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# Kírikos Herétis - A Greek Physician and Scholar of the European Enlightenment

Androniki Chrysafi<sup>1</sup>, Marios Marselos<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Kírikos Herétis (*Κίρυκος Χαϊρέτης*) (1756–1830) studied Medicine in Padua, at the end of the 18th century. His Dissertation entitled “*Manual on the economy of animals - The vital functions in humans and other living creatures*” concerned the function of the respiratory, digestive and cardiovascular systems, and it is considered the first book on Physiology in the Greek language. Herétis’ belief that water is the best remedy, originates from Hippocratic texts and from Friedrich Hoffmann’s Dissertation, highlighting a shift toward minimal pharmacotherapy and the use of natural therapeutic means. Moreover, the Hippocratic emphasis on the interaction between the natural environment and the physical and spiritual development of humans can be detected also in the writings of Herétis, as well as of his great-grandson, Pericles Yánópoulos, an intellectual and writer at the turn of the 20th century. The Dissertation of Herétis is an interesting synthesis of Hippocratic and Platonic philosophic views. The Platonic duality “Decay-Genesis” from the dialogue “*Timaeus*” contrasts with Hippocratic-Anaxagorean notions of humoral balance, while emphasising blood’s primacy over other bodily humors. By merging classical traditions with contemporary medical thought, Herétis exemplifies the scientific trends of the European Enlightenment, advocating water as a universal remedy, with the claim that it improves blood fluidity.

**Key Words:** Enlightenment medicine, Hippocratic tradition, Platonic philosophy, Kírikos Herétis

## Introduction

Kírikos Herétis (*Κίρυκος Χαϊρέτης*) was born in 1756 in the village of Agios Thomas, Heraklion, Crete. The Herétis family has Byzantine origins, with documented traces in Constantinople as early as the beginning of the 13th century. His father, Astrinós Herétis, passed away at a relatively young age, and the care of his children was taken over by his brother, the physician-philosopher Dimitrios Herétis. Dimitrios sent young Kírikos to Mount Athos, where he studied for eight years at the *Athonias School*. Later, he moved to Venice, where he learned Italian and worked on editing books for publication. In 1793, he enrolled in the Medical School of Padua, from which he graduated in 1797.

Kírikos was married at the Church of St. George in Venice on August 1, 1798, to Countess Anna Marconi, aged 22, an Orthodox Christian of Greek lineage, originally from Crete, as himself. Kírikos and Anna had a large family with seven children.<sup>1</sup>

In 1800, Kírikos Herétis moved to Constantinople, where he practiced medicine successfully. Notably, in 1811, Sultan Mahmud II appointed him as his personal physician after Herétis cured him of a persistent eye infection. However, in 1824, Herétis was accused of being a member of the “*Filikí Etería*”, a secret organisation preparing the Greek revolution, and was sentenced to death. Despite the Sultan’s assurances that he would not be executed, the stress of his confinement led him to suffer a severe stroke from which he never recovered. He died on July 22, 1830, at the age of 74.

Kírikos Herétis was a multifaceted figure of the Greek Enlightenment, who engaged in editing, publishing, and writing medical, philosophical, and patriotic texts. He was proficient in Greek, Turkish, Latin, Italian, and French. However, his most significant work is the study he conducted immediately after graduating from the Medical School of Padua, a Dissertation titled “*Manual on the economy of animals - The vital functions in humans and other living creatures*” [*Ἐγχειρίδιον*]

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τῆς τῶν ζώων οἰκονομίας, τούτεστιν ἡ περὶ ἀνθρώπους καὶ περὶ τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα αἵτια τοῦ ζῆν], hereafter referred to simply as the “Manual”.<sup>2</sup> This work is an attempt to interpret the preservation of life in higher organisms as a result of the combined functions of the respiratory, digestive, and circulatory systems. Karaberopoulos described it as the first Greek book on Physiology.<sup>3</sup> In 2002, Detorakis published a related study<sup>4</sup>, including a complete facsimile edition of the Manual, thereby facilitating scholarly access to the text, since only a limited number of original copies have survived.<sup>5</sup>

