

ISE Newsletter



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Editorial

Dear fellow members of the ISE

It is central to Ethnobiology in general, and for Ethnopharmacology in particular, that traditional knowledge is understood as the result of the systematic observation of human-environment interaction by people's wit, shaped by beliefs and cultural biases. It is, therefore, important that ethnopharmacologists devote their best efforts and sufficient time to establish a cultural dialogue of mutual respect with the individuals and groups of all the different cultures they work with (including, indigenous communities, chemists, pharmacologists, botanists, anthropologists, local expertise, local authorities, etc), and that research results must be meaningful to the original knowledge holders.

In the drug development arena, it is the task of ethnopharmacology to construct new AND effective ways to develop plants into drugs based on traditional medicine experiences and observations. Clearly, pharmacognosy continues to provide useful methods, but is not prepared to fully encompass the body of useful data from traditional knowledge as a basis for drug development. The pharmaceutical industry has proven that high through put screening, if serves well the purpose of feeding the "too difficult the task - too risky the business -very expensive must the drugs be", it is not successful strategy in discovering new drugs. Moreover, the necessarily customized (quasi case by case) analyses that any sort of remedy deserves, hardly makes sense from an industry perspective of tracking active molecules from as many sources as necessary. It is the task of ethnopharmacology to effectively combine the insights of indigenous healers and open-minded MDs on therapeutic and toxic effects of medicinal practices, with methodological strategies that can lead to significant and meaningful results for the development of quality plant drugs. It is also the task of Ethnopharmacology research that these results are meaningful and useful for those opting for, or in need of, processing their own drugs from local plants.

I am honoured to have been given the chance to preside over the International Society for Ethnopharmacology, and hope to facilitate an open and positive exchange among the diverse classes of scientists who make up our community. I am pleased and grateful that such scientists are willing to share their experiences and knowledge gained from the interaction with an even bigger and more interesting array of peoples. I look forward for the discussions and am eager to accompany the scientific advances that ISE can help bring forth.

With my best regards,
Elaine Elisabetsky
President ISE (2003 - 2004)

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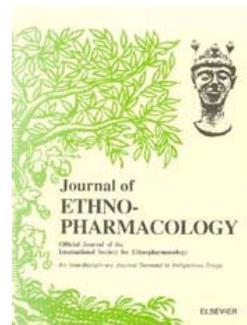
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Most of our Society's international conferences have been held in Europe (Strasbourg 1990, Uppsala, 1992, London, 1996, Zurich 2000) but also in Peking (1994) and Hawai'i (2001). However, Africa has played an important role in the development of modern medicine and with the enormous medical and socio-economic problems on this continent there is an urgent need to strengthen research efforts on African phytomedicines, and their potential role e.g. in primary health care. An exciting and widely discussed example of a new drug for the 'North' is the development of an extract from *Hoodia* spp - a traditional medicine of the Khoi and San of South Africa and Namibia into an appetite suppressant drug. Thus our last meeting was held jointly with the SAAB (South African Association of Botanists) and took place from 8. – 11.1.2003 at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Of course, ethnopharmacology, ethnopharmacy and ethnobotany were among the main topics, but taxonomy/ systematics, ecology, physiology and biotechnology were equally well represented. Overall the conference attracted more than 300 researchers from 33 countries, a record number for a conference on such a topic in southern Africa. Three plenary lectures were among the highlights of the congress:

- *AE (Bream) van Wyk* (Univ. Pretoria, ZA) - Plants, peoples and cultures: perspectives from Southern Africa
- *Maurice Iwu* (Bioresources Development and Conservation Programme, USA and Nigeria) - Biodiversity and developments of new phytomedicines and biodiversity conservation in Africa
- *EE Elisabetsky* et al. (Univ. Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil) - Ethnopharmacology as source of new drug paradigms: the case of an Amazonian 'brain tonic'

But the liveliest and most important parts were the short lectures and posters given by numerous researchers (especially younger ones). Many of these showed the high level of academic research in South Africa and how the country develops a new democratic science encompassing all elements of the society. Many young African PhD students participated and it is to be hoped that they have a chance use their skills in the development of South Africa. The AIDS epidemic is in many countries of Africa, of course, of great concern

and many researchers looked at ethnopharmacological approaches to combat it. Other important area included anti-infective, anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory agents, sustainable use of medicinal plants, and authentication of herbal products

Our society awarded three prizes for posters in the area of ethnopharmacology. The posters were judged by *Elaine Elisabetsky* (Brazil), *Renate Seitz* (Germany), *Peter Houghton* (UK) and *Patrick Owen* (Canada). A joint first prize was awarded to

- *S. Subramoney, SF van Vuuren* (presenting author) and collaborators from the University of Witwatersrand in Parktown, ZA and from Anadolu University in Eskisehir, Turkey for their poster 'Antimicrobial properties and geographical variation in essential oil composition of fever tea, *Lippia javanica* (Verbenaceae)' and

- *S. Lyantagaye* (presenting author) and DJG Rees from the University of the Western Cape Bellville, ZA for their poster 'Screening *Tulbaghia violacea* extracts for the presence of apoptotic compounds'

The second price went to *Nadia Jacobo-Herrera* and collaborators from the University of London, UK for their poster 'NF-κB inhibitors from *Valeriana officinalis* L., an important European medicinal plant'.

Organising the conference had been quite a challenge and all members of the ISE were delighted to participate in a high-quality conference, which clearly will have a significant influence on the development of the field in Southern Africa. I think none of the ISE members had foreseen that our participation would have such an impact. About 30 members including about 10 student members attended the AGM of our society. *Peter Houghton* from Kings College, Univ. London, UK was elected as our new President-Elect and *Anna Jaeger* (Copenhagen, Denmark) as our new treasurer. A large number of new, mostly very young members were elected to the board. Details will be available in the near future on our homepage. Our special thanks go to *Prof. Marion Meyer* and his team for organising a conference, which went extremely well and for their very kind and extremely friendly attention to all the delegates needs. Our next conference is planned for 2004. So watch out, especially here in the newsletter, for exciting announcements.

*Prof Michael Heinrich
Past-President (2000- 2002)*

Winner of Poster Awards

Antimicrobial properties and geographical variation in essential oil composition of fever tea, *Lippia javanica* (Verbenaceae)

S Subramoney, SF van Vuuren, AM Viljoen, B Demirci and KHC Ba_er

¹Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, 7 York road, Parktown 2193, South Africa

²Medicinal and Aromatic Plant and Drug Research Center (TBAM), Anadolu University, 26470-Eski_ehir, Turkey

Lippia javanica is extensively used in herbal preparations as a decongestant, for colds and coughs. The essential oil chemistry varies dramatically both within and between natural plant populations. As the antimicrobial activity is directly related to the specific composition of the oil, the activity also fluctuates. The essential oils were analysed by GC-MS and a cluster analysis performed. From sixteen samples (representing five natural populations), five chemotypes were identified (myrcenone, carvone, piperitenone, ipsenone and linalool). The oil showed minimal activity against *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli*, and *Bacillus cereus*, and no apparent activity against *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* in disk diffusion assays. The oil did have activity against *Candida albicans* and *Cryptococcus neoformans*. Time kill studies were performed on three microbial respiratory isolates (*Klebsiella pneumonia*, *Cryptococcus neoformans* and *Bacillus cereus*) and the strongest bacteriostatic effect was observed for *Klebsiella pneumonia*.

