

GREEK ART AND ARCHITECTURE 1945-1967

A BRIEF SURVEY*

An attempt to analyse a contemporary art or architecture faces special difficulties. Personal attitudes and predilections are always present, to start with; in an analysis of present-day conditions and actions, they are unavoidable and even perhaps necessary. Other difficulties are due to the kind of artistic life which prevails at any particular period. In the phase through which art and architecture are passing today, extreme changes are taking place and many contradictory tendencies exist side by side.

Within the limits of this paper, I should like to give, as far as possible, an objective and informative survey of the whole field in a simple descriptive manner. Accordingly, our study will be focussed on significant modern work; less attention will be paid to those artists and architects who, although possibly not devoid of artistic abilities and actually producing honest useful work, do not contribute significantly to the solution of the central contemporary problem—or rather problems—of the interaction between man and environment.

Some Remarks on the International Context

Before beginning to consider the present trends in the art of Greece, we must look briefly at the international situation of art during the same period. This task is necessary and must be undertaken despite its sweeping nature and its difficulty. A few general, and by necessity unsupported, remarks on the international context of contemporary art will enable us to better grasp our more specific topic; out of them some general criteria for judging contemporary art may be obtained.

During the first few years after the Second World War, different forms of geometric abstract art (post-Mondrian and neo-Cubist) prevailed in the mainstream of artistic creation, whereas in the middle fifties, neo-geometrical and *art informel* style represented the most vital and creative tendencies. Today, several controversial movements have appeared with a diversity of

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artistic expressions, many of them equally important and stimulating. It is very hard to make distinctions and to generalize in this area, but it is, I think, clear that the every-day life object, the industrial "fact," the spatial ordering and the use of the "movement" are emphatically treated. On these lines, we may distinguish the following basic characteristics of today's art, which may be equally useful for a better understanding for the future perspectives of the artistic development during the last decade.

1. Abstract and Informal art, in the strict sense, are not so widespread today. These two modes, however, are still important in that, on the one hand, they are the starting point for an art of calligraphy, and, on the other, their techniques and principles assist all subsequent trends.

2. Human figures reappear on an ironic, often caricatural, or on a tragic plane. They create a kind of new Realism and are sometimes found in Pop Art.

3. Objects or situation that become symbols of the industrial environment are "painted" or are themes for representation. In the same context, the object in itself exists as a whole, or as debris within a work of art.

4. Movement, alone or in coordination with light or sound, as a positive and creative element, appears in works with mainly geometrical forms.

5. Finally, an accentuation of the presence of space, whether directly and geometrically defined, or indirectly defined, is often a very common and fundamental theme.

All these characteristics, and especially the three last ones, share a common concern : the *environment*. It is clear that they attempt a new ordering of the human milieu—this is also, in fact, the main if not the only valid task of architecture today. This common trend will not be analysed further now; it is enough for the moment to emphasize its significance. In any event, we shall deal further down with the various architectural orientations.

Nations like Greece that have inherited characteristic art forms from their history are confronted with one particular problem : tradition. Whether determined by the *credo* of the artist or seen as an historical fact, tradition plays an especially ambiguous role in the evolution of art. We shall discuss later its influence in contemporary Greek art and architecture.

There is one more general theme : the subjects of art and the spread of its ideas have reached in the last ten years a point of great complexity and astonishing rapidity. Shows are moved from one country to another; there is a multiple nexus of government-sponsored expositions and shows by private groups and individuals. Presentation outside the boundaries of each nation has become much easier, so that some of the criteria for the recognition of an artist have changed. There are also an enormous number of publi-

cations, from the most luxurios to the most paltry; much art criticism in newspapers and magazines, along with brief "dissertations" in exposition catalogues. A sort of art book industry has taken root, although often it is manifested by pseudomonographs and simple photograph collections.

Painting and Sculpture in Contemporary Greece

Moving now to a brief discussion of contemporary Greek art, we shall start by giving some features of the artistic "milieu" of the country. During the middle and late forties, despite the very difficult national conditions, a limited but significant number of powerful artistic activities occurred: first, a group of poets and painters in Athens created the review "*Tetradio*" (Notebook), while at the same time another group in Thessaloniki started the review "*Cochlias*" (Spiral); later in Athens the avant-guard artistic group "*Armos*" (Joint) was founded. These movements were the generating elements of the whole artistic activity which was to follow. They were made possible chiefly by artists who matured between the two wars and included in their ranks some very young artists who later became leading figures in Greek art.

While after the middle fifties a fair number of galleries opened in Athens and Thessaloniki contributing positively to artistic activity, the art magazines lagged behind. The only magazine exclusively devoted to art, "*Zygos*," (Balance) stopped publication in late 1966, after several years of life. Literature and music have played an important role in the development of Greek art. Greek poets, in particular, have done yeoman service in forming the spiritual space that is necessary for art. Many of them wrote art criticism, for example, Empirikos and Elytis, while others, like Engonopoulos and Pendzikis, were active in painting as proficiently as in literature.