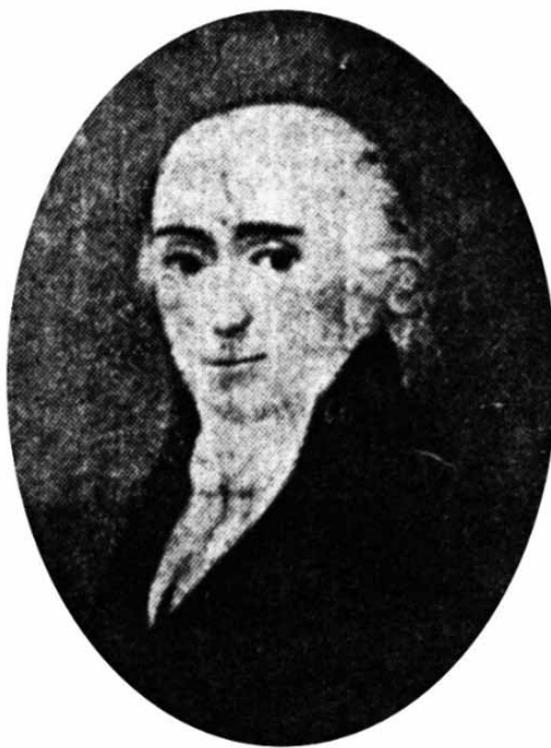
During the time Kírikos Herétis studied at the renowned Medical School of Padua, medicine was undergoing significant transformation due to advances in Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry. It is worth noting that by around 1770, the Englishman Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) and the Swede Carl Wilhelm Scheele (1742-1786), working independently, had isolated in gaseous form an unknown chemical element. The French Antoine-Laurent de Lavoisier (1743-1794) named this new element “oxygen” and understood its chemical and biological action by studying the phenomena of fermentation and respiration.<sup>6</sup>

Physiology emerged as an independent scientific field in the early 19th century, when the macroscopic and microscopic structure of the human body was

still almost fully known. This anatomical knowledge provided the foundation for a more systematic comprehension of physiological functions. In Germany, Physiology was established as a distinct science under the guidance of Johannes Müller, who was a professor in Bonn and later at the University of Berlin. Through his studies and inspired teaching, he laid the groundwork for this new scientific field and established it with his “Handbuch der Physiologie des Menschen” (Handbook of Human Physiology), published in the 1830s. Herétis studied and wrote his “Manual” during this transitional period. His work could be considered an early Physiology book, as its contents indeed concern the basic functions of the human body.

The author mentions in the Introduction that his manuscript had been read by the brothers Ioannis-Baptist Haravouris<sup>7</sup> and Markos Haravouris<sup>8</sup>, as well as by Vincenzo Malacarne<sup>9</sup>, who encouraged him to have it printed and translated into Italian (“Manual”, p. 9).<sup>10</sup> Had this occurred, the “Manual” could have had a broader impact on the scientific community of the time.

Herétis describes the anatomy and function of the respiratory, digestive, and circulatory systems, leading to an extensive description of the beneficial effects of water, primarily for maintaining the fluidity of blood.



**Figure 1.** A portrait of Kírikos Herétis painted in Venice by Andreas Gradenigos.



**Figure 2.** The first page of the dissertation of Kírikos Herétis (original edition, in the Library of the Ioannina University).

He also proposes the use of cold water for treating asthma, providing his personal therapeutic experience.

The perspective of the “Manual” is primarily based on the dual concept of *Decay* and *Genesis*, as a result of the functions of respiration and digestion: *All bodies under the moon undergo change and renewal. Genesis and decay are two successive governors of the creatures on earth. Whatever decay hastens to bring into nonexistence, genesis reshapes. And whatever genesis excessively advances, decay removes. A living being, whether rational or irrational, approaches death daily through decay, and at the same time returns to life through genesis* (pp. 11-12).

The author also recognises the great importance of inhaled air: *Air is essential to the life of every living being, rational or irrational, for it cools the blood excessively heated by movement*” (p. 13). It is noteworthy that while Herétis adequately describes the function of the lungs and heart, he makes no reference to oxygen. According to him, the role of blood circulation is to transport nutrients from the digestive tract to the tissues, while respiration serves to regulate body temperature, as blood cools down by passing through the lungs.

### Elements of Hippocratic Medicine

Many passages in Herétis’ “Manual” refer to the bodily humors and their qualitative properties as factors of health or illness. A significant portion of the text is dedicated to water, which he considers absolutely necessary for maintaining the fluidity of blood, ensuring better circulation and renewing bodily humors. Additionally, he describes therapeutic treatments based on the principles of purification, such as bloodletting and administration of purgatives. These practices were not exceptions, but part of daily medical routine, showing that in the late 18th century medicine still adhered to many of the Hippocratic principles. At the same time, Herétis demonstrates extensive knowledge of the medical advancements of his time, frequently citing works of other physicians not only from Italy but also from other countries.

In Chapter One (*On Respiration*), we read: *Anything that alters the purity, warmth, or coldness of the air in any way renders it harmful. Excessively warm air disperses the watery parts of the blood, increases bile, dries and thickens the humors, leading to choleric fevers, inflammations, and similar ailments. Excessively cold air hinders invisible transpiration, hardens the solid parts of the body, and freezes the fluids, resulting in rheumatisms, catarrhs, and related conditions. Exces-*

*sively humid air deteriorates the elasticity of the solid parts, leaving the body in a weakened and phlegmatic state, predisposing it to intermittent fevers, dropsy, and other ailments* (pp. 22-23).

He also highlights the importance of air quality for human health and warns of the public health dangers posed by the polluted air of densely populated cities: *Not only because the same air is breathed by many individuals repeatedly, but also because it is burdened with sulphurous particles, smoke, and various fumes* (p. 23).

