Editorial

2023 marks the 90th anniversary of the Hellenic Radiological Society.
The Hellenic Radiological Society is the formal scientific and educational Society of Greek Radiologists. It was founded in September 20th 1933.

The Hellenic Radiological Society aims to develop the highest Radiological standards, as well as to exchange scientific information in all fields of Imaging through training and research.
Furthermore, it aims to promote the best possible collaboration among Radiologists

in Greece, to enhance scientific and educational activities and also to assist in professional issues. The Hellenic Radiological Society cooperates with foreign Radiological Societies in order to develop mutual training and research programs.

The establishment of the Hellenic Radiological Society in 1933 was made during economic crisis and political instability and
P. Vasilidis was the first President of the new society.
On the occasion of this anniversary we added to our issue an article in honor of the first President and his memorable work and attribution.

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EDITORIAL

"Demetrios P. Vasilidis: the first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society"

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ABSTRACT

This is an original article about Demetrios P. Vasilidis, the first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society.
The Hellenic Radiological Society was established in Athens, in 1933 (20th September), in the radiological laboratory of Athanasios Lambadaridis, during a period of economic and political crisis in Greece.
The first general meeting of the Hellenic Radiological Society, for the election of the first Board, took place in Athens, on the 25th of September, 1933, in the electrotherapy laboratory of Demetrios P. Vasilidis. Most of the founding members were present, approved the articles of the Society and elected Demetrios P. Vasilidis as the first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society.
Demetrios P. Vasilidis was an internist-neurologist and one of the first doctors who were involved with radiology in Greece. According to his own reports, he dealt with the effects of X-rays on various manifestations of tuberculosis from 1904 onwards.
In 1923, Demetrios P. Vasilidis published a book of 335 pages titled "A Method of Radical Therapy of Pulmonary Tuberculosis" (in Greek). In the book he referred to the pharmaceutical regimen, the physiotherapeutic regimen, the course, the effectiveness and the prognosis of his applied therapy.
He founded "The first and best equipped laboratory in the East", as he mentioned in his advertisement, as well as a sanatorium in Kipseli, Athens, where he applied his treatment.
The death of the first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society, Demetrios P. Vasilidis, was announced to the board in an urgent meeting of the Hellenic Radiological Society, in Athens, on the 5th of March, 1937.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR, GUARANTOR

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KEY WORDS | Hellenic Radiological Society; History; Medicine; Greece

Introduction

During the 1930's, 22 doctors in Athens and Piraeus were practicing the- still not recognized in Greece - specialty of radiology. The Hellenic Radiological Society was established in 1933, by the aforementioned doctors, during a period of severe economic crisis and political instability.

The political situation in Greece in that era was particularly tense. The government of Eleftherios Venizelos (1864-1936) wanted to reform Greece. However, the defeat of his political party in 1933 and the international economic crisis of 1929, cancelled his plans. Greece was already indebted when the Wall Street Crash of 1929 emerged and the government tried to prevent bankruptcy by taking immediate economic countermeasures and imposing increased taxes. Unfortunately, the countermeasures proved to be futile, the stock exchange of Athens shut down and the exchange and gold of the Bank of Greece were dissipated due to speculation. The bankruptcy of Greece was officially announced in May 1932, when the government of Eleftherios Venizelos declared a suspension of payments. That was a result of the great increase of the country's external debt due to the international economic crisis and the decrease of exports [1].

Discussion

The establishment of the Hellenic Radiological Society

On September 20th 1933, at 7 pm, during the aforementioned economic crisis and political instability, radiologists, radiology technicians and electrical inversion therapists gathered at the radiological laboratory of Athanasios Lambadaridis, at 8b Polytechneiou Street in Athens, where they voted unanimously on the establishment of a new scientific society by the name of *"Ελληνική Ακτινολογική Εταιρεία"* (Hellenic Radiological Society). The radiologists who were the founding members of the society were (in alphabetical order): Demetrios Vasilidis, Evangelos Vidalis, Andreas Georgakopoulos, Isidoros Gounaris, Panagiotis Grigoratos, Antonios Throuvalas, Christos Kalantidis, Manos Karzis, M. Kontopoulos, Georgios Kratsas, Michael Kiniras, Athanasios Lambadaridis, Panagiotis Lapatsanis, Joseph Kope, Stefanos Petrochilos, Takis Prapopoulos, Konstantinos Tsaggaris, Vagias Tsarouchas, Evangelia (Lia) Farmakidou, Felix-Eftychios Hart [2, 3, 4].

