TAXONOMIC STUDIES ON SOME SPECIES OF AMARANTHACEAE IN EGYPT

By

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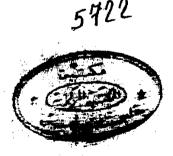
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COURSES STUDIED

In addition to this thesis, the student has passed the examination in the following theoritical courses:

1 - PLANT EGOLOGY

- a) Climatic factors.
- b) Edaphic factors.
- c) Biotic factors.
- d) Synecology: Study of plant communities in Egypt with special reference to desert vegetation.

2 - TAXONOMY OF HIGHER PLANTS

- a) History of classification.
- b) Different systems of classification.
- c) Taxonomy dealing with all monocotyledonous and dicotyledonous families.

3-FLORA

Distribution of plant communities in Egypt.

4 - PLANT PHYSIOLOGY

Dealing with plant growth regulators.

LIST OF PLATES

Plate		Page
1	Macro-and Micromorphology of Achyranthes	
•	aspera.	21,2
2	Macro- and Micromorphology of Aerva persica	27,29
3	Macromorphology of A. persica v. bovei	32
4	Macro- and Micromorphology of A. persica v. latifolia	35,36
5	Macro- and Micromorphology of Alternanthera modificra	39.4
6	Macromorphology of A. repens	44
7	Macro- and Micromorphology of A. sessilis	48,50
8	Macro- and Micromorphology of Amerenthus angustifolius	52,54
9		•
•	Macro- and Micromorphology of A. ascendens.	57,59
10	Macromorphology of A. caudatus	62
11	Macro- and Micromorphology of A. chlorostachys	65,67
12	Macromorphology of A. hypochondriacus	69
13	Macro- and Micromorphology of A. oleraceus.	72.74
14	Macromorphology of A. paniculatus	76
15	Macromorphology of A. sylvestris	79
16	Macromorphology of A. tricolor	81
17	Macro- and Micromorphology of Celosia	
	argentea	83,85
18	Macromorphology of C. cristata	88
19	Macromorphology of C. pyramidalis	90
20	Macromorphology of Digera muricuta	93
21	Macromorphology of Gomphrens globosa	97
22	Macro- and Micromorphology of Pailotrichum gamphalobryum	,103
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Plate		Page
23	Macromorphology of Pupalia lappacea	106
24	Foliar Trichomes	123
25	Stomatal Types	124
26	Dendrogram of the 23 Studied Amaranthaceous	138
27	The Relation Between The Proposed System to that of Hans Sching (1893)	166

- 4111 -

CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	1
PART I	
MACRO- AND MICROMORPHOLOGY	•
SECTION A:	
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION	
(1) SYSTEMATY	3
(2) AMATOMY	8
ATM OF THIS STUDY	1
	12
SECTION B:	
(1) MATERIAL AND METHODS	14
(2) OBSERVATIONS	20
	20
SECTION C :	
DISCUSSION	: =
(1) MACROMORPHOLOGY	109
(2) MICROMORPHOLOGY	119
	en.
PART IT	1
NIMERICAL ANALYSIS	2.1.136
Store T.	
(1) CHOICE OF CHARACTERS AND ORSESVATIONS	eri para di mana di ma
THE AND THE PARTY OF TARE	
CA MERCIE AND FERRISSION OF TACA	
MET THE TRANSPORT OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPE	
	2. 有力量。 2. 数字 二十二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二二

			Page
SECTION B:			
RESULTS	*** ***	*** ***	140
SECTION C:			
DISCUSSION OF THE ANALYSED DATA			
(1) PROPOSED HUMBITOAL CLASS	IFICATION -	OF	
AMARANTHACEAR IN EGYPT	*** ***	*** ***	163
(2) RELATION OF THE PROPOSEI		THAT	
OF HAME SCHINZ (1895)	***	•••	165
GENERAL STREAMY	*** ***	•••	168
APPENDIX I	*** ***	*** ***	170
APPENDIX II	*** ***	*** ***	171
REPER MICES			172
ARABIC SUBLARY.			1/2

PRBFACE

PREPACE

The Amaranthaceae is a family of about 80 genera and 800 species distributed throughout the warmer parts of the earth. It is represented in the Egyptian wild flora by 8 genera and 24 species. The largest of these genera is Amaranthus which includes 14 species. Five genera are monotypic and these are Digera, Saltia, Pupalia, Achyranthes and Psilotrichum. Aerva has two species and Alternanthera has three species.

