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Cultural and Physical Space as a Condition of Artistic Vision: The Aegean in Greek Artists Maleas, Ghikas and Tetsis

The Aegean¹

The Aegean is the matrix of Greek civilization and art. Homer's 'wine-dark' sea is the hub of the uninterrupted, vast sequence of Greek civilizations as their referential and imaginary space. Here the Greek language, thought and social constitution through poetry, philosophical logos, art, architecture, the organization of space following the *polis* model as a civilizing and participatory condition, plus theatrical experience were cultivated. Civilizing factors facilitated communication and security, which were enhanced by the continuous sight of land within the Aegean 'garden', thence mutual observation that promotes dialectical thought, the facility of trade, the visual and psychological sense of isolation and, yet, of easy contact, the availability of fine materials like Parian marble, the temperate climate, plus the landscape plasticity and the geometric precision of strong outlines and colour contrasts.

Given this wealth, it is proposed that, to account for the formation of the mental, visual and spatial reflexes, codes, and conventions of three important Modern Greek artists, Konstantinos Maleas (1879–1928), Nikos Hadjikyriakos Ghikas (1906–1994) and Panagiotis Tetsis (1925–2016), nurturing parameters such as the Aegean and poetry, psychoanalytic aspects of unconscious roots in time and space, personal cultural geographies, and artistic interactions with both the West and the East should be added to the usual analysis of style and iconography.

The Generation of the 1930s, to which Ghikas belonged, and which included two Nobel prize winners, the poets George Seferis and Odysseus Elytis, emphasized the importance of the Aegean to Greek culture and poetry, in itself a privileged record of Greek sensitivity and aesthetics. Poets developed dialogues with fellow poets, both contemporary and ancient. The enjoyment of observing and narrating space is present throughout, from Homer to *ekphrasis*, a Byzantine literary genre with ancient roots, and beyond. The creative gaze translates and reconfigures the sensible in ways which supersede by far the mere transcription of the retinal image [14; 18]. The ancient visual exploration included space plasticity. Contouring and the effects of light were seen as divine symbols and metaphysical identifications between matter and spirit since Homer's brilliant horizons, Sappho's sparkling fires, and the calculated effect of

¹ Figures relevant to this paper can be accessed on the net through the addresses provided in the footnotes. All figures were last accessed on June 13, 2018. The site of the National Gallery (Athens), where the reader can find many works of the three artists, was under reconstruction during the revision of this paper.

gold reflections in Byzantine mosaics. Philosophical principles and political processes shaped a visual insight that was multi-perspectival, multi-faceted, intuitive and participatory, plus a clear and immediate spatial feeling [14]. The poetic phenomenology and the purifying power of the Aegean light in Elytis peaks as the transparent mystery of an Aegean summer noon which inundates and evaporates volumes.

The Aegean worlds were an unconscious archetype to 20th-century modernism, both Western and Greek, inspiring authors like Nikos Kazantzakis and Henry Miller, architects like Le Corbusier and artists like Fernand Léger, to name but a few. Many, but not all of these artists moved in the context of the 4th CIAM (Congrès International d' Architecture Moderne / International Congress of Modern Architecture) which took place in 1933 in Athens and aboard the liner *Patris II*. A number of Aegean islands were visited². Besides, artists like Brancusi, Giacometti and Modigliani were influenced by the morphological purity of the Cycladic idols. Le Corbusier described the Aegean landscapes as charming and dreadful, powerful and pure; he was fascinated by archetypal island architecture. What remains less known is that there had already been indigenous modern responses, creative and conjectural, to the plastic values of the Aegean: during the 4th CIAM, Anastasios Orlandos, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at the National Technical University of Athens, drew participants' attention to traditional Aegean architecture as the archetype of modernism. Painters like Maleas and Spyros Papaloukas had started painting the Aegean around ten years earlier.

