemporary readers that an 18th-century scholar should have argued for the compatibility of slavery and the Christian faith, and should in effect have defended the moral legitimacy of such bondage. The surprise would be heightened if it is added that the person arguing this case had himself once been a slave.

These are precisely the supposed anomalies that are central to any encounter with the 'political-theological' treatise translated here. Its title, 'Is slavery compatible with Christian freedom or not?', translates the original Latin, *Dissertatio politico-theologica, qua disquiritur, Num libertati Christianae servitus adversetur, nec ne?* It was published in the university city of Leiden in 1742. **Jacobus Elisa** Johannes Capitein (1717-1747), its author, was born on the west coast of Africa, where he was enslaved as a child. He eventually attained his freedom and studied in the Netherlands before returning to Africa as a missionary, where he died at an early age.

What factors could have motivated such a person to defend slavery? Is it even feasible to try to reconstruct these factors? In one of only two English-language books devoted to Capitein, he has not surprisingly been dismissed as an 'Uncle Tom', to reflect his apparent co-optation to the interests of his masters; the task of these comments will be to reassess that analysis of his treatise and his life. By way of introduction to the translation of the treatise itself, the following pages are offered with two main purposes in mind: to show the nature of Capitein's own contribution to debates about bondage, and to demonstrate in what ways Capitein was a product of his times. These are in a certain sense contradictory purposes, but they are necessary to a mode of intellectual history that is alert to both human agency and social context, one that tries, in fact, to keep the two in a productive tension. A somewhat different but certainly comparable contradiction may be summed up as follows. In order to understand Capitein, we need to understand what slavery meant in the world that he inhabited; yet equally, Capitein's story and treatise themselves inform us about that slave-holding world. It is here that slavery's intellectual history sits squarely, though uneasily, with its social and economic history.

Many questions and issues arise from the treatise. Most obvious are those that relate the author to his work. The relevance of these cannot be denied, especially when the overtly autobiographical aspect of the treatise is compared and contrasted with other slave narratives, a genre of writing that has attracted much scholarly interest in recent times. But these are far from the only ones. Capitein's scholarly project calls for an assessment on its own terms: how is authority constructed and deployed in the treatise? As the endnotes added to this edition attest, the work bristles with learning. But it is not enough merely to note the many references and allusions made, whether to classical literature, to the Bible, or to medieval and early modern scholarship. Ultimately, we should like to know in broader terms what was at stake when a particular scholarly authority is invoked. Is it valid to compare different instances of slavery in a transhistorical manner, as Capitein does? What, in particular, is the sense of slavery that Capitein abstracts and compares over such a broad sweep of western culture? To be sure, there is no overlooking the tremendously ambitious range of the work. It is no perversity to see Capitein's use of his sources as problematic when many of them contain difficulties of interpretation within themselves. The Greco-Roman texts offer no single, abstract theory of slavery, however widespread are the references to bondage that may be found within their pages; and the same can be said for the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. This fact sits uneasily with Capitein's frequent citations and references. A more sympathetic analysis would follow the contours of his selectivity, and be attentive to the choice of the many 16th- and 17th-century scholars that he mentions and quotes. Finally, the issue of race, in its full range of cultural and somatic aspects, requires consideration. Explicitly, it is present in the treatise in an ethnology linked with the Bible; implicitly, its many aspects pervaded the life of someone who spent his life alternately as an African-born former slave in the Netherlands and as a Dutch-trained minister of religion (*predikant*) in Ghana.

These, then, are some of the issues that demand our attention in the pages that follow. They are offered in an attempt to grasp various aspects of Capitein's historical context, and to use Capitein himself to understand the world that he inhabited. Constantly we need to bear in mind both the theory and the practice of slavery. Capitein participated, on one hand, in an intellectual (philosophical and theological) debate about the moral legitimacy of the institution; on the other, bondage was part of the concrete experience of his life, as it was for some eleven or twelve million people transported across the Atlantic by various

European maritime powers between the early 15th and the late 19th centuries.” It is reasonable to expect that theory and practice should **have** related to one another in this, but it is also challenging to understand the complexities of that relationship.

I. A life: servitude and aftermath

I.1 An orphan in the Netherlands

Jacobus Elisa Johannes Capitein, as he was later to be known, was born in 1717 in the immediate hinterland of the Guinea coast, an area that is part of modern Ghana (see map 2).⁴ Orphaned at the age of seven or eight, he was sold into slavery at St. Andrew’s River, and later **he** spent some time at the coastal **trading**-posts of Elmina and **Shama**.⁵ His master, the sea-captain Arnold Steenhardt, gave or perhaps sold him to his friend, Jacob van **Goch**, who had by that time served the Dutch West India Company (WIC) for fifteen years.

When Van **Goch** left Elmina for the Netherlands on April **14th**, 1728, he took Capitein with him, ‘so that I might practice some trade that was not demeaning and thereby earn a living’, as Capitein was later to write. Their destination was Middelburg in the Dutch state of Zeeland. Here Capitein attained his freedom. It was freedom by default, since slavery had been effectively outlawed when the Dutch Republic came into existence as a result of the international treaty of **1648**.⁶

Still in the company of Van **Goch**, he moved after a short time to the Hague, the home-town of Van **Goch**, where he remained for several years, learning the Dutch language and also the art of painting. Here, too, the largesse of the Reformed minister Johann Philipp Manger (1693-1741) allowed Capitein to join catechism classes in preparation for baptism into the church. Contacts made during these classes, through fellow pupils who were the sons of eminent burghers, led directly to the furthering of his formal education. The theologian Henrik Velse (**1683-1744**), prompted by his young son, suggested that Capitein receive further opportunities for study, on the condition that **he** later devote his life to Christian missionary activity in west Africa. Capitein consented, although his account of this episode seems curiously tentative. His patron Van **Goch** added both his approval and his practical support. The subvention of other burghers made it possible for Capitein to attend the Hague Latin School. One of

these patrons was F. C. Roscam, an aristocratic woman who acted as both a teacher of the ancient classical languages of Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and as a benefactor.’ Another was the influential Leiden jurist Peter Cunaeus, who funded part of Capitein’s university studies through the generosity of the Hallett **Fund**.⁸ On July **8th**, 1735, after four years in this school, Capitein was baptized at the Kloosterkerk by Manger, his original catechism teacher.

It was at this point that he took on his first three names: **Jacobus** Elisa Johannes, after his patron **Jacobus** van **Goch**, after Van Goch’s sister Elizabeth, ‘who has been like a second mother to me’, and after the wife of their cousin, Pieter Nesker. The three acted as witnesses at his baptism. He had been given the name Capitein on his arrival in the Netherlands. Of his original name we cannot be sure: nineteenth-century sources report his name as Asar, but the source of this information is now lost. It is possible that the name is the mistaken distortion of the name *Afer*, the Latin for ‘African’?

Capitein’s six-and-a-half years of schooling in **the** Hague ended in 1737 with a public lecture that was later published as the treatise ‘On the calling of the heathen’ (i.e. on the need to call them from their error of unbelief; in Latin *de vocatione ethnicorum*). Although the work is no longer extant, Capitein’s summary of it at the beginning of his longer treatise, and indeed its title, make it clear **that** Christian mission was at the forefront of his agenda, at least in the scholarly-religious sphere of his life.

This schooling qualified Capitein for further education at the University of Leiden, where, as university records attest, he registered on June **22nd**, 1737, to study theology. He again received the hospitality of burghers, living during his five years at Leiden in three different households. Financial support for his university studies also came from Van **Goch**, from the Hague Latin School, and from the university itself. It is possible that the level of his funding, some of which was contingent on satisfactory progress, **went** beyond the norm.”

The treatise which is translated here was delivered as a lecture on March **10th**, 1742, and represents the culmination of his studies at Leiden. It marked his attainment of one of the predoctoral degrees, **the** Master’s or more probably the **Licentiate**.¹¹ Such occasions were formal to the point of ritual: all participants duly were attired in their academic finery. A candidate would present his lecture before the faculty’s full assembled professoriate, and thereafter answer their questions. Unlike the procedure in most contemporary Protestant

universities, the lecture would represent the candidate's own work, rather than that of his professor."

Capitein's ordination into the Dutch Reformed Church by its governing body, the **Classis** of Amsterdam, followed on May 7th of the same year. This could happen only when he had been appointed by the WIC, for it was the Company **that** paid missionaries as its own **employees**.¹³ Together these developments opened the way for Capitein to return to Guinea, and this he did without delay in early July 1742. In the intervening time his Latin treatise, 'Is slavery compatible with Christian freedom or not?', had been published in Leiden. Capitein dedicated the publication to Peter Cunaeus and his other sponsors, as he says in the introduction. So popular was his work to become that it was translated into Dutch in a matter of months, with four new editions appearing within the year.

1.2 Unhappy returns: Elmina, 2742-1747

The source for most of the above information is Capitein himself, while **the** records of **the** University of Leiden add some details about his studies there. Certainly the autobiographical passage that precedes the treatise itself deserves close attention (see his 'Preface to the reader' below). For his subsequent life, a number of letters survive from his correspondence with the WIC and the **Classis** of Amsterdam. Together **they** give **the** impression that the remaining five years of his life were beset by practical difficulties, and disagreements with both the WIC and the **Classis**.

Arriving back in Elmina on October **8th**, 1742, Capitein assumed the spiritual leadership of both the WIC employees, based at its headquarters in the Castle, and also of **the** school attached to it.¹⁴ Within his sphere of ministry there were 107 staff of the WIC at Elmina, out of a total of 241 on the Guinea coast. Initially Capitein made a good impression on the **WIC's** director-general in charge of the west coast region, Jacob de Petersen, who wrote a favorable report about him immediately after his service of induction on October **21st**, 1742. The text of **the** sermon that Capitein delivered at that service, II *Corinthians 4:6*, is significant for its implied presentation of himself as the 'light shining **out** of darkness'. Clearly the dual purpose of his mission was to uphold the morale of the Dutch employees and to convert Africans to **Christianity**.¹⁵

On his return to Elmina Capitein was in many senses a different person from the one who had been taken as a slave to the Netherlands fifteen years earlier. Indeed, for this man of African descent, **now** leading a supposedly European life, the question of acculturation and reassimilation soon became an acute one in this familiar but unfamiliar setting of Elmina. His letters suggest that his attempts to reintegrate himself into African society did not **meet** with the greatest success – not surprisingly, given that in the preceding years the Dutch slaving activity at Elmina had intensified. Capitein himself wrote to the WIC, at a time **when** he was eliciting its approval for his plan to marry a young African woman, **in order** 'to win **the** affection and trust of the blacks here at Elmina'. In this letter, dated February **17th**, 1743, Capitein hints ominously that the state of the Christian church at Elmina was worse than he had expected. His intention to marry an African woman, he says, was to show goodwill toward the local population and thus further his task of conversion."

Capitein's plan to marry became the first of a series of differences that he was to have with his superiors in Amsterdam. The woman, whose name is not recorded, could not legitimately marry him without first being baptized; and it was not acceptable that Capitein, as husband-to-be, be the one to teach her the catechism, and the woman's parents were unwilling for her to travel to the Netherlands to receive instruction there." The Company's solution to this problem was a high-handed one: it sent a Dutch woman from the Hague to marry Capitein, apparently without giving him any forewarning. There are many puzzles about the woman, Antonia Ginderdros, and the circumstances of her journey. For example, had she known Capitein before? What was her background in the **Netherlands**?¹⁸ In any event, the marriage took place on October **3rd**, 1745.

By this time, however, it is clear that Capitein's relations with both the **Classis** and the WIC had deteriorated. Three letters from **him to the** WIC requesting practical assistance went unanswered, and its **eventual** answer to his fourth still exhibited an attitude of intransigence. On the other hand, the **Classis** wrote to express its displeasure with him, in part for his failure to report directly to it.¹⁹ This letter, dated January **10th**, 1745, also reveals that the **Classis** had doctrinal differences with Capitein.²⁰ He had translated the Lord's Prayer, the Twelve Articles of Faith, and **the** Ten Commandments into Fante, a local dialect of the Akan language, which is a member of the Niger-Congo family. Aspects of the translation were considered unacceptable by the **Classis**, and it claimed **that**

III. Capitein's writings in overview

III.1 Missiology

If the bare outlines of Capitein's life are clear, let us consider his writings and thought in greater detail. His earliest work, of which no copies are known to survive, was a treatise entitled 'On the calling of the pagans' (*de vocatione ethnicorum*). Nonetheless, the work is summarized by Capitein at the very beginning of the thesis published here. In it he stresses that the process of converting the pagans had begun, but that it was far from complete. The curse that Noah placed on his son Ham (or more particularly on Ham's son Canaan), in a very well-known passage from Genesis, is invoked as a way of underlining the need for the conversion of (African) non-Christians. In brief, the well-worn line of the argument may be summed up as follows: Ham, having seen his father

lying naked and drunk, causes his own son Canaan to be cursed by Noah, and with him the peoples of Africa; but the New Covenant of Christianity promises deliverance to all people, even to those under the curse. This has taken place only in part with the coming of Christ, and the final fulfillment is yet to be achieved: this is the role that Christian mission has to **play**.⁵⁵ (This is a problematic story to which we shall return under section IV.1 below.) In any event, Capitein's summary of his earlier work sounds a note of urgency that pervades the dissertation as a whole.

