

DEDICATION

Joséphine Th. Koster entered her service at the Rijksherbarium as an assistant, April 1930, in the midst of the economic crisis. She was engaged as an unsalaried collaborator, the then current type of position the Netherlands' State could offer its scientific offspring. When Prof. Dr. H. J. Lam, freshly appointed Director in August 1933, ordered her to start work each morning as early as the salaried staff-members, she resigned from her unremunerative post by 31 Dec. 1933. She then continued, as a guest of the Rijksherbarium, her investigations on the Compositae of the Dutch East Indies, and in 1935 she took her doctor's degree on the thesis 'The Compositae of the Malay Archipelago' at Leyden University. Her promotor was Prof. Lam.

In the end the unfavourable labour-market of that time appeared to have favourable consequences for algology; for Miss Koster, she once confessed to me, had a great ambition to teach biology in secondary schools!

When Madame Weber-van Bosse in 1934 presented her famous collection of algae to the Rijksherbarium, she made it a condition that a special curator for this collection be appointed. Prof. Lam offered this post to Dr. Koster, who gladly accepted it, particularly since Madame Weber happened to be an old friend of the Koster family. She was appointed by 1 Nov. 1934. Common botanical interests had brought together Madame Weber-van Bosse and the Koster family, a clan of keen amateur botanists. Old ties of friendship were resumed and Madame Weber instructed Miss Koster in her manor of Eerbeek which was for many years a famous centre of algology.

No one could have better fulfilled the enormous task of rearranging the collections already present in the Rijksherbarium (*ca.* 23.000 specimens) and the new acquisitions (*ca.* 50.000 specimens) which included the invaluable collections of Kützinger and Hauck among others. In the course of many years she rearranged the collections in such a way that any investigator can now easily find the specimens he is looking for. Type-specimens in particular, many of which are present in the collections, can generally be found without much delay by means of extensive indexes. It is undoubtedly one of Dr. Koster's greatest achievements to have made so easily accessible one of the most important algal collections in the world. Not only in this way has she rendered invaluable services to algal taxonomy, but also by sorting out and sending on loan, all over the world, collections and specimens required by algal taxonomists. She has enjoyed receiving the numerous visiting botanists from abroad and has entertained them at her home. With pride she showed, at the turn of the year, her picture-gallery of good wishes for the new year, the evidence of the international network in which she partook. She considered this task her prime one, to be accessible to others.

For many years, Miss Koster was one of the few specialists on algal taxonomy in the Netherlands and therefore the centre of almost all algological activities. Those concerned with algae, freshwater as well as marine ones, came to her for advice; for many botanists, particularly plant-ecologists, she indefatigably identified innumerable samples. In this way, good-humoured, witty, helpful, Dr. Koster became a well-known character in

the national and international algological world. She took on the functions of secretary of the 'Hydrobiologische Vereniging' and the 'International Phycological Society', and she was for many years a member of the International Committee for Algal Nomenclature. Enthusiastically she instructed those interested in algae, enthusiastically she lured me into that fascinating realm of weedy coasts uncovered by the receding tides, a realm of which I shall remain a subject for the rest of my life. We explored together many a shore in France, Ireland, and on the Channel Islands; how perfectly stimulating were these roams over slippery boulders and rocky outcrops, from one discovery to the next!

Scientifically, she led a dual life; Indo-malaysian Compositae continued to interest her as well as the algae. In the course of her career at the Rijksherbarium she published a number of papers on Compositae and algae, particularly the blue-greens on which group she became a specialist. We may assume that she will continue to produce her highly esteemed contributions to plant-taxonomy for many years after her retirement, when her successors at the Rijksherbarium will be in charge of the collections.

It must be an immense pleasure to her that her once solitary algological nucleus has now expanded into a group of cells distributed over several scientific institutions in the Netherlands.

We would like to dedicate this *Blumea* instalment with papers predominantly on algal taxonomy, morphology, and ecology to Dr. Joséphine Th. Koster, in recognition of her great service to algal taxonomy and algal taxonomists.

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Photograph Ruth van Crevel

Dr. JOSEPHINE TH. KOSTER
at her desk in the Rijksherbarium, 1967.