

Four Decades of Greek Artistic Presence in Paris (1970-2010): Theory and Interpretation

Sapfo A. Mortaki

Abstract—This article examines the presence of Greek immigrant artists (painters and sculptors) in Paris during 1970-2010. The aim is to highlight their presence in the French capital through archival research in the daily and periodical press as well as present the impact of their artistic activity on the French intellectual life and society. At the same time, their contribution to the development of cultural life in Greece becomes apparent. The integration of those migrant artists into an environment of cultural coexistence and the understanding of the social phenomenon of their migration, in the context of postmodernity, are being investigated. The cultural relations between the two countries are studied in the context of support mechanisms, such as the Greek community, cultural institutions, museums and galleries. The recognition of the Greek artists by the French society and the social dimension in the context of their activity in Paris, are discussed in terms of the assimilation theory. Since the 1970s, and especially since the fall of the dictatorship in Greece, in opposition to the prior situation, artists' contacts with their homeland have been significantly enhanced, with most of them now travelling to Paris, while others work in parallel in both countries. As a result, not only do the stages of the development of their work through their pursuits become visible, but, most importantly, the artistic world becomes informed about the multifaceted expression of art through the succession of various contemporary currents. Thus, the participation of Greek artists in the international cultural landscape is demonstrated.

Keywords—Artistic migration, cultural impact, Greek artists, postmodernity, theory of assimilation.

I. INTRODUCTION

IN the universal cultural memory, the 20th century is a distinctive and important reference, complete with political, cultural and social events, warfare, conflicts, and innovations, and most importantly, an unlimited freedom of choice and the assertion of every form of pluralism deriving from the past and the present. In this perennial history, in conflicts and exchanges, the history of art, as a cultural derivative, arises from the conventions necessitating a continuity in the entropy of events and, in particular, in the definition and interpretation of aesthetic trends [1].

From the Second World War and on, artists and artistic movements throughout Europe were threatened with exclusion from their official expression of thought in society while, at the same time, they were asked to propose and express positions that require social participation, even as negation, criticism or judgement. And while the state and public institutions become increasingly introverted, the latter

exacerbated by mistrust and conformism, artists, with their attitude and work, develop increasingly radical extroverted dynamics challenging the limits of conventional meaning, inaugurate nihilistic practices, anti-social tendencies and anthropological ruptures, introducing a counterproposal of new metaphysical cosmogonies. In this context, although pre-war Greece had formed a peculiar introspective modernism, from the mid 1950's, it begins to align with European reality at all levels of public life and participates in the European developments to a greater or lesser extent.

Europe, as a term, politically and ideologically characterises an area of free movement of people and ideas, an area of justice, as opposed to dividing the world between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. For individuals and peoples, it reflects the dream of a universally free society in which everyone, overcoming obstacles, can achieve progress, equality and freedom [2]. This is the context where the presence and involvement of Greek artists in the Parisian cultural scene is outlined for a period of 40 years (1970-2010). Initially, their settlement in the French capital falls into the earlier migration tradition of Greek artists there, and the institutions contributing to their integration are presented. Also illustrated is their role in contributing to both the Parisian-through mounting important exhibitions-and the Greek scene with their return to their homeland.

II. GREEK ARTISTS IN PARIS: INTEGRATION AND CULTURAL CO-EXISTENCE

Following the end of World War II and the Greek civil war, intractable political, economic and social problems as well as intense ideological confrontation prevailed in Greece. The authoritarian political regime imposed in Greece immediately after the end of the war, the persecution of citizens of left ideology [3] and the limited Visual Arts horizon [4], forced many Greek artists and intellectuals to seek a recourse in the artistic and cultural centres of the West [5]. The majority of them headed for Paris, as a centre of artistic creation [6]. Contributing to this effect were the multitude of scholarships granted by the French State to Greek artists and intellectuals, as well as the favourable reception of the French State scholars, in the context of the Hellenic-French friendship, educational relations and exchanges developed between the two nations since 1937-1938 [7]. Thus, on December 28, 1945, 150 scholars, coming mainly from the Resistance and the EAM (National Liberation Front), arrived in Paris on the landing ship *Mataroa*, assisted by the French Institute to flee Greece with the initiative of Octave Merlier and Roger Milliex. This migration had a mainly political character and

