Essays on the history of herbal medicine. Ancient Greece (continued)

A.A. Karpeev
(National Council for Homeopathy, Moscow)

History of phytotherapy. Ancient Greece (continued)

AA Karpeev
(National council for homeopathy, Moscow, Russia)

SUMMARY

The article is the sixth in a series of essays on the history of herbal medicine. In a previous article on the history of herbal medicine in Ancient Greece, the main focus was on the teachings of Hippocrates, his use of medicinal plants in medical practice. This article continues the study of the use of phytotherapeutic agents by doctors of antiquity, examines the activities and works of the "father of botany" Theophrastus.

Key words: Ancient Greece, medicine, herbal medicine, medicinalplants, philosophy, botany, Aristotle, Theophrastus.

RESUME

Current article is 6th in a series of articles devoted to the history of phytotherapy. The previous article described the teaching of Hippocrates and his use of remedial plants in medical practice. In continuation we research use of herbal by ancient doctors considering activity and work medicines of Theophrastus - "the father of botany".

Keywords: Ancient Greece, medicine, phytotherapy, remedial plants, philosophy, botany, Aristotelle, Theophrastus.

We again meet with the ancient Greek civilization in the most remarkable period of its existence - the classical one. It was a tremendous time in the history of all mankind. The constellation of the great names that sounded at that time is amazing. Great scientists, philosophers, doctors, playwrights, architects, sculptors, historians, poets, politicians, as if by agreement, were born exactly in this blessed period of time. Is this a coincidence? After all, outstanding personalities have appeared in all historical periods, in other civilizations, but in such a number and practically at the same time ... Coincidence? Unlikely.

There was, apparently, all the same in this people some kind of unquenchable flame, requiring constant replenishment, both physical (example of Sparta) and spiritual. Otherwise, why did these soldiers (and Greece fought almost continuously) needed science and art? In something the answer can be found in the letter of the Macedonian king Philip, inviting the philosopher (!) Aristotle as the educator of his son Alexander - the future great commander. The king wrote to the scientist: “My son was born, but I am less grateful to the gods that they gave him to me than for the fact that they allowed him to be born in your time. For I hope that your concern and your teachings will make him worthy of the future state. " This was written by a man who spent his whole life in the saddle, a warrior who was wounded many times and, it would seem, was far from

sentimentality, but carries a fire in his soul, prompting to put the interests of the state above all. This fire is special, it burns, burns, but does not burn, does not incinerate. Perhaps this is the very passionarity about which the great Russian scientist L.N. Gumilyov. He designated passionarity as a characterological dominant, “an irresistible inner striving (conscious or, more often, unconscious) for activities aimed at achieving some goal (often illusory). This goal is often seen as a passionate individual, sometimes even more valuable than his own life, and even more so the life and happiness of his contemporaries and fellow tribesmen. " Further, the scientist argues that an ethnos can go through (one must think that it can not go through) the phase of ascent, when people of “long will” appear - passionaries [3].

Ancient Greece (to a lesser extent, Ancient Rome) certainly went through this phase (maybe more than once). Are not passionaries, for example, Lycurgus, who of his own free will passed away, if only his ideas and principles for the development of the kingdom would continue to underlie the government of the country; Socrates, who voluntarily accepted death, but did not deviate from his principles; Aristotle, who fell into mortal disgrace with his disciple, the almighty Alexander the Great, but did not betray himself? Other examples of passionate personalities in ancient Greek society can be cited. But even this does not explain the truly massive "starfall" of geniuses, which did not happen then in any other era. Yes, apparently, and in this case there cannot be an exhaustive explanation. Too complex multidimensional processes were going on in this society, and we know only a little bit about it, and in this smallness - only the outer shell, torn, torn to pieces by time. We do not know, for example, what kind of music the ancient Greeks had. But she was, there were performers (singers and musicians), which means there were authors. But there was no musical notation, and this music was forgotten, and, apparently, it was beautiful, like all ancient Greek art. But it cannot be captured in marble, thanks to which we can still admire antique statues today. It cannot be expressed in words, thanks to which we are still moved and shaken by the tragedies of Sophocles, the comedies of Aristophanes. I remember how in the early 60s of the last century in the Moscow theater. Mayakovsky, the magnificent N.P. Okhlopkov played Euripides' Medea. Theatrical Moscow was shocked! It would seem (by analogy with Shakespeare's: "What is he to Hecuba? And what is Hecuba to him?") That could touch the hearts of people, most of whom have recently experienced the horrors of the worst war in history? But it did touch, and how! And not only in the stunning finale, when the actress E. Kozyreva, who played Medea, who killed her children in order to take revenge on her husband, who had betrayed her, left the house with a bloody knife, and a bloody trail followed her, but throughout the entire tragedy, written by more than two thousand years ago.

