

Lustgärtlein – Pharmaceutical and Botanical Manuscript from the 18th Century



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Introduction

The library of the Czech Pharmaceutical Museum, under signature HK-SR-1, has preserved an illustrated pharmaceutical and botanical manuscript. Although it is not complete and either its author or its exact title is known, an analysis of its form and contents, description and evaluation have been conducted.



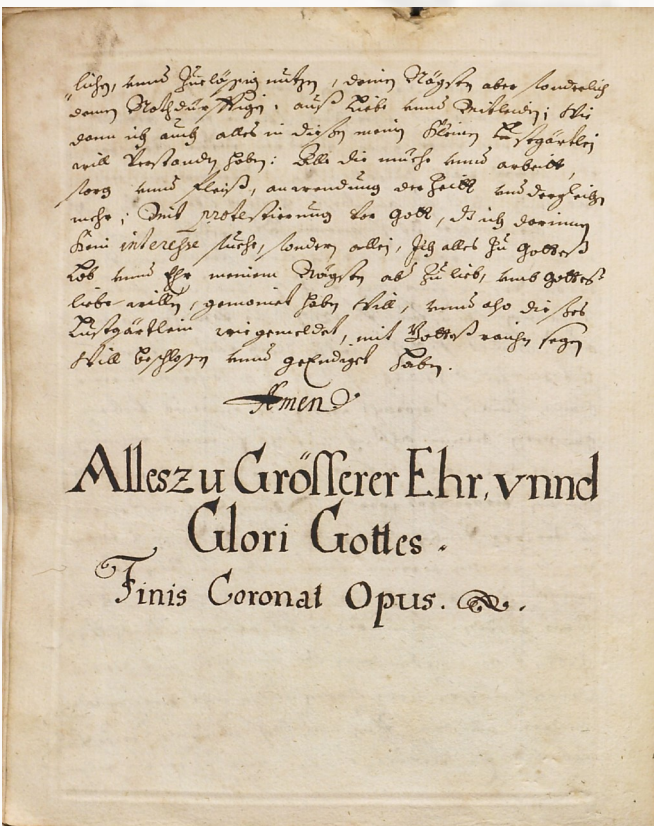
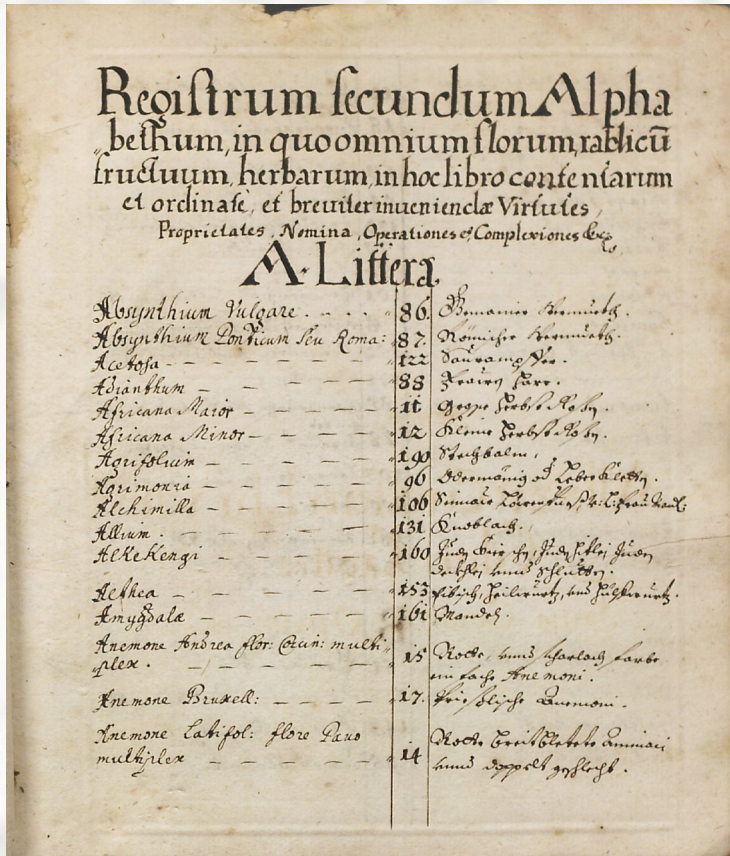
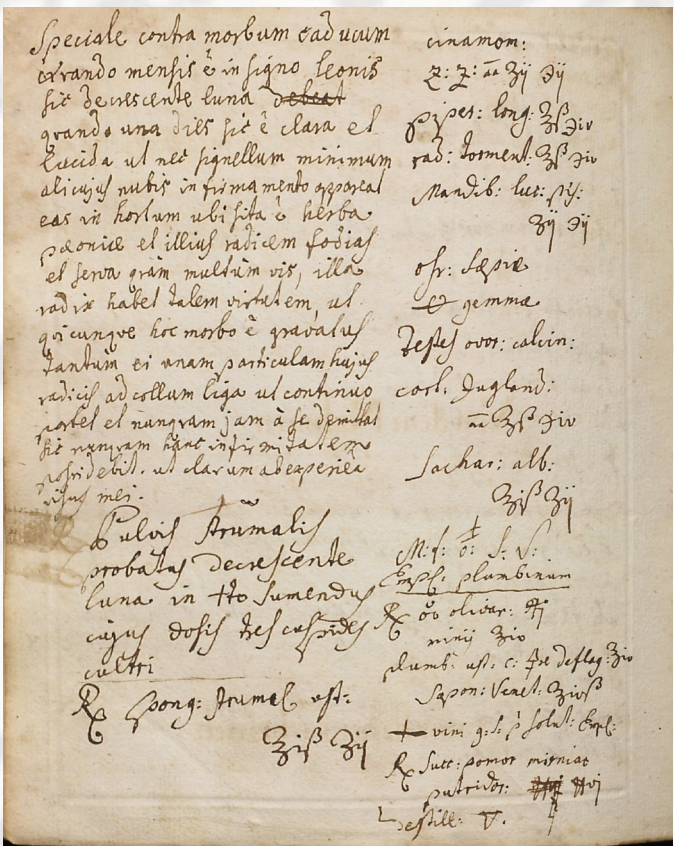
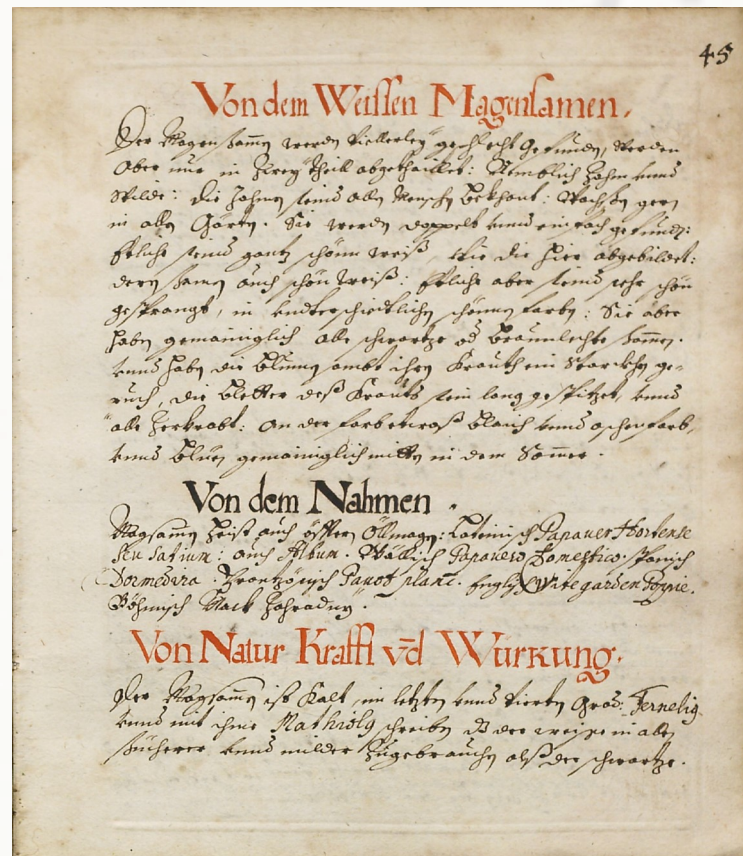
Characteristic of the Manuscript

The manuscript is written on paper sheets that are 19.5 cm high by 16 cm wide. It consists of a pictorial section with a related text. 297 folios (sheets) have survived. The original size, including blank sheets, was apparently 224 folios of pictorials and 176 folios of text, i.e. a total of 400 folios. Originally, the work contained about 205 coloured illustrations, 127 articles written about the depicted plants, an introduction and supplements. The book contains both a Latin and German index, which make it possible to identify the missing articles and illustrations.