Sapfo A. Mortaki is a post-doctoral research fellow in Harokopio University of Athens, Greece (phone: 00306944333394; e-mail: msapfo@hotmail.com).

constituted the first post-war migratory current of artists to the West. They were followed by a second current, in the years of the 1960s, the causes of which Mavrommatis mainly attributes to the kind of Contemporary Art [7, pp. 195-196], [18] as a different artistic attitude and the attraction exerted by the artistic conditions in foreign centres [8], while at the same time artists, who had migrated in the previous years, began to return to their homeland and influence art development in Greece [7, p. 205]. However, the dictatorship imposed in Greece on April 21, 1967 halted this movement, and thus created a new current, the third one, to the artistic centres of the West. In the years of the 1980s, the diaspora grows further and disperses in a much wider area. The territory of the artistic and intellectual life has been globalised and in many cities there are now museums, galleries, collections, magazines and art schools that attract artists [2, p. 32].

Currently informed about art issues, Greek artists consider fleeing to the art centres abroad as a fundamental factor for their cultural and social renewal and personal emancipation. They head for Paris and other art centres of Europe and America for a long or short period of time or for a trip, in which they seek scientific training, technical development, ideological interaction, imagination development or spiritual fulfilment [9], equipped with memories of their homeland [7, p. 273].

Generally, in migration, the causes regulating the movement of artists and intellectuals are far more complex and the reasons determining their communications, connections or settlement are multidimensional, since they also relate to their family status at the time of migration, social changes, education, their professional status, the economy and labour market characteristics in their homeland and the host country at the time of migration, the political history and action of each and those around them [7, p. 25] and, definitely, random and highly unpredictable elements constituting each individual adventure or even the adventure of specific groups of people and their interaction within their story. Indeed, when the artists migrate as adults, they weave their personal path through special conditions, situations and opinions [9, p. 428].

In those years, the migratory phenomenon is approached not only in terms of the processes within the host countries, but also to the policy of the countries of origin, which aims at developing bonds between expatriates and the motherland as well as the social relations and fields transcending national borders. Moreover, the integration of migrants in the host society and, quite often, their close bond with their homeland are no longer regarded as contrasting or contradictory processes. At the same time, the mechanisms through which immigrants meet each other, develop and maintain various social relations beyond the borders of the two societies (the one of origin and the host), the cross-border institutional networks, along with the symbolic and social ties connecting groups living in different places [10] have started to be researched.

In Paris, a large proportion of Greek artists, not only of post-war currents mentioned above, but other and earlier ones as well, such as the generation of the 1930s, chose to spend

their whole life or its major part in it, either because they found the right conditions to develop their talents and careers there or because they were forced to or, more often, because they envisioned a more open and friendly world, and chose to live and work where thought and knowledge were freer, the society more tolerant, the institutions more democratic and the contact with the world unhampered. Those whose presence was still felt in subsequent generations, with their statement and work, their connections and circles, will contribute to the integration of young artists in the modern artistic reality, will help them find the conditions for juxtaposing their talent with other artists, French and foreign, and often to fulfil their potential.

It is a fact that most contemporary Greek artists at some stage of their professional path had a direct and often lasting contact with the radiance of Paris, either through scholarships of the Greek or French Government or other Institutions or with their own expense, albeit not all Greek artists considered it imperative to visit Paris. They pass through Paris, as it constitutes a dynamic passage allowing communication with the rest of Europe, while offering an organized public life and institutionalized artistic and professional life, museums of modern and contemporary art, an art market and galleries, publications, bookstores, cafes and generally a complete and renewed cultural infrastructure in the historical context of modernity [9, pp. 433, 456].

III. THE CULTURAL CONTEXT FOR ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

In Paris, in addition to the artists mentioned above, there existed structures, which, along with other activities, were designed to support and promote the artists and provide them with the possibility to display their artistic production and make it known to the European public [11], as well. Next, we will refer to the most important of them.

