

**Debate**THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE TEACHING-RESEARCH OF ANATOMY IN MEDICINE:  
THE GENDER ISSUE**WOMEN IN ANATOMY IN GREECE: SCIENTIFIC STAFF AND DIRECTORS IN THE ANATOMY DEPARTMENTS****Fiska Alik<sup>1</sup>, Piagkou Maria<sup>2</sup>, Katerina Vassiou<sup>3</sup>**<sup>1</sup>*Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, Democritus University of Thrace (DUT), Alexandroupoli, Greece*<sup>2</sup>*Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece*<sup>3</sup>*Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, University of Thessaly, Larissa, Greece*

Anatomy professors Fiska A (full), Piagkou M (associate) and Vassiou K (full)

**The Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)**

The Anatomy Department of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) was founded on 18 May of 1835, under the name "Department of Descriptive Anatomy", the same day of the NKUA establishment. It is the oldest University of Greece, rich of history. The first anatomy classes began on the Anatomy Department the 19<sup>th</sup> May of 1837, by using for the education dried bones, models, few anatomical paintings, and a very few human corpses. For the first time, the fresh cadaveric

specimens are preserved in alcohol. The Laskowski method is introduced, constituted by a solution of phenic acid and glycerol. In 1892, the Anatomy Museum is enriched with various specimens, and instruments. In 1926, the Teichmann technique was used for the injection of colored substance into corpses, a technique that was firstly applied in Greece, before its application in Europe (Piagkou et al. 2012), (the anatomical museum, online).

In 2004, for the first time, an associate female professor became head of the Department for six years (2004-2010). The last 25 years, 7 females compared to 18 male professors have served in the Department (a percentage of 38.8%). This year the Anatomy Department serve two female

professors compare to six male professors (33.3%). In this Department, 25% of the scientific staff performing teaching and research activities with interim or transitory appointments are women and most of them are medical graduates of the NKUA. The academic and research staff of the Department supplementary teach anatomy by using the Virtual dissection tables (Anatomege tables- 5 in number) with the main anatomy class in the Dissection Hall by dissecting cadavers. Concerning the School of Medicine, at the NKUA, the percentage of women entering Medicine the last 5 years (2017-2022) is 56.2% and the percentage of women graduated from Medicine the last 5 years is 51.8%. Regarding the academic staff of the Faculty of Medicine, the proportion of women held positions as Main, Associate or Adjunct Professor in the last 7 years is 38.8%.

#### **Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, University of Thessaly**

The Anatomy Department, School of Medicine, University of Thessaly (UT), was founded in 1996. Since then, of the four academic teaching staff at the Department, the full professor Katerina Vassiou, radiologist is the unique woman (1/4, a percentage of 25%). Her current position is Head of the Anatomy Department. In this Department, 50% of the scientific staff performing teaching and research activities with interim or transitory appointments are women and most of them are medical graduates of the UT. The academic and research staff of the Department proceeded to the digitization of the anatomical plastic models and dissected and preserved specimens of the Anatomy laboratory and created e-books for the supplementary students' education. Furthermore, a series of short educational videos was created on the anatomy of the central and peripheral nervous system, of the internal organs, as well as of the musculoskeletal system. Concerning the School of Medicine of the UT, the percentage of women entering Medical School, the last 5 years (2017-2022) is 59.3% and the percentage of women

graduated from Medical school, the last 5 years, is 57.87%. Regarding the academic staff of the Faculty of Medicine, the proportion of women held positions as Main, Associate or Adjunct Professor in the last 7 years is 30.4%.

#### **Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, Democritus University of Thrace (DUT)**

The Department of Anatomy of the School of Medicine, of the Democritus University of Thrace (DUT) was founded in 1990. A year later, in 1991, the Unit of Electron Microscopy was founded as part of the Anatomy Department. The Laboratory of Clinical Anatomy was founded in 1999 after the inspiration and establishment of the postgraduate education program "Clinical and Surgical Anatomy" that began in 2015. Since October 2015, the head of the Anatomy Department was the associate professor Aliko Fiska, a pathologist. Under the efforts of the full professor Fiska, the Anatomy Museum was established with bones' collections adequate for the study of anatomy, the anatomy education, and research. Concerning the School of Medicine at the DUT, the percentage of women entering Medical School, the last 5 years (2017-2022), is 58.3% and the percentage of women graduated from Medical School, the last 5 years, is 59.4%. Regarding the academic staff of the School of Medicine, the proportion of women held positions as Main, Associate or Adjunct Professor in the last 7 years is 33.3%.

#### **References**

- Piagkou M, Androutsos G, Demesticha T, Lappas D, Karamanou M, Piagkos G, Skandalakis P, Piagkos K. 2012. The first anatomy professors in the medical school of the University of Athens. *Ital J Anat Embryol.* 117(1):8-12. PMID: 22893995.
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