The islands are mountainous and dry, their slopes terraced to secure valuable soil for cultivation. Settlements are adjusted to the slopes through close dialogues with the rock and the interpenetration of architecture and nature, which result in sculptural prisms and curvatures with irregular or polygonal base lines. The character of site produced the form of town by mutual adjustment of building and its receptacle. Communal bonds of cooperation were necessary for survival, as occupation of the Aegean by foreign powers, pirate attacks, and earthquakes were coupled by poverty. Social solidarity was registered sculpturally in the architecture of the settlements which were often fortified and organized around churches and squares. Urban forms are determined by dwelling units and churches, cubic and round, respectively. Alleys offer cooling breezes and open infinite vanishing points, though slanting and the limited size of land plots make them unsuitable for perspective rendering, advancing instead a non-perspectival outlook, and the 'spirit of stairs'. A balance was pursued between limited economic resources and building materials, natural assets of the site and climate, plus architectural recycling of earlier forms.

Elytis explores the multiple dimensions of the Least, a notion which is subjected to all kinds of metaphorical and literal folds as the trademark of a sophisticated Greekness. However, despite these evocative sightings, the value of the Least is founded on the desire for the Absolute.

Among the islands that attracted the interest of the artists in question, and many other islands which pioneered the influx of tourism from the 1970s onwards, Santorini and Hydra loom large.

² The 4th CIAM, initiated by Le Corbusier and organized by Christian Zervos, took place in the summer of 1933 and was an arena for debate on modern urbanism. Among the participants were important architects, critics and artists, European and Greek(see [13, p.39] for details). See fig. available at: <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinning.com/564x/e0/7c/85/e07c85656d46e06d3d09d253d8a6c381.jpg>

Santorini

Santorini, a Cycladic island, is to many an awe-inspiring, unique marvel [6; 9] as it dramatically fuses Aegean geology and history. The largest crescent-shaped fragment called Thera or Santorini is part of the group of islands located around a gulf created by the huge explosion of a still active volcano. Possibly, Plato's legend of Atlantis reflects this eruption and its physical and metaphysical role in the formation of Greek culture and consciousness. The caldera walls, which are actually a colossal geological section, the product of heat from the molten rock, are uniquely coloured. The spectacle is awe-inspiring and breathtaking as earth and rock colours, combined with turquoise waters, witness the succession of natural violence³.

Archaeological excavations uncovered a thriving city with strong Minoan features. The prehistoric houses of Akrotiri parallel Santorini's present-day settlements in planning and scale, accentuating the continuity of human habitation through the millennia. Centuries later, Ancient Thera was founded in the 9th century BC on the ridge of a steep mountain and was inhabited until 726 AD. The prehistoric and the contemporary merge in settlements Fira, Merovigli, and Oia nested in the backbone of the caldera atop layers of volcanic ash and pumice at a height of 300 meters from sea level, forming a white pinnacle to the polychrome face of the caldera cliffs. The Latin rule, starting from the 13th century, produced a number of fortified settlements, deserted after piracy had declined [16, p. 318]; their ruins on precipitous rocks of limited surface confirm the archetypal Aegean spirit of place (*genius loci*), prevailing despite temporary conquerors: being creative through full appropriation of the Least.

Hydra

Hydra's main geographical characteristics, a round centripetal port and the natural beauty of a barren, waterless rock of pure and wild perfection, are both photogenic and inspirational to artists; yet, this island remained on the margins of history. Deprived of the archaeological heritage of other Aegean islands, Hydra is close to Athens and quite unique as it has made a special contribution to Modern Greek history due to the daring spirit of its people. Hydra profited from trade during the 17th and 18th centuries and was instrumental in the Greek Revolution of 1821 against the Ottoman Empire. The immaculate amphitheatric town has one of the most impressive ports of the Aegean and is a pure morphological and architectural greatness drenched in sunlight [16, p. 55]⁴. Its forms are intermittently dismantled and enhanced as the rapidly changing light-shadow interplay devours forms and produces chromatic sequences moving from brilliance to muteness.