Some other factors may be listed which have contributed to a greater or lesser extent to the development of contemporary Greek art:

For the last five years, the Greek section of the International Association of Art Critics (A.I.C.A.) has been awarding an annual prize in sculpture or painting. Although this prize has not yet won the prominence it deserves, it is thus far the only one in Greece.

The IV International Congress on Aesthetics in Athens, organized by P. Michelis, in 1960 and an international meeting of art critics organized by A.I.C.A. in 1963 gave good opportunities for acquaintance and discussion; more generally, the participation of Greek critics and theoreticians in international bodies and meetings has been an important positive factor.

Fruitful results have been obtained in the last few years from the

frequent shows abroad of artists from Greece, sometimes with government aid or sponsorship, but more often under private auspices and financing.

Finally, and to my mind of primary importance, Greek artists living outside Greece, especially in Paris, have exerted a growing influence on contemporary Greek art. These artists, now thirty-five to fifty years old, either have returned to Greece for good or normally spend a large part of the year there. They set up studios and organize artistic groups. By communicating something of the life of the great art centers, while also gaining themselves from the contact with Greek reality, with the actuality, the landscape, the people, and the "memory," of the country they create a truly fertile movement.

Here we might also mention a number of Greeks who live abroad, most of them in Paris, and who do not exhibit regularly in Greece or take any especially active part in Greek artistic life. Among them are some of the best known names of modern art. I am thinking of Prassinis, who is perhaps more French than Greek, the sculptor Takis, the painters Nicos (Kessanlis), Vyzantios, Karakhalios, Vafiadis, and Angelopoulos in Paris, and Kardamatis in Venice. In the United States, older artists, like Lekakis and the late Xeron, and younger ones, like Chryssa and Samaras, occupy a position of genuine importance; but they no longer have any connection with the Greek scene.

Some other factors and conditions are clearly negative and inhibit progress: no museum of modern art exists in Greece (however, a National Gallery is now being built in Athens which will include contemporary art as well); there are no systematic art publications; there is no serious art trade; and the professional position of artists is very insecure.

After World War II, Greek art and the formation of the younger artists were decisively influenced by a generation of artists who had grown up between the two wars, and had been under the influence of a dominant painter, Parthenis. At the end of that period and for the first years after World War II, the painters Ghika, Engonopoulos, Moralis, Tsaroukhis, and Diamantopoulos best embodied the character of the times. Ghika, who during the past few years has been living in London and Paris, has been the most important pathfinder, with a profound philosophical outlook, a post-Cubist style, and echoes of Oriental art. In his recent work (which he has not yet shown in Greece) the geometrical elements are diminishing and persist only as calligraphic signs.

Engonopoulos works in a purely Surrealist style; he is also a prominent surrealist poet. Tsaroukhis and Moralis, each with a large number of disciples, have worked in the manner of the great painters of the period between the



