

Aegyptus et Pannonia VIII.



Acta Symposii anno 2021

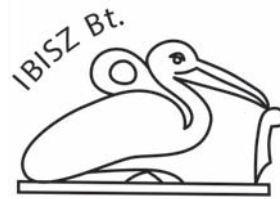
BUDAPEST

Aegyptus et Pannonia VIII.

Acta Symposii anno 2021

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Aegyptus et Pannonia VIII.

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“Plants for Health from Ancient Egypt to Present Day” Conference and the HEFS AEC

DR. HEDVIG GYŐRY PHD
HEFT AEC president

After the realization of the 2019 mummy conference, the need arose to discuss the new trends, methodologies and achievements in ancient materia medica from a phytotherapeutic point of view and to disseminate the results achieved by our in-depth research. With this conference, we also wanted to explore how many different ways there are to approach ancient plants and medicine, also from historical, cultural, religious, ethnographic and pharmacological points of view, and to compare it with other related fields. We also wanted to draw attention to other areas of research into plants that maintain and improve health. In this way, contemporary and historical treatments were juxtaposed, Egyptian, Hittite, Greek, Roman and later European herbal medicine, to mention only the most important regions studied in these proceedings. The conference was held in two languages, English and Hungarian, but all the articles in the proceedings are English. We hope that this way we can bring these issues to the attention of as many people as possible.

This time we have chosen to discuss the plants used for health problems. A significant proportion of the substances in ancient Egyptian prescriptions are of plant origin. Reviewing and studying their effects and data can also provide new opportunities for the current pharmacopoeia. Our group of doctors thought that there was a lot of new knowledge to be gained in this area worldwide, and that the knowledge of plants is becoming increasingly important, if we only think of the research into pathogens, many of which have adapted to synthetic drugs. We need thus new materials to use to eliminate them, and earlier medical practices may lead to the discovery of new active substances that are important for people today. Knowledge of these active ingredients makes it possible to apply these drugs as new medicines in a consistent quantity and quality. On the other hand, there are also many places where conditions do not allow the use of drugs produced by modern technology, but nature can help patients with its often hidden treasures. In addition to pharmacological research, folk remedies studied by ethnomedicine

and historical medical research play an essential role in getting to know them.

The HEFS AEC partly organizes its activities in cooperation with other organizations – the above-mentioned international workshop of the Nephthys project in 2022 was co-organized by the Hungarian Natural History Museum, while this very conference took place in partnership with the HNM Semmelweis Museum of Medical History, whose members gave several lectures on historical medicine and modern ethnomedicine, and where a special chamber exhibition would have welcomed the participants in honour of the conference, if the COVID had not prevented the organization of a face-to-face meeting. Nevertheless, we were able to offer the possibility of discussions and consultations in special virtual chambers, allowing the exchange of professional experiences.

The HEFS AEC has published these new proceedings, this time in two volumes (Aegyptus et Pannonia VII-VIII), containing more than half of the papers presented at the conference: “Plants for Health from Ancient Egypt to Present Day”. As we focused on our main research topic in the Medical Research Group of the HEFC Ancient Egyptian Committee, we wondered what the scientific community thought about the ancient Egyptian use of plants in various fields of human and natural sciences, the continuity of related knowledge, and the implications and possibilities of these ancient practices for people today. We also wanted to present the ideas we had developed and the results we had achieved in the professional field, and to provide an opportunity for specialists to discuss different topics. In terms of the structure of the proceedings, we have returned to the previous method of the series, so that the articles are once again listed in alphabetical order of authors, rather than by subjects

THE HEFS ANCIENT EGYPTIAN COMMITTEE AND THE MEDICAL HISTORY

The HEFS, which has been operating since 1995, carries out several activities in the tradition of its earlier activities: the general programs focus on the last five thousand years, selecting interesting and important topics, while the work of the AEC is mainly directed in three directions. An important objective is (1) the cultural transmission and dissemination of knowledge about ancient Egyptian culture through lectures and public meetings for interested adults, also in the framework of the Hungexpo. We also organise (2) artistic and handicraft activities, workshops accompanied by discussions on various topics with children, launching every year a fine arts competition (drawing/painting), the results of which will be exhibited for the third time in January 2023 in the Deák 17 Children’s and Youth Art Gallery of the Budapest History Museum; and (3) following scientific and scholarly research into the use of ancient objects, human and animal remains – including an international event of the Nephthys Project in 2022 – and medical history, concentrated on phytotherapy and surgery.

As far as our material at the conference is concerned, we present here as a starting point our research focused primarily on the use of plants in surgery, if only because several members of the group are doctors from the Department of Surgical Research and Techniques at the Faculty of Medicine in Semmelweis University, Budapest. The first scientific results of this new direction are published of today's surgical tools and materials. Thus our conference papers focus on the ancient Egyptian surgery from the point of view of the application of plants in these volumes, but research is also being carried out in other areas. Firstly we present research in the direction that is mainly focused on comparative analysis, directed towards the ancestors surgical kit, the plant materials used for wound care and the general knowledge of ancient Egyptian surgeons, with a view to the surgical culture of other peoples and periods or the use of pharmacognostic knowledge. We have also considered it essential to investigate into possible reasons for the use of plants, which may allow us to consider modern phytotherapeutic applications.

Two other areas of our phytotherapy research are also represented in these volumes. The origin and treatment of various diseases throughout the world, and especially in ancient Egypt, is also an interesting topic. In this direction, we have chosen to focus one disease in particular. Diabetes is one of the most widespread diseases of our time, and we have chosen to study its ancient treatment methods. In this case, as in the case of surgery, we have compared several cultures to find out the ancient knowledge and problem-solving methods, and have pointed out herbs that are officially used in the world, or in Hungary.

Another problem of our time, seemingly far removed from the history of medicine, is the conservation and preservation of biodiversity, which is affected not only by climate change and other natural factors, but also by human activity. This phenomenon can be traced back even to ancient Egypt, although the process has accelerated in the last hundred years. One of our topics in this respect is presented here, showing how an ancient curiosity herb has become a plant of large-scale production in the 21st century, and saving this way the species from extinction.

A new direction of the group is the study of the history of Hungarian phytotherapy in partnership with the Semmelweis Museum for Medical History. We have just taken the first steps in this direction, but we can already say that the classical Roman authors, and the ancient Egyptian knowledge they transmitted also played an important role in official medical practice and influenced folk medicine in our country. It seems that the herbaria published in Hungarian language played a key role in this process.

The interweaving of contemporary and historical issues characterizes many of the articles in the volumes. At the same time, mutual influences, shifts of emphasis and reinterpretations within the ancient world, or elements of later historical periods that reach into the past or present, play a prominent role. In this field, it is essential to collect and examine the sources from a new perspective in order to obtain a clearer picture of certain details of the past. Historical, artistic, literary, religious, economic, museological, pharmaceutical, phytotherapeutic, ethnobotanical or even chemical points of view appear in individual articles. It has been proven that the ingredients listed in many of the ancient Egyptian recipes studied so far can still be used as effective medicines today.