As everywhere in the Aegean archipelago, Hydra is densely built. Labyrinthine alleys offer unprecedented views at every turn; undulating stone fences and dazzling staircases⁵ are different from the quaintness of their equivalents on other Aegean islands. Hydra's architectural character maintains a distinct sense of continuity in scale, size and proportions, producing an architectural experience which is highly representable in painting terms. Captains' mansions

³ See figures available at: <http://www.tovima.gr/books-ideas/article/?aid=759173> and at: <http://www.armenivillage.com/elements/home2.jpg>

⁴ Among many other sources.

⁵ See fig. available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=hydra+port+%&title=Special:Search&go=Go&searchToken=4ih89l4212eoo3v3s3ixx4csp#/media/File:Hydra_port_\(Greece\)_-_Panorama_-_20070712b.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=hydra+port+%&title=Special:Search&go=Go&searchToken=4ih89l4212eoo3v3s3ixx4csp#/media/File:Hydra_port_(Greece)_-_Panorama_-_20070712b.jpg)

are distinguished by their rectangularity, elegant austerity, scale and materials including gray, cut-stone masonry laid in regular coursing. The spirituality of materiality reigns supreme, fascinating artists.

Let us now turn to the three artists in question.

Konstantinos Maleas (Constantinople, 1879 — Athens, 1928)

Konstantinos Maleas⁶, one of the foremost Greek artists of the 20th century, the originator of Modern Greek landscape painting, was among the first to work *en plein air*. Maleas, trained as an architect, was cosmopolitan, dynamic, and intellectually curious. He spent seven formative years in Paris, where he studied painting and managed to pack a lot in his brief life. He became a co-founder of the Art Group (*Ομάδα Τέχνης*) in 1917, the first organised effort to overthrow academic styles and to seek inspiration in the Greek tradition, particularly in Byzantine and folk art. Remaining *au courant* in artistic matters, Maleas pursued international acknowledgment. He was influential in the intellectual life of the country at a turbulent time: Greek territorial expansion with the unification of the Northern provinces was followed by the Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922.

Maleas travelled extensively. Besides exploring the Near East, he depicted many pictorial dimensions of the Aegean Islands: Chios, Mytilene, Naxos and Santorini, as the epitome of Greek space. Belonging to the first generation of Greek artists who studied in Paris, following the reign of Munich School, he became versed in Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, while also communicating with Oriental pictorial traditions. Japanese prints like those by Hiroshige, with their fascinating modernity, strong colours, asymmetrical setup, cuts of subjects and strong emphasis on tree silhouettes must have influenced Maleas. His works, shaped by his architect's vision, advance a clear structural articulation of forms and themes. The mesmerizing combination of natural settings and Aegean settlements was matched with a Post-Impressionist sensitivity. Often, intense diagonals guide the ascending flight of the gaze⁷ [9]. While having previously used a restrained and subdued palette to portray the yellowish light of the East, Maleas felt free to experiment with a vital explosion triggered by the light and colour of the islands.

His studies evoke a striking inner response between forms produced by natural violence like the islet Kammeni⁸, locus of the Santorini volcano crater, and human-made forms: they face each other in juxtaposition over prevalence. Santorini architecture, an obvious bliss to the artist's eyes, is livened up by its matter and movement. Plastic, meandering and round walls made of dark volcanic stones are rendered serpent-, or dinosaur-like. Perhaps a representation of the evil that overcame the island, they are now succumbing to the peaceful power of white-washed human dwellings, exorcized and domesticated. The religious element is powerful, as is indeed in the settlements⁹. The round walls of churches link them to the natural rock as hap-

⁶ See fig. available at: <https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:KONSTANTINOS-MALEAS.jpg>

⁷ See fig. available at: <http://www.artnet.com/artists/konstantinos-maleas/Santorini-f2uBsp5PZ6IWkcO-HI2qeqw2>

⁸ See figures available at: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/ab/Maleas-konstantinos-kammeni-santorinis.jpg>

⁹ See fig. available at:

<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/65/83/76/65837629f35b735f27891ba48dc24c30.jpg>

pens in Byzantine architecture and iconography. Colours are brilliant, unlike those in previous periods of Modern Greek art, as the artist measures himself against the unmanageable Greek light. Angles are occasionally very narrow, following the island blueprint. Santorini forms are implicitly compared to Byzantine mosaics and to architectural forms from the other end of the Mediterranean, namely to architect Antonio Gaudi's Barcelona¹⁰. The blue hues of the sea are dark with lighter serpentine ribbons but without reflections. Lay-out (*εν κατοψηι*) rendering, present in Maleas, corresponds to both the local topography and the outlook advanced in Paris by artists like Gustave Caillebotte [14]¹¹.