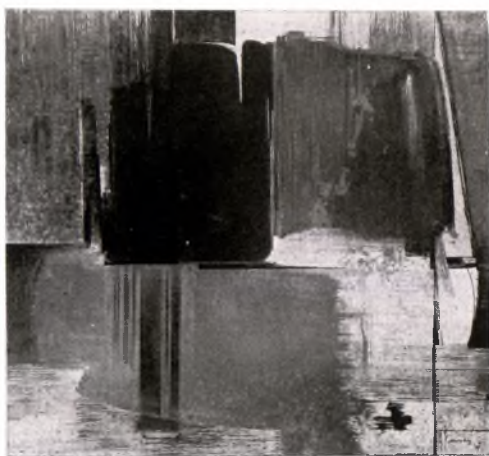
Tsarouchis 1951



Ghika 1956



Moralis 1958



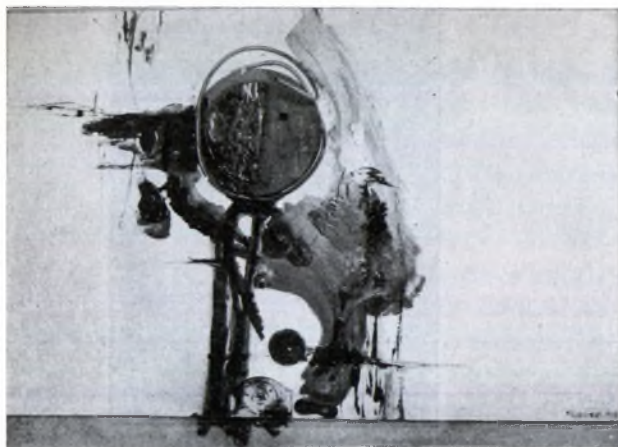
Kondopoulos 1967



Engonopoulos 1964



Spyropoulos 1967



Sachinis 1964



Lefakis 1964



Molfessis 1965



Pierrakos 1965



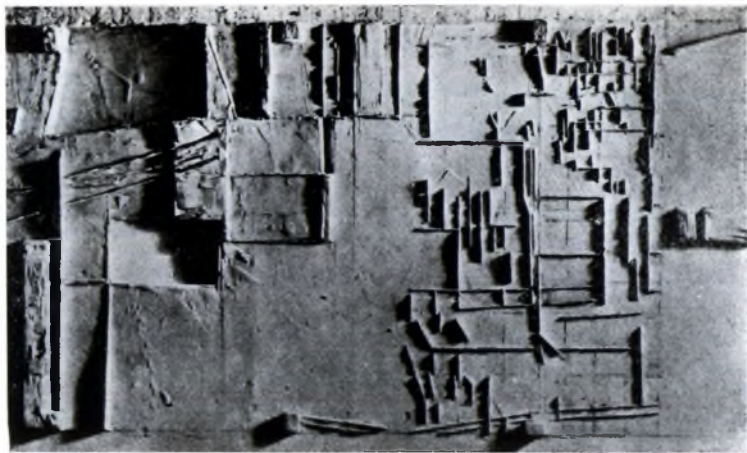
Derpapas 1964



Katraki 1960



Piladakis 1963



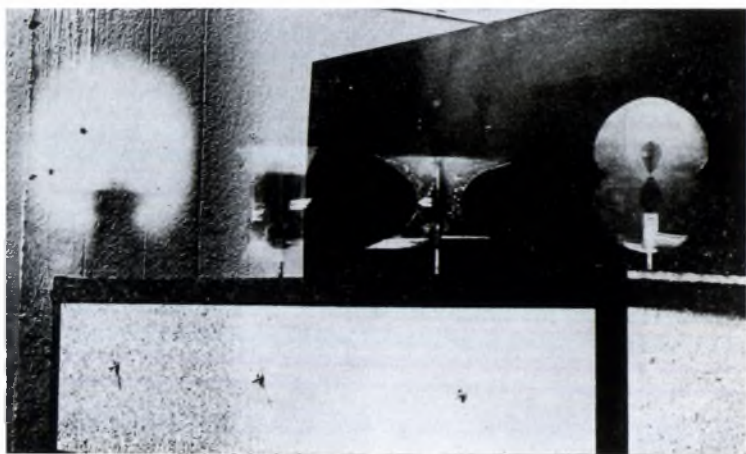
Xenakis 1965



Logothetis 1966



Caniaris 1965



Xagoraris 1966



Karas 1965



Perdikidis 1966



Fassianos 1966



Gaitis 1965



Kondaxakis 1967



Sklavos 1963



Houtopoulou 1966



Mylona 1966



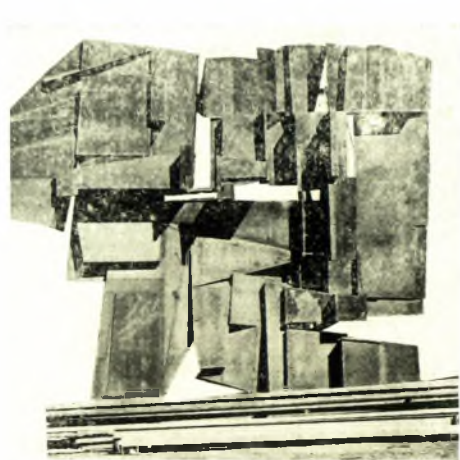
Konstandinidi 1965



Philolaos 1965



Capralos 1964



Zongolopoulos 1966



Pikionis 1958



Constantinidis 1960



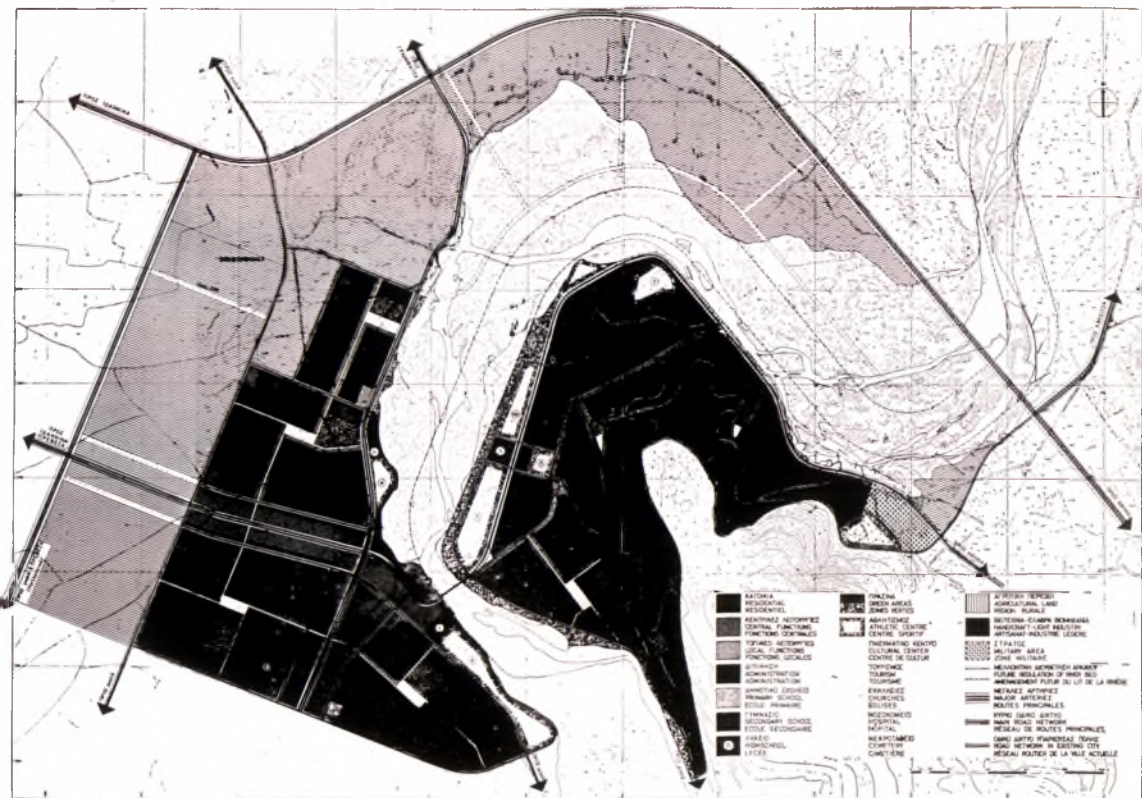
Valsamakis 1967



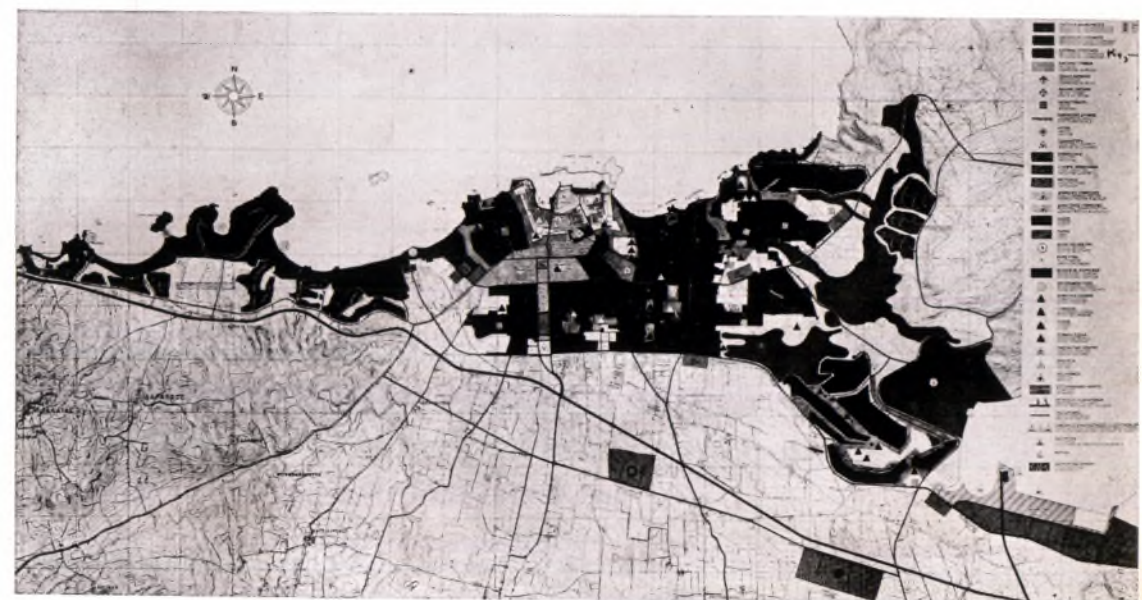
Yannakis 1965



Zenetos 1960



Doxiadis 1967 (Arta)



Argyropoulos and Tsitsis 1967 (Chania)

wars, perhaps more like Matisse and Braque than like Picasso, while experimenting in Greek painting style as it appears in ancient vase painting and in Byzantine and folk art. This tradition had been eagerly studied at a somewhat earlier period by the versatile architect Pikionis and a painter, the late Kontoglou. Tsaroukhis works also largely in theatrical sets and Moralis on large decorations for buildings. In the same period a singular place was held by the late Mytarakis with an expressionistic neo-cubism, projected in a warm interpretation of landscapes. Finally a quite but powerful painter, the late Papaloukas, presented during the first post-war decade a work of high quality which may be described as a combination of impressionism and Byzantine spirit.

All these artists represented the core of Greek art in the first postwar decade. Their influence has to a certain extent diminished in the late fifties and this has marked the beginning of a second period. The award of the Unesco Prize at the 1960 Venice Biennale, to the painter Spyropoulos, may be taken as the visible sign of this.

Within the tradition of representational art and in a clearly neoclassical or neo-byzantine style is a painter with a touch of the imaginary in his work, Spyros Vassiliou, as well as two other painters, Nikolaou and Mavroides (the latter working recently in a neo-impressionistic manner). The young artists Fassianos, Mytaras and Kýpraios seem attracted by similar traditional ways. They are talented painters and their acquaintance with abstract and informal art is obvious. Fassianos, more particularly, has a sharp humoristic vision.

