

**ΑΚΑΔΗΜΙΑ ΕΜΠΟΡΙΚΟΥ ΝΑΥΤΙΚΟΥ
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ΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ



***Greek seascape painting from Volanakis
Konstantinos to Nikos Kalogeropoulos***

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ΘΕΜΑ

**Greek seascape painting from Volanakis Konstantinos to
Nikos Kalogeropoulos**

**ΤΟΥ ΣΠΟΥΔΑΣΤΗ: ΣΑΡΑΦΙΔΗ ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ
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Table of contents

Table of images.....	4
Prologue.....	6
Chapter 1 Konstantinos Volanakis.....	8
1.1 Introduction to the art of Konstantinos Volanakis.....	8
1.2 Konstantinos Volanakis, a true representative of seascape painting.....	9
1.3 Volanakis' most significant paintings.....	10
CHAPTER 2 Altamoura Ioannis.....	18
2.1 Introduction to the art of Altamoura Ioannis.....	18
2.2 Altamoura Ioannis, his magnificent representations of seascape	18
2.3 Altamoura's most significant paintings.....	19
CHAPTER 3 Hatzis Vasilis.....	23
3.1 Introduction to the art of Hatzis Vasilis.....	23
3.2 Hatzis Vasilis, his representations of seascape and sea vessels.....	23
3.3 Hatzis' most significant paintings.....	24
CHAPTER 4 Koutsis Ioannis	31
4.1 Introduction to the art of Koutsis Ioannis.....	31
4.2 Koutsis Ioannis, his significant contribution to seascape painting.....	31
4.3 Koutsis' limited number of surviving masterpieces.....	32
CHAPTER 5 Kalogeropoulos Nikos.....	35
5.1 Introduction to the art of Kalogeropoulos Nikos	35
5.2 Kalogeropoulos Nikos, his contribution to seascape representations.....	35
5.3 Kalogeropoulos' most significant paintings.....	36
References.....	42

Table of images

Konstantinos Volanakis

Image 1: “*The port of Volos*”, oil in canvas, 136x81, private collection of Marianna Latsi.

Image 2: “*The fisherman's home on the beach*”, 1882, oil on canvas, 100x120 cm, the Historical Archives Museum of Hydra, Greece.

Image 3: “*The departure*”, 1877, oil on canvas, 100x161 cm, private collection.

Image 4: “*Pulling in the catch*”, 1869, oil on canvas, 74 x 146 cm, private collection.

Image 5: “*Collecting the Nets*”, 1871, oil on canvas, 100 x 126 cm, private collection.

Image 6: “*The burning of a Turkish frigate*”, 1882, oil on canvas, 110x150 cm, Hellenic Maritime Museum.

Image 7: “*Naval Battle of Salamis*”, 1882, oil on canvas, 110x150 cm, Hellenic Navy.

Altamoura Ioannis

Image 8: “*Thalassographia*”

Image 9: “*Sailing in choppy seas*”

Image 10: “*Boat on the Shore*”, 1874, oil on canvas, 38.5x53, private collection, Athens

Image 11: “*Caique at Spetses*”, 1877, oil on canvas, 29x39, collection of National Gallery of Athens

Image 12: “*Breaking the waves*”, 1875, oil on canvas, 58x74, collection of descendants of the artist, private collection, Athens

Hatzis Vasilis

Image 13: “*Landing of Greek troops in Kavala*”, 1913, oil on canvas, 62 x97 cm, Municipal Art Gallery of Ioannina.

Image 14: “*The battleship 'Averoff' leading the Greek fleet to the Battle of Elli*”, 1913, oil on canvas, 46 x 70 cm, collection of National Gallery of Athens

Image 15: “*Seascape*”, 1910, pastel on paper, 25 x 49 cm, private collection, Athens

Image 16: “*Promenade by the shore*”, 1898, oil on cardboard, 22x19cm, private collection, Athens

Image 17: “*A peaceful scene by the shore*”, 1897, oil on canvas, 60.5 x 98 cm, private collection

Image 18: “*The island of Pamvotis*”, oil on canvas, 50.3x96.7 cm, Municipal Art Gallery of Ioannina

Koutsis Ioannis

Image 19: “*On the beach, Spetses*”, 1901, oil on canvas, 55 x 45 cm, private collection, Athens

Image 20: “*Life by the seashore*”, 1910, oil on canvas, 45 x 57 cm, private collection, Athens

Kalogeropoulos Nikos

Image 21: “*Sailing vessel*”, 1914, oil on canvas, 50 x 60 cm, private collection, Crete

Image 22: “*Battleship 'Averoff' in Constantinople*”, 1915, oil on canvas 70 x 100 cm, private collection, Athens

Image 23: “*Yacht*”, 1912, oil on hardboard, 34 x 48 cm, private collection, Athens

Image 24: “*In choppy seas*”, 1917, oil on canvas, 52 x 78 cm, private collection, Athens

Image 25: “*Vessel in the sea*”, 1918, oil on canvas, 44 x 62 cm, private collection, Athens

Prologue

Modern Greek art is highly correlated with seascape painting as several significant painters have contributed in representing, through their creativity, the undeniable bond between Greeks and sailing. Art historians do not consent on the specific period that modern Greek painting emerged, as some place it in the mid-17th century whereas according to others it evolved during the 18th century, highly affected by the Italian Renaissance. According to the prevailing opinion modern Greek painting emerged during the first decades of the 19th century, following the foundation of the modern Greek State (Vlachos, 2002).