A. The Greek Community

The Greek community of Paris was founded in 1923, with the head of goddess Athena as an emblem, inscribed and signed by the Greek Parisian sculptor D. Galanis [12]. The research that I conducted in October 2017 at the offices of the community and my conversation with the President, Ms. Seta Theodoridou, revealed that there was no evidence on the community activity before and immediately after the Second World War. The first information starts in 1978 and is still incomplete until today. The Community developed rapidly from 1979 and on, with the election of a major personality of Paris, civil engineer Aristides Zizikas, as president. Its main aim, beyond strengthening the links between the Greek communities in Paris, is to maintain the flame of Hellenism in foreign lands; hence, it has founded Greek schools since 1924. Also noteworthy is its cooperation with all the Greek associations in the city and its settlement in the Hellenic House, granted by the Greek Government, under Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis, housing all its events ever since [13]. Another important function is hosting cultural and social events, presenting all expressions of modern Greek culture and promoting young people, young talented Greeks.

In its effort to strengthen the ties of friendship and cooperation with the French people and compensate for a Greek cultural gap in Paris, the Greek community participates in events with the Municipality of Paris or other institutions. Thus, the Hellenic-French friendship week, established within the framework of the celebration of the week of Europe, provides the opportunity to promote the significant presence of Greeks living in Paris to the French and European cultural scene.

As regards how the French perceive the two peoples' relations and the contribution of Greeks, especially the artists to the French society, let's hear from Pascale Vivienne, deputy mayor of the 14th arrondissement, who awarded the medal of the city of Paris to the then president of the community, Roviros Manthoulis, in the celebration of the Hellenic-French friendship week in 2000. Note that the opening day of the week was dedicated to plastic arts, with an exhibition by the honoured guest, painter Pavlos (Dionyssopoulos), well-known on both sides of the Atlantic, in the Hellenic House.

Among others, the deputy mayor mentions:

"during the Hellenic week, Paris became Greece through numerous cultural events, such as exhibitions, concerts or even lectures, discussions ... the success of this week, entitled *La Grèce sur Seine* proves the Parisians' admiration for the Greek culture. It is also an excellent sample of the cultural achievement of an association. The members of the community, especially Greeks, offer their best self to Paris in material, cultural and spiritual sectors. You remain deeply committed and loyal to your identity, your language, your traditions, your country, while at the same time you are adopted Parisians. The distinction, which I award you, on behalf of Jean Tiberi, reflects the recognition of the municipality towards one of the most eminent representatives of the Greek community in Paris. In awarding it, I wish to express my gratitude for all you have offered to our city... The organization of such events, with a broad impact, decisively and dynamically contributes to tightening the relations of members of the community, but also to strengthening the ties of friendship and cooperation between the two peoples, the French and the Greek [14]".

The Community promotes the work of Greek artists of Paris mainly through organising exhibitions. Thus, in 1990, they held a group exhibition of young *Greek artists residing in Paris*, with works by G. Andreadis, O. Katsoulidis and H. Kyriakidis. The Hellenic House hosted an exhibition of Ch. Vogiatzis in October 2002 and of G. Skylogiannis [15] on January 9, 2003. In 2003, there was a sculpture exhibition by P. Papaloizou [16] and of modern painting by A. Siamou [17]; an exhibition by Ch. Voyatzis [18] in 2004, by Konstantina Arapaki [19] in 2005, while in 2006, a tribute to the sculptor Filolaos and a painting exhibition by G. Fokas [20]. Several artists, such as S. Karavousis, G. Lakeridou, T. Kriezi, A. Fassianos, K. Tsoklis and Th. Tsigos have donated works of theirs to the community as a token of their appreciation, some of which are displayed at the offices of the Hellenic House.

IV. FONDATION HELLÉNIQUE

During the interwar period, Fondation Hellénique accepted the first students in the academic year 1932-33 and hosted the Greek scholars arriving in Paris on December 28, 1945. During its operation, it hosted thousands of students, not only Greeks but also of other nationalities [21]. After the regime changes, it altered character, and was converted into a Greek cultural centre, hosting cultural events aimed at the promotion of the Greek culture on Paris campus. It organizes various music events, artistic evenings, film screenings, painting, sculpture and photography exhibitions and the like. It constitutes an integral part of our cultural heritage in Paris [7, p. 206].

An indicative example is the exhibition held in 1976 in two halls of University Bureau (F.I.A.P.), in which Greek scholars in Paris, namely St. Bonatsos, K. Rokos, R. Sarelakou and M. Skouloudi organized a retrospective exhibition entitled *Four young Greek artists exhibit in Paris*, with approximately 70 works, the product of their activity and experiences in the large artistic centre [22]. In 1982, the exhibition *Young Greek Painters* took place in Cite International. The cultural activity of the Fondation continues unabated to this day.

