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**Cechy morfologiczne i anatomiczne wybranych gatunków kokoryczek *Polygonatum* Mill. jako próba wyjaśnienia historycznego wyjaśnienia nazwy tych roślin leczniczych – *sigillum Salomonis***

**Morphological and anatomical features of chosen species of Solomon's seal *Polygonatum* Mill. as an attempt to historically explain the name of these medicinal herbs – *sigillum Salomonis***

SUMMARY

Morphological and anatomical structure of two domestic species of Solomon's seal *Polygonatum* Mill. was studied: scented Solomon's seal *Polygonatum odoratum* (Mill.) Druce and many-flowered *P. multiflorum* (L.) All. (*Convallariaceae* Horan. family – Lily-of-the-Valley family) in order to explain the historical name of these medicinal herbs – *sigillum Salomonis*, i.e. "Solomon's seal", used in botany and pharmacy from the 16th to 19th centuries. In both species their rhizomes, flowers, leaves and stems were studied.

Features that make these two species different were pointed out, including features still not recorded in literature or until now shown incorrectly (length of pistil, length of rhizomes' internodes, nervature of leaves, cf. table 1). Particular attention was given to marks of fallen sprouts (scars) on rhizome's nodes of these plants. They are round, not star-shaped, and surrounded by a ridge of rhizome's tissues, which resembles an impress of a round seal in wax. However, none of the studied structures resembles the shape of Solomon's seal (lack of star-like shape), which does not allow for the justification of the names etymology – *sigillum Salomonis* – neither on the grounds of the structure itself, nor in connection with the importance of Solomon's seal in culture or history. Data on the use of the studied Salomon's seals in historical pharmacy was collated (starting from the 18th century until the present day). The data on the use of these plants in medicine are scarce and keep recurring in the quoted historical sources. The importance of the studied species in pharmacy was always minor and limited to their mainly external use on the skin and on wounds. Currently, the rhizomes of Solomon's seal are not applied in medicine. Their chemical composition was better known in the years 1979-2004.

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