

# SKETCHES IN THE SPANISH



In fond memory we dedicate this issue of the *Journal of Ethnobiology* to Dr. C. Earle Smith, Jr. As a highly regarded scholar of botany and archaeological botany, "Smitty" also possessed a warm and outgoing personality that drew people to him. I have a vivid memory from my student days when I first met Smitty at an academic meeting. He, along with Volney Jones and Dick Ford, had invited fledgling archaeobotanists to an evening gathering, and Smitty was going around and introducing us to one another. His ruddy smile and pleasant nature relaxed even the most petrified amongst us.

Smitty's students David Lentz and Charlotte Gyllenhaal (1988) and Emily McClung de Tapia (1989) have provided us a thorough overview of his impressive academic accomplishments. Emily also took the time to organize his published and unpublished works, and offers a specific look at his contributions to Mexican ethnobotany (this volume). A brief scan of his bibliography reveals that, in addition to primary research, he enriched his profession with biographical sketches, book reviews, and synthetic works. His views on sharing information are revealed by his publications in foreign language journals and outlets.

I would like to share with you some common threads that weave throughout the papers in this volume that reflect Smitty's own interests and his approach to the profession of ethnobiology. I think that he would be proud of the diversity of research interests and scholarship expressed by these authors.

Bob Bye and Eldemira Linares expand upon Smitty's interests in human-plant interactions by examining the continuity or disjunction of the biological products of five tropical market plants over a four century period in central Mexico. Smitty understood that efforts to document ethnobotanical processes are often grounded in baseline archaeological contributions such as those he made. Although farther removed in subject matter and geographical area, Brian Hesse makes a similar contribution to understanding ethnobiological processes, this time in the form of prehistoric human-fauna interactions. He examines 4000 years of Palestinian archaeological records in light of diverse modern theories on the origins of the food tradition of pork prohibition.

Smitty's pioneering efforts in Central and South American archaeobotany required major investments in learning the modern flora of foreign regions, and in becoming familiar with both the archaeological and ethnographic literature. David Lentz so aptly contributes to and continues this research tradition with his multi-faceted look at the use of coyol by pre-Columbian Mesoamericans.

The difficulty and care required in identifying ancient plant remains is a theme of some C. Earle Smith publications. These concerns are reflected in my efforts to document the criteria of identification of ancient reedgrass cigarettes and their contents. Pamela Ford, though working with artiodactyl carpals, shares the same scholarly goals of fully describing the modern alternatives and providing explicit criteria that can be understood and duplicated by others.

Smitty's bibliography reveals his interest in the history and development of the discipline of archaeobotany. Emily McClung de Tapia continues this theme in her personal perspective on Mexican ethnobotany, where she explores how some ethnobotanists aim to mesh the goals of pure science with important humanistic concerns. This view parallels our Society's current leading role in defining the dimensions of socially responsible research with native groups.

In this volume Richard Evans Schultes, Brian Hesse and Emily McClung de Tapia share with us insights into the nature of C. Earle Smith, Jr., the man and the scholar. I easily envision that on many occasions in the field Smitty probably grabbed a nearby stick and smoothed a patch of dirt to sketch something by way of explanation. I do it myself, and am honored to be able to sketch for you this perspective on his contributions, research goals, and the interests he shared with many of us. If an "Ethnobotanical Hall of Fame" existed, he would surely be inducted.

Karen R. Adams

LENTZ, DAVID L. and CHARLOTTE GYLLENHAAL. 1988. C. Earle Smith, Jr., 1922-1987. *Economic Botany* 42(2):284-285.

de TAPIA, EMILY McCLUNG. 1989. In Memoriam. *Journal of Ethnobiology* 9(1):115.