This volume contains 16 contributions on the role of drug use in different periods. There are chapters on the reconstruction of some ancient Egyptian remedies, on the ancient method prescribed for the preparation of antjw ointment, or on the preparation and action of kyphi, and pelargonium, traced through biochemical and experimental research; Others are devoted to the materia medica used in Hungary over the centuries, or to the comparison of contemporary Egyptian folk medicine and pharaonic materia medica in the field of gynaecology; another is devoted to studies on the possible identification of magical Egyptian plant names with a dominant connection to the moon, or to the ritual and non-ritual use of some plant substances with religious names in Egypt. Others relate to the popular treatment of diseases such as tuberculosis and cholera in Hungary, or which edible plants have been identified in Coptic medical therapies. Sedative plants are also featured in the current volume, and a plant closely associated with a butterfly is discussed. Another article focuses on the pomegranate, with its many meanings as a symbol of fertility and female power. Yet another focuses on the worldwide surgical use of plants, while others discuss the balance between practical and religious beliefs in the use of medicinal plants. The pop-up exhibition for the conference is briefly introduced, hinting at the museological aspect of medical history.

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The editors of these volumes would like to thank again all the organizations and individuals who made the conference and the publication of these volumes possible, as well as the speakers, the members of the Organizing and Scientific Committees, the secretary of the conference, and the technical assistance, i.e. all those who contributed to the realization of the conference and who have contributed with their knowledge to these volumes. Special thanks are also due to the authors of the papers for their work and cooperation.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all those colleagues and volunteers who have shared their expertise and offered their generosity by providing scientific or linguistic proofreading for these volumes.

Thanks are also due to the active participation of Aquila Design, who coordinated and realized the editing and printing and to our financial supporters, the Hungarian Natural History Museum, the Ibisz Bt. and the Kiss Ferenc a Növényi Biodiverzitásért Alapítvány [Kiss Ferenc Plant Biodiversity Foundation], whose aim is to raise awareness of the natural treasures we have and to try to teach people to use them, rather than abuse them.

THE EDIBLE PLANTS FOR HEALING IN COPTIC DOCUMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Plants are the main source of diet, but are often used as medicaments in all ancient times. The Ancient Egyptians were familiar with different types of plants and their pharmaceutical properties. Such natural therapies are attested in many medical sources and sometimes connected with physical, spiritual and magical therapies.

In this paper, I highlight the medical use of vegetables such as lettuce, garlic, onions, and fruits such as figs, sycamore, grapes and pomegranate. And of course, the cereals. I will primarily focus on the medical sources dating from the 4th to 11th centuries AD, from excavated ruins and monastic libraries.

Edible plants used in healing were sometimes eaten as raw or cooked material, or crushed to be oil or drink, or applied as ointment. Some medical recipes prescribed specific types of food that were applied for various diseases.

An extra emphasis is placed on medical prescriptions, dosage, and the appropriate way to use the medicament to gain the desired result. This paper is an attempt to localize groups of plants used for specific internal and external diseases and the appropriate way to use them.

KEYWORDS: Coptic, edible, medicine, medicament, plant, prescription

1 INTRODUCTION

Plants are not only the only chance for survival but also has a powerful effect on healing. Medicinal plant usage in Coptic medical prescriptions has been focused on illness treatment rather than disease prevention. Coptic prescriptions cover a wide range of medical issues that have been treated in different ways, by using different substances. Within the recipes, various types of remedies have been identified. Most of the final remedies consisted of a combination of several substances delivered in accurate measurements. The remedies can be divided according to today's classification into four main categories: orally ingested as a syrup or pill; internally applied as a pessary

or paste; externally applied as a powder, ointment or poultice; and applied through fumigation, and inhalation. The medical prescriptions usually contain various combinations of plants, minerals, animal and human substances. Botanical substances were used to a large extent in Coptic medical remedies, more than the other elements. Few prescriptions have adopted the use of a single plant source in the treatment of a specific disorder, without any other ingredients, for instance caraway to treat cataracts (Ch 91, section 7.2),¹ and melon for itchy legs (Cod.Med.Copt., 241, recipe no. 8, section 4.5).

This paper aims to provide significant information on some of the most promising edible medicinal plants, as well as how they may be used for both nutrition and medicine.

MATERIA MEDICA

2. GRAINS

2.1 WHEAT / ⲥⲟϣⲟ

Wheat known by the Coptic word ⲥⲟϣⲟ, ancient Egyptian: *sw.t*, Greek *πυρός*, and Arabic *قمح*.² The juice of wheat / *κελλος* was used as a drinking remedy against worms or in form of smoke with tamarisk bark; they introduced them downwards the bottom in Ch110.

The *samid* ⲥⲁⲙⲓⲧⲧ, Arabic *samid* *سَمِيد*, is a kind of semolina made from coarsely-ground wheat. It meets the Latin *similago*.³ Semolina, mustard, and vinegar were used for painful temples: ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ρⲉⲛⲉⲙⲁⲁϥ ⲉϥⲧⲕⲕⲁⲥ ⲉϥϣⲱⲛⲉ “*For painful and sick temples*” in Ch160.

2.2 BARLEY / ⲓⲱⲧ

Barely known by the Coptic word ⲓⲱⲧ, ancient Egyptian: *jt*, Greek *κριθή*, and Arabic *شعير*.⁴

For medical purposes, roasted barely ⲓⲱⲧ ⲉⲃⲣⲁⲕⲗ was used as a poultice with lentil and milk to treat warts in Cod.Med.Copt. recipe no. 37:⁵

ⲓⲱⲧ ⲉⲃⲣⲁⲕⲗ ⲕϥⲥⲁ//ⲛⲓⲁⲥ ⲁⲛⲁ. ⲑⲛⲟⲟϥ, ⲁⲗⲁⲙⲃⲁⲛⲉ ⲙⲙⲟⲟϥ ϣⲓ ⲉⲣⲱⲧⲉ, ⲛⲟϥϥ ⲉϥⲧⲟⲉⲓⲥ ⲛⲉϥⲗⲱϣⲙ ⲛⲟϥⲁⲣⲱⲛⲓⲛ ⲛⲉϥⲕⲁⲧⲁⲡⲗⲁⲥⲥⲉ ⲛⲙⲟϥ ⲛⲟϥⲥⲉⲗⲉⲗⲓⲛ ϣⲓⲗⲛ ϣⲛⲧϥ.

*Roasted barely, and Kysamias in equal parts. Crush them, mix them with milk, put it in a rag, boil a lentil, and apply it on his belly as a poultice.*⁶

Barely flower used in form of a plaster against spleen disorders: P.Mich. MS 136, ll. 34-38:

1 CHASSINAT 1921, 197.

2 CHASSINAT 1921, 277.

3 CHASSINAT 1921, 277.

4 TILL 1951, 60.

5 ZOEGA 1810: Cod.Med.Copt. 244.

6 All translations by Mona Sawy, if other way not stated.

ΠΡΟΣ ΣΠΛΗΝ ΔΟΚΙΜΟΝ ΕΜΠΛΑΣΤΡΟΝ ΑΠΟ ΠΡΩΪΑΣ ΕΩΣ Ο ΤΗΣ ΗΡΕΡΑΣ. ΝΟΪΤ̄ Ν̄ΙΩΤ̄' ΖΙ
ΟΖΥΓΓΙΝ Ν̄ΡΙΡ ΖΙ Ζ̄Μ̄Χ ΕΦΧΑ ΤΟΝΟΥ. Ζ̄ΜΟΥ// >>>—

*For (a disorder of the) spleen: A proved plaster. From morning until the sixth hour of the day. Flower of barley (mixed) with fat of swine (mixed) with very acrid vinegar (and) salt.*⁷

3 LEGUMES

3.1 LENTIL / ἀρωιν

Lentil known by the Coptic ἀρωιν, Greek φακός, and Arabic بلسن , عدس.⁸ Cooked lentils are mixed with other substances and used in form of poultice against skin disease in Cod.Med.Copt. 244, recipe no. 37.