The first general assembly meeting of the Society for the election of the first Board was held in the electrotherapy laboratory of Demetrios P. Vasilidis, at 3 Massalias Street, in Athens, on the 25th of September, 1933, at 7 pm (Fig. 1). Seventeen of the twenty founding members were present, approved the articles of the constitution and elected Demetrios P. Vasilidis as President, Felix-Eftychios Hart as Vice-president, Athanasios Lambadaridis as General Secretary, Stefanos Petrochilos as Treasurer, Isidoros Gounaris as Special Secretary and Evangelia (Lia) Farmakidou as Librarian. The constitution of the Society was composed by 38 articles and was approved by the Court of First Instance of Athens, on the 31st of October, 1933 (decision number 8266) [3, 5, 6].

The first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society

Demetrios P. Vasilidis, the first president of Hellenic Radiological Society, was an internist-neurologist and one of the first doctors who were involved with radiology in Greece. He wanted to be called *"Physician-electric inversion therapist"*.

The date and place of his birth are unknown as there are no descendants. Greece had been recognized as an independent, sovereign state in 1830, under the London Protocol of February 1830 and initially, no registers were kept. So, we assume that he was born between 1860 and 1870.

From 1904 onwards he dealt with the effects of X-rays on various manifestations of tuberculosis [7].

According to our research he was a prolific scientist. He made many scientific publications both in French and in Greek, the most important of which were respectively:

"L' influence de l' eau prise à l' interieur" (1903), *"La loi de l' aspiratin des gas"* (1904), *"De la colite interstitielle chronique causant de graves neurasthenies"* (1905), *"Le traitement des osteites et des arthritis tuberculeuses par les rayons*