The main characteristic of modern Greek art is its correlation to religion as the majority of compositions depicts religious figures in an attempt to represent the profound connection of orthodox religion to the inner personality. Influences from artists of the late Renaissance are obvious as well as the contribution of artists from Greek islands, specifically Crete and the Ionians islands. During the early 20th century Greek art turned towards the past in an attempt to define its identity and its historical roots. Therefore Greece's heroic recent history appeared in multiple paintings produced by Greek artists immediately after the War of Independence. In those a romantic approach of the recent struggles emerges as Greek artists draw battle scenes against the Ottomans. An idealized point of the War of Independence is depicted in them and representatives of this period prefer to present battle scenes deprived from extreme violence. Theodoros Vryzakis (1814-1878) and Dionysios Tsokos (1820-1862) are two of the leading painters at this time (Vlachos, 2002).

The next generation of painters is strongly represented by Konstantinos Volanakis (1837-1907) and Ioannis Altamouras (1852-1878), two seascape painters who depicted the battles between Greeks and Ottomans through their personal perspective. Naval engagements that contributed into the conquer of freedom are the main theme of their paintings. It is undeniable that their work acts as a strong statement of Greeks' struggle towards independence. Furthermore their representations of everyday life by the seaside present an ideal view of people's routine and their connection to the sea (Vlachos, 2002).

Hatzis Vasilis (1870-1915), Koutsis Ioannis (1860-1953) and Kalogeropoulos Nikos (1889-1957) through the wealth of their work, they managed to refresh the seascape scenes in an attempt of confusing the viewer. Representations of everyday activity merge with the surroundings of the seaside. Their combinations of seascapes present humans' attempt to tame nature and exist with it, a peaceful refuge and a place of nostalgia and travelling (Vlachos, 2002).

These Greek painters stand out as authentic representatives of Greek seascape painting as their art reveals diverse but yet strong personalities. Although it is almost impossible to fully appreciate their talent from the few works selected in this thesis, their compositions undeniably prove their true love towards the sea.

CHAPTER 1 Konstantinos Volanakis, a pioneer of seascape painting

1.1 Introduction to the art of Konstantinos Volanakis

Konstantinos Volanakis (1837-1907) is regarded as one of the most appreciated seascape painters of the period after the Greek War of Independence. He is considered as an authentic representative of the school of Munich, followed by Nikephoros Lytras (1832-1904), Nikolaos Gysis (1842-1901) and Georgios Iakovidis (1853-1932). When Otto, the first king of the modern Greek history was placed on the Greek throne in 1833, the majority of Greek artists of that time turned their attention to the Art School of Munich. The founding of the Athens School of Arts in 1837 elevated their inspiration and focus as it followed the German teaching model. Konstantinos Volanakis was among several Greek artists who selected to study in the European capital and therefore his art is highly permeated by German artistic tendencies (Vlachos, 2018).

Volanakis' studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, under the guidance of Karl von Piloty, and his interaction with equally notable Greek students such as Nikolaos Gysis, Georgios Iakovidis and Nikiforos Lytras, acted as a boost to his undeniable talent. As a student of Karl von Piloty he was introduced to major painting techniques as he attended classes of drawing and elementary painting (Vlachos, 2018).

Unfortunately during this period of time his conservative instructors mainly encouraged him towards portrait painting rather than landscape painting as the academy promoted learnings of historical representation and portraiture. Despite the specific tendencies promoted by the academy, the students remained free to evolve towards their personal thematic choices and to develop their distinguished personal style (Vlachos, 2002).

Volanakis through his tuition revealed a high degree of attention to detail and moved towards realism. The turn towards landscape painting occurred after a drawing

competition Emperor Franz Joseph held in memory of the Battle of Lissa, in which Volanakis won. His prize included free traveling with the Austrian navy that permitted him to produce numerous sketches and canvases of seascape. His return to Greece was combined with his recruitment as a tutor at the Athens School of Arts and he additionally operated a private school. As an authentic representative of the School of Munich he revealed his strong artistic personality which has been fully appreciated by his era. His teaching methods and his art perspectives draw an innovating direction regarding the domain of artistic education in Greece (Vlachos, 2002).

1.2 Konstantinos Volanakis, a true representative of seascape painting

Konstantinos Volanakis, known as the ‘father of Greek seascape painting’ is one of the students of the famous Munich school that followed their inner perspective and depicted their personal tendencies in their art. Overcoming the portraiture as well as the moralistic thematology, dominant traits imposed by this specific Art School, Volanakis evolved through his profound love towards landscape and especially seascape. The sea along with the sailboats, each with its personal value, composed the depiction of his inner sentimental world as he established a distinguishable personal style. This master of Greek seascapes, motivated by his feelings, set his sight on depicting the sea in an attempt to reveal its secrets (Vlachos, 2018).