3.2 LUPINE BEANS / ταρμος (θερμογς)

Lupine known by Coptic ταρμος, or (θερμογς) from the Greek θέρμος,⁹ and Arabic word ترمس.¹⁰

Lupine beans have been used in a special kind of ointment, i.e. ΠΗΞΙΝΟΝ, *Pyxinum*, “boxwood ointment” against haemorrhoids as in SBKopt I 005,¹¹ and the dry lupine flour ΝΟΕΙΤ̄ ΝΘΑΡΜΟΥΣ ΕΦΩΟΥΩ appeared to be used against the warts in the medical recipe Cod.Med.Copt., recipe no. 38.

4 FRUITS

4.1 APPLE / ογμηλα νογητρ

Apple known by Coptic μηλα, from Greek μήλον.¹² In a Coptic medical recipe, a specific type of apple called ογμηλα νογητρ “rose apple” is used against internal diseases. What is meant by rose apple is uncertain, but it has been used to treat knocking κωλαζ in SBKopt I 003.¹³

4.2 GRAPE / ελοολε

Grape known by Coptic ελοολε, Ancient Egyptian *j3rrt*, Greek σταφυλή, and Arabic عنب.¹⁴ There are two types of fresh grapes fruit in Coptic medical recipes: sour and female grapes. Firstly, the sour grape εληλημχ used to treat the itching legs as a second treatment followed the first recipe which inscribed

7 Translation based on WORRELL 1935, 29, with slight modification.

8 TILL 1951, 72.

9 LIDDELL – SCOTT – JONES 1996, 794b.

10 TILL 1951, 73.

11 TURAJEV 1902; TILL 1946-1947, 49–54; TILL 1951a, 132 (translation); HASITZKA 1993, 3-5 (nos. 4-5).

12 LIDDELL – SCOTT – JONES 1996, 1127a.

13 TILL 1946-1947: 43-48; HASITZKA 1993: 3 (no. 3); BUSCHHAUSEN – HORAK – HARRAUER 1995, 280 (no. 299).

14 LIDDELL – SCOTT – JONES 1996, 1996,

to treat the itching leg Cod.Med.Copt., 241, recipe no. 5, which recommended sesame, to be boiled with water and rose oil:

ΕΚΩΔΑΝΧΙ ΟΝ ΝΟΥΕΛΗΡΜΧ ΝΓΘΝΟΥ ΖΙ ΧΑΜΕ// ΜΕΛΟΝ¹⁵ ΝΓΛΟΟΛΕ ΕΡΟΥΓ, ΩΑΥΛΟ.

Also, if you take a sour grape, rub them with chamomile and smear them (the legs), they will heal.

Secondly, the female grape, its juice has been used against breast and penis pain, Cod.Med.Copt., 214, recipe no. 2:¹⁶

ΕΤΒΕ ΝΚΙΒΕ ΕΥΤΚΑΣ ΩΑΦΕΡΩΑΥ ΟΝ ΕΠΣΟΜΑ ΝΖΟΥΤ ΜΠΡΩΜΕ ΧΙ ΝΤΒΟΤΑΝΕΙ ΧΕ ΒΑΛΛΝΕΜΟΥ ΜΗ ΝΟΥΠΨΙΜΙΘΙΟΝ ΜΗ ΟΥΛΙΘΑΡΚΕΡΟΝ ΜΗ ΟΥΤΑΖΤ ΜΗ ΟΥΩΠΠΙΟΝ ΑΝΑ ΘΝΟΥ ΚΑΛΟΣ ΧΙ ΝΟΥΚΟΥΙ ΝΖΜΧ ΕΡΟΥΓ ΑΝΑΛΑΜΒΑΝΕ ΜΗΟΥ ΖΙ ΧΕΛΟΣ ΝΕΛΟΟΛΕ ΣΖΕΙΜΗ. ΚΑΥ ΖΗ ΟΥΑΚΚΙΟΝ ΝΤΑΖΤ. ΝΓΣΟΥ [Ν]ΚΟΛΣ ΕΡΟΥΓ ΩΑΝΤΟΥΛΟ. ΚΩΔΑΝΟΥΩΩ ΕΚΑΦ ΕΥΜΗ ΕΒΟΛ ΑΛΑΜΒΑΝΕ ΜΗΟΥ ΝΓΑΥ ΝΤΡΟΧΙΚΟΣ ΝΓΚΑΥ ΩΑ ΤΕΧΡΙΑ ΖΗ ΤΕΧΡΙΑ ΤΕ ΒΕΛ ΝΕΤΡΟΧΙΚΟΣ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙ ΜΟΥ ΝΣΑΥΖΕ ΧΡΩ

For breasts that have pain – also it is useful for the male human body (i.e. penis): Take the plant called cat’s eye, white lead, litharge, lead and opium in equal amounts; crush them well, add a little vinegar, (and) mix it with the juice of female grapes, and put in a lead vessel and let it rest, rub in the diseased parts until healing. If you want to keep it (the medicine), mix it up, take it, make them pills and leave them until using; to use it, dissolve the pills in the white of egg (and) apply.

The old grape leaves have been used against skin disease (wart), Cod.Med. Copt., 244, recipe no. 40:

ΟΜΑΙΟΣ ΕΤΒΕ ΟΥΖΥΛΗ. ΣΩΒΕ ΝΕΛΟΟΛΕ ΝΑΝΑΣ, ΘΝΟΥ ΖΙ ΜΟΥ, † ΕΡΟΥΓ.

Likewise, against a wart. Rub old grape leaves with water, put it on.

Dried grapes called raisins, Coptic (ΣΑΠΠ), have been used against stomach disorders in P.Ryl.Copt. 106, and to drive out worms in Ch 227:

ΟΥΑ ΕΡΕ ΝΖΕΛΜΙΣ ΝΖΗΤΨ ΖΨ ΤΕΥΛΟΧΟΣ ΝΧΜΗ ΖΙ ΕΛΟΛΕ ΩΟΥΣΕ ΛΟΖΜΟΥ ΤΣΟΥ ΟΕΥΜΟΥΣ ΣΕΝΑ

Someone, who has worms inside him, in his lodjos: Nedjmê and raisin; crush them; (make the patient) drink the juice, the worms will go away.¹⁷

4.3 POD OF CAROB / Χιειρε

Χιειρε in general means “pod” and specially referring to “pod of carob”. It corresponds the Greek κεράτιον and Arabic خَرْوَب.¹⁸

15 Cf. χαμαίμηλον “chamomile”. LIDDELL – SCOTT – JONES 1996, 1975b.

16 BOURIANT 1888.

17 English translation by me, the French translation by CHASSINAT 1921, 318.

18 TILL 1951, 67.

The water of carob $\mu\omicron\omicron\gamma \mu\pi\chi\iota\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon$ has been appeared in pharmaceutical text SBKopt. I 002, unfortunately its purpose is not stated.

4.4 FIG / $\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon$

Fig known by Coptic $\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon$, Greek $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\kappa\omicron\nu$, and Arabic تين .¹⁹ Leaves of wild fig $\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon \eta\epsilon\omicron\omicron\gamma\tau$ literary means “male fig”,²⁰ has been used as an ointment, to be mixed with baking soda, sulfur and honey, and used against psora (Cod. Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 17). The fruit itself has been appeared in the medical recipe Ch 22, to be used against $\epsilon\iota\tau$ “*melanoderma*” to be eaten as a food, and its juice had to be placed on it as well.

$\epsilon\phi\omega \eta\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ “fig honey”, used as part of a medicine taken for internal diseases P. Ryl. Copt. 106.