Agree, the people were extraordinary - the ancient Greeks. And their medicine was wonderful, incomparably better than in all previous civilizations. Even in the next civilization, ancient Roman, the best characteristic of a doctor was considered to be his Greek origin.

Our work is not aimed at the study of ancient Greek medicine. But it is impossible not to dwell on two of her achievements. The first we have already mentioned -

a completely new form of training medical personnel for European medicine - medical schools. They were very different from each other, professed different philosophical views (and medicine, let me remind you, in those days was considered a part of philosophy), relying mainly on the magical component of diagnosis and treatment. And how could one disagree with these postulates when they were pronounced by such titans of philosophical thought like Empedocles and especially Plato? And it's a miracle that against this background the Kosk school appears with its leader Hippocrates, who turned medicine to real life, cleared it (I must say, not completely and not immediately) from the magic foundation, laying the foundations of its scientific nature. Quite unusual and extremely important for the fate of medicine was the Alexandrian School of Medicine,

The organizational and creative thought of the ancient Greek doctors gave rise to a most interesting and completely unusual form of medical care for that time (and for a later one too). This refers to the Asclepion
- churches in honor of Asclepius, in which sick people were helped in an organized manner.

Scientists believe that healing temples appeared in Ancient Greece in the 7th-6th centuries BC, then, as the importance of the role of Asclepius in the development of medicine grew, they were transformed into temples named after him - Asclepion. The very first Asclepion was formed in Tricca (Thessaly), Epidaurus (Peloponnese), on the island of Kos. Basically, they were practiced by priests from the Asclepiades clan - people who knew well the then medicine. There was a strict system for selecting patients: the road to the church was closed for seriously ill people, especially those suffering from incurable diseases. Pregnant women were not admitted to treatment [2].

Upon admission, the patient was prescribed baths, diets, and cleansing procedures. Prayers played an important role. Sacrifices were encouraged. According to the researchers, it was in the Asclepion that the medical terms "miasm" - desecration, "pharmacos" - the person to whom the priest transferred the disease from the patient were born. But the main action awaited the patient at night, when he was placed in the abaton - a covered gallery, into which no one had the right to enter, except for the patient and the priest. Here the patient was immersed in an incubation sleep, which was caused by narcotic substances. It seemed that the priest, analyzing dreams, would be able to understand and suggest to the patient the cause of the illness and the necessary treatment. Naturally, medicinal plants known at that time were used to introduce a patient into a narcotic sleep [9].

As for the use of medicinal herbs in asclepion, they, of course, were used, but, undoubtedly, in a magical, shamanic aspect. Asclepion was a vivid embodiment of the powerful direction of ancient Greek medicine, the ideologists of which were such powerful philosophers as Empedocles and, to an even greater extent, Plato, who repeatedly pointed to psychic abilities as the basis of the medical art. Therefore, it is difficult to agree with the famous researcher S.Yu. Trokhachev, who writes: "It is known that