Screening *Tulbaghia violacea* extracts for the presence of apoptotic compounds

SSL Lyantagaye and DJG Rees

Department of Biotechnology, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535, South Africa

There are two ways in which cells die: either they are killed by injurious agents, or they are induced to commit suicide (Apoptosis). Apoptotic cells shrink, develop bubble-like blebs on their surfaces, have the DNA in their nucleus degraded, and break into small, membrane-wrapped, fragments. Apoptosis is needed to destroy cells that represent a threat to the integrity of the organism, such as cells infected with viruses, cells with DNA damage, and cancer cells. Some DNA damaged cells develop ways of preventing apoptosis, leading to the formation of tumours. We are screening the plant *Tulbaghia violacea* (bush garlic) for anti-cancer compounds. Scientific justification on the anti-cancer activity of this plant is crucial. We show the occurrence of apoptotic killing in CHO cells treated with extracts from *Tulbaghia violacea*, based on four analyses: 1) microscopy for cell shrinkage and membrane blebbing, cytometry for 2) phosphatidyl-serine translocation to the outer surface of the cell membrane and 3) caspase-3 activation and 4) agarose gel electrophoresis for fragmentation of chromosomal DNA. We are currently verifying the mechanism by evaluating cytochrome-c release from mitochondria to cytoplasm and PARP cleavage using flow cytometry. Purification towards characterisation of compounds that can be used in the development of anti-cancer drugs, using chromatography and spectroscopy is underway.

NF- κ B inhibitors from *Valeriana officinalis* L., an important European medicinal plant

NJ Jacobo-Herrera, P Bremner, S Gibbons and M Heinrich

Centre for Pharmacognosy and Phytotherapy, The School of Pharmacy, University of London, 29-39 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AX, U. K.

Valeriana officinalis L. is a well-known European medicinal plant. Among its historical uses is the treatment of inflammatory conditions such as throat inflammation, rheumatism, and varicose veins. However, its use in modern phytotherapy is restricted to the treatment of nervous conditions. So far, around 150 compounds have been isolated from this plant, and the search for their therapeutic profiles is still in progress. We have shown that *V. officinalis* is an inhibitor of the transcription factor NF- κ B, which is an important mediator of inflammation. One single isolated active compound, the sesquiterpene acetylvalerenolic acid, and several fractions with at least two compounds were found to be inhibitors of NF- κ B. Thus, this study provides biochemical evidence for the species anti-inflammatory traditional use in Ancient Europe



Ethnobotany at the University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA.

Ethnobotany in the Department of Botany at the University of Hawai'i, has been a continuous feature since the first courses were first offered before WWI. Students who have taken courses and earned degrees from the Department include these eminent scholars: *Isabella Abbott* (first Hawaiian woman to earn a Ph.D.; named Distinguished Economic Botanist of 2001 by the Society for Economic Botany), *Alvin Chock* (former USDA Asia-Pacific Region Director), *Dennis McKenna* (ethnopharmacologist), *Shengi Pei* (organizer of ethnobotanical research in China and Nepal), and *Art Whistler* (Pacific ethnobotanist). Other individuals who have been associated with Hawaiian Ethnobotany include: *Kuswata Kartawinata*, *Beatrice Krauss*, *Mary Pukui*, *Joseph Rock*, and *Harold St. John*.

Although research and education in Ethnobotany has long been based in the Department of Botany, the Departments of Anthropology, Biology, and Geography include ethnobiology faculty who teach Ethnobotany courses, conduct research, and support graduate students. The following outlines the primary degrees, courses, faculty members, graduate student research projects, other resources, and the new Hui Konohiki program.

Degrees

M.S./M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are currently offered through the Departments of Anthropology, Botany, and Geography. M.S./M.A. students who elect the Plan A Program conduct an independent research project and write a formal thesis. The M.S. Plan B Program requires participation in a research project, for which the student writes a short report. The M.A. (Geography and Anthropology) Plan B Program requires two substantial research papers and a research proposal. In all cases, students take a selection of courses in Botany, Anthropology, Geography, and other UH departments. A B.S. degree in Ethnobotany is under consideration by the University administration, with likely approval and introduction in Fall 2003. This will be a trans-disciplinary degree based in Botany, with a core of Ethnobotany and

required studies in Anthropology and Biogeography. The capstone course of the B.S. track involves applied research in the local community and evaluation shared among a combination of faculty advisors and community leaders.

Courses

Graduate students work with their advisory committee to select the combination of courses best suited for their professional objectives, including courses from a broad variety of departments and programs.

Currently offered Ethnobotany courses (through the Department of Botany) include: Introductory Ethnobotany, Advanced Ethnobotany, Medical Ethnobotany, Ecological Ethnobotany, Hawaiian Ethnobotany, Cognitive Ethnobotany, Quantitative Ethnobotany, and Ethnoecological Methods. Courses in Economic Botany and Ethnopharmacology are under development. The Medical Anthropology Program offers a variety of courses that include Ethnobotany modules featuring ethnobiology theory, research design, ethnographic field methods, ethnomedicine, food and medicine, plants in prehistory, and cultures of Asia and the Pacific. The Hawaiian Studies Program – which now offers undergraduate courses in traditional agriculture, medicine, canoe navigation, and fiber arts – will in the near future offer an M.A. degrees that will become an additional option for Ethnobotany students.

Graduate Student Research Projects

At present more than 40 students focusing on Ethnobotany are enrolled in Graduate Programs in Anthropology, Botany, Geography, and the Pacific Studies Program. Although students have conducted research on all tropical continents, the principal geographic focus of ethnobotanists based in Hawai'i has been the Central and South Pacific. Past and present students have conducted research in: American Samoa, Bolivia, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Fiji, French Polynesia, Guiana, Hawai'i, India, Indonesia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Nepal, Panama, Peoples Republic of China, Peru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Surinam, Tanzania, Tonga, and Vietnam.



Many students choose to conduct research in their own culture in order to better understand themselves, to conserve traditional knowledge of their families, and to ask scientific questions about the interrelations between people and plants.

Students are encouraged to develop independent research projects rather than to work on faculty-led projects. Examples of student projects in four focal areas include: Medical Ethnobotany and Ethnopharmacology: conservation of medicinal plants in the Tibetan community in exile; ethnopharmacology of algae in Hawaiian traditional medicine; evaluation of pharmacological activity of Marshallese plant resources; diversity of medicinal plants of Cambodia; evaluation of plants used by traditional Tanzanian healers to treat viral infections; side effects of *Piper methysticum* (kava) consumption.