V. CENTRE CULTUREL HELLÉNIQUE

The Greek cultural centre was founded in 1975 at 23 Galilee Street, in the 16th arrondissement. Its aim is the cultural promotion of Greece in Paris. With its ceaseless activity and through events, it presented the intellectual, cultural and artistic identity of Greece to the French public, thus signifying the continuity of its long history in the world culture. To achieve its objectives, it cooperates with official French institutes, such as the Academy of France, the Sorbonne University, Pompidou Centre, museums, town halls, conservatories, as well as the Hellenic House; this cooperation contributed to its status enhancement and its integration in the French society, which is dynamically present in every event. Through the language of art and culture it contributes to strengthening the ties and friendship of the two peoples [23].

Apart from numerous events, such as book exhibitions and presentations, film screenings or photography exhibitions, there were also painting and sculpture exhibitions by Greek artists, and specifically four in 1975, 16 in 1980, 17 in 1990 and one in 2001.

VI. OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS

Greek artists' work is also supported by galleries, such as the historical *J Gallery*, owned by P. Restany's wife, Jeannine, where Pavlos and Daniel exhibit along with the New Realists (Nouveaux Réalistes). Takis exhibits in Greek origin *Iris Clert's Gallery*, while Nausica Pastra will establish her relationship to geometric abstraction and Op Art through her relationship with *Denis Renee Gallery*. Karavousis repeatedly exhibits in *Coar Gallery*, with work characterized by a metaphysical portrayal of reality, a high painting quality and a frugality of means [24]. Their activity is also promoted by groups such as the Initiative of Greek artists in Paris group,

who organised the 1975-1976 exhibition. The sculptor Aristidis Patsoglou, settled permanently in Paris since 1968/9, founded the LOGOS group in 1981, in which fifty international artists participated. Within six years he organized 30 exhibitions in France and abroad, along with numerous meetings of artists and amateurs for exchanging ideas. At the same time, his wife, Alexandra Patsoglou-Raftopoulou, a founding member of the above group, ran the *Galerie Sculptures* in the sixth arrondissement of Paris.

Indicatively, we mention the *Association of Greek Sculptors in Paris*, as well as the *New Sculpture Association*; it is with the initiative of the latter that Greek artists participate in the annual *Salon de Sculpture*. For example, in the 27th *Salon* (09/05/1975-08/06/1975), the Greek delegation in Paris exhibited their works entitled *Thirteen Greek Artists Exhibit on Champs Elysees*. These artists were K. Andreou, A. Apergis, S. and M. Bonatsou, H. Kouvaras, F. Michalea, G. Michas, A. Patsoglou, K. Polychronopoulos, E. Potaga, K. Rokos, G. Zogolopoulos and O. Zouni, who, with the quality of their work and their multitudinous participation, achieved one of the most interesting representations in the exhibition [25]. Most artists participated in major exhibitions, such as the *Salon Montrouge*, of the 1980s and 1990s, being artistically active. In addition, several private initiatives contributed to the promotion of the Greek artists of Paris. The President of the Hellenic Community of Paris, Seta Theodoridou, characteristically mentions in a conversation with the writer:

“Sania Pappa, an art critic, was among this lot of people ... I remember that it was the Manolis Mavrommatis, also an art critic, who had made in Paris, at the Embassy Press Office at Mexico square, he made a great exhibition with all those Greek artists and it was something amazing. The Greek artists in Paris, at the Embassy, not the Embassy exactly, it was the Embassy Press Office and Mavrommatis had curated it...Vassia Karabelia, who has moved to Greece now... Then there was Eurydice Trichon-Milsani, who is an art critic, who worked at Pompidou and organized major exhibitions with Greek artists here in Paris. They helped the Greek artists, they introduced them to gallerists to make exhibitions ...”. Also significant were the social contacts of the artists in known haunts. “From 1977 to 1987 at 47 Monsieur le Prince Street there was a restaurant with music, where the music was not the common music of the time, the bouzouki music, of course my husband played the bouzouki, he was called Alekos and the place was Chez Alekos, but the music played was only by Theodorakis, Hadjidakis, Xarchakos, that is more dignified and of better quality for us. This restaurant soon became the haunt of the Greek painters who were fellows of the French State and were in several ateliers here at the School of Fine Arts. Those artists were so many, P. Samios, G. Golfinos, N. Tziotis, G. Fokas, G. Kottis, A. Siamou and all these people lived here and have greatly progressed in their art here in Paris and returning to Greece they all had an important career” [26].

