

Self-Portraits by Nineteenth-Century Greek Painters

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The subject of this paper is the self-portrait, and, in particular, the ways in which Greek painters of the 19th century supported and expanded the genre. A series of self-portraits of painters who lived beyond the borders of the newly established Greek state are analysed in this paper. From an iconographic aspect, their works follow the constitutional visual conventions and they are created within the frame of a specific artistic trend, reflecting theoretical discussions and conflicts of their times.

By the end of the 19th century the self-portrait had, for several reasons, lost their distinctive elements and was usually not conceived as different from the portrait. From the 1860's, many Greek painters created portraits of themselves in order to express their personal success, and also, to present the case for the improvement of the social position of the Greek artists, in general. A leading example of such a focus of intention can be seen in the self-portraits of Nikeforos Lytras.

As an art form in itself, self-portraiture is a very attractive field of research for art historians. With its origins lost in the mists of time, self-portraiture emerged in the Early Renaissance as a special category of portraiture. Self-portraiture exemplified art theory which, from the fifteenth-century onwards, became a weapon in the hands of artists struggling to escape the label of mere craftsmen, a label that had oppressed them since antiquity. They sought to be recognized as intellectual creatives and laid claim to their right to be seen as worthy of a more elevated position on the social ladder. Self-portraiture was a way of declaring the intellectual nature of their work and society's acceptance of them. At the same time it functioned as a signature, an artistic identity, an autobiography, a document, a practical implementation of art theory, an example of *la vita activa* and *la vita contemplativa*.¹

As a result of historical circumstances the arrival of self-portraiture in Greece was delayed by several centuries. It first appeared in areas where conditions were propitious with the first examples being in the late eighteenth century, in the Venetian Ionian Islands. These earlier Ionian self-portraits, those of the painters Nikolaos

¹ Calabrese, 2006, especially p. 23–27, 29–31.

Koutouzis and Nikolaos Kantounis, have been explored in two earlier articles by Markatou.²

This article will focus on a representative selection of self-portraits painted by nineteenth-century artists who flourished at the same time as the Ionian Islands artists who continued to follow the tradition of the masters of the Ionian Schools. In the newly founded Greek state however, chiefly as a result of the politicians' overarching aim of ensuring that Greece was seen as part of the civilised world, the teaching of the Fine Arts was immediately instituted and, on the basis of Adamantios Korais's theory of *metakenosis*, a European style of art was adopted.

However, the difficult conditions in which artists had to practise in Greece, in the nineteenth century, kept them tied to the level of common labourers. Consequently their social status was far from that achieved by their European counterparts.³ Nevertheless self-portraiture emerged early on in the Modern Greek state.

As early as 1846/1847 in the addresses he gave at the School of Arts, Lyssandros Kaftantzoglou mentioned that among the works on display, the works of the School's students, there were self-portraits: in 1846 the student A. Damiris⁴ exhibited "a picture of himself" in oils⁵ and similarly in 1847 two oil-painting students P. Demetriou and V. K. Skopas⁶ exhibited their "pictures" while S. Chatzoyiannopoulos (sic) exhibited "his own picture in a pencil sketch".⁷ They had probably heard about self-portraiture from the Europeans and the Greeks who had studied abroad and who were currently teaching painting at the School of Arts: e.g. Georgios Margaritis and Raphael Ceccoli. Such examples of self-portraits should not be seen as cause for hasty judgements as to the ambitions of these budding artists seeking to be recognised as intellectual creators. However, given that on many occasions the works the students exhibited in the annual shows at the School were portraits, and sometimes portraits of their fellow students,⁸ it can be concluded that the students themselves were regularly used as models. Bearing in mind therefore, the conditions at the time, it is possible to conclude that, it was mainly for lack of models that the students resorted to their mirrors: a practice previously employed, in many instances, by famous painters such as Rembrandt. However, apart from self-portraits by artists who lived outside the borders of the Modern Greek state, self-portraits by more accomplished Greek artists do not appear before the 1860s.