Ecological Ethnobotany: evaluation and modeling of harvesting strategies used for collection of wild plants used in hula and lei-making; ecological restoration of culturally important Native Hawaiian plants; ethnoecology of high altitude medicinal plants in Nepal; comparisons of non-timber forest product knowledge and use in American Samoa; distributions of mangrove species, environments, and uses in the Southern Pacific; GIS vegetation and climate mapping of culturally important resource units.

Cultural Ethnobotany and Economic Botany: construction and significance of Tongan voyaging canoes; hunting and fishing techniques and plants in Ecuador; clarification of Hawaiian 'awa cultivar diversity; diets of long-lived communities in Japan; evolution and distribution of Austronesian technologies and cultivars; plants used in Marquesan tatoos; Japanese crops introduced into Hawai'i.

Cognitive Ethnobotany: traditional Hawaiian plant taxonomies; symbolism and religious significance of felted bark in Polynesia; processes of adoption of plants into Polynesian medicinal systems; models of decision-making for resource conservation; identification of simple rules for cultural interaction with plants and plant environments; evolution and adaptation of immigrant knowledge of fruits and vegetables; contested perspectives on "weeds;" rationale for selection of tree species used in West African drums.

Scholarships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships are available through

each department on a very competitive basis. At the time of this writing more than 90% of the Ethnobotany students in the Department of Botany have support for their studies or research. Ethnobotany students in Anthropology, Botany, and Geography have been supported through the East-West Center, Center for Pacific Island Studies, Native Hawaiian Leadership Project, Hawai'i Community Foundation, Lyon Arboretum, Medical School, Cancer Research Center, and language scholarships, as well as by major foundations and governmental funding agencies.

Applications for graduate study in the Departments of Anthropology and Botany highlight the international demand for programs in Ethnobotany and the very competitive nature of these programs – many more students apply than are admitted. The strongest applicants are those with clear professional objectives whose interest in plants transcends utilitarian concerns and includes interest in human-plant interrelations and/or conservation of ethnobiological knowledge in their own communities.

Faculty in Ethnobotany, Ethnobiology, and Ethnopharmacology

Nina Etkin (Anthropology) - Medical Anthropology, Ethnopharmacology, Africa, Hawai'i. Former president of the International Society for Ethnopharmacology.

Associate Editor of *Pharmaceutical Biology*; *Journal of Ethnopharmacology*, and other ethnobotanical journals

Lisa Gollin (Medical School) - Medical Anthropology, Asian Ethnobotany, Ecology.

Nanette Judd (Medical School) - Hawaiian traditional plant medicines and practices.

Will McClatchey (Botany) - Medical Ethnobotany, Ethnopharmacology, Evolutionary Biology. Currently, Secretary for the Society for Economic Botany.

Mark Merlin (Biology) - Biogeography, Pacific/Asian Ethnobotany.

Tamara Ticktin (Botany) - Ecological Ethnobotany, Conservation.

Lyndon Wester (Geography) - Biogeography, Asian Ethnobotany.

Other Resources

The University of Hawai'i offers rich and diverse resources that support ethnobotanical research and the conservation of traditional knowledge. These include a world class library with extensive collections of books,

manuscripts, and maps – especially for the Pacific and Asia. Other important resources include the ethnomusicology instrument collection (primarily plant materials), the College of Tropical Agriculture research stations and collections of tropical trees and ornamental plants, the Department of Botany herbarium, and the Lyon Arboretum. Important community resources include the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Maritime Center, City of Honolulu botanical gardens, Waikiki Aquarium, and cultural centers for each of the major immigrant and ethnic populations. Hawai'i is located in a subtropical, oceanic location where the weather is uniformly moderate, fostering the growth of a wide variety of plants. Approximately 7,000 species of angiosperms grow in the University's 200 acre rainforest Lyon Arboretum, which is used for teaching and research. Current student projects in the Arboretum include a common garden study of Hawaiian 'awa varieties, restoration of a tract of native forest, studies of Chinese medicinal plants, and out-planting experiments of plants used in production of lei.

Hui Konohiki Program

An emerging collaboration between Drs. *Lilikala Kame'eleihewa* (Hawaiian Studies) and *Kim Bridges* (Botany) has led to development of the Hui Konohiki Program, which will train undergraduate students in

integrated environmental management from the combined perspectives of Hawaiian culture and scientific research. The Program will center on two years of hands-on, out of the classroom, research and training led by a team of five faculty, community members, and experts in traditional knowledge. Training will be conducted in Hawaiian and will feature research and restoration projects intended to benefit local communities.

Hui Konohiki Program Faculty

Carlos Andrade (Hawaiian Studies) -

Hawaiian Cultural Geography, Traditional Navigation and sailing, subsistence farming practices.

Ka'eo Duarte (Botany) - Hydrology, Modeling Integrated Environmental Systems, Economic Impacts of Management Alternatives.

Cindy Hunter (Biology) - Oral Reef Ecology, Education on Marine Issues, Marine Plant-Animal Interactions.

Will McClatchey

Information about the **Ethnobotany** program can be found at:

www.botany.hawaii.edu/ehnobotany/

Information about the **Hui Konohiki** program can be found at: www.konohiki.hawaii.edu

Information on **Medical Anthropology and Ethnobotany** can be found at:

www.anthropology.hawaii.edu



Abstracts of Student's Thesis

Herbal Medicine: An Ethnobotanical and Socio-Economic Study of Markets in Quito, Ecuador

Johanna Putscher (MSc candidate)

Email address: johanna_putscher@hotmail.com

Supervisors: Dr. Roland Albert, Institute of Ecology and Conservation Biology, University of Vienna, Austria; Dr. Christian Reinhard Vogl, Institute for Organic Farming, University of Agricultural Sciences Vienna

Collaborators: National Herbarium of Ecuador (QCNE)

Funding institution: International Relations Office of the University of Vienna, Austria

The purpose of this project is to describe the variety of medicinal plants in the municipal markets of Quito, and to investigate ethnobotanical and socio-economic factors for their use. The fieldwork was carried out from April to September in 2001. A random sample of 5 markets was taken and at each market one randomly selected herb vendor was interviewed. Additionally a survey of 90 customers was carried out with standardised questionnaires.

At the 5 stalls, I found a total number of 182 species of unprocessed, loose medical plants or components of them. 176 of them were identified, whilst 6 remained unidentified. The number of species each stall sold varied between 21 and 114. Some species are not only used for medical purpose but as ingredients or spices of food, or for hair care or as ornamental plants. Plants are used to cure disease both of natural causes and of supernatural causes such as *espanto* or *mal aire*.