What needs to be noticed even in the summary is Capitein's emphasis on missionary work in Africa. This element of both his academic treatises points towards something that we must regard with the utmost attentiveness: the presence of Capitein's own life in his theology. After all, as was stated above, his entire university education was predicated on his commitment to missionary work. It is the preface of the current treatise that illustrates this connection most explicitly. In referring to his earlier work, 'On the calling of the pagans', he stresses repeatedly the burden of evangelization placed on those who are themselves converts to Christianity. The following is what he says just before narrating the course of his life:

From this time onward I thought that the greatest obligation was placed upon me to be useful to my people. This, I would say, is the greatest obligation, and no injustice. For God, who is to be praised from age to age for the profound richness of his wisdom and foresight, not only led me from Africa to the blessed land of Holland; indeed, he initiated me into a superior religion and endeavored to hand down to me the rudiments of knowledge.

The concerns and approach of the earlier treatise recur in the work presented here. As I shall illustrate, Capitein's concern with mission and with his own role in converting Africans shines through to an extent that the earlier work predicts. The later work adheres closely to the question posed in its title, namely that of the compatibility of Christianity and slavery. Its notorious conclusion, that the two are indeed compatible, must be understood in the light of the evangelical Protestantism that pervades **the** work as a whole.

The body of the dissertation, following an introductory chapter which defines slavery, is divided into two parts. **The** first of these (chapter 2) appeals to

the ancient authorities to illustrate that slavery was indeed **practiced** in Jewish, Greek and Roman antiquity. Here Capitein cites passages from **the** Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament), and from Greek and Latin authors including Aristotle, although he **criticizes** Aristotle's theory of natural slavery. The second, lengthier section (chapter 3) shows Capitein at his full intellectual breadth, using an even wider range of sources to argue the real point of **the** thesis: that slavery and Christianity are compatible. The final chapter is devoted to two related arguments: the first, that the human spirit and body should be considered separately from each other (sections **1-12**), and the second, that Christian doctrine does not stipulate that baptized slaves must be freed (section 13 to the end).

Capitein insists that the Christian faith and slavery can coexist in the moral order. In doing so he falls back upon a centuries-old tradition in which the symbolic and the physical aspects of slavery are distinguished. Complexities of the Christian tradition and the nature of Capitein's use of that tradition will be considered in section IV.1 below, but for the present some purpose may be served by returning briefly to Equiano. In his *Interesting Narrative*, **he** argued openly against slavery on the grounds that it transgressed human worth, and he laid great store in Christianity. In recounting his own life, he speaks of his conversion as an episode on his path to physical freedom. Yet at various points, especially in his letters and speeches, Equiano sometimes tends to the position **that** slavery was actually a good thing in so far as it made possible the conversion of Africans. To take another example from some twenty years later than Capitein's treatise, the eminent Danish theologian, Erik Pontoppidan (**1698-1764**), defended the practice of keeping slaves on the grounds that 'most of them probably get to know God and his Kingdom better, thereby becoming liberated in Christ, though the servants of men'. A radical Protestant of the Pietist persuasion, Pontoppidan wrote of his conviction that 'paganism is far worse than the worst degree of Christianity.'" This theme, expressed on countless occasions but seldom so pointedly, was long to be heard in the arguments of some Christians on behalf of slavery?

The manuscript translated here is without a doubt Capitein's most distinguished work, but it was not his only one. The treatise with which **he** terminated his schooling at the Hague, 'On the calling of the heathen,' now lost, has already been mentioned above. Further, Capitein's correspondence with the WIC and with the **Classis** of Amsterdam can be read in the translation of Kpobi

(*Mission* in *Chains*, appendix)'. In addition, we should also recognize Capitein's efforts as a translator, for he made three key Christian documents available for speakers of Fante: the Lord's Prayer, the Twelve Articles of Faith and the Ten Commandments. Capitein's translation of these texts survives. An interesting element of it is its two-part preface. In the first part, Capitein makes clear that the purpose of the translations is practical, namely to make the Christian faith accessible to indigenous and mixed-race schoolchildren of Elmina. It will be remembered that these texts were a major element of the school curriculum. In the modest tone often used in prefaces, he offers the polite disclaimer that 'in the course of time it will be refined, so that God will open his door wider to us'; the reason for hesitating, he indicates, is that the Fante language has not yet been completely written down (see appendix 1 below).

This is, in itself, unexceptional. What is remarkable, however, is that this somewhat clichéd preface, in rhetorical terms a standard *captatio benevolentiae* (introductory appeal for the reader's goodwill), is followed by another, distinctly non-standard preface that was written by the publisher, Hieronymus de Wilhem. In it, the publisher casts doubt on the translation offered by Capitein: 'The Reverend Mr. Capitein was correct to say in his preface that this translation is not perfect: the observant reader will agree with me that certain words in our [Dutch] language cannot be expressed in the African language [of Fante].' He continues by offering examples. It is clear that he has undertaken the critique by comparing points within the Dutch texts where distinctive words and phrases recur; and then checking these against the Fante versions. In fact, Wilhem admits by implication that he cannot read the Fante translation directly. The author is too far away to be consulted, being now in his second year at Elmina, and the publisher has not been able to find anyone in the Netherlands who is able to read Fante either. Wilhem feels that it is his obligation 'to give warning to the reader'.

III.2 A scholar and an African

It is therefore clear that Capitein's translation, useful as it was intended to be, became a problematic issue. This provides us with the spur to think more broadly about the issue of translation: the prefaces of both Capitein and Wilhem make it clear that the difficulties are more than just terminological. They are deeply rooted in culture, with its attendant problems of specificity and comparability. Some significant recent works of scholarship have teased out the

considerable cultural issues involved in translating;' and it is now widely accepted that every translation is an act of interpretation, since it cannot stand outside the systems of meaning implicit in the languages it seeks to bridge. By this reckoning, the considerable difficulties that Capitein had in establishing his mission and the school at the Castle of Elmina are emblematic of the wider problems he faced of making himself understood and of even operating simultaneously, in two different worlds. Such was the nature of the Dutch **seaborne** empire that these worlds intersected, in those Africans that found their way to the Netherlands, in the **WIC** employees on the Guinea coast, and not least in the person of Capitein himself.

The visual medium also gives us many clues about how Capitein was viewed. Each of the three portraits of him that are reproduced between the covers of the current edition presents a man who is emphatically both a scholar and an African (see figures #, #, #). His image as a gentleman of polite society is made clear by any comparison with the other male subjects shown here (see figures #, #). The Bible he clutches to his chest in figure # marks him out in that portrait as a cleric. On the other hand, there is no denying the bodily features that distinguish him from the male subjects of other portraits, in particular dark skin, a flat nose, thick lips and fleshy cheeks. While this combination of features might seem, at first glance, unexceptional, it must be regarded as extraordinary for its time. As Allison Blakely's fine study has shown, Africans were indeed represented in Dutch art of the Golden Age; typically they were portrayed as the servants of wealthy burghers or as caricatures in the decorative arts. Thus the Portrait of *Jan van Amstel and Anna Boxhoorn* by Abraham Lambertsz. van den Tempel (1671) contains, on its right margin, a small black servant whose presence 'helps to balance the composition'.⁵⁹ The scene is typical. What makes the portraits of Capitein exceptional is that they are individualized in a way that is perhaps unmatched by any African in Dutch art up to the mid-1700s.

If the portraits are an indication of how Capitein was considered by his contemporaries, we need to consider the way in which he saw himself; in practice, at least, how he presented himself. First, let us consider the manner in which he indicates his change of status from slave to free. It is worth noting, though it may not be surprising, that Capitein leaves his readers to infer the fact of his manumission from his autobiography. Rather than announcing it

explicitly, he marks its place in his narrative with a couplet in honor of **Middelburg**, the seaport of **Zeeland**, where he first arrived in Europe:

This land received me when I first came from Africa,
and was the door to the vale of the Netherlands.

Comparison with Equiano's passage on his manumission points to the very different character of those two works – and, arguably, also to the difference in their authors' attitudes to slavery. Equiano's narrative at this point is dramatic in its build-up, detail by detail, and packed with overt emotion."

This moment in Capitein's narrative, reinforced by a longer poem on the Hague that follows directly, serves several functions at once. Firstly and self-evidently, it expresses Capitein's sense of divine providence;" secondly, it announces the end of his status as a slave; thirdly and least obviously, it claims for its author a place among the learned Dutch aristocracy. If Latin was by far the scholarly language of the early modern Netherlands, then the ability to compose poetry in that language was the mark of learning. Thus, the treatise as a whole, with its enormous array of scholarly footnotes, may be regarded as a performance of learning, and the poems themselves as the *piece de resistance* of the treatise. It is poignant to think about the implications of Capitein's arrival in the Netherlands, and about the elaborateness with which he communicates the significance of that arrival.

The poem invites comparison with another that was composed about him by his friend, Brandijn Rijser, on the eve of his departure. It was published as the caption to a portrait of Capitein:

Observer, contemplate this African: his skin is black
but his soul is white, since Jesus himself prays for him.
He will teach the Africans faith, hope and charity;"
with him, the Africans, *once* whitened, will always **honor** the **Lamb**.⁶⁴

The color-coding of good and evil stretches so far back in western literary tradition that its earliest origins cannot be traced. To take one example, the opening lines of the biblical Song of Songs (or Song of *Solomon*), which dates back to the 6th century BCE, has seemed for generations of readers to convey this. In the *Song* the bride says: *I am black and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the*

tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon. Do not gaze at me because I am dark, because the sun has gazed on me. This, at least, is the modern translation of the New Revised Standard Version of 1989, accurately conveying the original Hebrew. In effect, however, a strong tendency in the history of the interpretation of this passage has been to see blackness and beauty as adversative, and thus separated by the emphatic conjunction 'but' rather than the more neutral 'and'. Thus the Latin translation in the Vulgate (late 4th century CE) has 'nigra sum sed formonsa', which is later matched by the 'I am black but comely' of the King James Version (originally 1611). The point here is not so much the meaning of the original Hebrew passage as the vicissitudes of its interpretation over the centuries." If we accept that the usual interpretation of this passage has generally been an incorrect one (taking 'but' for 'and'), it is clear that Rijser's poem echoes the color-imagery of the *Song of Songs* passage; whether directly or indirectly is immaterial for our purposes. The connection is made between blackness and sin, **hence** the emphasis placed on the conjunction 'but' in the *Song*. The Hebrew poem, in turn, created a new commonplace that is reactivated here by Rijser: that someone can be 'black but lovely', in this case lovely in a spiritual **sense**, as if through a paradox.

Rijser's short dedicatory poem is, to an extent, pure cliché, but, like many clichés, it carries an important message. It points to the somatic encoding of human beings – in a word, of race – in Capitein's world, and in this respect it reflects contemporary Dutch responses to him. The significant point is that the sentiment expressed in the poem resonates with Capitein's ethnological justification for missionary work, namely the attempt to redeem the curse on Canaan in striving to fulfill **the** covenant.

Capitein, the author of the treatise was, by any reckoning, a learned person. His command of scholarly Latin and the truly impressive range of earlier literature to which he appeals leave **no** room for doubt about this. In the case of Rijser's poem about Capitein, learning was seen as an escape from blackness, just as **the** beauty of the bride in the *Song of Songs* is presented in the Hebrew scriptures as an escape from blackness and its web of implications. Such an interpretation of Capitein can be reinforced with reference to his posthumous reputation in the Netherlands.'

The work in general, with its florid Latin and ponderous scholarly annotations, and the poems in particular, may be considered public demonstrations of their author's learning, assertions of his place in a social

milieu that held scholars and scholarship in high esteem. Capitein's Latin style is particularly elaborate, even for an age steeped in the aesthetics of excess. Its scholarly apparatus of quotes and references is full, and it should be remembered that the composition of Latin poetry carried the special cachet of gentlemanly **erudition**.⁶⁷ The treatise, taken as a whole, reflects the learning that was part and parcel of Reformed sermons of the period.