In Chapter Two (*On Digestion*), he explains: *Thirst arises from irritation of the membrane that lines the mouth, oesophagus, and stomach, due to a deficiency of fluids and the acridity of the humors, which causes a sensation of heat and dryness* (p. 25).

*When one eats too little of various foods, or consumes foods of low nutritional value, or eats difficult-to-digest meals, the body's humors are not renewed, and thus, the body's strength gradually declines. [...] Food is transformed into a material capable of generating blood, which is the source of all bodily humors and the only means by which the body restores its strength* (p. 44).

In Chapter Three (*On Blood Circulation*), extensive reference is made to water as a regulatory factor of bodily functions, essential for maintaining health and preserving life itself. Herétis, in support of his arguments, invokes the views of Hippocrates and Galen (*The Great Father of Medicine Hippocrates and the Renowned Galen first define Water in relation to Fevers*) (p. 63)<sup>11</sup>, as well as the opinions of Celsus and Avicenna, along with those of famous later physicians who also advocated for the therapeutic value of water, such as *Rondelet* [pp. 9,10], *the teacher Foyer* [pp. 11,12], *the renowned teacher Hancock* [p. 13], and *Cullen* [pp. 14-16].

A detailed reference is made to Friedrich Hoffmann<sup>12</sup> [pp. 17,18], whose views on water are cited: *[Hoffmann] asserts that one may justly call water a universal medicine; first, because it is suited to every temperament, every age, and every place. Second, because there is no better prophylactic against diseases than water itself. Third, because the relief and comfort it provides in both acute and chronic ailments are certainly assured. Fourth, because the use of water substitutes for the use of almost all medicines prescribed by physicians both for the preservation of health and the treatment of diseases* (pp. 61-62).

He concludes with the following statement: “*I leave it to the judgment of wise physicians to determine whether nature provides a remedy more suitable and effective than pure water for imparting such essential*

*fluidity to the blood*" (p. 63).

The topic of water is revisited in the conclusion of the "Manual": *Given all these, I certainly align myself with the opinion of the aforementioned renowned Dutch (sic)<sup>13</sup> medical teacher Mr. Hoffmann and advise all those who wish to preserve their health to make use of Water. The Father of Medicine Hippocrates himself states: "It is easier to be filled with drink than with food" (pp. 66-67).<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, he continues: Hippocrates defines a characteristic for distinguishing Good Water, saying that "Water that heats up and cools down quickly is the lightest" (p. 67).<sup>15</sup>*

Hippocratic influences are also evident in the everyday practice of medicine at the time when Kírikos Herétis began his studies in Padua in 1793. Specifically, he mentions that he suffered from asthmatic attacks and followed the instructions of his attending physician Andrea Comparetti<sup>16</sup>, a faculty member of the Medical School at Padua (pp. 64-65).

In another part of the text, he provides a detailed account of the therapeutic treatment prescribed to him by Comparetti: ... previously, I was compelled to undergo bloodletting three or at least two times a year and to take continuous purgatives to avoid the danger of plethora (p. 66). Considering that Comparetti was an active professor in Padua at that time, the described therapeutic regimen was evidently the prevailing and accepted scientific knowledge, which was taught to medical students. This knowledge directly refers to the Hippocratic principles of *bloodletting* and *purgation*, aimed at maintaining the balance of bodily humors.

As Herétis informs us, after following the treatment of purgatives and bloodletting for four years without success, he decided to consult Comparetti about a new treatment he discovered by chance when he came across a small book written by an Englishman called Smith<sup>17</sup>, which described almost miraculous results from the use of Water, among which I saw accounts, supported by various testimonies, that many asthmatics were cured solely by the use of Cold Water (p. 65).

Since Comparetti stated that he knew Smith and considered him a worthy writer of great repute, Herétis abandoned his previous treatment and admits that he began making not just use, but excessive use of extremely cold water, so much so that many of my friends told me I would become dropsical (p. 66). In fact, due to the positive effects he experienced from daily consumption of cold water, he recommended the same treatment to another patient suffering from asthma, who showed remarkable improvement in appearance and nourishment.

## **Environmental factors – A lore in Herétis' family**

The extensive and frequent references of Herétis to the quality of inhaled air and the properties of drinking water demonstrate that he recognised the importance of the environment in maintaining human health. Herétis' description of the qualitative characteristics of healthy air and water closely resembles the content of Hippocrates' work "On Airs, Places, Waters". Even more so, Hippocrates emphasises the decisive role of the overall natural environment in health and in the mental and spiritual state of humans: *One will generally find that human appearances and customs follow the characteristics of their land. Where the land is rich, soft, and moist, and where the waters are highly variable – warm in summer and cold in winter, with well-defined seasons – the people will be fleshy, unarticulated, and moist in constitution. They will also tend to be lazy, lacking endurance, and generally weak in spirit. They will exhibit sluggishness and drowsiness and will be slow and dull in the arts. In contrast, where the land is barren, rugged, and exposed to extreme winter cold and summer heat, the people will be hard, lean, well-articulated, strong, and hairy. They will be naturally industrious, sharp, wakeful, and self-willed, showing more of a wild nature than a tame one. In the arts, they will be more intelligent and perceptive and will excel in warfare. All other living things in such a land will follow similar characteristics. Such are the most opposite types of natural constitutions and bodily forms. By understanding these principles, one can infer similar observations about other regions without error.*<sup>18</sup>

