Willem-Paul and Corinne
Preface

Why would you read this preface? As we start thinking what to write here, we wonder who is going to read these words.

From our perspective – that of writers addressing an audience of readers – you are most likely Willem-Paul de Roever. Willem: our main motivation in putting together this Festschrift is to honor you on the occasion of your retirement. In terms of scientific ancestry, you are a father to two of us, and a grandfather to the third\(^1\), and you have had a profound impact on our formation as computer scientists. At the personal level, we know you as a kind-hearted, generous person. We are grateful to know you in these ways, and hope to have encounters with you in many years to come.

Another likely possibility is that you are Corinne or Jojanneke, wife or daughter of Willem; the two strong pillars on which so much in his life is founded. You share the honor, respect, and love that went into the writing, as will be acknowledged by those contributing authors that know you – which are almost all. Also, we would like to thank you for your help in sending us photographs for inclusion in this book, and for your encouragement.

The next option is that you are one of the contributing authors. In this case you may wonder why it took us so long to get this work published. After all, wasn’t it “almost done” already at the retirement event in July 2008? The answer is twofold: we gave everyone ample time to revise their submissions in line with the recommendations by the referees; and we ourselves took ample time to put everything together. Our hope is that this will be visible in the quality of the final result.

Then maybe you are a colleague who knows Willem-Paul well from meetings or projects: When we selected possible contributors for this Festschrift, one of our intentions was to include those colleagues that have had a collaboration with Willem-Paul that was significant in its duration, its results, or both. A few had to decline. There may also be some colleagues that are missing from the author list although they shouldn’t be. If you happen to be one of them, we accept full responsibility for this mistake – which it is; nothing else. Our apologies then!

But in the case that you had little to do with the creation of this volume, and that you maybe don’t even know Prof. Dr. Willem-Paul de Roever in person, let us add that he retired, in 2008, from the Christian Albrechts University at Kiel, Germany. A theoretical computer scientist, he has made contributions to programming language semantics, in particular on the topics of program correctness, concurrent programming, and compositional and fully abstract

\(^1\) On occasions like this, it is also common to list the scientific ancestors of the honoree. Willem-Paul was a student of Jaco de Bakker, who in turn was a student of Adriaan J. van Wijngaarden, student of Cornelis B. Biezeno. All are Dutchmen.
semantics, which inspired the Festschrift’s title. Elsewhere in this volume, you can find a list of his main publications, as well as his students.

Most prominent amongst his publications are two comprehensive textbooks, one on data refinement\(^2\), and one on concurrency verification\(^3\). Their content was born out of his lectures and research, mostly during his time with the Christian Albrechts University, and they are thorough reference books on their respective topics.

We are glad to present contributions by colleagues from all stages of his scientific career, from the CWI in Amsterdam to the University of Kiel. If you read through this Festschrift, you will find that some authors answered Willem-Paul de Roever’s quest for precision by getting down to the very essence of the field – e.g., Allen Emerson about “meanings of model checking”, Leslie Lamport on “computer science and state machines”, or Dines Bjørner and Asger Eir on “ontology and mereology of domains”. On the other hand, you will also find contributions from numerous facets of the field – from game theory to compiler correctness and from fair scheduling to encryption algorithms.

When we started contacting prospective authors, we received enthusiastic responses. We realized once more what a talent Willem-Paul has for building strong, international teams of scientists who realize the potential of such collaborations and whose involvement goes beyond their thinking minds – to their hearts.

With the photo gallery included at the back of the book, we have taken up a passion of Willem-Paul de Roever as exercised in his text books to include photos of fellow scientists to give the reader a more personal view on the people behind the research results. Besides portraits, some scenes from the retirement event are included as well.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the authors, the people at Springer, Kirsten Kriegel, Rudolf Berghammer, and all those who took photographs at the farewell colloquium and offered us a wide collection of pictures, which made it hard for us to choose from them.

Our colleagues are thanked for their help with reviewing contributions to this Festschrift – sometimes on short notice and on a tight schedule: Jan Bredereke, Ralf Huuck, Oliver Kutz, Sebastian Kinder, and Karsten Sohr.

October 2009

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\(^2\) together with Kai Engelhardt
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