² Markatou, 2003:109–119. Markatou, 2006:151–158.

³ And see Markatou, 2008.

⁴ Presumably the Epirote Alexandros Damiris (Kalarrytes, 1820–?). See Lexiko Ellenon Kallitechnon, 1997–2000, 1:338.

⁵ Lyssandros Kaftantzoglou, 1846:14. *ibid.*, 1847:14 n. a.

⁶ Vassileios Karoumbas, called Skopas (Athens c. 1820–Athens after 1883). See Lexiko Ellenon Kallitechnon, 1997–2000, 4:177.

⁷ Presumably the well-known painter Spyridon Chatziyiannopoulos (Fourni, Evrytania 1820–Athens 1905). See Lexiko Ellenon Kallitechnon, 1997–2000, 4:433.

⁸ Kaftantzoglou, 1851:15, S. Chatzoyiannopoulos (sic) exhibited the portrait of his fellow student G. Pa-paargyriou.

The Ionian tradition continued in the Ionian Islands and beyond, with painters such as Gerasimos Pitzamanos (Argostoli 1787 — Corfu 1825) and Georgios Meniatitis (Argostoli 1820 — Livorno 1895) being typical examples.

Pitzamanos's self-portrait (Figure 1), primarily modelled in colour and with conspicuous brushstrokes, is a Romantic work which, as Antonis Kotides has observed, is contemporary to similar works by the masters of Romanticism in Europe.⁹ Bearing in mind that Romanticism in painting was first seen in fully developed form in Géricault's *Raft of the Medusa* in 1819, while Pitzamanos's self-portrait has been dated, based on his age at the time, to ca. 1820¹⁰ this indicates that it was a pioneering work both for its day and for Greek art. The Ionian artist was in tune with what was going on in the great European centres because he had studied and lived in Rome and Paris. And the important point is that Pitzamanos, a follower of the masters of the Ionian School, was not just caught up in the reverberations of European trends but was completely in tune with what was going on in Europe and at the heart of developments. Even though most of his work known to date belongs to the Neoclassical tradition, the Romantic self-portrait has a special place in the beginnings of Modern Greek art. In this respect, his premature death represented a real loss for the development of art in the Ionian Islands and, indeed, for the shaping of the character of art in the newly founded state.

In addition, from an ideological point of view, Pitzamano's self-portrait is especially interesting as an expression of the artist's self awareness. The impassioned glance, the unruly locks, the half-open mouth, the smart modern dress and the aristocratic air all contribute to creating a restless artistic personality which self confidently addresses a viewer standing somewhere beyond the picture space. Though looking straight out at the viewer, the feverish gaze seems to be focused on some internal vision. As a member of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome, he would certainly have seen the self-portrait bust of Antonio Canova (1812) which became a model for other artists' self-portraits.



Fig. 1: Gerasimos Pitzamanos, *Self Portrait*, oil on paper, 43x33 cm, c. 1820–1823, Athens Museum of IEEE

⁹ Kotidis, 1995:203.

¹⁰ Koutsojannis, 2007:607 dates it to between 1815 and 1818 and considers it a pre-Romantic work.

In accordance with the ideals of Neoclassicism, the sculptor has represented himself looking towards the divine source of inspiration.¹¹ By contrast, Pitzamanos seems to be imbued with the idealism of the Romantic artist, whose inspiration comes from his inner life. Thus his self-portrait becomes a symbol of his intellectual autonomy.¹²