VII. ARTISTIC CONTEXT AND EXHIBITIONARY ACTIVITY

A. The Decade of the 1970s

Post-war Paris had gathered artists from around the world. The dictatorial regime imposed in Greece on April 21, 1967, and the other dictatorships reviving worldwide, forced many persecuted and expatriated artists to find refuge in Paris. These artists from every corner of the Earth brought along the mixture of generations, nationalities and trends, eager to share them with their fellow artists. Among the latter, who represent the entire artistic spectrum of the 1960s, and the Greek artists arise varied and complex relationships, bringing them in contact with foreign artists from Art Informel, Lyrical Abstraction, Tachisme, the Decollagistes, the Letrists, the New Realists, the Mec Art movement, with such groups as the Sociological Art, but also with younger artists starting up those years in Paris [2, p. 23].

The 1970s was the period that followed the release of May 1968, the period of contesting the society of consumption and spectacle, and at the same time the age laying the grounds for the great return of postmodernist aesthetics [27]. This decade inherits all the radical notions of the 1960s, albeit not the historical conditions having bred them [28]. Moreover, it is the decade that established the predominance of New York as the metropolitan centre, a new and aggressive renewed avant-garde of the successors [27, p. 206], without challenging, the fundamental role of Paris in the development of modern art, though.

In the decade of the 1970s, modernism was dominant in all aspects of art, in international-style new museums, built of glass and steel, in office buildings, private homes, even in religious organizations. What dominated everywhere was the last creations of such artists as Kenneth Noland, Henry Moor and Donald Judd, whose market value certified their quality [7, p. 222]. The late 1960s and 1970s witness much more radical new trends among Greek artists living in Paris and other European capitals, who open themselves to environments (Konstantinos Xenakis, Stathis Logothetis, Pavlos), constructions (Yannis Gaitis, Kostas Tsoklis, Alexis Akritchakis, Christos Tzivelos, Vasiliki Tsekoura), processes (John Bouteas, Diohanti, Nakis Panayotidis), actions and performances (Theodoros, Leda Papakonstantinou, Dimitris Alitheinos, Maria Klonari with Katerina Thomadaki and George Lazogas). The first experimental films and videos emerge (Leda Papakonstantinou, Maria Klonari with Katerina Thomadaki and Antoinette Angelidou) [2, p. 24].

Also important in this decade is the exhibition *Premiere Exposition des Jeunes Artistes Grecs de Paris*, organized in 1975 by the Centre Culturel Hellénique, with the participation of D. Alitheinos, F. Gryparis, G. Lakeridou, G. Megoula, St. Bonatsou, A. Nikoglou, B. Xenou, A. Patsoglou, D. Ratsika, D. Sakellion, N. Saperas, B. Sperantza, Ch. Tzivelos, A. Charalambidis and M. Christakopoulou. It is worth mentioning the exhibition *Grece: 22 Peintres et Sculpteurs. Secondes Rencontres Internationales d'Art Contemporain* hosted in *Galleries Nationales du Grand Palais*.

B. The Decade of the 1980s

From the 1980s and on, the systematic promotion of the end of ideologies and the domination of the postmodern demonstrate that the post-war world of Europe seems to be changing radically, inaugurating the shift towards globalization [2, pp. 30-31]. Postmodernism, as a political movement [4, p. 279] and as philosophical schema, prevailed in Paris with Jean-Francois Lyotard as a representative and with the main concept of inter-historicity, an acceptance of various phases of historical development and of the free use of forms of the past by artists. The release of his book *The Postmodern Condition*, published in 1979 in France, may constitute the ideological end of the 1970s [29].

This decade selectively merges the distant with the recent past to proceed further in a different way, declaring a return to tradition, a reconciliation with the arts of the past, with classicism being a source of deriving elements for postmodernists [4, p. 279]. The visual vocabulary of artists was enriched with morphological and iconographic loans and is characterized by the use of materials and technical resources from all stages of Art History [30].