in parallel with scientific medicine in Greece, there was temple healing with centers in the Asclepion - the sanctuaries of the god Asclepius. It was understood that in difficult cases, with the impotence of rational knowledge, the last hope for the gods remained ”[14]. Firstly, the researcher, it seems to me, is overly optimistic, having found a fully formed scientific medicine in Ancient Greece, and, secondly, he clearly underestimates the role of magical medicine in the healing process, giving it only a place in the treatment of serious diseases. What is the meaning of Plato's medicine (let me remind you that Plato, in addition to being the greatest and most authoritative philosopher, was the ideologist and head of a huge and influential trend in ancient Greek medicine)? The essence of his views on medicine and, in particular, on treatment, he defined as follows: “Accordingly, of all types of body cleansing and strengthening, gymnastics is the most preferable; in second place - there is an oscillatory motion during sea or other trips, if only they do not bring fatigue; and the third place is taken by this kind of influence, which, it is true, is useful in case of emergency, but the rest of the time, of course, is unacceptable for a reasonable person: we are talking about medical cleansing of the body by the power of drugs. Unless the ailment poses an extreme danger, there is no need to tease him with medications. The fact is that the structure of any ailment is in some way similar to the nature of a living being, meanwhile the latter is arranged in such a way that a certain sequence of life periods must pass, and both the entire genus as a whole and each creature individually have a strictly set time limit. which it achieves, if the force of necessity does not interfere. The triangles themselves constituting this creature, when combined, are endowed with the ability to hold on only until the appointed time and cannot extend their life any longer. Ailments are arranged in the same way, and therefore only those who want severe ones to result from mild disorders, and countless ones from a few, can interrupt their course with the power of drugs. Therefore, it is better to manage the disease with the help of an orderly lifestyle, as far as our circumstances allow, than to tease him with drugs, thereby making the trouble ingrained. " It would, of course, be an unacceptable oversimplification to judge Plato's medical views on the basis of this statement alone. This wisest philosopher wrote this way: “You cannot heal a separate part of the body without healing the whole. One should not try to heal the body without healing the soul, and if the head and body are to be healthy, one should start with the treatment of consciousness ”[13]. Who of modern doctors does not subscribe to this dictum? But nevertheless, Plato regards psychic abilities as the basis of medical art. " ("Feast") [12].

The Roman writer-philosopher Flavius Philostratus writes about the methods of healing of that time: “Iarch returned to the conversation about magic, listing many benefits that it brings to people, and he called healing the greatest of these gifts, for the wise Asclepias would never have comprehended this science, had it not been for Asclepius son of Apollo, and he did not prepare the potion needed for every ailment according to the word and broadcast of his father - and not only did Asclepius convey this art to his children, but also taught his admirers what herbs to heal wet wounds and what dried or

covered with scabs, and by what measure to dispense medicinal drugs in order to expel water from dropsy or retain blood from bleeding, or stop consumption and the resulting exhaustion. Who will deny that from magic comes the science of both antidotes and the treatment of many ailments with the same poisons? For in my understanding, without the mediation of prophetic wisdom, people would never have dared to combine destructive potions with saving ones ”[17]. This is where the origins of herbal medicine were seen in those days.

This suggests that it is impossible to give an unambiguous assessment of the healing of that time. We must agree with the point of view that both of these directions were necessary at that time, developed in a struggle against each other and thereby provided the dialectical conditions for the forward movement of medicine.

It is impossible to talk about history without mentioning its characters. In this case, we are talking about ancient Greek doctors who, like all doctors of that time, of course, were phytotherapists by definition and lack of choice.