Having studied painting and architecture at the French Academy (Académie des Beaux Arts) in Rome and at the Polytechnic in Paris, Pitzamanos was a typical example of the Ionian *homo universalis*: an archaeologist, painter, architect, engineer, author of a treatise on architecture, lecturer at the Ionian Academy in Corfu,¹³ and an engraver:¹⁴ he had all the qualities of a “Renaissance man”. His scholarly and artistic qualities, combined with the exalted positions he held both in the Ionian Islands state and beyond, are reflected in his self-portrait, which functions as a statement about his social and artistic recognition. I see it as a seminal moment in which he began to go beyond the dictates of Neoclassicism, which he had hitherto followed both in his creative and his theoretical work, and therefore a slightly later date for the painting is preferable: somewhere between his election to the Ionian Academy¹⁵ and the first signs of consumption in 1823. In this case, his Romantic self-portrait seems to herald his doubts about Neoclassicism and is consistent with his treatise in which, as Filippou Oraipoulos has noted, there are signs of “the first doubt about the classicism of Greek antiquity [...]”.¹⁶

In analysing Pitzamanos’s theoretical work, the *Treatise on Architecture*, Oraipoulos maintains that it was not just a case of simply absorbing the architectural material of the European tradition, but the result of processing it all and making a contribution of his own, and thus these theories represent a complete break with the past in Greece.¹⁷ And it is precisely this personal contribution of his which highlights Pitzamanos’s abilities and helps us understand the stylistic innovations in his self-portrait.

We can make similar observations about the self-portrait of Florence-based Georgios Meniatis (Figure 2). Though it was painted towards the middle of the century, it is distinguished by the classicistic style of its drawing. The arms folded across the chest,

¹¹ Janson, 1985:56, fig. 48.

¹² Sturgis, Christiansen, Oliver and Wilson, 2006:45.

¹³ On the title page of his treatise he refers to all his professional expertise and appointments: “Saggio d’Architettura Civile, con alcune cognizioni/ communi a tutte le belle Arti/ del Cavaliere Gerasimo Pizzamano, di Cefallonia,/ Archeologo, Pittore, Architetto ed Ingegniere, pubblico professore d’ Architettura Civile nell’Accademia delle Belle Arti negli Stati Uniti del Ionio [...]”, in: Oraipoulos, 1998:380.

¹⁴ He is considered to have introduced the art of engraving to Greece. See Kalligas, 1982:386–406, especially 388–390.

¹⁵ It is not known exactly when he was appointed. However, the discussions about founding the Academy, which was inaugurated in 1824, began in 1820. If we bear in mind that his *Treatise on Architecture*, which was written precisely for his students, bears the date 1820 (see Oraipoulos, 1998:380) then his appointment should date to the period when he was writing that text.

¹⁶ Oraipoulos, 1998:387.

¹⁷ Oraipoulos, 1998:380–389.



Fig. 2: Georgios Meniatis, *Self Portrait*,
Sketch on paper, c. 1850, Athens,
National Gallery



Fig. 3: Eleni Boukouri-Altamura, *Self portrait*,
oil on canvas, 33,5x26 cm, c. 1850, Athens, private
collection

elbows resting on the table are reminiscent of similar compositions by Rembrandt,¹⁸ and create an externally tranquil pose, while emphasising the introspection and the intellectual nature in the piercing gaze. The impression of immobility and the profound absorption help to create the image of the artist-scholar. In fact the painter, who was married to the Corfiot literary figure, Margarita Albana, belonged to a coterie of men of letters in Italy and was very active in artistic, professional and nationalist circles in Europe.¹⁹ Nevertheless the combination of the slight air of wistfulness and the folded arms are a reminder of the view which had prevailed since the Renaissance that the gifted creative artist was characterised by an innate melancholy. Though, of course, Meniatis' known work to date is considered to be of rather average quality.

The self-portrait of Eleni Boukouri Altamura (Spetses ?1821–Spetses 1900) is also dated to ca. 1850 (Figure 3). It was painted at the time when this first, professionally trained Greek woman artist was studying at the Overbeck School in Rome, disguised as a man, because women were prohibited from attending art schools.²⁰

¹⁸ For example, self-portrait of 1648, for an illustration see Pächt, 2005:71, fig. 36.