The consumers surveyed were between 15 and 76 years old, and 73% of them were female. The overall motives cited for using plants were to cure diseases or to avoid allopathic drugs. People's preference for natural medicine was an additional central motive. Only few consumers stated the low price of medical plants as primary reason for buying. The diversity of plants depends on the location of the market, the size and utilisation ratio of the particular market and the personal history of the herb vendor. Due to greater demand resulting from a higher frequency of consumers, centrally located markets show greater diversity.

Great variety of species at the markets, the frequent use of herbs and the fact that consumers from all social classes buy medical plants demonstrate that herbal medicine plays a significant role for people in Quito.

From Ethnobotany to Molecular Pharmacognosy – A Transdisciplinary Approach

Jürg Gertsch (PhD, MSc)

Email address: juerg.gertsch@pharma.anbi.ethz.ch

Supervisors: Prof. Otto Sticher, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, Switzerland; Prof. Sir Ghilleen Prance, University of Reading, UK; Prof. Gerd Folkers, Dr. Jorg Heilmann, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, Switzerland.

Collaborators: Ana Narvaez, Fundacion Instituto Botánico de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela

Funding Institution: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC, Bern, Switzerland

The Yanomami Amerindians inhabit the lowland rainforests of Southern Venezuela and Northern Brazil. Fieldwork was based on an International Contract between the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich and the Ministry of Environment (MARNR) of Venezuela, the elaboration of which was an integral part of the research process. It could be shown that the Yanomami in Venezuela have an inferior knowledge about medicinal plants than their relatives in Brazil. However, the ethnobotanical study in many respects revealed the special importance of food plants, poisonous and magic plants. The role of palms in general and the medicinal species *Phyllanthus piscatorum* in particular, are discussed in detail. Bulk plant material of 10 culturally important species was collected for biological and phytochemical analysis. *Clathrotropis galucophylla* Cowan, a curare adjuvant, *Cupania scrobiculata* L.C. Rich., the bark of which is used in the preparation of a snuff drug, and *Phyllanthus piscatorum* H.B.K., a fish poison and medicinal plant were chosen for phytochemical analysis, yielding several new compounds. From *P. piscatorum* a new derivative, which was called piscatorin, was isolated. For the first time, justicidin B and piscatorin are shown to be the piscicidal principles of *P. piscatorum*, and to possess significant antifungal and antiprotozoal potential.

Plants of the Khoekhoe in a socio-cultural context. Ethnobotanical aspects regarding language, reciprocity and anthropology of the senses.

Andreas Groner M.A.

Email address: a.groener@t-online.de

Supervisors: Prof. Dr. H.-J. Paproth (Munich), Prof. Dr. K. Beck (Munich), Prof. Dr. V. Harms (Tubingen), Prof. W. Haacke (Windhoek).

Collaborators: University of Munich, University of Namibia, National Botanical Research Institute (Namibia)

Funding institutions: Grant from Hans Bockler Foundation, funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The area of the study is the dry savannah of the south-eastern part of Africa, usually called Kalahari, a high plateau for which archaeological reports state a long period of human activity. It were mainly the Khoisan who lived there, when early European traders and consequently settlers invaded and suppressed them. The aboriginals have been classified by physical appearance, by economic traits and linguistic aspects into "Bushmen" or more recently "San" and "Hottentotts" or more recently "Khoekhoen". Still today, there is a serious argument on the suitable naming (e.g. "Hottentotts" is seen as abusive) and classification of their languages and cultures.

This project aims at the Nama, Damara and the Hei-||om of Namibia. They use a common language, the "Khoikhoigowab" (a group of several distant dialects) but are somehow divided in San and Khoekhoen. Their traditional culture bears a family-based system of mutual aid. Contrarily, governmental activities are aiming at economic development to face the challenge of globalized markets. Pharmacologically important plants like *Harpagophytum procumbens* and *Hoodia currori* found their way into the international markets and affect culture and nature. Economic aspects like this are part of the multiperspective approach. But also voucher specimens and plant names will be collected and cultural concepts and valuation of wild plants will be examined. This includes emic concepts of morphology, classification and reproduction of plants.

Dynamics of Tradition will be examined to riddle the question, whether the traditional knowledge about this vast dry land is threatened or not. Especially the olfactory meaning of wild plants to the Khoisan is strikingly evident and may be highly threatened. It is a pity, that this has been neglected in anthropology until today, since the anthropological method of participating observation may bring valuable insight into the olfactory meaning, which is difficult to penetrate by means of language.

Local wild food plants used by ethnic Greeks (*Grecanici*) in Southern Calabria, Italy – current role in the Mediterranean diet and antioxidant activity.

Sabine M. Nebel (PhD candidate)

Email address: sabine.nebel@ulsop.ac.uk

Supervisors: Prof. Michael Heinrich, Dr. Jo Barnes, Center for Pharmacognosy and Phytotherapy, The School of Pharmacy (SOP), University of London, London, UK

Collaborators: Dr. Andrea Pieroni (SOP), Universidad de Murcia, Harokopio University Athens, University of Frankfurt, University of Milan, Roche-Vitamines Basel, Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology Krakow

Funding institutions: European Commission

At the beginning of the year 2002 a consortium of six research groups, coordinated by the School of Pharmacy, University of London, has obtained funding from the European Commission for an interdisciplinary project focusing on ethnobotany, social medicine and molecular pharmacology. My PhD project is part of this overall project called "Local Food – Nutraceuticals". The main goal of the "Local Food – Nutraceuticals" project is to study extracts of plants traditionally used in rural communities of Southern Italy, Greece and Southern Spain as dietary by-products with potential anti-oxidant, anti-diabetic and memory-mediating activity. This project will improve the understanding of the mechanisms underlying the link between diet and chronic diseases, especially those that are age related.

The principle aim of my PhD project is to explore the current role of wild food plants within the traditional diet of Southern Italy and their potential health properties. With a multidisciplinary approach, ethnobotanical data will be linked with socio-nutritional data and modern molecular biology. Initially an ethnobotanical survey on wild food plants used in Greek communities in Calabria, Southern Italy, was carried out. The health promoting properties of the collected wild plants were evaluated, using different anti-oxidant assays. Finally a detailed socio-nutritional study will provide comprehensive information on the social framework related to the nutritional behaviours in the selected rural area.

Moko / La Rosa Negra, Ethnobotany of the Popoluca, Veracruz, Mexico

Marco Leonti, (Ph D)

Email address: marcoleonti@hotmail.com

Supervisors: Prof. Michael Heinrich (The School of Pharmacy, University of London, UK), Prof. Otto Sticher, (ETH Zurich, Switzerland).

Partner institution: Colegio de Postgraduados en Ciencias Agrícolas, Montecillo, Estado de México, México

Funding institution: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC, Bern, Switzerland, Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores (S.R.E.) México D.F.