The 1980s reflects a nostalgia and turn to the figurative elements of painting [31], to be reinstated by three different neo-expressionist European groups, the Italian, the German and the French free figuration (*Figuration Libre*), with its main representatives being Robert Combas, Remi Blanchard, François Boisrond, Hervé Di Rosa and the particular case of neoclassicist allegorical painter Jerard Garouste [29, pp. 9-10].

With the advent of postmodernism, artists reacting to non-figurative art, through patronising their ideas, seek to persuade for the modernity of their painting creations [31, p. 12].

Greek artists held numerous exhibitions in Paris in this decade, such as the exhibition *9 artistes Grecs de Paris* at *Atelier-Galerie Berthe* (March 12, 1981-April 20, 1981) with the participation of S. Karavouzis, G. Lakeridou, G. Maltesos, A. Pierrakos, G. Santantonios, Th. Ntoropoulos, A. Patsoglou, G. Simossis and Al. Patsoglou, artists residing in Paris [32]. Also, in the exhibition *La Rue*, organized by Centre Culturel Hellénique on May 6-13, 1987 at *Salle Polyvalente de la Roquette*, 10 contemporary Greek and Cypriot painters, studying in Paris at the time, presented their works (Eleftheriou, Ersi, Fokas, Kannelis, Kottis, Nicodemou, Samios, Siamou, Skiloyannis, Venieri) [33].

C. The Decade of the 1990s

In the 1990s there is a turn of many artists to the 1960s and 1970s. They seek to discover new starting points in minimalism and conceptual art, the art of representation and of video, in installation and site-specific art. At the beginning of this decade, the art that prevailed was based on personal observations, on-site and archival research, since many artists around the world were invited to construct works of a specific place, in museums and similar institutions.

The beginning of the decade witnessed an ethnographic turn in some art events, owed to various reasons, including the involvement of cultural representations in non-artistic forms, the latter also being encouraged by the development of

cultural studies in universities. The interest turned to anthropology, the scientific subject of which is culture, with its own proposals both for the artists and art criticism, resulting in many artists being interested in this expansion of their field of activity [34].

The stage of globalized economy and market, which modern culture is currently undergoing, as opposed to the industrial period, does not incite revolutions of a social or aesthetic character, because, for the time being, they are not useful to it. The prevailing slogan that "all is acceptable" seems to inextricably coincide with the rationale of aesthetics without limits and an unbordered interplanetary complexity [27, p. 207]. The collapse of borderlines in art, politics and other areas of human activity seems to be the distinctive feature of the age [29, p. 29].

Among the most interesting exhibitions of the decade is that of *Greek sculpture*, organised by the *Hellenic Cultural Centre* and the *Sculptors' Society of Greece* within the framework of exhibition exchanges with architects of France, at the Chamber of Architecture in Paris (May 21, 1991-June 20, 1991), with the participation of 67 artists with an equal number of works of various styles and materials. It offered a taste of modern Greek sculpture: sculptures of classical lines succeeded by a contemporary conception of figurative and abstract art, all of small or medium size [35]. The exhibition *Jeune Presence Grecque*, with the participation of Alexis Beroukas, George Rorris and George Chadoulis was hosted in 1992. The exhibition *Dialogues* was held at *Palais d' Iena* in January 1993, with works of Greek (e.g. Golfinos, Pastra, B. Skylakos, Theodoros, Xonoglou) and French (e.g. P. Besson, D. Dezeuze, Ch. Jaccard, B. Piffaretti, D. Thiolat), artists, from the collection of the *French Institute of Thessaloniki*. This incited some interaction through a shared vision of the modern world of the two complementary cultures [36].

In 1994 and 1995, exhibitions were held at the ambassadorial residence of the Permanent Representative of Greece to the OECD, in order to present the work of the Greek artists living and creating in Paris, in relation to the artistic developments of modern age as well as subsuming it in the context of international aesthetics, stylistic features and visual arts expressions. As for the artists, some had settled in Paris earlier, such as P. Papaloizos (settled in 1946) and A. Angelopoulos (settled in 1960), while others later, such as D. Andreadakis, who arrived in Paris in 1992, where he attended postgraduate studies in *Ecole National Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* with the teachers P. Caron and V. Velickovic [37].

