INTRODUCING LINEAR PERSPECTIVE IN GREECE, 1830–1860

LOCAL CONDITIONS OF A GLOBAL VISUAL REGIME

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ABSTRACT

This article operates on two levels, it begins with a historical mapping of the global disseminations of perspective, then it examines a local case: the introduction and adoption of linear perspective in Greece between 1830 and 1860. The analysis of textual and visual sources reveals a complex historical process which includes: artistic transfers between Greece and Western Europe, translations of perspective treatises, the formation of the modern Greek term for "perspective", the founding of educational institutions, and the advent of photography in Greece. The introduction of linear perspective in Greece constituted a crucial historical event, that shifted local pictorial traditions towards a Westernized naturalism. The examination of these local conditions, aims at a closer description of the global traits of perspective.

KEYWORDS

Linear Perspective; Global Art Studies; Modern Greece; Visual Culture; Artistic Transfers; Artistic Education; Photography.

I. Globalizing Linear Perspective

Certain philosophical terms used by art historians have shaped our theoretical and historical understanding of perspective. During the 1920s Erwin Panofsky understood perspective in a neo-Kantian approach as a "symbolic form" used "to objectify the subjective space" in images. Following a structuralist method during the 1980s, Hubert Damisch explained perspective as a pictorial "code" that we learn to decipher but also as a deceptive "dispostif" that demands analysis. Perspective is all this but also more, as it regulates images, beholders, and visual cultures. It constitutes, according to Hans Belting, a "cultural technique of looking" with a global history that art historians are just beginning to address.[1] Indeed, the efforts for a global art history and global museums and collections invite us to rethink the history of perspective in global terms.[2]

Following its inventions in Europe, perspective conquered the world as the most "natural" and "objective" system of representation, a pictorial code based on mathematical foundations claiming universal validity. Philosophers like Pavel Florenski and later Nelson Goodman have deconstructed this long-held and problematic belief by stressing that perspective has a conventional and historical character.[3] On this basis, the present study understands perspective as one pictorial style among others, intended to look as natural or neutral as possible: a local convention, that was neither natural, nor universal, but invented, improved, and globally distributed.

By which trajectories was perspective disseminated throughout the world? The following lines roughly map the main routes of this broad geographical circulation chronologically, as studied by various scholars. Numerous other trajectories remain to be clarified.

Perspective was invented and developed simultaneously in the regions of Flanders and Florence, receiving impulses from the Arab science of Optics in Italy. The two lost perspectival paintings that Filippo Brunelleschi made in Florence around 1425 played a crucial role in stabilizing the concept of the vanishing point. A further well-known step was taken around 1435, when Leon Battista

1
Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, New York 1991, 66. Hubert Damisch, *L'origine de la perspective*, Paris 1987, 38. Hans Belting, *Florenz und Bagdad. Eine westöstliche Geschichte des Blicks*, Munich ^{4}2012, 17, 54–59.

2
Wilfried Van Damme and Kitty Zijlmans, Art History in a Global Frame. World Art Studies, in: Matthew Rampley, Thierry Lenain, Hubert Locher, Andrea Pinotti, Charlotte Schoell-Glass, and Kitty Zijlmans (eds.), *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe. Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks*, Leiden/Boston 2012, 217–230. Neil MacGregor, *Globale Sammlungen für globalisierte Städte*, Berlin 2016. See also Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, Catherine Dossin and Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel (eds.), *Circulations in the Global History of Art*, Farnham 2015.

3
See the early critique by Pavel Florenski, *La perspective inversée*, Paris 2013, 15, 41–42, furthermore: Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art. An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Indianapolis 1999, 10–19 and also William J. T. Mitchel, *Iconology. Image, Text, Ideology*, Chicago 1986, 37–40.

Alberti described a simplified formula of central perspective for the practice of painters in his treatise *De pictura*. In parallel, early Netherlandish painters like Robert Campin and Jan van Eyck were developing modes of central and oblique perspective, though not in geometrical terms, but by improving empirical methods of naturalistic studio traditions. In Paris, the diplomat Jean Pèlerin Viator published in 1505 the treatise *De artificiali perspectiva*, where he introduced the crucial term "subject" into perspectival vocabulary. Another key transfer from Italy was to Nuremberg with Albrecht Dürer's 1525 treatise *Underweysung der Messung*, which presented various perspective machines. In the Ottoman Empire there was apparently resistance to perspective: presented most likely by Gentile Bellini at the imperial court around 1480, perspective was not adapted to Ottoman miniature painting. This had deeper reasons in the special requirements of Ottoman pictorial language, which avoided modes of Western naturalism. Not unlike Christianity, perspective was propagated as a pictorial language of universal truth, common to all people, an attitude that provoked sometimes local resistance(s). In the late sixteenth century, perspective was transferred to Eastern Asia and propagated in China by the Society of Jesus. The Italian missionary Matteo Ricci was a leading figure in this process. Together with the Chinese scholar Paul Xu Guangqi they translated Euclid's treatise on geometry into Chinese (1607) and established a library in Peking that included European treatises. In Japan perspective arrived around 1550. From 1591 to 1614 the Jesuit missionary Giovanni Niccolò taught Italian pictorial techniques and perspective to Japanese painters in a *seminario dei pittori* in Kumamoto. But it was during the Edo period of the eighteenth century that perspective was more widely appropriated in Japanese painting and prints, especially through the *Uki-e* genre. Southern Asian centers of art production like New Delhi and Mumbai seem to have received perspective around 1600 through European prints. But the use of perspectival representation in India was only implemented under British colonial rule, when perspective was taught in military and art academies.[4]

By the early nineteenth century, perspective had attained a global dissemination and currency. Yet, even in Europe, it was neither self-evident nor deployed everywhere as a system of spatial representation. In Greece and other regions, perspective remained largely unknown to the social majority. As this study will argue,

[4] An overview of the globalization of perspective is provided by: Belting, Florenz und Bagdad, 54–59; on the Arab impulses see ibid.; on Brunelleschi: Damisch, L'origine; on the Netherlands: Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origin and Character*, New York 1971, 5; on Viator: Damisch, L'origine, 141; on the Ottoman Empire: Belting, Florenz und Bagdad, 61–62, 67–80 and Deniz Beyazit, Defining Ottoman Realism in the Uppsala Mecca Painting, in: *Muqarnas Online* 37/1, 2020, 209–245; on China: Hui-Hung Chen, Chinese Perception of European Perspective. A Jesuit Case in the Seventeenth Century, in: *The Seventeenth Century* 24/1, 2009, 97–128; on Japan: Timon Screech, The Meaning of Western Perspective in Edo Popular Culture, in: Rebecca M. Brown and Deborah S. Hutton (eds.), *Asian Art*, Malden, MA 2006, 408–423; on India: Monica Juneja, Circulation and Beyond. The Trajectories of Vision in Early Modern Eurasia, in: DaCosta Kaufmann, Dossin, and Joyeux-Prunel, Circulations, 59–77.

it was around 1830 to 1860 that perspective was introduced and became widely popularized in Greece (by this term I will be referring to the topographical region and the modern Kingdom of Greece). This region, which was understood as the cradle of European civilization, had been under Ottoman rule for nearly four hundred years. In local pictorial traditions, perspective had been cautiously avoided.

II. From the Global Frame to a Local Case

The modern Greek term for perspective was formed around 1840, denoting the major representational system of Western painting that had remained widely uncommon in the Balkan region. Paintings in Greek museums from the years 1800–1840 confirm this absence of perspective, as they differ entirely from pictures made after 1840, that is, when perspective and naturalism had been established [cf. Figs. 1–4 to Figs. 5–9]. This historical process has been observed by some scholars, but it demands closer examination, as it formed a crucial event in the Westernization of visual cultures in the region.[5]

During the years 1830 to 1860, perspective was introduced in the region systematically by Greek and Western European artists and architects, through new books, university courses, and artistic competitions. It was a complex process of intercultural exchange between European "centers" and a forgotten "periphery", that Europe was then rediscovering as its "cradle".[6] In the decisive years, when the modern Greek state was formed and a national art history was emerging, perspective imposed a prescriptive code of naturalism that shifted gradually the local pictorial traditions towards Western European norms. Painters rapidly adopted occidental conventions, and this artistic education (or re-formation) proved decisive for further artistic development in Greece. The general population too seems to have accepted perspective with minor resistances, embracing it as an "objective" visual language. At the same time, naturalism and the domination of academic neoclassicism led to a devaluation of the traditions of Byzantine icons and folk painting; these were increasingly dismissed as "medieval" and "stagnant". This cultural shift reveals the set of Western values and concepts that went along with perspective: rationality, artistic subjectivity, objectivity, cultural progress.

