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Groeneboer, Kees. 2002. *Een vorst onder de taalgeleerden: Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk, Taalafgevaardigde voor Indië van het Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap 1847-1873. (Foremost among scholars of language: Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk, linguist in the service of the Dutch Bible Society 1847-1873)* Leiden: KITLV Press. ISBN 9067181560. 965pp. Bibliography, Index. 5 maps. Several b/w photographs.

Kees Groeneboer's *bronnenpublicatie* (source publication) is an invaluable reference for philologists, anthropologists, theologians, historians, and linguists – and especially for those with an interest in North Sumatra (Batak), Lampung, and Bali. Printed on thin, yet high-quality paper, this 965 page strong publication is with 25x3.5 cm of modest size.

In the introduction (pp. 1-31) Groeneboer gives a detailed overview of the life and work of Dutch linguist Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk (1824-1894), emphasizing the period of his employment with the Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap (NBG – Dutch Bible Society) from 1847-1873.

The book consists largely of Van der Tuuk's correspondence with the NBG during his period of study with the Batak, Lampungese, and Balinese languages. The entire correspondence is published in unabbreviated form, and each letter is supplemented by a critical commentary in the form of notes and cross-references. These notes have been compiled with dedication by Groeneboer and are certainly one of the strongest points of this book. It is through these notes that the correspondence become transparent and meaningful to the reader. They contain references to related correspondence and to a wealth of external sources listed in the extensive bibliography (pp. 900-949), as well as background information.

The NBG correspondence are supplemented by correspondence between Van der Tuuk and his friends, colleagues, and organizations in the Netherlands and the Indies. With 264 primary and 10 supplementary documents, Groeneboer's work is well researched and a solid piece of scholarship. Nieuwenhuys' *De pen in gal gedoopt* (1962;

1982), in which only a small part of Van der Tuuk's correspondence was included, will become largely obsolete.

The correspondence are divided in five sections, which make up the five main chapters of the book. Chapter I (pp. 41-86), *Voorbereiding in Nederland*, starts with some of the early communication of Van der Tuuk and his study friend J. Roos, as well as a book review he published in *De Gids* under the pseudonym S.B. It covers Van der Tuuk's preparational phase in the Netherlands from the time he receives the job offer (11.11.1847) until his departure to Surabaya (1.6.1849) where he was raised. Van der Tuuk had left Surabaya thirteen years earlier to study in the Netherlands.

The second chapter, *Naar de Bataklanden, 1849-1857* (pp. 87-355), begins in Surabaya and Batavia where first the west monsoon and then a skin disease prevented Van der Tuuk from departing to Sumatra. He finally departs for Sumatra on 14.1.1851 and settles in Barus where he studied the Batak language intensively for six years.

The third chapter, *Tussenverblijf in Amsterdam, 1857-1868* (pp. 357-630), covers Van der Tuuk's correspondence during his years in Amsterdam where he compiled the material collected in Sumatra for the publication of a Batak-Dutch dictionary (1861), a Batak grammar (1864), a Batak reader (1860-1862), and various bible translations (1859-1867).

Chapter Four, *Naar de Lampongsche Districten, 1868-1869* (pp. 631-690), covers only one year, and is the shortest of the five chapters. Departing from Marseille Van der Tuuk arrives in the Dutch Indies in July 1868, but a rebellion in Buleleng prevents him from going to his destination Bali. Instead he receives an offer to study Lampungese in southern Sumatra where he spends one year. Despite his productivity in that year, relatively little has been published, not even his dictionary of six hundred handwritten pages.

The fifth and final chapter, *Naar Bali, 1870-1873* (pp. 691-832) covers his time in service of the Dutch Bible Society where he was given the task of translating the bible into Balinese. Here he embarks on his monumental work of 3,600 pages, the trilingual Kawi-Bali-Dutch dictionary published between 1897 and 1912. Van der Tuuk leaves the Dutch Bible Society in 1873 when he is given the opportunity to devote himself

exclusively to the study of languages without having to work on bible translations, a task that he always disliked.

His correspondence with the NBG and others pertaining to Indonesian languages and cultures are an indispensable scholarly resource containing a wealth of hitherto unknown facts about various aspects of Indonesian culture and the history of Dutch scholarship in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The book is supplemented by ten *bijlagen* (appendixes) consisting of supplementary documents that were attached to main documents published in chapters one to five (pp. 883–889), an exhaustive list of Van der Tuuk's publications (pp. 891–897), a comprehensive bibliography (pp. 899–949), and an index of names and institutions (pp. 951–965). Given the volume of the publication, the wealth of information contained, and the referential nature of the book, a subject index would have added considerably to the usefulness of Groeneboer's otherwise excellent publication.

Groeneboer's source publication proves once again that knowledge of the Dutch language is an essential prerequisite for serious scholars of Indonesian language, history and culture.

#### References

- Nieuwenhuys, Rob. 1962. Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk. De pen in gal gedoopt. Brieven en documenten verzameld en toegelicht. 1 ed. Amsterdam: Van Oorschot.
- Nieuwenhuys, Rob. 1982. Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk. De pen in gal gedoopt. Een keuze uit brieven en documenten. 2 ed. Amsterdam: EM. Querido's Uitgeverij B.V.