Among the graphic artists, the late Kefallinos and Papadimitriou with their powerful technique and teaching have influenced a whole generation of graphists. Today, Vasso Katraki (Venice Prize 1966, with an "heroic" tendency in her lithographs) and Tassos as well as the younger Siotropou work purely representationally. Ventouras, a sensitive artist, keeps only the recollection of the thing seen, while Piladhakis, a painter and graphic artist, abandons the object and composes with lines, points, and surfaces, suggesting cross sections of plans, trees, or marine depths.

Of the painters who are today most characteristically neo-realist, three, Gaitis, Maltezos and Tōuyas, come directly from informal painting. The human figure appears as a caricature in all three, especially in Gaitis, who retains some of the quality of childrens' drawings and bases his composition on certain principles of cinematography. Karas, on the other hand, has really never abandoned the representational manner. His work has a genuine pictorial capacity and approaches expressionism.

It is interesting to note that nothing in Greek art corresponds to expressionism. This can be best realized from the fact that the late Buzianis (a painter who had made a name for himself in German expressionism) has not produced any disciples in Greece, despite the high quality of his work and the strength of his personality. A few marks of an expressionistic attitude can be seen in the work of the sculptor Lameris and the painter Arlioti. Peculiarly expressionistic is the work of Pierrakos, a painter who has lived in Paris for years. A creator of abstract landscapes, he is better represented by his black and white drawings. A young painter of Thessaloniki, Kondaxakis, combines in his latest work an intensively ironic and sensual attitude with an expressionistic technique, and finally the young also Derpapas living mainly in West Germany.

A large group of painters work in various aspects of informalism. Spyropoulos is undoubtedly the most mature, and has deserved an international reputation. In his latest works, the image is built up with dark earth colors and suggestions of geometric line formation. It is especially characteristic of his work that it keeps the colors and forms of the Greek scene. Oriented more towards a geometrical informalism is the work of Kondopoulos, a painter with a theoretical background who, for a long time, was the main force behind avant-garde movements in Greece. Lefakis, in Thessaloniki, possesses a "technique" of a high quality. In his often strongly colored informal paintings, he retains a peculiar reminiscence of hellenistic and byzantine mural texture. Younger painters are already producing mature work. Perdikidhis, who lives in Spain, creates expressive pictures that are tonally extremely soft and into which he introduces traces of calligraphy.

A number of painters have completely given up conventional painting. A very methodical and serious painter, Cosmas Xenakis, is one of those who are making long-range experiments in the pictorial problem, with well-thought-out work of an explicitly geometrical approach. Perhaps his most powerful expressions have been his large relief murals. Nikos Georgiadis, an artist living in London, has been especially successful as a painter for the theater and has made a name for himself on the stages of England and Germany. His painting sensitively combines collage with fragmentary geometrical elements. Sakhinis, who lives in Thessaloniki, uses pieces of junk which he glues on the painting and composes with great sensitivity. Even the harshest and most common of objects take on a pictorial sense and alter their meaning. Untiringly and systematically, Sakhinis investigates his means and expressive capacities; he is one of the foremost contemporary Greek artists. An extremely sensitive painter, Pavlos, who lives in Paris, has been engaged successfully

in collage technique and produces relief pictures by using, in an original way, thin slides of printed paper. The work of Molfessis, one of the most intelligent of the relatively younger painters, living in Paris for a long time now, is an authentic expression of painting based on direct and dynamic brushwork as well as on "toning" of the surface; a sort of communication goes out from the restless, nervous forms that move off the canvas' surface. Kondos, works in a microscopic script that suggests drawing, either on a large white canvas or on movable white cubes, which can be arranged freely by the spectator, a very important contribution indeed for the environmental approach. Tsoklis, a very gifted and devoted artist is an environmentalist too, but in a different manner. With an ironic-surrealistic attitude he either hangs painted non-geometric forms, their perpetual micro-movements accentuating their spatial character; or he creates pseudo-realities by using "real" objects in perspective. Especially during the last two years he has shown not only an original approach but also a high degree of mature achievement. For some time, Danil and Caniaris have been searching in Paris for an art that is no longer painting and still is not sculpture. Danil uses cardboard boxes and forms a sort of theater-space for a scenic theme. Caniaris, one of the most introspective of Greek artists, uses rags, scarecrows, and garments; he is trying to express a way of life out of an aesthetic sensibility. Tragic experiences are honestly expressive and give his work dignity.

A number of other younger artists work in a similar imaginary but still pragmatic world. In Thessaloniki, Logothetis uses metal sheet and perforated canvas, Manoledaki uses paper collages; in Athens Archelaou, works impressively with drilled wood. Finally, with the exception of the recent work of the mathematician painter Xagoraris, no activity is noted in kinetic art.

