Official presentation of ‘The Banquet’
recipient of the

WORLD PRIZE FOR THE BOOK OF THE YEAR
FROM THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

(translated from Persian).

The Banquet: A Reading of the Fifth Sura of the Kur’an. Analysis of Al-Sura ‘Al-Ma’ida’ Based on the Theory of Semitic Rhetoric, 450 pages.

The book has recourse to several sources, Islamic and non Islamic texts, modern and ancient, and even Jewish and Christian Semitic texts that date back to Antiquity – texts that few actually master. The latter sources are used with unequalled skill and accuracy. The Semitic rhetoric, its terminology and its rules in its new method are presented and explained simply and clearly. The author ends with four indexes, one, of the authors whom he has mentioned; one, of the references to the Kur’an, one of the references to the Bible, and an index of the notions in the book.

The author is a Christian monk. In this book, he reaches the scientific conclusion that the text of the Kur’an has both unity and coherence that are very exceptional.

The theory of Semitic rhetoric stems from a Biblical research school that started in the mid eighteenth century and led in the late twentieth century to an independent discipline called ‘Rhetorical Analysis’. This discipline studies Semitic texts both in prose and poetry, sacred texts in the different Semitic languages as Hebrew, Aramaean, Akkadian, Ugaritic, etc. Mr. Cuypers is the first researcher to have applied this method to studies of the Kur’an in a systematic and broad way. He has reached extremely interesting and convincing results to solve the intricate matter of the Glorious Kur’an.

Mr. Cuypers’ specialty is the literary study of the Glorious Kur’an namely from the angle of the way it was composed, as well as its relation with previous sacred texts. He masters the Persian language and literature. Since 1989 Cuypers has been working in Egypt as member of the Dominican Institute of Oriental Studies (IDEO: Institut Dominicain d’Études Orientales).