Maleas was influential among the next generations of landscape painters like Ghikas and Tetsis, to whom we turn immediately.

Nikos Hadjikyriakos Ghikas (Athens, 1906 — Athens, 1994)

Ghikas was a leading, versatile artist and an academic teacher, as well as the catalytic figure of the generation of the 1930s. Amply blessed with instinctual awareness and artistic potential, 'the most European of Greek artists' was shaped through studies and constant returns to Paris. A highly promising young artist in Paris [4, p. 29], he was conversant in the work of the Parisian avant-garde and modernism, but also of Greek artists such as Konstantinos Parthenis and Demetrios Galanis. He travelled in Greece and abroad exploring constantly; but he also pursued a collective life amidst important figures of 20th-century modernism, Greek and foreign, including the aforementioned Seferis and Elytis, the architect Dimitris Pikionis, and Henry Miller. He befriended Le Corbusier, who trusted he could become a very great painter [4, p. 97], and had Picasso comment positively on his exhibited work.

His maternal side came from Hydra¹². The terrace of the family mansion, Ghikas' balcony overlooking the sea, became the center of artistic creativity and feverish intellectual interaction. Hydra was his means for exploring dimensions of the human experience, materiality, myth, and spirituality. The representations of the island, Ghikas' personal paradise to which he returned until his mansion was accidentally burnt down, condensed the physical and metaphysical aspects of the elements, soil, sky, rock, light, and virtues, such as spirituality, frugality, and self-discipline.

From the 1930s on, Ghikas explored Greek themes and landscape through Cubist interpretations, plus the reconciliation of modernity and tradition, as well as the bridging of the gap between science and art. He chose to be established in Greece, internalizing the general trend toward the revitalization of folk art and the search for Greekness. Both were the impacts of the profound transformation that was motivated by the effects of the Asia Minor disaster¹³. The formal point of departure for Ghikas' own studies was Picasso's synthetic Cubism¹⁴. French

¹⁰ See fig. available at: <https://www.casabatllo.es/en/antoni-gaudi/park-guell/>

¹¹ See fig. available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gustave_Caillebotte_-_Rue_Hal%C3%A9vy,_vue_d'un_sixi%C3%A8me_%C3%A9tage.jpg

¹² See fig. available at: <http://www.dreamideamachine.com/en/?p=53>, http://www.alisonlesliegold.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Ghikas_terrace.jpg

¹³ As a counterbalance, critics like Zervos promoted the historical continuity of Greece's artistic heritage [4], while the Generation of the 1930s pursued creative explorations.

¹⁴ See figures available at: <http://city-mag.weebly.com/tauepsilonchinu972tauomicronpiomicronsigmaf/8> and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikos_Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas#/media/File:%22Athens_Houses%22_\(1927_-_1928\)_-_Hatzikyriakos-Ghikas_Nikos.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikos_Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas#/media/File:%22Athens_Houses%22_(1927_-_1928)_-_Hatzikyriakos-Ghikas_Nikos.jpg)

criticism discerned that, while continuing the aims of Cubism, Ghikas, perhaps the revelation of Greek Modernism in Paris, was attempting to expand them through a fondness for light which juxtaposed somber and brilliant areas of colour, visual angles, and architecture. The tectonic feeling of Ghikas' compositions emanates from his studies of light and a 'classical' spirit [4, p. 69]. Together with Pikionis they explored Greek heritages of many periods¹⁵, plus the application of geometric canons and mathematical theories of form to express mnemonic, symbolic, physical, and metaphysical values¹⁶.

