

Original article

THE TREATMENTS OF HYSTERIA AND INSOMNIA IN ANCIENT EGYPT TILL THE GREACO-ROMAN PERIOD

Faragalla, M.<sup>1(\*)</sup>, Raafat, M.<sup>2</sup> & Shalaby, N.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PhD Candidate, Tourism, Guidance dept. Faculty of Tourism and Hotels Management Tourism, Helwan, Egypt

<sup>2</sup>Tourism, Guidance dept. Faculty of Tourism and Hotels Management Tourism, Helwan, Egypt

\*E-mail address: [Mina.adeeb.post@fth.helwan.edu.eg](mailto:Mina.adeeb.post@fth.helwan.edu.eg)

Article info.

Article history:

Received: 2-7-2023

Accepted: 22-4-2024

Doi: 10.21608/ejars.2024.396694

Keywords:

Mental illnesses

Hysteria

Insomnia

Domestic violence



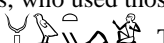

Defense mechanism

EJARS – Vol. 14 (2) – Dec. 2024: 255-261

Abstract:

This research aims to demonstrate the methods in which Egyptian physicians, Greek physicians and Roman physicians treated two types of mental illnesses, which were prevalent in ancient Egypt, Greek society and Roman society. This research also aims to prove that large numbers of ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans suffered hysteria and insomnia by examining the scenes of tombs, medical papyri and Greaco-Roman texts. This research also aims to analyze the customs of ancient Egyptian society, Greek society and Roman society, and their impacts on their mental health, and it also shows the impact of Egyptian medicine on Greek medicine and Roman medicine, where Greek physicians followed therapeutic methods, which were used by the Egyptian physicians to treat mysterious diseases or mental illnesses. This paper also discusses the difference between the Egyptian concept of mental illnesses and the Greek concept, and it also shows the development of the concept of mental illnesses, which were used in ancient Egypt till the Greaco-Roman period.

1. Introduction

Ancient Egyptians suffered mental illnesses, but these diseases were unknown to them at that time, and they treated them as mysterious physical diseases, although the author of the Edwin Smith Papyrus realized that the brain was the center of mental functions [1]. The ancient Egyptians believed that these diseases were caused by some demons possessing superpowers, and those demons are responsible for the chaos in the world, such as (*s3wtj.w*)  and (*šmzy.w*)  [2]. Moreover, they believed that, there was a group of demons under the control of some gods, such as Ra and Osiris, who used those demons to punish people, such as (*wptjw*) . They were attacking people during sleeping and causing them hallucination [3]. They believed that, (*aaa*-disease) (*3°*)  [4] was an evil-spirit in the form of an incubus, who was one of the instruments of demons, and they were attacking their victims during their sleeping [5]. However, in the Graeco-Roman period the concept of mental illnesses became clearer. Aristotle stated that, mental illness an exception, but it was not a deviation from the norms of human nature [6]. The (Stoics) believed that, all human beings were crazy, except wise people [7]. Greek physicians agreed with Egyptian physicians that any

abnormal behaviors were caused by external force, whether it was a demonic force or a divine force [8]. Greek physicians also agreed with Egyptian physicians that, there were some demons could bring hallucination to people, and there were some deities could protect them. In (*Odyssey*) and (*Iliad*), Homer stated that, any kind of madness is a result of a secret liquid, which was sent to people by demonic force or the wrath of deities [9].

2. Mythology

This research relied on the examination of medical papyri to represents the mental disorders in ancient Egypt such as Ebes Papyrus, Edwin Papyrus, Kahun Papyrus and Brooklyn Papyrus. These papyri represented several prescriptions dedicated for curing some diseases, which were later, interpreted as mental disorders. Moreover, this research relied on the examination of tomb scenes, monuments and opinion of some historians. This research relied on some texts, which date back to the Graeco-Roman period, such as the (*Timaeus*), the (*Acharnians*), and some papyri.

3. Results

Through the above-mentioned analytical techniques, the following data were obtained.

