

Love – A History of Hate in Suriname

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Hide, Flee or Suicide

Execution – Extinction – Existence – Expression

An Insight into a Country's Gay History

Researched and written by
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Epigraph

“They are tearing down the sun; they are even ripping the rainbow to pieces into a storm of souls. They are demanding respect, tolerance and justice from the former colonial oppressors, from their government and from the establishment, while at the same time they themselves are not willing or capable of showing the same mercy and decency. Anyone who wants to hate me, hate me, but I will not be silenced over this injustice. Who dares to disagree, can kiss my ass.”

Edgar Cairo - 1979¹ quoted on the hypocrisy shown by everyday people and their discrimination in general of minorities but in particular of homosexuals. Cairo, in his column, addressing the forbidden subject of homosexuality, pinpointing the injustice and intolerance and how common gay bashing was in the streets of Paramaribo in the late '70s.

Me, I don't dare to disagree with him, at the same time being well aware that others will surely disagree with me. Shall I remain silent? I think not.

Ivan Patrick Liesdek
Paramaribo, 26 December 2022

¹ Cairo, Edgar: *De Volkskrant*, 15 September 1979; 'Die zon achter de zon'.

The Journey

Same-sex attraction in antiquity was mostly seen as enlightened and 'LGBT' people as gifted or spiritual. That is, until several thousand years ago, when new trials appeared and continued.

Deceived, betrayed, denounced and accused
over misconceived perceptions.
Tried not by justice, not by peers, but by a tribunal
of self-proclaimed righteousness.
Mocked, tortured, coerced into confessions and crucified.
Slaughtered, executed and denied all rites.
Sacrificed to please the gods, to obtain favour, riches and power.
Accepting one's faith and oneself after paying the toll for it.
Euphoric enlightenment and its hopeful freedoms.
Absolving the executioners and humanity itself for not knowing the facts.
Redefining kindness and expecting love in return, alas.
The soul, body and spirit of a son or daughter,
a father or mother eradicated.

The same trials and tribulations have been a constant feature of our Suriname LGBT history from the 17th century right through to the present day. Trials in which the judge, the jury and the executioner are all rolled into one, taking place in court, at home, in school, by governments or in the church, still seen anywhere and everywhere around the globe.

LGBT persons as a minority, no matter where geographically located, irrespective of their cultural, ethnic or any other background, are for the present and for the future bound together by a unique shared personal experience and an especially unique history.

Introduction

In 2016, the exhibition 'Faces' on USA Black Gay History and Suriname Gay History was organized and hosted by Parea Suriname, with the support of the American Embassy in Suriname. On this occasion, researchers made a first attempt to write down an initial version of this document, 'A history of LGBTs in Suriname', that was to serve as the outline for the exhibit. This document was not only the starting point for the exhibition, but also for further research. After six years of digging, this research has resulted in the current version, which has the same structure of four themes as the initial one. All four themes have been extended and updated in depth to make the information more comprehensible. Many facts have been brought to the surface; many dots have been connected, whilst several subjects remain unknown for now. This history consists mainly of events and actions that occurred in Suriname. Events that have unfolded outside Suriname are mentioned only if and when there is a direct connection with the gay history of Suriname itself. The gay history of Surinamese people in diaspora (particularly in the Netherlands) is a completely different story with its own characteristics, which someday must also be written down.



Fig. 1. LGBT Exhibition 'Faces', 2016; headline of the newspaper article from June 2016; "LGBT exhibition Faces is holding up a mirror to society." Faces was the first LGBT history exhibition in Suriname, showcasing the preliminary research results, 2015–2016. The exhibition was mounted in collaboration with the US Embassy in Paramaribo and included a section on Black Gay History in the USA.

The attempt to comprehensively write down the complete LGBT History of Suriname is not only based on newly conducted research into literature and oral history, but we have also tapped into research already carried out. We must state that in most of the earlier research and reports, many of the conclusions, explanations and perceptions regarding sodomy (homosexuality/LGBT), although technically and historically correct, are based on intuition and reconstruction of historical facts seen mainly from the heteronormative perspective. Intimate, internal nuances and subtleties regarding the LGBT phenomenon and same-sex relationships are left out of the equation and are therefore not part of the discussion. Throughout this work, this aspect is, however, a useful tool for gaining insights, explaining and understanding a whole lot more about this part of history. All of a sudden, many stories and facts seem to be making much more sense, while others take a more drastic turn in conclusive understandings.

Doing research on a topic that has been taboo for centuries makes it extremely difficult to find reliable information. Most recorded information available is and remains written down by the victor, the oppressor. This fact and the era in which the information was recorded did not favour homosexuality. Even worse: the decision was often made to use an approach of declaring homosexuality the enemy and a threat. Many theories to justify this persecution were used, but religion always stuck out head and shoulders. What better way to use scriptures, that no one out of fear of heresy and blasphemy dares to dispute, even when this theory is based on a nonsensical, non-humanistic and biased approach. Ultimately, at some point through history, everything deviating from the biblical norm was considered blasphemy, even science and medicine for that matter. This hostile and devious pogrom of hate against love, classified as disgusting physical lust of the flesh, labelled homosexuality as the root of all evil. This Eurocentric Christian doctrine found its roots around the 3rd century and continued on through the Dark Ages and Medieval times, when state and church were still closely intertwined. This evil message was repeated over and over again for centuries and resulted in calculated and institutionalized hate and intolerance against targeted minorities. This cultivated hate against these minorities, or any so-called degenerates, was used as a powerful weapon and continued in 'divide and conquer' tactics during colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, slavery and most certainly Nazism. Only in the past century have things slowly started to turn around: overcoming and overturning centuries of lies and deception, used to brainwash mankind,

that still go on today and the logic of which isn't always easy to comprehend. Nevertheless, followers choose just to accept and swallow the doctrinal theory of their leaders: leaders who often claim to have God exclusively on their side. Reliable and relevant information on LGBT people is either erased or not recorded as such, moreover, tucked away in documents of perhaps a totally different nature. Despite the time lapses and gaps clearly present in this history as a result of missing information, a clear storyline has developed. Like any other story in history, whenever there was oppression, an emancipation movement always followed. The battles fought but also the ones that lay ahead, in being able to perhaps go back to a more universal and humanistic approach on homosexuality as it supposedly was prior to current civilization, need to be addressed accordingly. Therefore, our history is defined and written based on a Western approach that is structured along the guidelines of religious influences, political power, greed and wealth. Greed for wealth to be obtained by any means necessary, including oppression of minorities. Without any doubt in my mind and clearly evident in this history is that the non-Western approach to homosexuality is inevitably intertwined with many overlaps, which should also serve as an instrument or argument in the struggle for liberation. Actions and occurrences throughout history all scream injustice. This injustice and the hunger for freedom are therefore the focal point. Like many others, this gay history of Suriname involves battles won and lost, seemingly moving around in vicious circles of persecution to rising up for civil liberties and freedom, everything else in between and then seemingly back again to the starting point.

This 'going around in circles' also finds its way back in the way this history is written. The four main themes (Early attitudes, Social life, Awareness and activism, Recent challenges), much like their chapters and subsections, indeed all seem like circles within a bigger circle, yet are still always part of a bigger picture. The story always goes back to a starting point before closing and completing the loop. Within all these individual chronicles, each based on a specific subject or a matter discussed, the reader will consistently find several cases of hiatus, literally representing time lapses during which historical information on Suriname is lacking. In these instances, international events sometimes offer answers as to why. All these stories seem to be separate subjects that indeed all warrant their own 'circle' and yet are part of our Suriname LGBT history, the bigger picture. Hence, this explains our approach, the circles within the circles. Nevertheless, at the core of all these you will always find injustice, while in most cases an attempt is made to place this history of persecution in the light of present-day events.