Two things are worth noting here: firstly, Ghikas' Hellenized Cubism was linked with both the Parisian avant-garde and the landscape of Hydra. The deep links between the Cubist system of Hydra's nature-architecture duo and the Byzantine optical system, a visual, mythological, aesthetic, and symbolic universe of high sophistication and delicateness, struck an atavistic cord in Ghikas [14]. This resulted in unconventional or reversed perspectives, the dismissal of a horizon line, and the use of colour in a manner that was thoughtfully emotional rather than descriptive¹⁷.

Secondly, his explorations of Greece embraced the Far East, China and Japan, filtered through sieves of analogy and similarity, as their ancient outlook is kindred to the feeling of sacredness which stirred the artist. His observations underlie a creative articulation of rhythmology, the use of gold, sacred geometries, and landscapes imitating an ecstatic nature full of magical possibilities [14]¹⁸.

Panagiotis Tetsis (Hydra, 1925 — Athens, 2016)

Tetsis' artistic potential was discovered by Pikionis and Ghikas in his birthplace, Hydra¹⁹. Also educated in Paris after the Athens School of Fine Arts, upon his return, he was surprised by the sharp light of Attica and the blinding light of the Aegean.

Contrary to the prevalence of abstraction around the time of his artistic formation, Tetsis, an eternal lover of Hydra who knew recognition as a master painter and an academician, chose two things: firstly, to paint figuratively, following a long tradition. Tetsis returned to the visual because its potentialities are inexhaustible. It served his purpose to portray an archetypal visual interaction with the cosmos, not a fortuitous experience²⁰. In this sense, he turned himself into a Byzantine narrator of *ekphrasis*.

¹⁵ Ghikas explored Greece and organized archaeological trips.

¹⁶ Platonic mathematical ideas are behind the Greek conception of Cosmos and Harmony [14].

¹⁷ See fig. available at: <https://paletaart3.wordpress.com/2013/12/09/χατζηκυριάκος-γκίκας-νίκος-nikos-hadjikyriakos-ghikas-1906-1994-par/χατζηκυριάκος-γκίκας-νίκος-μεγάλο-το/>

¹⁸ Compare the figures available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kan%C5%8D_Sanraku#/media/File:Prune_sur_paravent_par_Kan%C5%8D_Sanraku.jpg and ://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=japanese+screens&title=Special:Search&go=Go&searchToken=1yb7vcn2ucbe9fi8l7mszywb6#%2Fmedia%2FFile%3A%27The_Bridge_at_Uji%27%2C_one_of_a_pair_of_six-panel_screens.jpg, and available at: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Nikos_Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas#/media/File:"Kifissia"_\(1973\)_-_Hatzikyriakos-Ghikas_Nikos.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Nikos_Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas#/media/File:)

¹⁹ See fig. available at: <http://talkofthetown.gr/o-filos-mou-panagiwths-tetsis3012-2/>

²⁰ See fig. available at: https://www.google.gr/search?q=%CF%84%CE%AD%CF%84%F%83%CE%B7%CF%82+%CF%8D%CE%B4%CF%81%CE%B1+%CE%B8%CE%AC%CE%BB%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwj_8tO2vabDhWipIsKHZB0CnkQ_AUICigB&biw=1163&bih=488

Secondly, to translate in colour the unrelenting Aegean light and the correspondence between light and the world; this means in effect that pictures may become autonomous generators of light²¹. This is an unprecedented and poetic move in Greek art, which recalls Elytis' evocations. Colour is also used to structure his pictures through rectangles reverberating Hydra's geometry²². In his many 'Hydras', nature is structured as a condensed spatiality. Furthermore, all stations of life are expressed through Hydra, including the fear of death. Shortly before his death, he portrayed, artistically elaborated, a Hydra rock as a sorrowful, anthropomorphic figure which may have articulated his own agony²³.

