

## Slaves

Slavery is a regrettable part of our world history. The injustices are numerous, from one human controlling another, to the concept of a human being as a possession, to the equation of a life to a sum of money. The slaves and their descendants must be acknowledged for their part not only in the economic success of the settlement at the Cape, their contribution to the physical structures left behind in the cultural landscape, but also for their ability to rise above their circumstances.

“Slaves were always very expensive. The two slaves of Coenraad Cloeten in 1703 were worth Rxd 283 or f849, which was 21% of the value of the land, buildings, stock and household items. The stock was valued at about Rxd 310 (f930) and the farm itself at Rxd 516 (f1548). When one considers the very high value of Hendrik van Batavia (f336) and Adriaan van de Kust (f513), they probably were also accomplished tradesmen. Hendrik hailed from Java, whilst Adriaan came from the eastern coast of India (the *Coromandel Kust*). Adriaan was exceptionally valuable for his time and I connect him with the *gereetschap* (f19) and *timmerhout* (f150)” (listed in the inventories). “Was he an accomplished carpenter? With his skills in great demand, e.g. as builder and making vats, it is not unknown for such tradesmen to accumulate wages in their spare time. With such income, (some) slaves bought their freedom, classified afterwards as Free-Blacks. They obtained the same rights and privileges as freeburghers. Is it possible that Adriaan van de Kust is the same man as Jan van de Kust, who became owner of Diamant from 1746 to 1749? The East-Indian Jan van de Kust was fairly prosperous and sold the farm as a going concern (livestock, equipment, wagon). It included a Cellar/Barn represented by *vaatwerk* (aamen and leaguers) and 12 *muid tarwe* (cereal), all valued at f2600, excluding the farm value of f1000.”

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\* Historical Survey and Structural & Archaeological Investigations of the Historic Buildings of Diamant, 2010