Among the papers found in the archive of Herétis' family in Patras, there was a hand-written text attributed to Kírikos Herétis, with the following content: *Greece, with its mild and temperate climate under its serene sky, was designated by nature as the first altar of the graces. To the well-governed freedom, the most inventive spirit, and the most brilliant imagination of the Greeks belonged the glory of founding and perfecting all the fine arts... The noble and cultivated spirit of our ancestors still lives and will continue to live.*<sup>19</sup> In this brief paragraph, Herétis praises the spiritual and artistic virtues of Greeks as a result of an extremely favourable natural environment. Compared to the afore-mentioned text of Hippocrates, one can easily recognise a common deterministic background.

At this point, it is worth noting that similar ideas were expressed later by Herétis' great-grandson<sup>20</sup>, the Greek intellectual and writer Pericles Yannópoulos (1869-1910): *By studying the land and analysing our-*

*selves, we see that all beauty and nobility present in the land also exist within us. Similarly formed, of the same essence, we manifest the same characteristics. Everywhere there is order, symmetry, harmony; everywhere there is elegance, Odyssean resourcefulness, and youthful grace; everywhere there is gentleness, charm, and cheerfulness; everywhere there is a playful wisdom, a humorous disposition, and a Socratic irony.*<sup>21,22</sup>

## Discussion and Conclusions

As a young physician, Kírikos Herétis experienced the cultural changes fostered by the European Enlightenment - a period characterised by the pursuit of new knowledge, though it had not yet fully cast off the traditional principles of Hippocratic medicine. He was eager to learn and adopt new ideas and therapeutic methods, as he stayed informed about the latest trends in his field through the works of renowned physicians of the time, such as Cullen<sup>23</sup>, Floyer<sup>24</sup>, Rondelet<sup>25</sup>, Smith<sup>17</sup>, Hanckoe<sup>26</sup> and Hoffmann<sup>12,13,27</sup>.

During the time Kírikos Herétis studied in Padua, in the late 18th century, the level of knowledge regarding the anatomy and physiology of the respiratory, digestive, and circulatory systems was quite advanced. A particularly striking aspect is the description of the nutrient absorption within the digestive tract, especially with regard to details concerning chylomicrons and their entry into venous blood through the thoracic duct (pp. 41-42). It is well known that the anatomy and function of the lymphatic system remained a challenging field of study even into the 20th century, due to the delicate structure of lymphatic vessels. Equally impressive is the level of knowledge concerning foetal blood circulation and the description of the gradual closure of the *ductus arteriosus* after birth (pp. 59-60).

It must be noted that despite the adherence of many physicians to the principles of Hippocrates and Galen, the 17th and 18th centuries saw a growing tendency to challenge classical medical texts. Friedrich Hoffmann (1660-1742) believed that the body possessed reserves for self-recovery, which could be supported without the excessive use of medications. This view could be considered "Hippocratic", given that Hippocrates himself was very sparing in the use of drugs, as demonstrated by the books considered his authentic works.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, a similar statement is found in the Hippocratic collection: *Nature is the physician of diseases. Nature finds the means of healing on its own, without difficulty...* (Epidemics VI, 5th, 1, p. 314).

Similarly to Hoffmann, the Scottish physician John

Brown (1735-1788) introduced "modern" ideas that gained a great reputation as the "Brunonian system of medicine", even in Continental Europe.<sup>29</sup> According to Brown, the treatment of any patient could be achieved with minimal medication, depending on whether their ailment was "asthenic" or "sthenic". Diseases of an asthenic nature should be treated with a "stimulant" like alcohol<sup>30</sup>, whereas sthenic diseases required a sedative drug like opium. In essence, Brown suggested that only two drugs would suffice for practicing medicine.