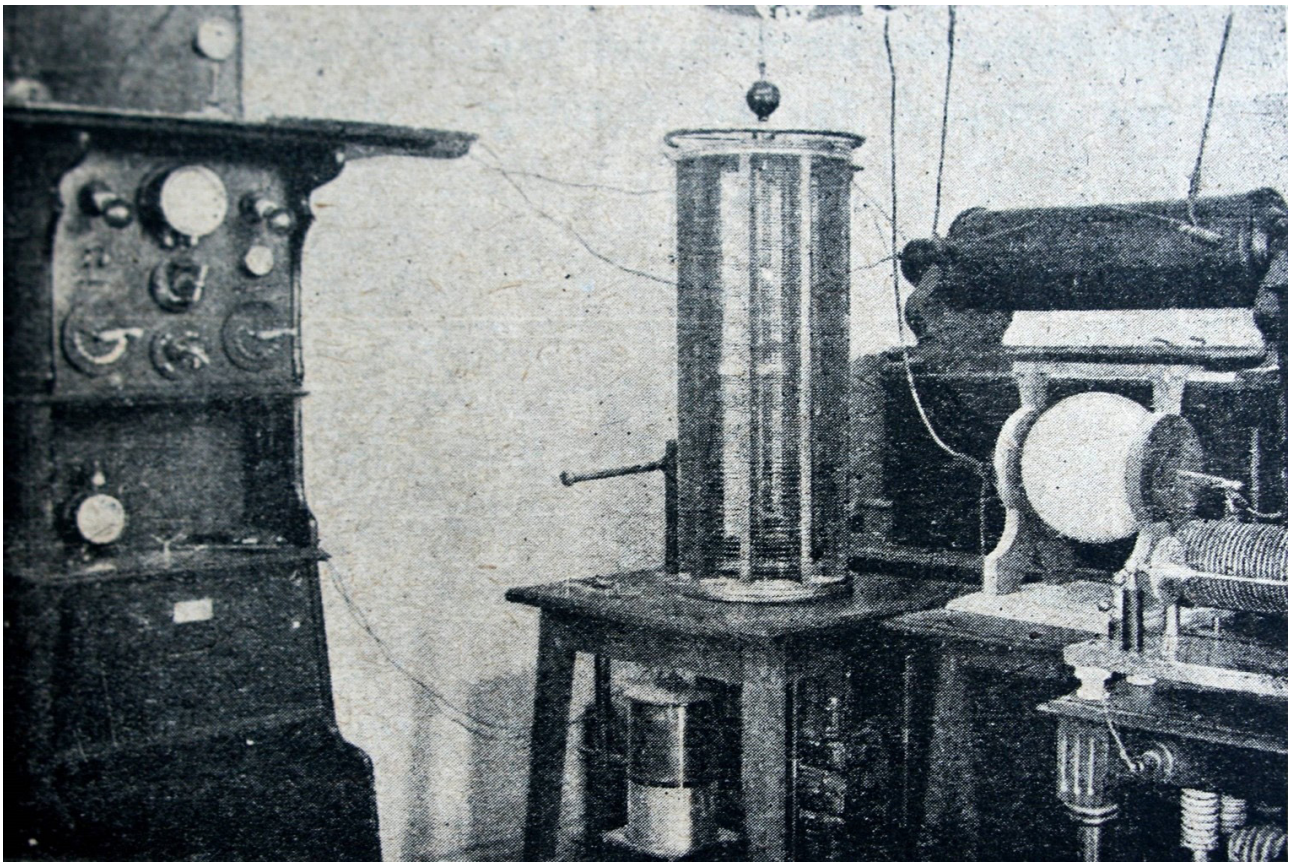


Figure1. *From the electrotherapy laboratory of Demetrios P. Vasilidis, at 3 Massalias Street, in Athens.*

X" (1906), *"Le traitement de la pellade"* (1906), *"Le traitement de la calvitie et de la seborrée"* (1906), *"L' hypertrophie des amygdales estquerissable par les rayons X"* (1906), *"Les courants de haute frequence"* (1907), *"Le myxoedèmetraité par l' électrotherapie"* (1907), *"Le traitement de la sclérodermie par les courants de H.F. et H.T."* (1907), *"Nouveau procedé de traitement radical du goltre exophthalmique"*(1910), *"Le traitement radicale de la myocardite chronique"* (1912),*"D' une pseudomyelite independante et de son traitement"* (1912), *"Le traitement rationel de vitiligo"* (1912), *"La zymotherapie"* (1914)[5] and *"Elements of Radiotherapy"* (in Greek, 1908), *"Panoramic Fluoroscopic network B"* (in Greek, 1909), *"The Therapy of Migraines"* (in Greek, 1909), *"The Energy Mechanism of Radium Rays"* (in Greek, 1911), *"High Frequency Currents (Physics Part)"* (in Greek, 1913), *"High Frequency Current Condenses"* (in Greek, 1913), *"Complex particles of X-rays"* (in Greek, 1914), *"Panoramic X-ray Complex particle B"* (in Greek, 1915) and *"New Therapeutic Treatment for Pulmonary Tuberculosis"* (in Greek, 1917) [5]

Demetrios P. Vasilidis announced his radical study, titled *"Le traitement radicale de la myocardite chronique"* during an international conference in Prague, probably in 1912. That study, as well as his previous professional occupation with the treatment of *"joint disorders"* was the reason why the German house *"Reiniger, Gebbert and Schall"* contacted him; they wanted to construct a device named *"Vasilidis' High Frequency Currents"*, since scientists from Germany and other countries had shown their interest. The letter of the German house to Vasilidis was published in the following article of K. Skokou *"National Calendar of 1915"* (in Greek):

"Our doctor-physiotherapist Mr. D. Vasilidis, who was recently appointed as the regular doctor-electrotherapist of H.M. the King, continuing his exhausting and long-lasting efforts to perfect physiotherapy methods, added a new one in the field of high-density currents. The following letter from "Reiniger, Gebbert and Schall", the biggest electrotherapy factory in Europe, addressed to Mr. Vasilidis is an example of the great impression that his method made abroad:

Mr. D. Vasilidis,
3 Masssalias Street,
Athens.
Our house, "Reiniger, Gebbert and Schall", which is the biggest factory of medical electrical machinery, assigned me the task to enquire about your device of high-density currents.
A great number of our clients, doctors who read your research, contacted our headquarters in Erlangen in order to find out more about your device and the application of high-density currents.
Since our house wants to serve these doctors, I would be grateful if you elaborated on those subjects.
Moreover, we would be happy if you wished to assign us the construction of a similar device, which we would name "Vasilidis' High Frequency Currents".
Alex. Hillsman" [8, 9].

