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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
EUGENE, OREGON

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

March 19, 1963

Dr. Wilson Popenoe
1722 N.W. 2nd Ave.
Gainesville, Florida

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

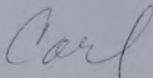
I am sorry to say that Rockefeller Foundation apparently thought that the pejobaye was not likely to become a staple food very rapidly and, therefore, they felt unable to support the research. Carnegie Corporation funds have been obtained to assist about four graduate students and me to Costa Rica for an interdisciplinary summer field course on tropical agriculture with the pejobaye palm as the central theme. Each student will have a facet of the problem and, hopefully, will be able to write it up as a dissertation. We will be working on the distribution, selection, acceptance (or rejection), varietal differences, transportation, and consumption of the pejobaye. The exact topics will not be chosen for another couple of weeks.

The final decision of who is to go with me was made today, and we will begin the process of molding the individuals into a cooperating unit when the spring term begins next week. We have a challenging problem; I imagine that I will have some extra concerns, but the rewards have a chance of being greater and of being obtained several times faster than if I tried to work on them all by myself.

In view of my interest in the extent of acceptance of the pejobaye in Central America, could you tell me the locations to which pejobaye seeds were sent from Tela and Zamorano? In addition to the places you remember, would you be able to suggest offices or persons who might have additional records on introductions or the shipment of seed?

I reiterate that I very much appreciate your assistance in trying to convince Rockefeller Foundation to support me. Probably because of your suggestions I was able, ultimately, to sound reasonably intelligible to my Carnegie Committee. Thanks again.

Sincerely yours,



Carl L. Johannessen
Assistant Professor of Geography

CLJ:rmf

June 3, 1963

Dr. Wilson Popenoe
1722 N.W. 2nd Ave.
Gainesville, Florida

Copy

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

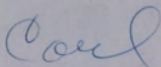
As I mentioned on March 19, the Carnegie Corporation is supporting research on the pejibaye in a field laboratory of the Summer School.

Four students and I leave for Costa Rica on June 10th to spend two and a half to three months in that area. One of the students, Mike Olien, will stop off in Honduras for a week or two and will want to examine the enclaves of pejibaye and the extent to which it has been accepted by the peoples near where the trees have been growing. He is a very knowledgeable fellow--an anthropology graduate--and should be of interest to all of you, though it is only his second trip south of the border.

I will hope to stop off on the way home and would like to have another chat.

Best regards to you and Hugh.

Sincerely yours,



Carl L. Johannessen
Assistant Professor of Geography

CLJ:rmf



INSTITUTO INTERAMERICANO DE CIENCIAS AGRICOLAS DE LA OEA

SA/6.7

El Instituto es un organismo especializado de la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Fue establecido por los Gobiernos de las Repúblicas Americanas en 1944 para promover su desarrollo económico y social a través de la educación y la investigación.

Centro Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza para Graduados

TURRIALBA, COSTA RICA
Cable: AGROEA - Turrialba

April 20, 1963

Dr. Wilson Popenoe
Antigua Guatemala
Guatemala

Dear Sir,

Prof. Carl L. Johannessen, Assistant Professor of Geography at the University of Oregon, has proposed a research project on the Pejibaye palm (*Guilielma gasipaes*). He proposes to come to Turrialba this summer with the graduate students in anthropology, geography and perhaps economics.

Prof. Johannessen spent a few weeks here last summer and did some work with the Pejibaye palm, mostly in the nature of horticultural work. He is very enthusiastic about his project and this summer proposes to supervise the work of students in their special fields, ... as outlined in the attached project.

The project proposed by Prof. Johannessen will require considerable support and collaboration from this Institute. We are attempting to evaluate the extent to which we should devote some of our own resources to collaborate with him, and are somewhat concerned about the wide range of highly specialized topics he proposes.

It occurred to us that you may know of Prof. Johannessen and his work and perhaps would be in a position to give us your frank opinion.