The example of Greece might seem marginal for the usual tracks of European art history, but it makes evident two crucial

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Ilias Mykoniatis, Η πρώτη έντυπη νεοελληνική πραγματεία περί προοπτικής. Η ευρωπαϊκή τέχνη και η υποδοχή της στην Ελλάδα του 19ου αιώνα, in: *Ελληνικά* 45, 1995, 341–352. Hercules Papaioannou, *Η φωτογραφία του ελληνικού τοπίου, μεταξύ μύθου και ιδεολογίας*, Athens 2014, 60–64.

6
On this framing see: Nicolaos Chadjinicolaou, Καλλιτεχνικά κέντρα και περιφερειακή τέχνη, in: id., *Νοήματα της εικόνας. Μελέτες ιστορίας και θεωρίας της τέχνης*, Rethymno 2001, 387–414.

points in the history of perspective. Firstly, perspective was not a given cultural fact across Europe, but in many regions was considered something completely foreign and new – even in the nineteenth century. Secondly, perspective was neither a natural nor a universal visual language, but a pictorial convention of local provenance (Italian, Flemish), which was promoted globally as a universal visual language. In this sense, it is necessary to recognize that perspective was increasingly *naturalized* and upon that basis *universalized*.[7] Studying the foreignness of perspective in various societies is not only an art historical issue, but one that concerns the anthropology of images.[8] In addition we should explore how the global iterations of perspective went along with and forged Western European cultural hegemonies.

III. The Introduction of Linear Perspective in Greece

From the fifteenth century onwards most parts of the Balkan peninsula were under Ottoman rule, a situation that began to change when the Greek Revolution started in 1821. The struggle for independence came to an end in 1827 with the formation of the First Hellenic Republic. But political stability arrived only with the establishment of the Kingdom of Greece in 1832. One year later, the Great Powers (France, Russia, United Kingdom) designated the adolescent Bavarian prince, Otto von Wittelsbach, son of the philhellene King Wilhelm I, as the first King of Greece. During the early decades of the nineteenth century three strands of painting prevailed in the region: post-Byzantine icon painting, folk painting, and the so-called Heptanesian School. A close consideration of this context puts the impact of perspective into relief.

Byzantine icon painting continued to be practiced in Greece during the Ottoman era. This pictorial tradition has been roughly termed "post-Byzantine".[9] Sixteenth-century icons from Crete and the Ionian islands are considered central in this context. As they bear elements of Venetian painting, their style has been described as *maniera italiana*, corresponding to the Italian notion of *maniera greca*.[10] From 1680 onwards, Baroque and Ottoman elements can be observed: colors became intense and ceremonial, leaving behind the

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These terms are central to my understanding of perspective, see also my discussion *Was heißt es, die Perspektive um 2020 zu denken?* of Emmanuel Alloa's book: *Partages de la perspective*, Paris 2020, in: *21: Inquiries into Art, History, and the Visual. Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte und visuellen Kultur* 4, 2021, 195–200.

8
Hans Belting, *Bild-Anthropologie. Entwürfe für eine Bildwissenschaft*, Munich ^{4}2011.

9
An introduction and critical discussion of the term is provided by Olga Gratziou, Μεταβυζαντινή τέχνη, χρονολογικός προσδιορισμός ή εννοιολογική κατηγορία, in: Tonia Kiousopoulou (ed.), *1453. Η άλωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης και η μετάβαση από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεότερους χρόνους*, Heraklion 2005, 183–196.

10
Stelios Lydakis, *Geschichte der griechischen Malerei des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Munich 1972, 19.

spiritual rigor of the sixteenth-century style; decorative elements and rocaille forms were also introduced. Around 1800 the icon had distanced itself from the traditions of the sixteenth century as older pictorial formulas gave way to new forms of "folk" character [Fig. 1].[11]

In parallel there existed a rich production of profane painting. Such painters were often individuals and sometimes groups who wandered from village to village and undertook various decorative tasks for houses or furniture. Their works depict landscapes, cityscapes, or allegories, and are usually framed by rich garlands, arabesques, and fruits; they often include Baroque and Islamic elements [Fig. 2 and Fig. 3]. Major works in this vein include the murals in manors of Macedonia, Epirus, and Thessaly, with outstanding examples at the mansion of Georgios Mavros in Ambelakia (painted 1798) and that of Nerantzopoulos in Siatista (1755).[12] Many painters in this field have fallen into oblivion, though some cases are better known, such as Pagonis, who was active in the early nineteenth century and painted churches and mansions in Pelion.[13] Etchers like Konstantinos P. Kladis and N. A. Koutsodontis are also known through signed works.[14] The case of Panagiotis and Dimitrios Zographos has been extensively debated in relation to a series of twenty-four battle depictions of the independence struggle, which were commissioned by General Ioannis Makrygiannis around 1836–1839.[15] Operating between map and landscape view, these paintings are important documents of major armed conflicts, but also precious examples of Greek visual culture before the introduction of perspective. *Painting nr. 10* [Fig. 4], for example, depicts the First Battle of Athens in the area between the Columns of Olympian Zeus (foreground), the Arch of Hadrian, and the Acropolis. These monuments are not successively foreshortened in a coherent perspectival space following the logic of a gaze. Instead, a narrative premium is focused on the military units around the Acropolis, which are depicted as strategic formations on a military map. In scholarship, this pictorial tradition has been labeled *laiki zographiki*

11
Cf. Gratziou, Μεταβυζαντινή τέχνη, 193–195.

12
Sousanna Choulia, *Το αρχοντικό του Γεωργίου Σβάρτς στα Αμπελάκια*, Athens ^{2}2010, 28–29.

13
Popi Zora, *Ελληνική Τέχνη. Λαϊκή Τέχνη*, Athens 1994, 15.

14
For the first, see an etched view of Constantinople (1851), National Gallery Athens, for the second the watercolor *The Destruction of Psara 1824 June 21*, ca. 1850, Benaki Museum Athens.

15
The painter was long thought to be Panayotis, not Dimitrios Zographos; this was clarified by Angeliki Fenerli, Οι ζωγράφοι του Μακρυγιάννη, Δημήτριος και Παναγιώτης Ζωγράφος – προσωπογραφικές και εργογραφικές διευκρινίσεις, in: *Ο Πολίτης* 36, 1980, 52–63. Cf. Spyros I. Asdrachas, Μακρυγιάννης και Παναγιώτης Ζωγράφος – το ιστορικό της εικονογραφίας του Αγώνα, in: id., *Οι Έλληνες ζωγράφοι από τον 19 ° αιώνα στον 20 °*, Athens 1974, 14–27 and Giorgos Petris, *Μακρυγιάννης και Παναγιώτης Ζωγράφος, δοκίμιο εικονολογικό*, Athens 1975.

[Fig. 1]
Unknown painter, Icon of Saint Nicholas with Christ and Theotokos, 27 April 1799, egg tempera, gold, and silver on wood, 30 × 23 cm, Athos, Koutloumousiou Monastery, in: Georgios Christopoulos and Ioannis Bastias, Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους (1669–1821), τ. 11, Athens 1975, 254.

[Fig. 2]
Unknown painter (L. Lolis?), View of a Harbor Town, 1798, mural, Ambelakia, Mansion of Georgios Mavros, in: Popi Zora, *Λαϊκή Τέχνη*, Athens 1994, cat. no. 2.

[Fig. 3]
Defterevon Sifnios, Allegory of the Blind Eros, 7 November 1825, egg tempera on canvas, 50.5 × 66.5 cm, Athens, Byzantine and Christian Museum. Photo: Wikimedia Commons (30.01.2023).

