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What's Hippocratic about the Hippocratics?
The Contribution of Materia Medica and Therapeutics

The physicians whose practice has been recorded in the treatises ascribed to Hippocrates have been credited with the use of a wide range of natural substances in therapeutics and a great therapeutic ability. The systematic inventory, computerization, and data-basing of all the prescriptions in the treatises considered to be part of the *Corpus Hippocraticum* (5,500+ items) make it possible to approach the topic on a new basis. Not only the range of plants used (almost half of the total number of prescription is made of only 40+ plants), but also the ways natural substances were prepared (excipients - with their variety - and other possible substances) and administered to the patients will be re-examined. Analysis will inscribe data in the context of traditional practice (considering that knowledge in the field resulted from the accumulation of data gained by trial and error over the centuries), verify if variations/evolutions over time and space can be identified, and contrast data (possibly in differentiated chronological and geographical ways) with those of other origins and periods (for example the chapters on the action of medicinal plants in the *Problemata* of the Aristotelian school, some fragment by Diokles of Karystos and, among others, the 9th book of the *Historia Plantarum* by Theophrastus). It will not deal with the pharmaco-chemical validation of ancient uses of plants in a positivist way, but will describe the therapeutical practices of the physicians whose activity has been recorded in the treatises further collected in the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, aiming at verifying if it can be characterized as resulting from a typical method (or, perhaps, from a reduced set of methods). In so doing, the presentation might offer a further contribution to the understanding of the genesis, provenance and dynamics behind the Hippocratic collection.