A brief consideration of the curricula that Capitein would have followed goes a long way towards explaining the process by which he acquired his learning. Firstly, the Hague Latin school, like other Latin schools of the Netherlands, was an elite institution. Its roots in Dutch humanism were most eminently linked with Erasmus of Rotterdam (c.1466-1536) and, beyond that, in Roman Catholic foundations dating back to medieval times. Its emphasis on teaching boys Latin throughout its program and Greek in the senior year remained its distinctive feature, and was part of a commitment to the study of Greco-Roman classical authors and their social background.”

Of the Dutch universities, that at Leiden was the oldest, having been established in 1575 by Prince William of Orange to **honor** the city's heroic resistance to the Spanish siege in the previous year.' Its connection with the idea of freedom was obvious from the start, when William wrote in a letter to the States of Holland and Zeeland that it was necessary to establish in their territory a university 'to be **a firm** support to and to maintain freedom and the right and lawful government of the country', where Dutch youth would be 'educated and taught in the proper knowledge of God and in all proper, honest and free arts and **sciences**'.⁷⁰ The university was therefore from the start a symbol of resistance against Spanish oppression. For much of its subsequent history, Leiden was to remain the Netherlands' most prestigious university, the most international in its professoriate and student body, and the most intimately connected with the nation's overseas **enterprise**.⁷¹ In the traditional medieval faculties of theology, philosophy, law and medicine, Latin was the medium of instruction; only in engineering was Dutch used. The most renowned among its many eminent professors was the French-born Joseph **Justus Scaliger**, who held a research professorship in Leiden from 1593 until his death in 1609. It was under Scaliger's influence that philological studies at Leiden rose to a position of leadership throughout Europe; specifically, he promoted the study of Hebrew and other Semitic languages, in part because of their value to Calvinist theologians in their debates with the **Catholics**.⁷² Hence the presence of Hebrew in the curricula

studied by Capitein, and hence a reference to the original Old Testament term for slave in his treatise (section 2.5).

The scholars that Capitein mentions in his treatise were, by and large, theologians, philologists and jurists of the 17th century. Together they testify to an impressive breadth of learning on his part. A few, such as Augier Ghislain de Busbecq (1522-1592), Jean Bodin (1529-1596), Francis de Ravelinghen (1539-1597) and Johannes Molanus (1553-1585) go back to the 16th century, but these are the minority of those directly cited. For Busbecq, it was wrong for certain peoples to crave physical freedom when in fact they needed leadership to function properly. In this respect he concurred with Bodin's notion of absolute sovereignty, although Bodin himself had attacked the Aristotelian and Augustinian positions on slavery from an empirical standpoint. Typical of the academic establishment of the early modern period, the vast majority of scholars” combined various spheres of study, particularly legal with theological studies. This is, in itself, a reminder of the centrality of theology to academic study to a degree that is hard to imagine in the contemporary western world. Notable examples are Claude de Saumaise (1588-1653), Johannes Casparus Suicerus (1620-1684), Paul Voet (1619-1667), and the enormously influential Dutch jurist, statesman and theologian, Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). It is in this light that we are to understand Capitein's institutional background when he entitles his treatise a 'political-theological dissertation'. It is striking that Capitein restricts his specific references to thinkers with whom he was at least nominally in agreement on the subject of slavery, whereas none of his 'opponents' **or** 'adversaries' are mentioned by name. As will be discussed below in section IV.2, it is worth noting the polemic tone of his thesis, and Capitein's vivid sense of his 'opponents'.

The Enlightenment left a notoriously ambiguous legacy in the intellectual history of slavery. On the one hand, it undermined much of the moral authority that had underpinned the practice of bondage; it made the institution of **slavery** a topic for debate. For example, Voltaire (1694-1778), an outspoken critic of the Catholic church and other forms of authority, highlighted the plight of slaves in Surinam in his widely read novel **Candide** (1758).⁷³ On the other hand, a great deal of Enlightenment thought concerning race was far from compassionate. Whereas Montesquieu (Charles-Louis de Secondat, 1689-1755) openly denounced slavery as ethically untenable, as did Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), his classically based theory of environmental determinism had, over time, the effect

of entrenching racial prejudice against black Africans.⁷⁴ The *Encyclopédie*, composed by diverse hands between 1751 and 1780, included both a denouncement of slavery and an extremely negative presentation of blacks.” It is unclear how much impact the *philosophes* would have had, by the early 1740s, on Capitein’s world. Much of the Enlightenment, arising in the latter part of the century, will not necessarily have had a direct bearing on his position. To be sure, the 18th-century Netherlands were the main center for the publication of writings of the Enlightenment thinkers, as they sought to avoid French censorship.⁷⁶ Yet the publication of these works in the Netherlands did not necessarily mean that they were widely read there; certainly we do know that a number of them were banned at the behest of the church. Yet it is as well to bear in mind the broader trends associated with the Enlightenment, for they do indicate that Capitein was on the cusp of large-scale historical change, and that he lived in a transitional period in which anti-slavery sentiment was beginning to gain in volume and breadth.” His ‘opponents’, though not named, are therefore a strong presence in his work, dictating its polemical tone and even its careful and wide-ranging scholarship.

This overview of Capitein’s scholarly background has shown how its two pillars, namely his Christian education and his classical training, gave him the language with which to defend slavery. But the same texts could easily have been differently deployed to produce other conclusions. It remains for us to consider in broader scope how the Christian tradition harbored various and even contradictory positions on the subject of slavery.”

PREFACE
To the reader

More than four years have elapsed since I composed a thesis *On the calling of the heathen* with all my youthful strength, having passed on from the schools of the Hague to attending academic lectures. I divided the work into three parts, as follows:

Chapter I: The promises made concerning Jnpheth and Ham are found in the occupations of their descendants, according to God's true word.'

Chapter II: Although the calling of the heathen is referred to in the New Testament, one must nevertheless understand that it was **actualized** only in part, even though its full extent was anticipated.

Chapter III: Given that it was anticipated, in what ways will it arrive? Also in the third chapter, as the main theme, I consider how God has been so long entreated with persistent prayers to allow his word, joined with abundant gifts of the Holy Spirit, to be proclaimed to those heathen who have never heard of his name till the present day.

Next, I divided into four parts those very means by which, if scrupulously followed, this task which is pleasing to God can be undertaken and promoted. The first stresses the necessity of understanding those languages by which we may encourage the heathen to convert to Christianity. The second asks that, when those tribes are approached, a suitable place be established for holding meetings. The third section shows that an intimate relationship with them must be sought at all costs, so that while they learn of that delightful sweetness of Christian brotherhood, they are drawn into it. Finally, since all these things cannot be accomplished without teachers, the fourth section places great emphasis on the need to train teachers and send them to the heathen – I mean those endowed with particular learning and piety, strangers to avarice and tyranny, so that they do not frighten away the unfortunate people by the harshness of their authority, but persuade them in a gentle and kind spirit. Now, since I shall shortly complete the course of my academic studies, by the grace

and aid of the most high God, I shall try in this preface to introduce the topics I was then speaking about.

(1) In general, it is incumbent on all true Christians to promote diligently those means which enable this conversion of heathen, God willing, to develop, whether independently or with the help of others.

(2) In particular, the task has been entrusted to those who are linked to this or that tribe, from which **they** themselves were converted to Christianity. This is found to be the situation when converts devote themselves to missionary work.

On the whole, nobody will deny Christian truths when viewed in this way. For since those people all accomplish with perseverance and joy the religious work which is most pleasing to God, they are bound and obliged to recognize of **their** own accord that this burden is forced on them – provided that they scrutinize closely and fairly the nature of the New Covenant, and the burning eagerness of the Apostles and missionaries to this purpose, and finally the times in which we live.' This is one of the features by which the New Dispensation is distinguished from the Old, and should by no means be criticized, namely that worship of God must no longer be restricted to one place or one rare. This has all been foretold for you in the books of the prophets. Firstly, *Hosea* said (2:23): *I will say to those who were not my people, 'you are my people,'* and *Joel* (2:28): *Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.* In fact Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, applied each promise to our current situation in the most eloquent words.' But above all, we must not overlook the words of *Zechariah*, who said (14:9): *On that day the lord will be one and his name one.*' The cause of all this is that the Messiah, about to be sent to the world at that time, after sacrificing his own **soul** for the guilty, would receive from his father an enormous kingdom extending to the farthest shores of the world. This is how, to adopt a loftier tone, the Psalmist depicts the glory of this kingdom, the citizens and the frontiers in vivid colors, and sings of the Messiah with resounding voice: *May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth,* etc. (*Psalms* 72:8).⁵

And SO, once he had come to earth at the predicted time, he placed the seat of his spiritual kingdom at the mountain of Holy Zion, where all the Jews who WERE awaiting the consolation of Israel had been stationed. But, as he continually stressed to those who heard him, he wanted this to take place through the spirit and through truth, among the people and in the land where God is worshipped in the New Dispensation. He sent his disciples to preach not only throughout the entire land of Israel, but he also wished them to approach all nations without distinction. Those who were obedient to the word of their lord and king boldly scorned all life-threatening dangers, and gladly gave up their possessions so as to inspire all and sundry to the faith, until the majority of people entered the spiritual kingdom of Christ and all Israel was saved. In fact there was so much zeal among the apostles that one would try to outdo the rest in performing this duty. It is more than sufficient to observe Barnabas and Paul, whose description in the Bible overflows with great and everlasting praise, since they are called *men who have risked their lives for the sake of our lord Jesus Christ* (Acts 15%). The followers gladly stood by the rest of the Apostles, although the anger of the enemies of truth and various torments were cast upon them — people such as Timothy, Titus, Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, Quadratus, Ignatius and others, whose history William Cave and other scholars have written.⁶

Who that is already a Christian and in whose innermost spiritual thoughts this name carries a profound meaning, as is fitting, would not wish to imitate those founders of the assembly of Christ who were very pleasing to God? — especially in our day and age when the church is no longer harassed ON all sides as once it was, but now that a wide doorway is opened up so that the mysteries of the Gospel may be known even by people across the seas, people who have until this day been enveloped in the darkest cloud of ignorance, and who have not been reached by God's word. Indeed, those who by God's wondrous prudence and goodness converted from paganism to Christianity can be of use in spreading the Gospel, and should in fact commit themselves to this endeavor. For apart from the fact that nature itself of its own accord says to all people that they should strive first of all to do good to those people who are joined to them

by a closer bond, it is clear from the mission work of the apostles that, before they traveled to pagan tribes to proclaim the gospel, they needed to take care of the well-being of their own people, the Jews, according to the command of the Lord himself (*Matthew 10:6*).⁷ Hence I have always thought that the greatest obligation was placed upon me also to be useful to my people at some time. This, I would say, is the greatest obligation, and no injustice', *For* God, who is to be praised from age to age for the profound richness of his wisdom and foresight, not only led me from Africa to the blessed land of Holland; indeed, he initiated me into a superior religion and endeavored to hand down to me the rudiments of knowledge. No Christian will begrudge me a few words here as I set forth a summary, so that I can describe God's providential care for me and my studies.

As a boy of seven or eight, orphaned by war or some other cause, I was sold to admiral Arnold Steenhart, who had landed at a certain place in Africa called St. Andrew's River in order to buy slaves. That eminent man returned when I recently spent time in Middelburg.

After traveling from there to the Castle, the citadel of Elmina, and then on to Chama, he gave me to his friend, Jacob van Goch, now my greatly revered patron and Maecenas," someone who will have my filial affection right up to the grave. At that time he was a very successful and skillful merchant on behalf of the noble directors of the African Society. He wanted me to be known as Capitein ('Captain') and he doted on me with paternal love thanks to his good character which caused his fame to spread virtually throughout all Guinea.⁹ Eventually, when he was about to return to his native land, he promised that he would take me with him and would see to it that after being duly instructed in Christianity, I might practice some trade which was not demeaning and thereby earn a living. After some years, in the course of which the acclaimed admiral sailed back from Zeeland to Guinea, miraculously guided by God, we sailed over and arrived at Middelburg in Zeeland. This event I have described elsewhere with the following verse:

This land received me when I first came from Africa
and was the door to the vale of Holland.

Later we proceeded from this city and made for the Hague, birthplace of my honored patron:

This is the place where our sequestered youth
was devoted to noble studies.

This is where Holland's forefathers came
and met to save the pact of nourishing peace.

This place with a thousand roads and shady retreats
fosters ease and lays cares aside.

In this most delightful Dutch town I not only learned the rudiments of the Dutch language but I also worked on the art of painting, in which I proved to be quite talented. Meanwhile, with the passage of time, a most humane person called Johann Philipp Manger allowed me to join the catechists at his private institute. I always stood out as an admirer of this man, who had a sound education and a singular devotion to God, and upon his journey to the mournful fates, when he was taken from the church of the Hague last year, I composed the following mournful elegy:

Hostile death brandishes its spear throughout the world
and forces everyone to succumb.

Fearless it penetrates the halls of kings
and even gives orders to those who hold power.

