H. Poeze

R. Mrázek

Introduction

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HARRY A. POEZE

Introduction

Already in the second year of its existence, 1852, the Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Neêrlandsch Indië published the first issue of its journal *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*. In 1994 it could pride itself on the publication of the 150th volume of *Bijdragen*, which has thus become the longest-running scholarly journal on Southeast Asia in the world. This 150th volume precedes the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the KITLV itself by seven years. The explanation for this incongruity is that in a number of earlier years the Institute published more than one volume.

Of course, this special *BKI* anniversary calls for an appropriate special issue. For this the Editorial Committee and the KITLV Board agreed upon a volume in which the long history of *Bijdragen* is given ample attention. This historical, retrospective analysis is offset, however, by an attempt to identify the issues that are likely to become topical in the scholarly debate of the future. In this debate, *Bijdragen* hopes to play a prominent part, thus proving its resilience and adaptability after a century and a half of existence.

In both parts of this issue – that on the past and that on the future – the focus is on Indonesian studies, which have constituted in the past and still constitute at present *Bijdragen's* main field of interest, although the proportion of contributions on Southeast Asian regions, other than Indonesia, and Oceania is steadily growing.

The history of *Bijdragen* is the subject of the first article, by Gerrit Knaap. A. Teeuw then sets out to outline the history of Indonesian studies in the Netherlands and the Netherlands East Indies to provide the essential background against which *Bijdragen's* role in this respect may be evaluated.

Teeuw again is the author of the first of four articles on *Bijdragen's* role in Dutch scholarship on Indonesia. He surveys studies on languages, literature and linguistics, as does Peter Boomgaard for historical analyses and Jos D.M. Platenkamp and Michael Prager for articles on anthropology.

Contributions on law and administration are discussed by Jan Michiel Otto, Albert Dekker and Cora de Waaij. They combine their historical reviews with a look into the future of their particular field of research. They thus provide a smooth transition to the articles that try to identify the essential issues of future research, or the subjects that have up until now suffered from neglect. The – obviously personal – views on this are put forward by Hein Steinhauer for linguistics, Heather Sutherland for history

and Reimar Schefold for anthropology. Much to our regret, it has not been possible to include a similar contribution on language and literature.

In the retrospective articles, the inclusion of numerous references to *Bijdragen* articles was unavoidable. In the same way as in the *Bijdragen Inhoudsopgave*, of which six volumes have been published to date, these references are by number. The articles themselves are then listed consecutively in the bibliography that rounds off this issue.

We wish to say a special word of thanks to the contributors to this issue, who delved into the tens of thousands of pages of *Bijdragen* volumes in search of trends and other treasures and were prepared to share their personal insights with us.

Thanks are also due to Rita DeCoursey, Marjan Groen, Jolanda Leemburg and Mayke Smits for their contribution to the editing of this volume.