1. The examination of Kahun Papyrus, Ebres Papyrus and Brooklyn Papyrus revealed that, there were some treatments were used to treat hysteria symptoms and insomnia.
2. The examination of historians' opinions revealed the causes of spreading hysteria among ancient Egyptians.
3. The examination of Greek texts revealed the demotic violence in the Graeco-Roman period, and they recorded the therapeutic methods for healing hysteria symptoms. Moreover, those Greek texts revealed the therapeutic methods, which were used for healing insomnia.
4. The spread of epilepsy, depression, addiction of alcohol and brain injuries were the main reasons for the spread of insomnia.
5. The Egyptians and Greeks relied on plants possess narcotic properties, such as poppy. They also relied on amulets and magical spells to treat nightmares that lead to insomnia.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Hysteria

It is a mental disorder with emotional disorder and sensory nerves, which related to movement, such as paralysis, blindness, loss of sensation and hallucination, and it is often accompanied by emotional outbursts [10]. These symptoms have no organic basis. They occur to run away from psychological conflict, anxiety or painful situation without realizing the motive for it, the lack of awareness of the motive distinguishes a patient with hysteria [11]. Freud interpreted hysterical symptoms as defenses against guilty sexual impulses [10].

#### 4.1.1. The concept of hysteria among Egyptian and Greek physicians

The disease of aching in uterus or the movement of the uterus is recorded in the Kahun Papyrus under this term, which is known later as Hysteria [11].

##### Case 1, Column 1, Lines 1-5

(šs3w(st irty.sy) mn n m3t.n.s hr mn nhbt.s dd.hr.k r.s h3w pw n idt m irty.sy)

**Examination:** "Of a woman whose eyes are aching till she cannot see, on top of aches in her neck".

**Diagnosis:** "It is discharges of the womb in her eyes" [12].

##### Case 2, Column 1, Lines 5-8 Aching in uterus

(šs3w st mr idt.s m hp. dd.hr.k r.s ptr ssnt. ir dd.s n.k iw.i hr ssnt 3šr. dd.hr.k r.s nmsw pw n idt. ir.hr.k r.s k3p sy hr ssnt.s nbt m 3šr)

**Examination:** "A woman who is ill from her uterus wandering".

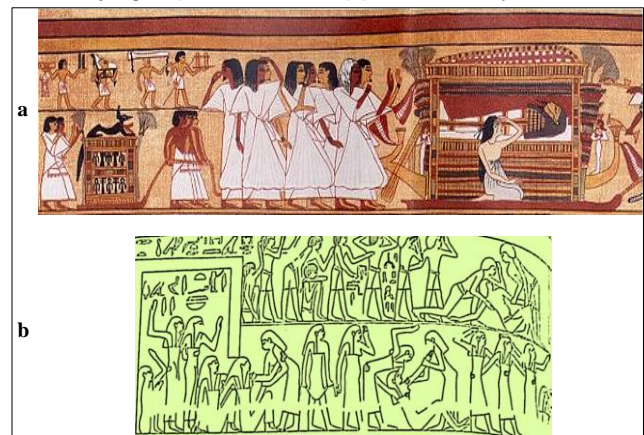
**Diagnosis:** "You should say of it, what you smell? If she tell you (I smell roasting and you should say) it is wrapping (?) of the uterus" [13].

The ancient Greeks agreed with the ancient Egyptian concept of hysteria. However, the Greeks developed the concept of hysteria. They said, "This disease leads to the inability to conceive children" [14]. The Roman concept attributed the hysteria to an abnormality in the womb and it defined the hysteria as a disease of the womb or a disruption in reproduction [11]. In the Hippocratic writings; they connected the disturbances of uterus with the term "Hysteria". It appears

in the thirty-fifth aphorism, which says "When a woman suffers from hysteria or difficult labor an attack of sneezing is beneficial" [15]. Melampus believed that hysteria of women was a physical disease, because it was a madness derived from their uterus, because their uteruses were poisoned by venomous humors, due to a lack of orgasms and uterine melancholy. Plato in the (*Timaeus*) confirmed this opinion; he stated that, "The uterus is sad when it does not join with the male and does not give rise to a new birth" [11].

#### 4.1.2. Causes of hysteria in ancient Egypt

There are several factors lead to hysterical disorders, such as severe mental trauma, domestic violence, death or loss of a beloved one, unexpected failure of business and meeting an undesirable person. Interestingly, heredity may also be a cause of Hysterical disorders [16]. The loss of beloved one and domestic violence were the most important factors, which probably led to the spreading of hysteria among the ancient Egyptian women. There are several scenes and texts that illustrate the pain of deceased's relatives as a result of the loss of a beloved person, which may then lead to depression, such as the scene of Tuta in the Book of the Dead. She is depicted grieving on the bier of her husband Ani, fig. (1-a) [17]. Furthermore, there is another mourning scene referring to the pain of losing beloved one in the Tomb of Ankhmahor at Saqqara, which dates back to the Sixth Dynasty, fig. (1-b). This scene depicts a group of men and women outside the house of the deceased; some of whom are sitting, their heads on their knees and their arms raised above their heads as a sign of grief. There is also a man in the upper register lying down, and two men are helping him to get up, one of whom holding his torso as a sign of the severe sadness that makes him unable to stand. The feeling of pain also is depicted in the lower register, which depicts a lying woman, and two women are pulling her up. Interestingly, the scene contains a comment expressing the pain of deceased's sons due to the death of their father saying "i tf.i i nb.i" (*Oh, my father. Oh, my lord*) [18].