It is significant for the whole Greek tradition that in contemporary art a limited number of artists are devoted to sculpture. I think this is because of the very long and strong anti-sculptural character of the byzantine and post-byzantine art, which acted as a barrier for the continuation of the pre-christian tradition. There are few examples of sculpture before modern times, such as the anonymous sculpture of the wood figures on the ships and the stone figure-heads of the Rodhakis' house on the island of Aegina.

Still, in this restricted number of contemporary sculptors there are many with work of high quality and with an international reputation. The older ones: Coulendianos, living in Paris, Aperghis, Zongolopoulos and Loukopoulos, retain a fruitful and youthful dynamism. Aperghis uses now thin metal rods, while Zongolopoulos is characterized by a prismatic composition tending towards symbolism. Within the representational school, Capralos

and his pupil Clouvatos, have done work based on Greek archaic and classical sculpture, while the very able Apartis keeps to the spirit of his maître Bourdelle.

Philolaos, who after years in Paris is once more taking part in Greek art life, often uses everyday objects as his material, and is experimenting with the transformation of matter and objects into the "mythical". In another direction, Spiteris is making work that achieves a kind of monumentality without being bombastic. Usually through the expressive treatment of stone, the work of the late Sklavos, Prix Rodin of the Biennale of Paris 1962, retains an archaic simplicity and communicates a feeling of heavy calm. Mylona and Houtopoulou succeed in defining a plastic space, the former by organizing in her own way the movement of planes and the latter by using spherical forms. Finally the young Theodoros, a Prix Rodin 1965, gives well-thought-out and searching work; he is now the most powerful and promising sculptor in Greece. Without abandoning "sculpture" he forms original adaptable "wholes" within the environment.

Architecture: The International Climate

Here, too, we shall begin by reviewing, in a short and simplified manner, the main tendencies outside Greece during the post-war period so as to account better for influences of these tendencies on the country's architectural trends. Haphazard and "laissez faire" architectural creation will not be discussed, of course, although this kind of architecture plays a most important —perhaps the most important— role in the formation of human environment.

1. Various kinds of Structural Functionalism; by this I mean the expression of the different technologies involved in the *construction* of an architectural work. To my mind, this is a kind of "architectural engineering", successful or unsuccessful. In this category, too, I think, falls the work of all those architects who seem to be particularly fascinated by the new technological possibilities, whether explicitly or implicitly.

2. A conventional Functionalism; by which I mean the use of oversimplified notions of function of the building, whether concerned with circulation or with financial aspects.

3. Architectural expressions resulting from a consistent and responsible search into the work of architecture as an environmental act. Many different and chiefly recent approaches are included here. They either emphasize the various "technicalities" of the environment or its societal aspect.

4. A "formalistic" or so-called "form-makers" approach which, although

basically of independent expression, often tries to justify itself through some of the tendencies listed above, particularly the two first ones.

In addition, we must also mention the strong personal influence of famous architects like Le Corbusier and Mies Van der Rohe, regardless of tendencies, inspite of them, or in accordance with them.

In the very brief account of contemporary Greek architecture, which I shall now try to present, I hope to show that art and architecture have followed quite similar paths. Indeed some of the difficulties and problems of the country are more apparent in architecture than in art.

Architecture in Contemporary Greece

After World War II, architecture and planning, in Greece as elsewhere had to face the enormous needs of reconstruction. Here too, the generation which grew up between the wars took the lead. The post-Bauhaus spirit of the "thirties" moved strongly at the time, represented mainly by the late Kontoleon and by Karantinos and Valentis who continue to show a lively activity in the architectural scene. In the same generation, Despotopoulos exerted a special influence, mainly until the first post-war years.

The work done during the German occupation by a team of architects and planners under Doxiadis had prepared some valuable material on the postwar housing problems. However, because of the hard national conditions at the time, further development was impeded. Until almost the middle "fifties", architectural activity was restricted to Athens and Thessaloniki; it was mainly concerned with the construction of privately financed apartment houses, a situation which to some extent still persists today and accounts for much land speculation. Thus, the great opportunity for planning and building with the appropriate methods and with a hierarchy of priorities was lost. Some isolated efforts of importance were made by the Ministry of Reconstruction, one of these being a rehabilitation project near Piraeus.

The urgent need for reconstruction of the destroyed villages of Central and Northern Greece in the late "forties" and early "fifties" was carried out without the necessary national and regional planning projects. The houses were built either by the villagers themselves to which the necessary building materials were supplied by the state, or by governmental agencies, which set up standard house-units using chiefly locally produced materials.

It was only in the middle "fifties" that another generation of architects started the renewal of Greek architecture. Together with a fair number of younger ones, they represent today the soundest part of the contemporary movement.

Before going into the description of specific tendencies and projects, however, it is useful, I think, to present the main characteristics of the architectural milieu:

There are today two schools of architecture in operation, one in Athens and another in Thessaloniki; they are certainly not able to fill the present needs of the country, especially since they are confronted with the problem of rapidly growing numbers of students, —a problem which, is certainly not restricted to Greece. This weakness in architectural education is obviously a serious handicap in the development of the country.