Chapter 1
Early Attitudes: 1692–1980s

1.1 Homosexuality is a crime

Prior to the persecution of homosexuals based on Eurocentric religious doctrine, and even centuries if not millennia before our continent was annexed and colonized subsequently by the Spanish, Portuguese, English, Dutch and French (not particularly in this order), old civilizations not only permitted homosexuality, but also saw homosexuals as sacred and holy, calling them amongst other things two-spirited people. This part of oral history, even though it has only been documented in the recent past, still remains somewhat unknown to many. The oppressors' successful strategy of thoroughly wiping out civilizations and cultures together with their traditions and beliefs, including the stance on homosexuality, is finally crumbling, and the unravelling of this information and what it entails concurs with the prevailing urge of mankind, in particular homosexuals and their need to be free in spirit and mind but also in their sexuality and identity. This oppression of these old civilizations, the same oppression seen in post-colonial times, is identical to the oppression of any other minority, including that of LGBT persons. The oppression and executions peaked in the late 17th early 18th centuries, only to be gradually halted a century later, after WWII. Let us take a look starting from this point, the turn of the 17th century. This manifested itself also in the case of Suriname, where we see the same things happening. We mainly find that the documented part of history predominantly involves the white part of society, the colonial masters. Even though documented information on the enslaved is lacking, this does remain Surinamese (LGBT) history, too. Before we go into the LGBT part of the history of Suriname, let us find out what in general lay at its core and why the written part starts somewhere around 1730.

Centuries of LGBT history are written and determined by the victors. Proof of the existence of love between people of the same sex was either tenaciously concealed, except perhaps by the Amerindians, Greeks and Romans, or it was quickly destroyed. Love between humans of the same sex seems never to have existed in society. However, ancient Asian, Eurasian and African documentation on homosexuality has revealed it to be an integral part of civilization. Sadly enough, concealment during past centuries and the ongoing deception cause, quite unnecessarily, polarization of society and unspeakable suffering for people who belong to the LGBT community. Records on homosexuality exist mainly in the ledgers and journals of the criminal courts of justice. Centuries of demonizing and criminalization,

centuries of persecution and execution by rule of law, continuing to the late 1950s and 1960s. This dehumanizing injustice is still continuing in various parts of the world. Suriname's case is not that much different. Times have changed, though, so the correct version of history needs to be dug up and written down.

Between 1730 and 1733 stretching to 1737, in the Dutch Republic (precursor of the Netherlands) approximately three hundred men were indicted for sodomy, of whom 75 were sentenced to death, while most others were sentenced to imprisonment. Many homosexuals fled and sought a safe haven in England and Germany. These persecutions in the Netherlands are relevant to the history of LGBT in Suriname, because the same methods² were adopted by authorities in other Dutch territories, Kaap de Goede Hoop [the Cape of Good Hope], under the rule of the Dutch East India Company, and Suriname, ruled by the 'Geoctroyeerde Sociëteit van Suriname' (SvS), a company [Exclusive {lit. Patented} Society of Suriname] that had the city of Amsterdam, the Dutch West India Company and a noble family as stakeholders. Everything in the colony of Suriname was dictated by the owners in Amsterdam, and accordingly the witch hunt on homosexuals, too. Similar processes occurred in France and Italy. In the Dutch Republic, three more waves of intense persecutions happened: in 1764, 1776 and 1795. It started in Utrecht, in 1730, when a sexton was imprisoned and questioned by the police on a totally different matter. During the interrogation he had subconsciously mentioned that men would cruise around Utrecht's cathedral tower and have sexual relations with each other. Two days later the first arrests were made. One by one, the suspects all confessed, naming new culprits. A whole subculture of homosexuality came crumbling down. All over the Republic, 144 men were arrested. Amongst them were men of all ages and social backgrounds: soldiers, porters, servants, but also high-ranking military officers, notaries and merchants.³ The interrogations revealed a homosexual underground with permanent public meeting places, private houses and brothels with male prostitutes. Remarkably, this subculture in the Netherlands was mentioned during a sodomy trial taking place in Suriname. Suspect Matthijs de Goijer (sometimes spelled de Goyer), when interrogated during the sodomy case against him in Paramaribo (1731), mentioned going to these 'safe places' in 1722 while visiting Amsterdam, accompanying the brother of fellow suspect Matthijs Balkman. Suriname's

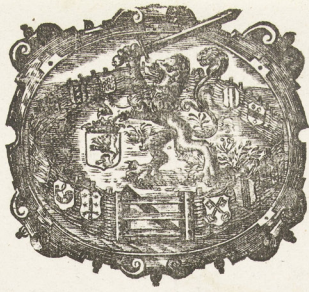
² Boon (1997): please see the Bibliography for all such book references.

³ Meer, van der (1995); see Bibliography, pp. 14–45.

Governor Carel de Cheusses, presiding over this case along with the 'Raad-fiscaal' [public prosecutor], sent this information to the authorities in Amsterdam for further investigation and persecution.

It is not very clear why all of a sudden in 1730 a moral panic developed in the Republic that led to the hunt on homosexuals. Prior to 1730, sodomy was known in Latin as the *crimen nefandum* [the crime one cannot discuss] or *peccatum mutum* [the mute sin], a sin so terrible that even the devil did not have a name for it. Christians were not allowed to speak of this under any circumstance. This was applicable to the whole of Europe, but also to its colonized territories, thus also to Suriname. Because of this 'burying one's head in the sand' mentality in regard to what we now know as homosexuality, it was considered to be rare and hardly ever occurring. In legal documents, however, there are to be found several cases of sodomy and severe punishments. In the 12th century, it was referred to as a *crimina mixti-fori*, a crime that could be prosecuted by both secular and religious courts, placing it in the same category as witchcraft. For the first half of the 1600s, several public executions involving 'death by fire' are chronicled. By second half of that century, the preferred punishment for sodomy had evolved to death by strangulation and denial of burial rites. This allowed the executions to be kept a secret, apparently for the aforementioned reasons. By this time, authorities wanted to erase this 'gruesome sin' and eradicate homosexuality.⁴ For good reason, this subculture had to go underground. Never to be seen or heard of, it was imperative for sodomites to wisely keep themselves hidden from public view. History is repeating itself, and in a current-day context these circumstances are sadly recurring in so-called backward nations like, for example, Russia, Chechnya and most recently in Hungary (2021). Even though steps are being made to decriminalize homosexuality in several English-speaking Island states in the Caribbean, we also see in other parts of the region movements trying to persuade legislators to recriminalize the LGBT phenomenon, as by the 'example' set by Russia. So, how very geographically distant it in fact is, it comes much closer to home than one might think, especially when these circumstances are described to me personally by a close friend in Russia as dire with all hope lost and no expectations of any decent life or future.

⁴ Meer, van der (1993) (see Bibliography), pp. 36–38.



PLACCAAT.