Judging by the enthusiasm with which Herétis, adopting Hoffmann's views, advocates for water as a near-universal remedy, it can be inferred that he was influenced by the medical views of his time, which did not favour any longer the extensive and complex pharmacotherapy found in Galen's texts. This trend reached its peak a few years later, when the German physician Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843) formulated the principles of "homeopathic medicine", proposing not only fewer medications but also infinitesimal doses.<sup>31</sup> On the other hand, Herétis' view that water is essential in the human body - because it maintains the fluidity of the blood - reflects the overall Cartesian perception of the time, which likens the human body to a complex mechanical system of levers and pulleys. In this system, solid organs hold an important position, according to the principles of "solidism" introduced by Herman Boerhaave (1668-1738)<sup>32</sup>, as well as the force of blood circulation, which sustains the body's function in the same way a watermill operates through the force of water.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, it is of interest to point out that the "Manual" contains some elements of Platonic philosophy. The most characteristic of these is the duality of "Decay - Genesis", which is encountered already in the introduction of the book and constitutes Herétis' main line of reasoning, in describing the function of the human body. The dialogue "Timaeus" represents the quintessence of Plato's natural philosophy, as it brings together his views on the functioning of the human body as part of the universe. In this dialogue, the physiological and pathophysiological conditions of the human body are interpreted through the dual concept of "Decay - Genesis", which is completely absent in *Corpus Hippocraticum*. In fact, Hippocratic physicians had adopted the doctrine of Anaxagoras (c 500-428 BC), according to which *nothing comes into being or perishes, but rather, it is composed and separated from pre-existing elements in nature* (Anaxagoras, fragment 17). That is, things do not emerge

from nothing nor disappear completely, but rather change form. According to Anaxagoras, instead of speaking of “genesis” and “decay”, it would be more accurate to refer to “mixing” and “separating”, because the fundamental elements of nature are not lost but they change from one state to another. Indeed, the Hippocratic view of health is the result of a symmetrical mixture of humors: *Thus, absolutely nothing is lost, and nothing is born that did not exist before; changes occur through mixing and division... but everything increases and decreases to the greatest possible or the least possible extent* (On Diet I, 4).

Another point of similarity between Plato’s “Timaeus” and Herétis’ “Manual” is the fact that both books emphasise the significant role of blood, whereas the other humors of the human body (phlegm, yellow bile, black bile) are considered harmful by-products of decay that must be expelled from the body.

As has already become clear, the medical issues addressed in Plato’s works sometimes converge and sometimes diverge from the fundamental principles of Hippocratic medicine. However, “Timaeus” in particular stands out for its theoretical breadth, which, to some extent, justifies the impact this Platonic dialogue had on Western civilization. A crucial factor was the compatibility of key theories in “Timaeus” with fundamental Christian beliefs, such as the existence of a “benevolent Creator of the world” and the “immortality of the soul”. Notably, this dialogue was translated into Latin as early as the 4th century AD, making it the only known Platonic work in the West at the time, whereas most other ancient Greek texts were translated after the 11th century.<sup>34</sup>

A comparison between “Timaeus” and the “Manual” leads to the conclusion that Plato’s philosophical ideas enjoyed a significant penetration into Italian culture at a very early stage, so that they even influenced the development of medical concepts. Therefore, it is not surprising that alongside Hippocratic ideas and principles, we also encounter views reflecting Plato’s natural philosophy, even in a text as late as that of Herétis.

Another significant issue is the influence of the ideas of ancient medicine and philosophy on modern Greek literary movements, exemplified by the writings of Pericles Yannópoulos, Herétis’ great-grandson. Yannópoulos was an essayist and active follower of aestheticism at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, a period marked by the ascendancy of the movement known as “geoclimatic nationalism”. This theory emphasises the natural interaction between environment and humans, shaping not only their physical charac-

teristics but also their psychological disposition and cultural achievements. In his powerful aesthetic essays on Greek art - “Modern Painting” (Η Σύγχρονος Ζωγραφική, 1902)<sup>35</sup>, “The Greek Line” (Η Ελληνική Γραμμή, 1903)<sup>36</sup>, and “The Greek Color” (Το Ελληνικόν Χρώμα, 1904)<sup>37</sup> - the environment is endowed with “metaphysical properties of social determination, strengthening the Greek spirit and leading the Greeks to a poetic, ecstatic journey towards perfection”.

In accordance to Herétis’ description of the importance of clean and temperate air for human health and Hippocrates’ emphasis on the decisive role of the natural environment in health and the mental and spiritual state of humans, Yannópoulos condemns the unhealthy European atmosphere of 1903: “Every house burns coke, every human body burns alcohol”, characterising Europeans as “barbaric by nature”, with “souls filled with images of misty landscapes and smoky cities”.<sup>38</sup> This stands in contrast to the bright and temperate Greece, where “Everything plays; everything prospers; everything showers hope; everything sprinkles joy; every eye that opens receives a drop of happiness. All is Light. All is Joy. All is Pleasure. All is Delight”.<sup>39</sup> Along the same lines, Yannópoulos coined the emblematic phrase “Life in Greece is an outdoor life”.<sup>40</sup> Living outdoors is “a structural component of mental and physical health, as well as a spiritual balance of the inhabitants of the Greek peninsula, from antiquity to the modern era”.