It does not allow rulers to contemplate the triumphs they have won
but forces them to abandon their opulent trophies.

It claims for itself all the treasures of the rich,
and even the cottage of the poor, and divides it among others.

With its sickle it reaps together young and old
without distinction, like grains of corn.

Veiled in a black shroud it dared

to disturb the threshold of Manger's house.

When the dismal cypresses stood before his home
noble I lagged groaned balefully.

His dear wife soaked him with her tears
and repeatedly beat her breast with her hand.

Just so did Naomi pour forth tears
once widowed by your death, Elimelech.¹⁰

The sorrowful wife kept pleading with the shades of the dead
and wailing in a tearful voice,

while Phoebus buried his face in a black veil
to deny the land its beloved sunshine.

O my immortal glory, my only delight!

So you flee from my sight and leave me wounded.

Husband, I would not mind if a swift breeze
has carried you to a joyful home in heaven.

But whenever I urge peace and quiet on my limbs,
or when day comes, I remember you still.

Death snatched you away from our marriage-bed.

What day will renew our broken bonds?

Look how your sacred home, dedicated to studies
now bears the marks of gloomy sorrow for you.

The dear children of our marriage-bed
shed tears flowing as from a brimming stream.

The tender sheep are scattered as if their loyal shepherd
has been wretchedly torn apart by wolves' teeth.

Their shuddering bleats rend the air
when they spot their tattered leader and call out to him.

Thus we fill our halls with plaintive cries
while your corpse lies empty on the bed.

The pious throng joins with your mournful widow
who marks the funeral in a suitable way.

This great jewel of priests, my glory, comes to an end,
the Lord's delight, beloved of good folk.

His sweet mouth is closed, which was fed
 by a sacred font with which I relieved my thirst.
 Alas, how suddenly fled that eloquence
 which I enjoyed as heavenly nectar.
 You ancient poets laud the eloquence of Nestor,
 but Manger was greater than Nestor himself."
 He disturbed the demon of the Styx with his powerful words
 as he entered the house, O Christ our leader.¹²
 From death he called back souls about to die
 and asked Christ to substitute his own neck.
 In shining form he showed me salvation
 and taught me the way of justice.
 Through prayer he put my wishes before God's throne
 and the Lord heard his fervent prayers.
 His eyes which shone like a yellow lightning flash
 now stand stiff, oppressed by eternal quiet of sleep.
 Like a scout in heaven, with his eyes he has laid aside
 the evil darts thrown by the devil.
 A bloodless, pale look occupies his gentle face
 where there was once charm mixed with severity.
 Likewise is his forehead pale,
 which was often touched by grim winter's cold.
 If anyone who recounts more, great sadness overruns their limbs
 as they try to address final words to this man:
 Honored father, though we are burying you, a second part
 of you which will not die climbs up to Mount Olympus."
 Surely some rejoicing will do your soul no harm,
 since you take to the shades a just reward of the sacred fight.
 Surrounded by soft linen among the denizens of heaven
 you are now fed, as victor, with ambrosial food."
 With rejoicing soul, drink from the glassy stream
 water springing forth from the soil.
 Now day will ever be able to disturb your peace;

death is overcome and lies beneath your feet.
 These very things were taught by your most recent words, father,
 to a holy throng listening with open ears.

The providence of the wise Lord concerning the pursuit of my studies at the catechistic school of the great and blessed theologian must be broached, if not exhaustively then at least for the most part. Among the catechists I became acquainted with the two generous sons of Willem Henrik van Schuylenburch, who at the time were purported to have said to one of the sons of Henrik Velse, an eminent theologian, that they thought I should steer my career-path towards the study of theology, so that, God willing, I might afterwards show my people the way to a better religion, since they need to be diverted from their cult of idolatry. Now I admit that I do not clearly remember whether I disclosed to anyone that such an idea appealed to me. But it is true that this theologian, for his part, being always very eager to spread the gospel, summoned me and asked whether the report was true. I replied that I certainly did not shrink from the proposal. Then he went to my most esteemed patron and asked whether he wished to send me to the public schools. From that time on he set aside his own funds for me, not only for the liberal arts, but he also supplied as generously as possible whatever was required for the proper pursuit of academic studies.

At that time the school superintendent was one Isaac Valkenaar, someone widely known for his scholarly intellect. Whenever I summon up his memory, I can visualize even now his extremely devoted support for me to be educated privately. When all this happened, I became known through the memorable theologian Henrik Velse, to F. C. Roscam, a noblewoman of immense endowments, who greatly helped me in learning Latin and then taught me the rudiments of Greek, Latin and Hebrew." She is dedicated to unblemished piety and to the study of languages, and she makes her house available to young students without charge. She also afforded my education no small advantage in that she introduced me to the influential and noble Peter Cunaeus: to him and to the rest of my patrons I have dedicated this dissertation, for what it is worth. When I was moved up from the first to the fourth class I received holy baptism

from J. Philipp Manger in a service held by Ludwig Timon Pielat, whose outstanding rhetorical skill as well as his study of Practical Theology, as it is called, deservedly cause listeners of all ranks to hang on his words. At that point I was named Jacob after my esteemed patron, Elisa after his sister, who has been like a second mother to me, and Johannes after their cousin, who is the wife of Peter Nesker, a very successful clerk and chief secretary. And so for six years, with half my schooling completed and a public oration delivered under the guidance of the rector, Rutger Ouwens, a man steeped in both of the learned languages, I was sent to this most distinguished of Holland's universities. Since the costs to be paid for anyone's academic studies to be completed properly were not small, the most honorable curators of the University of the Hague and the most eminent senators of Holland graciously bestowed their patronage on me, so that after being trained in the liberal arts I could at last bury myself completely in theology. Since all of this has come to pass, full of wonder I burst forth with these appropriate words of the psalm (39[40]:6): *How wondrous are your works, God, how precious to me are your plans! How manifold is the universe!*

For the reasons stated above, the gospel must be spread in our time wherever the dominion and power of Christians are open to it. Nevertheless I have often come to the realization that some Christians fear that through evangelic freedom slavery will disappear entirely from those colonies which Christians own, to the great detriment of the overseers of those colonies. Indeed there were once, and still are, people in the Christian world, and especially in the Netherlands, who, led astray by some unknown spirit, have determined that evangelic freedom cannot coexist with servitude of the body. As I shall demonstrate, my own present situation demands that I prove that such an opinion stems either from ignorance about the nature of evangelic doctrine, or from superstitious anxiety stemming from the customs of the early Christians, or finally from the institutions and morals of these regions.

God, favor these youthful undertakings
and let my words not detract from your praise.
Holy one, you condemn people's foul lies.

and vain superstition does not smile at you.
While I follow the shining trail of truth
may you always lead me along the right path.

CHAPTER THREE, which proves that slavery and Christianity are not antithetical

(1) It is clear beyond doubt that 'most Netherlanders wish to persuade themselves and others **in** the exchange of debate that Christian freedom can in no way walk in step with slavery in the proper sense. For now in our time it is thought that worship of God must necessarily be cultivated not only with a pure mind, which does not allow itself under the devil's control to be reduced from the spiritual basis that gives it life, but indeed also with a free body. If this opinion, as I would label it, is not on the right lines, at least it can be linked somehow to the views and sayings of fanatics, by which they, charged up with meaningless spirit and arguing that every magistrate in the Christian world should be removed, were unable to proclaim that slavery does not contradict Christianity. This incorrect view would never have occupied the minds of our adversaries had they not formed preposterous ideas of all sorts about the nature of the New Covenant, and were they not ignorant of the ways of the early Christians, or of their own regions, of ancient law and of the more **significant** customs.

(2) Concerning the nature of the New Covenant they believe that this freedom promised to believers is just as much corporeal as spiritual. And so, as the Old Covenant was transformed into the New, slavery which flourished under the Old (as we saw above), now in our age would be thrown out together with the other repealed practices of Mosaic law. All of this is affirmed by the witness of *II Corinthians 3:17*; *Galatians 5:1*; *I Corinthians 7:23* and *John 8:32*, among other sacred **writings**.³⁰

(3) According to the custom of their regions, they trust that aid and assistance are given to their opinion: for the very reason that slavery is unknown in the Netherlands, since it is forbidden for any person to be cast into slavery, nay more, that every slave who is brought to live here in the Netherlands from some other place will be granted bodily freedom as if by tacit consent, and even.

more if he formally embraces Christianity, so much so that he can no longer be sold by his master at will.

(4) Although these reasons may seem specious to some, still after being called back to a just weighing with a balanced scale, they may easily be found to lack in weight. Besides, we might say that the New Covenant gives freedom to people who, through the special grace of the Most High God, are or become participants in it. But how should it be understood? As spiritual and bodily simultaneously? Decidedly not. It is only the spiritual which shakes off from Christian shoulders the burden of ceremonial law which according to Paul and Peter, the fathers were not able to bear, and liberates them so they may undergo the mild yoke of **Christ**.³¹

(5) They cry out that the situation must be understood in no way other than this, some citing innumerable references in the New Testament itself (of these it will suffice to mention *two*, *Ephesians 6:5* and *I Timothy 6:1*);³² others cite those same points made in paragraph 2 above, from which our adversaries construct their arguments against us, and they very smartly hurl their quivering spear against us as their opponents. No wise person will allege that I will have exceeded the limits of this dissertation if I were to bring this to your attention by means of a rather **short** listing of the passages cited.

(6) As indeed at *II Corinthians 3:17*, where *the spirit of the lord is, there is freedom*, it is very clear from the connection between this passage: and preceding ones, particularly the sixth, seventh and thirteenth verses, that freedom as it is mentioned here is opposed by the yoke of slavery in the form of Mosaic law, by which a great number of the Israelites, weighed down by countless ceremonies, multiplied their guilt daily by transgressing the law. And according to the axiom of our unerring teacher in heaven, *everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin* (*John 8:34*: this passage needs to be discussed more fully below). There is two-fold evidence of this slavery. One is that, after committing the idolatry of the golden calf, the Israelites were afraid to approach Moses when he was about to deliver God's commandments, his face aglow with divine light, for they thought

themselves unworthy' to behold the shining glory of God himself. The other instance is *Hebrews 2:15* (on which you should consult Gregory Raphelengius), where Paul seemed to speak about most of the Israelites when he said that all *their lives [they] were held in slavery by the fear of death.*³³ For this well-known saying rings very true:

Since each mind is aware of its own affairs,
it conceives hope and fear inside its breast for its own deeds."

Moreover, unless they maintained as much obedience as the law of Moses demands, they were subject to the most dire curse.

How much the law of commission would have been granted to all Moses' successors as a result of this sin of *moscholatreia* ('calf-worship'), by which the Israelites transgressed God's law, just as Adam had **done**;³⁵ how much can be gained from it, seeing that the scribes and pharisees burdened the shoulders of humankind with loads that were heavy and hard to carry, though they 'themselves did not even lift a finger to move them. The apostle Paul shows that this most powerful and widespread reign of prescribed law, and the servile fear of the Israelites, came to an end, with the New Dispensation superseding the Old. Just as for the truly faithful, however many were led by Christ to remove the fog and extract the inner meaning of the law, sin would no longer have dominion over them through the precepts of that law, just as we read in *Romans 6:14*.³⁶ On the other hand, when they were rewarded with the freedom of the children of God, whose brightly shining sign is described in this chapter, a sign by which, even in this mortal life, God's glory is offered to be looked at in their uncovered faces as if in a mirror. And so the main argument returns to this: along with our most distinguished leader and any other names that might be more celebrated, if that were possible, we maintain that in this case Paul distinguishes the literal sense in Mosaic law, under the name of the letter (*to gramma*), from its mystical sense which he calls the spirit (*to pneuma*), something that was not understood in its full sense until the time of the *Gospel*.³⁷ From this it follows that in this entire chapter we should not debate physical freedom for

even one syllable, but rather we should confine ourselves only to spiritual freedom, freedom **that** is drawn from the fundamentals of Christian freedom.

(7) *Galatians 5:1* refers to, **in fact** demands, that very spiritual freedom which I have just mentioned: *For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.* For Paul, the most reliable interpreter of sacred texts, speaks at *Galatians 4:22* about the two sons of Abraham, and of **how** slavery followed **the** one born to a slave woman, whereas freedom followed the one born to a free woman. At verse 24 he says that this is an allegory, by which expression he takes pains to indicate that in the following discussion he will propose that slavery is the outer observance of Mosaic law, called the covenant of Sinai, and that by freedom he means the Dispensation of the New Testament, freed from all those rituals. This distinction, as they well realize, encourages the Galatians not to submit to the yoke of Sinai at the hands of the Judaizers, who insisted on emphasizing the need for circumcision.

