

IN MEMORIAM PROFESSOR A.J.G.H. KOSTERMANS (1906-1994)

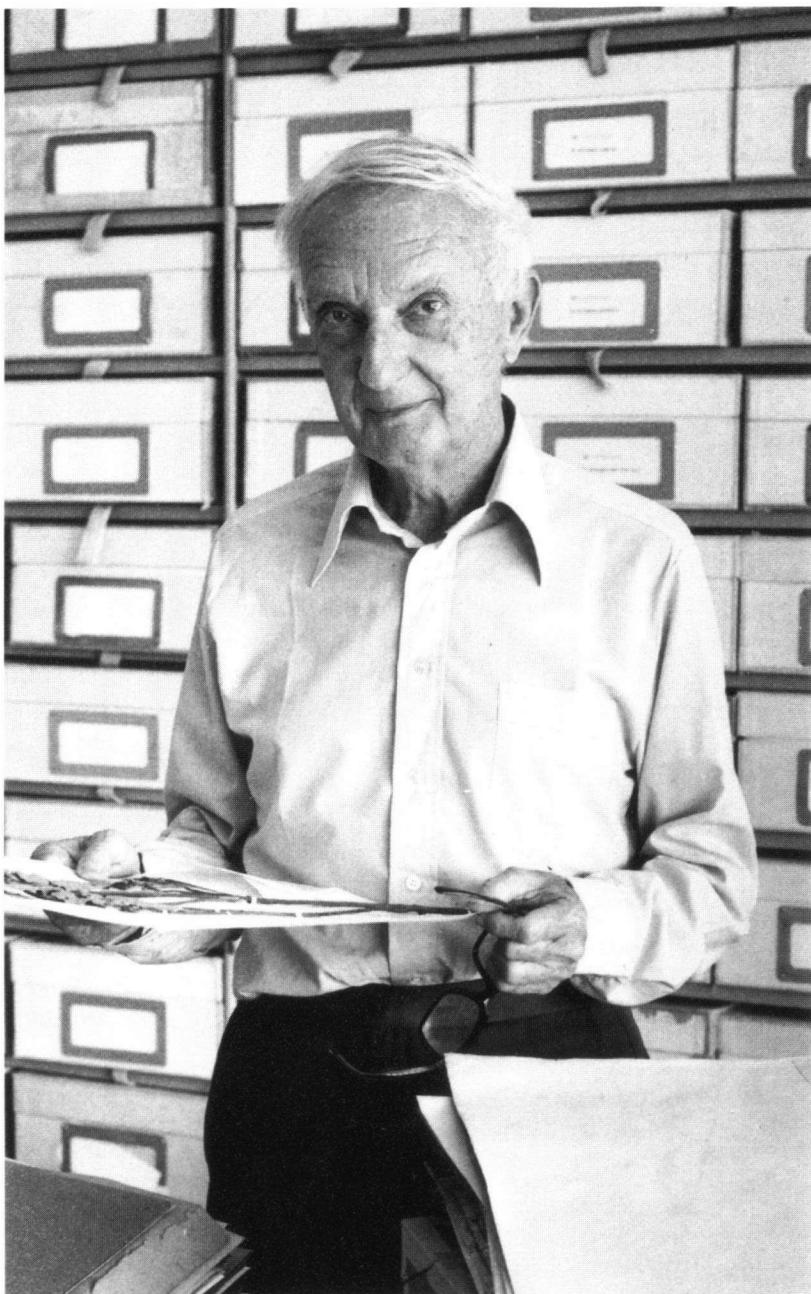
With the death of André ('Dok') Kostermans, at the age of 88, a truly extraordinary personality has passed away. Dok had bravely borne the inconvenience of an increasing number of ailments associated with high age, such as poor eyesight, and had just recovered from a broken hip when his heart condition (angina pectoris) once more became acute. He passed away on 10 July, 1994 in a hospital in Jakarta where he had been transported one day before from his residence at Pasir Muncang, Gadok, some 15 km out of Bogor. His remains have been interred in the small historical cemetery within the Kebun Raya, by special permission of the Government of Indonesia.