Yannópoulos interacted with and influenced the intellectuals of his time, leaving a profound imprint on 20th-century Greek thought, arguably intensified by his dramatic - almost theatrical - suicide at a seaside location near Athens in 1910. While he had an impact on Greek landscape painters, his most enduring influence was on the writers of the so-called “Generation of the 1930s”, who introduced the modernist movement in Greek literature. Yannópoulos’ geopolitical views offered a theoretical tool to the “Generation of the 1930s” for the redefinition of national identity and the concept of “Hellenikotita” (Greekness), after the catastrophic Greco-Turkish War of 1922 and the deportation of the Greek inhabitants of Asia Minor.

In conclusion, Herétis’ “Manual” is an interesting text on human physiology of the Greek Enlightenment, where Hippocratic and Platonic ideas and theories are merged harmoniously. Moreover, Herétis follows the prevailing views of his contemporary colleagues in Italy and other counties, advocating for water as an important and unique remedy for the human body.

## ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

### Κήρυκος Χαιρέτης - Ένας Έλληνας Ιατρός και Λόγιος του Ευρωπαϊκού Διαφωτισμού

Ανδρονίκη Χρυσάφη, Μάριος Μαρσέλος

Ο Κήρυκος Χαιρέτης (1756-1830) σπούδασε Ιατρική στην Πάδοβα, στα τέλη του 18ου αιώνα. Η διατριβή του, γραμμένη στα ελληνικά, αφορούσε τη φυσιολογία του ανθρώπινου σώματος, με έμφαση στη λειτουργία του αναπνευστικού, του πεπτικού και του καρδιαγγειακού συστήματος (Έγχειρίδιον τῆς τῶν ζῶν οἰκονομίας, τούτεστιν ἡ περὶ ἀνθρώπους καὶ περὶ τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα αἰτίᾳ τοῦ ζῆν). Το έργο του Χαιρέτη αντικατοπτρίζει τις προχωρημένες ιατρικές γνώσεις της εποχής του, ιδιαίτερα στην ανατομία και τη φυσιολογία του ανθρώπινου σώματος. Υποστηρίζει τη χρήση του νερού ως θεραπευτικού μέσου, στηριζόμενος στα Ιπποκρατικά κείμενα αλλά και στη διατριβή του Friedrich Hoffmann. Επιπλέον, η Ιπποκρατική έμφαση στην αλληλεπίδραση μεταξύ του φυσικού περιβάλλοντος και της σωματικής και πνευματικής ανάπτυξης του ανθρώπου είναι εμφανής τόσο στα γραπτά του ίδιου του Χαιρέτη όσο και σε εκείνα του δισέγγονου του, Περικλή Γιαννόπουλου, ενός διανοούμενου αισθητιστή των αρχών του 20ού αιώνα. Η διατριβή του Χαιρέτη αποτελεί μια ενδιαφέρουσα σύνθεση των απόψεων του Ιπποκράτη και του Πλάτωνα. Ο Χαιρέτης ασπάζεται την πλατωνική δυαδική αντίθεση «Φθορά-Γένεσις», σύμφωνα με τον διάλογο «Τίμαιος», όπου το αίμα έχει πρωταρχικό ρόλο στον οργανισμό, ενώ οι υπόλοιποι χυμοί αποτελούν προϊόντα φθοράς και σήψης. Η άποψη αυτή αντιπαραβάλλεται με το αξίωμα του Αναξαγόρα και του Ιπποκράτη ότι τα βασικά δομικά στοιχεία του ανθρώπινου σώματος μπορεί να μεταβάλλονται αλλά δεν χάνονται. Συνδυάζοντας τις κλασικές παραδόσεις με την ιατρική σκέψη της εποχής του, ο Χαιρέτης εκφράζει τις επιστημονικές τάσεις του Ευρωπαϊκού Διαφωτισμού και προβάλλει το νερό ως ένα χρήσιμο φάρμακο, το οποίο βελτιώνει τη ρευστότητα του αίματος.