The language of the main text is German, while the plant names and minor captions are in Latin. It is a fair copy written in current (German cursive); the headings of both the chapters and the paragraphs, together with the captions to the illustrations, were drawn in Humanistic minuscule. All Latin terms are also in Humanistic minuscule. Sporadically, German and Humanistic semi-cursive appear as well.

The pictorial part also includes ornamental plants and cereals, but the texts refer only to medically relevant species. The texts describing the illustrations refer to the medically usable parts of the represented plants (blossoms, roots, etc.).

The title page did not survive; however, we know that the author considered himself to be German. He was well acquainted with Czech facts, so he was very likely to come from this country. Certainly, he was a physician and the author of some pharmacopoeia. He was very familiar with and quoted European medical authorities from antiquity to the 17th century; he did not refer to younger authors or early Linnaean systematics. He repeatedly called his work *Lustgärtlein*.



Structure of the Manuscript Articles

The articles have a uniform format. Each plant is first morphologically characterized in general; the following “Von dem Nahmen” paragraph then provides names in other languages. The “Natur, Krafft und Wirkung” section generally describes the nature of the drug, which is then classified in compliance with both how it belongs to the elements (fire, air, water, earth) and the qualities (hot – dry, hot – wet, cold – wet, cold – dry). From this, a therapeutic focus is derived. The essence of each article is found in its last respective paragraph, “Von dem Gebrauch”, which explains the therapeutic use of the plant. The author deals with appropriate indications, sometimes distinguishing between internal use (*Innerlicher Gebrauch*) and external use (*Eüsserlicher Gebrauch*). For many plants, he directly mentions fitting dosage forms.

The manuscript concludes with several supplements devoted to increasing agricultural yields by using a chemical fertilizer (*Sal nitri*) and to food preservation. Free sheets were later inscribed with **medical prescriptions**.