(folk painting) or more broadly *laiki techni* (folk art), in order to distinguish it from and oppose it to *logia zographiki* (academic, learned painting).[16] Art historians of the late twentieth century characterized this tradition with the problematic term "naïve painting".[17]

These were the prevailing pictorial traditions in the region around 1800. Perspective, as used in Western European societies, was still widely uncommon. But this situation concerned primarily mainland Greece. Regions under Venetian rule – the Ionian Islands (Heptanese) and Crete – provided exceptions, as they became acquainted with Western naturalism and perspective around 1650. The Ionian Islands had never been under Ottoman rule and were unified with Greece only in 1864, rendering them an isolated case. Under Venetian and British rule, this region had been oriented towards Western cultural developments long before mainland Greece. Thus, the painting tradition of the Heptanesian School bears Venetian elements. A major painter was Panayotis Doxaras (1662–1729), active mainly in Zakynthos, who was well acquainted with Italian art history. Around 1720–1724 Doxaras translated texts by Leonardo da Vinci, Leon Battista Alberti, and Andrea Pozzo, while he also suggested one of the earliest versions of the Greek word for perspective: *prooptiki* (προοπτική).[18] But his work largely remained unpublished for a very long time: the first short fragments of his manuscripts initially appeared in print in 1843, while the full text was only published in 2015.[19] Nevertheless, the paintings of Doxaras were influential in the Ionian Islands, where they introduced the so-called style *al naturale*: during the eighteenth century realism prevailed and profane subjects became more common; after 1800 bourgeois portraits were in high demand [Fig. 5].[20] Yet, such artistic impulses were not echoed in mainland Greece.

16
A critical history of the term *laiki techni* is provided by Giorgos Petris, *Λαϊκή ζωγραφική, πρώτη προσέγγιση*, Athens 1988; see also: Zora, Λαϊκή Τέχνη, and Sofia Handaka (ed.), *Λαϊκή τέχνη. Νέα ευρήματα – νέες ερμηνείες. Πρακτικά Συνεδρίου προς τιμήν της Πόπης Ζώρα*, Benaki Museum, Athens 2015.

17
Stelios Lydakis, *Οι Έλληνες ναΐφ ζωγράφοι / Les Peintres Naïfs Grecs*, Athens 1987.

18
Andreas Moustoxydis, Παναγιώτης Δοξαρᾶς, in: *Ελληνομνήμων ή σύμμικτα ελληνικά* 1, 1843, 17–40, 32. The substantive *prooptiki* derived from the verbs *prooptao* or *prooptano* that meant "to foresee". Given the fact that *prooptiki* means pro-spective (to see forward or in advance), it was a rather inaccurate translation for the meaning of per-spective (to see through).

19
Fragments of Doxaras's texts were published by the historian Moustoxydis, Παναγιώτης Δοξαρᾶς, 32–35. The entire publication appears in: Panayotis K. Ioannou (ed.), *Λεονάρντο ντα Βίντσι, Λεόν Μπαττίστα Αλμπέρτι, Αντρέα Πότσο, Διά την ζωγραφίαν. Οι πρώτες μεταφράσεις κειμένων τέχνης από τον Παναγιώτη Δοξαρά*, Heraklion 2015, for *prooptiki*: 99, 215. I am thankful to Victor I. Stoichita for drawing my attention to the texts of Doxaras.

20
An overview is provided by Miltiades M. Papanikolaou: *Η ελληνική τέχνη του 18ου και 19ου αιώνα. Ζωγραφική – Γλυπτική*, Thessaloniki 2005, 22–39.

[Fig. 4]
Dimitrios Zographos, First Battle of Athens, picture 10, 1836–1839, gouache on cardboard, 50 × 63 cm, Athens, Gennadius Library. Photo: Wikimedia Commons (30.01.2023).

[Fig. 5]
Nikolaos Kantounis, The Pharmacist Dicopoulos, ca. 1825, oil on canvas, 86 × 70 cm, Athens, National Gallery. Photo: Wikimedia Commons (30.01.2023).

Why was perspective absent? The main obstacle to the introduction of perspective in mainland Greece seems to have been the isolation and poor social condition of Greeks under Ottoman rule. The Western Renaissance(s) had had almost no impact on the region, whereas the Enlightenment and French Revolution were readily received and provided an impetus to independence movements. Around 1800, multiple land taxes and massacres had led Greek communities to pauperization and distress. Education was possible for only a few wealthy families; contacts with Italian cities, common in the Ionian Islands, were almost impossible for inhabitants of the mainland. Instead, people were oriented towards Istanbul (*Polis* in Greek), and traveled there to obtain a mercantile or clerical education.[21] Instruction in painting was attainable with independent masters or in monasteries, mainly in Athos, where icon painting was taught over generations.

Another obstacle to perspective was local visual cultures. Both, the (post-)Byzantine and the Ottoman pictorial traditions maintained a cautious distance to naturalistic pictures coming from the West. Byzantine painting generally avoided naturalism and perspective, despite some attempts to integrate them.[22] The main requirement for icons was not the representation of an illusionistic third dimension of a worldly space, but the presentation of a transcendent dimension in the service of the religious experience during the act of the adoration of God (*latreia*) or the veneration of saints (*proskynesis*).[23] The Ottoman pictorial traditions tended to be antirealistic as well, and this reluctance towards Western naturalistic conventions impeded a wider introduction of perspective in the Empire.[24] These visual cultures remained skeptical about an image concept that aimed to represent the visible world by arranging a fictional gaze for the beholder; as Leon Battista Alberti famously put it in *De pictura* (I, 19): the beholder should imagine the image carrier as an *aperta fenestra* to the world. In this context, it is telling that perspective was introduced when Ottoman rule was repelled and a European government took over the leadership of Greece.

The decisive years. The years between 1821 and 1833, during which the Revolution started and the state was established, remain some-

21
On this historical period see e.g. Mark A. Mazower: *The Greek Revolution. 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe*, London 2021.

22
Gratziou, Μεταβυζαντινή τέχνη, 188–189. Elements of foreshortening are found e.g. in some icons by Emmanuel Tzanes (1610–1690) and Theodoros Poulakis (1622?–1692) at the Benaki Museum.

23
Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult. Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst*, Munich ^{6}2004, 170–175, 560. Cf. Tania Velmans, *L'image byzantine ou la transfiguration du réel. L'espace, le temps, les hommes, la mort, le péché, les doctrines*, Paris 2009, 31–66.

24
For some Islamic paintings that are worked with perspectival elements see: Beyazit, Defining Ottoman Realism.

how invisible in art history, since not many paintings have survived. But it was during this and the following decades that a fundamental transformation of the pictorial traditions took place. Two cardinal Western European systems of naturalistic representation – perspective and photography – were introduced simultaneously in the young country. In this process, several developments were decisive: (1) artistic transfers between Greece and Western Europe, as more and more Greeks studied Fine Arts in Europe and European artists worked in Greece, (2) translations of perspective treatises, (3) the formation of the Greek term for perspective, (4) new institutions that taught perspective, such as the Athens School of Arts, and (5) the arrival of photography.

Artistic transfers. Under Ottoman rule, emigration had been a liberating life path for Greeks, but it was realistic only for individuals from wealthy families. By 1800 a Greek diaspora with centers in Venice, Vienna, and Budapest had developed. It was in this context that young people started to leave Greece to study in European universities, among them also painters who went to the Art Academies of Rome, Naples, Paris, and later Munich.[25] For many of them it was usual, and seen as a patriotic duty, to return home to invest their skills. Many early nineteenth-century Greek painters share this biographic trait, examples include: Gerasimos Pitzamanos, Athanasios Iatridis, Philippos Margaritis, Theodoros Vryzakis, Dionysios Tsokos, Nikiforos Lytras, and Konstantinos Volanakis.[26] After having systematically learned European pictorial conventions and techniques in Western academic institutions, such painters differed completely from the masters of folk painting: they had become "artists" in the Western European sense of the word and aligned themselves with European artistic groups and pictorial traditions.[27] They developed careers and some of them, like Vryzakis

[25] As new studies show, Munich became a center for Greek art students after the eviction of King Otto in 1862: Panayotis K. Ioannou, Studenti greci alle Accademie di Belle Arti di Italia (xix secolo), in: F. Bruni and C. Maltezou (eds.), *L'Adriatico. Incontri e separazioni, xviii–xix secolo*, Venice/Athens 2011, 297–321.

