



Professor Dr. C. Kalkman, 1990.

Portrait painted by Carla Rodenberg and presented to Dr. Kalkman on the occasion of his retirement.

PROFESSOR KALKMAN RETIRES

On 13 December 1990 Prof. Dr. Cornelis (Kees) Kalkman retired from the positions of Professor of Plant Systematics and Scientific Director of the Rijksherbarium/Hortus Botanicus by presenting his valedictory lecture to the academic community of Leiden University and the assembled Dutch Botanical world. The day after, circa 170 staff members and partners joined in the research institute for a memorable farewell party, culminating in a show around the personality of the parting Director.

Born in Delft on 5 May 1928, Kalkman used the opportunity of early retirement at the age of 62, after a long term as an active and successful administrator and coordinator of research and teaching in plant taxonomy in Leiden. This now offers him the possibility to return to taxonomic work on Rosaceae and on writing a textbook on economic botany. He also continues for a couple of years as Chairman of the Flora Malesiana Foundation, and is as such active in further internationalisation and speeding up of the Flora project.

Kalkman's career line is an exemplary one for the position he ultimately held. Following his study of Biology at Leiden University from 1948–1955 he worked for a number of years as forest botanist in West New Guinea. From 1959–1972 he was on the scientific staff of the Rijksherbarium, actively engaged in monographic work (his thesis on *Prunus* was published in 1965), teaching at various levels of the Biology curriculum, and also strongly engaged in the budding democratic institutions which later resulted in the Biology Subfaculty Council and in the University Council. When Professor Van Steenis retired in 1972 from the Directorship of the Rijksherbarium, democracy in Leiden University was at a peak, and the selection committee for a successor was strongly advised by the entire Rijksherbarium Staff to choose Kalkman out of the two alternatives considered suitable for the post.

Kalkman's Directorship of the Rijksherbarium can perhaps best be characterised as that of successfully consolidating the favourable position of the institute in the Science Faculty of Leiden University in a period when other research oriented departments were seriously affected by staff reductions, budget cuts, and in the case of classical fields like taxonomy sometimes even total annihilation. For this major achievement we are greatly indebted to Kalkman. It could only be achieved thanks to his tenacious and steady fight for the institute and biological discipline he knew to be of lasting value. To a large extent it could also only succeed thanks to the respect for his personality and integrity he commanded among all the Faculty and University administrators he had to negotiate with.

Another major achievement of Kalkman's directorship was the merger of the Leiden Botanical Garden and the Rijksherbarium into one research institute, which came into effect early in 1989 after a long preparatory phase. The marriage of the then 399 years old Hortus Botanicus and the Rijksherbarium, with its comparatively young age of 160 years, turned out to be a happy one to the benefit of both partners, and terminated a strange situation where the study and curating of a living and dead collection were separated institutionally. The merger led to greater autonomy for the institute in research policy; it also resulted in a separation of responsibilities for the scientific and administrative management so that in the last two years Kalkman's title changed from general to scientific director.

Due to his manifold activities within the Leiden University and the Dutch botanical world, Kalkman did not travel extensively and he may have been regarded as somewhat of an introvert by the international community. In Leiden we have grown to appreciate the man behind the slightly introverted facade as someone with a dry but very entertaining wit and always a well-considered and helpful opinion when advice or leadership were needed.

We wish Professor Kalkman a very happy and productive retirement, and are fortunate to have him in the institute as an active honorary staff member. We also congratulate him with the very well deserved Royal Decoration (Knight in the Order of the Dutch Lion) which was bestowed on him to acknowledge his many outstanding services.

PIETER BAAS