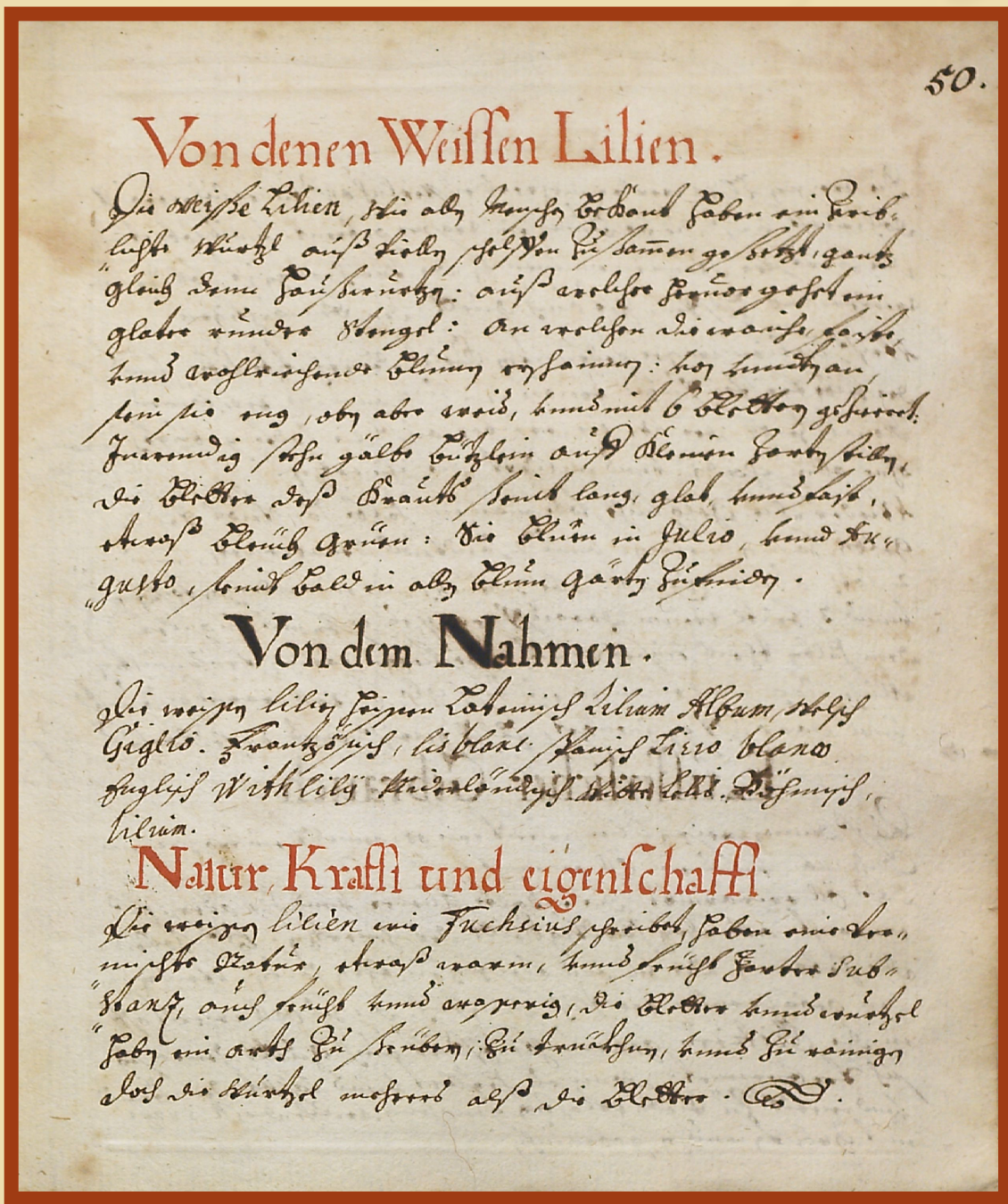


Conclusion

The work was probably intended as a **popular-educational** piece for a wide range of readers. The author stated, “*I have not written this Lustgärtlein for the learned ... it is only meant for simple and sincerely pious people*”. From its content and formal attributes (script), it can be judged that it was written in the first half of the 18th century.

It is a rare piece of work that spans the border between the scientific and lay medical discourse of the early modern age. The pictorial section makes it a first-rate cultural and historical object.

An Example of an Article and Its Illustration



On the White Lily

The white lily has an onion-like root similar to houseleek (*Sempervivum*) from which a smooth and rounded stem grows. Fine fragrant flowers appear on it. They are narrow at the bottom, but widen at the top, with 6 petals. ... They bloom in July and August, and are found in almost all flower gardens.

On the Name

The white lily is called *Lilium Album* in Latin, *Giglio* in Italian, *lis blanc* in French, *Lirio blanco* in Spanish, *white lily* in English, *Witte Lelio* in Dutch, and *lilium* in Czech.

Nature, Power, and Properties

As Leonhart Fuchs writes, the white lily has a mixed nature; it is a bit hot and a wet fine substance, and it is also wet and watery; its leaves and roots have the power to free from ailment, to desiccate and cleanse; the properties are manifested by the roots rather than the leaves.



Internal Use

The white lily is used more externally than internally; however, dis-Some people have stated that such liquid is effective when one loses ened people. When the water from the white lily is drunk, it cools the heated liver evacuation of urine, triggers delayed menstruation, expels dead foe-Against jaundice, take a half-handful of yellow seeds, two handfuls of *cumae*; crush them together and pour in 3 pints of wine, then boil to-secutive days, drink a hot glass of the mixture in the morning on an certainly and reliably helps.

External Use

Water, *conserva* and oil are prepared from the white lily.

The oil warms up cold limbs and nerves. It softens all the stiffness of one’s pain. This oil should gain great respect from midwives because it is very useful for women getting ready to give birth. The oil is often used in enemas. It is also good for burns because it heals and quenches, and is contained in many poultices (*Pflaster*) that are very successfully used by surgeons.

tiled water is made of the blossoms. their voice. It is also good for the weak-

and helps from its blocking. It forces the tuses without harm and relieves pain. sagebrush and two lots of *radicum cur*-gether and decant. Then, for a few con-emptly stomach and have a sweat. This