[26] Gerasimos Pitzamanos (1787–1825), from Argostoli, studied painting and architecture at the Art Academy of Rome and became a member of the Academy of Saint Luke. Athanasios Iatridis (1798/99–1866), from Karpenisi, studied painting in Vienna and lithography in Paris; he worked as a draftsman at the Athens archeological authority. Philippos Margaritis (1810–1892), from Smyrna, studied painting at the Art Academy of Rome and worked as a professor at the Athens School of Arts from 1842 to 1863. Theodoros Vryzakis (1814 or 1819–1878), a central figure of Greek nineteenth-century painting, who came from Thebes, studied painting at the Kunstakademie of Munich; he lived, worked most of his life, and died in Munich. Dionysios Tsokos (1820–1862) studied at the Art Academy of Venice under Lodovico Lipparini, returned to Greece in 1847, and in 1856 became drawing professor at the Arsakeion. Nikiforos Lytras (1832–1904), from Tinos, studied at the Athens School of Arts and at the Kunstakademie of Munich under Carl von Piloty. Konstantinos Volanakis (1837–1907), from Crete, worked as a merchant in Trieste and studied at the Kunstakademie of Munich under Carl von Piloty. Cf. Evgenios D. Matthiopoulos and Dora Komini-Dialeti (eds.), *Λεξικό Ελλήνων Καλλιτεχνών: ζωγράφοι, γλύπτες, χαράκτες*, 4 vols., Athens 1997–2000.

[27] See here mainly: Eleonora Vratskidou, *L'émergence de l'artiste en Grèce au XIXe siècle*, Paris 2022.

or Nikolaos Gysis, gained wide recognition through state commissions. These new generations of painters consciously distanced themselves from the older pictorial traditions of Greece and were proud to pass down their "progressive" styles to new generations.

At the same time, numerous European artists that traveled or worked in Greece contributed to the dissemination of Western artistic conventions. Socialized in classicist and romanticist aesthetics and enthused by the Greek Revolution, they depicted antique monuments or painted portraits and heroical scenes from the independence struggle. One such artist was Giovanni Boggi (1770?–1832), who produced a series of lithographic portraits of Greek combatants around 1825. The Frenchman Louis Dupré (1789–1837), a pupil of Jacques-Louis David, who visited Greece in 1819–1820, produced similar portraits and elegant genre scenes.[28] The German officer and painter Karl Krazeisen (1794–1878) published a series of lithographed portraits of the leaders of the Revolution, traced *d'après nature*, that became quite popular, particularly the portrait of general Theodoros Kolokotronis.[29] Another German painter, Peter von Hess (1792–1871) escorted King Otto in 1832–1833 and painted the monarch's arrival at Nafplio (first capital of Greece). A series of lithographed scenes from the Greek uprising, made after Hess, echoed long in the country: to this day they illustrate history schoolbooks.[30]

With the foundation of the Kingdom numerous European architects, painters, and urban planners (to name but a few professions) acquired posts or state commissions. German artists were especially favored by the Regency. Friedrich von Zentner, a Bavarian officer and engineer, was assigned first director of the Athens School of Arts in 1837.[31] Pierre Bonirote (1811–1891), from the Lyon Art Academy, was recommended by Ingres to the Duchesse de Plaisance in Athens, and became "Teacher of Oil Painting" in 1840

28
Voyage à Athènes et à Constantinople, ou collections de portraits des vues et des costumes Grecs et Ottomans, peints sur les lieux, d'après nature lithographiés et colorés, par L. Duprè, élève de David, accompagné d'un texte orne par de vignettes, Paris 1825. See: Elisabeth A. Fraser, *Mediterranean Encounters. Artists Between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, 1774–1839*, University Park, PA 2017, 165–206.

29
Bildnisse ausgezeichneter Griechen und Philhellenen, nebst einigen Ansichten und Trachten. Nach der Natur gezeichnet und herausgegeben von Karl Krazeisen, Munich 1828.

30
Griechenlands Befreiung in XXXIX Bildern entworfen von Peter von Hess. Lithographiert bei Heinrich Kohler und Joseph Atzinger, Munich ca. 1845–1850. The complex history of these images is clarified by Sabine Fastert, Der Bilderzyklus von Peter Hess, in: *Das neue Hellas. Griechen und Bayern zur Zeit Ludwigs I.* (exh. cat. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum), ed. by Reinhold Baumstark, Munich 1999, 306–337.

31
Antonia Mertyri, *Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση των νέων στην Ελλάδα. 1836–1945*, Athens 2000, 62–66. Cf. the older seminal study: Kostas I. Biris, *Ιστορία του Εθνικού Μετσόβιου Πολυτεχνείου μέχρι της ιδρύσεως των Ανωτάτων Σχολών, 1836–1916*, Athens 1957.

at the School.[32] Raffaello Ceccoli (1808–1870) from Bologna also taught painting at the School between 1843 and 1852.[33] Ludwig Thiersch (1825–1909) from Bavaria, professor at the School from 1852 to 1855, undertook the task to "renovate" Byzantine icon painting according to Nazarene aesthetics and linear perspective, obtaining both approval and critique for his efforts. Lysandros Kaftantzoglou, director of the School, praised an icon by Thiersch and Nikolaos Lytras "painted in oil" according to "all the rules of optics, perspective and coloration".[34] Finally, the Venetian Vincenzo Lanza (1822–1902) – to whom we will return below – was appointed first professor of perspective at the School of Arts.[35]

All these artists transferred particular aspects of European styles to Greece: Bonirote promoted an orientalist style; Ceccoli followed a Venetian version of the Nazarene movement; Thiersch represented the Nazarene movement of Munich, and as a basis to this all, Lanza taught the techniques of perspectival drawing.[36] These transfers unfolded in a country where neoclassicism was *the* artistic direction from the outset. A central figure here was the leading architect of nineteenth-century Greece, Lysandros Kaftantzoglou.[37] After studies in Europe, Kaftantzoglou became director of the School of Arts, following von Zentner in 1843. These biographical data lead us to the question of how Greek institutions promoted the teaching and adaption of perspective in the practice of painting. But before we elaborate on this, we should first clarify how the Greek term for perspective was formed.

History of a word. Through the prism of *Begriffsgeschichte*, as approached by the historian Reinhart Koselleck, the term "perspective" reveals a multi-facetted history. How did the term develop in Greek? Before the establishment of the Athens School of Arts in 1837, two French perspective treatises had been translated into

32
Friedrich von Zentner, *Das Königreich Griechenland in Hinsicht auf Industrie und Agrikultur*, Augsburg 1844, 12.

33
Gianfranco Piemontese, The Presence of the Italian Painter Raffaello Ceccoli at Kerkyra and Zakynthos from 1837 to 1843, in: Dora F. Markatou (ed.), *Proceedings*, vol. 6, *XI International Panionian Conference. Life and Culture in the Ionian Islands*, Argostoli 2020, 165–175.

34
Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 156–159. Lysandros Kaftantzoglou, *Λόγος εκφωνηθείς κατά την επέτειον τελετήν του Βασιλικού Πολυτεχνείου [...]*, Athens 1855, 31.

35
For the biographical data I consulted: Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση.

36
For each see ibid., 144–145, 152–153, 156–157.

37
Dimitris Filippidis, *Η ζωή και το έργο του αρχιτέκτονα Λύσανδρου Καυταντζόγλου. Το ιστορικό αποτύπωμα ως οδηγός συνεκδοχικών παρεμβάσεων και διαμεσολαβήσεων με το παρόν*, Athens 1995.

Greek: the first in 1831, the second in 1856.[38] We know little about the reception of these books except that they were used for teaching drawing in secondary schools and universities.[39] The second book must have been useful for perspective courses such as those of Lanza at the School of Arts, as it contains helpful diagrams by the painter Andreas Kriezis. Although these books had a rather minor impact on broader artistic practices, they make evident local efforts to formulate a Greek word for the concept of perspective.[40]

Both books term perspective as *dioptiki* (διοπτική), a rather suitable word, that means "to see through". But *dioptiki* was still unheard of, so the translator of the second book found it reasonable to add to the title page the French word *perspective* next to *dioptiki* in brackets.[41] At the same time, there were other words in use for perspective, such as *skiagraphia* (σκιαγραφία), *scenographia* (σκηνογραφία), and *apoptiki* (αποπτική). *Skiagraphia* meant "shadow tracing" and at the School of Arts it was also used for "perspective" as the curricula attest.[42] *Scenographia*, the term used by Vitruvius in *De Architectura libri decem* (Liber I, II) to signify three-dimensional representation, was used for "perspective" as well as for "stage design". *Apoptiki* (from *apopsis*: prospect) was registered by dictionaries in 1843 and was barely used.[43] Eventually, none of these words was adopted for broader use; it was another term that prevailed: *prooptiki* (προοπτική), which became the modern Greek term for perspective. It appears in 1845 in a lecture by Grigorios Papadopoulos, professor of art history at the School of Arts, who might have bor-