Sincerely yours,

Gordon Havord
Dean and Director,
Tropical Center

GARNEGIE FOUNDATION GRANT
FOR OVERSEAS TRAINING

Topic: Interdisciplinary Summer Field Course on Tropical Agriculture in Costa Rica

Introduction

During the summer of 1962 I returned to Central America, this time to Costa Rica, to study the pejobaye palm. This is a tall, usually spiny trunked, palm tree that produces a tasty, starchy fruit. I studied this palm because the utilization of a high yielding tree crop, such as the pejobaye fruit, as a staple food source allows the most efficient utilization of human and soil resources. Very little expenditure of energy on cultivation is necessary and by keeping shade on the soil the rate of oxidation of nitrogenous material in the soils is greatly reduced. Also the tree roots are able to penetrate deeper than those of annual crops and, therefore, circulate soils nutrients through a greater depth of soil. Since there is no necessity for plowing, soils erosion is reduced to a minimum.

The fruit of the pejobaye is cooked before it is eaten and in this condition the best forms supply an excellent starchy food, reasonable high in protein and vitamins. The current utilization of this crop is relatively restricted, in part because much of the produce is of poor quality. When this fruit is improved, consumption will increase and the crop can be more widely dispersed throughout the tropical world. This can be achieved only by concerted action of the professional community in the selection and breeding of high quality stock.

Method

I propose to use this summer's training program as an exercise in tropical agriculture through the concerted study of an important crop. The summer's study will be oriented around the central theme of my particular interest, which is

that of the pejibaye, but the individual students will be expected to choose a field of interest in which he has personal competence. It is expected that the topics chosen could serve as a focus for the master's thesis in their respective departments. The researches of the whole group should allow the integration of many facets of the problem into a meaningful whole far greater than that of unrelated individual masters' thesis.

Research Topics

The following topics are suggestions for initial consideration. As the students become better acquainted with tropical agriculture, they may wish to modify these topics:

1. Distribution of large plantings of pejibaye and volume of production.
(Geographer or Anthropologist)
2. Transportation of pejibaye crop - volume, routes, and cost of shipment.
(Geographer or Anthropologist)
3. Consumption of pejibaye crop - markets, prices, and volume. (Economist, Geographer or Anthropologist)
4. Manner of selection and dispersal of forms planted in large groves
(Anthropologist or Botanist)
5. The factors that effect the readiness of peoples to accept the pejibaye as a partial substitute for a previously used staple food.
(Anthropologist)
6. Selection of sprouts and seed for experimental nursery stock, special emphasis on spineless forms and fruit that is exceptionally large and tasty. (Botanist and principal investigator)
7. Ultimately, through extensive measurement of the anatomy of this plant and its genetic characteristics, it is hoped that the wild progenits of the domesticated plant and the routes of dispersal can be indicated.

With a group of four students from three disciplines it will be possible to gather information on several aspects of my principal interest; that of understanding the varieties, use, selection, and distribution of the pejibaye. This kind of problem is ideally suited to group study on a seminar basis, for the individual student will continually be finding data directly and immediately useful to another of the group. For example, a person studying the distribution of primary production is in a position to assist the student who is trying to find out the transportation routes used to move the produce to market. In turn the person studying the market situation can gain leads on the source and transportation routes for others at the same time he is documenting the volume of produce in the market. The several quantitative studies on volume of production can serve as cross-checks on each other. The research on the acceptability of a new kind of staple food will be carried out mainly on the margin of extensive cultivation in those areas where the pejibaye has been recently introduced. An attempt can be made to rank the importance of price, accessibility, ease of production, flavor, taboos, prestige, etc. in communities of Indians, Mestizos, Spaniards, and North Americans. With more men in the field we have a greater chance of finding especially high quality forms for propagation in nursery stocks. While I am out looking for new forms I will naturally be gaining as much information on the other topics as possible.

Since the pejibaye grown from sea level to a little over 3,000 feet in the tropics, its study will provide the students with an introduction to regional analysis of tropical agriculture in addition to their specific and intensive interests.

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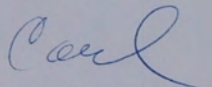
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