The sea for Volanakis enclosed an authentic truth as it resists the flow of time, remaining intact through eternity. Volanakis is a painter who embraced his love for the sea, along with the ships travelling within the vastness of oceans. Thus his painting world is full of paintings of steamboats, sailboats, fishing boats, great naval ships, dinghies and harbors, all depicting the way he perceived his homeland, Greece (Vlachos, 2002).

Most of his emblematic works are hosted in public or private collections and are often presented in exhibitions organized by well-known foundations. Through these exhibitions Volanakis' huge offer to the establishment of Modern Greek Art is revealed as his profile emerges. Volanakis' paintings have the power to aspire and to promote his special relation with the sea as he introduces the audience to his insight. A noticeable artist who overcame his boundaries as he cultivated his interest for the sea allowing it to prevail in his paintings (Vlachos, 2018).

1.3 Volanakis' most significant paintings

Volanakis heart has been always close to the sea. Multiple valuable paintings can be mentioned and his masterpieces present an insight of the lives of sailors in Modern Greece.

Volanakis has set his private identity as he depicted the sea and its secrets by applying his personal style, his representational energy and his authenticity in an attempt to define the main characteristics of the life of Greek sailors. In his painting *“The port of Volos”*, an item from the private collection of Marianna Latsi, the clarity of colors, the variation of light, the form of the clouds in the sky, the stability as well as the slight ‘*movement*’ implied, act as representatives of the purity of Greece, its magnificence and glory. In this painting the building growth of the prosperous port town is presented, as Volanakis' view of the harbor and its day-life activity are depicted. The neo-classic buildings and the clean streets are a sign of prosperity and growth. Even from the early stages of its development the harbor of Volos demonstrates a rather elegant feeling. In Volanakis' perspective the townscape acts as a background in his attempt to present the force of the modern Greek maritime industry, as a strong ship prevail in the middle of the painting. The viewer focuses on the monumental steamship that is anchored at the port. Smaller ships also populate the harbor as maritime flourishes in the small Mediterranean city. Volanakis' respect for

details, a legacy from his training in Munich, reveals several aspects of the maritime life in Modern Greece. His harmonic rendering of colors permits the depiction of seascapes with great precision.



Image 1: “*The port of Volos*”, oil in canvas, 136x81, private collection of Marianna Latsi.

His painting “*The fisherman's home on the beach*” Volanakis attempts to present the everyday life of a Greek fisherman, as he reaches towards his humble house by the beach. This painting provokes feelings of peace, a true insight of life in the Greek surroundings. Gentle colors represent the sand, the sea reflects the sky and the humble home seems to be the perfect shelter. Volanakis through his great love on everyday life on the seacoast, did not limit himself to strict academic tenets and heartless landscape representations, allowing himself to perceive the seascape as a complex entity, both calm and fierce. In contrast to his historical maritime compositions often handled in a more rigorous academic style, Volanakis in this painting attempts to capture the silent moment of peace that emerges from this scene.



Image 2: “*The fisherman's home on the beach*”, 1882, oil on canvas, 100x120 cm, the Historical Archives Museum of Hydra, Greece.

Another majestic composition is “*The departure*”, a painting from Volanakis’ Munich period of creativity. This painting depicts a steel-hulled paddle steamer that is ready to sail. The hoisted blue signal flag on the bow mast reveals that the ship is ready to departure from the port. Smoke is rising from the ship’s funnels as the engines idle. The last provisions are being loaded on the starboard side. At the same time elegance is demonstrated, as well- dressed passengers are embarking from the ferry which has just tied up. The huge ship lies in contrast with the serenity of the waters and the calmness of the sky. Volanakis by this painting presented his undeniable abilities to act both as a marine painter and a draftsman.



Image 3: “*The departure*”, 1877, oil on canvas, 100x161 cm, private collection.

Volanakis often signed his creation in Latin characters (*Bolanachi*). A superb example of his Munich period is the painting “*Pulling the catch*” in which significant elements of Volanakis’ art are observed. His precision in detail, his magnificent sense of space, his harmony of proportion are revealed leading to a moving composition of clear beauty. Nearly monochromatic this painting creates an incredible atmosphere, a suggestion of romance. The low horizon permits the viewer to embrace the spaciousness of the sky as the fishermen pull their catch. The perfect balance between movement and serenity. Volanakis focused often on everyday life on the coast and on the hard toil of fishermen and depicted his genuine interest in the ordinary activities of people living and working by the sea. The low brow and working class is situated in the center of the painting capturing the focus of the viewer. Additionally a crowd of embarking passengers is detected waiting on the quayside of a small local port for the incoming vessel that hazily emerges from the distant horizon. Volanakis’ seaside is not a place only for the poor working class but is often visited by people from diverse social groups. The elegance of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen is depicted in

contrast to the shaggy clothes of the fishermen, creating multiple sentiments. In this painting, despite the undeniable wealth of details, the human figures in the back become a part of the whole, almost absorbed by the natural environment in a romantic attempt to focus on the fishermen.



Image 4: “*Pulling in the catch*”, 1869, oil on canvas, 74 x 146 cm, private collection.