Their names, unfortunately, are mostly brought in by the quicksands of time, but many names have survived in the memory of their descendants. I want to start this list with a unique, albeit semi-mythical, female doctor. In the 4th century BC. in Athens, a doctor appeared who, in his work, gave preference to the treatment of women, but was constantly faced with the fact that women were reluctant to go to a man's doctor for treatment. In the end, the doctor was forced to reveal to one of the patients that she was a woman who, having changed into a man's dress, was educated in one of the medical schools (presumably from the famous doctor Herophilus), and the women pushed to Agnodice (that was the name of the doctor) almost not in a crowd. This could not be tolerated by her fellow men. A denunciation followed, then a trial and a sentence: the death penalty. The fact, that in democratic Athens, women were forbidden to practice medicine on pain of the most severe punishment. But the judges did not consider the possibility of collective female resistance. A huge number of women took to the streets of Athens to protest the decision of the judges, and they were forced to change the verdict, allowing Agnodice to practice. Unfortunately, according to many researchers, the story of Agnodice is nothing more than a beautiful legend. Doubts about the reality of the existence of the first female doctor are intensified when we learn that the only author who captured Agnodice in his writings was Hyginus, who, as we have already noted, was not only a collector and interpreter of myths, but sometimes their creator. A huge number of women took to the streets of Athens to protest the decision of the judges, and they were forced to change the verdict, allowing Agnodice to practice. Unfortunately, according to many researchers, the story of Agnodice is nothing more than a beautiful legend. Doubts about the reality of the existence of the first female doctor are intensified when we learn that the only author who captured Agnodice in his writings was Hyginus, who, as we have already noted, was not only a collector and interpreter of myths, but sometimes their creator. A huge number of women took to the streets of Athens to protest the decision of the judges, and they were forced to change the verdict, allowing Agnodice to practice. Unfortunately, according to many researchers, the story of Agnodice is nothing more than a beautiful legend. Doubts about the reality of the existence of the first female doctor are intensified when we learn that the only author who captured Agnodice in his writings was Hyginus, who, as we have already noted, was not only a collector and interpreter of myths, but sometimes their creator.

True, there is another literary source in which Agnodice is mentioned, but its reliability is very doubtful. We are talking about the work of the Frenchman G.E.F. Lantier "Antenor's travels in Greece and Asia". On the title page is "The Manuscript Found at Herculane and Translated into French." The book first saw the light of day in France in 1798 and quickly became very popular in Europe. It was translated into Russian at the beginning of the 19th century, and in a short time it was reprinted 4 times (the last edition in 1822). True, it should be said that European researchers very quickly recognized it as a hoax and attributed it to the genre of adventure literature, and the excitement around it quickly faded away.

It is regrettable that what is described in it is a beautiful invention. After all, there on several pages the woman doctor Agnodice is mentioned. In particular, her medical action is described, which was included in textbooks on psychotherapy and is known to all doctors from the student's bench (of course, without any mention of Agnodica). The essence of the matter is that some ancient Greek respected and wealthy citizen began to be terribly annoyed by a fly that landed on his nose, as soon as he intended to write or read. It was not possible to drive away the intrusive insect by any means. Doctors, including the most famous, made a helpless gesture (you can imagine how, leaving the patient, they twisted their fingers at their temples). Meanwhile, the patient's suffering intensified. This continued until the arrival of Agnodice to him. Having visited the patient several times, using several medicines to no avail, she did not turn away from him, but on one of the visits she took a pile of papers and slapped them on the patient's nose, after which she showed him a dead fly prepared in advance. The patient recovered, multiplying the fame of the woman doctor [10].

Do you think that, following the example of Agnodice, Greek women rushed in slender rows into medicine? You are wrong, and this once again proves the mythology of the pretty heroine. For many centuries, European women have worked in medicine as physician assistants, nurses (later nurses), midwives, midwives, etc. And only after 1849, when the American Elizabeth Blackwell received her medical degree, European women began to join the medical ranks. But in the twentieth century and the following century, women more than compensated for the previous lag.

I would like to mention two more ancient Greek doctors (only two of the magnificent cohort, but what can you do - the size and subject matter of the work make their own limitations). Often, when talking about great people, we remember their origin and, most often, their parents, rightly seeing in them the genetic basis of the genius of a son or daughter. Researchers scrupulously delve into the life of the parents of a genius, trying to establish some patterns that determined the singularity of their child. Sometimes it works, more often it doesn't.

So today we will remember the ancient Greek physician Nicomachus, who was very famous in Athens, although he was born on the island of Andros. He belonged to the Asclepiades family and traced his descent from Nicomachus, the son of Machaon, the grandson of Asclepius. In Athens, Nicomachus was quite famous, wrote seven books (six on medicine, one on natural philosophy). But even this would hardly have left his name among the most famous characters in ancient Greek history, if not for the colossal glory of his son - the great philosopher of all times Aristotle. True to the long-standing tradition of the Asklepiads, Nicomachus taught his son the basics of medicine from early childhood. This explains the well-known fact of the philosopher's frequent use of medical terms in his writings [1]. By the way, after the death of Nicomachus, Aristotle (he was fifteen at the time) got his father's magnificent library. The medical successes of Nicomachus attracted the attention of the Macedonian king Aminta II, who appointed Nicomachus as a court physician. Later, their relationship grew into friendship and laid the foundation for the well-known chain of Amyntas II - Philip II - Alexander the Great on the one hand, Nicomachus - Aristotle - on the other.