We studied the medicinal plants used by the Popoluca of the Sierra Santa Marta in southern Veracruz, (Mexico) during a 16 months period of field research.

The Popoluca are of the Macro-Mayan language stock and culturally related to the Zoque in Chiapas and the Mixe in Oaxaca.

We analysed the collected information about medicinal plants, disease concepts, and treatment methods applying the concept of the “healers’ consensus“. The most important medicinal species were assessed pharmacologically, using published phytochemical and pharmacological data in order to contribute to the safe and efficacious use of traditional medicine.

Based on another study, in which we analysed the perception of smell and taste properties of plants and the influence of these sensations on the selection of medicinal plant species, we provide evidence for a highly significant association between the organoleptic properties of plants and their usage as a medicine.

By comparing their ethnopharmacopoeias, we provide evidence for the antiquity of medicinal plant usage by the Mixe and the Popoluca whose cultures have parted about 2.000 years ago.

During a phytochemical and pharmacological investigation of the bark of *Mosquitoxylum jamaicense* Krug & Urban (Anacardiaceae) used by the Popoluca in women’s medicine we isolated the active compounds.

Student’s Viewpoint

Reflections on Empathy from the Field and Beyond¹

I recall walking up Cerro Neblina with Tio Isac. He gathered two kinds of flowers, *hierba de muina* which is white and another yellow flower I did not recognize by name. I asked him why he picked those flowers. He gave the customary answer, “*Para santo*,” for the gods (the native gods and the Christian saints--the word *santo* translates as *jo’o*, gods or saints, in Chatino). I asked again, this time specifically, about *hierba de muina*. “Because I have *muina* (anger) and want to ask that my anger be healed.” When we reached the sacred cave at the summit, he placed his flower offering at the

foot of San Juan, St. John the Baptist, the largest stalagmite, so named because it was constantly bathed in water.

The Chatino of Oaxaca, Mexico, taught me to be aware of the natural and invisible worlds of omens and spirits. When a fox calls at night someone will die soon. When a hummingbird enters the home, someone is planning witchcraft. Medicinal plants correspond to every aspect of the Chatino world²: *hierba de chaneque* for sudden attacks by local sprites, *hierba de aire* and *hierba de brujo* for attack by witches, *hierba de sueno* for attack by bad dreams. Medicinal plants also correspond to specific symptoms: *hierba de latido* for a pulsing abdominal pain, *hierba de pasma* for illness trapped within, *hierba de empacho* for

¹ My sincere thanks to Brian Stross for his thoughtful comments on an earlier draft.

² Causes of illness include emotions within the body and gods and nature without. The Chatino body has fluid boundaries. For example, witchcraft enters the body by way of evil dreams.

abdominal discomfort after excessive eating or missed meals, *hierba de muina* for anger, *hierba de espanto* for fright.

The Chatino consider the emotions anger, fear, and shame, as causes of illness. Envy, omnipresent in Mesoamerica, leads to a pervasive fear of envy, to the vindictive anger of the envious, and to the corresponding anger of the victim towards his envious aggressor. The envious person seeks to deprive another of the envied trait or possession by destroying it.³ Violence, a direct consequence of envy, is extremely prevalent in the Sierra Sur of Oaxaca. Three ethnographic works, two on the Chatino⁴ and one on the neighboring Mixtec⁵ are devoted to the violence in the region. While illness is not directly attributed to envy, *maldad*, *aire*, sorcery, dreams⁶, anger and fear, all derived from envy, are the most common causes of Chatino illness and death.

³ Envy is, by definition, accompanied by a destructive urge to attack and spoil the goodness of others. E.g., Ulanov, A. B. & Ulanov B. 1983. *Cinderella and Her Sisters: The Envied and the Envyng*, p. 15. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.; Schoeck, H. 1966. *Envy: A Theory of Social Behavior*, Pp. 1, 115. London: Martin Secker & Warburg Limited; Berke, Joseph. 1988. *The Tyranny of Malice: Exploring the Dark Side of Character and Culture*. New York: Summit Books, p. 19.; Anath Ariel de Vidas. *Envy, ethnic identity and modernity: Teenek people facing otherness*. *American Anthropologist*. Submitted; Nason points out that not all rage is destructive, and that rage has a self-affirming valuable aspect as well. Kernberg uses aggression, destructiveness, contempt, envy and rage almost synonymously (Kernberg 1974 in Nason 1985), as manifestations of the negative idealization of splitting. Nason, J. D. 1985. *The psychotherapy of rage: clinical and developmental perspectives*. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 21: 167-192.

⁴ Greenberg, James. 1989. *Blood Ties: Life and Violence in Rural Mexico*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press. Hernández Díaz, J. 1987. *El Café Amargo: Diferenciación y Cambio Social Entre Los Chatinos*. Oaxaca, Mexico: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez.

⁵ Flanet 1977. *Vivire Si Dios Quiere Mexico*, D.F.: Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI).

⁶ *Maldad* and *aire* are synonyms for witchcraft. *Maldad* also refers to vindictive acts such as vandalism of property. *Aire* has a broader meaning than witchcraft. For the relation between dreams and witchcraft see note 1. “¿*Aire de malda* or *aire*? *Aire* of *malda*, *aire* of the people, *aire de malda* of the people.” In Chatino, *kuẽ`ẽ` .. jna`a*, evil air, is the term for *maldad*, and *kuẽ`ẽ` kutsa`a* is witch’s air. *Aire* of dreams, also synonymous with sorcery, is *kuẽ`ẽ` shala*. Weiss, J. 1998. *Diagnostic Concepts and Medicinal Plant Use of the Chatino (Oaxaca, Mexico) with a Comparison of Chinese Medicine*, Pp. 159-161. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Texas at Austin. P. 189 lists 26 chatino herbs for *aire* and *maldad* (and 4 for *chaneque*).

While in the field, I struggled to comprehend *maldad*, the malevolence with which the Chatino treat one another in secret. *Maldad* refers to witchcraft as well as vindictive vandalism and violence. “Someone did me *maldad*. I found my donkey untied, with her udders slashed and a pole stuck into her vagina.” Children of a paraplegic father returned to their work to find all their tools and the agave leaves they had cut for sisal thrown into the *monte*. They retrieved their tools, but all their work was lost. Women complained of domestic violence, “He beats me, then brings me *hierba de muina* from the mountain.” “Tio Juan carried the money collected by the *municipio* to repay the government loan. Someone waited for him on the path, robbed and killed him.” “My son knew the names of the five masked men who robbed the *municipio*, so someone shot him. I saw him; one bullet went in here, in his groin, and another in his leg here, and another through his abdomen, here,” she repeated the story in all its gory detail over and over and over. Tia Anastasia lowered her voice to a whisper, “My neighbors are very fierce.”

