Editor’s Note

This marks the twentieth issue of Aramaic Studies. Over the course of its history no one has contributed more to the journal's success than Willem Smelik, who served as editor or co-editor of every issue from 2003 to 2021.

Aramaic Studies’ predecessor was the Journal for the Aramaic Bible, founded by Smelik’s mentor, Johannes de Moor. De Moor served as co-editor, along with William (Bill) Petersen and Abraham Tal, for issues 1–2.1 (1999–2000). For these issues, Smelik served as secretary, whose tasks included typesetting. When De Moor retired in mid-2000, Smelik succeeded him as co-editor (starting with issue 2.2 [2000]), working alongside Petersen and Tal. In 2001, Smelik became sole editor of the Journal for the Aramaic Bible.

In the early 2000s, discussions began about expanding the scope of the Journal for the Aramaic Bible to include all languages and literatures of Aramaic, including Old, Achaemenid, Hatran, Palmyrene, Nabataean, Qumranic, Mandaic, Samaritan, Christian Palestinian, Syriac, the various Jewish dialects of Aramaic, as well as Neo-Aramaic. This broader vision was realised when the first issue of Aramaic Studies was published in 2003 (see introduction on pp. 3–4 of 1.1). Smelik invited Bas ter Haar Romeny to join him as co-editor of the first issue, and the two would continue in this capacity for more than a decade. I succeeded Ter Haar Romeny in 2016, first as associate editor, and then as co-editor with Smelik starting in 2020. Aramaic Studies 19.2 (2021) marked the final issue under Smelik’s fruitful editorship.

For almost two decades now, Aramaic Studies has consistently been the leading journal for the study of all aspects of Aramaic language and literature. On behalf of all scholars and students of Aramaic, I would like to express profound gratitude to Willem Smelik.

Aaron Michael Butts