E Staaten van

Holland en Westvriesland, als de geenen die deese sullen sijn of hooren leeren / Sullen: in te wren; Alsoe Wy tot Ons heergonstig leetwelen gewaar werden / dat boven / en behalven tredingen / heilige Wy sijne regere lieve Vaderland niet en niet werd ontfouken / ook sedert enigen tyd in Onsen Lande van Holland en Westvriesland gep nat On

worden 'gestraft met de dood

En vierde/ dat de Liggaamen van de Geëxecuteerden inme-
diaatelijk na de executie publiquelijk sullen worden tot asfche
verbzand / in Zee getwoyen / of op galge Velden opgehanger / of ten toon gesteld / als de begzaaffenis onwaardig
zynde:
bewonere en yemulle groen / yewonere en yemulle mits deelen:
Eerfelijk / dat de booschrebe misdaad van Sodomie voortaan altyd publiquelijk sal worden gestraft / geijch alle andere Crimina, tot asfchijk en waarschouwing van een ieder:
En anderen/ dat deselwe misdaad volgens de Goddelijke en beschrebe Regten sal worden gestraft niet de dood / dog dat de soort van doofstref sal worden gelaaten aan den Regerer / om deselwe by het doofboomig te bereyeren van gelegentheid der ontsandigheden / dienende tot meerdere / of mindere / verswaering van een foo asfchulijgh crimen:
En verden / dat de gene / welke sullen worden overtuigt van haer werck te hebben gemaekt van anderen te debaucheeren / of te verleiden / tot de booschrebe gultwedaad / of van haer Duisen om buil gewin te leenen tot het plegen der selve / schoen met overtuigt van in eige Persoon sig oare merde te hebben besofret / merde met de dood sullen worden gestraft:
En vierde/ dat de Liggaamen van de Geëxecuteerden inme-diaatelijk na de executie publiquelijk sullen worden tot asfche

verbzand / in Zee getwoyen / of op galge Velden opgehanger / of ten toon gesteld / als de begzaaffenis onwaardig zynde:

En vyfden/ dat de Donnissen/ ter saake van de booschrebe misdaad te wpen by contumacie tegen de Doofblugtigen / sullen worden gebrukt dooz odde van den Regerer deselwe getwelen hebende / en vervolgens gepubliceert / en geafficeert ter plaatse alwaar sulds gebuikelijk is:

misdaad van Sodomie

deselwe / om naauwkeurig ondersoek te doen op de redenen van absenteit van de Persoonen / respectivelijk subijet aan haer Jurisdictione / in alle Schone van haer den maand Wyd laaffies Schuldigen aan de zbaar te worden / tot sus toe sig clandestinelijk / sonder / en tegen / alle apparenre redenen / hebben geabsenteert / en verlaaten haare Kunsten / Professien / Diensten / Kostwoningen / Huishoudingen / en Wooningen / en welke daer dooz sig moreelilens hebben ten nuttelijk verdaag gemaekt / son by de Justitie / als by het Gemeen / van seyndig te wercken aan het booschrebe crimen: en / intien by het booschrebe naauwkeurig ondersoek grem redenen vooschomen / welke bequaam zyn om uit te wiffelen de swaare suspicie / waar onder sy sig dooz haer clandestin verrek gebzagt hebben / en welke suspicie niet weinig verkerkt is dooz haer wylbippen / na dat haer clandestin verrek herelidandis / en het waotern van

En ten einde dat den inhoude van dit Ons Placaat alomme miag worden geobereert / en niemand daer van ignorantie home te pretenderen / laten en ozbonneren Wy / dat het selve alomme sal werden gepubliceert / en geafficeert / daer men gewoon is publiceert / en officie te doen; outbieden doozis en gelacken den Procureur Generaal van Onsen Vode / mitsgaders alle andere Officieren / en Justicieren / dat Splinden jegens de Geëxecuteerden van dien / sonder aansen van Persoonen / na den inhoude van dit Ons booschrebe Placaat procederen / sonder eenige gunste / saveur / of dissimulatione / want Wy het selve tot dienste van den Lande alod bevonnen hebben te behooren.
Gedaan in den Sage onder het klein Zegel van den Lande den 21 Julii 1730.

Onder stondb /
Ter ordonnantie van de Staaten.
En was geteekent /
Willem Buys.

21 Julii 1730.

IN 'S GRAVE
By PAULUS en ISAAC SCHELTUS, ordinaris Druckers van de Edede
Groot Mog. Heeren Staaten van Hollandt en Westvrieslandt. Anno 1730.
Met Privilegie.

Fig. 2. Act of 1730 describing in detail the capital punishment for the crime of sodomy by public execution; the death penalty was administered by slow strangulation in combination with optional torture or flogging, accompanied by slow burning or roasting over a smouldering fire; subsequent burial rites were denied and the corpses had to be weighted and tossed into the open sea.

On 21 July 1730,⁵ sodomy was declared a capital crime in the Dutch Republic. The relevant act was to remain in force until 1811, when sodomy was decriminalized after the French invasion. In Suriname, however, decriminalization would take effect only in 1869,⁶ six years after the abolition of slavery (1863). In the daily newspaper *De Kolonist* of 2 May 1869, we read the announcement of the new laws taking effect as of 1 May 1869, replacing the Sodomy Act of 1730, along with many other contradicting and chaotic acts, legal decisions and decrees. The article closes with the sentence: “Hoping these new laws will not only bring prosperity and invite newcomers to our colony, but will provide tranquillity, peace, friendship and trust; all being key elements on which Suriname’s future and prosperity depend.” *De Kolonist* of 25 June 1871 makes note of the poor execution by authorities and institutes of these new laws, and thus also the functioning thereof. Officials frustratingly kept holding on to traditions, confusing the new Penal Code. If so, did this also work the same way with the abolished act on sodomy? An example of people holding on to old bad habits is expressed in the newspaper *De Surinamer* from 1905 and 1911, where sodomy is still used as the term to refer to homosexuality and is consistently mentioned together with prostitution, adultery and money-lending as a criminal activity. Underlining these sentiments of the day, the newspaper calls for some form of morality laws, based on the scriptures, if necessary, to put an end to these immoral tendencies. Meanwhile, in 1911, anti-LGBT legislation, by means of these called-for morality laws, would again be enacted in the Netherlands (pc248bis) and soon afterwards also to be made law in Suriname (1916; the Act pc253bis – later pc302).

On 1 April 1937, the government regulation from 1865 was replaced by the Polity of Suriname (Dutch: Staatsregeling van Suriname), and this led to a first change after the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands was proclaimed on 15 December 1954 (Suriname ceased to be an overseas possession of the Netherlands, and rather became a constituent country within the Kingdom). Again, a new polity that reflected the new constitutional arrangements was adopted by the State of Suriname (Staten van Suriname) in 1955, and this again entailed a second small change in which the Act pc253bis became 302. Both of these aforementioned changes, however, affected only the heterosexual society positively; the discriminatory amendment for homosexuals remained firmly in place. In 1975, Suriname

⁵ Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_the_Netherlands, consulted 5 June 2016.

⁶ UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans and Intersex Association.

DE KOLONIST

DAGBLAD TOEGEWYD AAN DE BELANGEN VAN SURINAME.

