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IN MEMORIAM

Prof. Dr. W.J.Th. Peters

(Loo bij Duiven 28 February 1919 - Nijmegen 31 May 2005)

After some difficult years of burdensome old age, Wim Peters quietly passed away at the end of May 2005. He will be remembered by many former students as an excellent teacher who succeeded in communicating classical archaeology with passion, even to those who were more interested in other aspects of antiquity or in art history.

The son of a farmer in the area north of the river Rhine, close to the German border, he chose to study Classics in the nearby Catholic University at Nijmegen instead of his beloved field of art history, because of what he took to be the greater opportunities provided by a Classics degree to find a job in the future. His studies started in 1938, but were badly interrupted, firstly during troop mobilisation in the year preceding the outbreak of World War II in 1939, and secondly by much more serious experiences during the war itself. He was taken captive and transferred to a work-camp near Leipzig, from where he was later taken to a concentration camp in France for having helped French prisoners-of-war. For his courage he was later awarded the *Croix de guerre avec étoile de bronze*.

After the war he succeeded in completing his studies very quickly, in 1948. He then became a school teacher, at first in the south of the Netherlands, and from 1950 at Groningen. Here he made contact with Professor Hendrik Gerard Beyen, the doyen of Roman fresco studies, because Peters had ambitions to write a PhD on Roman wall painting. Despite his work as a school teacher and the worries of bringing up a young family of four children, he succeeded in travelling for the first time in 1955 to Pompeii, a site to which he was later to return many times. In 1963 he defended his thesis on *Landscape in Romano-Campanian Mural Painting*, a monograph that is still frequently consulted, thanks to its excellent observations on various aspects of wall painting in general and of landscape in particular. His keen eye for style, composition and colour helped him greatly in enriching both this and his later studies. Peters was a skilful drawer, painter and photographer.

Soon after, the Professor of Classical Archaeology at Groningen, Annie Zadoks-Josephus Jitta, asked Peters to join her in the university's Institute of Archaeology, and together they started a project of preparing a corpus of all the bronze statuettes found in the Netherlands. Wim van Es joined them, and two volumes in addition to another on the collection in the former Rijksmuseum G.M. Kam (now the Valkhofmuseum) at Nijmegen were published. The other two co-authors have always made it clear that Peters' share in this joint enterprise was the largest of the three.

Apart from these finds from the *limes*, fragments of mural painting found in excavations of Roman sites in the Netherlands were to form a further focus of his research. In the late 1970s Peters stimulated students such as Louis J.F. Swinkels, Robert M. van Dierendonck and the present writer to share the same field of research, so that a considerable number of find complexes could be published.

Peters also continued his studies of Roman wall painting in Italy, and when he was appointed a researcher in the Dutch Institute at Rome in 1968 he launched a field project at Pompeii. As the tutor of MA and PhD students who worked at Rome with scholarships from the Institute, he was well known for his excellent fieldtrips in and around the Urbs; at the same time he made good contacts with Italian and international colleagues from which he was to profit for many decades thereafter.

His appointment to the Chair of Classical Archaeology at his former alma mater, Nijmegen, meant the premature abandonment of his position in Rome, but Peters was able to make the chair very much his own, alongside Professor Jules E. Bogaers, the expert in provincial Roman archaeology, and professor Bernard Stolte Sr., who occupied the chair of ancient history. Peters' young assistant, Jos de Waele, was later to become his successor, in 1984.

The Pompeii project was conducted in collaboration with Peters' colleague at Leiden, Frédéric Bastet. For several years a team of both students and professors drawn from various universities worked in the House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto at Pompeii and carried out wide-ranging research on the building's history, on its earlier phases, and on the analysis of the extant paintings of the Third and Fourth Pompeian Styles. His heavy burden of university teaching and administration delayed the completion of the work, but the resulting monograph, published in 1993, was welcomed by the scholarly world as a sound and thorough work in the field of pompeianistica.

Peters' interests were mainly focused on the chronological development of Roman wall painting. Like Bastet, he was a real student of Beyen in this respect: Beyen had studied the Second Style, Bastet worked on the Third Style, and Peters had the difficult task of navigating the complexities of the largest bulk of Pompeian paintings, namely those of the Fourth Style. His essays on the House of the Vettii (1977) and on the varieties of Fourth-Style decorative schemes (1982) form important building-blocks in a growing edifice on the Fourth Style which, however, sadly never reached completion. On several occasions Peters had to admit that no firm timetable for its publication could be proposed. One of the problems for any student of the Fourth Style is that various different decorative schemes used in the wall-paintings of the second half of the 1st century AD appear to occur for the first time simultaneously, so that no clear evolutionary development, such as those formulated by Beyen and Bastet for 'their' Styles, can be defined for the Fourth Style.