In 1923, Demetrios P. Vasilidis published a book of 335 pages, titled: *"A method of Radical Therapy for Pulmonary Tuberculosis"* (Fig. 2). In the introduction the author stressed the following: *"... I ended up trying a completely new basis of treatment, for the success of which I aimed simultaneously at: a) preventing the spread of the disease, b) fighting the pathogen in the already existing areas, c) stimulating the resistance of the tissues affected and d) stimulating the local reaction of the body".* In the book, Vasilidis referred to: a) the pharmaceutical regimen, b) the physiotherapeutic regimen (radiotherapy, electrotherapy, electric bath effect, water bath and sunbath, diet, pneumothorax), c) the course, d) the effectiveness and e) the prognosis of his applied therapy.


Δ. Π. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΔΟΥ
ΙΑΤΡΟΥ

ΜΕΘΟΔΟΣ
ΡΙΖΙΚΗΣ ΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑΣ
ΤΗΣ
ΦΥΜΑΤΙΑΣΕΩΣ ΤΩΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΟΝΩΝ

ΕΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΣ
ΤΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΕΙΟΝ "ΕΣΤΙΑ,,
1923

Figure 2. *"A method of Radical Therapy for Pulmonary Tuberculosis" published in Athens, 1923.*

In the *"First Part"*, under the title *"Entreaty to my readers"*, the author mentions the following:

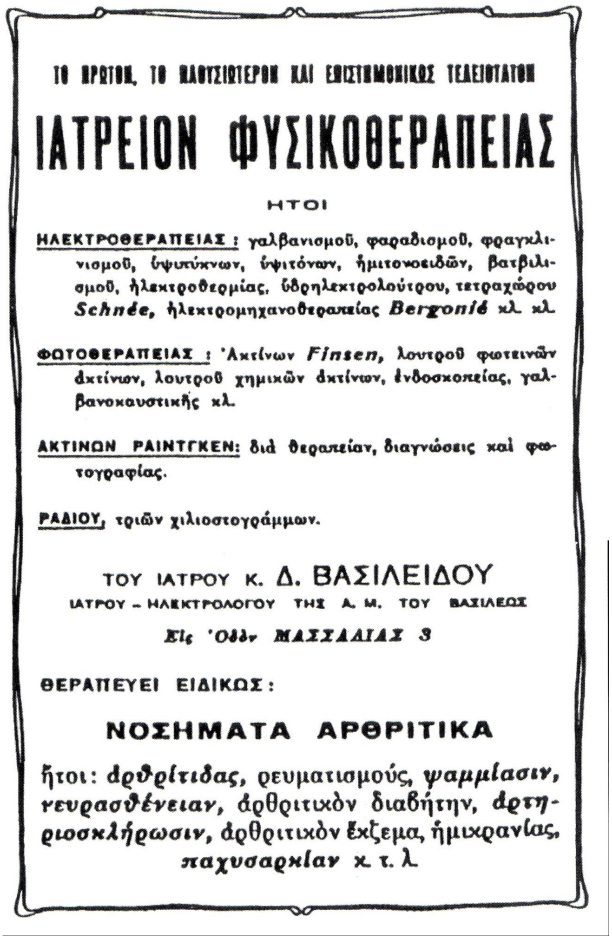
"Through this book, my readers will discover: a) a new medical treatment for a disease that afflicts humanity and Greece in particular and b) myself as an author.

***Regarding the new medical treatment**: I do not expect my colleagues to be lenient. Every new medical treatment of whichever disease must be judged seriously and objectively. Unbiased judgment, accurate application of my method and fair evaluation of its results is what I expect from my colleagues.*

I am referring to the application, because the judgment of my method must be made clinically on patients, since the proposed devices for the treatment are brand new and cannot be judged theoretically, especially by non-experts.