There is very little activity in way of criticism and in the discussion of achitectural ideas. In the early "fifties" the review "*Architectoniki*" started to appear and it is still the only one, with the partial exception of the art review "*Zygos*" which published periodically architectural material. Dealing mainly with planning is the international review "*Ecistics*" of the Doxiadis group; finally an annual review of architecture, "*Architectonica Themata - Architecture in Greece*", has just appeared.

Only one large scale architectural exhibition has taken place, back in 1955; two small shows were organized later by the Association of Greek Architects, which also has to its credit the publication of a bi-monthly *Bulletin* and the organization since 1961 of the annual Panhellenic Congresses of Architecture, whose influence is not limited to architecture.

The founding, in the middle fifties, of the internationally known now Doxiadis Associates was an important stimulating factor because of its scientifically oriented planning and the promotion of many artistic and general cultural activities. It counts in its ranks such especially able architects as Efessios and Symeon.

It is finally to the credit of governmental agencies and the Association of Greek Architects, that a great number of public buildings of importance have been the subject of architectural competitions; a fact which had much to do with the rise of the architectural quality and the promotion of young architects.

In architecture as in art we generally find a strong tendency to relate the contemporary work to the Greek tradition. This tradition at its best is not to be confused with the characteristics of the ancient classical forms. It is rather an intention to draw general principles from these forms as well as from byzantine and anonymous (folk) architecture. In this sense and in its most successful interpretations, this tradition coincides with some features of modern architecture. Here, Pikionis, whose influence on painting and sculpture was noted earlier, has been the leading figure, stressing the Greek tradition. Du-

ring his thirty years' teaching in the Athens School of Architecture he left his mark on generations of architects. His ideas were mainly tried out in the large landscape project for the area surrounding the Acropolis and in a children's playground near Athens.

As for the dependence of Greek architecture on the leading international movements, it seems that the Corbusian influence is largely present in Greek architecture; quite naturally so, since at some points it coincides with certain of the traditional features of anonymous architecture. On the other hand, the relative lack of industrialized building materials, together with the fact that steel structures are very rarely used, have somewhat hindered a purely Miesenian expression. An outstanding theoretician of architecture, Michelis, active since the early forties as an author and teacher at the Athens School, has greatly helped the understanding of modern international architectural movement in Greece.

Based on the above factors and on a feeling of austerity and understanding of the basic problems and possibilities of architecture in Greece, a strong movement has now emerged. This movement strives towards an architecture which responds to the technical and financial possibilities of the country and to particular human needs. The use of local and low-cost building materials and methods of construction, an effort for an industrialization which is adapted to the existing conditions, obedience to site and climate—these are some of the features of the current efforts of a great number of Greek architects. As a result, a kind of "neo-brutalism," to use the British terminology, has developed during the last decade.

In the field of planning on the other hand, very little has been achieved, despite the work of Spanos and Vassiliadis, two chief architect-planners in the governmental agencies. It is regrettable that even at this moment no complete project exists for the development of any city nor any coherent and detailed work for the preservation of historic sites—an urgent and particularly stimulating problem in Greece. In this direction, the only work that has been started, is the historical investigation of the architectural environment which needs to be preserved. Such work is carried out by Moutsopoulos and his students of the Thessaloniki School for the byzantine, post-byzantine and anonymous architecture of northern Greece, by Mylonas in Mount Athos, and more recently by Bouras for some byzantine monuments. Finally we must not fail to mention, the creative work of the eminent architect-archaeologist Travlos on the conservation and landscaping of sites.

Because of these deficiencies, not only the small urban areas, but also the two largest cities of the country, Athens and Thessaloniki, have lost a major

part of their historical continuity and have also parted—I fear, for ever—with their urban coherence. Uncontrolled expansion and endless rows of apartment houses of the type which a foreign visitor has appropriately called “chest of drawers,” are the present image of Greek cities.

During the last five years, some systematic and encouraging work, concerned mainly with regional planning, has been started. The Ministry of Coordination which prepared material for planning work and commissioned groups of architects and planners with the projects of seven cities. Also the town-planning departments of the two architectural schools are now contributing to the study of actual urban developments; they are led by Antoine Kriezis with the assistance of Aravantinos in Athens and by Argyropoulos in Thessaloniki. Despite his struggle for a new Athens, Doxiadis was not much involved in the past with projects in Greece. Only now is he preparing some regional planning studies; his specifically architectural activity in Greece is much more limited. Among his few architectural projects, of special interest is his Headquarters’ Office building in Athens; built in concrete, with particularly well organized open spaces, it follows closely the main principles of a contemporary architecture adapted to the country’s possibilities.

