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**Sophist vs. Scientist? Defining the *Technai* and the Scientific Tradition**

In defining the place of Hippocratic medicine in the history of science, most scholars see the imprint on it of natural philosophy, but many deny the impact of rhetoric or of magico-religious healing practices, which have sometimes actually been placed in opposition to Hippocratic medicine and the development of early science. I show in this paper that a different conception of science and the scientific tradition, based on the work of Karl Popper, permits the assimilation of these aspects of ancient medicine, allowing us to understand how Hippocratic healers could incorporate (often covertly) and reject (often overtly) the ideas and practices of midwives, herbalists, and magicians, as well as the theories of natural philosophers, and to appreciate the impact on Hippocratic medicine of sophistic debate concerning the definition of *techn*. The competitive environment engendered by this debate prompted Hippocratic healers to defend their methods and ideas on the basis of their technical status, which in turn, contributed to the constituting of the problem set of Hippocratic medicine by privileging particular methods and concepts, regardless of their efficacy or accuracy. Sophistic debate concerning the definition of "*techn*" was thus crucial to establishing the place of Hippocratic medicine in the scientific tradition, and sophistic rhetoric should therefore be seen as central to the early history of science, not opposed to it.