D. The First Decade of the 21st Century

In the 2000s, the more traditional forms in painting and sculpture (paintings, sculptures, photographs and digital prints) coexist with the new media (videos, multimedia, environments, structures, installations), so as to create an overall aesthetic effect, in which the viewer perceives both the concept of limits and the concept of relationships. Modern art constitutes a new experience of concepts and styles, withdrawing itself from the concept of ethnicity, but still inspired by ethnic cultural symbols [38].

The artist may create from zero point and select elements from the history of art and cultural anthropogeography, while the Internet usage and information exchange may contribute to the intercultural nature of the work; hence, the modern artwork, far from being negated, becomes the subject of modern communication [39].

A quite distinctive element of this period in the European art scene is the reappearance of the drawing, not as a preliminary sketch before the completion of the work (painting, sculpture, installations), but as an autonomous work, ready for display [40]. There appeared sketches in huge handmade paper or tiny rice paper, drawings/ sketches with graphite, crayons, charcoal, ink pen, rapidograph, with combinations of digital print and handmade interventions, and so on. Since 1972, K. Vyzantios created a series of 30 drawings with charcoal and pencil, considered to herald the upcoming alienation and aloneness of the human of the city [39, p. 52], reverting to a figurative language after an abstract period [41].

There also appeared a type of painting on paper, akin to book illustration, with an unprecedented exhibitionary autonomy, thereby bridging the culture of illustration with the field of painting [40, p. 20].

In conclusion, the set of points used by the artists in the past decades so as to create images that correspond to the spirit of our age, often known as space age, information age, the electronic period, the global village age, the age of hyper-industrial society, etc., brings the audience confronted with works, dominated by the vision of a more humane culture in the future [39, p. 20].

From the group exhibitions held in this decade, we will mention the *Hybrid Landscapes*, organised in Fondation Hellénique in 2007 and *This Time May We Not Forget-a 'burned' exhibition*, held in 2009 at *Maison de Grèce*.

At the same time, Greek artists held solo exhibitions in Paris, such as A. Patsoglou and S. Karavouzis at *Nicolas Deman gallery*, with the presence of the latter artist being consistent on the art scene of the Parisian capital [42]. The press of the times publishes articles on the interpretation and the mystic character of Karavouzis' works, on the occasion of the exhibition mentioned [43]. Excerpts in both Greek [44] and French [45] newspapers promote Vana Xenou's solo exhibition held on June 2-24, 2000 at *Chapelle de la Salpetriere*, one of the most important venues for contemporary art in Paris, featured by the Association Sculptures au Palais Royal and the French Ministry of Culture, in the context of contemporary creation promotion. Xenou's paintings and sculptures with the Eleusinian Mysteries as her subject exemplify her constant research and restatement, as well as her subjective interpretation of collective myths [46]. In March 1995, St. Daskalakis exhibits 20 large paintings at the well-known Parisian *Flak Gallery*, enjoying a great public appeal [47]. Also, the gallery owner expresses her appreciation of modern Greek artists, therefore planning an exhibition for G. Rorris in the future. In its article, the newspaper identifies 19th century artists' technique in Daskalakis' works, which he sets in modern context [48].

VIII. THE RETURN: INTERACTIONS AND INFLUENCES

The abolition of the totalitarian regime in Greece in 1974 initiated a repatriation movement. This brought the contradictions between the Greeks of diaspora and Greeks of the homeland to the foreground. Vlassis Kaniaris' exhibition *Walls* in May 1969 at the *New Gallery* is a historic event in Greek visual arts. It assumes a critical character by using special elements with a symbolic meaning, targeting the dictatorship as well as the broader global socio-political field [49]. He marked the gradual resurgence of artistic life in Greece as much as the gradual exchange of views between the Greek artists abroad and those living and working in their homeland [27, p. 207]. Thus, despite the difficulty in communication, diaspora artists achieved the unconflicted coexistence of Greek art with the concerns and the morphological characteristics of Western art, with the varying types of expressionism, pop art, constructions, various forms of realism, happenings, environments, installations, minimalism, ideocratic art, science and technology [39, p. 16]. What contributes to this effect are educational trips by the artists, various art publications, electronic media and others, all leading to the gradual change of artistic conditions in Greece [7, p. 287]. This is reflected in their work, presented in many exhibitions, such as the one organised by the *French Institute* in the framework of its 50 years of presence in Greece (1938-1988), presenting 22 old and new scholars: Andreou, Antypa, Aperghis, Assarghiotaki-Riga, Karavouzis, Coulendianos, Diamantopoulos, Efthymiadou, Fassianos, Ferendinos, Kindyni, Lappas, Makris, Malamos, Milios, Pavlos, Prekas, Rammos, Skyloyannis, Venieri, Vyzantios, Zoggolopoulos from December 19, 1988 to January 20, 1989 [50].