¹⁹ For biographical details see Tsitselis, 1904:451–455.

²⁰ For biographical details see Galanaki, 1997:29–33 and Markatou, 2009:357–360.

The importance of the work lies mainly in the fact that it is the first self-portrait by a woman in Greece, and indeed does not follow the usual conventions: the artist is not turned towards the viewer to show off her work, as was the norm in female self-portraits, but is giving all her concentration to her work. Thus, as we do not know what she is painting, what is emphasised is not the result but the act of painting itself. The fact that she chose not to depict herself frontally but in profile cannot be a coincidence. According to some scholars, a profile portrait does not necessarily presuppose the presence of a viewer, nor does it give an idealised or formal image of the subject, as is the case with frontal portraits. What interests the artist is achieving a process of individualisation and giving the image a biographical function.²¹ From this point



Fig. 4: Nikolaos Kounelakis, *Self Portrait*, oil on oil-cloth, 47x37 cm, c. 1860–1862, Athens, National Gallery–Koutlides–Collection K. 816

of view we are looking at a self-portrait of Eleni conceived as a conscious attempt to record her exploits in art in painted form and to transpose her opposition to male privilege to a symbolic level.²²

Nikolaos Kounelakis (Chania 1829–Cairo 1869) created some interesting self-portraits in terms of iconographic types and the messages they express. The self-portrait in the Koutlides Collection (Figure 4) is dated to 1860–62 and employs an iconography encountered frequently from the Early Renaissance onwards: he is depicted in bust form, with his upper body turned to the left in three-quarter profile, while with a characteristic movement of the pupils, his gaze is looking to the right. This pose has been interpreted as some sort of act of self-assertion, because it addresses the viewer in a more active fashion than strictly frontal portraits.²³

The three-quarter profile self-portrait is particularly interesting because it presents the sitter's visual perspective. This pose allows the subject to "move" in space, using gestures or the contours and features of the face, as Leonardo da Vinci had long ago observed, to express their subjectivity in a subtle way. This pose also involves the temporal element, as it can change, since it presupposes a previous pose. Thus the artist paints his/her own portrait as "an experienced author", who is recording an act with a past and a future, of which the

²¹ Calabrese, 2006:130–133.

²² Markatou, 2009:362–363.

²³ Calabrese, 2006:134.

picture depicts only a single moment.²⁴ In Kounelakis's case, the "spatial element" of the picture is given by the statue depicted on the left, while the "temporal element" is chiefly rendered by the movement of the gaze which can change direction at any minute. Incorporating time and space into the picture results in a figure with an inner life and spirituality, a duly appreciated, thinking artist.²⁵ The stillness of the head, indicated by the movement of the pupils, is a feature which Kounelakis must have adopted under the influence of the Nazarenes.²⁶ Like them, the Greek painter is attempting to balance a strictly objective conception of the figure with the depiction of subjectivity.²⁷

The statue depicted on the left is a copy of a classical work²⁸ and convinces us that antiquity was the model. To be specific the statue has been interpreted by Kotides as "a depiction in emblematic form of the tradition in which he places himself"²⁹ or by Missirli as "a reference to the ideals and visions of an artist with a classical education and tendencies".³⁰ The use of statuary, moreover, in still-life paintings which double as self-portraiture is also found in the seventeenth-century Flemish art and indeed Adriaen Valk includes, in one of his still lifes the same statue as Kounelakis used.³¹

In the painting *The Artist's Family* (Figure 5), dated to ca. 1864, his theoretical preoccupations are evident. The painter is depicted standing on the right, looking out at the viewer, while drawing the dome of the Florence cathedral. In the foreground



Fig. 5: Nikolaos Kounelakis, *Artist's Family*, oil on oil-cloth, 94x73 cm, c. 1862–1864, Athens, National Gallery P.476

²⁴ See Calabrese, *ibid.*: 142–146.