(8) The third example, from the first letter to the *Corinthians, 7:23*: *You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men,* will not be so easily answered. Nonetheless, if examined diligently and viewed from all angles, these words of Paul will, in their context, fight all the more clearly for our cause rather than for that of our adversaries. For nobody can fail to see that it is shown here that it was contested among the Corinthians whether slavery in the ordinary sense could coexist with Christian freedom: and so in those times the very same subject which we are now discussing was being investigated. This question, which was being discussed by greater minds than ours, as was right, the Corinthians handed over in a letter to be decided by Paul, together with other questions. But he would reply (v. 20) that he wanted the general rule to be observed that religious doctrine by no means removes differences of status.' Paul concludes from this (v. 21) that **any** slave who should give his name to Christ should be content with that condition: likewise if he could become free by honorable **means, that** is, not against God's will, he would prefer freedom over slavery. He goes on to declare (v. 22) that external or personal freedom is not essential to the worship of God. A remarkable paradox indicates this fact: whoever has been

called a slave in the Lord becomes a freedman of the Lord and, conversely, whoever has been called free becomes Christ's slave. From this he concludes, in our passage, that everyone whether slave or free should recognize that he has been bought with the precious blood of Christ. That person must therefore make sure not to subject himself willingly to servile status among gentiles, in accordance with the repulsive custom of that age whereby many hired themselves out to trainers and masters in order to fight against beasts and gladiators, as indeed the renowned Claudius Salmasius, that untiring student of ancient literature, said in his response to Milton, p. 20.³⁹

Since this is the case it becomes easy to see that here too our adversaries will find no defence for their opinion. Moreover, Paul's response to the 'Corinthians carries so much evidential weight that he forestalls our adversaries at every turn and they can no longer challenge us. They claim that slavery was tolerated for a long time in the age of the apostles until, with the light of the Gospel growing brighter each day and the Christian community establishing a firmer, safer base, slavery was completely stopped among Christians. If this were to be established, who does not see, I ask, that the apostle Paul would have had to discuss the duration of slavery when he discussed the subject at such a suitable point? But though he says nothing about the matter, we can see clearly enough that our view is strengthened, as it were, by new fortifications.

(9) Finally, let us add *John 8:32: And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.* These words of our Savior to the Jews seem at first glance to offer the greatest shelter of a contrary view. This is particularly so if it is borne in mind that the word *eleutheroun* ('to set free'), as has been long established by those best versed in Greek, was commonly used by the greatest Greek writers to signify manumission, with which people become free or freedmen. Above all, it can be seen in Euripides' *Heracleidae*, where a certain mistress is moved to promise freedom to her servant with these words (l. 788-789):⁴⁰

Dearest man, this day has taken you

to freedom, because of this message.

The terms 'slave' (*doulos*) and 'free' (*eleutheros*) are also used in the dialogue of Aeschines Socraticus." Our adversaries take encouragement from the thought that it can be concluded from the responses which the Jews gave to Christ's saying, that by freedom Christ had in mind not spiritual but rather physical freedom. To be sure, the Jews responded indignantly to Christ (*John 8:33*): *We are descendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will be made free'?* John Selden once conjectured about this very passage in his exegesis, book 6.9:

Surely they are merely saying here, on the strength of their traditional teaching, that they never suffered *inner* slavery; nowhere do they deny the other, outer, kind (to use a distinction we have made above in the case of the Jews) of a people either captured or given into slavery.

(10) But nobody who pursues the truth can ignore the fact that each person is the best interpreter of his or her own words. The following passage leaves us in no doubt that the Jews misinterpreted Christ's intentions either out of malicious fabrication or out of ignorance (as with Nicodemus who understood rebirth in the bodily sense), while their innermost senses *were* bent more on carnal than on spiritual affairs at that time. Christ makes absolutely clear what he wished to signify by liberty, that is liberty from the sin by which the devil rules all those who have not yet fled to Christ the savior through his health-giving faith. In this way the person who has been devoted to sin, that is to pleasure and desire, is called a slave of sin *par excellence* through the seriousness of his action. This is proven not only by much testimony of the scriptures but also by the agreement between the Greek fathers, as we call them, and the gentiles themselves; likewise, in copious fashion, J. Caspar Suicerus in the first volume of his *Thesaurus of the church*, under the word 'slavery', number 2, p. 956.⁴² Moreover Joachim Kühn should be consulted in his *Annotations to Aelian's variae historiae*, book 2.4, p. 94.⁴³

(11) And so we distinguish between slavery of conscience or sin from civil slavery; between heavenly law and the law of the courtroom; between freedom of the spirit and freedom of the body. Christ talks about heavenly law and about slavery of conscience or the spirit, from which we are defended by the New Covenant, as Johannes **Crocius** has pointed out well on page 181 **with** reference to the first epistle to *Timothy* 6.1, the first instance in the teaching of a distinction of **status**.⁴⁴ Henry More of Cambridge discusses what freedom under the New Covenant involves, in his *Opera theologica*, book 9.7, pp. 393-394, **paras. 8-10**.⁴⁵

(1) The faithful are freed from the fussy and excessive encumbrances of ceremony, so that we are no longer caught up in the toils of silly superstition and its practices, things which are of such a nature that they cannot show the way to everlasting life or extend Christ's kingdom on earth.

(2) The faithful are freed from their sins, that is from pride, envy, hatred, anger, grief, avarice and every desire, so that this freedom can lead us to justice, which cannot fail to presuppose the effective persuasion of truth. Therefore it seems that I was not wrong to conjecture that Christ, our heavenly teacher, meant with the phrase, *The truth will make you free (John 8:32)* that believers would be sanctified through truth in the word of God, as John says (17:17).⁴⁶ Anyone who wishes to learn more fully about the nature and aspects of Christian freedom should look at John Calvin's *Institutes* (3.19).

(12) But if anyone does not agree with these solutions, let them read the brief letter of Paul to *Philemon*, and they will **recognize** with me that 'where there is evidence there is no need for **words**.'⁴⁷ From this letter it is more clearly elucidated than the light of noon that a slave named Onesimus who secretly fled from his master Philemon to Rome was there initiated by Paul into the rudiments of Christian doctrine, and afterwards sent back to his master. As one can infer from the context of the letter, Philemon is beseeched humanely through prayers to take Onesimus back without flogging him, not in terms of his rights but out of brotherly love, on account of the shared faith which will make Onesimus more fit than before to perform his future duties.

From these things it is abundantly clear, as we wished, that the nature of the New Covenant demands only *spiritual* freedom in order that we can worship God, not necessarily *external* freedom. As a result, differences of status in Christianity by no means have to be removed. The illustrious Hugo Grotius, whose name continues to shine like a star in the scholarly universe, even after his death, has some comments well worth reading in the last part of the fifteenth verse of his **letter**.⁴⁸ See also Paul Voet's *Institutes* 1.3.4.⁴⁹

(13) If anyone still objects to this demonstration of unquestionable truth which, unless I am completely mistaken, we have deduced from the nature of the Gospel, that person **will** necessarily face extreme and intractable difficulties. For it is clear even to catechumens that the Gospel very often presents the spiritual kingdom of God (to borrow a phrase from the kingdoms, kings and lords of **this** world) in such a way that Christ Jesus, the one and most loyal shepherd of our souls, is presented as the most glorious king and lord of that kingdom – Christ, who having suffered much servitude, gives laws to his subjects, whom he himself gained with his own blood, and who are therefore warned always to recall that they were bought for this price and should glorify God in body and soul. Reference is made here to the right of a master in antiquity *over* slaves whom he had bought for personal use.

How can we explain and understand these and similar phenomena if it **is** held – so runs the argument of our adversaries – that the name and use of slavery considered in and of itself seem so inimical to the nature of the New Covenant that Christians are not allowed to keep a Christian slave? Is it, I ask, that all these phrases have been taken from a source which is forbidden to Christians? Moreover, I ask, to what deceit and injustice would the door be opened? For all people, and consequently also slaves, can easily feign Christ's name. They would do this more readily if the reward of such a wrongdoing were freedom. It would happen in such a way that masters, being frequently tricked by this ruse, would be denied what is rightfully theirs, and in such a way that many in their great desire to retain their own property, would cease from their efforts to convert slaves but rather oppose conversion. We all understand that this is far from the wishes of the righteous.

(14) Anyone who lays prejudice aside and gives due attention to these things which we have said from the fourth paragraph of this chapter up to this point will happily agree with me how deceptively the argument was at one time forced upon the Christian world by a tract under the title, *On the manumission of Turkish slaves by baptism*. Christian Thomasius, a man of great talent and distinction, refuted this argument and showed in chapter 8 of his *Various questions of history, philosophy and law* how false it was when exposed.”

(15) But finally, in order that I might back off from this demonstration of my own beliefs derived from the nature of the New Covenant, let me conclude with the words of John Calvin, that man of austere holiness, that man famous among those who were the first to spread the true Gospel in his own time, who publicly refuted the opinion of our adversaries when he said:⁵¹

The person who knows how to discern the difference between body and soul, between this present, transient life and that eternal life to come, will have no difficulty in understanding that Christ's spiritual kingdom and the civil order are entirely different matters. Therefore it is a mistake on the part of the Jews to seek and enclose Christ's kingdom within the parts of this world. Let us rather ponder what scripture clearly teaches, namely that the fruit which we pluck through God's benefaction is spiritual; and we will remember to keep within its own limits all that freedom which is promised and given to us in him. For why is it that the same apostle Paul who bids us not to submit to the yoke of slavery [Galatians 5:1] elsewhere forbids slaves to be anxious about their status [I Corinthians 7:21], if it were not that spiritual freedom can perfectly well coexist with civil bondage? It is in this light that such statements should be understood, that in God's kingdom there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, neither slave nor free. By the same token, there is

neither Jew nor Greek, neither circumcised nor uncircumcised, neither barbarian nor Scythian, neither slave nor free. But Christ is all things to all men. By this is meant that it makes no difference what one's status among humans is or under what nation's laws one lives, since Christ's kingdom does not consist in these things at all.

(16) Now that the first rank of our enemies has been crushed, I am glad to say, let us attack the second. These contend that acceptance of our thesis is an unwise withdrawal from the ancient and accepted practice of the early Christians, among whom the manumission of slaves was celebrated as a mark of exceptional piety. This is particularly the case at Easter, when they went in memory of the glorious resurrection of our savior, as we read in Gregory of Nyssa, who flourished around 370 CE: 'On this day the bonds are removed, the debtor released, the slave freed by a beneficent and humane proclamation and edict of the church.'⁵²

Our opponents think we must concede from this that the early Christians understood, and in fact proved, that personal bondage and Christian freedom are mutually contradictory. And so, in order to respond to this argument as briefly as possible, I would prefer the issue at hand to be considered on a firm basis of law rather than practice, for in this way we are not inquiring into what the ancient Christians actually did as a result of their exceptional and always praiseworthy goodwill and clemency, but rather into what needed to be done on account of Christian freedom, and into whatever they should always observe diligently as applying to all Christians of all times. While our opponents relate the manumission of slaves to the last of these, it will scarcely be evident by which person, at what time, and on which occasion this kind of manumission was instituted among Christians; and it will tie them into such a knot that the absurdity of their argument will become clear when compared with our thesis.

(17) Writers of church history allege that Constantine the Great originated the custom of manumitting slaves in the church." As Sozomen writes (1.9):⁵⁴

It seems worthwhile, as I begin this discussion, to list here the laws made for the use of those who were given freedom in the church. Partly in order to maintain a careful observation of the laws, and partly for the sake of owners who unwillingly released them, since it would be very difficult for anyone to acquire greater freedom than being given Roman citizenship, he passed three laws decreeing that all who had been given their freedom in the church, with priests as witnesses, would be granted Roman citizenship. Sufficiently clear indications of this holy institution survive even into our age. Indeed the custom is maintained to this day, that consecrated laws concerning this matter are first written down in the records of manumissions. These laws were promulgated by Constantine, who devoted all his care and thought to reinforcing Christianity.

Relating to this topic, the following can be read in Nicephorus Callistus (7.46):"

Constantine also granted freedom to the church by legislation, and after having been given freedom, witnessed by priests, they would be enrolled among the number of Roman citizens. The passage of time confirms these things since this custom has been approved and has prevailed over many years up to the present time. He established laws of this sort with great zeal, and with them he industriously spread the worship of God.

With this, finally, the 'tripartite' Ecclesiastical-history, as it is known, concurs (1.9):

Because of the subtlety of the laws, owners unintentionally suffered difficulty in bestowing the

greater freedom which they call Roman citizenship. Therefore Constantine passed three laws, decreeing that through this pious measure all who had been freed in the church, witnessed by priests, would enjoy Roman citizenship, and the present time still preserves signs of this measure. For it was customary for written laws concerning freedom to be given priority in manumissions. Therefore Constantine took this step, clearly eager to honor religion in every respect.

