



Take Care

Healing Springs and Baths in Greece

Lydia Xynogala

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- Healing baths were venues of emerging modernity, science, and the pursuit of political ambitions and business interests throughout the history of modern Greece
- An interdisciplinary examination of the evolution of Greece's numerous spas, a largely ignored aspect of modern Greek history since the 1830s
- Offers a poignant view of the privatisation of public resources in the wake of Greece's 2010–15 public debt crisis and proposals for a redesign of the country's public health sector

Since the early 19th century, Greece's numerous thermal springs have been not only places of well-being and healing, but also venues where the newly independent state has pursued its aspirations for prosperity, modernisation, and integration into institutional Europe. For modern Greece, thermal water is more than just a natural resource. It has evolved from a public good and remedy into a versatile instrument of national identity, scientific research, and the pursuit of political and business interests.

Take Care: Healing Springs and Baths in Greece explores the history and political transformation of the country's spas and the culture of wellness tourism in Greece since the late 19th century. Lydia Xynogala tells the story of scientific, social, and political forces driving this development, linking the 19th-century Paris World's Fairs with Greek hospitals, factories, research institutions, hygiene exhibitions, and healing baths. She also examines the fate of public resources in the turmoil of Greece's public debt crisis in 2010–15 and the wave of privatisations sparked by it.

Xynogala's book combines an interpretation of archival sources with field research findings, oral history, and ethnographic records. Illustrated with historical and newly taken photographs and documents, her narrative follows the intersections of environmental science, natural philosophy, and the history of public health and architecture.

Lydia Xynogala directs the Athens- and Zurich-based design and research practice ALOS. She also teaches and researches at the Academy of Architecture in Mendrisio and at Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design.