**Figure 1** a. scene depicted in the Book of the Dead represents Tutu grieving on the coffin of her husband Ani, b. mourning scene from the tomb of Ankhmahor in Saqqara, dating back to 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty, (After: Wasserman, et. al., 1998.)

Herodotus described the traumatic loss of beloved ones and mourning actions by the dead relatives during the funeral ceremonies "The women smear their heads with dust, and

sometimes also the face..." [1]. Although, Egyptian women enjoyed several rights which distinguished them from Greek women [20]. There were some violations were practiced against Egyptian women, which probably helped spread the hysteria. In Turin Papyrus, Amenhotep son of Hapu, recorded the rape of a wife in front of her husband, who had committed adultery. Probably, such behaviors helped [21].

#### 4.1.3. Causes of hysteria in Graeco-Roman societies

According to the Greek and Roman texts, the Greeks and Romans suffered the symptoms of hysteria, because many Greek women were subjected to domestic violence, which played a significant role in the spreading of hysteria among them. Euripides recorded the suffering of Greek wives as home-makers and mothers in (*The Narration of Media*). At the beginning of her speech, she stated that, a woman must pay a dowry to take a husband, she must provide him with sex, and he becomes a master to her inheritance, her house and her body. Women must leave aside their own customs and habits, and they must work hard to get their husbands. Euripides stated that, men have life easy. The hardest thing they have to do is fighting in battle, but this danger is not equal to the gravity of childbirth [22]. In the (*Achamians*), the farmer Dicaeopolis invited his friend (Phales) to rejoice the opportunity, he invited his friend to sexually assault a slave girl, as punishment for stealing wood [23]. Furthermore, the papyrus Oxy 744 is a letter dating back to the first century B.C., which indicates a Greek custom during the Ptolemaic period, and it indicates their hostile preference of boys over the girls. This letter was sent from Hilarion to his wife Alis, which says "When you deliver a child and it is a boy, let him live (but) if it is a girl abandon it" [24].

#### 4.1.4. Methods of hysteria treatment in ancient Egypt

The Egyptian physicians relied on the magical treatments to cure the hysterical symptoms. Thus, the author of the Kahun Papyrus recommended the fumigation by the use of sweet-smelling substances to attract the womb [15]. Probably, because the Egyptian physicians thought these symptoms were caused by superpowers.

##### 4.1.4.1. Case 1, column 1, lines 1-5

(ir.ḥr.k r.s k3p sy ḥr snṯr ḥr mrḥt m3t k3p k3t.s ḥr.s k3p irty.sy ḥr inst nt gny rdi.ḥr.k wnm.s mist nt ʿ3 w3dt)

"You should treat it by fumigation her with incense and by massaging her with fresh oil, fumigating her womb with it, and fumigating her eyes with leg fat. You should have her eat a fresh ass liver." [12].

##### 4.1.4.2. Case 2, column 1, lines 5-8

"dd.ḥr.k r.s nmsw pw n idt ir.ḥr.k r.s k3p sy ḥr ssnt.s nbt m 3ṣr"

"You should treat it by fumigation her with whatever she smells as roast" [13].

However, the author of the Ebres Papyrus considered these symptoms were a result of physical disease; therefore, he recommended the fumigation along with other sedative substances such as beer. The author of the Ebres Papyrus recommended some ineffective substances such as wood of boat, pieces of clothes and dry human excrement (š3w). (*Prescription 793*) "Dry human excrement (š3w); added to terebinth-

resin (snṯr); the woman is fumigated therewith and the fumes are caused to penetrate into the inside of her vagina (iwf)". Furthermore, the author of Ebres Papyrus recommended the use of the wood of boat and clothes. (*Prescription 791*), "(ḥ<sup>c</sup>.t nt inj) existing on the wood of a boat; rubbed in lees (t3h.t) of excellent beer. Cause her to drink it". (*Prescription 792*) "Ochre (stj) 1, left to stand in fresh (ʿntjw)-resin; applied to her umbilicus, a small rag (gw) of cloth, moistened with (ʿntjw)-resin is placed on the upper side thereof" [25]. Thus, the authors of these medical papyri relied on the Defense mechanism for healing these hysterical symptoms, because it is possible that, these procedures are based on helping the unconscious process to cope with feelings or ideas which are not acceptable at their conscious level [26].