²⁵ The fact that there is a second self-portrait of the artist later in life in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, where he lived, inclines us to think that he was appreciated in a city with a great artistic tradition. See Missirli, 1994:57.

²⁶ For example there is a similar pose and movement of the pupil in a self-portrait by Friedrich Overbeck (1843–1844), illustrated in *Die Nazarener*, 1977:222, n. E 20.

²⁷ Jensen, 198:42.

²⁸ It recalls the head of a Niobid attempting to remove the arrow from her back in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme in Rome (after 430 BC), which was also copied by Neoclassical sculptors. Illustrated in Bakalakis, 1990:321, fig. 135^a.

²⁹ Kotidis, 1995:208.

³⁰ Missirli, 1994:57.

³¹ Calabrese, 2006:347, *illus.* 344.

are sitting his mother-in-law, who is reading and on the right his wife, who is writing out a musical score. Behind his mother-in-law is a copy of a classical female head. Kotidis has made some pertinent observations about the painting both in terms of its iconography and its style.³² So I shall only add some thoughts about the iconography and above all the presentation of theoretical ideas.

It is a self-portrait of the artist within a family scene, arranged in such a way as to combine the family picture with the depiction of artistic endeavour. In effect it is a group portrait, in which each subject is self absorbed and not playing an intellectual part in the artistic process. This sort of self-portrait, which first appeared in the sixteenth century onwards³³ and is characterised by the constraints of the work space available to the artist,³⁴ is common from the eighteenth century onwards, once the artist had taken his place in society. In other words it is the equivalent of some sort of declaration that he too is a member of the bourgeoisie.³⁵ In Kounelakis's painting the bourgeois atmosphere is built around the furniture and the fabrics, the well-turned out appearance of the artist, the women's clothes, their dignified attitude to death (his young wife had already fallen prey to consumption) and above all the activities with which the subjects are occupied, and by means of which references can be made to all the arts: painting, or more precisely drawing, through the activity of the subject of the self-portrait; architecture, through the drawing of the dome, sculpture through the copy of the statue, music through his wife's occupation and poetry³⁶ through his mother-in-law's reading. However, the primary emphasis is on the artist's hand, stretched out over the heads of the women, and, his head, depicted at the same level, with its penetrating gaze. In essence what stands out are the features which from as far back as Alberti, are thought to make the artist: the intellect (*ingenium*) and the hand (*manus*).³⁷ The hand, in particular, can be classified in the category of "speaking" hands, inasmuch as it allows the artist to speak about himself and his work.³⁸

The symbolic presence of all the arts in the painting evokes an association of ideas which inevitably recalls the discussions which went on in the nineteenth century regarding a synthesis of the arts, which could create the all-embracing art form,

³² Kotidis, 1995:209–210.

³³ Raupp, 1984:39.

³⁴ According to Raupp (1984:41), the cramped workshop is a constant feature of this type of self-portrait from the late 16th or early 17th. c.

³⁵ Kluxen, 1989:141.

³⁶ Charalampidis (1976:59) supposes that she is studying the Gospel. However, if we bear in mind that the Nazarenes were influenced by the brothers August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel, who argued for the superiority of poetry over the other arts, then it is natural for Kounelakis, who was influenced by the Nazarenes, to use the symbolism of poetry here. And see Piantoni, 1981:18–26.

³⁷ Calabrese, 2006:249.