38
(1) Ι. Β. Φραγκήρου, *Διδασκαλία της διαγραφικής ή γραμμικής ιχνογραφίας [...]*, Μεταγλωττισθείσα, κατ' επιταγήν της Α. Ε. του Κυβερνήτου της Ελλάδος, υπό του μακαρίτου Κ. Κοκκινάκου. Επιθεωρηθείσα δε υπό Ι. Π. Κοκκώνη, Aegina 1831. = Translation of: Louis-Benjamin Francoeur, *Enseignement du dessin linéaire, d'après une méthode applicable à toutes les écoles primaires [...]*, Paris 1827. (2) Τενότου, *Διοπτική (Perspective)*, Μεταφρασθείσα μεν εκ του Γαλλικού υπό Πάνου Ν. Πλέσκα Γραμματέως της Νομαρχίας Κυκλάδων, Εκδοθείσα δε δαπάνη Μ.Π. Περίδου και Α. Κριεζή, Ermoupoli 1856. = Translation of: Jean-Pierre Thénot, *Les règles de la perspective pratique, mise à la portée de toutes les intelligences, et indispensable pour l'étude du dessin en général. [...],* Paris 1839. On these Greek translations see the seminal article of Mykoniatis, Η πρώτη έντυπη.

39
Τενότου, Διοπτική (Perspective) 1856, ς΄.

40
Cf. Mykoniatis, Η πρώτη έντυπη, 349.

41
Τενότου, Διοπτική (Perspective) 1856.

42
The term *skiagraphia* is attested in the curricula of the academic years 1863 until 1907 at the School of Arts. I am grateful to the staff members of the archive at the Athens School of Fine Arts for their support.

43
For *skiagraphia* see: Anthimou Gazi, *Λεξικόν ελληνικόν*, vol. 3, Venice 1816, 160 and Konstantinou M. Kouma, *Λεξικόν δια τους μελετώντας τα των παλαιών Ελλήνων συγγράμματα*, vol. 2, Vienna 1826, 349. For *scenographia* see: Gazi, Λεξικόν, 15 and Kouma, Λεξικόν, 349. For *Apoptiki*: Moustoxydis, Παναγιώτης Δοξαρᾶς, 29, 31 and Stephanos Ath. Koumanoudis, *Συναγωγή νέων λέξεων υπό των λογίων πλασθεισών από της αλώσεως μέχρι των καθ'ημάς χρόνων*, vol. 1, Athens 1900, 133.

rowed it from the translations of Panayotis Doxaras, which had been partially published in 1843.[44]

To conclude: five different words were used for "perspective" in Greece between 1831 and 1845: *dioptiki*, *skiagraphia*, *scenographia*, *apoptiki*, *prooptiki*. While the historian Andreas Moustoxydis used the word *apoptiki*, the architect Kaftantzoglou used *scenographia*, and art historian Papadopoulos *prooptiki*.[45] These confusing linguistic circumstances make evident how uncommon and unstable the concept of perspective was in Greece around 1840. Some words seem to have been used quite rarely and fell into oblivion (*dioptiki*, *apoptiki*), others survived with different meanings (*scenographia* as stage design). *Prooptiki* finally prevailed as the standard term for perspective in Greece around 1870.[46] Likewise, perspectival terms like vanishing point, horizon, visual line, groundline, tableau, projection plane, eyepoint, or distance point were also translated during those years.[47]

The formation of the term for perspective reflects *in nuce* the transformative condition of the Greek language around 1840. According to the seminal studies of the historian George Dertilis, at a time when the young country was trying to adapt to European modernity, hundreds of neologisms were coined for Western European concepts previously unknown in Greece.[48] Art historical terms like "style", "genre" or "plaster cast", were also formed during this period. This process of word-making was led by intellectuals like Stephanos Koumanoudis, Lysandros Kaftantzoglou, and Grigorios Papadopoulos.[49]

The histories of language and lexicography are precious sources for the global history of art. The Greek trajectory of the term

44
Grigorios Papadopoulos, *Λόγος περί του Ελληνικού Πολυτεχνείου [...] εκφωνηθείς δε κατά την επέτειον της εκθέσεως τελετήν*, Athens 1845, 4, 10, 11. Moustoxydis, Παναγιώτης Δοξαρᾶς. Lexicography registered *prooptiki* erroneously as a neologism of Papadopoulos dating it to 1857: Koumanoudis, Συναγωγή, vol. 2, 850. This error has been copied further in acknowledged dictionaries like those by Georgios Babiniotis.

45
Moustoxydis, Παναγιώτης Δοξαρᾶς, 29, 31. Kaftantzoglou, Λόγος (1855), 21. Papadopoulos, Λόγος, 4, 10, 11.

46
An early intellectual use of the term *prooptiki* was made by Grigorios Papadopoulos in his essay Περὶ τῆς καθήμᾶς εκκλησιαστικῆς τέχνης και ἰδιαιτέρως τῆς ἑλληνικῆς αγιογραφίας. Χρονικά Ελληνικού Εκπαιδευτηρίου έτος ΙΖ', Athens 1870, 3–13. From the academic semester 1875–1876 onwards, perspective was termed *prooptiki* in the curricula of the School of Arts, which are preserved in the archive of the Athens School of Fine Arts.

47
Φραγκήρου, Διδασκαλία της διαγραφικής, 174–184.

48
George B. Dertilis, Κράτος, γλώσσα και τεχνογνωσία στην Ελλάδα, 1830–1940, in: M. Ασημακόπουλος, Γ. Καλογήρου, Ν. Μπελαβίλας, Θ.Π. Τασιος (eds.), *170 χρόνια Πολυτεχνείο. Οι μηχανικοί και η τεχνολογία στην Ελλάδα*, vol. 1, Athens 2012, 1–24; 20.

49
Eleonora Vratskidou, Art History and the Art School. Revisiting the Institutional Origins of the Discipline Based on the Case of Nineteenth-Century Greece, in: *Journal of Art Historiography* 13, 2015, 1–64, 32–37.

"perspective" certainly has equivalents in other languages.[50] Bringing them to light would help to specify further the global permutations of perspective.

The institutional introduction of perspective in Greece, however, did not start at the Art Academy, but at the Military Academy of Evelpidon in Nafplio. Founded in 1828 during the First Hellenic Republic by the first governor, Ioannis Kapodistrias, this Academy taught technical and engineering courses like descriptive geometry, topography, architectural drawing, and machine design.[51] The first Greek perspective book served for the courses in perspective.[52] Its translation in 1831 had been part of the measures taken by Kapodistrias to bolster the educational system.[53] But since the courses in this Academy primarily served military, engineering, and industry purposes, their impact on pictorial aesthetics remains unclear. Nonetheless, this context makes evident that the cultural significance of perspective was considerably broader than merely artistic: its applications permeated numerous fields like architecture, mechanical engineering, or military sciences.[54]

After Athens became capital of Greece in 1833 the Bavarian Regency founded in 1837 the University of Athens and the Royal School of Arts (Βασιλικόν Σχολείον των Τεχνών). This artistic and technical school, initially a humble institution, developed later into an Art Academy of European format. As mentioned, the first director was Friedrich von Zentner; the early professors were also not Greeks, but artists and architects from Bavaria, France, and Italy.[55] This personnel sheds light on the artistic and ideological setup of the Athens School of Arts – it was Western European from the outset. Greek artists only began teaching at the School after a royal decree restricted the working prospects of foreigners in favor of locals. The first Greek professors appointed in 1842 were Philippos

50
Cf. e.g. the case of the Japanese term: *The Advent of Photography in Japan* (exh. cat. Tokyo, Museum of Photography), ed. by Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography and Hakodate Museum of Art, Hokkaido, Tokyo 1997, 11, 163.

51
Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 36.

52
Andreas Kastanis, Descriptive Geometry in the Greek Military and Technical Education during the 19th Century, in: *Journal of Applied Mathematics & Bioinformatics* 7/3, 2017, 13–82, 22–23.

53
Φραγκήρου, Διδασκαλία της διαγραφικής. Kapodistrias is mentioned on the title page; cf. Mykoniatis, Η πρώτη έντυπη, 344–345.