#### 4.1.5. Methods of hysteria treatment in Graeco-Roman societies

The Greeks cared about treating hysterical disorders; and they developed their treatments; therefore, they dedicated Tricca temple to treat these disorders. Furthermore, Melampus developed the treatments of hysterical disorders; therefore, he relied on the use of herbals, which possess alkaloids effects for healing the daughters of King Argon (Iphice, Lysippa, Proetus and Iphianassa), together with several other young virgins. Those girls suffered symptoms of hysteria, hallucination and thinking themselves cows. Therefore, he recommended the purging the women with the roots of hellebore, (*Helleborus*), which contains alkaloids effects. Hellebor (*Helleborus*) can induce massive foul-smelling, and it can cause convulsions. Therefore, it was used for treating different psychic disorders [9]. Galen, followed Melampus' method for treating hysteria. He recommended purging by the use of hellebore (*Helleborus*), mint (*Mentha*), laudanum, belladonna (*A. belladonna*) extract, valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) and other herbs. Hippocrates recommended acrid or fragrant fumigation of the face and genitals, to push the uterus back to its natural place inside the body. Melampus, Hippocrates and Galen recommended the marriage to treat hysteria. Melampus urged the daughters of King Argon, to join carnally with young and strong men for curing them. Galen stated "Getting married or repressing stimuli that could excite a young woman...". Hippocrates stated that, "widows and unmarried women should get married and live a satisfactory sexual life within the bounds of marriage" [11].

## 4.2. Insomnia

It is a difficulty in initiating or maintaining a restorative sleep. Insomnia is different from (sleep deprivation), which occurs when an individual does not have the opportunity to get a full night of sleep [27].

### 4.2.1. Types of insomnia

There are several types of insomnia. The most important types are as follows:

#### 4.2.1.1. Acute insomnia

This is also called short-term insomnia. This type is usually caused by a source of stress, and it tends to last for a few days or weeks. Acute insomnia can occur at any age, it is more common in women than men, and it is more common in older adults than younger adults and children.



#### 4.2.1.2. *Insomnia due to mental disorders or medical conditions*

Insomnia symptoms are often associated with many mental disorders, as depression, which is one of the most insomnia-related mental disorders [27].

#### 4.2.2. *The concept of sleep among Egyptian and Greek physicians*

The ancient Egyptians believed in the ability of soul (*Ba*) to travel beyond the physical body during sleep. Thus, sleep was viewed in some aspects as death, in which the individual is in different state or a different world. Therefore, sleep was considered the way to mysterious world and a method to communicate with the dead and his gods. The concept of sleep developed in the Graeco-Roman period. Thus, Galen distinguished between sleep, comas and other forms of unconsciousness, as well as form sleep induced from hypnotics [28]. They were also able to realize the benefits of sleep for the human body. As a result of the Romans' knowledge of the importance of sleep and the seriousness of insomnia to humans, they used sleep deprivation as a means to torture criminals [29].

#### 4.2.3. *Causes of insomnia in ancient Egypt*

There are several causes lead to two types of insomnia, which are primary insomnia and secondary insomnia. Primary insomnia is sleeplessness, which cannot be attributed to psychiatric or environmental cause, such as brain injuries, epilepsy, medications or drug abuse. Secondary insomnia arises from mental disorders, sleep disorders or primary medical illness [27]. Probably, many ancient Egyptians suffered Primary insomnia due to widespread cases of brain injuries resulting from the frequent wars and the accidents which occurred for the workers, who worked in the field of construction, which was widespread in ancient Egypt, fig. (2-a) [30]. Moreover, the prevalence of epilepsy (*nsy.t*)  in ancient Egypt indicates the prevalence of primary insomnia among ancient Egyptians [31], where the Ebers Papyrus recorded four prescriptions (752, 753, 754 and 756), which are relied on sedative substances [25]. Moreover, the Brooklyn Papyrus recorded a prescription *43c* in the Brooklyn Papyrus for curing epilepsy, this prescription in the form of a beverage and ointment to heal epilepsy (*nsy.t*)-disease and snakebites, for removing breathing difficulties and strengthening the heart (*ts h3ty*) [31]. Depression and grief also played an important role in the spreading of secondary insomnia among ancient Egyptians. The Petersburg Papyrus m6B 35 recorded the relation between grief and insomnia (*Tw r snbt kdd m irti sdr hr iwin rs-kwi*) "The sleep will slide away from the eyes. You spend the night with words, I am awake" [18]. Nightmares (*rsw.t dwt*)  played an important role in the spread of secondary insomnia among ancient Egyptians, such as Heni's letter, which dates back to the Old Kingdom. (Heni) could not sleep because he was bothered in a dream by his father's servant (Seni), who is also dead. Therefore, Heni wrote this letter to deny his responsibility for hitting this servant (Seni), and he asked the protection from his father to prevent (Seni) [32]. (*The Leyden Papyrus 731 Plate VII, VIII*) is a letter from a man to his deceased wife, who acted as an evil spirit against