This is confirmed by the first and second laws in the Book of those who have been manumitted in the church. For the first law is as follows:

It was resolved long ago that people would be more likely to grant their slaves freedom of the Lord in the Catholic church if they could do so in the presence of the people and with Christian priests assisting. In order to preserve the memory of the event, records would be set down in the manner of public proceedings which they themselves would sign as witnesses. Therefore, with justification can freedom be given or bequeathed by each of you however you wish, as long as there is evidence of your intention.

The second law runs as follows:

Those who, out of religious reasons and within the embrace of the church, grant freedom to their deserving slaves should do so under that law by which Roman citizenship is usually conferred in a completely performed ceremony. But it has been resolved that this law may be relaxed for those who grant it in the presence of priests. (And so forth.)

It is true that the words of the first law, **'It was resolved long ago,' seem to disagree with the authors quoted above, so much so that we should not consider**

Constantine to be the first proponent of manumission in the church. But I see that for two reasons discrepancy and ambiguity are eliminated by the most eminent experts in the law-court who have focused their minds on these words. For they observe that before Constantine passed the recorded laws, upon **being** consulted, he either responded with a letter that it was permitted to do so, or **he** himself passed the three laws concerning this issue, as we heard from Sozomen a little earlier. From this they conclude that the first of these laws fell into disuse with the passage of time. But however these **things** came about, I do know this much: it is most explicitly established that nobody records this law and custom before Constantine's conversion from paganism to the purer religion, but that this type of manumission certainly grew stronger among Christians between 312 and 316 CE. Since this is so, as my prerogative I ask the opponents why this custom was eventually introduced after such a stretch of time since the age of the Apostles and the first Christians, who were not in any doubt that piety was strongly linked to charity? Had that age not tasted the sweet fruit of benevolent Christian freedom? Or were slaves of that period outside the grasp of the church? If anyone thinks this to be the case, they not only display their own ignorance but they also make futile attacks on the most evident truths which we have already proven.

(18) Concerning the point at which Constantine ordered slaves to be manumitted in the church, anyone who ponders carefully the writers cited will understand that this kind of manumission had been recommended to church authorities not so much to preserve Christian freedom as to increase their authority even in human affairs. For now those who had **victimized** the Christians had been either restrained or killed, and the church was in a better position and it seemed that wonderful peace reigned everywhere; the emperor was praised for his love and reverence towards those who professed the religion. And so, because humanity urged that it was fitting to be kind to all peoples, especially to Christians, since it behooved them to be more compassionate than the Gentiles had been, it was decreed that the law of manumission would be in the power of the bishops; indeed greater trust was put in them than in secular judges for reliable and persuasive judgments. For Constantine had sensed that,

to use the words of Sozomen, 'In the careful observation of the laws great difficulty attends the acquisition of the greater freedom [i.e. of citizenship].' For certainly during the census which preceded the manumission within the church, and which the foremost jurists believe should be specified in the Second Law as usual practice, it was custom at Rome that slaves would gain their freedom if they were registered by their masters in the census of Roman citizens.

(19) These laws of Constantine on no account obligated individual Christians to free all of their slaves, Gentile or Christian, whether they so wished or not, as if slavery had been finally discovered to be at loggerheads with Christian freedom; but instead they concern only those who are well-deserving enough to be granted freedom selectively. **The ancients** once treated **their** faithful slaves in the same way, according to Terence, *Andria*, 37-38:⁵⁶

My slave, I made you become my freedman
because you have served me so well.

The words of Saint Augustine urge us to believe it (sermon 21.6):"

You take your slaves to the church to be manumitted.
Quiet reigns. Your petition is read aloud, or your wish is made known. You say that you are manumitting your slave, who has served you faithfully in every way.

(20) I emphasize this all the more strongly. In the very superstitious age of Marculfus the Monk, who, according to **Bignon's** notes in his first book of *Formulae*, flourished around 660 CE in France, it was thought that Constantine was the originator of manumission in the church, and it was entirely up to masters to decide on the kind of freedom granted to the slaves whom they were manumitting. In fact Marculfus cites the following in his Laws, book 2.33:

N. N. to his beloved male or female slave: Because of the loyalty and service with which you have served me as a

household slave, and for the remission of my sins, I absolve you from every bond of slavery, on condition that you continue to serve **me while I live, whereas if you outlive me, you will be free.** (And so it continues.)

It must be added that the purchase of slaves was **practiced** during that age, as is clear from **Bignon's Formulae**, which should evidently be ascribed to Marculfus. For we read in the second paragraph:

In the name of God, I am selling N. N. to this buyer, my brother, a splendid lord. I have decided, not by supposed right, nor under duress, but by the proper decision of my own will, to sell you this **homeborn** slave from today henceforth in terms of my rights. (And so it goes on.)

Since this is the case, it becomes brilliantly clear how false it is that the manumission of slaves in the church was introduced entirely to eradicate slavery from the whole Christian world on account of Christian freedom and so that good doctrines could be spread everywhere – so much so that all Christians, even in our own time, would be obliged to preserve this custom.

(21) But perhaps the poet was correct to predict that ‘even to those already conquered, valor returns to the heart’ (Virgil, *Aeneid* 2.376).⁵⁸ Opponents will rise against us and say, ‘Though we agree with the foregoing proof, we nonetheless uphold, on the strength of the passage from Marculfus, that several early Christians thought it a sign of worth as well as of conscientiousness if someone released a male or female slave, and we should always strive for what appears to have pleased God in the past.’ Certainly we do not deny that many Christians of antiquity, particularly the French, were brought round to this opinion by certain people of the church to whom the law of manumission was recommended according to the law of Constantine. But I do not at all hesitate to call it silly and superstitious. For because there is no reference among the aforementioned ecclesiastical historians to **those formulae** by which slaves **were**

freed in the age of Marculfus, and because such a view is so far from the divine truth, let those who have received higher faculties from God and who have been taught by **our** heavenly teacher discern that we are not allowed to abandon God's serious teachings, **his** judgment, his mercy and faith, so that we can adhere to human customs. To make this clear to our adversaries I shall simply include three passages from Marculfus himself. But please restrain your laughter, my friends! At book 2.32 we read:

Whoever releases a rightful bond of servitude can be sure that the Lord will repay him in the future. And so in God's name, **in order to save our souls and for eternal reward, my wife and I release you from all bonds of slavery in our household from this day onward.**

Likewise we read at 2.34:

If we release any of our slaves from the shackles of slavery, we ensure that we shall receive recompense in the future. Therefore in God's name and for eternal reward, I free you from all chains of servitude so that you may lead a free life from this day onward, just as if you had been born to free parents, and you may not give your service to any of my heirs and descendants or to anyone else, unless with a complete guarantee of freedom you should hold yourself to whomever of my heirs you should choose, and once I have passed away you should perform a mass and light a candle for me at each anniversary. (And so on.)

Finally, in his appendix (chapter 13), the following stands out:

As long as almighty God allows us to have a healthy body in this life, we ought to think frequently about the health of our souls so that we deserve to have our sins reduced a

little. **And**'so in God's name, I have by my rights released this slave as a free person, in order to cure my soul and diminish my sins, and so that in the future God may see Et to show forgiveness to me. (And what follows.)

(22) But, so as not to be more long-winded than I intended, let me proceed to show that those people, however many they are, who try to prove to themselves and to others that slavery in the strictest sense no longer prevails in the Netherlands, claiming that both laws and Christian principles oppose it, are doing so more out of ignorance than from any solid basis. Since any citizen or resident alien can relish complete freedom here, according to the privileges granted by the counts and kings of these regions, nobody who has any knowledge of Dutch affairs can deny that this must be attributed to political considerations. For, both before and after the Netherlands was enlightened by the health-giving glow of the Reformation, slavery was a well-known phenomenon here, as is testified not only by jurists of former times but also by the more recent ones who have mentioned the provinces of the Netherlands in their work.

(23) Indeed, the brilliant jurist Peter Gudelinus writes as follows in his *Commentaries on the New Law, book 1, ch. 4, On aspects of the New Law which concern the condition of slaves, p. 56:*⁹

At one time among Christians here, just as elsewhere, the treatment of purchased and home-born slaves was extremely harsh, and even the church kept slaves, as the records show, until the gradual rise of Christian charity induced many to manumit their slaves. Finally, there were hardly any slaves anywhere, as Johann Molanus noted in *Canons book 3*." It is not known when exactly this came about. Around 1200 CE. there were slaves in Italy and Germany, as the papal records indicate in the decrees under the titles, *Slaves should not be ordained and On the marriage of slaves*. In the same **book mentioned** above, Molanus adds that the Church of Saint Peter in

Leuven possesses the document of the manumission of a certain person which took place in that church in 1250 CE. Therefore it is probably only for three hundred years, or a little more, that the possession of slaves began to be abolished in the Netherlands and in most other places. But the use **and** sale of slaves are still retained to this very day in Portugal, in other parts of Spain, and in some jurisdictions which border the Turks – there it is customary for slaves to retain their status though they renounce Islam and are taught Christianity. This should not seem absurd, since it has been shown that the enslavement of people and the power of a master do not contradict divine law.

So that nobody of contrary opinion can imagine that the weapons to be used against us lie buried beneath these words, 'until the gradual rise of Christian charity induced many to manumit their slaves, and finally there were hardly any slaves anywhere,' I shall take away from that person every opportunity of recovering his strength. We readily concede that Christian charity does not permit Christians to brutalize their slaves and it offers, with the passage of time, the opportunity for slavery to be utterly removed. In this way it has been permitted for any Christian to manumit his slave, should he so wish. But we deny that this proceeds from any specific instruction in the Gospel.

Paul Christanaeus may be added to Gudelinus, and in his *Decisions of the Dutch senate* vol. 4.80.2-3 nearly the same words are **found**.⁶¹ Ulrich Huber, who dates the abolition of slavery to the later period, said this in the foreword to his *Institutes on personal law*: 'From this time, about 1212 CE or thereabouts, Christians ceased to sell each other into slavery.' And Hugo Grotius in his *Introduction to the law of Holland, written in Dutch*, says that the use of slaves in the Netherlands was not stopped until three hundred years ago.

(24) Should anyone ask for what reason the name and practice of slavery has ended within the Netherlands, I would want them to hear what Paul Voet has to say in *his Institutes* 1.3.4:

Since the provinces of the Netherlands Federation are opposed to the law of slavery, having achieved their freedom by law and by arms, any slaves who might come over to us from elsewhere or enter the boundaries of our territory should by the very fact of their coming here obtain their freedom. In order that they might be all the more located in the Netherlands Federation as a safe haven, those people who have arrived in our jurisdiction and come to our guardianship and protection should not be exposed to those things from which they have fled.

From all of this the following is more than clear enough to anyone: every slave **who is brought here from elsewhere enjoys complete freedom in the Netherlands, not so much as a result of the laws and principles of the Gospel but rather due to political reasons.**

(25) What a firm basis does our conclusion rest upon. On the strength of this, granting the opinion of our adversaries concerning the state of the Netherlands, it is necessary to show how, even when Christian freedom is intact, there remain not only certain traces of earlier slavery but also, more importantly, the buying and selling of slaves. This is the case in many other Christian states in which all people profess Christianity, albeit with different opinions and in different ways. Paul Voet, in the passage mentioned above, confirms this, as do the battery of our other key witnesses.

Nevertheless, certain traces of ancient slavery have remained in Germany, Poland, Muscovy, Transylvania, Prussia and even in the Zutphen and Arnhem Quarters of Gelderland.⁶³

And a little later:

In the kingdom of England, though harsh slavery has been abolished, some people are attached to the land, others work just like slaves for a period on a contract basis; they are called apprentices.

Concerning the purchase and sale of slaves in the manner of cattle, you see what Jean Bodin has to say in the context of the Portuguese (*De republica* 1.5).⁶⁴

(26) To be sure, the most learned and meritorious persons in the state do not hesitate to wish that personal slavery, which in our time has been partly or completely abolished amongst most Christians, should be reinstated, in so far as it is extremely useful to the state, but restored in such a way that it is in keeping with Christian clemency, rather than brutality. For it is absolutely certain that countless troubles, such as cannot be enumerated easily, would result from the discontinuation of slavery. The most esteemed Busbecq leans towards this view in his *Turkish Letter* 3 pp. 160-161 (Leiden 1633);⁶⁵

I do not know whether the person who first abolished slavery did us a favor. If run justly, leniently and according to the precepts of Roman law, public slavery in particular could have remained, and there would have been no need for crucifixion and the gibbet to coerce those who have nothing other than their life and their freedom, and whom poverty forces to commit some kind of crime. Freedom without possessions does not always promote honorable activity. Not everybody's nature can endure resourceless freedom and not everyone is born so that they can have control over themselves and **know** by their own judgment what is right. They need the leadership and rule of their betters, like a prop; **in** no other way will they put an end to their misdeeds. By the same token there are certain animals whose fierceness is always to be feared unless constrained by chains. Indeed the weaker mind is ruled by a master's authority, and the master

lives by the slave's work. The Turks derive enormous benefit, both public and private, from slaves: they look after their domestic affairs very effectively by means of slave **labor**. And so, as **the** proverb goes, **they** say that someone who has even a single slave does not seem poor. But if any business must be done, anything carried out, built or demolished in public life, they do it by the assiduous work of slaves. Nowhere can we match the grandeur of ancient monuments. Why is that? We are bereft of manual **labor**, that is of slave **labor**. Let me keep silent on the subject of how much the ancients learned from slaves in attaining all types of knowledge.