Het abonnements is per jaar 20
 Voor 6 maanden / 11. — voor 3 maanden 5
 Voor elke afzonderlijk nummer 2.5

De prijs der Advertentien is :
 Voor elken gewonen regel 25 Gts.
 Zegelagt voor elke plaatsing 25

Ao. 1869.
ZONDAG 2 MEI.
No. 35

1 Mei 1869.

Aan den lang gekoesterden wensch van Suriname's bevolking is voldaan. — De nieuwe wetgeving is in onze kolonie ingevoerd. — De kroon is gezet op het werk door den onvergetelijken Metman begounen — door den onvermoeden arbeid van mannen, rijk met regtskenis bedeeld — gelukkig voltooid. — Dank zij Nederland toegebracht — daar het in eene zoo dringende behoefte van Suriname heeft voorzien. — Dank zij den mannen toegebracht — die ter harer voltooiing hebben medegewerkt. — Moge de nieuwe wetgeving voor Suriname zijn de lichtende zon, wier koesterende stralen de zoo zeer geknakte welvaart van Suriname zullen herstellen. — Moge zij zekerheid geven — daar waar een zoo noodlottig weifelen en wankelen — sulke betreuenswaardige vreselien voor ons heeft opgeleverd. — Moge zij de rigtsoort zijn op den weg van vooruitgang — in het goede — van verbetering van het vele gebrekkige — dat onzen maatschappelykjen toestand ontserde. — Moge zij de lichtende baak zijn, om den vreemdelyng aan te lokken, op Suriname's kust. — Moge zij de draad zijn, die zijne wesen — die sten oplet. — Moge zij aller herb. — Moge zij een doode nederdruk ging verlies een hoop toekomst. — Wij beving met riname be. — De cha der indru publicatie weet wat het niet is. — Zij beh. — telheid — ofschoon de noodlottige sporen door haar nagelaten — nog in vele jaren niet zullen zijn uitgewischt. — De nieuwe wetgeving is daar — de

1 Mei 1869.

Aan den lang gekoesterden wensch van Suriname's bevolking is voldaan. — De nieuwe wetgeving is in onze kolonie ingevoerd. — De kroon is gezet op het werk door den onvergetelijken Metman begounen — door den onvermoeden arbeid van mannen, rijk met regtskenis bedeeld — gelukkig voltooid. — Dank zij Nederland toegebracht — daar het in eene zoo dringende behoefte van Suriname heeft voorzien. — Dank zij den mannen toegebracht — die ter harer voltooiing hebben medegewerkt. — Moge de nieuwe wetgeving voor Suriname zijn de lichtende zon, wier koesterende stralen de zoo zeer geknakte welvaart van Suriname zullen herstellen. —

Uleum petre, Steenolie, Sijmon: petroleum, vloeibare aardolie, bergolie, naphtha, Senecaolie.

V.

EWENSCHAPPEN DER VERSCHILLENDE BEDEELDE OLIEN, ONDERKENNING, OORZAKEN VAN ONTRANDING EN ONTPLOFFING.

Het is laier de plaats niet verder te wijden, noch ook te wijzen op vijftigal in de laatste jaren ontdekking van verschillende agentia, waartoe de prachtige verwatofen, en de zo onderlinge verbindingen ontstaan zijn. De wetenschap en de praktijk heb-

gewoon worden. waterstofhollen in iling be-
 swigt is, g toe—ze ze ook se in et een n.
 en ont off n humne sene z e—bevindt sene be vlambare sike dit pur donz chillende de olien
 bare, waterstofperatur en sio temen ver ligt offingen. dampnaking oorwerp. m b a m, die stens n bran en aan gelegen
 heid geven tot het vormen van gevaarlijke gassen. Dit zijn de ware olien tot verlichting geschikt.
 Voorts de zware koolwaterstofen, die paraffine bevattend, voor machinesmer worden aangewand.
 e. Gemengde olien. Deze zijn door haar verschildand gehalte aan de eerstgenoemden, ook licht ontvlambaar, daar ze bij de gewone temperatuur ontvlambare dampen afgeven.
 Hiertoe zijn te brengen: de ruwe petroleum, de slecht geraffineerde lampolien en vooral de verwatofen b e olien, die door vermenging met ligte (ook terpentijn) producten zijn bereid, en tot een sp. gew. gebracht van 0.800.

Fig. 3. Newspaper DE KOLONIST, 2 May 1869. Official announcement of the new Penal Code for the colony of Suriname per 1 May 1869, replacing the Act of 1730. This Penal Code was based on the Napoleonic Code (Code civil) of 1810.

gained her independence with her own constitution. This constitution was suspended in 1980 after a military coup and was replaced in 1982 by Military Decree 'Statute A11'. A serious attempt of activists to have pc302 suspended failed, and again this piece of legislation remained, emboldening any and every homophobe to interpret its intent and take action against LGBT persons. In the wake of the return to democracy, in 1987 a new constitution was adopted by referendum. In 1992, the 1987 constitution was reviewed and revised, voted for and approved in Parliament with the statutory minimum of a two-thirds majority. In 1994, pc302 was again modified with a slightly positive change in favour of homosexuals, but remained in force. In 2011, a commission was installed to update and modernize the constitution of 1992. Article 8-2 of the constitution, "No one shall be discriminated against on grounds of birth, sex, race, language, religion, education, political opinion, economic position or any other status," remained. Finally, in 2015 – about a century after its enactment – pc302 was scrapped from the Penal Code.

1.1.1 De Goijer's ring of 'sodomites', 1731

'Claartie', a tavern of some sort around that time in Paramaribo, is where Matthijs de Goijer and Jan Brouwer presumably first made their acquaintance and shared their first beers. What would start out as a presumed passionate night of shared physical and possibly romantic attraction to one another, would after several endeavours end up as a terrible nightmare for both gay individuals, simply because of the blatant ignorance and religious idolatry signifying that era.

In 1731, Garrison Quartermaster Matthijs de Goijer, the 41-year-old son of former governor Johan de Goijer, and soldier Jan Brouwer were condemned to death for having engaged in the 'gruesome sin of sodomy'. De Goijer was sentenced to be slowly strangled while roasting over a smouldering fire.⁷ Because Brouwer was supposedly coerced into committing the act of sodomy, he was spared being roasted, and was punished 'only' by being tied to a pole and strangled to death (garrotted) instead. The location was "there where usually criminal justice was administered to whites," namely the courtyard of Fort Zeelandia, the fortress then as now located near the centre of Paramaribo. In an attempt to avoid God's wrath and punishment over the colony, the colonial authorities ordered the (half-burned) corpses to be tied down with weights of a hundred pounds each and cast into the

⁷ Kempen, van (2002): (see Bibliography), Part 3, p. 36.

sea.⁸ Funeral rites were denied, thus denying the possibility of the religiously promised eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven after death. A third man, Christiaan Jurkas, was to be flogged and banished forever from the colony. He had confessed committing the ‘sinful act of sodomy’ as a male prostitute against payment of money.

The archived documents do not reveal what triggered this case initially and who betrayed De Goijer to the authorities. All three condemned men were officially notified at a verdict reading on 1 March 1731, to be responsible for paying the costs of their own trial, the execution and also the executioner’s bill.⁹

The execution took place on 2 March.

⁸ Schellekes & Hoogbergen (2001): see Bibliography.

⁹ https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/258/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_258_0378.

Het Hof van Police en Criminele Justitie is
aerordinaer versagert geweest, en sijn in die
Vottinge de Partoorien van Matthijs de Goyer
en Jan Brouwer ter dood gecondemneert, almede
Laurens Stadler om gequesselt te worden met de
Lentemars den 21 die ge-executeert sijn 93
worden

Fig. 4. Log of the Court of Criminal Justice and Police (Het Hof van Police en Crimineele Justitie): execution of Matthijs de Goyer, Jan Brouwer, by burning and strangulation, and the flogging of Laurens Stadler (= Christian Jurkas), 2 March 1731. Stadler had to also witness the public execution of aforementioned and after having received his punishment was banned from the colony. Eight others suspected of homosexuality where acquitted, because sodomy could not be proved. The executions took place in the Fort Zeelandia courtyard, Paramaribo, always one day after the verdict. All the executed had to pay the costs of the courts as well as the executioner's fee.

Matthijs de Goijer: A confession with dire consequences

De Goijer confessed on 4 February 1731 to the charges of sodomy and, according to the registers, gave several names of ‘culprits’ in Suriname.¹⁰ On being asked, he named several details such as the number of times, where, when this took place and with whom. This detailed and explicit line of questioning was all according to a strict sequential protocol that we see recurring in all the interrogations of all the suspects.