Most of the plants are annuals and they represent about 79.17% of the total number of the species. The perennials are usually fruticose in the sense that they are woody.

Most of the Amaranthus species are weeds of the Nile and the Mediterranean Regions. A. angustifolius is, perhaps, of the Widest distribution since it inhabits the different habitats. It occurs in all except in the Red Sea Region.

The general morphological characteristics are the herbaceous or shrubby habit with opposite or alternate simple

generally entire exstipulate leaves. The leaves are often more or less densely covered with hairs. The flowers are usually arranged in simple or branched spikes or racemes. The inflorescences are usually showy.

The flower structure corresponds with that of the Thenopodianese. The general floral formula can be written as

$$P_{4-5}$$
, or (4-5), A_{1-5} , $G(2-3)$.

Perianth leaves are usually membranous, white or more often coloured. The stamens are anteposed and more or less united below into a membranous tube which may carry certain appeadages between the anthers. The ovary is unilocular with one-few ovules. The ovule is campylotropous on basal placenta. Styles united or free. Fruit a nutlet with a hard wall or a utricle with a thin wall. The flower is subtended by a welldeveloped bract and two bracteoles; all usually scarious and coloured.

Anatomically, the Ameranthaceae has long been known to have anomalous secondary thickening in the stem and root.

PARTI

MACRO-AND MICROMORPHOLOGY

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

(1) SYSTEMATY

er and the second secon

The Ameronthaceae as well as its allied families have been variously categorised in different taxonomic works. Imgler (1936) applied the term Centrospermae as an order including these families, and he classified Ameranthaceae together with the Chenopodiaceae under the Chenopodiineae. Bessey (1915) designated this order the Caryophyllales derived from Ranalian stocks. Bentham and Hooker (1862 - 1883) grouped Ameranthaceae with Nyotaginaceae, Illecebraceae, Chenopodiaceae and Phytolaccaceae with some other families under series Curvembryae of the Monochlamydeae or Incompletae. Hallier (1905) accepted Engler's name but greatly expanded its circumscription and derived it largely from Ranalian Podophylleae. Wettstein (1923) followed Engler. Hutchinson (1924 - 1926) recognized these families as representing two orders. Chemopodiales including transmithecese, Chemopodiacese and Phytolaccaceae, and Caryophyllales including Caryophyllaceas, Aiscaceae and Portulacaceae. In Rutchinson's view Caryophyllales are the more primitive arising from Rangies through Sarifragaceae while Chenopodiales are derived from

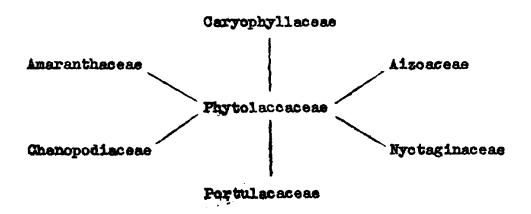
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them i.e. Caryophyllales. Pax and Hoffmann (1934) suggested that the families of Centrospermae may have originated from Phytolaccaceae by development along different lines, since this small family shows great variety in the plan of the floral structure. It includes genera in which the ground plan is identical with that of Amaranthacese and Chenopodiaesse, but also forms in which multiplication of stamens and carpels has taken place. Such diversity has led to the above suggestion. On this view Chenopodiaceae and Amaranthaceas represent a variation on the simple type of flower. From the type with two staminal whorls and two whorls of carpels the families with more highly developed flowers have been derived. Disappearance of the inner whorl of stamens and a whorl of carpels accompanied by reduction in the pistil gives the ground plan of Myctaginaceae in which the perianth has become petaloid and a similar origin may be claimed for the simpler floral types of Aizoaceae. floral type of Portulacaceae may be derived from the same source by disappearance of the inner whorl of carpels and the approximation of a pair of bracteoles to the flower to form the dimerous calva-

represents a further elaboration and the eliarnative positions

of the carpels, noted in the description of the femily, may be explained by the disappearance of one of the two whorls which existed in the Phytolacca - like ancestor.

Rendle (1952) gave the following diagram to illustrate this view of the origin of various families.



Pax and Hoffmann (1934) suggested a somewhat different arrangement. The main difference is that Amaranthaceae with the closely associated Chenopodiaceae should be considered as representing the origin of the group. The following diagram illustrates this view.