Once I exclaimed to Tio Nacho, “From my point of view, *maldad* is an illness!” Of course, for the Chatino, *maldad* is an illness. I looked for examples of *maldad* in my own life that would enable me to relate to the vindictive feelings of the Chatino and used art as a medium for deepening my understanding. I recalled a beloved Siamese cat that had been shot by my anti-Semitic Texan landlord and neighbor. I painted a detailed picture of my cat, dead, under my window, and drew my landlord’s house in flames, something I felt like doing at the time. I showed the picture to my Chatino friends, who said I was doing *maldad*. I then drew another more schematic representation of my cat and the landlord’s house, and did *maldad* to the painting itself, cutting, tearing and stapling. The destructive act transformed into “Shrine for My Cat and *Maldad*.”

More recently I have watched Arab healers at work. Most sheikhs would be considered psychic or religious healers in Western terms, much as the Chatino healer is “he who breaks copal⁷,” one who heals with prayer. The Arab illnesses evil eye (*eyn hasad*, literally “envious eye”), curse and witchcraft result from

⁷ In Santa Cruz Zenzontepec (District of Sola de Vega, Oaxaca, Mexico) copal is *Bursera* sp. resin incense.

increasing levels of envy and destructive action. In the first, we find the feeling of envy directed towards someone, in the second a persistent protracted envy with harmful destructive wishes, and in the third, envy is accompanied by a malicious act, such as secretly giving a potion of water with drops of menstrual blood. These cross-cultural encounters with envy have led me to consider the social causes of illness⁸, and to search for an answer, a “cure,” for Tio Isaac’s anger. I humbly offer these reflections on envy, empathy, good and evil. The importance of integration of good and evil can be found in Western psychoanalytic thought. In the spirit of the ethnopsychiatrist George Devereux,⁹ I will consider the splitting of good and bad¹⁰, one of the basic defense mechanisms of Western psychology¹¹, and envy as the “root of all evil.”¹² Splitting occurs

⁸ Pathogenic social relations.

⁹ Devereux, George. 1980. Normal and abnormal (1956). In Devereux, G. Basic Problems of Ethnopsychiatry. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, p. 53. “...fundamental psychodynamic processes have a universal character even if they express themselves in extremely varied forms. Whether normal or abnormal, whether belonging to one culture or another, the individual relies on defense mechanisms that are basically the same.”

¹⁰ “The envied person becomes an object, and ceases to exist as “a valid subject.” [The envied] is changed into a thing, a mere object of envy. [The envied] exists only with reference to the envier’s idealization and persecution, typical defenses against the pain that comes with envying.” Ulanov, A. B. & Ulanov B. 1983, pp. 17-18.

¹¹ Elaborated by Melanie Klein and others associated with object relations theory, such as Fairbairn, W.R. Bion. “Clarke relates splitting to the problem of racism and an “us” vs. “them” mentality. “...Melanie Klein’s work addresses the harsh, cruel, and terrifying side of human nature (as well as the good), which some may call the reality of life.” Clarke, S. 2001. The Kleinian position: phantasy, splitting, and the language of psychic violence. Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society 6: 289-297.

¹² I found one reference to Kleinian object relations theory of splitting applied in ethnography. Johnson, Allen. 1997. The psychology of dependence between landlord and sharecropper Northeastern Brazil. Political-Psychology 18:411-438. From the abstract: “Theory from the Kleinian school of psychoanalysis concerning envy, splitting, and idealization provides a framework for interpreting ethnographic case materials.” Sobel undertook a thorough analysis of black, white, male and female dreams during the American Revolutionary era, utilizing the closely related concepts of projective identification and extractive introjection to explore the changing perceptions of self and other. Sobel, M. 2000. Teach Me Dreams. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

when a person “experiences other people and themselves as either all good or all bad. The realistic good and bad elements of both the self and others are not integrated and cannot be experienced simultaneously.¹³” Other people are seen and treated as idealized all good or all bad objects. The negative parts of our selves are projected onto a scapegoat all bad “other.” If violence originates in the “failure to see the other as self,¹⁴,” then the “cure” is to find the other in ourselves.

Underlying feelings of fear and mistrust characterize the envier and envied. In Mesoamerica, this atmosphere of mistrust, the threatening *aire*, is omnipresent¹⁵. Aguilar’s¹⁶

¹³ White, Judith C. 2000. Psychoanalytic group psychotherapy with African American women: the bad mother in all-female groups. Jackson, Leslie C. and Greene, Beverly, eds. Psychotherapy with African American Women: Innovations in Psychodynamic Perspective and Practice, pp. 208-224. New York: Guilford Press (cited from the abstract); Both the positive (admiration) and negative idealizations are consequences of envy according to Ulanov and Ulanov (

¹⁴ Ziv, Efi. 2002. Politics of violence against women (Hebrew). *Hevra v’r’vacha* (Society and Welfare) 22:417-432. “Violence arises from the failure to see the other as self, and therefore violence intervention should incorporate a correction of this failure so as not to repeat it.”

¹⁵ Kearny 1972. The Winds of Ixtepeji: World View and Society in a Zapotec Town. New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.; Foster describes the many behaviors that the fear of envy evokes in Mesoamerica and elsewhere. Foster, G. 1965. Cultural responses to expressions of envy in Tzintzuntzan. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 21: 24-35; Foster, G. 1972. The anatomy of envy: a study in symbolic behavior. *Current Anthropology* 13: 165-202; In DSM IV (Widiger T. A. et al., eds. 1996. DSM-IV Sourcebook, vol. 2. Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association. The following cited chapters refer to this text.) mistrust (Bernstein, Useda and Siever, Ch. 22, p. 665) and the evil eye (Foulks, E. F. Culture and personality disorders. In Mezzich, J. E., Kleinman, A., Fabrega, H. and D. L. Parron, eds. Culture and Psychiatric Diagnosis: A DSM-IV Perspective, p. 249. Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Press.) are associated with the paranoid personality, envy and/or fear of envy and lack of empathy with the narcissistic personality (Gunderson, Ronningstam and Smith, Ch. 28, p. 746), a feeling of emptiness and splitting with the borderline personality, (Gunderson, Zanrini, Kisiel, Ch. 26, p. 723). Researchers propose an alternate dimensional approach to the classification of personality disorders that would more accurately represent reality than the categorical approach currently favored (Widiger, T. A. Ch. 32, Personality disorder dimensional models, p. 789). The psychoanalytic literature recognizes a feeling of emptiness (Gunderson et al., p. 723, Ulanov and Ulanov 1983, p. 31) that accompanies splitting. Klein considers splitting a defense against anxiety, “fear of annihilation taking the form of fear of persecution” (Clarke 2001). My work with the

work in Mexico elaborates how trust and face are developed and maintained within a prevailing atmosphere of mistrust in order to enable exchange of goods. He describes two extreme types of friendship: *amigos intimos*, true friends and *amigos politicos*, false friends. The *amigo politico* is someone who has betrayed the friendship by treachery, and is now in a relation of “enmity and mutual avoidance.” “Real friendship is idealized in the sense that very much is expected of it.” Aguilar’s “idealistic bifurcation of friendship” is an accurate description of splitting. We seek to harm another, to do *maldad*, when we view that person as “all bad.” We tend to view evil, violence, especially killing, as incomprehensible and reprehensible. If violence arises from a feeling of envy, contempt and hatred for someone, contempt and hatred of the violent aggressor perpetuate violence, in a vicious cycle. The need for vengeance diminishes when we realize that the aggressor is engaging in the very human, common practice of splitting, of treating people as good or bad objects. When we recognize our own tendency to condemn and to feel contempt towards others, then we can experience empathy towards the most villainous. By embracing our own negativity, we can empathize with the negativity in others. Various antidotes to envy have been proposed: gratitude,¹⁷ generosity,¹⁸ empathy¹⁹, compassion,²⁰ and trust.²¹ Probably all are

Chatino neither supports or negates the presence of a feeling of emptiness in addition to fear and envy.