De Goijer stated he was not new to this practice because in Amsterdam he had visited these special houses where men like him gathered. He claimed he was introduced to this ‘life’ by the brother of Matthijs Balkman, the latter also being a suspect in this case. De Goijer did not remember the address of the establishment he and Balkman visited in Amsterdam.

It is because of its underground nature and the urgent need of the authorities to also dismantle such places or reveal possible facilitators of sodomy, that all suspects were consistently questioned about this. We do therefore indeed mention all these localities in the next few paragraphs. We did not find any information regarding if and when the authorities took any action with the information on these localities. We on our part also tried to establish a thread that could possibly lead to any conclusions on the existence of safe places or establishments in Paramaribo in those 1700s.

He further said that he knew his arrest was by the direct order of Governor de Cheusses and that he also knew what the ‘sin of sodomy’ was, as pointed out to him by the Public Prosecutor, the ‘Raad-fiscaal’, who supposedly quoted this ‘fact’ from the Bible.

He denied having conspired with others or having heard of such, to commit the ‘sin of sodomy’. He basically denied knowing of the existence of any other circle of sodomites except ‘his’. When asked, De Goijer said all acts of sodomy were committed while he was sober, fully aware, and of his own choice, and that his advances were never declined by the others.

In the second round of questioning, De Goijer came back on his earlier statements and ultimately declared only to having committed the actual ‘sin of sodomy’ twice, and with only Jan Brouwer, but no one else in Suriname.

¹⁰ [https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/258/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_258_0371 t/m 0375](https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/258/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_258_0371_t/m_0375).

He admitted that the first time he had rewarded Jan Brouwer with a silver signet, which he 'bought back' for 12 shillings. For the second time he paid Brouwer 10 shillings.

De Goijer, however, most likely out of fear of torture, named or implicated all the other persons, probably not fully realizing the consequences for his fellow 'homosexuals'. They were subsequently arrested, interrogated and treated as suspected sodomites. In this case, a total nine of the implicated men were arrested, while four others were under suspicion but not taken into custody, and supposedly all the house owners' or proprietors' scruples were called into question.

We have to keep in mind that in the centuries prior to 1730, sodomy, even though considered an illegal act against mankind and nature, was not relentlessly persecuted. The punishment itself was still the same, and gruesome, but, as noted earlier, was never made into a public spectacle. On the contrary, executions were deliberately kept secret and behind closed doors. Sodomy was officially the sin 'never to be spoken of and thus not to be seen'. Likewise, sodomites wisely kept themselves hidden away from public view as much as possible. In present-day settings, homosexuals still find themselves having to do exactly the same. They still have to remain in the shadows and in obscurity in certain places and under certain circumstances. This also is the case for many LGBT persons in Suriname. It is possible that De Goijer might have lived in the naïve assumption that his activities, given these secretive circumstances and because of his status and position, might be passed off with 'a slap on the wrist'. Especially also given the fact that the morals around that time in the colony and of its inhabitants were not particularly exemplary. Living by the so-called norms and moral guidelines according to religion and the Bible was nowhere to be found. For example, alcohol abuse, prostitution, swearing, cursing and foul language, whoring and the sexual abuse of slaves, reported as such by religious leaders to their authorities, were the norm of the day. Yet slavery, on the other hand, was completely and absolutely acceptable according to the morals of their Bible and religion.

The proceedings of the 'Hof van Policie en Crimineele Justitie' (Court of Police and Criminal Justice) were held in Fort Zeelandia, at which location all the arrestees were also kept prisoner for at least the duration. The 'Examinaatie en Informatie', the questioning, was done by 'Raad-fiscaal'

(Public Prosecutor) Andriaan Wiltens in the presence of Governor de Cheusses, Militia Commander J.F. de Vries, Secretary Pieter Braat and sworn clerk Theodorus Robart.

Jan Brouwer

De Goijer claimed the contact that first night with Jan Brouwer was at 'Claartie', where he was drinking a beer, when Brouwer came in. He bought Brouwer a glass of beer and brought it over to him. 'Claartie', we must presume, was some sort of tavern in Paramaribo around that time or a private home where folk would tend to go and pay for a drink. Brouwer accepted the beer and they had a few drinks together. The first time they had ever spoken, however, prior to this evening according to the testimonial in the archives, was apparently at the house of one Hugo van Gebert, so in fact Brouwer and De Goijer already knew each other. When De Goijer was about to leave after the drinks, he asked Brouwer to go for a stroll, during which he De Goijer made the proposal for sexual intercourse. Around seven o'clock in the evening they ended up at the house where De Goijer was lodging. Meanwhile both adults had already consented to mutual carnal relations, but when they arrived at de Goijer's house, Brouwer told De Goijer he was a poor man and would not mind if De Goijer were to give him some money.

Suspect soldier/private Jan Brouwer (44), when examined, categorically denied the charges of having had anal intercourse, having not asked for or received payment for any act of sodomy, as De Goijer would have declared. He admitted at first only to the advances made by De Goijer. When asked why he did not report these sins to the governor or to the commander, Brouwer said he did not do so because De Goijer pleaded with him and he decided to accede to De Goijer's plea because of De Goijer's good family name, rank and station above that of his own.

De Goijer also stated in his confession that the first time the endeavour with Brouwer had occurred, this had taken place at the house where he, De Goijer, was lodging, the home of B. Fuijst.¹¹ The second time, about 14 days later, De Goijer went to the house where Jan Brouwer was lodging and asked him to again do the deed. Brouwer replied that it would soon be dark and he first had something to attend to. Brouwer asked where he could meet

¹¹ https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/258/file/NL-Ha_NA_1.05.03_258_0348_t/m_0355.

De Goijer soon after he was done. This would be the house of widow Bambergen. De Goijer admitted that both of the times they penetrated each other and actually did also *'waste seed in each other'*.

When Brouwer was interrogated a fourth time, he finally conceded and confessed. Brouwer pleaded for mercy, stating the only motive he had for committing the gruesome sin was the financial reward, but that neither he nor De Goijer actually *'wasted seed in each other'*. He furthermore asserted never before or after this to have committed the sin of sodomy and that to him this was all an experiment.

When De Goijer was asked again during his examination whether he had committed the sin of sodomy with another eight men, as he did with Jan Brouwer, he retracted his earlier statement in which he implied this. He finally confessed that they only had *'played'* with each other, but that with none of them he did actually have penetration or *'waste of seed within'*. As stipulated, both penetration and climaxing while penetrated were the factors necessary for the act to be classified and proven as sodomy. Yet all of these men, except Christiaan Kerkhoff and Rudolff Arentsberg, were still immediately arrested as suspects shortly thereafter. Additionally, Pieter Benningh and Jan Eijland, who were called to account by the *'Raad-fiscaal'*, were for unknown reasons not arrested. These persons' names were apparently important enough to be mentioned in the documentation, yet mysteriously enough not for any reason or motive to be given as to why they were not arrested or thoroughly interrogated, as was the custom. This will remain a mystery for now, especially given the fact that even whispered gossip would be reason enough to be arrested and interrogated, let alone being named or implicated by the main suspect or culprit. Only one thing we do know for sure, and that is that political and financial-economic circumstances defined relations and positions in the colony. Perhaps the answer lies in this; we cannot know for sure.