So, the exact terms of my medical treatment regarding the chemical and physical factors, the place and order of their application and the personal history of the patient must be taken into consideration. Moreover, my colleagues should bear in mind everything I mention in the various special chapters and particularly in "About the course of treatment", "About prognosis and results" and "About therapeutic forms".

I have dedicated a separate chapter to "The evolution of my treatment and so on" after I conceived it and most importantly after I announced it to the Medical Society of Athens, on 13 May 1917, for the first time. I did that on the one hand because it will be an answer to the queries and prejudice of many people against me and on the other hand because I believe I owe an apology to myself and this is something I should have done a long time ago.


ΤΟ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ, ΤΟ ΠΛΟΥΣΙΩΤΕΡΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΩΣ ΤΕΛΕΙΟΤΑΤΟΝ

ΙΑΤΡΕΙΟΝ ΦΥΣΙΚΟΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑΣ

ΗΤΟΙ

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΟΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑΣ: γαλβανισμοῦ, φαραδισμοῦ, φραγκλινισμοῦ, ὑψυτύκνων, ὑψιτόνων, ἡμιτονοειδῶν, βατβιλισμοῦ, ἠλεκτροθερμίας, ὑδρηλεκτρολούτρου, τετραχώρου *Schnée*, ἠλεκτρομηχανοθεραπείας *Bergonié* κλ. κλ.

ΦΩΤΟΘΕΡΑΠΕΙΑΣ: Ἀκτίνων *Finsen*, λουτροῦ φωτεινῶν ἀκτίνων, λουτροῦ χημικῶν ἀκτίνων, ἐνδοσκοπείας, γαλβανοκαυστικῆς κλ.

ΑΚΤΙΝΩΝ ΡΑΙΝΤΓΚΕΝ: διά θεραπείαν, διαγνώσεις καί φωτογραφίας.

ΡΑΔΙΟΥ, τριῶν χιλιοστογράμμων.

ΤΟΥ ΙΑΤΡΟΥ Κ. Δ. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΔΟΥ

ΙΑΤΡΟΥ – ΗΛΕΚΤΡΟΛΟΓΟΥ ΤΗΣ Α. Μ. ΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ

Εἰς Ὁδὸν ΜΑΣΣΑΛΙΑΣ 3

ΘΕΡΑΠΕΥΕΙ ΕΙΔΙΚΩΣ:

ΝΟΣΗΜΑΤΑ ΑΡΘΡΙΤΙΚΑ

ἤτοι: *ἀρθρίτιδας*, ρευματισμούς, *ψαμμίασιν*, *νευρασθένειαν*, ἀρθριτικόν διαβήτην, *ἀρτηριοσκλήρωσιν*, ἀρθριτικόν ἔκζεμα, ἡμικρανίας, *παχυσαρκίαν* κ. τ. λ.

Figure 3. *Advertisement of the electrotherapy laboratory of Demetrios P. Vasilidis, in 1917.*

Regarding myself as an author, *I ask my readers, doctors and non-doctors, to consider that any scientific publication written in Greece often presents insurmountable difficulties. This is because there is lack of libraries and laboratories that can assist in scientific work, as well as lack of moral and clinical support and of many other factors that could assist scientists in achieving their goal. The aforementioned difficulties were even greater as I had to take away precious time from heavy professional work in order to write this book, something that happened within a very short time span.*

I am convinced that my colleagues will find new ideas, remarks and studies written as accurately as possible, in various chapters of my book. I would therefore like my colleagues to consider and judge them along with the shortcomings which they may encounter and which inevitably all scientific works contain, especially when written under the circumstances mentioned above."

The book included many outlines, photographs and x-rays. There was also an extensive Greek and German bibliography [5].

Demetrios Vasilidis founded *"The first and best equipped laboratory in the East"*, as he mentioned in his advertisement (Fig. 3), as well as a sanatorium in Kipseli, Athens where he applied his treatment [7].

He was a member of the Christian Archaeological Society from 1925 onwards.