Tetsis was versed in all artistic issues, whether local or Western. Typically modern elements of his painting are the spontaneous conversion of outwardly insignificant subjects into a revelatory artistic experience which exalts the noblesse of everydayness and need, plus the muscular treatment of paint. A rather 'ancient' characteristic is the avoidance of deep perspectives and neutral backgrounds; backgrounds are strong and active fields. Without ever becoming descriptive or mimetic, Tetsis pursued the depth of the surface and the magic of things [11; 15]. The quasi-Dionysian delirium of flows and colours, a revelation of hidden power, recalls philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis' analysis of Dionysian delirium as the experience of collective freedom in ancient Athens.

His curved walls evoke his fellow painter Papaloukas' work of the 1920s. The scale of the curvature may be different, but adjustment to the rock is equally accomplished. This lover of colour painted seas in ways which occasionally recall Maleas. Yet, Tetsis also dared to produce work in black ink. He turned the landscapes of the island of Sifnos into archaeological excavations with torrents of magma, covering the entire optical field²⁴. Maleas' layout paintings and studies of height may have instigated his, while his last works in ink (2011–2014) recall the grace of Oriental etchings²⁵.

Conclusions

Alongside a variety of formative parameters of the artistic inspiration, the case of the three artists discussed above portrays the importance of potential spatial and cultural references like the Aegean. Relations between art, space, and geography have recently come into focus, and deservedly so [2; 7; 8]. It is quite geographical moorings of fascination and emotional involvement, creative localisms feeding on myth and age-long tradition, plus human relations

²¹ See the figures available at: <http://mikrosdialogos-theofilis-tetsis.blogspot.com/>

²² Disorderly and disobedient elements are also present, though they are always contained through a central stable unit [20].

²³ See figs of the exhibition 'Apotheosis of Landscape', available at: https://www.google.gr/search?q=%CE%8D%CE%B4%CF%81%CE%B1+%CE%B8%CE%AC%CE%BB%CE%B1%CF%83%CF%83%CE%B1+%CF%84%CE%AD%CF%84%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiUo9-btKbdAhVywIsKHawLAtsQ_AUICigB&biw=1163&bih=488. See also the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNjBZMrcTEM>

²⁴ See fig. available at: <https://paletaart.wordpress.com/2013/04/07/τέτσης-παναγιώτης-panayotis-tetsis-1925/τέτσης-παναγιώτης-σίφνος-εν-κατόψη/>

²⁵ Compare the figures available at: <http://p2.storage.canalblog.com/20/43/577050/37410197.jpg> and https://www.google.gr/search?q=%CE%84%CE%AD%CF%84%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82+%CF%80%CE%B5%CF%8D%CE%BA%CE%B1&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=ygux2z0mR_kADM%253A%252CXAqUTvL-G3J_nHM%252C_&usg=AFrqEzdWPWrH5eLArDuxGE96kQLgFQl8gA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewj3-7uWwKbdAhWJDSwKHS0fCnUQ9QEwBHoECAUQBg#imgrc=ygux2z0mR_kADM:

of interaction, apprenticeship, companionship and moral reference which may account for the fact that European modernity did not solely spring from major cultural centers, such as Paris, spreading to remote places. Modernity was, and still is, also created in peripheral zones with a long cultural history such as Greece, where an inexhaustible sequence of archetypes originate but also a multitude of interactions are constantly metabolized [14]. A perpetual and partly unacknowledged process of creative exchange has been at work for a long time and now calls for a closer look.

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Abstract. The article investigates creative inspiration from, and response to, the Aegean Sea and islands. Inspiration during the 20th century relates to the return to what creators perceived as a civilizing bosom. Some examples of both the conditions and the fruit of modern creativity springing from Aegean islands are examined against this ancient and archetypal background, both natural and cultural; plus, a particular gymnastics of artistic vision. This exploration is pursued through discussions on themes such as the following:

The material and spiritual formation of Post-Byzantine Aegean space: the deep descriptive (ekphrastic) faculty and tradition ingrained and recovered here, linked with the appreciation of great views from high rocks over planes, gorges and the open sea, which informed the urban design of Byzantine cities.

