

Origin of the papyrus

Papyrus once grew in excellent quality and quantity in the Nile Delta, the papyrus country. The triangular stem shaft grows up to 6 metres high and bears an umbel at the top. Its image became the hieroglyphic sign for "green". The stylised papyrus was the sceptre of Egyptian goddesses. Papyrus bouquets were offered as sacrifices to the gods. Its shape served as a model for stone pillars that supported the ceilings of temples and tombs.



The stems of the papyrus plant were used to make boats, ropes, baskets and sandals. Herodotus reports that the ancient Egyptians also drank the papyrus sap, and that the



sweet lower parts of the stalks were chewed by Egyptian children. The Greeks called it papyrus, after the Egyptian word "papuro - the royal", because in Pharaonic times the production of writing material was a state monopoly.

The Greeks and Romans learned about papyrus from the Egyptians and introduced it to Europe. It was widely used there until the 2nd century AD, when it was superseded by parchment. Later, people switched to using the paper that had come to Europe from China.



Papyrus harvest



the trimming



Laying papyrus



Papyrus press