In contrast to the previous painting, which is full of movement and dynamism, “*Collecting the Nets*” provokes feelings of serenity and peace. In an almost silent sea a small fishing boat is placed in the middle whereas in the background larger ships appear. The effect of the calm sea is captured as its colors mix with the pale colors of the sky. Harmony of proportion in combination with the remarkable sense of space create a composition of austere beauty. Nearly monochromatic this painting depicts a peaceful atmosphere as the spaciousness of the sky meets the eternity of the sea. Volanakis’ pure interest in the ordinary life of fishermen prompts him to focus on everyday activities in a rather romantic manner.



Image 5: “*Collecting the Nets*”, 1871, oil on canvas, 100 x 126 cm, private collection.

An extremely intense as well as intricate piece is “*The burning of a Turkish frigate*”, an amazing painting now hosted by the Hellenic Maritime Museum. Volanakis’ emblematic personality arises through the colors of this magnificent painting as he created a strong depiction of the Greeks’ struggle towards freedom and independence and specifically of a common tactic during the Greek War of Independence. Revolutionaries would attempt to approach a large Turkish ship in a small boat loaded with explosives. With gentle maneuvers they would reach the side of the Turkish large ship and blow it up. This specific strategy was very successful and led to the victory of the Greek struggle for independence. According to historical references, in one case the explosion was so intense that killed 600 Turkish sailors. “*The burning of a Turkish frigate*” is a magnificent painting that reveals the extent of the blaze as the smoke rises towards the sky. Near the frigate, the small Greek ship is still on fire as it leans against the enemy ship. Volanakis’ details are breathtaking as he depicts the Turkish scramble to escape as the frigate is burning. The scene of the disaster is placed in the context of an impressive seascape. The sea, full of calmness, reflects the blue of the sky and of the clouds. The bravery of Greek sailors is obvious through the comparison of the small boat against the huge Turkish frigate, David versus Goliath, freedom against slavery.



Image 6: “*The burning of a Turkish frigate*”, 1882, oil on canvas, 110x150 cm, Hellenic Maritime Museum.

The “*Naval Battle of Salamis*” is included among his most outstanding paintings and belongs to the Hellenic Navy. It is a masterpiece of art that hangs in the office of the Prime Minister and depicts the famous ancient naval battle between the Persian Empire and the alliance of Greek city states. The bright colors reveal the force of the battle as the courage and the desire for independence prevail. This specific battle is believed to be the turning point in the history of Classical Greece leading to the victory of Greeks.



Image 7: “*Naval Battle of Salamis*”, 1882, oil on canvas, 110x150 cm, Hellenic Navy.

Manolis Vlachos, a notable researcher on Greek art, is considered an expert on Volanakis’ art. According to Vlachos, Volanakis never engaged himself in the art of historical representation and portraiture. Furthermore he declined depicting other aspects of everyday life in the nascent Greek state and dedicated his talent entirely to maritime painting. It is love for the sea that urges him to depict every facet of the maritime life, the tranquility of the sea, the idyllic aspect of harbors and the intensity of naval battles.

All of Volanakis’ paintings reveal his strong personal style, his artistic breadth which appears through his realistic and, at the same time, romantic impressions. His authenticity, the way he reaches towards the viewers’ emotions, consolidates his reputation as the ‘*father of Greek seascape*’. Despite the tragic events of his life, Volanakis remains a painter expressing both beauty and faith in life as few other creators did. An imposing but yet tragic figure, a true pioneer of art.

CHAPTER 2 Altamura Ioannis

2.1 Introduction to the art of Altamura Ioannis

Through his outstanding seascapes, Ioannis Altamouras has been recognized as one of the most magnificent painters of the 19th century. In his short period of life (1852-1878) he created breathtaking pieces of art, capturing the atmosphere of the sea and its undeniable strength (Kipreou, 2009)

Son of the Italian painter Francesco Saverio Altamura and the first Greek female painter Eleni Boukoura – Altamura, Ioannis has been introduced to the fine world of painting and representation from his early years, as he had amazing artistic skills (Vlachos, 1992).

Altamouras studied first under the supervision of Nikephoros Lytras at the Athens School of Art. From 1873 to 1876 he continued his studies, under a scholarship in King George I, at the Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen guided by a magnificent artist, Karl Frederik Soerensen (Piemontese, 2009).

Altamouras almost exclusively produced seascape paintings, mostly in small scale. The way he depicted his marine scenes seems to be influenced by 17th century Dutch seascapes as well as by French paintings. His painting, '*The port of Copenhagen*', won the second award in an artistic competition of Olympion in Athens in 1875. His return to Athens was accompanied by the opening of his personal atelier as his reputation rapidly expanded. Unfortunately, his early death due to tuberculosis ended a promising career. (Vlachos, 1993).

2.2 Altamura Ioanis, his magnificent representations of seascape

Altamouras was familiar with the particularities of the sea and of the seagoing vessels. By using vivid light colors, blue, yellow, green and grey, he attempted to

depict almost vividly the open horizon and the movement of the sea as he gradually moved away from the restrictions of realism. (Kipreou, 2009)

Despite his early death, Altamouras has left a considerable number of breathtaking paintings. His preference towards seascape paintings led him to produce masterpieces and gained his place in the hall of fame next to Konstantinos Volanakis. Altamouras and Volanakis depicted often in their art the naval engagements during the Greek War of Independence and managed to present the strength and heroism of Greece's struggle for freedom and independence (Piemontese, 2009).