We decided to recall the next character of ancient Greek medicine in support of our conviction that it was Hippocrates who was the father of European medicine. In contrast to the opinion of some scholars that the authority of his personality was unjustly inflated, let us recall the Athenian physician who lived a little later than Hippocrates, and the Athenians called him the second Hippocrates. What other proofs of the enormous authority of Hippocrates are needed, if a magnificent doctor is named after him, and this is how people who still find the genius of medicine alive?

We are talking about the doctor Diocles, a native of Karista (the island of Euboea). Diocles' popularity in Athens was exceptional [1]. In addition to medical practice, he was known as the author of a number of research papers. He wrote the first textbook on anatomy (by the way, according to scientists, he is also the author of the term "anatomy", although a detailed anatomical nomenclature in Ancient Greece existed even before Hippocrates).

Diocles not only actively used herbal medicine in his medical work, but also wrote a work on medicinal plants, antidotes, and their use in medical practice.

But Diocles made a particularly great contribution to cosmetology. His four-volume work on the subject was immensely popular with Athenian women. Yes, and modern cosmetologists revere Diocles as one of the founders of this direction of medicine.

As an epigraph to the introduction of the next character of ancient Greek herbal medicine, I would like to take the words of the great Frenchman Victor Hugo: "Before a great mind I bow my head, before a great heart I kneel." In ancient Greece, and indeed in ancient times, there were plenty of people to bow your head to. But about those in front of whom you can kneel, we know very little. And not because there were few of them, just the high qualities of the human soul did not always remain in memory, in contrast to the inquiring mind, heroism, courage, unyielding will, cruelty, various talents and abilities.

Speaking about the ancient Greek philosopher Theophrastus (he himself considered himself, first of all, a philosopher), all researchers, paying tribute to his versatility, necessarily mention that he was a man of great soul, kindness, extraordinary, as they would say now, sociability. Diogenes Laertius, who left the most complete information about his life, wrote: "Theophrastus was the wisest man, the most diligent worker and, above all, kind and learned." Interestingly, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, even the slave Pompilus was a philosopher in Theophrastus, the scientist subsequently released him and even mentioned him in his will. Few people in Ancient Greece were awarded such love, reverence, respect not only of students, but also of the people around him. It is known that almost the entire population of Athens came to his funeral (he died at the age of 85). Until his last days, he was surrounded by his students (at some moments in the Lyceum he headed, up to 2000 listeners studied at the same time), who didn’t want a soul in their teacher. And he gave them all his free time from doing science. Theophrastus was not married because he believed that the family was a distraction.

from doing science.

Theophrastus was born in 371 BC. in the city of Eres on the island of Lesvos. There is a legend that his parents named him Tirtam, but Aristotle began to call him Theophrastus, which meant "divine orator", or "possessing divine speech." If this is a beautiful legend, then it is based on Theophrastus' truly magnificent oratory. By the way, rhetoric in his numerous works occupied a significant place.

The first teacher of Theophrastus was Plato, and only later he linked his fate with Aristotle. Thus, his philosophical thought was fertilized by the ideas of two of the greatest philosophers of antiquity. But if in Plato he was just an attentive student, then for Aristotle he became an associate, ally, friend. It is characteristic that Aristotle, dying, left him not only the leadership of Lyceum (Theophrastus was his scholar leader for 34 years), not only the right to dispose of his manuscripts (which had negative consequences, since after the death of Theophrastus they fell into careless hands and, according to a number of historians, mixed with the manuscripts of Theophrastus himself, creating a confusion that has not yet been resolved), but also entrusted him with the fate of his son Nicomachus.