acted as an evil spirit against her living husband and caused him depression and insomnia. "And now, behold thou dost not suffer my heart to take comfort; I will be judged with thee and one shall discern wrong from right...". The husband believed that, the soul of his deceased wife was the cause of his grief and nightmares, so he decided to complain her in the court of another world [33]. The prevalence of alcohols in ancient Egypt [34] was considered as one of the most important reasons for the spread of primary insomnia [27] among the ancient Egyptians, where alcoholic beverages were an essential element of all Egyptian festivals and fests [34]. There are some wall-paintings depict the prevalence of alcohols in the tomb of Neferhotep no. 49 in Theban, which depict the scenes of a rich man's banquet. One of these scenes represents a sick lady, which is vomiting probably from drinking too much alcohol, fig. (2-b) [35].

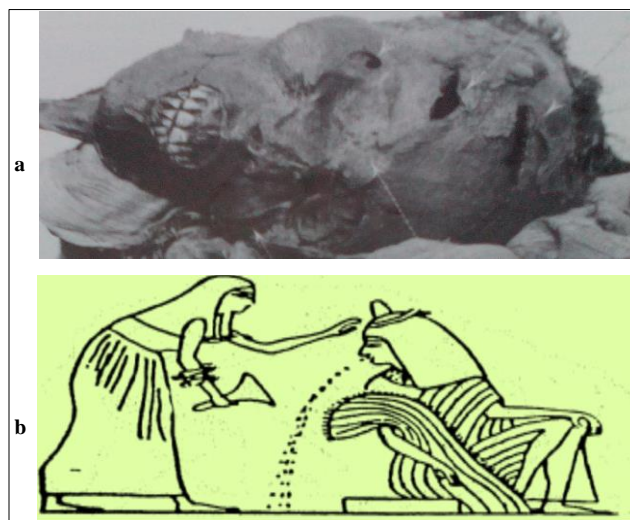


Figure (2) **a**, Injuries penetrating the skull of Sequenra, (After: Numn, 2002). **b**, woman sitting cross-legged in severe vomiting excessive, (After: Hsu, 2020)

#### 4.2.4. *Causes of insomnia in Graeco-Roman societies*

Probably, the Ancient Egyptians could not determine the causes of insomnia, while Romans could identify several reasons for insomnia. The Roman physicians identified some reasons behind insomnia, which were attributed to such **lifestyle** choices as excessive drinking and eating. Furthermore, they identified restlessness of mind, worries, a troubled conscience, love sickness and insanity as well as physical illnesses as reasons behind insomnia. Interestingly, the noises of city life kept Romans awake at night. Furthermore, other noise-makers included disorderly servants, neighbors, townsmen as well as barking dogs [29]. Juvenal was a Roman poet; He complained about the noise of the city, which caused difficult to sleep (Insomnia) [36]. However, there were other factors that led to the spread of insomnia between Greeks and Romans. Probably, many Greeks and Romans suffered primary insomnia resulting from brain injuries, which was caused by wars. Therefore, there were several Greek and Roman physicians, who recorded several methods to cure brain injuries and head wounds with exposed tissue in their authoresses, where the major part of these injuries were the result of frequent wars

and accidents. The most useful ancient writers for this study were Cornelius Celsus, Claudius Galenus and Pedanius Dioscorides. Pedanius Dioscorides compiled an extensive catalogue of medicinal products, including plants with cholinesterase inhibitors useful in the treatment of brain injuries [37]. Probably, epilepsy played a major role in the spread of primary insomnia in Greek and Roman societies. During the Graeco-Roman period, epilepsy was a common disease, and it was called the sacred disease because the ancient Greeks believed that, this disease possesses divine-origin. In *Lithica*, Orpheus described the vengeance of Mene Goddess of the Moon, in the form of epilepsy. "... To prove them sufferers from the sacred sick, for quickly will they bend and forwards tilt, as to earth it draws them. Smear'd by froth, from their own mouths, hither and tither will they turn? And wallow on the ground. For filled with anger towards them, she laughs to see their woe, Mene, the horrid and swift" [8].

