

Social and Ideological Dimensions of Nursing Education in Greece: The Nursing School of Evangelismos (1950–1983)

Nursing, as an applied science, centers on patient care. The term "nursing" gained prominence in Greece in the 1960s, corroborated by testimonies from alumni of the Evangelismos School of Nursing, who recall its frequent usage during their student years in the 1950s and 1960s. From the mid-19th century through the First World War (1914–1918), the core responsibilities of medicine and nursing remained stable, focusing on caring for patients with serious illnesses and safeguarding life. Over this period, nursing education gradually became institutionalized. The first Greek School of Nursing Sisters was established in 1875, initially known as “Nosokomikon Pedeftirion” (Nursing Training Institute). By 1931, the school had evolved to offer a structured, three-year nursing education.

Attendance at nursing schools -especially after World War II through to 1960- was influenced by economic hardships and the emerging social recognition of nursing as a profession. This study examines nursing education at the Evangelismos School from 1950 to 1983, utilizing archival sources from the school and semi-structured interviews with its graduates.

The narratives and archival records reveal that many students hailed from rural areas, particularly Northern Greece. Religious values and the influence of the Brotherhood were critical factors in their decision to attend Evangelismos, which also served as a boarding school supporting families struggling with post-war financial hardships. The education system was marked by strict adherence to specific moral values and implemented within a framework of military-style discipline. During the period studied, the quality of education was perceived as "excellent," prioritizing patient-centered care and delivering high standards of healthcare.