I repeat - Theophrastus was, first of all, a philosopher. To match Aristotle, he possessed an encyclopedic mind. His works allow us to classify him as an empiricist. It is known that contrary to the opinion of Aristotle, who deduced the principles of cognition and knowledge from the rational soul, Theophrastus believed that the only source of knowledge is the evidence of the senses, experience. In his work "On the causes of plants" he says that scientific theories should be based on an empirical basis, and these facts should not be fitted to the theory [16].

In his treatise On Fire, Theophrastus, for the first time in the history of philosophy, stopped considering fire to be the same element as earth, water, air, justifying this by the fact that fire does not exist on its own. Only in the 18th century did Lavoisier give a scientific explanation of fire as a process with the release of heat and light, confirming the point of view of the ancient Greek.

He also paid attention to the problem of morality, seeing the highest goal of life in serving the good.

It is interesting that, disagreeing with Aristotle on many problems of physics, logic, philosophy (for example, in the understanding of place and emptiness, movement and time), Theophrastus presented criticism of the teacher's positions in such a way that it looked like only a refinement of Aristotle's positions, wore, as it were, “internal Character, without denying the very teachings of the great philosopher. This once again testifies to the fact that in Theophrastus a great mind and an equally great heart were happily combined. By the way, historians note that Theophrastus knew how to get along perfectly with the mighty of this world, without losing his own dignity.

Theophrastus was not a religious person, rather he can be called an atheist, although for known reasons he did not advertise his atheism, limiting himself only to statements against religious sacrifices, claiming that all living things are related.

Researchers have calculated that Theophrastus penned 227 works on

the most diverse topics. Here we see the "Opinions of Physicists" - a work that researchers consider the world's first history of philosophy, and "On the best state structure", and "On drunkenness", and "On salt, milk and alum", "On proverbs", " On the Gods ”,“ On the History of the Gods ”, works on logic:“ Analytics First ”and“ Analytics Second ”,“ Topeka ”, philosophical and polemical work“ Against Academicians ”, etc. Dionysius of Halicarnassus mentions the work of Theophrastus "On the Kings" [6]. Two volumes of his studies on music were also known in Ancient Greece.

The versatility of Theophrastus' interests is evidenced by the fact that not only plants are mentioned in his works, but also people related to them - rhizotomes (root diggers), pharmacopolis - traders of medicinal plants [4].

The most famous philosophical work of Theophrastus is his "Characters", which were reprinted many times in many countries of the world, including Russia (last edition in 2007). The scientist describes 30 human characters from "pretender" to "greedy" (in other translations - from "irony" to "selfishness") [15]. The characters are described in a living, figurative language, many of its definitions have not lost their vitality in our time. For the modern reader, the enumeration of human characters naturally raises the question: is this all, isn't it not enough? And where is the heroism, courage, meanness, passion for bribery and much more? Let's not forget that Theophrastus is a philosopher, not a psychologist or sociologist, he has his own approach, his own research goal. Be that as it may, the book is read with interest and gives us food for reasoning.

But no matter how attracted our attention Theophrastus the philosopher, first of all he is interesting to us as a researcher of nature, a naturalist. Theophrastus took the natural sciences no less seriously than philosophy. Diogenes Laertius quotes his words addressed to his disciples: "Either leave my science - for it requires a lot of work - or defend with honor, and then you will be great happiness" [5].

In his botanical writings, Theophrastus described 550 plants. Attention is drawn to the fact that plants were living beings for the scientist, which, like all living things, need moisture and warmth to carry out their activities. He wondered about the "causes of plants" and at the same time put the influence of the environment and heredity in the first place. For the first time in the history of European plant science, it was this ancient Greek who attempted to systematize plants. But before that, he laid out everything he knew about them. He described in detail all parts of plants (roots, stem, branches - consist of bark, wood and core; other parts of plants are leaves, flowers, seeds). At the same time, the author emphasizes that each part of the plant represents many differences. The researchers note that Theophrastus was the first to use the terms “tree, shrub, liana,

Theophrastus pays great attention to higher plants, describing in detail pine, fir, beech, yew, linden, maple, ash, dogwood, cedar, medlar, mountain ash, cherry, elderberry, willow, elm, poplar, alder, walnut, boxwood, buckthorn, ivy , laurel, sycamore. He describes their habitat, the country where they grow, the climate.