Two large-scale efforts, one on housing by the Governmental Organization for Low Income Housing and the other on new hotels and tourists’ development by the National Tourist Organization, are of particular importance. In both cases and at different periods, we find as chief architect Aris Constandinidis, a leading figure in Greek architecture, whose work has been praised internationally. Standing between the present and the post-war generations, he has consistently used a structural approach to modern architecture, combined with a sensitive and personal understanding of anonymous architecture. “I must confess” he writes, “that in this anonymous architecture of my country I sought and I think I have found that which I myself would like to accomplish today: a frugality of arrangement, a sensitivity of construction and that quality which unites a structure with the spirit and the plasticity of the Greek landscape.” Constandinidis has unquestionably influenced the younger architects and has helped raise the status of architecture in Greece.

Another architect of the same generation, Provelengios, came back to Greece in the middle fifties after a long and successful term in Le Corbusier’s studio. He has ever since made his presence felt in the architectural field not simply by bringing his Corbusian experience, but by exhibiting a personal humanistic approach, as well. In the same generation belong Mylonas, whose work on historical monuments I mentioned earlier, Krantonellis and the younger Liapis.

As I said already, the generation of the fifties has played a decisive role, with powerful and often original work. Valsamakis, partly influenced by Miesian principles, was the first to emerge. He designs mostly luxury houses and hotels, always preoccupied with spatial distribution and well thought-out details. Zenetos came later from Paris with an expressionistic attitude and an audacious style. Dekavalas shows a consistent ability in details; he has designed some large scale projects, among which I must mention the housing project on the island of Santorini, built after the disastrous earthquake, with the collaboration of the young architects Kondaratos and Sapountzis. With a similar way of thinking we find the clear structures of Ziogas; Nikoletopoulos; Bogdanos; Papailiopoulos and Tzakou, the latter being especially concerned with interior design; and finally Rizos and the younger Vikelas, both keeping a good pace in the entrepreneurial jungle.

During the last six or seven years, many young architects have created not only promising but also mature work. Among these, and certainly omitting some, are: the well organized team of Dessylas, Kondargyris, Lambakis; and Loukakis Tritsis, working on planning, Yannakis, a sensitive post-Corbusian architect who has given particularly important work on religious buildings; Papayiannis, with a large activity and carefully designed projects; Dimitris and Susan Antonakakis whose ever searching attitude has given work of noteworthy spatial and textural quality, The team of Fines and Papaioannou whose most representative work is an impressive complex of buildings in the University Campus of Thessaloniki, and A. Kalligas, now working in planning.

A hopeful sign for architecture in Greece is the research work which has started during the past five years, despite the extremely limited financial support and the various administrative difficulties. Within the University framework, where almost exclusively the research is carried out, we wish to mention in particular the younger researchers, among whom are: Kondargyris in Athens, studying building methods, and Kaloyanides in Thessaloniki, working on the problems of flexibility and adaptability related to industrialised methods. Private research is much less frequent and systematic, although occasionally no less important; for example, Zenetos' work on quasi-fantastic city structures and Patellis' on pre-fabricated elements.

In architecture as in art, there are many Greeks living outside their country, whose work I feel I must mention although their influence on Greek matters is very limited. Among them, the better known and older are Candilis in Paris and the planner Paul Kriezis in London. The others, relatively younger, are: Dergalin in Stockholm and several in the United States, most of them teaching

at various universities: Antoniadis at Columbia; Paraskevopoulos at Michigan whose study on the use of plastics in architecture is particularly noteworthy; Michaelides at the Washington University in St. Louis, whose book on the urban morphology of the island of Hydra will appear shortly; Mytarachi, formerly at Yale; and Tzonis at Yale.

Some Concluding Remarks

As you may have noticed, my presentation has followed in the main, although not too faithfully, two distinct lines of approach: a rough chronological one, on the one hand, and a classification according to specific art tendencies, on the other. I could have chosen a different method, and thus avoid the risk of sounding as if I were giving a directory listing of names. I could have discussed, in some detail, a few artists only, concentrating on the best and most powerful among modern Greek painters, sculptors and architects. I have not done so, however, because it seemed to me that I could not give in this manner an adequate picture of the general artistic climate in Greece and would present, moreover, a less "objective" and impartial view. And, although I have not attempted to suppress entirely my own bias in favor of the tendencies and characteristics which I regard as the most creative, I have tried, at the same time, not to limit unduly the scope of my presentation and to indicate more fully which possibilities have been tried and avenues explored, whether successfully or not.

Among Greek artists and architects today, as at any other time, there are a few who, with varying degrees of ability and success, create original work, work which embodies really significant interactions with their environment. On the other hand, a good number of other artists merely follow in their own ways the major artistic currents of our time, adapting them, more or less adequately to Greek conditions and the Greek reality. As for the youngest generation, they at least bring bright promise for the future; more so, in many ways, than their elders.

This should not sound like too optimistic a forecast. The outlook for the future will indeed be gloomy if artists and architects continue to face adverse economic conditions, and a total absence of a national culture policy, which to my mind chiefly involves an intense effort on the educational front. Moreover, the growing significance of art and architecture on the formation of man's environment emphasizes, more than ever before, the necessity for their becoming an integral part of a national policy of development.

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