On the other hand Potgiesserus, relying on the judgments and opinions of great people, especially Busbecq, proves in *his Prolegomena* on the *status of slaves, paras.* 33-35, in general, not only that humankind reaps greater benefits from slave than from hired **labor**; but also, in particular, that there would be a massing of dishonest and lazy people who would wander around and consume the food of their fellow-citizens and others, thereby weakening them, an evil that would come about should slavery continue to proliferate on a large scale among all Christians.*

(27) Lest I continue indefinitely, I can, I think, safely draw the following conclusion from the above discussion, even though I by no means concur with every opinion of the most learned writers mentioned **above**: **that** slavery in no **way** contradicts Christian freedom — slavery, which indeed has been repealed here in the Netherlands out of some sense of benevolence and clemency or for political expediency, not because of divine law. From this it follows naturally that slavery does not impede the spread of the Gospel in those Christian colonies where it prevails right up to the present day. For this reason, a kingdom most amicable and pleasing to God can and should be built for both masters and slaves, educated in the better religious practices. This is what Paul recommends to Philemon (v. 16).⁶⁷ And in this way slaves will certainly in the end be as prepared as possible for the will of their masters, as we read in *Ephesians* 6:5-8:

Slaves, be obedient to those who are your earthly masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as to Christ. On these lines, another passage will grow deep roots in the minds of those masters who have not cast off the character of a Christian gentleman (v. 9): Masters, do the same to them, and forbear threatening, knowing that he who is both their master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Henry Velse, esteemed pastor of the Church of the Hague and an erudite **man** if ever there was, has pointed out the ways and means by which this kingdom may be founded and strengthened under good auspices, in the historical preface appended to the *Detailed reports on the founding of Christianity among the heathen on the Coromandel and Malabar coast*, written by the Danish missionaries at Tranquebar. Here that incomparable theologian has reviewed and refuted the doubts of certain people with which they were troubled (**paras. 46-47**), and discussed in a logical fashion whether the teachings of the Gospel, which will promote and serve this religious work, can be handed down to slaves without ill effect (48-53).

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Abbreviations used in the *endnotes*

ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992).

BWN: *Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederland* (Haarlem: Brederode, 1852-1878).

LCL: Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press).

OCD: *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, ed. Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, 3rd edition).

REP: *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1998).

SHE: *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1955).

¹ Japheth and Ham are two of Noah's three sons, the other being Shem. Ham and his progeny are cursed by Noah after Ham finds him lying drunken and naked (presumably because he fails to conceal Noah's shame). In keeping with the curse, Ham's son Canaan is to become the slave of Japheth (Gen. 9:20-27). On the centrality of this story to Capitein's ethnology and theology, and on some of the 'difficulties surrounding its interpretation, see section IV.1 of the introduction above.

² The Covenant or Dispensation is a central doctrine of Christianity, and one that establishes its relationship with Judaism. God's covenant with Noah, following the flood, binds God with all creatures, human and animal, in a set of mutual promises and obligations (*Genesis 9:1-17*). Specifically, the law God gives to Moses on Mount Sinai is referred to as a covenant (*Exodus 24:7*). At a number of other significant passages in the Old Testament the term covenant (Hebrew *berit*) denotes God's relationship with humans, based on the law given to Moses.

In the Christian tradition it is Jesus, as God's son, who supersedes the law and thus establishes anew God's relationship with humans. The contrast is most piquantly expressed in Paul's *Second letter to the Corinthians 3:4-11*. According to Paul, the law given to Moses was a *ministry of death* (v. 7) because it was temporary and provisional, whereas the New Covenant in Christ is for all time (v. 11).

³ *Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people (I Peter 2:10); For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the*

Lord our God calls to him (Acts 2:39; this is taken from Peter's call to the Jews of Jerusalem to repent).

⁴ This passage is from the eschatology (description of the end of time) contained in the prophecy of Zechariah, dating to 520-518 BCE. As foretold here, Jerusalem will suffer but is defended by God from total destruction.

⁵ 'The river' may be understood as the Euphrates, as is established at *I Kings 4.21*.

⁶ The ancient figures mentioned here were considered leaders of the church in the immediate aftermath of the apostles. Timothy and Titus were at different times Paul's companions on his travels, and were later to be missionaries in their own right (e.g. *Acts 16:1-5* and *Galatians 2:1-3* respectively). They are the recipients of three brief letters included in the New Testament, namely I and II *Timothy* and *Titus*. These epistles, known from the practical nature of their content as pastoral letters, have traditionally been ascribed to Paul, though stylistic criteria would suggest that they were written by someone else.

Clement of Rome was probably identical with Pope Clement (around 90-100 CE). The letter from the church at Rome to the church in Corinth that is usually ascribed to him presents a Christian community that has settled down by the end first century CE, and is no longer urgently concerned with the impending end of time.

Polycarp (c. 69-c.155) was bishop of Smyrna from 110 to his death by martyrdom. Of his writings only one letter that he wrote to the Philippians, which might originally have been two letters, survives. It warns against apostasy, i.e. renunciation of the faith on the part of Christians.

Quadratus (early 2nd century CE) was the first of the Christian 'apologists'. While based in Asia Minor he wrote a defense of Christianity addressed to the Roman emperor Hadrian (117-138). Only one fragment of the work survives; it is contained in the church history of Eusebius (c.260-c.340).

Ignatius (d. 108 or 115) was born in Antioch. Condemned to death there for his Christian allegiance, he was sent to Rome to be thrown to the beasts. His own letters, written en route there to Christian churches in various parts of the eastern Mediterranean, are the main source of information about him. It is unclear whether he did finally endure martyrdom. His letters warn against

heresy and exhort Christians to unite under the bishop and clergy. Their shrill tone is in marked contrast to that of Clement, with whom he corresponded.

William Cave (1637-1713): British patristic scholar who wrote voluminously on the history of the church. See SHE vol. 3.461. It would appear that Cave's work was Capitein's major source on these authors.

⁷ At this passage paraphrased by Capitein, Jesus, instructing the twelve apostles to spread the Gospel, says: *Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

⁸ Gaius Maecenas (d. 8 CE) was classical Rome's most famous literary patron. A counsellor of the emperor Augustus, he was associated with the most distinguished poets of the time, including Virgil and Horace (on whom, see notes 00 and 00 below). From ancient times his name became a byword for the ideal literary patron.

⁹ If *Capitein* was the name Van **Goch** chose for the slave-boy, it might indeed be explained on the basis that he was a gift from sea-captain, Steenhart: thus Kpobi, *Mission in Chains*, 190. At the same time, however, there may be a note of sarcasm in calling a slave 'captain': on the use of facetious names for slaves, though in a different part of Africa, see Robert C.-H. Shell, *Children of Bondage: a social history of slave society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1838* Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994), 240-241, where the most piquant example cited, Fortune (*Fortuijn*), also reverses the roles of master and slave in playful fashion.

¹⁰ The story of Naomi and Elimelech is told in the Old Testament book of *Ruth*. They were a married couple, who left Bethlehem for Moab together with their sons, at a time of famine. Elimelech died, their sons married Moabite women (one of whom is Ruth), but then died also. Naomi then returned to Bethlehem, together with the loyal Ruth, who after her subsequent marriage to Boaz becomes grandmother of King David. Capitein refers to the story here as a paradigmatic instance of conjugal love, and the loss of a husband. See further ABD, 'Naomi'.

¹¹ **Nestor** was a hero of Greek mythology, among those fighting in the Trojan War and later returning from it. Famed for his longevity, he is presented as an elder statesman figure in Homer's *Iliad*. See further OCD, 'Nestor'.

¹² The Styx ('abominable') was the main river of Hades, the underworld of Greek mythology. The souls of the dead had to cross this river in order to reach their final resting place. It is interesting to note the juxtaposition of the (pagan) classical with the Christian at this point. See further OCD, 'Styx'.

¹³ Mount Olympus, the highest mountain of Greece, situated on its northern border, was considered the home of the twelve 'Olympian' gods. See further OCD, 'Olympus'.

¹⁴ Ambrosia was a mythical food considered to confer immortality on humans.

¹⁵ Nothing more is known about Roscam. It is significant, however, to see her compared with Anna Maria Schurman in an account of Capitein from the early 19th century: see Henri **Grégoire**, *On the Cultural Achievements of Negroes*, tr. and ed. by Thomas Cassirer and **Jean-François Brière** (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 94. For more on Schurman (and **Grégoire**), see Appendix 2 below.

¹⁶ **Marcus** Tullius Cicero (106-43 BCE): Roman statesman, orator, writer on various subjects, not least philosophical. The three books of his treatise *De officiis* ('on duties'), written in the last year of his life, may be consulted in the bilingual edition of Walter Miller, LCL series (1913). For a detailed study of this work, see Andrew R. **Dyck**, *A Commentary on Cicero, De Officiis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996). The canonical status of Cicero in Capitein's scholarly world is underlined by the fact that, at the elaborate ceremony to mark the inauguration of the university in 1575, he was represented in the procession, along with Aristotle, Plato and Virgil, and following the four Evangelists, four Roman jurists and four Greek and Roman medical writers: see Maria Wilhehnina Jurriaanse, *The Founding of Leyden University* (Leiden: **Brill**, 1965), 10, with contemporary illustration.

¹⁷ Lucius Annaeus Seneca, Seneca the younger (3 BCE-65 CE): Roman statesman, philosopher and poet, was very influential for the later history of Stoic philosophy. In medieval manuscripts, brief quotes of a moralising nature from

his tragedies become mixed in with texts of **Publilius Syrus**, a writer of mimes (popular entertainments for the stage) who came to Rome as a slave in the mid-1st century BCE, probably from Antioch. The apophthegms (moralising maxims) from these mimes were used in the education of Roman schoolboys as a kind of fund of proverbial wisdom. The edition referred to by Capitein is that of Jan Gruter (Janus Gruterus, 1560-1627).

¹⁸ Aristotle (384-321 BCE): Greek philosopher and founder of the Peripatetic school; in his treatise, *Politics*, he was the originator of the very influential theory of natural slavery. On this much-quoted passage, see the discussion in T. Wiedemann, *Greek and Roman Slavery: a sourcebook* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 15-21; P. Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 35-38, 107-127. Among the many translations of the work, see especially Stephen Everson, *Aristotle: The Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹⁹ Apart from his tragedies mentioned above, Seneca also wrote Letters, which are in effect essays on subjects of ethical philosophy. [Loeb ed.]

²⁰ Odoardus Bisetus: 17th-century commentator on Aristophanes (c.445-c.385 BCE), the classical Greek world's pre-eminent writer of comedies. See Bisetus' copiously annotated edition, *Aristophanis comoediae undecim* (1607).

²¹ Constantine Harmenopoulos (d.1380): Compiled a 'corpus' or body of secular and canon law, thus organising legal material into a new system which was more easily used. In so doing he created a legal code that was extensively used in Greece and certain Slavic countries until fairly recently. A partial translation is available in Edwin Hanson Freshfield, *Konstantinos Hermenopoulos: a manual of Byzantine law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930).

²² Horace, **Quintus** Horatius Flaccus (65-8 BCE): Roman poet who wrote both lyric and satirical verse, in the second part of his life under the reign of Augustus. For detailed modern commentary on this passage see R. G. M. Nisbet and Margaret Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace, Odes I* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970).

²³ Alcimius Avitus (c. 490-518): bishop of Vienne, France, and opponent of the Arian heresy. The work referred to is his biblical epic *De spiritalis historiae gestis*,

in five books, in which themes from the *Genesis* narrative are put into Virgilian verse. A scholar of Capitein's time would probably have been familiar with the 1677 edition from Lyons: see Daniel J. Nodes (ed.), *Saint Avitus: The fall of man* (Toronto: Center for Medieval Studies, 1985), 1-10,62-64.

²⁴ Athenaeus (flourished c. 200 CE): His only extant work, the compendious *Deipnosophists*, in which various topics of philosophy, literature, law, medicine and the like are discussed over several days at a learned banquet. Greek text and parallel English translation are available in the LCL series, edited by C. B. Gulick (7 vols., 1927-1941).