Christiaan Jurkas (Laurens Stadler)

The third arrestee, Christiaan Jurkas (33), claimed that De Goijer had tried in two instances to kiss him and once had grabbed him in the crotch, but declared nothing else had happened. De Goijer's version was quite different from that of Jurkas. According to De Goijer, after the kissing and caressing, he asked Jurkas to turn around so that he could penetrate him. After this, Jurkas asked for compensation as he was a poor man in need of finances.

When De Goijer refused to pay, they continued without intercourse and only masturbated. Jurkas ultimately conceded and confessed to what De Goijer had stated in his confessions.¹² This affair took place in Fort Zeelandia, in the workplace of the quartermaster, De Goijer's workroom, room number 6.

Room number 6 was the same room in which De Goijer admitted to also having had sex with one Rudolff Arentsberg. And the same room that would become De Goijer's prison cell, while Fort Zeelandia, also being the place where his late father, Governor De Goijer, lay buried, would become his place of execution. The courtyard of Fort Zeelandia would furthermore be the place where all the other executions of those found guilty of sodomy were to take place.¹³

Note: In the scan of the original ledger with the records of the Court of Police and Criminal Justice dated 3 March 1731, we do find, however, the name of Laurens Stadler instead of Christiaan Jurkas as the one to have been flogged. In the official reports and letters from the prosecution ('Raad-fiscaal') and from Governor de Cheusses there is constant mention of Christiaan Jurkas.

Christiaan Kerkhoff and Rudolff Arentsberg, Pieter Benningh and Jan Eijland

Although everybody else implicated by De Goijer was immediately arrested, against Christiaan Kerkhoff also against Rudolff Arentsberg, for reasons unknown there was no case brought, neither were they arrested. Later, as it would turn out, De Goijer did not have anal intercourse with Rudolff Arentsberg, but that they had just 'fooled around' twice: once on the plantation of Jan van de Meule and once in the storage room (Room No. 6; De Goijer's workroom) of Fort Zeelandia. Concerning the occurrences with Christiaan Kerkhoff there is no information. It certainly seems as if Kerkhoff and Arentsberg might have been protected by someone or something, for them not to undergo the same treatment as the other similar suspects.

De Goijer himself never mentioned the names of Pieter Benningh or Jan Eijland, whose names were advanced by the 'Raad-fiscaal' himself. De Goijer denied having committed sodomy with these two. How their names

¹² https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/258/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_258_0380.

¹³ https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/258/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_258_0379.

came to be listed as possible sodomites by the 'Raad-fiscaal' remains a question. We do know, however, that simple gossip or hearsay would be enough to have anyone arrested. Was the 'Raad-fiscaal' looking for a reason to justify the arrest of these two, and if so, why? We don't know. There might have been power play or personal motives involved. What we do know is that these sodomy laws, later the morality laws, were often used for blackmail or to settle personal or political scores. This of course went on throughout the 1700s and 1800s, but also clearly during the 1900s, for example as documented during Nazism and in recent decades consistently in the political arena. In the best-case scenario, this might have been bullying of Bennis and Eijland as we would recognize it in a current-day setting.

Hendrik Heyns

Private/First soldier Hendrik Heyns (21) was the fourth person arrested and questioned. He recalled De Goijer in 1728 arriving in the grounds of Mistress Lucia Bleij's plantation, requesting lodging for the night. At night, De Goijer, who was sleeping in a hammock in Heyns' room, asked him to come into his hammock, but Heyns refused De Goijer's advances and left the hut to go and smoke his pipe outside. When he came back De Goijer was already sleeping. De Goijer's statement, however, was that he and Heyns had lain together in the hammock and that Heyns had played with his 'manly hood' until he, De Goijer, 'unloaded his seed', after which they fell asleep together.

Hendrik Dalendorp

The fifth arrestee, tambourinist Hendrik Dalendorp (22), confessed to having been approached by De Goijer with advances, which he claimed to have categorically refused. He did not report this to the authorities because De Goijer had begged and pleaded with him not to do so. Because of the higher rank of De Goijer, he decided to keep quiet. The 'crime scene' was the house of J.S. Brundel.

Hendrik van Rees

Tailor Hendrik van Rees (33) was also arrested and questioned. De Goijer had declared to have bathed together (in a creek or river) with him, during which they had masturbated each other. Van Rees denied having done so and claimed that all that had happened was that De Goijer invited him to go for a stroll, during which De Goijer would have kissed him and slipped his hands into his pants and suggested that Van Rees did the same. Van Rees said he refused, denied the allegations and stated that he even physically

fended off De Goijer. During his interrogation, De Goijer that stated his homosexual conducts with Van Rees had taken place as early as the year 1729.

Basya Govert van Vliet

In this same case, 29-year-old Govert van Vliet (trainee tailor, former servant) was questioned, and denied (contrary to De Goijer's statement) having masturbated together with De Goijer in a hammock in his room, when De Goijer was spending the night on the plantation 'Wildbaan' of Pierre Labadie, where Van Vliet used to be in charge as the 'basya'.¹⁴ This mutual masturbation happened, according to De Goijer, probably as early in 1728, almost three years prior to the court case. Even after a second round of interrogation, Van Vliet kept on denying this statement by De Goijer.

An interesting aspect that we could not clarify is the ethnicity of Govert van Vliet. In the archival document he is called 'basya', while De Goijer referred to him as 'Negerofficier' [Negro officer]. This would indicate his ethnicity as possibly being African. This would mean that De Goijer might have also have been in violation of the edict of segregation decreed by his father Governor Johan de Goijer, who in 1711 redefined and tightened this edict from 1686, forbidding and severely punishing carnal relations between whites and coloured persons, especially in the case of white women who dared to cross the boundaries, if besides heterosexual, same-sex conduct had also been included in this edict. However, the fact is that the archives reveal that Van Vliet is also referred to as 'the person Govert van Vliet' (a non-white person would simply be referred to as 'de neger' [the Negro]; furthermore, in the line of questioning, "If he as a (supposed) Christian was aware of the wrath of God," and finally the fact that he had a surname would all suggest Van Vliet must have been a white man. We do know that freed enslaved would receive a family name and we also know that in Suriname it was not uncommon for 'basyas' to be blacks. It therefore remains a possibility that Van Vliet might have been black. Because information is lacking on homosexuality amongst or by enslaved, this would have been something exceptional.

¹⁴ Derived from Dutch Bassiaan or Bastiaan meaning overseer or supervisor; ranking person in charge of the enslaved. This function could be fulfilled by either a white or a black person. A supervisor could, however, still be referred to as 'basya'.

Matthijs Balkman

As arrestee number eight, Matthijs Balkman¹⁵ (36), implicated by De Goijer, said he did indeed know De Goijer. He also admitted to having visited him and spending the night at his house, the house of B. Fuijst. This notably occurred after De Goijer had already on earlier occasions made several advances to Balkman, while he, Balkman, was still working as a 'draaier', a woodworker, in Fort Zeelandia, where De Goijer was also stationed as quartermaster. He denied, however, having committed sodomy or having masturbated with him. He admitted that De Goijer made sexual advances towards him, but he never gave in. He also denied, as De Goijer would have suggested, having seen De Goijer reach orgasm at any point in time. Balkman stated he had not reported these incidents to the authorities, simply because of De Goijer's higher rank and his urgent request to keep quiet about it.

De Goijer named the location as "the room in the house where Zwalembergh and Lebou lived." This was the house of B. Fuijst; also De Goijer's lodging address. De Goijer's statement was that he asked Balkman if he might join him in his hammock. To which Balkman had agreed. While lying together, he embraced Balkman, and he guided Balkman's hand to his 'manhood'. Balkman played with him, masturbating De Goijer until he 'wasted his seed'. When asked by the 'Raad-fiscaal' if he also intended or actually committed the sin of sodomy with Balkman on another occasion, namely in the workroom No. 6 or in the maintenance room of Fort Zeelandia, De Goijer said he did not know or recall this anymore.