**Λέξεις Κλειδιά:** Ιατρική του Διαφωτισμού, Ιπποκρατική παράδοση, Πλατωνική φιλοσοφία, Κήρυκος Χαιρέτης

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2. Έγχειρίδιον τῆς τῶν ζῶν οἰκονομίας, τούτεστιν ἡ περὶ ἀνθρώπους καὶ περὶ τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα αἰτίᾳ τοῦ ζῆν, Ενετήσι, 1798. Έν τῇ Τυπογραφίᾳ τοῦ ποτέ Δημητρίου Θεοδοσίου, νῦν δὲ Πάνου Θεοδοσίου τοῦ ἔξ Ιωαννίνων. [“Manual on the economy of animals -The vital functions in humans and other living creatures”. In Venice, 1798, at the Printing House of the late Demetrios Theodosiou, now of Panos Theodosiou from Ioannina.]
3. Dr Dimitrios Karaberopoulos has published several studies on Greek physicians of the Enlightenment, including the following: a. Karaberopoulos D. “Presentation of the First Physiology Book of 1798”, and b. Karaberopoulos D, Oikonomopoulou A. “Water, a Universal Remedy According to the Physician Kírikos Herétis, 1798”, Deltos 2010, issue 39, pp. 15-18. These papers can be found in: “Karaberopoulos D. On the Medical Philosopher Kírikos Herétis (1756-1830)”, self-edition, Athens 2014, pp. 5-14 and 15-23. [in Greek], and they are posted, at the website: <https://karaberopoulos.gr/images/files/XAIRETHS.pdf>. The latter was published also in English, in the Mexican journal *Analecta Historico Medica* 2006, vol. IV, pp. 287-91.
4. Detorakis EE. Manual of Animal Economy, Created by the distinguished medical philosopher Kírikos Herétis of Crete, (Venice 1798). Facsimile Edition, Cultural Society of Health Sciences, University of Crete, Museum of Medical History, Heraklion, 2002. [In Greek]
5. One of these is kept in the Library of the University of Ioannina.
6. The monumental work of Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier (1743-1794) “Traité élémentaire de chimie, présenté dans un ordre nouveau et d'après les découvertes modernes” was published in Paris in 1789, shortly before the French Revolution. However, it took time to become known due to the turbulent period that followed, which was marked by the tragic beheading of Lavoisier himself in 1794.
7. Haravouris Ioannis-Baptist (Χαρβούρης Ιωάννης-Βαπτιστής) (1723-1801). A physician from Argostoli, Kefalonia (Greece). After his medical studies in Bologna, he served as a professor at the medical school in Turin (1750) and later was elected a member of the medical society in London. He served as a physician to the royal family of Louis XVI in Paris and was a professor of Physiology in Padua from 1795 until his death.
8. Haravouris Markos (Χαρβούρης Μάρκος) (1731-1808). A physician from Argostoli, Kefalonia (Greece) brother of Ioannis-Baptist Haravouris. In 1740, he moved to Venice, where he studied at the Flanginian School (Φλαγγίνειος Σχολή) (1740-1741), a Greek educational institution that operated in Venice from 1662 to 1905. He then enrolled in the Cotonio School or Ellinomouseio (Κωττονιανόν Έλληνομουσεῖον) (1741-1748) in Padua, which was an annex of the University there. From 1749-1757, he continued

his studies at the University of Padua in Philosophy and Medicine, graduating as a Doctor of Medicine on July 14, 1757. He then specialized in Natural Sciences and particularly Chemistry at the University of Bologna. The Venetian Republic awarded him the title of Count in 1760.