#### 4.2.5. Methods of insomnia treatment in ancient Egypt

Ancient Egyptian physicians used several methods to treat insomnia, according to the requirement of each case. They relied on amulets and magical spells to treat nightmares' insomnia. A spell recorded in Leiden Papyrus no. I 348 (v.2), which was called "*mdj.t n.t dr snq.wt ny hr ii.t r hzy.t hr m grh*" (*The book of driving terrors which come in order to descend upon a man in the night.*) "*Put your face backwards, then you raise your head, together with your (Ba), your shapes, your corpses, your magic, together with your shapes, your forms. Oh male zh, female zht, male dead mwt, female dead, male dead, male adversaries dzy, and female adversaries in the sky and in the earth: You shall contemplate and look; it is the Lord of All, and those who are; it is Atum, it is W3dt, the Lady of Dread in the great bark, it is the child; it is the Lord of Truth. It is the figure of Atum on the upper road. It is the consuming flam by Sia, Lord of Heaven. The earth is on fire, the sky is on fire, the people and gods are on fire. You say you are hidden against it (but) it is come-as is its name in truth. Be aware of the flame which comes forth from the Two Horizons. Words to be said over the image which is in drawing, made upon a choice piece of linen, to be placed on the throat of a man until he is seen to be quiet*". According to this spell, the ancient Egyptians believed that flames were viewed as counter-agent against nightmares [38]. The ancient Egyptians used some artifacts and amulets against bad dreams. They decorated their headrests, bedposts with the figures of Bes, Beset, Sobek and Tawaret and other gods associated with women, children, fig. (3). Probably, these magical methods stimulated the defense mechanism within the patients, which deals with their negative thoughts [26]. Moreover, the ancient Egyptian physicians recommended several herbs, which possess soothing properties, such as opium (*Papaver somniferum*), lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) and chamomile (*Chamomilla*). The Ebres papyrus recommended the use of poppy seeds of opium [25]. (*Papaver somniferum*) [39] as hypnotic to relieve insomnia [40]. Prescription 782 in Ebres Papyrus says "*A remedy to prevent excessive crying (of baby's), poppy seeds, fly's excrement found on the wall, made into a mass, stained and drunk on four days. This remedy stops it immediately*". Furthermore, prescription 860 in the Ebres Papyrus recorded Thyme (*Thymus zygis*) [25]. This herb was

used by the ancient Egyptians for embalming. Thyme (*Thymus zygis*) was thought to be beneficial in reducing snoring [41]. Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) was known by ancient Egyptians, and it was used by them to preserve their mummies. This herb is considered an herbal sleep remedy, probably it related to their belief about death as eternal sleep [42]. Chamomile (*Chamomilla*) was known in ancient Egypt and it was considered a sacred plant, therefore, it offered to the gods. Interestingly, it was used for different purposes as a cosmetic treatment, anesthetic, and antiseptic. It was known to induce a state of quiet and serenity foreword for sleep [43].



**Figure (3)** protective figures of Bes depicted on headrest of limestone, dating back to the Nineteenth Dynasty, displayed in British Museum no. EA6378.2, (After: Nunn, 2002)