³⁸ Calabrese, *ibid.*: 146–149.

the Gesamtkunstwerk.³⁹ For Kounelakis it is only natural that he should become involved in these sorts of debates, as he was living in Europe and more importantly was influenced by the Nazarenes who believed that artists “organized into communities, sharing common convictions, could achieve some great communal work”⁴⁰

As regards his theories on art, the sketch on the easel merits some attention. At first glance it makes us think of Florence, where the artist lived. However, given that he is depicted in the act of drawing, I think the sketch is intended to recall the controversy over *disegno e colore*, that is whether the value of painting lies in the ideas of the artist expressed in drawing or whether colour takes precedence because it allows the faithful, empirical depiction of nature.⁴¹ By holding a pencil and not a paintbrush, Kounelakis seems to come down on the side of *disegno*. However, if one looks at the whole painting, one feels that, despite its clear outlines, the artist has managed to balance his two main modelling tools and has achieved a form of painting which is the “composition in shapes and colours” the Nazarenes had envisaged.⁴²

Nikolaos Typaldos-Xydias (Lixouri 1828–Athens 1909) painted various types of self-portrait. Having lived most of his life in Paris, he moved to Athens after 1889. Among his well-known works are four self-portraits from his time in Paris.

In the self-portrait K.98 in the Koutlides Collection (Figure 6), a frontal depiction of the head of the young artist, his squint is conspicuous, a problem which is barely perceptible in a more or less contemporary self-portrait in three-quarter profile.⁴³ However, it is once again obvious in a later, three-quarter-length self-portrait⁴⁴ (Figure 7). The documenting of a physical flaw shows that the artist was influenced by Realism and did not enhance his appearance, but genuinely depicted the result of his self



Fig. 6: Nikolaos Xydias, *Self Portrait*, oil on canvas, 60x50 cm, c. 1860, Athens, National Gallery–Koutlides–Collection K. 98

³⁹ And see *Lexikon der Kunst*, [1968] 1981: II, 53–54. and *The Dictionary of Art*, 1996, 12:496–498, with bibliography.

⁴⁰ And see Bachleitner, 1976:176–181.

⁴¹ And see *The Dictionary of Art*, 1996, 9:6–9.

⁴² Piantoni, 1981:21–23.

⁴³ Illustration in Kefallenes, 1994:8, fig. 1.

⁴⁴ Illustration in *Afieroma ston Xydia*, 1996; unpaginated.

appraisal, rejecting the sort of idealisation which demanded concealment of any natural abnormalities⁴⁵ or the removal of any personal element from the face.⁴⁶ Nevertheless the squint has been corrected, perhaps surgically⁴⁷ in his last known self-portrait.

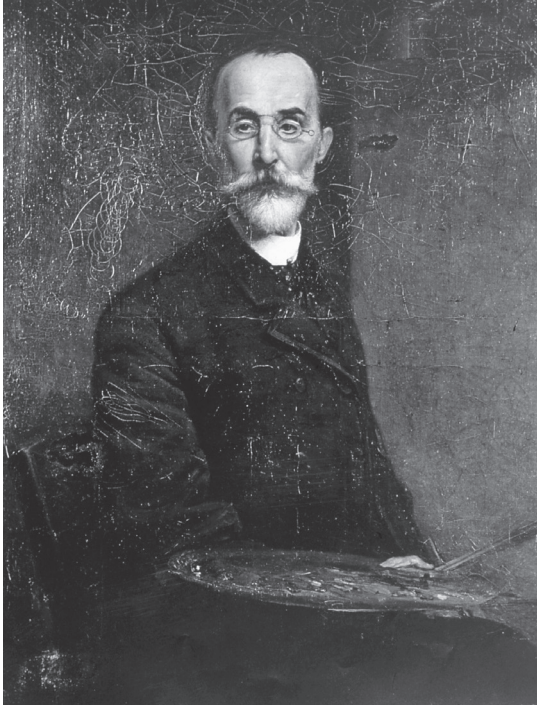


Fig. 7: Nikolaos Xydias, *Self Portrait*, oil on canvas, 100x82 cm, 1888, Athens, National Gallery–Koutlides–Collection K. 303

The painter is depicted in bust form, seated and holding a palette and brush, turning in three-quarter profile to the right, while looking the viewer directly in the eye. Dated to 1888, the self-portrait belongs to a type introduced by Raphael in the portrait of Baltassare Castiglione and adopted by later painters. The monumental pose, the enquiring gaze recall famous works such as the self-portraits of Jacques-Louis David (1794),⁴⁸ Francesco Hayes (1862)⁴⁹ or Edouard Manet (1879)⁵⁰ and place it squarely in the great European tradition which was coming to an end in the nineteenth century.