9. Malacarne, Vincenzo (1744-1816), Italian professor of Medicine, Surgery, and Obstetrics in Turin, Pavia, and Padua. He represented the “cultivated” scientist of the eighteenth century, combining humanities, medicine, and politics. His contribution was significant in Anatomy, Surgery, Obstetrics, and Neurology. He made the first comprehensive description of the human cerebellum.
10. The page numbers for the excerpts from Kírikos Herétis’ “Manual” refer to the original Venetian edition of 1798.
11. Ο Μέγας Πλατήρ τῆς Ἰατρικῆς Ἰπποκράτης καὶ ὁ Περίφημος Γαληνὸς τὸς Ὑδωρ κατὰ πρῶτον διορίζουσιν εἰς τοὺς Πυρετοὺς (σ. 63).
12. Herétis knew apparently the works of Friedrich Hoffmann (1660-1742) and especially his Dissertation in the University of Halle in Wittenberg, which was published in 1712 with the title “*De aqua medicina universalis*” [Water as a universal remedy].
13. Friedrich Hoffmann (1660-1742) was a German physician. He was born in Halle, in what is now Germany, and was a prominent professor of medicine at the University of Halle (Wittenberg). For some reason, Herétis mentions him as a Dutch physician.
14. Littré E. “Hippocrates. Opera Omnia”. Vol. I-X. Paris, 1839-1861. Vol. IV. Aphorisms, 2nd. 11. p. 472: “*Πῶον πληροῦσθαι ποτοῦ ἡ στιον*”.
15. Ο Ἰπποκράτης ἐρμηνεύει ἐν σημεῖον εἰς διάκρισιν τοῦ Καλοῦ ὄντος, λέγων “*Ὕδωρ τὸ ταχέως θερμανόμενον καὶ ταχέως ψυχόμενον, Κουφότατον*” (σ. 67). [Littré E. Hippocrates. Opera Omnia. Vol. I-X. Paris, 1839-1861. Vol. IV. Aphorisms, 5th. 26. p. 542 (“That water is very light which heats and cools quickly”)].
16. Comparetti, Andrea (1746-1801) was an Italian physician and botanist, who graduated from the Medical School of Padua in 1778. In 1782, he assumed the Chair of Clinical Medicine at the University of Padua, and in 1787, the Chair of Clinical Hospital Medicine, which he held until his death. [Baldini U. Andrea Comparetti. In: Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani, p. 668-672. Istituto della Encyclopedie Italiana, Rome.]
17. Hugh Smith (1730-1790) was an English physician. He authored a 32-page book titled “A Treatise on the Use and Abuse of Mineral Waters. With Rules for Drinking the Waters; And a Plan of Diet for Invalids Labouring Under Chronic Complaints”, published in London in 1776.
18. Littré E. “Hippocrates. Opera Omnia”. Vol. I-X. Paris, 1839-1861. Vol. II. Περὶ Αέρων, Τόπων, Ὑδάτων, 24. p. 86-93.
19. A loose leaf among the remnants of Kírikos Herétis, recorded by K.N. Trantafyllou in the Herétis Family Archive in Patras. [In Greek]
20. Kírikos Herétis and his wife Anna Marconi had seven children: Alexios (born 1799), Demosthenes (1800), Aristotle (1802), Aristides (1805), Theophrastos (1806), Kalliope (1807), and Isocrates (1809). Eudokia, the only daughter among the five children of Theophrastos Herétis, was the mother of the renowned intellectual and aestheticist writer Pericles Yannópoulos, from her marriage to the physician Dimitrios Yannópoulos in Patras. Pericles Yannópoulos was born in Patras, but lived in Athens. He was enlisted in the Medical Faculty of the National University in Athens and he also pursued medical studies in Paris, but never graduated. He was an enthusiast and lively intellectual, who translated into Greek works of Charles Baudelaire, Oscar Wilde and Edgar Allan Poe, and he also wrote many essays on art, establishing himself as the leading representative of the movement of Aestheticism in Greece.
21. Yannópoulos P. “The Greek Line and Color” (Η Ελληνική Γραμμή και το Ελληνικόν Χρώμα), Athens 1992, p. 83 and 90. Originally published in *To Αστυ*, Sept. 1904. [In Greek]
22. Chrysafi A. “Pericles Yannópoulos (1869-1910) – From the archive to the realm of ideas”. PhD Dissertation, Department of Philology, Faculty of Humanities & Social Studies, University of Patras, 2023. (doi: 10.12681/eadd/53991). [In Greek]
23. Cullen, William (1710-1790). Scottish physician and pharmacist, professor at the Medical School of Edinburgh.
24. Floyer John, Sir (1649-1734). An English physician who studied at Queen’s College, Oxford, where he earned his degree in 1674 and his doctorate in 1686. His general studies included reading classical medical texts, memorizing the aphorisms of Hippocrates, and studying the works of Galen. In 1697, he published a study on England’s baths (*An Enquiry into the Right Use and Abuses of the Hot, Cold, and Temperate Baths in England*). In 1698, he published a work on the treatment of asthma (*A Treatise of the Asthma*), and in 1702, he wrote about cold baths (*The Ancient Ψυχρολονσία Revived; Or; An Essay to Prove Cold Bathing Both Safe and Useful*).
25. Rondelet Guillaume (1507-1566). French physician, anatomist, and naturalist (founder of the scientific field of ichthyology).
26. John Hancocke (1679-1728) was known for a treatise with the title: “*Febrifugum Magnum: or Common Water, the Best Cure for Fevers and Probably the Plague*” (London: R. Halsey, 1723), cited in Cirillo, “*De frigide*” (n. 117), 146. On the success of Hancocke’s work and reaction to it, see Gentilcore, “*Drinking Water*” (n. 4), 700-702, and Mark Jenner, “*Quackery and Enthusiasm, or Why Drinking Water Cured the Plague*,” In: “*Religio Medici: Medicine and Religion in Seventeenth-Century England*”, ed. O. P. Grell and A. Cunningham (Aldershot: Scolar Press).
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Dimensions of Pandemics/Epidemics from Antiquity to COVID-19. Edited by Zirogiannis P and Vogiatzakis E. Volume 17B, pp. 1225–1266, Athens 2022. [In Greek]

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30. Ethyl alcohol belongs to depressant drugs, but until the late 19th century, many classical Pharmacology textbooks classified it together with stimulants (*Remedia excitantia*). This is due to the fact that small doses of alcohol create a false initial sense of well-being and stimulation, primarily attributed to the loss of inhibitions.

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33. Gentilcore D. In Praise of the Ordinary: Shifting Knowledge and Practice in the Medical Use of Drinking Water in Italy, 1550–1750. *Bull. Hist. Med.* 2023; 97(4):531–559.

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36. Yannópoulos P. “Η Ελληνική Γραμμή” [The Greek Line], in Π. Γιαννόπουλος, *Η Ελληνική Γραμμή και το Ελληνικόν Χρώμα*, Athens 1992, p. 83–103. An essay first published in the journal of Athens *Ανατολή*, May 1903. [In Greek]

37. Yannópoulos P. “Το Ελληνικόν Χρώμα” [The Greek Color], in Π. Γιαννόπουλος, *Η Ελληνική Γραμμή και το Ελληνικόν Χρώμα*, Athens 1992, p. 103–152. An essay first published in the journal of Athens *Το Άστυ*, September 1904. [In Greek]

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