

## LAUDATIO MAURITS DE VROEDE

*K. De Clerck\**

In June 1943 Maurits De Vroede (who was only just 21) obtained an M.A. in history at the State University of Ghent. Being successively employed as a teacher at several secondary schools and at a teachers' training college for a considerable time, he nevertheless continued to do scholarly research. The results regularly appeared in journals and in book form. In 1957 De Vroede got his Ph.D. and in 1970 he gained the degree of "geaggregeerde voor het hoger onderwijs". From 1972 onwards he held a chair at the Catholic University of Louvain, where he was given emeritus status in 1987.

Generally spoken, the work of Maurits De Vroede can be divided into three parts :

1. the history of the Flemish movement and the relations between Belgium and the Netherlands;
2. the history of the press;
3. the history of education, which became, since the 1960s, his favorite field of research.

As far as parts one and two are concerned, De Vroede did a considerable amount of pioneering work by studying new records. In view of the history of education he published in 1970, as the result of an intensive study, an important book on teacher training in Belgium and Luxemburg mainly during the first half of the XIXth century. This work shows, at least embryonically, a clear preference for the social approach in the history of education. Later on his conception of socio-historical research in education was given concrete form in numerous and often international publications. One of the most significant contributions to the Belgian educational

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historiography is undoubtedly the publication of an impressive inventory and characterization of the educational press in Belgium from 1817 onwards — a project under the editorship of De Vroede that started in 1970 and was completed in 1987. It was the result of a close cooperation of many years' standing between the departments of history of education of Louvain and Ghent.

De Vroede has always been in close contact with researchers from all over the world. In order to stimulate the international dialogue, he has founded the "Belgisch-Nederlandse Vereniging voor de Geschiedenis van Opvoeding en Onderwijs" and the "International Standing Conference for the History of Education".

We are pleased to present Maurits De Vroede with the SARTON MEDAL as a token of our recognition.

