

OBITUARIES

David Asheri

We are sad to record the death of David Asheri, Professor Emeritus of History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, on February 3, 2000 in Jerusalem. A short account of his life and work, accompanied by a bibliography of his writings, will appear in the next issue of *SCI*.

Haiim Baruch Rosén

Professor Haiim Baruch Rosén was born in Vienna on March 4, 1922 and died in Paris on October 2, 1999. Rosén was a Professor of Linguistics at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and of Classics at Tel Aviv University. Among his publications, more than 250 items in all, the most important of his many contributions to Classical Philology include his groundbreaking works on the language of Homer and Herodotus: *Strukturalgrammatische Beiträge zum Verständnis Homers*, Amsterdam: North Holland 1968; *Eine Laut- und Formenlehre der herodotischen Sprachform*, Indogermanische Bibliothek, I. Reihe: Lehr- und Handbücher, Heidelberg: Winter 1962. In addition, his recent edition of Herodotus in two volumes in the Teubner series is the most up-to-date and philologically full edition of this author: *Herodotus, Historiae*, Vol. I, Bks. I-IV, Leipzig 1987; Vol. II, Bks. V-IX, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1997, Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana. Rosén's work in the field of Classics also includes important studies on contacts between classical languages and Hebrew, e.g. his *L'hébreu et ses rapports avec le monde classique — Essai d'évaluation culturelle*, Comptes rendus du GLECS, Supplément 7, Paris: Geuthner 1979, and later works. Among Rosén's other contributions to Classics are the application of syntactic methods to the study of Latin, and his work on the history of grammatical thought among philosophers such as Aristotle and Heraclitus. A selection of Rosén's works on Classics may be found in Parts I and III of the three volumes of his collected papers, edited by a group of friends and disciples: *East and West. Selected Writings in Linguistics*, München: Fink, 1982 and 1994.

Donna Shalev

The following words were said at his funeral by Joseph Geiger:

Haiim Rosén, one of the veterans of the second generation of teachers at the Hebrew University, came to Palestine from Vienna before being able to conclude his high

school studies. Unlike his teachers Moshe (Max) Schwabe, Yohanan (Hans) Lewy and H.J. Polotsky, who all completed their studies in Germany, he studied at the Hebrew University. He studied, engaged in research and taught there for well over fifty years, until the last year of his life.

In his teaching and research he combined the two related but rival disciplines of philology and linguistics, and thus played an important part in the emergence of the Jerusalem School. His scholarly work and great achievements belong to three fields: the philological and linguistic study of ancient languages, in the first place Greek, where he occupied a leading position; both the theoretical and the historical aspects of general linguistics; and the study of spoken modern Hebrew, reflected in the titles of his two influential books on the subject: *Our Hebrew* that was not always *Good Hebrew*.

The scholarly achievements of Haiim Rosén, long recognised in the world of learning, will be appreciated elsewhere. The academic community in this country gave recognition to his work in awarding him the Israel Prize some twenty years ago and in his election to the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. The many and various invitations that he received from all over the world to lecture and to teach testified to his scholarly standing and he was in frequent demand at congresses and other academic events. Teubner publishing house invited him to prepare the new edition of Herodotus, and he completed this task a few years ago in a two-volume *editio maxima*.

Haiim Rosén was not a teacher in the usual sense of the word, an academic who among his other tasks devotes some of his time to teaching, but a teacher with a mission, a teacher full of enthusiasm, a teacher of exceptional gifts who could relate not only to his pupils' intellect, but also to their personality. His teaching was an art. It was my good fortune to study with Haiim Rosén in my first three years at the University, almost forty years ago. It seemed that he never changed; 'his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated' until his last day. On retirement some ten years ago he started teaching courses on the history of the Greek language and related subjects in the Graduate School and in the Department of Classics. At the beginning I used to encourage students to attend his courses, but after some time I realised that this was not needed, since the students invited each other to come and take part in the extraordinary adventure of Haiim Rosén's classes. He was a teacher-artist, but his was not art for art's sake and there was no trace of that narcissism so often found in successful artists. He was truly enthusiastic about what he was doing, and he knew how to kindle a fire in the hearts of generations of students. Each class was a piece of art — with a well-defined subject, beginning, middle and end, and though for decades he enjoyed a high reputation as a well-known scholar, he never looked down on students from the heights of his academic position. He always talked, argued and discussed with the youngest of students as with a full-fledged scholar, since there was no way to know whether the silver cup might not again be found in the sack of Benjamin.

I hope that I have not painted a severe picture of these encounters, since Haiim Rosén's classes were lively and merry, marked with the peculiar humour of the mentor. This was of course a mainly linguistic sense of humour, which developed

into a sort of secret linguistic code between Rosén and his pupils. The typical examples of linguistic phenomena were always chosen so that one remembered them for their cleverness. His classes combined two characteristics that are found together but rarely: on the one hand seriousness and even a solemn approach to scholarship and to the seeking of scientific truth, and on the other hand high spirits and a sense of fun in seeking that truth. It was a happy science, *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, and whoever saw Haiim Rosén at work could not fail to see that he was enjoying every minute of it. Furthermore, he not only enjoyed scholarship, but clearly also derived great satisfaction and stimulus from his encounter with intelligent young people. I imagine that some of his best ideas came to him while teaching, arguing and discussing. It was this that must have caused him to continue teaching as he had done for fifty years despite the weight of his many obligations and the frailty of his body.

The years only improved him, and he seemed to become ever more mercurial. He was among the first in the faculty to enjoy the benefits of the computer age and became a youthful surfer of the internet. Time and age could do him no harm: even with a weakened body his spirit was as strong as ever and his mind as sharp and penetrating as it had been a generation earlier.

We have lost a teacher who was always proud to belong to the Hebrew University. The University may be proud to have had him among its graduates and teachers, and his pupils may justly be proud to have studied with a great teacher.