$\rho\omega\tau\epsilon \eta\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ “fig milk” has been used against $\alpha\lambda\pi\epsilon\sigma\omicron\gamma\tau$ “hemorrhoid”. “If a hemorrhoid gets bigger, anoint it twice daily with fig milk” in SBKopt I 005.

4.5 MELON, CUCUMIS MELO / $\lambda\omicron\mu\omega\pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\nu$

Melon known by Coptic $\lambda\omicron\mu\omega\pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\nu$ from Greek $\mu\eta\lambda\omicron\pi\acute{\epsilon}\tau\tau\omega\nu$.²¹ The medical recipe (Cod.Med.Copt., 241, recipe no. 8) recommends to use the inner part of melon to treat the itchy legs:

$\epsilon\kappa\omega\alpha\eta\chi\iota \mu\pi\epsilon\chi\gamma\lambda\omicron\varsigma \eta\tau\sigma\kappa\iota\lambda\lambda\alpha \epsilon\tau\epsilon \tau\alpha\lambda\lambda\omega\iota\omicron \tau\epsilon \mu\eta \eta\epsilon\tau\eta\epsilon\omicron\gamma\eta \eta\omicron\gamma\lambda\omicron\mu\omega\pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\nu \eta\gamma\tau\alpha\epsilon\sigma\omicron\gamma, \varsigma\epsilon\eta\alpha\epsilon\mu\tau\omicron\nu$.

If you take the juice of squill, that is the aloe, and rub the inside of a cucumis melo and anoint them (i.e. the sick legs), they will be relieved.

4.6 CHRIST’S THORN TREE / $\kappa\epsilon\eta\eta\alpha\tau\epsilon, \kappa\eta\eta\alpha\tau\iota, \kappa\epsilon\eta\eta\alpha\tau\iota$

Ziziphus spina-christi is known by Coptic $\kappa\epsilon\eta\eta\alpha\tau\epsilon, \kappa\eta\eta\alpha\tau\iota, \kappa\epsilon\eta\eta\alpha\tau\iota$, and Arabic نبق, سدر , *nabaq, sidr*. It is used to treat the large intestine, to be ground and mixed with drugs called *aam*, spurge, myrrh in Ch 225.

4.7 POMEGRANATE / $\gamma\epsilon\lambda\mu\alpha\eta$

Pomegranate known by Coptic $\gamma\epsilon\lambda\mu\alpha\eta$, Greek $\rho\acute{\omicron}\alpha$, and Arabic رمان .²² Pomegranate is included in the composition of many medicaments as follows:

4.7.1 Fruit $\gamma\epsilon\lambda\mu\alpha\eta$: The pomegranate fruit used as gastrointestinal medicine for “someone whose bowels run”, as follows in P.Mich. 593b, p. 168, ll. 16-25:²³

$\omicron\gamma\alpha \epsilon\tau\epsilon \eta\epsilon[\eta] \mu\alpha\epsilon\tau \mu\omicron\phi[\omega\epsilon] \omicron\gamma\epsilon\tau\epsilon\mu\alpha\eta \eta\tau\omega\omicron\gamma\omega\eta [\epsilon]\eta\omicron\lambda \eta\tau\eta\alpha[\chi\sigma\eta] \eta\beta\lambda\lambda\epsilon \eta\varsigma[\omicron\omicron\gamma]\epsilon$

19 TILL 1951, 56.

20 TILL 1951, 56.

21 TILL 1951, 63.

22 TILL 1951, 61.

23 WORRELL 1935.

ⲛⲓⲥⲟⲗⲟⲥ[ϣ] ⲛⲓⲧⲓⲑⲁⲃ ⲛⲓⲭ[ⲉ]ϣⲁⲱϣ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲥⲱⲥ ⲛⲓⲕⲱⲕ

*Someone whose bowels run (?): A pomegranate. You pour it(s contents) out, and you mix it with the whites of eggs, and you rub it to dough, and you cook it. Afterwards you peel.....*²⁴

4.7.2 Juice: ⲛⲓⲗⲉⲙⲏⲁⲛ ⲉϥⲗⲁⲙⲗ̅ ⲛⲕⲁⲙⲉ ⲗⲁⲱ ⲟϥⲟⲛ ⲉϥⲗⲟⲗⲟⲥ. Juice of sour, black and sweet pomegranate is used against air in P.Louvre AF 12530, recipe no. 24, ll. 68-76;²⁵ the juice of sour pomegranate for itchy in the eyes (P.Louvre AF 12530, recipe no. 22, ll. 43-5). ⲛⲓⲡⲏⲣⲓ ⲛⲓⲗⲉⲙⲏⲁⲛ is used also for itchy eyes in P.Louvre AF 12530, recipe no. 23, ll. 59-67.

4.7.3 Seeds: The seeds of sour pomegranate ⲛⲓⲃⲏⲣⲃⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲗⲉⲙⲏⲁⲛ ⲉϥⲗⲁⲙⲗ̅ used with other substances to treat the itchy eye in P.Louvre AF 12530, recipe no. 27, ll. 82-91:

ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲟϥⲗⲟⲕⲉ ⲗⲏⲛⲃⲗ ⲗⲓ ⲛⲓⲃⲏⲣⲃⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲗⲉⲙⲏⲁⲛ ⲉϥⲗⲁⲙⲗ̅ ⲛⲓⲧⲁϥ ⲉⲡⲏⲟⲟϥ ⲛⲓⲕⲁϥ ⲉⲧⲓⲱⲧⲉ ⲛⲓⲭⲓ ⲛⲓⲡⲏⲟⲟϥ ⲛⲓⲧⲓ ⲁⲥⲥⲟϥⲭⲁⲣ'ⲟϥⲁ'ⲥⲁⲡⲓⲣ̅ ⲛⲓⲧⲁⲥⲧⲓϥ ⲛⲓⲧⲓ ⲛⲓⲣⲏⲧⲓⲩ̅.

*For itchy eyes: Take the seeds of sour pomegranates, give it to water, leave it (until?) for morning dew, take the water and add sugar (edge gloss: and) aloe juice (to it); boil it and give it away.*²⁶

4.7.4 Rind: Even the rind of pomegranate appeared to have medical efficacy, in Ch 233 it has been used to treat the mouth bleeding:

ⲟϥⲁ ⲉϥⲛⲟϥⲭ ⲥⲛⲟϥ ⲉⲣⲣⲁⲓ ⲗⲏ ⲣⲱϥ ⲗⲓⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲓϥⲟⲛⲧⲉ ⲃ̅ ⲕⲟϥⲕⲉ ≡ ⲗⲟⲙ̅ ⲗ̅ ⲕⲁⲓⲣⲉ ⲫⲟⲛⲧⲓⲛⲟⲛ ⲗ̅ ⲗⲓⲣⲓⲛⲧⲟⲟϥ ⲗ̅ ⲗⲓⲣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛⲓⲥⲟϥⲥ̅ ⲫ̅ ⲑⲛⲟⲟϥ ⲟϥⲱⲟⲛ̅ ⲗⲓ ⲉϥⲓⲱ ⲛⲓϥⲱⲛ ⲥⲧⲕⲟⲥ

*Someone who throw up blood by his mouth: Acacia nilotica pod two drachmas, pomegranate rind one drachma, hazelnut one drachma, chicory two drachmas, wild rue one drachma, safflower flower six drachmas; crush them, and mix with honey. He eats according to his strength.*²⁷