54
On this topic see: Kastanis, Descriptive Geometry.

55
Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 39–77.

and Georgios Margaritis from Smyrna and the engraver and monk Agathangellos Triantafyllou from Nigrita in Macedonia.[56]

The Athens School of Arts delivered the canonical educational agenda of European art academies with courses in drawing from plaster casts, oil painting, linear perspective, artistic anatomy, art history, and graphic techniques. In the early years there was no chair for perspective, although it was included in the technical drawing courses of the architects Christian and Theophil von Hansen (1837–1843, 1839–1843). Some years later, perspective was covered by the geometry courses of Theodoros Komninos.[57] In 1845 the art historian Grigorios Papadopoulos complained about the lack of regular perspective courses, as an "essential" deficit, calling for the government to support the School in this and other matters.[58] From 1852 to 1856 perspective was taught occasionally by Ioannis G. Papadakis.[59] In 1855 the director, Kaftantzoglou, repeated the demand for a chair for perspective, along with courses in descriptive geometry and engraving. To counter the shortfalls, he proposed the curricula of the Rome University as an educational model.[60] Perspective became part of an artistic competition at the School in 1856, when new funds were available to finance a prize for perspective drawing. The subject of the competition was "Pyramid on a Pedestal" and two students from Epirus and Andros won awards.[61]

A chair for perspective was ultimately founded in 1863. Vincenzo Lanza taught in this position until 1900, becoming one of the longest-serving professors at the School.[62] We know little about Lanza and his work, only a few of his paintings are preserved in the collections of the Athens National Gallery and the Benaki Museum.[63] His depictions of Athenian monuments, detailed and romantic in style, are comparable to numerous works by European painters in Greece around 1850. But as professor of perspective, Lanza played a crucial role in the education of new generations

56
Ibid., 79–80, 81.

57
Papadopoulos, Λόγος, 10.

58
Ibid., 10, 11.

59
Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 105, 124.

60
Kaftantzoglou, Λόγος (1855), 21, 23 n.

61
Lysandros Kaftantzoglou, *Λόγος εκφωνηθείς κατά την επέτειον τελετήν του Βασιλικού Πολυτεχνείου τῇ κέ Νοεμβρίου 1856 [...]*, Athens 1857, 20, 23, 24, 28.

62
Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 186, 278–280.

63
Compare e.g. his paintings *The Acropolis* (1860), Athens National Gallery, or *View of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates and the Ruined Quarter of Fanari* (1863), Benaki Museum.

of painters.[64] In time, perspective came to be regarded as indispensable knowledge for young artists and became an obligatory course in 1876.[65]

Lanza's son, Loizos (1854–1919), worked as a painter and specialized in perspective too. An example of his work is *The Southern Portico of the School of Fine Arts* [Fig. 6], in which perspective and light are rendered with precision. In the corridor of the neoclassical art academy, a young student stands among plaster casts of antique sculptures reflecting the gaze of the beholder; at the vanishing point, a window frames a luminous view. These visual semantics testify to and reflect the academic socialization of the new artistic generations in Greece. Lanza worked next to his father as professor of perspective, holding the post from 1889 to 1917. In parallel, a native of Corfu with French roots, Vikentios Bokatsiambis (De Bocheciampe, 1856–1932), also taught perspective at the School (1900–1928). This personnel indicates that the first instructors in perspective at the Athens School of Arts were an Italian and two Greeks of Italian and French origins, thus, artists familiar with European pictorial traditions.[66]

Alongside perspective, the artistic genres of history painting, landscape, still-life, and others were introduced at the School. Their adoption had been urgently recommended in 1845 by the scholar Stephanos Koumanoudis.[67] These processes reveal how academic realism became the prevalent artistic style at the Athens School of Arts, an institution that was developing in a European "periphery" communicating with art "centers" like Rome or Munich.[68]

Imposing perspective through photography. At the time that the term perspective was being formed in Greece, artists and scientists in France and Britain were in search of a new word to describe an imaging technology that would later be called "photography". This neologism composed of Greek words, was coined around 1839 in England by the astronomer Sir John Herschel. Other terms like *héliographie*, *calotype*, or *daguerréotype* were also in use for the con-

64
Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 278.

65
Ibid., 215.

66
For L. Lanza see: Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 280; for Bokatsiambis ibid., 262, 310.

67
Stephanos Koumanoudis, *Που σπεύδει η Τέχνη των Ελλήνων την σήμερον*. Προσετέθησαν καὶ δύο πραγματεῖαι του Ιωάννου Βιγκλεμάννου περὶ τέχνης, ἐκ τοῦ Γερμανικοῦ, Belgrade 1845, 23–24.

68
For Munich see: Marilena Cassimatis, Die Münchener Akademie und die Athener Kunstschule – (k)eine paradoxe Symbiose, in: Christian Fuhrmeister and Birgit Joos (eds.), *Isar/Athen. Griechische Künstler in München – Deutsche Künstler in Griechenland*, Munich 2008, 65–80.

[Fig. 6]
Loizos Lanza, The Southern Portico of the School of Fine Arts, 1895, watercolor on paper, 140 × 103 cm, Collection of the Athens School of Fine Arts, in: *Teaching Art. The History of School of Fine Arts through the Work of Its Teachers, 1840–1974* (exh. cat. Athens, School of Fine Arts) ed. by Nikos Daskalothanassis, Athens 2004, 76.

cept of photography.[69] After its public announcement at the Paris Academy of Sciences in August 1839, the daguerreotype reached Greece in October of the same year through European travelers.[70] The neologism "photography" was translated into Greek around 1840 as *photographesis* (φωτογράφησις), probably by the Bavarian Xavier Landerer, professor of chemistry at the University of Athens.[71] In 1847 the French photographer Philibert Perraud demonstrated the technique of the daguerreotype at the Athens School of Arts.[72]

To the eyes of the local population, who had been socialized in a visual culture where icons and folk art were dominant, realistic pictures in perspective, the use of *camera obscura*, and the photographs arriving from Western Europe must have made a strange impression – comparable to the experiences of people in Japan when they confronted photographs around 1848 (the terms "photography" and "perspective" have a common root in this case).[73] After all, only elite circles in Greece had had access to Western European paintings, prints, or illustrated books. But soon reasonable prices and wide distribution rendered photography a mass medium. Commercial practice began around 1848, when the painter Philippos Margaritis established a studio in Athens, becoming one of the earliest Greek photographers; in 1850, Margaritis also became the first professor of photography at the School of Arts.[74]

The introduction of photography in Greece reinforced the canonization of perspective as a common pictorial language [Fig. 7]. As I have examined elsewhere, photographic images produced within cameras develop a perspectival iconicity, because the light projection in cameras is modeled and standardized according to the perspective convention.[75] Consequently, the photographic medium promoted a perspectival visual code, in Greece as well as globally. The seemingly natural formation of images inside cameras deliv-

69
Geoffrey Batchen, The Naming of Photography. "A Mass of Metaphor", in: *History of Photography* 17, 1993, 22–32, 26.

70
Alkis Xanthakis, *Η ιστορία της ελληνικής φωτογραφίας 1839–1970*, Athens 2008, 17.

71
Koumanoudis, Συναγωγή, vol. 2, 1096: φωτογράφησις. Cf. ibid., 1155: Ξαυέριος Λάνδερερ.

72
Xanthakis, Η ιστορία, 28. Cf. Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 99–100.

73
Edward Doddwell e.g. described the amazed and aggressive reactions by Turks to the *camera obscura* during his visit in Athens: *A Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece, during the Years 1801, 1805, and 1806*, vol. 1, London 1819, 294, 270. See also: The Advent of Photography in Japan, 10–11, 163.

74
Xanthakis, Η ιστορία, 32. Alkis Xanthakis, *Φίλιππος Μαργαρίτης, ο πρώτος Έλληνας φωτογράφος*, Athens 1990, n.p.

75
Michalis Valaouris, *Perspektive in der Fotografie. Studien zur Naturalisierung des Kamerabildes*, Berlin 2018, 116–129, 209.

[Fig. 7]
Philippos Margaritis, The Temple of the Olympian Zeus with the Acropolis, 1856–1862, albumen print, 20.7 × 30.7 cm, Athens, private collection, in: Alkis Xanthakis, *Φίλιππος Μαργαρίτης, ο πρώτος Έλληνας φωτογράφος*, Athens 1990, 35.

ered evidence that perspective was "natural" as well. Thus photography, turned out to be a decisive argument in the naturalization of perspective.