2.3 Altamoura's most significant paintings

Altamouras, a charismatic painter, has modified through his art the artistic movement of representation and managed to depict, using his vivid pallet of intense bright colors, the deep spirit of mysticism lying in the depths of sea and seascape (Kipreou, 2009)



Image 8: “*Thalassographia*”, oil on paper, 24x30, collection of the National Bank of Greece.

With vigorous and at the same time free brushstrokes, Altamura's "*Thalassographia*" depicts a calm seascape full of brightness. Vitality and lighting are added to the painted deep surface of the sea capturing the beauty of nature. Remarkable details appear at the reflections of the waves and reveal an amazing image of nature's elements.



Image 9: "*Sailing in choppy seas*", 1875, oil on canvas, 45x66, collection of National Gallery of Athens.

'*Sailing in choppy seas*' was painted in 1875, just one year before Altamura returned to Greece from Copenhagen. This splendid portrayal of a huge sailing ship presents every detail of sails, masts and rigging, and even the figures of sailors lying

onboard. The sky, full of light colors depicting its openness and breadth, lies in contrast with the sea and its green waves. White splashes combine smoothly with the travelling clouds in the sky. Altamura persists in following the strict academic principles but at the same time he tries to depict the changing atmosphere of the seascape.



Image 10: “*Boat on the Shore*”, 1874, oil on canvas, 38.5x53, private collection, Athens

The seashore has always been a source of inspiration for Altamura as “*Boat on the Shore*”, this outstanding painting depicts. The openness of the sky with the travelling clouds and details are presented in a fine and delicate manner. Three figures are shown in the middle ground and seem to complete almost perfectly with the coastal environment.



Image 11: “*Breaking the waves*”, 1875, oil on canvas, 58x74, collection of descendants of the artist, private collection, Athens.

“*Breaking the waves*” is a fine example of Altamouira’s mature style as he demonstrates a remarkable accuracy and technique, that is rarely found in such a young artist. The lighting of the sky as the sun escapes through the clouds, the changing atmosphere and the mobility of the sea vessels combine with the fierce horizon. The breadth of the horizon, as depicted through the dark clouds, is portrayed with brilliance, and reveal an exceptional talent.

CHAPTER 3 Hatzis Vasilis

3.1 Introduction to the art of Hatzis Vasilis

Hatzis Vasilis a well-known Greek painter was born in 1870 in the small Greek town of Kastoria. Even from his early childhood he became familiar with the magnificence of the sea as his family was deeply involved in shipping and sailing. During his childhood he lived in Patras, a town with port and expanded vessel congestion. He also studied at the Athens School of Fine Arts from 1886 to 1893 under the supervision of Konstantinos Volanakis and Nikyforos Lytras (Haidou-Lykouri, 2000).

It was during the Balkan Wars that due to his assignment by the Greek governance to the Greek Navy that he devoted himself into the depiction of vessels of the Greek fleet. Hatzis travelled on board of Greek navy ships in order to capture the events that comprised the Greek Fleet operations. His death in 1915 in Athens ceased a promising painting career (Vlachos, 2002).

3.2 Hatzis Vasilis, his representations of seascape and sea vessels

Although Hatzis was at first acknowledged for his seascape paintings, he did not restrained his talent only in seascapes. He also delivered outstanding representations of landscapes and genre scenes from the everyday life of ordinary people. His interest was challenged by the harsh life of fishermen and sailors and he attempted to depict their daily routine (Haidou-Lykouri, 2000).

His work included both the academic style and an interesting turn to impressionism can be seen in his masterpieces. Multiple exhibitions of his art work have been organized even after his death exposing to the crowd the talent and skill of a true painter (Vlachos, 2002).

His origins, as he came from a family deeply involved in shipping, and his studies under the instructions of Konstantinos Volanakis reveals his talent regarding seascape painting. Multiple representations of his artwork prove his interest to depict the magnificence of the sea and the routine of life by the seaside (Haidou-Lykouri, 2000).

Under government orders during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) he observed operations aboard the warships ‘Miaoulis’ and ‘Averoff’ and therefore was given the opportunity to record multiple glorious historical events. His magnificent use of romantic elements enabled the direct approach of his depictions and his realistic representations (Yofyllis, 1962).

3.3 Hatzis’ most significant paintings

Even though Hatzis never studied under the principals of the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, his art reveals a breathtaking commitment to detail. As the son of a ship-owner and a member of the Greek Navy during the Balkan Wars, Hatzis was familiar with the exaggeration of the sea, whose glory attempted to capture in his paintings (Haidou-Lykouri, 2000).



Image 13: “*Landing of Greek troops in Kavala*”, 1913, oil on canvas, 62 x97 cm, Municipal Art Gallery of Ioannina.