From the end of the eighteenth century the type of self-portrait which shows the artist's profession is on the wane and the number of works without occupational references are on the increase. This is due to the self-confidence the artist has gained and the introduction of the

cult of the intellect which render any kind of professional reference superfluous.⁵¹ The sort of self-portrait which will find favour from now on is influenced by the self-portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds which incorporate features from earlier, famous examples such as those of Titian or Rembrandt and present the subject as a pillar of the establishment. This change is, particularly evident in Reynold's portrait of 1779–80.⁵²

⁴⁵ For example, Paolo Lomazzo (1584), see Preimesberger, 1999:307–310, especially 308 and 310.

⁴⁶ For example, Carl Ludwig Fernow (1806), see Preimesberger, *ibid.*: 391.

⁴⁷ Stefanidis, 1996: unpaginated.

⁴⁸ Illustrated in Sturgis, Christiansen, Oliver and Wilson, 2006:12, fig. 4.

⁴⁹ Illustrated in Calabrese, 2006:256, fig. 235.

⁵⁰ Calabrese, *ibid.*: 260, fig. 238.

⁵¹ Kluxen, 1989:138–142.

⁵² Illustrated in Sturgis, Christiansen, Oliver and Wilson, 2006:47.

After the mid-nineteenth century the art of self-portraiture is positively “deconstructed”⁵³ and, though it does not die out, it no longer expresses theoretical opinions, thereby becoming increasingly indistinguishable from portraiture.

There are self-portraits of this type by many Greek painters, who from the late 1860s onwards were concerned with exploring their self image on one or more occasions. Examples of this exploration of self are evident in the work of painters such as Nikolaos Gyzis, Nikeforos Lytras, Polychronis Lembesis, Iakovos Rizos, Perikles Pantazis, Dionysios Tsokos, Georgios Avlichos, Thaleia Flora-Karavia and others. Moreover for the most part they are stereotypical depictions of the head or a bust-length portrait against a neutral ground, to give prominence to the head, frontal or in three-quarter profile, with a few exceptions, for example, Perikles Pantazis, ca. 1880 (Figure 8),⁵⁴ who is depicted in his studio, seated in a three-quarter-length portrait, in a pose of mental alertness recalling similar self-portraits of Anthonis van Dyck⁵⁵ or Courbet.⁵⁶ In addition to their artistic value in the context of the achievements of Modern Greek art, the self-portraits, especially those by artists living in Greece, are testimony of their efforts to be acknowledged by their fellow countrymen as intellectual creators. Their work helped make the profession of the artists an essential and distinct component of the evolving bourgeois society.⁵⁷

To conclude this process of exploring the emergence of self-portraiture on the Greek art scene, mention will be made of Nikeforos Lytras (1832–1904), who often resorted to his mirror, in order to capture his subjectivity in the microcosm of self-portraiture



Fig. 8: Pericles Pantazis, *Self Portrait*, oil on canvas, 60x45 cm, c. 1880, Athens, Giannis Perdios' Collection

⁵³ Calabrese, 2006:24.

⁵⁴ Missirli and Lydakis, 1998:194–195.

⁵⁵ Illustrated in Calabrese, 2006:151, fig. 143.

⁵⁶ Illustrated in Calabrese, *ibid.*: 327, fig. 297.

⁵⁷ Markatou, 2008:198, 199, *passim*.

