

In Memoriam Eric Pool (1939–2020)

Our dear colleague Eric H. Pool passed away on the 1st November 2020, only two weeks before his 81st birthday. He was born in Paramaribo on 15 November 1939. In those years, Paramaribo was the capital city of the Dutch Guiana, now the independent Suriname (since 1975). He was the youngest of 9 children and son of two teachers. Eric was only ten years old, when his father retired and decided to move to Amsterdam, where Eric adapted to the European way of life and did brilliant studies. He graduated *cum laude* in 1967 in classical philology at the University of Amsterdam. During his studies, he concentrated on Latin and Greek, but did also some Roman law and some legal papyrology... and law seems to have become his other focus as he obtained his first law degree two years later. At that time, law studies still presupposed a certain mastery of Latin and until 1972 the students who had not studied Latin before needed take an elementary Latin course at the University. This is how the Latin professor of the faculty hired Eric to assist him. And after a few years of teaching Latin, he joined the Roman law department, chaired by Professor Hans Ankum. For many years, he then taught the history of Roman law as well as Roman law to first-year students, as well as in the reading group “*Forum Romanum*”, especially when Hans Ankum was giving lectures and papers abroad. He was a gifted teacher, clear and patient. Thanks to his great knowledge of Roman law and history, he was able to present many historical and social background elements of each concept during the lesson.

Together with Hans Ankum and Marjolein van Gessel-De Roo, he wrote a major study of all the meanings of the expression “*in bonis alicuius esse/habere*”, which was published in three voluminous articles in the *Savigny Zeitschrift*. Eric Pool obtained his PhD. *cum laude* in September 1995 (still at the University of Amsterdam). His PhD is a study on the concept of *causa* in the sources of Roman law. This topic stayed one of his main topics of research also during the rest of his career.

In 1998, Eric Pool accepted to chair the Roman law department at the Flemish university of Brussels (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), without giving up his position as Senior Lecturer at the University of Amsterdam. He retired in 2004 from both Universities. Contacts with his former colleagues, assistants and students all confirm that he left only very good memories in both universities. Although his career as a professor has not been particularly long, it has left its mark on the academic world, as he has received a “Festschrift”, written by his colleagues from all over the world. In reference to the subject of his doctoral thesis, the name given to this Festschrift was “*ex iusta causa traditum*”. The project of this collective work has been conceived during the SIHDA of Clermont-Ferrand (2003) and the result has been handed over to him during the SIHDA of Bochum, in 2005. This

undoubtedly shows the very high esteem his colleagues had for him. It also says something about the fact that, like his mentor Hans Ankum, Eric Pool enjoyed attending international conferences in legal history and Roman law, like the “Deutsche Rechtshistorikertage”, the “convegni internazionali di diritto romano di Copanello” and of course the “Société internationale ‘Fernand De Visscher’ pour l’histoire des droits de l’antiquité (SIHDA)”.

Many of us will remember that he was a very active participant at our scientific discussions. Even more of us will remember what a pleasant colleague and friend he was. He was still with us at the last SIHDA in Edinburgh and it is really hard to believe that he won’t be there for the next one. Our conferences will never be the same without him anymore and we will miss him!

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doi: 10.14712/2464689X.2021.13