The sophisticated manner of adjustment to, and appropriation of, mountainous physical topography. Prismatic architectural forms are in constant discourse with the natural topography and have affected artistic representation.

The particular role of the Aegean in the formation of important artists and creators: modern intuitive interaction with the Aegean natural beauty, hard and exhilarating light, and heritage, is both material and spiritual. As is shown, the Aegean expresses the culture-nature dialectic par excellence, exemplified in the surreal metaphysical clarity and plasticity of islands like Santorini and Hydra.

There have been foreign (for instance, Brancusi's, Giacometti's and Modigliani's) as well as indigenous modern creative responses to the plastic values of the Aegean and its art. Modern Greek artists like Konstantinos Maleas explored and depicted the many pictorial dimensions of islandness as the epitome of Greek space. The paper focuses on his work inspired by Santorini. Besides Maleas, the analysis stresses the particular role of the Aegean in the formation of Nikos Hadjikyriakos Ghikas and Panagiotis Tetsis, both inspired by the island of Hydra.

In all three cases, it is shown how, in parallel with the effects of the Aegean, these artists also communicated with the pictorial traditions of the West as well as the East, particularly with Japanese art.

Keywords: the Aegean; archetypal backdrop of European modernism; Greek modernism; Greek 20th-century; artistic responses; natural and architectural space; artistic creativity; joint effect; multiple artistic traditions coexisting; visual and intellectual traditions; Modern Greek artists; exchange processes; European and Oriental cultural *foci*; centres and peripheries.

Название статьи. Культурное и физическое пространство как условие художественного видения: Эгейский мир в творчестве греческих художников Малеаса, Гикаса и Тетсиса.

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена тому, как художники черпают вдохновение в образах Эгейского моря и его островов и интерпретируют их. В XX в. эта традиция связано с возвратом к восприятию Эгейского моря как колыбели цивилизации. Ряд примеров современного искусства, берущего начало с Эгейских островов, рассматриваются в контексте древних архетипов, как природных, так и культурных, а также особой структуры художественного видения. В статье анализируются следующие темы:

Формирование материального и духовного пространства поствизантийского Эгейского мира. Здесь с древности существовала и развивалась традиция художественного описания, или экфрасиса, связанная с восприятием великолепных видов, открывающихся на равнины, ущелья и море с горных вершин; эта традиция повлияла, в том числе, и на планировку византийских городов.

Утонченная манера восприятия топографии и эстетики гористого ландшафта. Призматические архитектурные формы находятся в постоянном диалоге с природным окружением, которое влияет и на приемы художественного изображения.

Особая роль Эгейского мира в формировании художников. Современные творческие интерпретации, вдохновленные природной красотой Эгейского моря, его сложным головокругительным светом и культурным наследием, могут быть как материальными, так и нематериальными. Статья демонстрирует, что Эгейский мир представляет диалектику культуры и природы par excellence, а ее высшим выражением является ирреальная метафизическая ясность и пластичность таких островов, как Санторини. Существует множество творческих интерпретаций пластических особенностей

Эгейского мира и его искусства — как местных, так и иностранных (например, в работах Бранкузи, Джакометти или Модильяни). Современные греческие художники, такие как Константинос Малеас, исследовали и изображали «островной характер»

Эгейского мира как образец греческого пространства вообще. В статье основное внимание уделяется его работам, вдохновленным природой Санторини. Помимо этого, мы проанализируем особую роль, которую Эгейское море сыграло в формировании художников Никоса Хаджикириакоса Гикаса и Панайотиса Тетсиса, вдохновленных пейзажами острова Идра.

Во всех трех случаях демонстрируется, как, помимо влияния Эгейского мира, художники впитывают живописные традиции Запада и Востока, в особенности, японского искусства.

Ключевые слова: Эгейский мир; архетипический фон европейского модернизма; греческий модернизм; греческий XX век; художественный отклик; природное и архитектурное пространство; художественное творчество; совместный эффект; сосуществование художественных традиций; изобразительные и интеллектуальные традиции; современные греческие художники; культурный обмен; фокусы европейской и восточной культуры; центры и периферия.