#### 4.2.6. Methods of insomnia treatment in the Graeco-Roman societies

Aristotle followed the Egyptian approach for treating insomnia; In (*On Dreams*), he recommended the use of some herbs, which contain soothing properties such as mandrake (*Mandragora*), poppy (*Papaver somniferum*) and darnel (*Lolium temulentum*) along with some substances, such as wine. In (*De material medica*). Dioscorides recommended number of herbs, which possess soporific agents, such as opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), henbane (*Hyoscyamus ablus*), saffron (*Crocus sativus*), mandrake (*Mandragora*), iris (*Germanica*), mandrake (*Mandragora*), cabbage (*Disambiguation*), along with some substances such as wine [28]. Insect bites were among the most important factors that cause insomnia in the Roman period. Therefore, they used certain herbs against the vermin, such as cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*), pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*), and some aromatic plants [29]. The ancient Greeks believed that, sage (*Saliva officinalis*) could protect them from evil and conferred wisdom. Probably, they used it to treat insomnia, because they used it to enhance mental abilities and in scared gathering. Probably, bay leaf (*Laurus nobilis L.*) was used by the Greeks and Romans to treat insomnia, because they believed that, this herb possesses magical power against evil spirits. Therefore, they used it for making the crowns of kings, war-heroes, and Olympians [44]. The Greek physicians recommended the use of incantation for healing nightmares, which causes insomnia. This incantation recorded in London Papyrus PGM X. 24-35 in the British Museum says "*Magic to restrain anger, which works in all cases, it works against enemies, brigands, accusers, phobia and nightmares. Take a gold or silver lamella and engrave on it the characters and name, and when you have consecrated it, wear it in purity*" [45].

## 5. Conclusion

Probably, hysteria was more prevalent among women than men in ancient Egypt and in the Graeco-Roman period, because women in these communities subjected to several psychological traumas. Probably, they were more affected than men by losing beloved ones. Thus, there are several prescriptions, which were mentioned in the medical papyri and Greek texts to treat the movements of uterus, which were later, interpreted as symptoms of hysteria. Insomnia was a common disease in ancient Egypt, Greek and Roman societies, due to the spreading of brain injuries, epilepsy and depression. Hence, it is possible that, a large number of ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans suffered the side effects of insomnia such as headaches, indigestion moodiness, fatigue, anger, anxiety about sleep, daytime sleepiness, poor memory and poor-quality performance at work and the lack of motivation. Thus, there are several remedies were recorded in the medical papyri and Greek medical texts to cure headache, poor memory and anger.