Kostermans can be ranked as one of the most important post-war Southeast Asian botanists and was the leading expert on Old World Lauraceae. Somewhat contrary to his stature, 'Dok' was physically strong; also he was industrious, intelligent, optimistic, and fluent in several languages, all qualities which doubtlessly guided him through a long and hazardous career. He worked hard as a scientist until shortly before his death. He was a controversial person, but liked and loved by many. Kostermans had a natural charisma, and easily established contact with his fellow human beings, irrespective of their political background, rank, class, colour, or nationality. He combined his kind nature with a strong will and determination.

On September 26, 1994, Kostermans was commemorated in Leiden during a brief ceremony, in the presence of his sister-in-law Mrs. L.C. Kostermans-Lanzing, his foster-son Tito Kostermans, and Mr. G. Kramer from the Dutch Embassy at Jakarta. On this occasion the establishment of the 'Kostermans Fellowships' was announced: grants for botanists to work on much needed classical taxonomic revisions of Malayan plant families. The funds will come from the Kostermans' estate which he almost completely bequeathed to the Rijksherbarium at Leiden.

André Joseph Guillaume Henri Kostermans was born on 1 July 1906, at Purworejo, Central Java. His father was a schoolteacher at the Dutch-Native primary school. He had one younger brother. André attended the primary school at Ngawi and Yogyakarta and the secondary school at Bandung, and later in Maastricht, the Netherlands (1924). In 1925 he embarked on the study of biology at Utrecht University, where he took his PhD in 1936 with a thesis on Lauraceae (and Malpighiaceae) of Surinam. That year he also taught at secondary schools in Utrecht, Maastricht, and Amsterdam.

In 1938 he was awarded a grant from the Buitenzorg Fund (Treub Fund) and subsequently went back to Java (Buitenzorg), also teaching in Jakarta. With the



Professor A.J.G.H. Kostermans in the herbarium at Leiden (1976).
Photograph Ruth van Crevel.

Japanese invasion in 1942, Kostermans joined the resistance for a short time, but was soon made a prisoner of war (1942–1945), transported to Singapore, later on to Thailand in an advance party for the reconstruction of the Burma railway, in the Kwai Noi River basin, proceeding up to Three Pagodas Pass. After the war, still in 1945, he returned to this area for plant collecting. In 1947 he was officially appointed Forest Botanist in the Forestry Service in Bogor. From 1954 onwards new staff for Herbarium Bogoriense was trained by him (with others). In the period 1955–1969 there was an intensive cooperation with the first director of Herbarium Bogoriense, Anwari Dilmy.

After the independence of Indonesia, Kostermans chose to stay on in the East and officially became an Indonesian citizen in 1962, adopting new Indonesian first names from friends: Ahmad Jahja Goh Hartono.

Right through the Dutch-Indonesian transfer of power and later on he rendered invaluable liaison services, and was instrumental in the continuously upheld good and fruitful botanical collaboration between Bogor and Leiden. Fully dedicated to botany and Indonesia, and to the fate of its flora and vegetation, he frequently expressed his vexation with the lack of efforts by others, and probably made some enemies in the process. Sometimes his criticism of fellow-botanists was not entirely justified.

Kostermans was officially attached to the Forestry Research Institute, and in later years, before his retirement, as assistant-director; he was also (since 1958) professor of plant ecology in the Universities of Bandung and Jakarta, and honorary scientist at the Bogor Herbarium. He held various visiting professorships abroad, supported by fellowships and grants. Up to 1984 he was engaged in generating a revised edition of K. Heyne's 'The useful plants of Dutch East Indies', which finally evolved into the multi-national PROSEA programme (1985). At his death he left at Bogor a databank in cupboards with some 70,000 reprints of relevant publications, collected for an intended encyclopedic 'Useful plants of South-east Asia'.