From the years of the Balkan Wars when as a member of the Greek Navy he followed the Greek fleet Hatzis depicted in his painting “*Landing of Greek troops in Kavala*”. This amazing representation of the time of arrival of the Greek army at the port of this little town depicts the joy and enthusiasm of Greeks as the Greek vessel enters the port. The crowd waving Greek flags embraces with pride the Greek sailors and yields its excitement. Vivid colors and especially the bright luminous depiction of the town’s buildings lies in contrast with the dark colors of the army vessel as it prevails in the middle of the painting, revealing an air of victory.



Image 14: “*The battleship 'Averoff' leading the Greek fleet to the Battle of Elli*”, 1913, oil on canvas, 46 x 70 cm, collection of National Gallery of Athens

Hatzis during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) under government orders observed several operations abroad warships, as a member of their crew. Therefore he was given the opportunity to depict multiple naval battle scenes that he managed to capture with powerful realism. He took part in operations involving the warship ‘Averoff’ and was inspired to approach the magnificence of this vessel in an outstanding painting. “*The battleship 'Averoff' leading the Greek fleet to the Battle of Elli*” is a true masterpiece of art and realism. In an amazing landscape hit by the glimmers of the rising sun this legendary battleship passes through the choppy Aegean Sea, as it reveals its strength and glory. ‘Averoff’ is recognized as the most impressive and important vessel in the route of history of the Greek Navy and was the flagship of the Greek fleet. Behind ‘Averoff’ the warships ‘Spetsai’, ‘Hydra’ and ‘Psara’ follow as they proceed to meet with the Turkish fleet in the legendary and victorious Battle of Elli.



Image 15: “*Seascape*”, 1910, pastel on paper, 25 x 49 cm, private collection, Athens

Hatzis’ use of bright colors and specifically yellow prevails in the painting “*Seascape*”. In an attempt to vividly depict the lights on the peaceful sea he connects the brightness of the sky with the surface of the sea. Hatzis tried really hard to bring his paintings to life and seems to be engaged in the depiction of the senses provoked at its presence. His attempts seem breathtaking as he truly captured the vibes of the elements depicted.

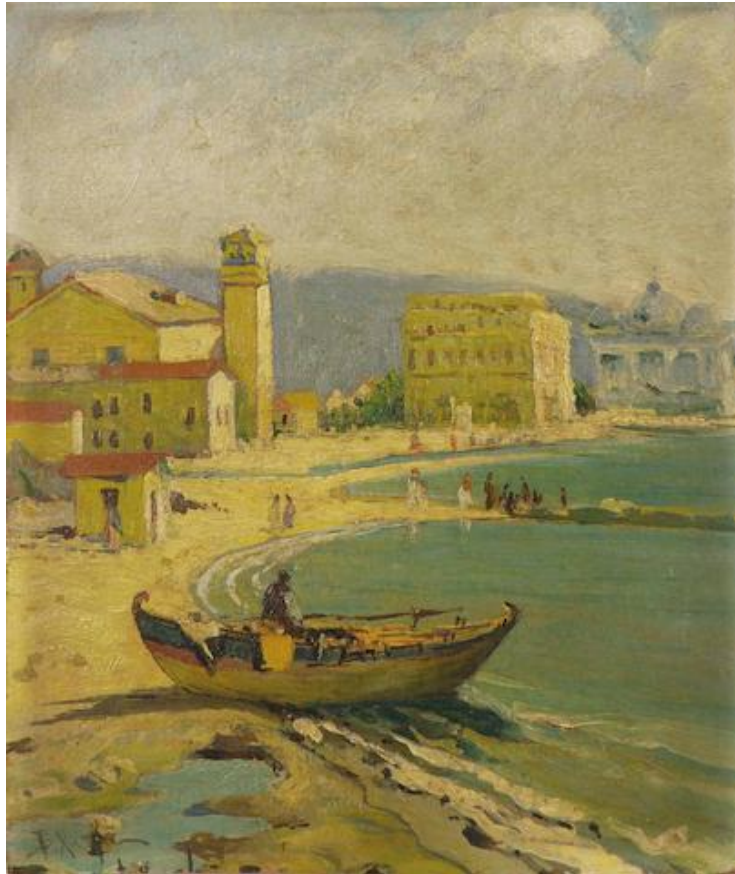


Image 16: *"Promenade by the shore"*, 1898, oil on cardboard, 22x19cm., private collection, Athens

In *"Promenade by the shore"* Hatzis embraces the calmness of the sea and life near the waves seems full of calmness and peace. Figures appear to merge with the colors of the shore leading to a breathtaking outcome. Again Hatzis' preference towards luminous colors is revealed and yellow prevails in multiple combinations. The small town and its buildings emerge powerful in the scene, without disturbing the calmness and the smoothness of the seascape.



Image 17: *“A peaceful scene by the shore”*, 1897, oil on canvas, 60.5 x 98 cm, private collection

“A peaceful scene by the shore”, an undoubtedly beautiful depiction, is full of light and colors as it represents the joy of life. By a calm seashore people embrace the calmness of the sea, in one of Hatzis’ finest masterpieces. A painting that is distinguished by the crisp design and the sensitivity of its colors as they merge into a compositional balance. The low horizon gives value to the spaciousness of the bright sky. The group of people is almost integrated with the natural surroundings, causing emotions of relaxation. Hatzis, by the fascinating image of fishermen at work in combination with the beached boats, has chanted the true story of everyday routine of people by the Greek seacoast.