## References

- [1] Okasha, A. & Okasha, T. (2000). Notes on mental disorders in Pharaonic Egypt. *History of Psychiatry*. 11: 413-424.
- [2] Szpakowska, K. (2009). Demons in ancient Egypt. *Religion Compass*. 3: 799-805.
- [3] Lucarelli, R. (2010). Demons (Benevolent and malevolent), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*. 1: 1-2.
- [4] Faulkner, R. (1964). *A concise dictionary middle Egypt*. Griffith Institute at the University Press, Oxford.
- [5] Nunn, J. (2002). *Ancient Egyptian medicine.*, Univ. of Oklahoma, London.
- [6] Ahonen, M. (2019). Ancient philosophers on mental illness. *History of Psychiatry*. 30: 3-18.
- [7] Gazmuri, S. (2006). The mentally ill in Roman society (Late lepublic and empire). *Argos*. 30: 87-102.
- [8] Magiorkinis, E., Sidropoulou, K. & Diamantis, A. (2011). Hallmarks in the history of epilepsy: From Antiquity till the Twentieth Century, Ch. 8. In: Foyaca-Sibat, H. (ed.) *Novel Aspects on Epilepsy*, IntechOpen, Netherland, pp. 131-156.
- [9] Tzeferakos, G. & Douzenis, A. (2014). Sacred psychiatry in ancient Greece, *Annel of General Psychiatry*. 13 (1), doi: 10.1186/1744-859X-13-11.
- [10] Collins, H. (2007). Hysteria, <https://dictionary.apa.org/hysteria>, (23/10/2022).
- [11] Tasca, C., Rapetti, M., Carta, M., et. al., (2012). Women and hysteria in the history of mental health, *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health*. 8: 110-119.
- [12] U-MSc-CAM, S. (2020). Comparison of the medical principles of the ancient Egyptian and the ancient Greek medicine based on the medical papyri and Corpus Hippocraticum, *J. of Alternative Medicine Research*.12: 145-154.
- [13] Collier, M. & Quirke, S. (2004). *The UCL Lahun Papyri: Religious, literary, legal, mathematical and medical*, Vol. 1209. BAR Pub., British Archaeological Reports Ltd.
- [14] Micale, M., (1995) *Approaching hysteria: Disease and its interpretation*, Princeton Legacy Library, Princeton University Press, New Jersey.
- [15] Veith, I. (1965). *Hysteria: The history of a disease* . The University of Chicago, Chicago.
- [16] Amin, N. (2019). Overview of hysteria; Introduction, review, causes, signs and symptoms, complications and management, *J. of Neurological, Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing MAT Journals*. 1: 23-26.
- [17] Wasserman, J. (1998). *The Egyptian book of the dead: The Book of the Dead*, Chronicle Books, San Francisco.
- [18] Hsu, S. (2020). "I Wish I Could Die": Depression in ancient Egypt." *The Expression of Emotions in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*, Brill, Boston.
- [19] Omran, W. (2019). Transporting the deceased by the wheeled cart in the Greco-Roman Tombs, *J. of Arab-Arch*. 17: 32-49.
- [20] David, A. (1999). *Hand book to life in ancient Egypt*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford.
- [21] Matic, U. (2021). Gender-based violence. In: Austin, A. & Wendrich, W., (eds.) *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*. 1, Los Angeles pp: 1-22.
- [22] Sander, E. (2010). *Envy and jealousy in classical Athens*. PhD., UCL University College London, UK.
- [23] Magalhães, J. (2020). *Para-philiias transgressive sex in ancient Greece*, Ph.D., Humanities dept., Univ. of Roehampton, London.
- [24] Breiner, S. (2013). *Slaughter of the innocent: Child abuse through the age and today*. Springer. Germany
- [25] Ghalioungui, P. (1987). *The Ebres Papyrus: A new English translation, commentaries and glossaries*. Academy of Scientific Research & Technology, Cairo.
- [26] Patrias, K. & Wendling, D. (1999). Defense mechanisms, <http://id.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/D003674>, (05/07/2021).
- [27] American Academy of Sleep, Insomnia, <https://aasm.org/resources/factsheets/insomnia.pdf>, (3/5/2022)
- [28] Chokroverty, S. & Billiard, M. (2015). *Sleep medicine: A comprehensive guide to its development, clinical milestones, and advances in treatment*, Springer, Switzerland.
- [29] Nissin, L. (2016). *Roman sleep: Sleeping areas and sleeping arrangements in the Roman house*. Univ. of Helsinki, Helsinki.
- [30] Ghalioungui, P. (1965). *Magic and medical science in ancient Egypt*, Barnes & Noble, NY.
- [31] Leitz, C. (1999). *Magical and medical papyri of the New Kingdom*. British Museum, London.
- [32] Ahmed, H. (2020). The motivating drives behind dreams and nightmares in ancient Egypt according to Freud's theory, *Bulletin of the Center Papyrological Studies*. 37: 527-545.
- [33] Gardiner, A. & Sethe, K. (1928). *Egyptian letters to the deads*, The Egypt exploration Scosity, London.
- [34] Rosso, A. (2012). Beer and wine in antiquity: Beneficial remedy or punishment imposed by the Gods?" *Acta medico-historic Adriatica*. 10: 237-262.
- [35] Ebeid, N. (1999). *Egyptian medicine in the days of Pharaohs*, General Egyptian Book Organization, Cairo.
- [36] Bamunusinghe, S. (2019). 'Juvenal's presentation of the decline of morals in the ancient Roman society through satire. In: Rahula, K. & Sugathasiri, K. (eds.) *Sadaminena: A felicitation volume of scholarly articles*, International Buddhist Center, Le Bourget, France, pp. 328-335.

- [37] Belfiglio, V. (2015). Treatment of traumatic brain injury in the Roman army, *Balkan Military Medical Review*.18: 101-105.
- [38] Emily Jane, O. (2008). *Excavating the emotional landscape of ancient Egyptian literature*. Brown Univ., Rhode Island.
- [39] Manniche, L. (2006). *An ancient Egyptian herbal*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., British Museum Press, London.
- [40] Crystal, E. (2000). Ancient Egyptian medicine-smith papyrus-ebers papyrus. n.d., <http://www.crystalinks.com/egyptmedicine.html>, (12/2/2022).
- [41] Sleep and snoring-non-drug and non-surgical approaches, <http://www.breathing.com/articles/sleeping-snoring.htm>. (12/2/2022)
- [42] Cache Creek lavender, History of Lavender. n.d., <https://www.cachecreeklavender.com/history-of-lavender.html>, (17/9/2024)
- [43] Johnson, K. (2005), Ancient Egypt. herbal secrets., <http://www.angelfire.com/ut2/egytherb/chamomille.html>, (12/2/2023).
- [44] Christodoulou, M. (2019). Medical herbs in ancient Egypt., <https://www.thegreekherbalist.com/herba-column/medicinalherbsinancientgreece>, (22/2/2023)
- [46]Betz, H. (2022). *The Greek magical papyri in translation, including the demotic spells*, Vol. 1, Chicago Univ. Press, Chicago.