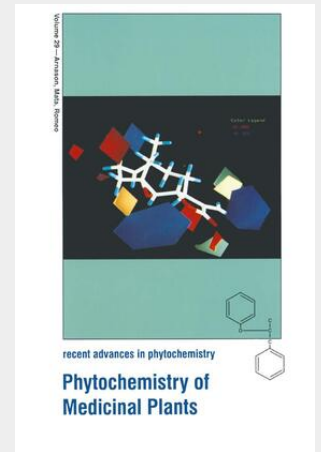


Phytochemistry of Medicinal Plants

Phytochemicals from medicinal plants are receiving ever greater attention in the scientific literature, in medicine, and in the world economy in general. For example, the global value of plant-derived pharmaceuticals will reach \$500 billion in the year 2000 in the OECD countries. In the developing countries, over-the-counter remedies and "ethical phytomedicines," which are standardized toxicologically and clinically defined crude drugs, are seen as a promising low cost alternatives in primary health care. The field also has benefited greatly in recent years from the interaction of the study of traditional ethnobotanical knowledge and the application of modern phytochemical analysis and biological activity studies to medicinal plants. The papers on this topic assembled in the present volume were presented at the annual meeting of the Phytochemical Society of North America, held in Mexico City, August 15-19, 1994. This meeting location was chosen at the time of entry of Mexico into the North American Free Trade Agreement as another way to celebrate the closer ties between Mexico, the United States, and Canada. The meeting site was the historic Calinda Geneve Hotel in Mexico City, a most appropriate site to host a group of phytochemists, since it was the address of Russel Marker. Marker lived at the hotel, and his famous papers on steroidal saponins from *Dioscorea composita*, which launched the birth control pill, bear the address of the hotel.



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