

Schorer, Squire Jacob Anton (1866–1957), Dutch activist. Schorer was born into a patrician family from Zeeland. He studied law in Leyden and became a lawyer and judge in Middelburg. In 1903, he left his home town to study sexual sciences with Magnus HIRSCHFELD in Berlin, where he became an 'Obmann' of the 'Wissenschaftlich-humanitäre Komitee' (WHK). Inspired by German examples, he published an article on homosexuality in a Dutch law journal. It endorsed Hirschfeld's perspective of homosexuality being natural and homosexuals as a third sex. His view was condemned by the president of the Dutch High Court, and the editors immediately apologized for their mistake of having published Schorer's article.

After the death of his father, in 1910 he returned to The Netherlands. He went to live with his mother in The Hague, where he would soon lead the movement against the proposal for a new criminal law which forbade same-sex relations between adults and minors under 21 years. In 1911 the article was adopted as the infamous 248-bis. One of the arguments to include an anti-homosexual article in the law again after 100 years of liberty was precisely the activities of defenders of homosexuals like ALETRINO, RÖMER and Schorer. A year later, Schorer founded a Dutch chapter of Hirschfeld's WHK and published a Dutch version of the German leaflet 'What Everybody Should Know About Uranism'. Although others gave their name to this Dutch chapter, it remained

very much the private business of Schorer. In 1914, after the beginning of World War I, the Dutch chapter renamed itself NWHK (Nederlandsch Wetenschappelijk Humanitair Komitee) to stress its independence from the Germans. Schorer's major work was writing articles in support of homosexuals, bringing them into contact with each other, and publishing annual reports (*Jaarverslagen*, 1915–1920 and 1933–1940). These reports were sent to politicians, legal and medical specialists and also to students in these fields. This led to unsuccessful attempts to forbid the mailing of such material. Schorer also collected one of the most important homosexual libraries of the world. Its contents have been printed in a catalogue with several supplements.

After the Germans occupied The Netherlands in 1940, the library was swept away within a few months and never a trace of it has been recovered. With the invasion, Schorer dissolved the NWHK and destroyed its archives. In 1942, he was evacuated to Harderwijk in the eastern part of the country, where he would live the rest of his life. Efforts to retrieve the library or to get financial compensation were unsuccessful and remain so to this day. In 1957, he died as a nearly-forgotten pioneer of homosexual emancipation in a provincial town where even nowadays gay life is largely absent.

Hans van Weel and Paul Snijders, 'Levenslang strijden voor rechtvaardigheid', in Hans Hafkamp and Maurice van Lieshout (eds), *Pijlen van naamloze liefde. Pioniers van de homo-emancipatie*, Amsterdam, 1988: 96–103.

Gert Hekma