Image 18: “*The island of Pamvotis*”, oil on canvas, 50.3x96.7 cm, Municipal Art Gallery of Ioannina

In contrast to the previous paintings “*The island of Pamvotis*” is a depiction of a seascape but the sea is not the main theme of the painting. The figures of the two Greek shepherds seem at first to dominate as their positioning in front captures the eye. But it is the calmness of the sea, its pale colors and its calmness that finally bind the attention. The little island of Pamvotis rises through the peaceful waters so gently and in true harmony with the rest of the representations. A fine mixture of colors vividly represent the seascape creating feelings of calmness.

CHAPTER 4 Koutsis Ioannis

4.1 Introduction to the art of Koutsis Ioannis

Koutsis Ioannis was born in 1860 and was the descendant of an aristocratic maritime family, well active during the Greek War of Independence. He was only fifteen years old when, along with his brothers, took in his hands the management of the ship owning company (Vlachos, 1978).

His embracement to art begun near Konstantinos Volanakis. Ioannis Altamura had also influenced Koutsis, as he lived under his home for almost 2 years. Koutsis was a member of the Munich School art movement during the 19th century. Besides being a well known seascape painter Koutsis has also founded one of the oldest and leading shipping companies in Greece and was the owner of the first Greek oil tanker named after him (*'Ioannis G. Koutsis'*) (Vlachos, 2002).

It is rather interesting to mention that Koutsis did not proceed to any personal exhibitions of his masterpieces. He rather preferred to participate in group exhibitions although his reputation as an outstanding artist existed in Piraeus. His wealth permitted him to abstain from selling his paintings except for a small number during the German occupation of Greece in 1941- 1944. Therefore his art is mainly reserved and shared among his relatives, descendants and friends. He died in 1953 in Piraeus, at the age of 93, leaving an outstanding legacy of art (Vlachos, 1993).

4.2 Koutsis Ioannis, his significant contribution to seascape painting

Koutsis art consists mainly of seascape paintings that seem to be greatly influenced by his teacher, Konstantinos Volanakis. It is said that in some of Volanakis' paintings Koutsis participated by completing the waves and by refining the depiction of the sea. In general, seascapes are considered to be one of his strong

points as he managed to represent in details the calmness of the seascape (Vlachos, 1978).

Koutsis depicted the seascape with great success and outstanding descriptive accuracy as well as finesse. His wise use of coloring brings out character to his themes and express strong feelings (Vlachos, 2002).

Koutsis coming from a family of sailors and through his career at the ranks of the Navy acquired good knowledge of the sea and of the ships. Every element in his masterpieces is carried out with clarity and precision, characteristics that are attributed to his talent. With a sharp eye Koutsis detects the value and beauty of the seascape and gently delivers it in his paintings (Vlachos, 1993).

4.3 Koutsis' limited number of surviving masterpieces

Although his contribution in seascape painting is undeniably tremendous, a very limited number of surviving works by Koutsis are detected. The main issue seems to be his denial to sell his paintings leading to their maintenance in the hands of private collectors, mostly relatives. Two rare examples of the limited number of the surviving masterpieces of the magnificent painter are presented, deriving both from private collections (Vlachos, 2002).

Koutsis captured the seascape's likeness in all its splendor, marking every detail through the greatness of his talent. Masts, sails and figures are depicted in alliance with his expert knowledge of the maritime world revealing an accurate and convincing picture of the everyday life by the sea (Vlachos, 1978).



Image 19: “*On the beach, Spetses*”, 1901, oil on canvas, 55 x 45 cm, private collection, Athens

“*On the beach, Spetses*” is a painting distinguished by its peace that emerges through the outstanding mixture of colors and details. Koutsis with great sensitivity manages to present the people that appear in the landscape. His skills in depicting details permitted him to integrate these figures to the natural surroundings. This rural scene of the little island of Spetses appears and the calmness of the sea is totally combined with the calmness of the seashore. The peacefulness of the sky, presented by pale colors is depicted by the trees and the building. Using bright colors the reflections on the surface of the sea appear vivid and offer a breathtaking aspect.



Image 20: “*Life by the seashore*”, 1910, oil on canvas, 45 x 57 cm, private collection, Athens

One of the most refined seascapes ever to appear is this masterpiece of Koutsis. “*Life by the seashore*”, this luminous painting, rich in realistic description as well as multiple symbolisms. Koutsis came as close as few other Greek artists to the achievements of Kostantinos Volanakis, matching or even surpassing his master’s seascapes. With loving care he portrayed the figures of fishermen by the seashore. Additionally, the vividness with which they are presented reflects Koutsis’ ability to capture aspects of everyday life on the seacoast. Although the huge boat’s striking presence dominates the center of the picture, capturing the eye with its strong appeal, the figures of fishermen finally dominate, due to the vivid colors that Koutsis selected in order to depict them.