Through guest professorships and stipends he stayed for several periods outside Indonesia: 1967 University of Kentucky, Lexington, USA, also visiting Europe; 1968 USA and Europe; 1969 Sri Lanka for the Smithsonian Flora of Ceylon project; 1970/71 guest professorship at Aarhus, Denmark and also visiting Kew and Leiden; 1973 guest professorship at Zürich, Switzerland; 1975–1978 B.A. Krukoff botanist at Leiden.

In 1990 he was awarded the Commander's Cross of the Order of Oranje-Nassau in the Netherlands.

For a more detailed account of the life of Kostermans up to 1981, see M. Jacobs, *Reinwardtia* 10 (1982) 9–20. The Rijksherbarium also has an unpublished account by Kostermans himself with personal reminiscences. Most of his correspondence and unfinished manuscripts will be stored at L.

In the botanical world Dr. Kostermans will be remembered for the following outstanding achievements:

1) His major contribution to botanical exploration of Southeast Asia. He collected an unrivalled number of high quality herbarium specimens, mainly from Indonesia, but also including gatherings from S India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indo-china, and Papua New Guinea. In all, his collections amount to c. 40,000 numbers, and these are generally fertile and have several duplicates. He operated in more than 15 remote areas in Indonesia, predominantly in the 'difficult' tall lowland rain forest and had a feeling of collecting new or otherwise rare or particular material. This renders his collections more valuable than most others. At the peak of his active career he developed the so-called 'method Kostermans': piling up a fair number of duplicates from a certain tree wrapped in newspaper, and temporarily storing these with similar collections soaked in spirits, and drying these later on. The method achieved some notoriety because of the less than beautiful results. But Kostermans was in a hurry, as the forests rapidly dwindled.

2) His successful efforts (with others) to build a new and modern herbarium at Bogor (opened in April 1970). The invaluable collections had suffered decay in the post-colonial years in, by then, too small and obsolete premises. With increasing collecting activities the building of a new herbarium was urgent, as was duly understood by the authorities.

3) By fostering many children, and training a number of young Indonesian botanists, Kostermans played a major role in raising several generations of Indonesian scientists. Many of his adopted children and pupils have reached high positions in science or other areas in society, both within and outside Indonesia.

4) His output of a very high number of scientific publications, mostly on Lauraceae, but also including studies in Anacardiaceae, Bombacaceae, Chrysobalanaceae, Meliaceae, Mimosaceae, Sterculiaceae, and Tiliaceae: in total amounting to over 7,000 printed pages. His 'Bibliographia Lauracearum' (1964) will remain a vademecum for that family. The original annotated copy of this work is lost, but there is a duplicate in L. Unfortunately, a Flora Malesiana treatment of the Lauraceae, a very large and complex family, remained out of reach.

Kostermans described eight new genera and hundreds of new species, and also made hundreds of new combinations, mainly in the Lauraceae. Two genera and dozens of new species are named after him (see below).

The botanical community must be grateful for the invaluable services Dok rendered in his long and industrious life. His presence in and around Bogor will be sadly missed. In the Herbarium, the Kebun Raya, or at his home he received many international guests, and then the latest news and gossip from all over the world was exchanged. Malesian Botany will never be the same after his demise.