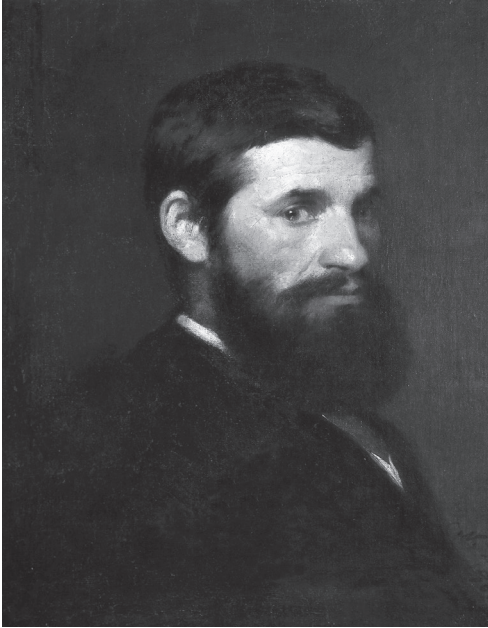


Fig. 9: Nikeforos Lytras, *Self Portrait*, oil on canvas, 53,5x43,5 cm, 1867, Athens, National Gallery P. 1851

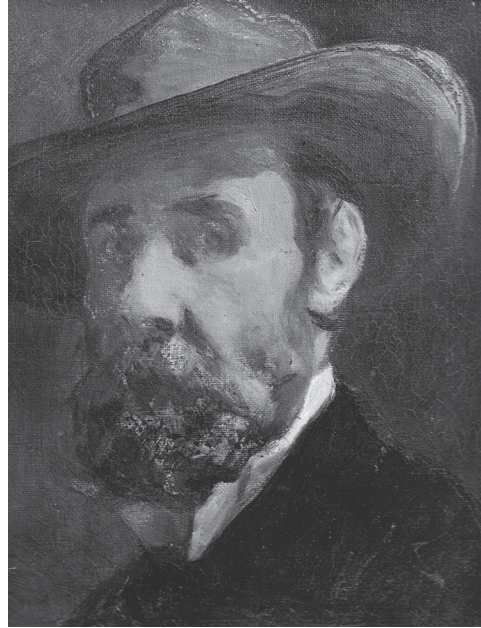


Fig. 10: Nikeforos Lytras, *Self Portrait with Hat*, oil on canvas, 27x22 cm, private collection

and to express the success he had found as an artist. In 1867 he painted a self-portrait (Figure 9) probably influenced by his appointment to the School of Arts the previous year.⁵⁸ Shown with a searching look in the portrait type of the well-dressed bourgeois, he gives an indication of the determination he would show as a teacher and founder of a Greek school of painting. In another self-portrait, as an older man wearing a hat,⁵⁹ (Figure 10) painted after Reynolds, but also imitating his fellow student, Hans Mackart,⁶⁰ he is shown as a successful bourgeois, emphasising both his personal status and the social advancement of Greek artists in general.

To recapitulate, we can see that nineteenth-century Greek painters, sometimes up-to-the-minute but more often following in the footsteps of their European counterparts, attempted to celebrate the achievements of centuries of European tradition in order to gain a place for themselves in the art world of the newly established state. And to a large extent they succeeded. Moreover, as we can deduce from the way that their self-portraiture developed, they were striving to be recognised as a unique branch of modern European art.

⁵⁸ Another self-portrait in left-facing three-quarter profile is more or less contemporary. It is now in the Athens National Gallery (acc. no. II 2597).

⁵⁹ In the Athens National Gallery there is another self-portrait with a hat, which shows him as an older man with very harsh features (acc. no. II 6797) and a sketch with a full-length depiction with hat, identified by Marilena Kasimati (acc. no. II 3688/368).

⁶⁰ See Trnek, 2005:238, ill. 239.

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* Fig. 10: Photograph from *Οι Έλληνες Ζωγράφοι από τον 19ο αιώνα στον 20ό*, Αθήνα χ.χ.: Εκδόσεις Μέλισσα, p. 101.