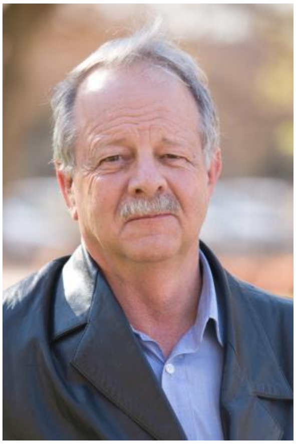
REDAKSIE/EDITORIAL

‘n Waarderingswoord aan prof. dr. H. F. (Herrie) van Rooy



Herculaas Frederik van Rooy, wat op 7 Augustus 1949 sy eerste asem geadem het, het vanjaar (2014) op die vooraand van die lente in Suid-Afrika sy vyf-en-sestigste verjaarsdag gevier. Herrie het dus daardie ouderdom bereik waarop akademici verbonde aan staats-gefinansierde universiteite amptelik onthef word van belangrike, maar dikwels minder aangename verpligtinge wat deel is van hierdie professie. Gelukkig vir die gilde van Semitici in Suid Afrika gaan Herrie vir die afsienbare toekoms steeds ‘n rol speel in die verdere uitbou van hierdie vakgebied. Hy het ingestem om vanaf 2015 vir ‘n termyn te dien as Direkteur van ‘n nuutgestigde navorsingsfokusarea, Antieke Tekste: Teks, Konteks en Resepsie, aan die Noordwes-Universiteit.

This latest development sees the career of Harry van Rooy completing a full circle of which the first line was drawn almost forty years ago. His involvement with Semitics stretches back to 1975 when he was appointed by his Alma Mater, the then Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, as a temporary lecturer in the Faculty of Arts. This was only a year after he obtained an MA degree in Semitics with distinction. In 1977 he received the degree D.Litt. (Semitic Languages), also from the PU for CHE, with a thesis that compared the structure of the Sefire treaties to that of the book of Deuteronomy in the Hebrew Bible.

In 1980 stem Herrie in om die akademiese wêreld voltyds te betree toe hy as senior lektor in Semitiese Tale aan die PU vir CHO benoem word. In 1983, op 34-jarige leeftyd, word hy bevorder tot professor. Hy was een van die stigterslede van die Suid-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Semitistiek (SAVSEM) in 1988; ‘n vakvereniging wat tot op hede die geakkrediteerde vakwetenskaplike tydskrif, *Journal for Semitics*, publiseer. In die heel eerste nommer van hierdie vaktydskrif (1989) verskyn ‘n artikel van Herrie wat ook handel oor die struktuur van die Aramese Sefire-verdrae.

Harry has been a regular contributor to this journal, not only as author but frequently also as reviewer. He served on the executive committee of the SA Society for Semitics (SASSEM) for 12 years; the last term (1997-2000) as chairperson. His academic productivity in the field of Semitics is seen in the fact that he has read a paper at almost every annual meeting of SASSEM and the later SA Society for Near Eastern Studies (SASNES). In 2012 he was honoured by this Society with the opportunity to deliver the Van Selms memorial lecture at the annual conference. He is recognised by the National Research Foundation as an internationally acclaimed researcher. His research on the Syriac texts of the Old Testament has contributed in large part to this recognition.

Hierdie feesbundel is die derde wat vanjaar vir Herrie van Rooy aangebied word. Dit spreek enersyds van die belangrike bydraes wat hy op meer as een gebied in die akademiese wêreld lewer. Andersyds is dit ‘n bewys daarvan dat Herrie onder studente en kollegas oor ‘n wye spektrum heen ‘n gewaardeerde en geliefde mens is. Ons wens hom geluk met hierdie mylpaal in sy beroeps- en persoonlike lewe en sien uit na sy verdere bydraes tot hierdie en ander navorsingsvelde. Mag die najaar nog ‘n ryke oes oplewer.

H. J. M. van Deventer
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