W. J. J. O. de Wilde & P. Baas

Brief chronological survey of main collecting localities

1938 Java: Jakarta and the islands in Jakarta Bay, and Nusa Kambangan. — 1945 Thailand: Kwae Noi area (partly with Bloembergen and Den Hoed). — 1946 Thailand and Indochina (for useful plants to be introduced in Indonesia). — 1947 West New Guinea: Momi-Ransiki, Arfak Mts (2000 m). — 1948 S Borneo. — 1949 Morotai, Banka. — 1950 Central Celebes (Malili), unfortunately all collections lost through fire in Makassar. — 1951 E and NE Borneo, Sankulirang I.; Central Java. — 1952 E Borneo (Baratus Mt, etc.). — 1953 S and NE Borneo. — 1954 NE Borneo: Nunukan I., Bulungan; E Borneo. — 1955 E and Central Borneo; W Java (Ujung Kulon); S Sumatra. — 1956 Central Borneo. — 1957 NE Borneo. — 1958 W Java: Prinsen I.; Bali. — 1960 W Java: Pulau Pencang, Ujung Kulon. — 1961 Sumbawa; E Java (Purwodadi Bot. Gard.); S Borneo. — 1962 Sumbawa; W Java: Mt Honje. — 1966 SW Celebes; W Irian Jaya. — 1969 Sri Lanka for Smithsonian Flora of Ceylon project. — 1977 S India (with Ridsdale); Kuala Lumpur. — 1979/1980 Sri Lanka.

Eponomy

Annonaceae: *Orophea kostermansiana* P.J.A. Keßler — Araliaceae: *Osmoxylon kostermansii* W.R. Philipson — Bombacaceae: *Coelostegia kostermansii* Soegeng-Reksodihardjo; *Kostermansia* Soegeng-Reksodihardjo; *Kostermansia malayana* Soegeng-Reksodihardjo; *Neesia kostermansiana* Soepadmo — Burseraceae: *Canarium kostermansii* Leenhouts; *Dacryodes kostermansii* Kalkman — Chrysobalanaceae: *Kostermanthus* G.T. Prance; *Kostermanthus heteropetalus* (Scort. ex King) G.T. Prance; *Kostermanthus malayanus* (Kosterm.) G.T. Prance — Combretaceae: *Combretum kostermansii* Exell — Dipterocarpaceae: *Anisoptera kostermansiana* Dilmy — Elaeocarpaceae: *Elaeocarpus kostermansii* Weibel — Ericaceae: *Diplycosia kostermansii* Sleumer; *Vaccinium kostermansii* Sleumer — Euphorbiaceae: *Glochidion kostermansii* Airy Shaw; *Macaranga kostermansii* Perry; *Phyllanthus kostermansii* Airy Shaw — Fagaceae: *Lithocarpus kostermansii* Soepadmo — Flacourtiaceae: *Casearia kostermansii* Sleumer; *Ryparosa kostermansii* Sleumer — Gesneriaceae: *Monophyllaea kostermansii* B.L. Burtt — Lauraceae: *Beilschmiedia kostermansiana* Robyns & Wilczek; *Cryptocarya kostermansiana* C.K. Allen; *Litsea kostermansii* C.E. Chang; *Ocotea kostermansiana* Vattimo — Leguminosae: *Acacia kostermansii* I. Nielsen; *Adenanthera kostermansii* I. Nielsen; *Albizia kostermansii* I. Nielsen; *Bauhinia kostermansii* K. Larsen & S.S. Larsen; *Crotalaria kostermansii* C. Niyomdhama; *Mucuna kostermansia* H. Wiradinata; *Pithecellobium kostermansianum* Mohlenbr. — Meliaceae: *Aglaia kostermansii* (Prijanto) Kosterm.; *Lansium kostermansii* Prijanto; *Reinwardtiodendron kostermansii* (Prijanto) D.J. Mabberley — Monimiaceae: *Kibara kostermansii* W.R. Philipson — Myristicaceae: *Knema kostermansiana* W.J.J.O. de Wilde — Myrsinaceae: *Ardisia kostermansii* B.C. Stone — Pandanaceae: *Freycinetia kostermansii* B.C. Stone — Rutaceae: *Tetractomia kostermansii* T.G. Hartley — Sterculiaceae: *Sterculia kostermansiana* I.G.M. Tantra — Tiliaceae: *Colona kostermansiana* Wirawan; *Schoutenia kostermansii* Roekmowati-Hartono — Verbenaceae: *Teijsmanniodendron kostermansii* Moldenke.

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