¹⁶ Aguilar, John L. 1984. Trust and exchange: Expressive and instrumental dimensions of reciprocity in a peasant community. *Ethos* 12: 3-29.

¹⁷ Klein, M. 1975. Envy and Gratitude and Other Works 1946-1963. Collected Works vol. 3. London: The Hogarth Press; Berke op cit. p. 280.

¹⁸ E.g., Berger, Miriam. 2002. Envy and generosity between co-therapists. *Group* 26:107-121.

¹⁹ E.g., Broom, Ellen Wildemann. 2002. An examination of factors related to the cognitive and affective empathy levels of adjudicated youth. *Dissertation Abstracts* 63(2-A): 554.

²⁰ Buddhism offers E.g., Harrington, Anne 2002. A science of compassion or a compassionate science? What do we expect from a cross-cultural dialogue with Buddhism? Davidson, Richard J. and Harrington, Anne, eds. *Visions of Compassion: Western scientists and Tibetan Buddhists Examine Human Nature*, pp. 18-30. London, Oxford University Press.

²¹ Aguilar, John L. 1984. Trust and exchange: Expressive and instrumental dimensions of reciprocity in a peasant community. *Ethos* 12: 3-29; Berke (op cit. p. 280) lists three: generosity, gratitude, and empathetic compassion, which he also calls loving consideration. Admiration,

important in healing envy and closely related feelings such as resentment and contempt. Empathy is the ability to feel what another feels. When we are empathic, we experience the other as self, and reach the root of, and cease the cycle of violence, evil and envy. In Western psychotherapy, abusers are best treated with an admixture of control and compassion.²² This empathic understanding of *maldad* can have broad application to violent conflicts. Here in Israel-Palestine, for example, we reciprocate force with force, and malevolent envious²³ violent acts are subsequently repaid with retributive justice. Israel not only destroys Palestinian terrorist/martyr cells (control), but also destroys the homes of the *shahids* (Palestinian martyrs; vengeance). The world will be a more benevolent place if we use force against force as a necessary restraint, but recognize that the shaming of and punitive action against the aggressor engender only more anger, resentment, envy and violence. A policy of restraint deriving from an empathic understanding of the emotions of envy and contempt that cause aggression can lead to a rational approach to violence.

Janna Weiss Ph.D., L.Ac.
jweiss@research.haifa.ac.il

suggested by Berke as an antidote to envy (Berke op cit. p. 33), is yet another manifestation of envy. Berke (op cit. p. 294 n. 56) himself points out that admiration is sublimated envy. Admiration is projected onto the angelic idealized good object of defensive splitting (pers. obs.).

²²“Both compassion and control strategies are found to be required to effectively treat abuse.” Mederer, Helen J. and Gelles, Richard J. 1989. Compassion or control: Intervention in cases of wife abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 4:25-43.

²³ While Atran does not mention envy per se, he alludes to envy as a possible cause of terrorism: “relative loss of economic or social advantage by educated persons might encourage support for terrorism.” Atran offers that “In the Middle East, perceived contexts in which suicide bombers and supporters express themselves include a collective sense of historical injustice, political subservience, and social humiliation vis-a-vis global powers and allies” and “massive retaliation further increases people’s sense of victimization.” I consider that feelings of victimization, moral indignation and envy are closely allied. Feelings of victimization and righteous indignation have been shown to precede defensive responses in another cultural and social context. Atran proposes that “Perhaps to stop the bombing we need research to understand which configurations of psychological and cultural relationships are luring and binding thousands, possibly millions, of mostly ordinary people into the terrorist organization’s martyr-making web.” Atran, Scott 2003. *Genesis of Suicide Terrorism*. *Science* 299: 1534-1539.

Upcoming ISE conference

THE JOINT 45TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
SOCIETY FOR ECONOMIC BOTANY WITH THE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR ETHNOBIOLOGY
CO-ORGANIZED BY THE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY
AT UNIVERSITY OF KENT AT CANTERBURY, JUNE 14-18, 2004



Tentative Program of the ISE Conference:

PANEL 1. SAFETY MATTERS: SIDE EFFECTS OF PLANTS USED IN INDIGENOUS MEDICINE AND THEIR IMPACT ON PUBLIC HEALTH (MICHAEL HEINRICH, COORDINATOR)

The following topics could be included

- *Pharmacovigilance of herbal medicinal products*
- *Safety of herbal medical products in Europe*
- *Safety matters - a perspective on herbal medicinal products from the WHO*
- *Chinese Herbal medicine - Side effects and drug interactions.*
- *The TRAMIL project*

PANEL 2. ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY IN EUROPE AND THE NEAR EAST (CRISTINA INOCENCIO, COORDINATOR)

The following topics could be included

- *Ethnopharmacology of ethnic groups in Turkey*
- *The merging of food and medicine in Spanish, Valencian and Bable speaking mountains in Spain*
- *Ethnopharmacology of ethnic groups in Israel and Palestine*
- *Local food and medicinal plants in Crete and Greek islands, present and future*

PANEL 3. ETHNOPHARMACY AND MIGRATION. (ANDREA PIERONI, COORDINATOR)

The following topics could be included

- *Diverse historical and ethnic influences in the Materia Medica of the Near East.*
- *A transcultural pattern of drug use: khat in the UK*
- *Ritual healing practices and ethnopharmacopoeias among Albanians and Italians in southern Italy*
- *Areca nut use following migration in London.*
- *Use of complementary and alternative medicine among migrant women in New York City*

PANEL 4. POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES (ELAINE ELISABETSKY, COORDINATOR)

The following topics could be included

- *Indigenous Resource Rights and just compensation: concepts and possibilities.*
- *A perspective from industry: policies and practices from Shaman Pharmaceuticals*
- *An indigenous perspective: the Matatua declaration and its implications*
- *An indigenous perspective: an Amerindian perspective*

WORKSHOP: “DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT IN ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY”

Sarah Edwards (coordinator) and Nina Etkin

**For further information please visit our soon updated home page:
<http://www.ethnopharmacology.org>**

Impressum

ISE Newsletter, Bulletin of the International Society for Ethnopharmacology
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Barbara Frei Haller, PhD (Editor)
bfreihaller@bluewin.ch
Palu 142a, CH-7530 Zernezz/ Switzerland

Michael Heinrich, Prof. (Co-Editor)
Michael.heinrich@ulsop.ac.uk

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International Society of Ethnobiology

The International Society of Ethnobiology is engaged in organisation of International Ethnobiology Congresses once in two years. A growing number of scientists from a broad range of traditional disciplines now regularly conduct research at the interdisciplinary boundaries of anthropology, botany, zoology, archaeology, pharmacology, geography, sociology, linguistics and related fields.

