Judith E. Bosnak and Frans X. Koot (reisverslag vertaald en ingeleid door) met medewerking van Revo [read: Revi] A.G. Soekatno: *Op reis met een Javaanse edelman: Een levendig portret van koloniaal Java in de negentiende eeuw (1860-1875)* [Travelling with a Javanese nobleman: A lively portrait of colonial Java in the nineteenth Century (1860-1875)] 2013; Zutphen: Walburg Press, 2013. 286 pp. ISBN 9789057308673. Price: EUR 39.50 (hardback).

If such be needed, this remarkable volume is proof indeed that the study of Javanese in the Netherlands is alive and kicking. The bulk of it consists of a Dutch translation of a Javanese original, itself published in two editions in the nineteenth century. This is based on the second edition, which consists of two volumes, namely the *Tjarijos bab lampah-lampahipoen radèn mas arjo Poerwalelono* (*Het verhaal van de reizen van radèn mas arjo Poerwalelono*) (Van Dorp: Semarang, 1877), and *Lampah-lampahipoen radèn mas arjo Poerwalelono* (*De reizen van radèn mas arjo Poerwalelono*) (Ogilivie: Batavia, 1880). These were printed in Javanese script. The Javanese text is in prose (not verse), in the style called *krama*. The author uses the pseudonym Poerwalelono; his actual name was Tjondronegoro V. He was a member of a regent family from the North Coast of Java, and lived 1858-1885. (Regarding the spelling of such names, we are told [p. 33] that a decision was made to keep the spelling from the colonial period, rather than to adopt the modern or academic system.)

As related in the Voorwoord (Preface), this publication was offered as a surprise to Willem van der Molen by some of his former students, on the occasion of his appointment as honorary professor at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta, seeing that he had introduced them to Javanese and Javanese script using *De Reizen*. A transliteration of the whole was made by Revi Soekatno, Frans Koot made the translation, and Judith Bosnak wrote the introduction. It is a worthy tribute to him, and it is fortunate that means were found to publish the results.

There were in fact four journeys, taking the noble traveller over a large area of Java, including Batavia and the Sunda lands, as well as Surakarta and Yogyakarta. The reader is struck by the author's ability to observe and describe, and his enquiring mind. An example is his description of the provision of gas-lighting in the streets of Batavia, or the horse-drawn trams there. The story is crammed with fascinating detail. One has the tendency to look for places one knows today and compare them with what Poerwalelono

wrote on his journey. On p. 252, for instance, we read (in translation) about Yogyakarta: 'There is no big market. We do see market stalls standing in little groups together. The place that most deserves the name of "big market" lies close to the residence of the Patih, to the north of the fort'. Does this mean that around 1875 the Pasar Beringharjo of today had not yet actually been built?

An eye-witness account was an innovation in the Javanese literature of the time, but the genre of the travel-account stems from a long tradition, going back to the *Serat Centini* and even into the Majapahit period. The historical and literary significance of this work is discussed in an excellent introduction, and footnotes provide extra information. There is a glossary, and six useful explanatory paragraphs on such subjects as the Javanese calendar, colonial administration, and aristocratic titles. However, a major feature to mention here is the number of photographs directly relevant to the account, taken from the KITLV's huge collection, as well as the attractive colour reproductions of paintings from the period.

The translation is into stylish Dutch, which reads well. But this was not the first time that Poerwalelono's work had been translated. A French translation by Marcel Bonneff, with an extensive introduction, appeared in 1986 (see Reference below). Students of the Javanese language would probably also want to consult the original, however, and hence one hopes that some arrangement can be made to deposit the transliteration or make it available online.

In short, this publication is highly recommended for those who would like to discover how a Javanese gentleman viewed his world in the colonial period—that is, if one happens to be able to read Dutch.

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Reference

- Bonneff, Marcel
1986 *Pérégrinations Javanaises; Les Voyages de R.M.A. Purwa Lelana au XIX^e siècle (c.1860-1875)*. Paris: Etudes insulindiennes/archipel: 7. Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme Paris.