4.8 DATES / ⲃⲏⲛⲏⲛⲉ, ⲃⲏⲛⲉ

Date palm fruit known by Coptic ⲃⲏⲛⲏⲛⲉ, ⲃⲏⲛⲉ, *Phoenix dactylifera L.*, Greek φοῖνιξ, and Arabic تمر.²⁸ In Coptic medical recipes, it always meant the fruit. In Ch 21 special kind of dates ⲃⲏⲛⲏⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲡⲁⲣⲉⲟⲛ "old dates", has been used with lentil flour, raisins, honey. The exact use of the recipe is not clear but it is possible that it is against skin diseases:

[...]ⲗⲁⲥⲉ ⲗⲉⲛⲃⲏⲛⲏⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲡⲁⲣⲉⲟⲛ ⲛⲓ ⲟϥⲛⲟⲉⲓⲧ ⲉⲗⲟⲗⲱⲟⲟϥⲉ ⲛⲓⲑⲉⲗⲟⲥⲓⲛ ⲕⲁⲃⲁⲣⲟⲛ ⲛⲁⲥ ⲉϥⲓⲱ ⲥⲛⲟⲟϥ ⲧ̅ ⲉⲣⲟⲥ ⲱⲁⲥⲡⲱⲣⲉⲭ

[...] old dates and lentil flour, hulled and old raisins, honey; grind them; apply to it, it will remove it.

²⁴ Translation: WORRELL 1935, 192.

²⁵ RICHTER 2014.

²⁶ Based on the German translation by RICHTER 2014, 178.

²⁷ Based on the French translation by CHASSINAT 1921, 321.

²⁸ TILL 1951, 52.

The medical recipe Ch 73, recommends using the crushed dates as a poultice for stomach ailments:

Ομεος βηιννε εφταζ β νοειτ ηδσχη²⁹ η γιμιθιον δ στηραζ β ζθω γη δ δ
(sic) βαφογω εφληκ δ κροκος δ θνοογ καλωσ μαχκογ μν ογηρτι ναπακ
παστογ φαντογσενριστα καλωσ κααγ ριχωφ ηκαταπλασμα φηαλο
Likewise: Crushed dates two ounces, cucumber flour eight ounces, white lead one ounces, styrax two ounces, mastic one-ounce, fresh rue one ounce, saffron one ounce; grind them well; mix with old wine; cook until desired consistency; apply them as a poultice; he will be healed.

The medical recipe Ch 216 recommends date honey دبس,³⁰ against fistula and ulcer as follow:

ογπαρρε ετςγρζ ετσαβολ³¹ μν ημεχπωνε φαρρωαγ δε οη επλγη ηημ ετχορμ
πομ δ ρημζ δ ηη σ ηηβ ηηη³² πεφωφε παστογ φαντογηραω χρω σαβολ σαρογη
A remedy for external fistula and ulcers, it is also appropriate for any infected wound: copper rust four drachmas, slate stone four drachmas, vinegar one ounce, honey dates sufficient quantity; cook them until they turn dark-hued; apply outside or inside.

Another part from date palm tree i.e. βοι “branch of date-palm” used in Ch 232 against ulcer and every kind of wound:

ογηπραστροη ενανογς ερωρ ησαω μν παθοσ ηημ ηηπλγη ηερματοσ γ νερ γ
ογαθ ηρημζ γ ταλοογ επκωρτ παστογ καλωσ ταρζ ηη ογβοι εφληκ νανογς
ηηπλγη ηημ ετχορμ
A good plaster for itching ulcers and for every kind of wound complication: Silver slag three drachmas, oil three drachmas, distilled vinegar three drachmas; put them on the fire, cook them well and mix with fresh date-palm branch. Good for any infected wounds.

The date palm fruit was used in magical recipe for “woman to become pregnant” ACM, 270, no. 128, ll. 67–69.³³

29 φωβε has various meanings “cucumber”, “gourd”, Greek σίκυς, and Arabic قثاء قفوس, بطيخ الاصفر. CRUM 1939, 581A; TILL 1951, 63.

30 TILL 1951, 66.

31 Literally means “external flesh”.

32 The Chassinat Papyrus contains a large number of cryptographic spellings, like this example: δηη σ ηηβ ηηη, εβιω ηβρηνε “honey of dates”, Arabic dibs دبس. CHASSINAT 1921, 307.

33 SAWY forthcoming.

4.9 SYCAMORE / ΝΟΥΖΕ

Sycamore *Ficus Sycomoros* L., ancient Egyptian *nh.t*, Greek συκόμορος, and Arabic جميز.³⁴ ερωτε ννουζε “sycamore milk” used as remedy against psora that affected the head of small children in Ch 38.

The wood of sycamore plays a role in the preparation of a remedy used against hemorrhoids, without being a component of the remedy itself in SBKopt I 005.

The smoke of a remedy burned on sycamore wood is prescribed to cure vulva from pain in P.Mich. MS 136, ll. 161-16). εφω ννουζε “honey of sycamore” used to treat eyes mist in Ch 113.

5. NUTS

5.1 HAZELNUT / ΚΑΙΡΕ ΝΦΟΝΤΝΟΝ

καροια, καιρε, καρια, καροι means “nut-bearing tree, nut”, Greek κάρυον, most of the time, the type of nut is not specified.³⁵

In Coptic medical texts there are two words for hazelnuts καιρε νφοντνον, corresponds to the Greek Κάρυον Ποντικόν, *Corylus avellana* L. and Arabic بندق, and ασαλλοογς, ασαλλαγςε Arabic جأوز.

The Coptic medical recipe Ch 233, recommends καιρε νφοντνον, to be eaten in case of mouth bleeding:

ογα εφνουχ σνοφ ερραι ε̅ν ρωφ χιειρε νφοντε β̅ κογκε ε̅j ζοη̅ δ̅ καιρε φοντνον
 δ̅ ρριντοογ δ̅ ρρηε ν̅σογς ⚡̅ θ̅νοογ ογω̅μ̅ ρι εφω ν̅ω̅μ̅ σ̅τ̅κο̅ς
*Someone who throw up blood by his mouth: Acacia nilotica pod two drachmas, pomegranate rind one drachma, hazelnut one drachma, chicory two drachmas, wild rue one drachma, safflower flower six drachmas; crush them, and mix with honey. He eats according to his strength.*³⁶

And ασαλλοογς, ασαλλαγςε probably used in form of suppository to treat the wind and sting in P.Louvre AF 12530 recipe no. 21, ll. 33-42:

πρωκε νβαλ ωτ̅ αλπανητ̅ εγεινε ννασαλλοογς ταγριαζ̅ ταρβογρβορ̅ καδ̅νια̅ς̅
 σαγρι̅ ογω̅ι̅ ν̅ογω̅τ̅ ν̅ι̅ρ̅σακτογ̅ ν̅ι̅ρ̅τ̅σογ̅ παλακητ̅ ν̅φ̅ω̅οογ̅ε̅ ε̅ν̅τ̅ζ̅αι̅βε̅ς̅
*The itchy eye: Fat, the painite, bring the hazelnuts(?), long pepper, calamine, ... (each) one part, crush them and soak them; the thickened should dry in the shade.*³⁷

The medical recipe Cod.Med.Copt., 244, recipe no. 43 recommends to use the

34 TILL 1951, 97.

35 TILL 1951, 80.

36 English translation by me of the French translation by CHASSINAT 1921, 321.

37 English translation by me of the German translation by RICHTER 2014, 178.

dry nut καροια ερωογωωγ to treat psora:

ετβε νετ νψωρα. καροια ερωογωωγ, θιογ απγρογ. βολογεβολ ρι ηρη ερωοορ.
ταρσϑ ρη τσιοογν ηη ογαωη ηνερ.