Regarding the brother of Matthijs Balkman, mentioned earlier, who, according to De Goijer, introduced him into the underground gay scene in Amsterdam, the 'Raad-fiscaal' wanted to know with whom, when and where. De Goijer declared not to remember many details such as the occupation held by Balkman's brother (Jacob) or by his father (Jan), except the address at which the Balkmans lived, which would have been on the corner of the 'oude Dijckstraat' in Amsterdam. De Goijer declared that this first time Jacob Balkman introduced him to this underground world in Amsterdam must have been in the year 1722. He did not recall the address of the location he described as the place where men like him met each

¹⁵ The name of Matthijs Balkman (36) used in the report of Schellekes & Hoogbergen differs from the one as noted in L.J. Boon (1997): Matthijs Bartelman (36); Based on the descriptions in these studies, both refer to one and the same person. In the official reports and letters from the prosecution and Governor de Cheusses, Balkman seems to be the correct name.

other. According to Matthijs Balkman, his father's and brother's names were Jan and Jacob and the correct address was indeed as De Goijer had declared. Most likely the 'Raad-fiscaal' wanted to send this information to the authorities in Amsterdam to investigate and persecute this case of sodomy.¹⁶ Likewise, all the addresses of houses and the names of owners or hosts where any sodomy possibly might have been committed in Paramaribo were also registered. Of course, they were also suspect, based on 'guilt by association' and perhaps subject to summary investigation. In order to determine whether these persons were possibly part of any sodomy ring or just 'sympathizers', they must have also been looked at through a magnifying glass. Sodomy had to be eradicated at any cost or lengths in order to avoid losing the grace of God and to prevent economic losses. In a small town with approx. 1230 white inhabitants at that time, one can imagine the consequences to one's 'reputation' or 'integrity', not to mention the consequences to one's position and financial status, if implicated in a sodomy case.

Jacob Gerritz van Susteren

Finally, arrestee number nine, Jacob Gerritz van Susteren ('koopman' [merchant]), said he knew De Goijer simply because he once had sold him some goods. De Goijer initially said that he and Van Susteren twice had committed sodomy. For one of those times with Van Susteren he named the house of Casper Schaap as the location. Here he would have masturbated Van Susteren until he ejaculated. Van Susteren, when confronted with this information during his questioning, denied the accusation of both occurrences and denied having had any immoral sexual relations with De Goijer.

The colony 'Sodonomie and Gamoribo' a novelty

Clearly not knowing any better, according to statements of Governor de Cheusses in his correspondence to the owners of the Societeit van Suriname (SvS), '*sodomy was also discovered in the colony*' and was thus a novelty in Paramaribo. In his fear of God Almighty, as he claimed, he did or would do anything within his powers to prevent the colony becoming a breeding ground such as Sodom and Gomorrah had been. What we see is that he set out, with the Edict of 1730 in hand, to eradicate this 'evil' and save the colony. 'Saving us' from becoming 'Sodonomie and Gamoribo'. In fact, present-day

¹⁶ https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/258/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_258_0383.

so-called moral knights still do the same and still claim that the LGBT phenomenon is a modern-day 'novelty'. De Cheusses and the 'Raad-fiscaal', amongst others, relentlessly went to work on this case of 'discovered' sodomy of Matthijs de Goijer and his ring of sodomites.

In recapping the above paragraphs, we find it striking that De Goijer initially mentioned having committed acts of sodomy with all of the suspects, while in some cases at best it was masturbation with or without reaching a climax. Was it because De Goijer did not know what sodomy entailed as strictly defined by the letter of the law back then? Was he naïve, hoping for mercy, or did his motivation lie somewhere else? We don't know. The fact remains that back then, society, the rule of law and religion saw themselves fit to have the legal and moral right to disregard any form of private life of any or all individuals and judge them according to their puritan beliefs. In fact, they still claim and demand that government and legislators do the same, all according to their radical beliefs. Even though the general conception and definitions of earlier sodomy laws included not only 'homosexual acts' but also included, for example, foul language, drunkenness, adultery, prostitution and so on, the Edict of 1730 on sodomy explicitly focuses on the 'homosexual acts' henceforth presumed to define sodomy and thus made it synonymous with what we would now call homosexuality. In the Edict of 1730 on sodomy, it is clearly mentioned that, from 1730 on, sodomy (as intended by this edict) would henceforth be tried and executions held in public. Not as before, out of sight, but now to be made a public spectacle of and also meant to warn off future sodomites. Here of course referring to sodomy, the *crimen nifandum* – a crime never to be spoken of – the crime of sodomy solely regarding male-male sexual relations defined as motivated by pure lust. This edict is also clear on its intent, namely to stave off the wrath of God, thus preventing loss of prosperity and welfare. The edict furthermore gives absolute power to the Courts ['Hoven'] in taking any actions and making any decisions deemed necessary to eradicate this defined form of sodomy [=homosexuality]. Because, as mentioned above, it was seen solely as a sin of pure lust (with absolutely no possibility of love, romance or any other human emotion being involved), it was, according to archival records, defined and specified as anal penetration in combination with climaxing during said penetration. Without a doubt, any and every court case on sodomy since 1730 can be considered as having had the sole purpose of persecuting and executing homosexuals, and at the same time all earlier cumulative definitions of what sodomy entailed lost their validity

within the framework of the Edict of 1730. We should also make no mistake about it that this ridiculous theory is still seen as 'law' by refutists, the radical religious extremist, but also the average everyday bully, all of whom often claim to have God and the Bible exclusively on their side.

The investigation into De Goijer took about three weeks, and the governor of the colony of Suriname, Carel de Cheusses, as head of the courts, was closely involved. This is evident in the detailed reports De Cheusses sent by government correspondence to his superiors, the owners of the Geootrooyeerde Societeit van Suriname (SvS) in the motherland.

The criminal charge was presented to the Court of Police and Criminal Justice [Hof van Policie en Crimineele Justitie] by the public prosecutor ['Raad-fiscaal'] the day after the investigation ended. He emphasized the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, and said that it was not only by regular law, but also by God's law that the sin of sodomy was punishable, knowing that God would also punish the whole colony of Suriname, as He had punished Sodom, if the punishment was inadequate. So instead of a quick death by decapitation or hanging, the prosecutor, in accordance with the Edict of 1730 on sodomy, demanded (a slow) death by strangulation, whilst roasting on an open fire. After this, the colony should complete the cleansing of itself by casting the bodies with added 100-pound weights into the sea. As was common practice, the verdict would be implemented on the following day. In the case of De Goijer, Brouwer and Jurkas, the charges lodged were sodomy and 'having one's male genital in one's hand'. For the act of sodomy, anal intercourse needed to be proved, and only Matthijs de Goijer and Jan Brouwer, *'hence their confession without torture'*, were found guilty of this sinful crime and sentenced.