At the same time, exhibitions are hosted in Paris with the participation of artists from Greece, such as the one taking place from November 10, 1978 to January 29, 1979 in *Grand Palais* in the context of cultural exchanges between France and Greece, entitled *Modern Greek Art in Paris*; it intended to exemplify achievements and trends of the contemporary artistic creation in Greece. Organized by the *National Gallery*, it displayed 48 works from its collections, while artists of two generations participated: living artists of the older generation (Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas, Diamantopoulos, Tsarouchis, Moralis, Vassileiou, Nicholaou) and younger artists (Botsoglou, Karras, Fassianos, Gaitis Mytaras, Siceliotis, Theofylaktopoulos, Vakirtzis, Zouni). The representatives of sculpture were Aperghis, Georgiadis, Zoggolopoulos, Loukopoulos, Nicolaides and Parmakelis [51].

VI. CONCLUSION

In Paris and all European centres where creation developed beyond the Greek borders, Greek artists' involvement was remarkable. Their settlement in countries of post-war Europe had an educational as well as a creative character, as they joined the developments in the latest artistic currents and actively participated in the avant-garde pursuits. Their contribution to the artistic creation of their age was significant

[5, p. 291]. In the interval of four decades (1970-2010), Greek artists held numerous group and solo exhibitions in Parisian galleries and museums, denoting the remarkable Greek presence in Paris, where they displayed older and more recent samples of their artistic production. We mentioned a few of those indicatively, since a complete listing or general reference to them is beyond the scope of this text. These artists' activity is promoted both in Paris, where their exhibitions take place, and in Greece, through references in magazines and the press of the time. The art magazines, *Eikastika*, *Chroniko*, *Ant1*, to which we referred in writing this paper, reported on the activity of Greek artists abroad in every issue.

Several of the migrant artists studied, taught, got distinctions and spent many years there, so that today the countries hosting them claim them as their own. Some appear to accept this claim. Others constantly feel active links with Greece and return to settle permanently or for short visits [52]. The younger generations in Greece, with the modern accessibility to information and travelling, return to their place retaining an organic connection with the art scene internationally, but also keeping some distance that is neither founded a priori on their Hellenic provenance or on international demands [2, p. 26].

Cultural diaspora, both during the civil war and in the years of the dictatorship of 1967-1974, constitutes a phenomenon closely linked with the history of post-war Greece; therefore, the argumentation of distinguishing artists "within and outside the walls" must not be based on rigid dividing lines. Greek diaspora art, perfectly integrated in the international scene, reflects the orientations of contemporary creative thinking that offered some very important artists in Europe such as G. Gaitis, N. Kessanlis, Pavlos (Dionyssopoulos), K. Tsoklis, B. Kaniaris, G. Touzenis, Daniel (Panagopoulos), Chr. Romanou, P. Xagoraris, S. Karavouzis and many others.

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Sapfo Mortaki is an art historian and a museologist. She has studied History and Archaeology at University of Ioannina and she holds an MA in Museum and Artefact Studies from Durham University UK and an MA in Continuing Education from the Open University in Cyprus.

She attained her PhD title in Art History from the School of Philosophy of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She was a postdoctoral fellow at the same University and at Harokopio University of Athens. She has worked in the Telloglion Foundation of Art, the Folklife and Ethnological Museum of Macedonia-Thrace and the Directorate of Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programs of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Athletics, where she participated in the organization of exhibitions, educational programs and also in editing exhibition catalogues. She has taught Art History and Museology in Adult Education, the Technological Educational Institute of Patras and the University of Western Macedonia (undergraduate level) and Harokopio University (undergraduate and postgraduate level). Currently she is an adjunct faculty tutor at Hellenic Open University and the Technological Educational Institute of Central Macedonia. She is also a post-doctoral fellow in Harokopio University of Athens.

Dr. Mortaki has published two monographs, articles in scientific journals and has participated in academic conferences. She is a member of the Hellenic Committee of ICOM and the Greek Union of Art Historians.