Statements and paintings. Not only the modern technology of photography, but also classical antiquity was used as an argument for the authoritative status of perspective. Perspective was introduced in a classicist spirit, as something that "was not unknown to ancient Greeks" and was now returning to its origins.[76] Moreover, it was imposed as an objective, axiomatic tenet that "teaches the eye how to see correctly", as "the grammar of painting", and, with Leonardo da Vinci, as "the rudder of painting".[77] But more importantly, perspective was framed in Greece, building on Western discourse, as a universal pictorial language, a visual Esperanto comprehensible to all cultures. Jean-Pierre Thénot, author of a popular perspective treatise that was translated into Greek, stated in his educational vision: "Je veux rendre populaire ce langage commun à toutes les nations, si nécessaire aux diverses classes de la société, et qui doit, par cette raison, entrer en première ligne dans l'instruction des peuples."[78] Convinced that *all* painting should adjust to the coordinates of perspective, Thénot denounced numerous perspectival "errors" in works of his contemporaries Horace Vernet, Eugene Delacroix (*La mort de Sardanapale*), and Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps.[79] Such statements introduced perspective in Greece as a prescriptive norm, considered to be a progressive and objective system of pictorial representation with universal validity, based on mathematical foundations and the natural data of human vision.

Minor written sources report responses to perspective in Greece.[80] The foremost testimonies remain the preserved artworks; indeed, paintings made around and after 1840 demonstrate a massive aesthetic shift when compared to icons or folk paintings. A key painting of these years is a group portrait at the Athens National Gallery titled *Young Artist and His Model* [Fig. 8]. This work is generally considered by scholars as one of the earliest modern paintings in Greece. It is dated around 1840–1845 and, as I propose,

76
Τενότου, Διοπτική (Perspective), η′.

77
Ibid., θ′, ζ′, and title page.

78
Thénot, Les règles, 3. Cf. the Greek translation in: Τενότου, Διοπτική (Perspective), ιβ′.

79
Thénot, Les règles, 17–18. Cf. the Greek translation in: Τενότου, Διοπτική (Perspective), 24–26.

80
Perspective was a rather boring course to some students as a note implies: "this artist entered the School so uneducated [...] that he is absent from the courses of anatomy and sleeping in that of perspective" (my transl.) in: Mertyri, Η καλλιτεχνική εκπαίδευση, 244.

[Fig. 8]
Andreas Kriezis (attr.), Young Artist and His Model, 1838–1839, oil on cardboard, 66 × 50 cm, Athens, National Gallery, in: Antonis Kotidis, *Ελληνική Τέχνη. Ζωγραφική του 19ου αιώνα*, Athens 1995, fig. 1. For the new attribution and date see note 81.

was probably painted by Andreas Kriezis.[81] It depicts a painter in traditional clothing of Psara in front of an easel, who works on a portrait of a man. The man he is painting stands behind him; he is dressed in a European suit (at the time, this clothing was still uncommon and named *fragika: Frankish clothes*) and is accompanied by a third man in local attire. The standing figures are looking at the portrait and seem to be discussing its likeness. The trio implies an economic relation: a professional painter, a customer, the product. All iconic signs refer auto-referentially to the act of painting and the depicted tableau, which is shown in striking perspective, as are also the easel and the foreshortened tile floor. This meta-painting, in the sense of Victor Stoichita, testifies to the local adoption and adaption of perspective and oil paint in Greece around 1840, and renders evident the cultural shift of images towards the Western realistic style (vividly underlined by the Western attire of the portrayed man). In terms of an anthropology of images, with the introduction of perspective in Greece, new ways of looking at and using images were established, ways that tended to be purely visual, rational, and, to a certain extent, conflictual to the cultic veneration of icons.[82]

During the second half of the century, perspective was widely appropriated by painters and popularized in Greece. A remarkable case in point is the work of Charalambos Pachis (1844–1891), for example, *May Day on Corfu* (1875–1880) or *The Assassination of Kapodistrias* [Fig. 9]. The latter bears curvilinear distortions and was probably drafted with the aid of an optical instrument, maybe a *camera ottica*. This deformed perspective visually amplifies the agony of the tragic scene.

Paintings like these bear witness to the rapid popularization of perspective. But this process of translation and adoption did not pass without friction. General Makrygiannis, who commissioned the battle paintings from Zographos [Fig. 4], noted in his *Memoirs*,

81
Andreas Kriezis (1813–? after 1877), from Hydra, studied lithography and painting in Paris from 1839 to 1846. In Greece he worked from 1851 to 1868 as a drawing teacher in Syros and painted mainly portraits. A portrait attributed to him, *Captain from Psara* (1850–1853) in the National Gallery Athens (inv. no. K.805), bears strong similarities to the *Young Artist and His Model* – not only in the fine handling of brushwork and warm dark coloring of shaded areas or flesh, but also in the costumes with the vraka trousers and the red fez, depicted in both paintings. A second point is Kriezis's interest in perspective: he co-edited, financed, and drew the diagrams for the perspective book that was translated into Greek (Τενότου, *Διοπτική (Perspective)*). In the *Young Artist and His Model*, perspective is boldly demonstrated by the depicted painting, the easel in oblique perspective, and the tiled floor in absorbing depth (which is similar to that in Kriezis's portrait of a *Hydriote Noble Lady*, National Gallery Athens [inv. no. K.764]). An alternative candidate for the authorship of *Young Artist and His Model* would be the Tyrolean Francesco Pige (1822–1862?), a friend of Kriezis in Syros around 1850. But Pige arrived in Greece after 1848 (and *Young Artist and His Model* is dated 1840–1845). Above all, the analytical style and cool hues in Pige's paintings are dissimilar to the style displayed in *Young Artist and His Model.* Thus, I propose that *Young Artist and His Model* was most probably painted by Kriezis, shortly before he went to Paris in 1839. It was likely executed in the Athens milieu of the School of Arts, while Kriezis was working at the Royal Printing house. In this case, the *Young Artist and His Model* can be dated around 1838–1839, as an early work of Kriezis. Various factors speak to this: the unwillingness to sign, the poor, amateurish material of the work (cardboard), and the subject of the learning painter, which could reflect Kriezis's situation as a student.

82
Cf. Belting, Bild-Anthropologie, 50–54.

[Fig. 9]
Charalambos Pachis, The Assassination of Kapodistrias, 1870–1891, oil on canvas, 80 × 101 cm, Corfu, Municipal Gallery. Photo: Wikimedia commons (30.01.2023).

that before choosing Zographos to paint the battles around 1836, he had asked a European painter. But after the first drafts, Makrygiannis rejected the European pictures. It is unknown who the painter was or what the pictures looked like, but they were certainly drawn in perspective, a visual language Makrygiannis considered unsuitable for his narrative purposes.[83]

Linear perspective as cultural progress. Beyond this singular case, a nuanced look at the rapid reception of perspective in Greek society is necessary. The reasons for this should be sought in the European orientation of the country, as "Greece was striving towards Europe, and Europe was striving towards Greece".[84] It would be wrong to assume that this Western orientation was imposed by the Bavarian government; in fact, Greek intellectuals of the diaspora had called for it long before 1821. As art historian Antonis Kotidis observes, the role of the modern Greek Enlightenment was essential here, especially the figure of Adamantios Korais, a savant with encyclopedic horizons, who lived in Paris and was committed to the formation of a Greek state.[85] In a treatise on the education of Greeks, Korais formulated a cultural-political agenda that was to have far-reaching consequences. According to Korais, Greece should seek contact with European cultures, because under Ottoman rule it had missed crucial episodes in Europe's progress. The duty of education should be to regain those steps: by founding new schools, translating European literature, launching scientific and popular journals, and so forth. All the capital achievements of Western Europe were to be "transfused" to Greece: "we should transfuse in the heads of the [Greek] nation the matured ideas of the enlightened [European] nations."[86] As an ardent proponent of the Enlightenment, Korais regarded the educative and general condition of Greeks as abysmal, and in line with Rousseau's ideal of perfectibility, he proposed solutions for its amelioration.[87] Korais's cultural-educative theory of

83
On this episode see mainly the analysis of Chadjinicolaou, Καλλιτεχνικά κέντρα, 391–395.

84
Lydakis, Geschichte, 16 (my transl.).

85
Antonis Kotidis, *Ελληνική Τέχνη. Ζωγραφική του 19 ου αιώνα*, Athens 1995, 19–20.

86
"[...] νὰ μετακενόνωμεν εἰς τοῦ ἔθνους τὰς κεφαλὰς, τας ὡριμασμένας ἰδέας τῶν φωτισμένων ἐθνῶν." Adamantios Korais, Εις την έκδοσίν (1814) των Βίων του Πλουτάρχου προλεγόμενα, in: Korais, *Συλλογή των Προλεγομένων*, vol. 1, Paris 1833, 564; cf. 561–565.