At the same time, around 1980, an opportunity presented itself for further study of a crucial monument within the timeframe of the Fourth Style, the Golden House of Nero, which was constructed between AD 64 and 68. Dottoressa Laura Fabbrini, then archaeological curator of the monument, who at the time was working on the wing of the Domus Aurea preserved on the Oppian Hill, warmly invited Peters to study and publish the paintings of the building's walls and vaults. In the early 1980s, therefore, Peters made a full photographic documentation of the frescoes, and had some of the most important wall schemes drawn. His collaborator, Paul Meyboom of Leiden University, was entrusted with work on the vault decoration, whereas Peters concentrated on the walls. Meticulous descriptions of the wall schemes were prepared, and all the unpublished material was handed over to the present writer in 1992 when the latter was appointed to the same position in Rome previously held by Peters.

As a mark of the high regard in which his research in Italy is held, Wim Peters was awarded an Italian order of which he was immensely proud: he could style himself *Commendatore all'Ordine del merito della Repubblica Italiana* and, as all Italian holders of this decoration do during their coffee break in their favourite bar, enjoy the reverence given by his peers and make jokes about it too. In some difficult bureaucratic moments the small rosette in the lapel of his jacket was capable of working miracles.

University duties ended for Wim Peters in 1984 with his official retirement, but the Lucretius Fronto house and the Domus Aurea projects still demanded his attention.¹ Smaller projects concerned ancient Roman gardens and their representations, and research on provincial Roman painting. In his last years he had really left archaeology altogether, saying that he was no longer able to follow new developments; he therefore no longer felt able to make further contributions to academic debate. A 'round table' on the workshops of painters, organised at the Dutch Institute in Rome in honour of Peters' 75th birthday, effectively marked the end of a fruitful academic career.² In his last years Peters still continued to research, but his work now concentrated mainly on the history of his beloved birthplace and its region, as well as complicated family histories.

Peters achieved a career which most modern scholars would no longer be able to follow. Starting as a secondary school teacher, he always regarded the qualities of good instruction as a central plank in his pedagogic mission, an attitude he continued in academic teaching as well. His didactic qualities were great. As a scholar, Peters worked slowly but precisely: he preferred not to publish at all rather than turn out a flashy, incomplete article with flawed arguments, so risking that such a contribution would fail. His list of published works is, nevertheless, not inconsiderable, and demonstrates the wide range of his interests, as outlined above.

Many former students and both Dutch and international colleagues will remember Peters as a straightforward, if sometimes severe, scholar, but in general as a very amiable man who liked nothing more than social contact with all of them, in the form of a good glass of wine or a nice dinner.

Eric M. Moormann

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NOTES

- ¹ A small *Festschrift* in Dutch was offered by colleagues, friends and former students: J.A. de Waele/L.J.F. Swinkels/E.M. Moormann (eds.), *Om de tuin geleid. Een feestbundel aangeboden aan prof. dr. W.J.Th. Peters ter gelegenheid van zijn 65e verjaardag*, Nijmegen 1984.
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- ² "Mani di pittori e botteghe pittoriche nel mondo romano. Tavola rotonda in onore di W.J.Th. Peters in occasione del suo 75mo compleanno", May 1994, Nederlands Instituut te Rome, Rome. The proceedings have been published in *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 54 (1995).
- ³ I leave out Peters' numerous papers on the local history of his family and his birth place, of which the first dates back to 1948, but want to record that just before his death he received the first copy of a small volume he dedicated to this topic: W.J.Th. Peters, *De Loowaard, zeven pachters en de nieuwe eigenaars*, Nijmegen 2005.

Arrival of the Bankers At the turn of the 20th century, a plan to slowly take over the government of the United States began to unfold. Many works have been written about the Nazi machine that instigated two world wars, though few have traced the footsteps of the foreign financiers and the actors we prefer to call "politicians." A brief glance at shipping records, passenger manifests, and financial transactions on Wall Street indicates a pattern of deception which was masterminded by this same machine. The level of cooperation from government agencies and their elected officials was not only d Member Since 20th Sep, 2018. offline last seen 3 hours ago. The Blue EM2. The Blue EM2 Joined 20th Sep, 2018. Offline. Stories. Blogs. Smile because it happened." Dr. Seuss. MegaBrony95. MegaBrony95 #38 Jul 9th, 2019. Those whom we love. Newspaper chronicle 'in memoriam' of Prof. (Mech.) Eng. Antnio Manuel Pais de Sousa Pascoal (1931-1998), former Prof. of mechanical technology at 'Escola Industrial e Comercial de Aveiro' (EICA), later entitled 'Escola Secundria n 1 de Aveiro'. Newspaper chronicle 'in memoriam' of Prof. (Mech.) Eng. Antnio Manuel Pais de Sousa Pascoal (1931-1998), former Prof. of mechanical technology at 'Escola Industrial e Comercial de Aveiro' (EICA), later entitled 'Escola Secundria n 1 de Aveiro', and now entitled 'Escola Secundria Dr. Mri