*For psora: Dry nut, and solid sulphur; dissolve them in strong wine, anoint him in the bath with a lot of oil.*³⁸

5.2 PISTACHIO / ΨΙΤΤΑΓΙΝ

Pistachio known by Coptic ΨΙΤΤΑΓΙΝ, from Greek πιστάκιον, and Arabic فستق.³⁹ Pistachio form a part of a medicine that is likely to be taken to treat “knocking” in SBKopt I 003.

6. VEGETABLES

6.1 GARLIC / ΩΧΗΝ

Garlic known by Coptic ΩΧΗΝ, Greek σκόροδον, and Arabic ثوم.⁴⁰ It appeared to be used in three medical recipes, two recipes against psora in Cod.Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 22, and against itchy body in Cod.Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 26. Dry garlic used in a recipe to enhance breast milk in Cod. Med.Copt., 215, recipe no. 6.

6.2 ONION / ΜΧΩΛ, ΕΜΧΩΛ

Onion known by Coptic ΜΧΩΛ; ΕΜΧΩΛ, Greek κρόμμυον.⁴¹ It has been used for treating various diseases and medical problems such as inflamed gums, eye diseases, to expel worms, and skin diseases.

Seeds of onion has been used to clean the mouth of the heart i.e. the stomach, and the recipe stated that this remedy is useful for the head as well in P.Ryl.Copt 106.⁴² νογνε νζαδρ “root of onion” and water used to treat inflamed gums in Ch 179.

Water or juice of onion μοογ νεμχωλ used to treat “eye that waters” in (P.Sarga 21), and as a collyrium against worms in Ch 112.

P.Sarga 21, ll. 7-9:

ογβαλ εβτ μοααγ δ. πε νβαλ ναβ [ω]κ ριμοογ νεμχωλ ριεβιδ †ει εο[...].ογμονε
ογσιωε νβαμπε ριεβιδ πι

*An eye that waters: ... of raven's eye (8) and water of onions and honey. Apply (them) to [it ...] a goat's gall and honey ...*⁴³

38 Translated by Mona Sawy.

39 TILL 1951, 86.

40 TILL 1951, 69.

41 TILL 1951, 104.

42 CRUM 1909.

43 Translation: CRUM et al.1922, 52.

Ch 112:

Ομοος καταθανθ δ̄ αλλωης ἰ ῥ̄ ἑνοογ ογοωμογ ρι μοογ ἡρτιτ δαγ ἡνοσ **ἡκ** †
 ῥ̄ ναγ εφνακότε

Likewise: Blue vitriol an obol, aloe three drachmas; crush them; knead them with onion juice; make them a great collyrium; administer-in three to him (the patient) when he goes to sleep.

Onion mixed with wine to treat dark black scar and united them with skin color again in Ch 154:

ογἡαγλη⁴⁴ εσκην ετρεσῤπαγαν ἡπσωμα ἡπρωμε ἡχωρ ἡαρμο[....]ἡ ἑνογ ρι
 βρκ⁴⁵ χρω εροογ ωαγλο

*A black Scar, to make it take color (skin) of the body of man: Onion; crush it with wine; apply them; they will recover.*⁴⁶

6.3 PEPPER / πιπερ, ταρβογρβορ (Δαρβογλβογλ), λεγκον

There are several names in the Coptic recipes for pepper such as πιπερ or in genitive form πιπερωσ from the Greek πίπερ *Piper nigrum* L.,⁴⁷ it is written also in cryptographic alphabet **ἡἡ**,⁴⁸ **ἡἡ** ἡαλεγ = παραπι *Piper album* L.⁴⁹ Another name is ταρβογρβορ, Δαρβογλβογλ derived from the Arabic *dar fulful* دار لؤلؤف “long pepper” (*Piper longum*).⁵⁰ Another type of pepper is the λεγκον “white pepper”. In addition, the peppercorn βλβιλε ηπιπερ, has been appeared in Coptic medical recipes. Remedies containing pepper are taken in various forms: as powder, ointment and syrup.

Pepper has been used for various medical purposes such as different eye diseases as in Ch 12, Ch 54, Ch 78, Ch 104, Ch 199, SBKopt. I 006, and P.Louvre AF 12530.

Long pepper ταρβογρβορ prescribed for eye diseases, especially for “itchy eye” in P.Louvre AF 12530, recipe no. 21, ll. 33-42).⁵¹

Other use of pepper appeared in the medical recipes Ch 69, and Ch 74 to expel gases from the abdomen:

Ch 69:

(135) Ομοος ογστομαχος εφτεμτωμ ἡτηγ ερε τεγλο ἡβε τεῤῥἡ **ἡἡ** βαωογω
 ωϣἡοκ≡ (136) ροσἡ ἡαραβικον εφω ἑνοογ καλωσ † ναγ ἡφογωμ ρηαογχαἡ

(135) *Likewise: Stomach heavy with gas, so that it stops blowing:*

44 αγλη, ούλη. CHASSINAT 1921, 262.

45 βρκ, ηρι. CHASSINAT 1921, 273.

46 Based on the French translation by CHASSINAT 1921, 273.

47 TILL 1951, 84.

48 = πεπεριν, πεπερε, πεπρος. CHASSINAT 1921, 86.

49 CHASSINAT 1921, 86.

50 RICHTER 2014, 181.

51 RICHTER 2014.

*Cumin, pepper, rue, mustard, (136) Arabic natron, honey; crush them well; give him to eat it; he will recover.*⁵²

Ch 74:

(148) ογκασθαρισμος φλαειν σακαμογνια δ επογα νιτρου η εγφορβιου η (149) θνοου καλωσ ογαωμ̄ η εφιδ τσοου κατα τεγσση ηνεφτ σναει επεσχητ
(148) *A purgative: Pepper, cress, scammony, an ounce of each, natron eight ounces, eight ounces spurge; (149) crush them well; bake with honey; drink according to the strength of the patient, the gas will go to the bottom.*⁵³

In addition, pepper has been used to treat the great intestine in Ch 226, as follows:

Ομεος πιεζτο ετ̄κκας κοπρος ηλκηκος εφρωχ εφθηη ει ναλαγ ογοωμογ ει εφιδ τσογ αλλα χι πβε (sic) ηωορ̄πι ογδοκιμον πε
*Likewise: The great intestine that has pain: crushed burnt wolf droppings, white pepper; knead them with honey, drink it, but take your salary first, it is tested.*⁵⁴

Moreover, pepper has been used against skin disorder (melanosis) in Ch 177, as follows:

ογαμσιρ οβ̄η ησχηε αρσυνικον γθο βω⁵⁵ ηβ̄ρρε ετρωχ θνοου κα ογοωμογ ει εφιδ ηατμοου χρω
*A melanosis: Liquid alum, pepper, orpiment, burnt new paper, crush them well; mix with honey without water; and apply.*⁵⁶

6.5 CABBAGE / χωρ̄β

Cabbage known by Coptic χωρ̄β. Cabbage leaf appeared in the medical recipe Ch 212 to be used against abscesses that appear in the urethra.

There is a specific type of cabbage appeared in the medical text P.Louvre AF 12530, recipe no. 16, ll. 79-86, called χωρ̄β ασπιρ̄ενη “*Persian cabbage*”, ασπιρ̄ενη from Arabic *isbahāni* أصفهاني. Persian cabbage appeared in a recipe against air and every illness, as follows:

χωρ̄β ασπιρ̄ενη⁵⁷ μ̄ χαβωλ ε γ̄ σαρταρ εφογαααβ̄ β̄ {σαρταρ β̄} σαρηηω⁵⁸ εφταρ̄ω
α σαπ̄ρ σκοτιρε β̄ μικκ σηντε ηειωτ̄ σαβαραν ογραπε επαηρ̄ ηνηωωνε νιμ

52 Translated by Mona Sawy.

53 Translated by Mona Sawy.

54 English translation by the author of the French translation by CHASSINAT 1921, 317, with slight modifications.

55 γθοσβω, χαλτηс (χαρτηс). CHASSINAT 1921, 290.