87
Rousseau defined *perfectibilité* in his *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755) as the human ability to reform oneself towards better living conditions, marking by this quality the main difference to animals. See the seminal text by Reinhart Koselleck and Christian Meier, Fortschritt, in: Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, vol. 2, Stuttgart 1975, 351–423, 377–378.

metakenosis (transfusion) shaped the conception of modern Greek national identity as organically tied to Western Europe.[88]

It is in this ideological context that we should understand the avid reception of perspective, photography, naturalism, and other Western ideas in Greece. Korais's advice for "transfusion" applied to the Fine Arts as well: during the Ottoman era the arts in Greece had been under "Anatolian" and "Asian influence"; by "adopting" European artistic skills, "which were based on Greek Antiquity", Greece would "find again its cultural roots" and participate in the "European progress" – this is how the scholar Stephanos Koumanoudis answered in 1845 the title of his essay *Where Strives the Art of Greeks Today*.[89]

At the establishment of the Greek state, the idea of progress became central. The term *proodos* (πρόοδος), is ubiquitous in Greek perspective books and all texts related to the School of Arts. Its director Kaftantzoglou expressed admiration for the International Exhibition in London (1851) and Paxton's Crystal Palace, comparing cultural progress "to the natural growth of stalactites"; while in a later speech he stressed the role of artistic competitions for the progress of arts.[90] Many of these remarkable lines, that demand separate study, obviously naturalized the historicity of progress.

In the Western European context, progress was such an important idea during the nineteenth century that Reinhart Koselleck described it as a "secular substitute for religion".[91] However, the idea of progress is dialectical and implies also an opposite side of regress. The Bavarian elites that settled in Greece regarded the region, as well as Southern European societies in general, as "stagnant", opposing them to the "progressive" North.[92] Thus, to the eyes of Greek and European intellectuals the country was trailing in terms of science, technology, and agriculture; but was this the case for the field of arts? The idea of progress is no longer relevant for art history (as it remains for technology), because Western artistic principles such as *mimesis* or linear perspective have lost their claim to universal validity.

88
Paschalis M. Kitromilides (ed.), *Adamantios Korais and the European Enlightenment*, Oxford 2010.

89
Koumanoudis, Που σπεύδει η Τέχνη, 8–10, 16, 22–23, 27. With this text Koumanoudis also published the first Greek translations of the essays by J. J. Winckelmann, *Erinnerung über die Betrachtung der Werke der Kunst* (1759) and *Von der Grazie in Werken der Kunst* (1759).

90
Lysandros Kaftantzoglou, *Λόγος εκφωνηθείς κατά την επέτειον τελετήν του Βασιλικού Πολυτεχνείου*, Athens 1851, 3–7, 5. Kaftantzoglou, Λόγος (1857), 5–7.

91
Koselleck and Meier, Fortschritt, 410–412.

92
This opinion was expressed e.g. by the eminent archeologist Ernst Curtius, who had worked in Greece: Ernst Curtius, Das alte und neue Griechenland (1862), in: id., *Alterthum und Gegenwart. Gesammelte Reden und Vorträge*, vol. 1, Stuttgart/Berlin 1903, 22–40, 36.

Yet, during the nineteenth century the dogma of progress was so dominant that it forged problematic ideas of "progressive" and "stagnant" artistic traditions. In Greece this was the case with post-Byzantine painting. Advocates of neoclassicism regarded icons as "stagnant", "unfree", or "infantile"; their "absurd perspective" seemed erroneous.[93] Perspective emerged gradually as a prescriptive criterion for "correct" or "erroneous" pictures, and thus, as a powerful instrument for cultural critique. In this spirit, the art historian Grigorios Papadopoulos harshly criticized the lack of linear and aerial perspective in post-Byzantine icons, proposing methods for correcting such "errors" in the future.[94] Perspective had become synonymous with cultural progress. In a broader sense, the words "perspective" and "progress" were now used as interchangeable metaphors, denominating a modern optimism for future development.[95]

During the second half of the century, the artistic problems of German, French, or British painters became relevant for Greek painters too. Academic Realism around 1870, Orientalism around 1880, Impressionism around 1900, were all tendencies that informed the development of painting in Greece. Exhibitions, artistic societies, art history, or art criticism were new cultural phenomena that signaled the participation of Greece in Western European modernity. The concept of perspective became a key term for art criticism. Not surprisingly, the eminent writer and critic Emmanuel Rhoides praised the "perspective perfection" in works by Georgios Iakovides at an Athens exhibition in 1896.[96]

The participation of Greece in the modern artistic developments of Western Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century led successively to an underestimation of post-Byzantine and folk painting. These local pictorial traditions were only rediscovered during the 1930s through the lens of avant-garde aesthetics that began to re-appreciate the formal "simplicity" of Byzantine icons, the "primitivism" of Cycladic idols, and the "naïveté" of folk paintings.[97]

93
"stagnant", "unfree" in: Koumanoudis, Που σπεύδει η Τέχνη, 10, 21, 27; "infantile": Kaftantzoglou, Λόγος (1855), 9–10 and Papadopoulos, Περὶ τῆς καθήμᾶς, 10; "absurd perspective": Papadopoulos, Λόγος, 4.

94
Papadopoulos, Περὶ τῆς καθήμᾶς, 10–11.

95
In 1846, a dictionary noted "expectation" and "desirable" as metaphoric meanings of "perspective": Skarlatos D. Byzantios, *Λεξικόν Ελληνικόν και Γαλλικόν*, Athens 1846, 173.

96
Emmanuel Rhoides, Ἡ εν Ἑλλάδι ζωγραφική. Περιήγησις εις την έκθεσίν (Ακρόπολις, 01.06.1896), in: id., *Άπαντα*, 1894–1904, vol. 5, Athens 1978, 136–147, 138. Rhoides referred to the first version of *Children's Concert*.

97
The painter and writer Photis Kontoglou played a crucial role in the re-appreciation of Byzantine painting as the art critic and publisher Christian Zervos did for the Cycladic arts. The art critic Tériade "discovered" the folk painter Theophilos Hatzimihail in Lesbos during the 1930s and organized in 1961 an exhibition of his work at the Louvre.

In 1845 a Greek scholar had recommended "awareness" when "introducing" European ideas in the country, warning that many cultural imports are often "forgotten" and soon thought to be "native", although they are "foreign in origin."[98] Indeed, this was the case with perspective in Greece: it prevailed as a well accustomed visual language that generations conveyed to one another, while its provenance was rapidly forgotten. The present study has attempted to bring parts of this historical process back into memory, with a hope to strengthen the awareness of how modern Greek art and art history emerged.

IV. Beyond the Case of Greece

Considered in a broader frame, the example of Greece bears analogies to other global contexts. The question of when, and by which means, perspective was introduced, is relevant for neighboring regions like Serbia, Bulgaria, or Turkey, as well as for geographies like Lebanon, Egypt, or Algeria. Further studies will reveal other threads that are woven into the global history of perspective. Their particular local significance, as in the case of Greece, reflects a larger frame of global developments.

Teaching perspective in art and military academies around the globe led to an *institutionalization of perspective*, which forged the belief in it as an objective system of representation based on mathematical foundations and the natural facts of visual perception. Wherever perspective was imposed, non-perspectival pictures were misjudged by perspectival criteria as "primitive" or "erroneous". Such assessments activated the *dialectics of progress*, and often led to a suppression and Westernization of local artistic traditions in the name of progress. This is how perspective produced *dynamics of dependence* in forms of "center" and "periphery" or "North" and "South" (in our case: Rome/Munich–Athens). Similar to the Gregorian calendar, a (Catholic) system of representing time, perspective was promoted globally as a "natural" system of spatial representation *claiming universal validity*. In this sense, the globalization of perspective went hand in hand with and reinforced Western European cultural hegemonies by propagating a global visual regime. However, by questioning, how perspective *was made* a global visual regime, a series of power relations around the globe becomes evident.

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[98] Koumanoudis, Που σπεύδει η Τέχνη, 5–6.

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