Ammonius of Alexandria, also known as Ammonius Saccas: **Platonist** philosopher who flourished in the first half of the 3rd century CE. Among his many students was the prolific Plotinus. It is possible that he was brought up a Christian. Though various stories attached themselves to his name since late antiquity, the nature and extent of his own contribution can only be conjectured. In 1739, just three years before Capitein delivered his lecture, an edition of Ammonius had been published under the title *De differentia adfinium vocabulorum* by the distinguished scholar, Lodewyk Kaspar Valckenaer (1715-1785), then professor of Greek at the University of Franeker and later to hold the chair at Leiden (1766-1785). This was most likely the edition consulted by Capitein.

²⁵ At *Leviticus 25:39-55* God instructs the Israelites that they may never become slaves, though they may sell themselves as hired servants if circumstances demand it. *For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves are sold.* (42) However, the passage goes on to say that they are allowed to make slaves out of non-Israelites, since they are considered to be outside the covenant community: *As for the male and female slaves whom you may have, it is from the nations around you that you may acquire male and female slaves. You may also acquire them from among the aliens residing with you, and from their families that are with you, who have been born in your land; and they may be your property.* (verses 44-45 etc.) It is this, second aspect of the *Leviticus* chapter that Capitein has in mind when he cites it, as is made clear a little later, at paragraph 7 of his treatise.

²⁶ Laurentius Pignorius (1571-1631), also known as Lorenzo Pignoria, studied at Padua and Rome. His treatise on ancient slavery and other kinds of labor, *De servis et eorum apud veteres ministeriis commentarius* (1613), may be considered the first piece of humanist scholarship to deal specifically with slavery as an institution of ancient Greeks and Romans. Like Capitein, he too disagreed with Aristotle's theory of natural slavery. See further Joseph Vogt's piece, 'Slavery and the Humanists,' in his collected essays, *Ancient slavery and the ideal of man*, tr. Thomas Wiedemann (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 188-210, at 195-196; and Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, 91-92, 162, 291 (critical of Vogt's approach).

²⁷ John Selden (1584-1654): English jurist, statesman and archaeologist. The work Capitein refers to was an attempt to describe the law of nature within rabbinical traditions: John Selden, *De jure et gentium juxta disciplinam Hebraeorum* (Wittenberg, 1665) vol. 6.7. On his life and scholarship see John Edwin Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 322-324.

²⁸ Albert Schultens (1686-1751): Celebrated scholar of Arabic and Hebrew, professor of oriental languages at Leiden from 1732 to 1740. The text referred to here may be his commentary on the book of Job (1737). See SHE vol. 10.276.

²⁹ This passage contains various laws protecting human beings, in this case securing leniency for a slave that has been injured: *When a slaveowner strikes the eye of a male or female slave, destroying it, the owner shall let the slave go, a free person, to compensate for the eye.* etc. This comes immediately after the famous law of retaliation or 'lex talionis' (*Eye for eye, tooth for tooth..* .); in its own context, this should itself be understood to be a limit on unending revenge.

³⁰ *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (II Corinthians 3:17).*

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery (Galatians 5:1).

Jesus preaches on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem: *But you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free (John 8:32).* When they ask, in reply, what is

meant by 'free', Jesus answers, significantly: *Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin (8:34).*

You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human masters (I Corinthians 7:23). The argument in this section of the letter is that, since the end of the world is near at hand, it is better for everyone to retain his or her current situation rather than to try to improve it in this life (7:14-24).

³¹ At Paul's *Letter to the Hebrews (12:20)*, the Old Covenant given to Moses is contrasted with the New Covenant embodied in Christ: *For [the Israelites] could not endure the order that was given, 'if even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death.'* At Acts 15:10 Peter asks the disciples: *Why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke [i.e. of the law] that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear?*

³² *Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ. And Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed.*

³³ Franciscus Gregorius Raphelengius, Francis de Ravelinghen (1539-1597): Scholar of Hebrew and Persian literature. See BWN vol. 16.72.

³⁴ This is a quotation from Ovid, *Fasti 1.485-486.*

³⁵ In *Exodus 32* the Israelites become restive while awaiting the return of Moses, their leader, who had been on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights receiving the covenant from God. In its stead, Aaron had the image of a golden calf molded out of their rings, as a symbol of God. The calf, a young bull, symbolised fertility in a number of religions of the ancient Near East.

³⁶ *For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*

³⁷ The contrast between the letter (of Mosaic law) and the spirit (of God's love) is made at II *Corinthians 3:6* with the aphorism, *the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.*

³⁸ The passage preceding the one quoted above, and which Capitein is here paraphrasing, runs as follows: *Let each of you remain in the condition in which you were called. Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. Even if you can gain your freedom, make use of your present condition now more than ever. For whoever was called in the Lord as a slave is a freed person belonging to the Lord, just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. (20-23)*

³⁹ Claudius Salmasius, Claude de Saumaise (1588-1653): French classical scholar, learned also in Hebrew, Arabic, **Syriac**, Persian and **Coptic**, professor at Leiden for his last two decades. The defence he wrote for the reign of King Charles I sparked off a series of rejoinders between himself and John Milton. See Peter van **Rooden**, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, **1989**), 200-204. Sandys, 285-286.

⁴⁰ Euripides (c.485-c.406 BCE): One of the great Greek writers of tragedy, along with Aeschylus and Sophocles. In this instance, a messenger-slave is given his freedom spontaneously, because the news he brings to his noble mistress is so welcome.

⁴¹ Aeschines Socraticus (4th century BCE) was a pupil of the famous Athenian philosopher and teacher Socrates. His philosophical dialogs were famed for giving a faithful portrayal of the master. The edition to which Capitein refers is that by **Petrus** Horreus (dialog 1, p. 4, near the end).

⁴² Johannes Casparus Suicerus (1620-1684): Swiss theologian and philologist of Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Work cited is his *Thesaurus ecclesiasticus* (Amsterdam, 1682). See SHE vol. 11.105.

⁴³ Joachim **Kühn** (1647-1697): A noted scholar and later professor of Greek literature. The reference here is to his most important work, a substantial commentary on the Greek *Varia historia* of Aelian (c. 170-235 CE), a collection of moralising anecdotes linked mostly with the animal world. His philosophical allegiance was Stoic and trenchantly anti-Epicurean.

⁴⁴ Johannes **Crocius** (1590-1659): Reformed theologian and scholar of oriental languages at Leyden. See F. C. Clause, Johannes **Crocius** (Marburg, 1857) and SHE vol. 3.307. The passage from Paul's letter reads: *Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all horror, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed.*

⁴⁵ Henry More (1614-1687): British philosopher, theologian and humanist, one of the Cambridge Platonists. Capitein may have known the edition of his *Opera omnia* (London, 1708). See Aaron **Lichtenstein**, *Hen y More: the rational theology of a Cambridge Platonist* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962).

⁴⁶ *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*

⁴⁷ This phrase is drawn from the *Invective against Sallust* (chapter **12**), wrongly attributed to Cicero. See J. C. Rolfe's LCL edition of **Sallust** (1985), 512-513.

⁴⁸ Hugo Grotius (1583-1645): the most significant political theorist of **17th-century** Netherlands, a jurist by profession but also a statesman and theologian. His writings on natural law made him into a founder of modern international law. The letters, reflecting his contact with eminent contemporaries, many of them Protestant theologians, may be consulted in P. C. Molhuijsen and B. L. Meulenbroek (eds.), *Briefwisseling van Hugo Grotius* (6 vols., 1928-1967). Grotius was also a classical scholar of great distinction: Sandys, 315-319.

⁴⁹ Paul Voet (1619-1667): Dutch jurist and church historian, son of Gisbertus Voet of the Voetian-Coccesian debates of the Continuing Reformation (see section IV.1 of the introduction). The work cited is his *Commentarius ad institutiones juris* (1868). See BWN vol. 19.304305.

⁵⁰ Christian Thomasius (1655-1728): German Lutheran philosopher and jurist, who advocated some radical interpretations of natural law. His **chief** work was the *Fundamenta juris naturae* (1705), in which natural rights are affirmed. In his writings he favoured practical piety over adherence to theological systems. See further SHE vol. 11.428429.

⁵¹ John Calvin (1509-1564): French Reformed theologian. His masterwork was his *Institutes*, which came to constitute one of the most important statements of Protestant belief. It was published in its final Latin and French versions in 1559 and 1560. It may be consulted in the translation of John Allen, *Institutes of Christian Religion* (Philadelphia, 1936), vol. 2.3, pages xix and 76-92.

⁵² Gregory of Nyssa (c.330-395 CE): Bishop of Nyssa in Cappadocia (the mountainous central region of modern Turkey), and author of theological, mystical and ascetic works; younger brother of Basil of Caesarea, whose ideas he continues. Gregory was in fact unusual among leaders of the early church for condemning the ownership of slaves, which he associated with sinful pride.

⁵³ Constantine (c. 285-337 CE): Roman emperor who gained power through his military success. Following victory over his rival Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (312), he legislated in favour of Christians with the Edict of Milan

(313), thereby ending their persecution by the Roman state. He thus reunited the entire Roman empire and made it more receptive to Christianity.

⁵⁴ **Sozomen** (d. 450 CE): Jurist of Constantinople, who wrote a **history** of the church covering the period 324-439, ie. continuing the work of Eusebius. Much of his work is based on that of his contemporary church historian Socrates ('Socrates **Scholasticus**').

⁵⁵ Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos: Byzantine historian and man of letters, one of the Byzantine Humanists of the **13th-14th** centuries. His 23-volume *Ecclesiasticae historiae* ('church histories') remains a major source of modern information about the early Christian church and particularly of its Christological controversies (theological debates on the nature of Christ).

⁵⁶ Terence, Publius Terentius Afer (c.190-159 BCE). A North African who came to Rome as a slave. Following Greek models he wrote comedies in Latin, seven of which still survive. These have been much admired since medieval times for their elegant style.

⁵⁷ Augustine of Hippo, Aurelius Augustinus (354-430 CE): Christian bishop in Roman North Africa. One of the major thinkers and writers of the Christian church: among a vast theological output, his *Confessions* and *City of God* had particular impact. Several of his doctrines, such as original sin, gained even greater resonance in Reformation theology.

⁵⁸ Virgil, Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BCE): Roman poet, author of the *Aeneid*, which came to be read as the Roman national epic, under the rule of emperor Augustus. This poem, together with his pastoral poetry, has been extensively read, studied and imitated since antiquity, and has been perhaps the most frequently cited Latin work.

⁵⁹ Peter Gudelinus (1550-1619): Dutch jurist and scholar who wrote on theology and Roman law. The work cited is his *Commentarium de jure novissimo* (1620). See BWN vol. 7.534-536.

⁶⁰ Johannes Molanus (1553-1585): Dutch theologian and ecclesiastical historian. Work cited is *De canonicis libri tres* (1585). See BWN vol. 12.926927.

⁶¹ Paul Christaneus (1553-1631): Dutch jurist and legal historian. The work referred to is his *Practicarum quaestionum rerumque in supremis Belgarum curiis*

actarum et obseruatarum decisiones (1632). See *Biographie nationale de Belgique* (Brussels: H. Thiry, **1873**), 4.111.

⁶² Ulrich Huber (1636-1707): Dutch jurist who wrote on Grotius, Thomasius and the Roman *Juris* corpus. The work referred to is his *Institutiones et tituli singulares pandectarum* (1698). See further BWN 19.1374-1381.

⁶³ Of the regions mentioned, those closest to Holland were to the east, in two parts of the Gelderland province of the Netherlands, namely the inland Zutphen Quarter and the coastal Arnhem Quarter (Veluwe).

⁶⁴ Jean Bodin (1529-1596): French jurist and philosopher, one of the very few humanists to denounce slavery explicitly. His *Six Bookes of the Commonweale* (1576) argue for an ideal of absolute sovereignty that would be harmed by the coexistence of slave and free subjects, and attack Aristotle's notion of natural slavery. See D. B. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (1966), 111-114, with references. He is cited by Capitein as attacking the harshness of Portuguese slavery, not for his anti-slavery stance in general.

⁶⁵ Augier Ghislain de Busbecq (1522-1592): Flemish diplomat and polymath. His *Turkish letters*, sent from the court of sultan Stileyman I the Magnificent at Constantinople to Ferdinand I, are an important source for contemporary Ottoman history.

⁶⁶ Potgiesserus, or Joachim Potgiesser, wrote an account of Germanic slaves and freedman from the time of Caesar to the end of the Middle Ages, originally published in 1703. See futher Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, 91,291.

⁶⁷ In Paul's letter he encourages Philemon, the owner, to take back his runaway slave, Onesimus, *no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother — especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.*