56 English translation by the author of the French translation by CHASSINAT 1921, 290.

57 ασπιρ̄ενη from Arabic *isbahāni* أصفهاني. RICHTER 2014, 180.

58 σαρηηω, Arabic loan word means “Arsenic”. RICHTER 2014, 168. σαρηηω from the Arabic word *zernikh* زرنخ.

*Persian cabbage: 40, camphor: ½/₃, pure thyme: 2, {Thyme: 2}, red arsenic: 1, aloe juice ..: 2, musk: two ḥabba, saffron: one ḥabba. Against air and every illness.*⁵⁹

6.6 ROCKET, RUCOLA / ⲪⲐⲚⲪⲐⲚ, ⲪⲐⲚⲪⲐⲚ

Rocket known by Coptic ⲪⲐⲚⲪⲐⲚ, ⲪⲐⲚⲪⲐⲚ, Greek εὔζωμον, and Arabic جرجير.⁶⁰ Seeds of rocket ⲪⲐⲚⲪⲐⲚ appeared in Ch 168 to treat the abdominal pain, to be mixed and oil, and applied on the painful belly.

6.7 DILL / ⲁⲚⲎⲐⲐⲐⲐ

Dill known by Coptic ⲁⲚⲎⲐⲐⲐⲐ, Greek ἄνηθον, and corresponds to Arabic شبت.⁶¹ Dill appeared as an ingredient in various medical recipes for different medical purposes such as dental diseases, eye diseases, and to treat constipation. In Ch 49, dill has been used as a remedy for eye with ginger, galangal, cloves, and spikenard. In Ch 157, dill has been used to treat the sick mouth, which probably indicate inflammation or general pain.

In addition, the medical recipe Ch 229 recommends to use dill as purgative to ⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲧⲁⲩⲧⲓ ⲟⲩⲁⲡⲟⲧ ⲛⲫⲁⲣⲙⲁⲒⲁ ⲛⲁⲩ “*someone who was given a cup of poison*”, the recipe recommends to swallow dung and drink beer; he shall vomit the poison.

6.8 LEEK / ⲎⲪⲎ

Leek known by Coptic ⲎⲪⲎ, Egyptian *j3kt*, and Arabic كزّث.⁶² ⲎⲪⲎ ⲛⲎⲪⲎ “*leek juice*” used in Ch 4 for bare eye and in Ch 201 for night blindness (*Nyctalopia*). Leek seed used for headache in P. Carlsberg 500.⁶³

6.9 CELERY / ⲎⲐⲧ

Celery known by Coptic ⲎⲐⲧ, Greek σέλινον.⁶⁴ Celery has been used against stomach pain in Ch 71.

6.10 RADISH / ⲒⲐⲎ

Radish known by Coptic ⲒⲐⲎ, Ancient Egyptian *śm*, and corresponds to Arabic فجل.⁶⁵ Radish used to treat the bleeding that due to an internal organic

⁵⁹ English translation by the author of the German translation by RICHTER 2014, 177, with slight modifications.

⁶⁰ TILL 1951, 87.

⁶¹ TILL 1951, 53.

⁶² TILL 1951, 86.

⁶³ ERICHSEN 1963.

⁶⁴ TILL 1951, 94.

⁶⁵ TILL 1951, 88.

cause in O.Mon.Epiph. 574: [ε]ΓΒΕ ΟΥΑ ΕΦΩΩΝΕ ΕΠΕΡΑ ΝΡΟΥΝ̄ ΕΦΝΑΝΕΧ ΣΝΟΥ ΕΡΡΑΪ “for someone who is sick in his inward parts, (and) casting up blood”. The recipe recommends using the hot oil of radish, burnt sulfur, a hen’s egg, to be anointed on the bowels three time for the day.

The medical recipe Ch 162, recommends using radish oil, wax, sandalwood, sulfur fresh, dry rue, to treat psora. Also, Ch 156, recommends using radish oil for skin disease (cut) with sulfur and dried pitch. P.Ryl.Copt. 106, prescribes radish oil to treat knocking, with bdellium, tragacanth, gum, radish oil and various other substances.

6.11 CRESS / ΚΑΡΤΑΜΟΝ, ΟΥΛΑΕΙΝ (ΟΥΛΕΙΝ)

There are several names for cress or cress seeds in Coptic medical texts, such as ΚΑΡΤΑΜΟΝ, corresponds to the Greek κάρδαμον.⁶⁶ The medical recipe P.Ryl.Copt. 108 Ro gives a detailed description “A herb named cardamom, in the Egyptian tongue shife which is a tree that grows in mountain regions like a pomegranate tree, its leaves being somewhat long like..... Its wood is like that of the pomegranate”, the recipe recommends using cress with hoopoe blood for watery eyes. In Ch 63 ΚΑΡΤΑΜΟΝ used with incense, and white of egg against temple pain.

Another expression used for cress is ΟΥΛΑΕΙΝ or ΟΥΛΕΙΝ “Garden cress seed”, and Arabic حَبَّ الرِّشَادِ.⁶⁷

Garden cress seed with realgar, gum and pepper has been used as an agent to stop bleeding as in Ch 9, and as a remedy against psora in Ch 60.

6.12 LETTUCE / ΟΥΛ, ΟΥΒ

Lettuce known by the Coptic terms ΟΥΛ and ΟΥΒ, Greek θηρίδαξ, and Arabic خَسَّ.⁶⁸ In Coptic medical texts ΕΡΩΤΕ ΝΩΒ Ν̄ΑΩΕ “milk of better lettuce”, with opium, and manna used in a recipe against fog in the eye (Ch 8). In another recipe ΕΒΡΕΩΥ “lettuce seeds” used to be drunk with hot water to expel worms from the belly in Ch 111.

6.13 SESAME / ΟΚΕ, ΔΚΕ

Sesame known by Coptic terms ΟΚΕ, ΔΚΕ, Greek σήσαμον, and Arabic سَمْسَم.⁶⁹ In the medical recipe Cod.Med.Copt., p. 241, recipe no. 4, ΔΚΕ ΕΦΩΟΥΟΥ “dry sesame” with water and rose oil used in form of an ointment for itchy leg. Sesame also recommended to be taken by women who want

66 LIDDELL – SCOTT – JONES 1996, 877b.

67 CRUM 1939, 560a.

68 TILL 1951, 90.

69 TILL 1951, 95.

to increase their breast milk in Cod.Med.Copt., p. 215, recipe no.7. Sesame leaves $\sigma\omega\beta\epsilon\ \nu\omicron\kappa\epsilon$ used against psora in Cod.Med.Copt., p. 243, recipe no. 30. Sesame appeared to be used against knocking $\kappa\omega\lambda\alpha\gamma$ in SBKopt I 003, ll. 8-19.