According to an advertisement of the 28th of June, 1912, issue of the newspaper *"ΣΑΛΠΙΓΞ"*, issued in Mytilene, capital of the island of Lesvos, Demetrios Vasilidis treated patients in the *"Kourtzi Thermal Baths, Courtgibad"*, daily from 9 to 12 in the morning except Sundays, during his summer holidays (Fig. 4). The *"Kourtzi Thermal Baths, Courtgibad"* had been established by Panos M. Kourtzis (1850-1931) a businessman who exploited the hot springs *"Kucuk Ludza"* (small baths in Turkish), which contained radium. He equipped them with X-ray, electrotherapy and radiotherapy units and in parallel built the *"Radium Palace"*, a three-storey hotel with a capacity of 65 rooms [10].

In 1906 he married ElizaVasilidis, nee Mpaira, who died in Athens in 1935.

The death of the first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society

The death of the first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society, Demetrios P. Vasilidis, was announced to the board at an urgent meeting of the Hellenic Radiological Society, in Athens, on 5 March 1937. During the meeting the board decided unanimously that: 1) the members of Hellenic Radiological Society give their condolences to the family of the deceased, 2) a wreath on behalf of the Hellenic Radiological Society be deposited, 3) the board and the members of the Society attend his funeral and 4) a picture of the deceased be hung in the head office of the Hellenic Radiological Society [2, 5, 6].

Epiloque

Demetrios P. Vasilidis, the first president of the Hellenic Radiological Society, was a distinguished physician with an open mind and depth of thought. He was also a prolific scientist, a pioneer radiologist and a multifaceted personality.

ΘΕΡΜΑΙ ΚΟΥΡΤΖΗ
COURTGIBAD

ΡΑΔΙΟΤΧΟΙ ΙΑΜΑΤΙΚΑΙ ΠΗΓΑΙ
ΕΝ ΜΥΤΙΛΗΝΗ

Τελεία ἐγκατάστασις λουτρῶν κατὰ τὰς νεωτέρας προόδους τῆς Ἐπιστήμης.
Τελεία ἐγκατάστασις ἠλεκτροθεραπείας.
Τελεία ἐγκατάστασις ἀκτίνων Ραίντγκεν, Φίνσεν καὶ Ραδιοθεραπείας.

ΘΕΡΑΠΕΥΟΝΤΑΙ:

Ἀρθρῖτιδες καὶ ποδάγρα.
Ρευματισμοί.
Νευραλγίαι.
Ψαμμιάσεις.
Ἀρτηριοσκλήρωσις.
Στηθάγχη.
Παραλύσεις καὶ ἀτροφίαι.
Νευρασθένειαι.
Χρόνιοι νόσοι τοῦ δέρματος.
Ἐντεροκωλῖτιδες.
Ἐπιθηλιώματα.
Σαρκώματα.
Χρόνια γυναικολογικὰ νοσήματα.
Βρογχοκήλη.
Λευχαιμία.
Διαβήτης ἀρθριτικὸς.

Ὁ διευθυντὴς τοῦ Φυσικοθεραπευτηρίου Ἀθηνῶν καὶ μόνος Ἕλλην εἰδικὸς ἰατρὸς κ. Δ. Βασιλείδης θὰ ἐξετάζῃ καὶ κανονίζῃ τὴν θεραπείαν τῶν ἀρρώστων 9—12 π. μ. καθ' ἑκάστην (πλὴν τῶν Κυριακῶν).

Ἄρρωστοι ἐφωδιασμένοι μὲ πιστοποιητικὸν πτωχείας παρά τινος τῶν ἰατρῶν τῆς πόλεως γίνονται δεκτοὶ δωρεὰν Τετάρτην καὶ Σάββατον μετὰ μεσημβρίαν.

ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΕΩΣ

Figure 4. *Advertisement of the "Kourtzi Thermal Baths, Courtgibad", newspaper "ΣΑΛΠΙΓΞ", 1912.*

Under today's scientific view, the treatment that he proposed for tuberculosis during the interwar period is ineffective. The breadth of his way of scientific thinking, however, is impressive.

As well as the other founding members of the Hellenic Radiological Society, he was far ahead of his time and was condemned to the same fate as all other visionaries and pioneers; his knowledge and scientific background were not put into practice for many years. **R**

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