

**A Coptic Letters from Ihnasya el Medinah,  
Cairo Museum TR 1245, with Reference to Coptic Medicine**

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This subject of this study is a papyrus consisting of a letter from a person named Shnouda who was a monk in one of the monasteries near Fayyoun, based on the dialect used in the letter which is typical of the Fayyoun dialect. The letter is addressed to a person named Athenasius, who may have been a commander in the army.

It appears that this letter was in response to another letter from Athenasius to Shnouda asking about the cure to a disease that afflicted his eyes. The two researchers suggest that Shnouda sent this letter to Athenasius, refuting the use of copper sulfate to cure the disease, a cure that is still used by the Egyptian lower class. The papyrus consists of seven lines on the front and one line on the back, which was the address.

The papyrus exists in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo under the number S.R 1245, and probably dates from the end of the seventh or beginning of the eighth century CE. This papyrus was discovered in the region of Ihnasia el-Medina, in the Province of Beni Suef. We do not know exactly how it was discovered.

This papyrus is included in the collection of Coptic Papyri relating to nature, since it refers to the kind of medicine used for treating the eye. We can deduce from the papyrus that it was written by a monk, and it seems that churches and monasteries during the Coptic period were not merely places of prayer and worship, but also medical centers, as was the case with Ancient Egyptian temples.