7. HERBS AND SPICES

7.1 CHAMOMILE / $\chi\alpha\mu\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\upsilon$ ($\chi\alpha\mu\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\omega\upsilon\upsilon$, $\chi\alpha\mu\alpha\mu\epsilon\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\upsilon$)

Chamomile known by Coptic $\chi\alpha\mu\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\omicron\upsilon\upsilon$ ($\chi\alpha\mu\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\omega\upsilon\upsilon$, $\chi\alpha\mu\alpha\mu\epsilon\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\upsilon$) from Greek $\chi\alpha\mu\alpha\iota\mu\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon$, *Matricaria chamomilla* L., and Arabic بابونج.⁷⁰ Chamomile uses for itchy legs with sour grapes in Cod.Med.Copt., 241, recipe no. 5, and against intestinal worms in Ch 166. $\nu\epsilon\gamma\ \nu\chi\alpha\mu\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\omega\upsilon\upsilon$ “*Chamomile oil*” used against psora in Cod.Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 15.

7.2 CARAWAY / $\chi\alpha\mu\mu\omicron\gamma\eta\ \chi\alpha\rho\mu\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota$

In Chassinat papyrus caraway known by $\chi\alpha\mu\mu\omicron\gamma\eta\ \chi\alpha\rho\mu\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota$, Arabic $\kappa\omicron\mu\omicron\��\ \kappa\��\��\��\��$, *Carum Carvi* L.,⁷¹ it is used in case of cataract “eyes suffer from water” to be crushed and its strained juice is dribbled into the eye without any other ingredient in Ch 91.

7.3 CUMIN / $\tau\alpha\pi\epsilon\upsilon$ ($\tau\epsilon\pi\eta$), $\kappa\iota\mu\iota\omicron\upsilon\gamma$

Cumin known by Coptic $\tau\alpha\pi\epsilon\upsilon$, $\tau\epsilon\pi\eta$, (Ancient Egyptian: *tpnn*), and in Cod.Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 25) as $\kappa\iota\mu\iota\omicron\upsilon\gamma$, from Greek $\kappa\acute{\upsilon}\mu\iota\upsilon\upsilon\omicron\upsilon$. Externally, cumin is used in ointment for puffy eyes and swelling of the body in Ch 14, in case of wild psora in Cod.Med.Copt. 242, recipe no. 16, and itchy body in Cod.Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 25. In case of close uterus in Ch 125 vapors of cumin are prescribed “let the woman sit on it; she will recover by God’s will”. Cumin appears as an ingredient in various remedies for stomach disorders, for all stomach diseases, and for $\omicron\gamma\sigma\tau\omicron\mu\alpha\chi\omicron\varsigma\ \nu\tau\alpha\gamma\upsilon\omega\varsigma\epsilon$ “a stomach that leaps” in Ch 68, for gastric wind in Ch 69, and for stomach pain in Ch 71. In P.KölnÄgypt.12 cumin has been used against $\pi\alpha\gamma\epsilon\omega\ \mu\eta\mu\epsilon\gamma\iota$ “lichen of the forearm”.

7.4 BLACK CUMIN / $\varsigma\tau\iota\kappa\epsilon\mu\epsilon\ \text{for}$ ($\varsigma\text{-}\tau\kappa\epsilon\mu\epsilon$)

Black cumin (*Nigella sativa*) known by Coptic $\varsigma\tau\iota\kappa\epsilon\mu\epsilon\ \text{for}$ ($\varsigma\text{-}\tau\kappa\epsilon\mu\epsilon$), Greek Μελάνθιον , and Arabic $\text{شونيز وهو الكمون الاسود}$.⁷² Boiled black cumin, mixed with vinegar used as an ointment against itchy psora in Ch 217. In a second recipe for $\pi\epsilon\gamma\varsigma\omega\mu\alpha\ \gamma\omega\kappa\epsilon$ “itchy body”, black cumin is boiled with vinegar and other medicinal substances in Cod.Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 26. In both recipes, the ointment should be washed off with warm water after a while.

70 TILL 1951, 68.

71 TILL 1951, 71.

72 CRUM 1939, 110a.

7.5 FENNEL / φαναρ (φαναλλ), σαμαρηρ

Fennel known by Coptic φαναρ (φαναλλ), σαμαρηρ, and Arabic رامش.⁷³ Fennel water appeared in two medical recipes to be used against eye disorders Ch 90 and Ch 113. The wild fennel (probably the seed)⁷⁴ φαναρ ροογτ is used internally in case of spitting blood in Ch 233. σαμαρηρ mixed with incense used against psora in Cod.Med.Copt., 242, recipe no. 20. σαμογρηρ σογρια “*Syrian fenfel*” with vinegar used against heart disorder in O Bachit 1170+1172.

7.6 GINGER / σινσιπιλ

Ginger known by Coptic σινσιπιλ, from Arabic *zanjabil* زَنْجَبِيل.⁷⁵ Ginger is used exclusively for eye diseases. As a remedy in medical recipe against dark eyes in Ch 11 and Ch 12. In Ch 12 ginger used in a powder called *Sise kalamié* σισε καλαμιε, to be mixed with antimony, hematite, Indian lepidium, salt ammonia, storax, copper, aloes, zinc oxide, saffron, pepper and long pepper. In Ch 49, and Ch 81 used as a general remedy for eye. In P.Ryl.Copt. 106 ginger used internally to be mixed with pepper, gillyflower, mastic, spikenard, sesame, seed of onion, mustard, feverfew, garlic and raisins, to clean the mouth of heart, a remedy which is also benefit for the head.

7.7 MUSTARD / σιναιπε (σιναιπιν), φαλταμ (φαλταμμ)

There are two expressions for mustard in Coptic medical recipes: The Greek σιναιπε (σιναιπιν) σινάπι, and Coptic φαλταμ (φαλταμμ). Mustard has been used in a recipe with other medicinal substances to “*clean the mouth of heart*” in P.Ryl.Copt. 106, ll. 51-64. In Ch 160 recipe it has been used with semolina and vinegar as a remedy for sick temples, in Ch 6 against psora, and in Ch 69 against stomach disorders.

7.8 SAFFRON / κροκος

Saffron known by Coptic κροκος, from Greek κρόκος.⁷⁶ Saffron used externally in several recipes against eye diseases, as powders and collyrium especially against “*water*” in Ch 25, Ch 19, for “*star and flesh growths on the eye*” (Ch 52), eyes inflammation (Ch 44), swollen eyes (Ch 93), streaming (Ch 196), injured, dark and bald eyes (Ch 143), eyesight (Ch 51), and eye diseases in general (Ch 4, 46, 52, 53, 103, 104). Saffron has been used in form of poultice for stomach in Ch 73, and as collyrium for body swelling, painful limbs, gout, wounds, knee ankyloses in Ch 93. In case of skin diseases, saf-

73 TILL 1951, 56.

74 TILL 1951, 65.

75 TILL 1951, 67.

76 LIDDELL – SCOTT – JONES 1996, 998a.

fron has been used against herpes zoster (Ch 158), and for pustules (Ch 215). In P.Louvre AF 12530, recipe no. 16, ll. 79-86, saffron is used against air and all illness.

CONCLUSION

The importance of medicinal plants as sources of therapeutic agents and foundational elements of drugs for the treatment of human ailments has always been enormous and will continue to be so. Different parts of plants were used in Coptic medical prescriptions, i.e., roots, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds. Coptic physicians and medical practitioners knew how to extract pure substances from plants and use them in appropriate ways such as oils, resins and gums.

Coptic medical prescriptions are rich in a variety of edible plants which are used for various internal and external diseases. As a result of this research, it is also clear that the edible plants were recommended to be used orally in form of syrup and pills, or externally in form of poultice, plaster, ointment and powder. The survey of Coptic medical texts also proves that the edible plants are used in specific doses for both internal and external diseases, and also for both, fruits and herbs occupied the first place among the medical plants.

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