Whole sections are devoted to herbs and vegetables. He pays special attention to medicinal herbs. Being, along with Aristotle, the founder of the geography of plants, he speaks in detail about the places of their growth. The medicinal power of trees and herbs, in his opinion, depends on how suitable for them the place and growing conditions (water, wind, sun, shade, etc.). He mentions Tyrrenia, Thrace, Scythia, Ethiopia, India, Egypt as the places most suitable for their growth. He claims that there are different medicinal plants in all countries, the difference is only in their quantity. But there are places where unique herbs grow. Naturally, Theophrastus pays most attention to medicinal plants growing in Greece: in Thessaly, Parnassus, Laconic, Arcadia (notes that its inhabitants drink milk most willingly in the spring, when herbs are especially effective).

Theophrastus was very interested in aconite growing in Cyprus, Zakynthos, but the best (!) - under Heraclea of Pontus. The fact is that the leaves and fruits of aconite are harmless, and the root has deadly power, because of which the purchase of the aconite root was punishable by death.

Of interest is the argument of Theophrastus that some people can develop addiction to medicinal plants, and there are people who are generally immune to them. Very interesting is the opinion of the scientist about the stories about plants amulets, supposedly averting magic spells from a person. Theophrastus calls these stories meaningless and incredible.

Speaking about the medicinal effect of plants, Theophrastus sometimes comes to unexpected generalizations. So, reporting on the antihelminthic effect of the fern root, he discusses the endemicity of helminthic invasions on the basis of his data on the presence of worms in different peoples (Egyptians, Arabs, Armenians, Syrians) and, accordingly, on their absence in the Thracians, Phrygians and the inhabitants of Athens ... It is natural to assume that in this case he relied not on his own observations (by the way, he traveled quite a bit), but on the data of other researchers.

Theophrastus was the first to describe plant diseases. His ideas about the relationship of plants are interesting. He reports cases when one plant destroys another (quinoa is stronger than others in this respect).

He pays special attention to vegetables, the rules for their cultivation and even the use of fertilizers (manure, rotted straw). Does not ignore plant pests. Does not lose sight of plant juices, paying special attention to the resins of coniferous trees (gum, frankincense, myrrh, balsam).

Theophrastus describes the differences in grasses - some bear fruit, others do not; have different leaves; have different flowers; have different roots.

His idea that herbs in the human body act not only on the bodily, but also on the spiritual state seems to be very interesting.

Among other medicinal plants, Theophrastus describes in most detail calamus, its antispasmodic and vasodilating effect, as well as a whole range of properties: antimicrobial, analgesic, astringent, enveloping, sedative, hemostatic, diuretic, tonic.

The works of Theophrastus (unfortunately, only a small part of them have come down to us) for many centuries have been a guiding thread for many generations of naturalists. Descendants deservedly call him "the father of botany" (sometimes together with Aristotle).

The characteristics we give to Theophrastus, of course, are somewhat one-sided, in places exaggeratedly enthusiastic (I will explain this once again by the outstanding personal spiritual qualities of this ancient Greek). At the same time, some researchers have managed to overcome the influence of this charm and give more sober and, of course, closer to reality assessments of the scientific heritage of Theophrastus. Here is an excerpt from an article about him: "Sprengel emphasizes in Theophrastus the frequent" so they say "or" so say the Arcadians. " He is right, pointing out that Theophrastus apparently, apart from Attica, Euboea and Lesbos, was hardly where, incl. and in the rest of Greece. It can be concluded that Theophrastus knew many plants only by hearsay. And further: “We see in Theophrastus, as in most of the outstanding scientists of the ancient world, an enormous erudition, a great and noble striving for truth, a fiery thirst to penetrate the secrets of nature and, along with this, a complete inability to scientifically study this nature, moreover, dislike, aversion to the painstaking but necessary work of establishing and studying facts; this is left behind, as something insignificant, base, and all talent, all energy goes into the area of abstract thinking, and often with amazing wit and impeccable logic a harmonious, but completely false idea of the physical phenomena of nature is created, in other cases it is just a play on words, it turns out, as it were, an illusion of knowledge, but in reality it is only self-deception. All this forces us to treat Theophrastus with caution and responsibility, and at the same time to everything that classical antiquity gave to botany, especially since the importance of Theophrastus is usually overestimated and treated with exaggerated enthusiasm. He, certainly deserves the title of "father of botany", but his answers are much weaker than the questions he posed, they are imperfect, vague, naive and far from science, that is, "Botanical science is not a child of Theophrastus." One of the founders of Russian genetics, Academician of the USSR Academy of Sciences G.A. Nadson [8].