Staten Generael der vereenigde Nederlanden
 onse wettigen Souverain, alsmede Haer Edele
 Groot Hogbaene de Heeren Directeuren van
 de Edele geotroyeerde Societijt van Surinaam
 als Patroonen en Eijgendeen dezer Landen
 Condemnere den gedetineerde Christiaan Jurkas, So hij
 gecondemneert werd mit dezer gebracht te Worden ter
 Plecht daer men gewoont Criminele Justitie aen
 Haer Kant te administreren, en daer aen te sien de
 Executie van de twee mede gedetineerde Mattheijs
 de Goijer, en Jan Brouwer, en daar na aen Een pael
 gebonden en strengelicht warden Gegevelt en voort
 alle sijn Leven lang te warden Gehannen uijt deete
 Colonie en noijt daer weder in te moogen loomen
 op pene van niet de dood te sullen warden Gestraft
 Condemnere ende den selven mede in de Costen van
 mede Van Justitie;

Aldus Gedaen en Gentsaert In onse Vergaderinghe
 Gehouden alhier aen Paramaribo den eerste
 maart 1731; Was getekent C. De Chreijff,
 J. De Vries, Daniel Sichel, A. van Berck, Pieter Jansen,
 Franc Schout, Jan Christiaan Oberhaert, J. Sandick,
 A. Duinen De Brauer, Jacobus Lemmer,


Vijf Gegeve voor Copie
 Bij mij;

 gew. Secret.
 1731

Fig. 5. Of all sodomy cases, (detailed) reports were sent to the owners of the Geotroyeerde Societijt van Suriname (SVS) in Amsterdam. Depicted here is the letter dated 1 March 1731 on the sentencing of Christiaan Jurkas, who was to be flogged and then banned from the colony; this after having been forced to witness the excruciating execution of Mattheijs de Goijer and Jan Brouwer. Note the mention of also having to pay for the costs of his (their) own trial and execution.

Christiaan Jurkas was also found guilty, not of sodomy, but of the willingness to actually commit this crime, even if only for financial gain. His punishment was to bear witness to the executions, then to be flogged, followed by lifelong banishment from the colony.¹⁷ Even though the other suspects were not found guilty of sodomy due to lack of evidence, they were still imputed as criminals by Governor de Cheusses, as he stated his letters. The seriousness of ‘unnatural’ (homosexual) acts demanded some form of severe punishment (even if it was ad hoc). However, no information on punishment of the other suspects was found in the archives.

Another issue for us is the ease with which it seems De Goijer gave up so much information on so many others. Together with the statement that there was ‘no torture’, it makes this somewhat suspicious and raises many questions as to why and how. Most likely, together with his supposed earlier mentioned naivety, the idea of being tortured was perhaps gruesome enough to extract a full confession and any further information.

The main method of pressure and persuasion throughout all the interrogations of all the suspects is the repeated mentioning of the absolute ‘fear of God’ and His punishment for and wrath over the accused. This striking of fear would always be instilled in the ‘sinners’, but aren’t we all ‘sinners’ according to the doctrine? They were all (and so we are all) abundantly informed of this ‘fact’ and hence of the fate that awaited them, with a hint that telling the ‘desired truth’ might somehow release them from some of their anguish and burden. The accused were all consistently made aware of their alleged abominable sins, evoking fear and laying guilt, and were asked (rhetorical) questions such as: “Had they read the meaning of sodomy in the Bible?”, “Did they not have any conscience?”, “Did they know that it was a sin punishable by the law of God and also the laws of mankind?”

1.1.2 Dirk Swart and Bartholomeus Hendrick Hassel condemned, 1733

De Cheusses’ idea to get rid of sodomy in the colony, as he himself stated in the records, by dealing swiftly and mercilessly with the case ‘De Goijer’, apparently had not worked. Only two years later, in a colony ‘where sodomy had not existed before’ and meanwhile was ‘eradicated’ (in 1731), on 7 October 1733, the next known sodomy case in Suriname, of Ship Captain

¹⁷ Schellekes and Hoogbergen (2001): see Bibliography.

Dirk Swart, presented itself. The investigation and questioning of several suspects amongst the crew of the vessel, *De Juffrouw Maria*, started with complaints by Claas Martijn (carpenter) and Gottfried Meisner (surgeon) against Capt. Swart.

Martijn, in his letter to the 'Raad-fiscaal', gave an incriminating testimony¹⁸ against Swart, and started by his stating that he had not wanted to complain but simply to clear his conscience. Saying he was invited to sleep in the captain's hut, which invitation he considered a privilege and accepted. After spending a few nights in the captain's hut, he was asked to come and sleep in Swart's bed, which he also accepted. When Swart made sexual advances, Martijn said he didn't appreciate this and stated that nothing further had happened. Martijn declared that these sexual advances had occurred several times. These sexual advances, just like the ones made to Meisner, are described in minute detail in the statement of Martijn. Martijn said he shared his grief and sadness over the occurrences with Pieter van Baarle (a passenger), while off board along the Coppename River visiting the plantation of Moses de Vries.

Meisner's testimony incriminated Swart. He gave a detailed account of the three occasions on which the captain made sexual advances towards him.¹⁹ The first time was while at sea, on deck while passengers and crew were sitting having drinks and the captain invited him to come over and sit with him at his table. The second time it occurred was when they were just off the coast of Barbados and Swart invited him to come and tie his hammock in the captain's hut with the intention of having him sleep there. After having accepted the invite, Meisner stated that the captain asked him to come and lay with him in his bunk and he played with Meisner's private parts until they were disturbed by a crew member. After the crew member had left, the captain asked him to shave him, but meanwhile continued masturbating Meisner. The third time occurred again in the captain's hut. Meisner had just finished washing/treating the captain with camphor, after which and while sitting in a chair they masturbated each other. Meisner said he could not get excited, while the captain on the other had climaxed in Meisner's hand. These encounters lasted from 15 minutes up to more than 2 hours. Meisner claimed it was all against his will.

¹⁸ https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/260/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_260_0928.

¹⁹ https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/260/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_260_0930.

Swart did not deny the claims of either Martijn or Meisner, and confessed that he indeed on his instigation he had experimented with the two men. He denied, however, having had anal intercourse (sodomy) with either of them.

We don't know why and if Martijn and/or Meisner voluntarily went to report this to the authorities or whether someone else reported this matter beforehand; it all seems odd, and this part of the information is missing from the archives. It is also not mentioned in the study 'Sodomie processen in Suriname' by Schellekes & Hoogbergen. According to a letter²⁰ from Governor de Cheusses dated 30 December 1733 to the owners of the Societeit van Suriname in Amsterdam, it was either a passenger to whom apparently Swart had also made sexual advances, or Meisner, who reported this case of sodomy to the 'Raad-fiscaal'. It could very well also be possible that Pieter van Baarle, with whom Martijn had previously shared his grief about the situation with Capt. Swart, was the passenger De Cheusses referred to in his letters. It is also possible that this Van Baarle was simply the one who convinced Martijn and or Meisner to report the incidents: this if only for the reason of clearing themselves from any wrongdoing or facing terrible consequences if this were to come to light afterwards.

After having taken the statements of Claas Martijn and Gottfried Meisner, the same 'Raad-fiscaal' [public prosecutor], Adriaan Wiltens, as in the De Goijer case decided to question more men from the crew and initiate the witch hunt on Swart and other possible sodomites.

Swart was examined on the possible violations based on the statements of the aforementioned Martijn and Meisner. He did not deny the allegations, apparently aware of the fact that the case would have no legal merit as long as the actual deed of sodomy as specified by the letter of the law could not be proved. He did not even have to deny sodomy or the intent of sodomy, because he was not accused of such based on these testimonials. The 'Raad-fiscaal', dissatisfied and convinced that the gruesome sin of sodomy had actually been committed, conducted more interrogations of other crew members. Amongst them was deckhand Bartholomeus (Bartel/Barthel) Hendrik Hassel. Deckhand Bartel Hendrick Hassel was arrested based on a previous testimony of the ship's helmsman, who supposedly witnessed the dealings of Swart en Hassel.

²⁰ https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/en/research/archive/1.05.03/invnr/260/file/NL-HaNA_1.05.03_260_0843.