Ethnobiology is truly an interdisciplinary field that combines the intuitions, skills and biases of researchers from all of these areas. Similarly, there is a growing awareness among indigenous people of the need for exchange of information on resource management with other indigenous groups.

Ethnobiology congresses organised by ISE provide a platform to ethnobiologists, indigenous people and academia to discuss the research, issues, success stories and opportunities in the broad discipline of Ethnobiology.

In the year 2002 the 8th International Congress of Ethnobiology has been organised in Addis Abeba from September 16-20, 2002. The theme of 8th ICE was "People & Biodiversity". The Institute of Biodiversity Conservation & Research hosted the congress, and Dr. *Fassil Kebebew* facilitated the programmes as the Organizing Secretary of the Congress. More than 100 participants including indigenous people from over 20 countries had participated in the congress.

Biodiversity has always been associated with indigenous people all over the world, more so in developing countries and still it provides the major livelihood opportunities to the local communities. Addis congress themes addressed this understanding through deliberations by experts and grass root workers with experience sharing by indigenous people on what is the status of this relationship of biodiversity and people in today's context and on how to make biodiversity conservation efforts beneficial to traditional communities.

Following specific subjects areas were discussed through various presentations of the delegates in sub theme sessions .

- **Food crops & food systems:** In this session the issue of indigenous knowledge and food security has been discussed along with ethnobiological studies of non conventional less known plants used as food.
- **Genetic diversity of food crops and their conservation:** Strategies used by rural communities to ensure food security, shifting cultivation and plant diversity issues, folk classification and cultivation of livelihood support species were discussed in this sessions.
- **Ethnobiology of regional landscapes, crops & culture:** Biodiversity of various ethnobiologically important species and less known genera like *Ensete* and *Erythrina* along with ethnoforestry practices of mountainous regions were discussed to realise the value of people's knowledge of biodiversity in maintaining diversity and landscapes.
- **Partnerships & Participation:** Partnerships and participation issues. While using indigenous knowledge based development and conservation activities were discussed thoroughly.
- **Medicinal Plant use & Conservation:** It is an important issue in today's conservation and development scenario and a debate on medicinal plant diversity of regions and their use by indigenous people as well as their role in maintenance of these valuable plant resources formed major part of this session.
- **Access & benefit sharing:** Issues like benefit sharing by local communities and emerging balance, ethnobiological research and issues related to policy and practices were discussed in this session.
- **Biological resources in the wild and their use in livelihoods:** Though this is a cross cutting theme it was discussed separately through specific presentations.
- **Ethnobiology methodologies :** A range of new methodologies to conduct of ethnobiological research were presented including folk taxonomy and its use, mapping knowledge of forest

resources and methods integrating indigenous and modern practices for better assessments of biodiversity.

- **Indigenous Environment management:** It is an emerging research area and it provides opportunities to look at traditional knowledge in environmental management issues. Various interesting presentations like to recognise role of culture in forest conservation, local management practices and biodiversity provided food for thought to the participants.
- **Ethnobiology & Curriculum development:** Ethnobiology is interdisciplinary subject, it is generally studied as part of some of the basic disciplines like botany , anthropology or zoology , social sciences etc. However the discipline of Ethnobiology has grown to an extent that now it is important to study that as a separate subject rather than part of any other subject. This quest is difficult and many organisations and individuals are working on developing regional Ethnobiology curricula . Such efforts and experiences were shared in this session.

For more information about papers presented during Addis congress please contact Dr. Fassil Kebebew at fassilkeb@hotmail.com or Dr. Archana Godbole at a.godbole@cgiar.org .

The 9th International Congress of Ethnobiology will be held at University of Kent in June 2004. For more information please visit Kent ICE website www.ukc.ac.uk/anthropology/ice2004 .

*Archana Godbole
Secretary of the
International Society of Ethnobiology*

A Selection of More Upcoming Conferences

- June 12 – 14, 2003 - Vinadio, Province of Cuneo, Piémont, Italy -- Méthodologie de l'enquête orale appliquée à l'ethnobotanique (Part I). Troisième Séminaire annuel d'Ethnobotanique du domaine européen, Musée-Conservatoire ethnologique de Haute-Provence, Prieuré de Salagon, Mane, France. <http://musee-de-salagon.com>
- August 31 - September 2, 2003 - Beijing, People's Republic of China -- The International Symposium on New Achievement of Natural and Traditional Medicine (ISNANTM 2003). Please contact: impladcams@263.net or blguo@btamail.net.cn (Mr. Xin-guo Zhang /Dr. Bao-lin Guo)
- September 8 - 12, 2003 - Rio de Janeiro, Brazil -- XII Congresso Italo Latino-americano de Etnomedicina "Nuno Alvares Pereira". <http://www.farmacia.ufrj.br/silae>
- September 14 - 16, 2003 - La Paz, Bolivia -- 2nd International Symposium on Ethnobotany, Folk Traditions, Ethnomedicine, Ethnopharmacology, Sustainable development. http://www.cieer.org/symposio_2003/
- October 16 - 17, 2003 - Mane, France -- Les plantes alimentaires: du ramassage au jardin (Part II). Troisième Séminaire annuel d'Ethnobotanique du domaine européen, Musée-Conservatoire ethnologique de Haute-Provence, Prieuré de Salagon, Mane, France. <http://musee-de-salagon.com>
- December 15 – 16, 2003 - Royal Pharmaceutical Society, London, UK -- Anti-inflammatory and anti-infective natural products. <http://www.rpsgb.org.uk/> (Meetings)
- June, 2004 – Kew, UK -- GA / ISE meeting. Further information: michael.heinrich@ulsop.ac.uk
- June 14 - 18, 2004 - University of Kent at Canterbury, UK -- The Joint 45th Annual Meeting of the SOCIETY FOR ECONOMIC BOTANY with the INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR ETHNOBIOLOGY and Co-organized by the INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY. <http://www.ukc.ac.uk/anthropology/ice2004> or <http://www.econbot.org/events/2004/>