At the end of his article, the Soviet scientist admits that the works of Theophrastus are the best collection of information about the plant world in all antiquity and in the course of many centuries. One cannot but agree with this.

LITERATURE

1. Blavatsky T.V. From the history of the Greek intelligentsia Hellenistic time. - M .: Nauka, 1983 .-- 324 p.

2. Gritsak E.N. Popular history of medicine. - M .: VECHE, 2003 .-- 464 p.

3. Gumilev L.N. Etiogenesis and biosphere of the Earth. - SPb .: Azbuka, 2013 .-- 669 p.

4. Danneman F. History of Natural Science / Edited by M.P. Levin and O.V. Schmidt. Second edition. - M .: Publishing house "Book house" LIBROKOM ", 2011. - 432 p.

5. Diogenes Laertius. About the life, teachings and sayings of famous philosophers / Per. from the ancient Greek M. Gasparov. - M .: TerraKn. Club, 2009 .-- 604 p.

6. Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Roman antiquities / Per. from ancient Greek. - M: Milestones XXI, 2005.

7. Zhukova L.A. Medicinal plants: variety of life forms: tutorial. - YoshkarOla: LLC IPF "STRING", 2015. - 168 p.

8. Illustrated encyclopedic dictionary of F.A. Brockhaus and I.A. Efron, modern. version in 24 volumes - M .: EKSMO, 2005 (Tula type.), v. 21 - 255 p.

9. Lazarenko V.G. Ancient science and modern integrative medicine. - Izhevsk: Izhevsk State Technical University Publishing House, 2011. - 504 p.

10. Lantier E.F. Antenor travels in Greece and Asia. - M .: printing house S. Selivanovsky, 1814.

11. Levinstein I.I. The history of pharmacy and the organization of the pharmaceutical Affairs. People's Commissariat for Health of the USSR, State publishing house of medical literature "Medgiz". - Moscow Leningrad, 1939 .-- 233 p.

12. Plato. Feast. Collected works (in 4 volumes) Vol.2 / Per. from ancient Greek. - M .: Mysl, 1994 .-- 528 p.

13. Plato. Collected works in 4 volumes. (under the general editorship of A.F. Losev and V.F. Asmus) / Transl. from ancient Greek. - SPb .: Publishing House of Oleg Abyshko, 2006.

14. Trokhachev S.Yu. Descendant of Asclepius // Hippocrates. Ethics and general medicine (translated from ancient Greek by V.I.Rudnev). - SPb .: Azbuka, 2001. - pp. 5–41.

15. Theophrastus. Characters (translation, article and notes by G.A. Stratanovsky. Reprinted reproduction of the 1974 edition. - SPb .: Nauka, 2007 .-- 123 p.

16. Theophrastus. Research about plants. - Ryazan: Alexandria, 2005 .-- 560 p.

17. Flavius Philostratus. The life of Apollo of Tyana (translated from lat. - M .: Science, 1985 .-- 328 p.

Author's address

Ph.D. AA Karpeev, Chairman of the Board of the National Council for Homeopathy, Honored Doctor of the Russian Federation.

KarpeevAA@list.ru

Karpeev, A.A. Essays on the history of herbal medicine. Ancient Greece (continued) / A.A. Karpeev // Traditional medicine. 2018. No. 1 (52). P. 1927.

To favorites