CHAPTER 5 Kalogeropoulos Nikos

5.1 Introduction to the art of Kalogeropoulos Nikos

Kalogeropoulos Nikos was born in 1889 in Sykia Corinth. He studied at first theology in Athens at the Rizareio School and The University of Athens. Then proceeded to Munich where he continued his theological studies but also at the same time he followed studies in art history and painting, independently (Vlachos, 2002).

Kalogeropoulos followed the painting tradition of the two great painters, Vasilis Hatzis and Konstantinos Volanakis and embraced the art of seascape, revealing a magnificent talent and perception (Vlachos, 1993).

His artwork enriched the Greek themes with his sensible look and, following the climate of impressionism, Kalogeropoulos simplified seascape painting revealing a rather lyrical view (Haidou-Lykouri, 2000).

His service at management positions in both the Byzantine Museum and the National Gallery enhanced his knowledge and expanded his artistic feelings. He was also the head of the Professional School of Piraeus and the department of Arts and Education for the Ministry of Education and Religion, in Greece. He died in 1958 in Athens (Vlachos, 2002).

5.2 Kalogeropoulos Nikos, his contribution to seascape representations

Kalogeropoulos' main themes included portraiture, landscapes and most importantly seascapes. The marine life seemed to draw the attention of the magnificent painter as he followed the footsteps of the two great Greek seascape artists, Konstantinos Volanakis and Vasilios Hatzis. Although he had been undeniably influenced by these two painters, his work is remarkably different from the previous two, as he distanced himself from academism. Impressionism seems to have

influenced thoroughly Kalogeropoulos as he uses a simplified color palette. It is also worth mentioning that he had great influence by the art of Claude-Joseph Vernet (Vlachos, 2002).

5.3 Kalogeropoulos' most significant paintings

Kalogeropoulos' masterpieces are found in many public collections and many of his paintings are housed permanently in The Hellenic Maritime Museum, as a memory to his contribution to Greek seascape art. Also multiple paintings are held in private collections (Haidou-Lykouri, 2000).

Kalogeropoulos is considered one of the most skillful painters. Balancing the power of nature, Kalogeropoulos captures the beauty of the sea and composes paintings that depict its strength and dignity. The intense contrast between shady and bright parts became dominant in his paintings, and it is clearly visible in many of his masterpieces.



Image 21: “*Sailing vessel*”, 1914, oil on canvas, 50 x 60 cm, private collection, Crete

Kalogeropoulos’ creative energy can be seen without limits in “*Sailing vessel*”, a truly outstanding painting. The sea has an inner beauty and waves are painted without visible edges. Dark colors merge with bright, depicting realistically the fight between the powerful sea and the peaceful sky.. This masterpiece owes its identity to the magnificent mix of shady and bright colors.



Image 22: “*Battleship ‘Averoff’ in Constantinople*”, 1915, oil on canvas 70 x 100 cm, private collection, Athens

Epitomizing the glory of the Greek recent history Kalogeropoulos portrayed the legendary battleship ‘Averoff’ as it sailed towards Constantinople. In his painting “*Battleship ‘Averoff’ in Constantinople*” Kalogeropoulos states this proud vessel sails gently on the calm sea. The shady colors in the painting are used in contrast to the light appearing behind ‘Averoff’ leaving a rather supernatural icon of the vessel. Kalogeropoulos’ skills in composition and paint handling led to an outstanding outcome as the strong battleship seems to float smoothly over the waves. Constantinople appears shimmering in the background creating a distance to the eye. His remarkable precision and his delicate touch led to a remarkable harmony between the proceeding vessel and the distancing town.



Image 23: “*Yacht*”, 1912, oil on hardboard, 34 x 48 cm, private collection, Athens

“*Yacht*”, an outstanding work of Kalogeropoulos, beautifully depicts a vessel whose tall and thin masts and rigs penetrate the bright sky. For Kalogeropoulos the real challenge appear to be the correct mixture of lights and colors. What’s worth mentioning in this masterpiece is the artist’s success to hide the time of the day that this was created. The smooth, exquisite outlines and the flattened space captivate the eye and become the source of strong intense feelings.



Image 24: “*In choppy seas*”, 1917, oil on canvas, 52 x 78 cm, private collection, Athens

A superb example of Kalogeropoulos’ art “*In choppy seas*” shows its defining elements. Amazing execution and an outstanding sense of light and colors enables Kalogeropoulos to create with remarkable precision in details. Harmony of proportion and balance come together in this composition of beauty. The fierce atmosphere that emerges by the depiction of the waves and the low horizon gives value to the spaciousness of the sky and the roughness of the sea. Kalogeropoulos in this painting demonstrates his width of technical abilities as he understands seascapes as a complex entity with unlimited potentials.



Image 25: “*Vessel in the sea*”, 1918, oil on canvas, 44 x 62 cm, private collection, Athens

Despite the dark colors that prevail, “*Vessel in the sea*” is a true masterpiece, revealing the vast abilities of the seascapist. The vessel becomes n part of the sea, almost absorbed by its fury. Kalogeropoulos, a virtuoso of brushwork, nearly with the use of one base color depicts the power of the waves as they attempt to devour the small vessel. The artist uses his mastery of the techniques of art in this careful composition emitting feelings of respect towards the magnificence of the sea.

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