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Teeth in the Hippocratic Corpus

One of the subjects in the Hippocratic corpus that receives little attention among scholars is the teeth and their oral pathology and hygiene. The teeth, particularly their nature, development, and the various ailments that concern them form intriguing discussions in various treatises, including *Fleshes* 12-13, *Dentition*, *Epidemics* iv 19, and *Joints* 30-34. In my paper, I consider these treatises (and others) to investigate if some sort of unified understanding of the teeth and oral pathologies emerges from the Hippocratic corpus. Thus, my paper will be valuable not only for adhering to the conference theme about the possible unity displayed among various treatises of the corpus, but also for treating a subject that has largely been ignored. I will also discuss the connection between Hippocratic medical reflection on the teeth and other views prominent in antiquity, particularly the more philosophical views of Plato and Aristotle, along with the views of non-Hippocratic medical writers such as Diocles of Carystus and Praxagoras of Cos.

Interestingly, Aristotle often reflects on the teeth and their nature in many of his own writings, e.g. in *Generation of Animals* ii 6 and v 8, *Parts of Animals* ii 9 and iii 1, and *History of Animals* ii 1-6. There is some suggestive overlap between Aristotle and the Hippocratics on certain issues regarding the teeth. Aristotle, like the author of *Epidemics* iv 19, counts the teeth, arguing furthermore that the number of teeth correlates with the length of life (generally, the more teeth an animal has, the longer its life). Also, Aristotle engages the question of when animals develop their teeth (in a polemical context with Democritus), and attempts to determine the relationship between suckling and the development of the teeth, similar to the author of *Dentition*.

While my paper will focus on the Hippocratic treatises, it will have interest for those involved in classical philosophy as well. Therefore, I believe my paper is a good candidate for inclusion in the *Colloquium Hippocraticum*.