Innovating by design in inter-war Greece

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Abstract

This paper examines the role of design in Greek firms and society of the inter-war years. Evidence from primary sources and existing bibliography supports the argument that there was substantial awareness of design quality, as well as a clear understanding of design's role in increasing sales. Incorporating various aspects of design in entrepreneurial activities constituted a novel practice, a form of innovation in line with the on-going modernization of Greek society. However, design-related initiatives remained mostly on an embryonic level and failed to reach a level of maturity. The inconclusive nature of Greek inter-war design activities is discussed and is attributed to a range of political, financial and social factors.

Keywords: design; industrialisation; innovation; enterprise; inter-war years; Greece

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Introduction[1]

Before embarking on a discussion of the design domain in inter-war Greece, it is necessary to make some clarifications regarding the terminology used throughout this paper. This paper deals with the professional domain which today is usually described as *design*. While, for reasons of simplicity, the word *design* is employed in the present study for the inter-war years too, it should be borne in mind that this is an oversimplification for the convenience of readers. The word *design* did not have at the time the meaning that it has now, nor did the word *designer* exist in its current sense, especially in Greece.[2] In the time period under consideration (the 1920s and 1930s), there was no design field in the sense that we understand it today, in other words divided among areas of specialization such as graphic, interior, industrial, and so on. The domain of design skills was basically connected to the crafts, which were distinguished from both engineering on the one hand and the fine arts on the other. The professional area which is nowadays colloquially termed *design* was still largely undefined in Greece, operating under a variety of labels that meant different things to different people.[3] Textual sources used for the purposes of this paper include a range of terms to refer to what is now unified under the broad label of *design*: *applied arts*, *decorative arts*, *industrial arts*, *simple arts*, even *brutal arts*, as opposed to *fine arts*.[4]

Today, in the beginning of the 21st century, public perception of the design domain suffers from an overemphasis on visual and stylistic elements, to the expense of other aspects of its multidisciplinary character. The history of design has been established on a sense of aesthetic connoisseurship about certain

[1] This paper has resulted from a post-doctoral research project, partially supported by a State Scholarships' Foundation (IKY) grant (2002–2003) and by a Design History Society 25th Anniversary Research Award (2004). An early version was presented in the 2004 Annual Conference of the Association of Business Historians, Nottingham University Business School, 25–26 June 2004. I am very grateful to Ioanna Minoglou and to Alexios Zavras for their support and constructive comments. I would also like to thank the staff of the Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece for facilitating my research. Figures 3 and 4 are reproduced courtesy of the Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece.

[2] For an analysis of the evolution of design terminology in Greece, see Artemis Yagou, "Ti Einai to Design? Zitimata Ellinikis Orologias sti Gnostiki Perioxi tou Sxediasmou Proionton" (What is Design? The Issue of Greek Terminology in the Area of Industrial Design), *Proceedings of the 3rd Conference of the Hellenic Society for Terminology: "Greek language and terminology"*, Athens, 1–3 November 2001, pp. 129–137, and Artemis Yagou, "Greek Words for Creation: Reflections on Design Discourse in the Context of the Greek Language", *Another Name for Design: Words for Creation*, Proceedings of the ICDHS 2008 Conference, Osaka, 24–28 October 2008 (to appear). For a discussion on design terminology in the English language, see David Irwin, "Art Versus Design: The Debate 1760 to 1860", *Journal of Design History*, vol. 4, no 4, 1991, p. 219.

[3] The highly complex issue of the emergence of design education and incipient professionalisation is discussed in more detail in Artemis Yagou, "First Steps: Design Education and Professionalisation in Inter-war Greece", *Journal of Design History* (to be submitted). It should be emphasized that in the Greek case we could only speak of design "proto-professionalisation" during the inter-war years, rather than a distinct professional identity and consciousness. In the early 1930s, industrial design was only just beginning to become professionalized in the United States, the most advanced country in the world in this area. On the growth of the industrial design profession in the United States as a reaction to the Wall Street Crash of 1929, see Jonathan M. Woodham, *Twentieth-Century Design*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 66–70.

[4] Extensive research in a range of primary sources would be necessary in order to demonstrate the fine distinctions between these terms and specify their exact semantic differences, if any.

classes of objects, leaving out large areas of human experience and knowledge today associated with design. However, recent developments in design history have been leading to a gradual opening up of this field towards a more interdisciplinary perspective. This process is underpinned by the need to be inclusive and explore new skills and insights as our current inquiries evolve.[5] One example of this process of inclusion is based on the acknowledgement that industrial design, being rooted in the production and financial processes of a capitalist economy, is central to economic activity.[6] Therefore, information emanating from and associated with financial institutions is crucial in understanding design activities and their ramifications in society. This paper discusses design historical evidence on the inter-war period (1922–1940) resulting from research into primary, business-related sources and existing historiography. The purpose of this research has been to identify trends and mentalities of that period concerning design development in Greece.

More specifically, the present text is intended as a contribution to the discussion on enterprise culture and innovation from the point of view of design, which has so far remained in the shadow of more established and developed disciplines. Design management literature emphasizes the crucial role of design as a vital link between a market need or innovative idea and its translation into real products for manufacture and sale. Design contributes to the competitiveness of products through both "non-price" factors (performance, ease of use, appearance), as well as price factors (cost of manufacture and use).[7] Following the classification of innovations by Schumpeter, design primarily belongs to the first type: introduction of a new good or improvement in the quality of an existing good. Other aspects of design, such as corporate identity or novel promotional techniques, do not fit clearly in the above classification, might however be regarded as new types of organization.[8] Design in its wider sense is about proposing realizable artifacts, it is therefore about opportunities to change something for the better. Designers consider possible futures in the same manner that, in order to innovate, the entrepreneur has to visualise in his mind's eye the potential future demand.[9] The expanded view of design is thus very close to the

[5] Victor Margolin, "Design History and Design Studies", *The Politics of the Artificial*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002, pp. 218–233.

[6] In its Editorial Policy, the Journal of Design History (Oxford University Press) states that "The widespread recognition of the cultural significance and economic importance of design provides a broad base on which to build and the Journal seeks to promote links with other disciplines exploring material culture, such as anthropology, architectural history, art history, business history, craft history, cultural studies, design management studies, economic and social history, history of science and technology, and sociology." Editorial Policy, *Journal of Design History*, vol. 20, no 2, 2007.

[7] Vivien Walsh, Robin Roy, Margaret Bruce and Steven Potter, *Winning by Design: Technology, Product Design and International Competitiveness*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992.

[8] Mark Casson, "Entrepreneurship", in Adam Kuper and Jessica Kuper, *The Social Science Encyclopedia*, London: Routledge, 1999, pp. 249–250; Mark Casson, "Entrepreneurship", `http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Entrepreneurship.html` (accessed June 2008); Youssef Cassis and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou, "Entrepreneurship in Theory and History: State of the Art and New Perspectives", in Youssef Cassis and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou (eds), *Entrepreneurship in Theory and History*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 5–6.

[9] Klaus Krippendorff, *The Semantic Turn: A New Foundation for Design*, Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2006, pp. 25–28; Schröter and Travis quoted by François Caron, "Innovation", in Cassis and Minoglou (2005), *op. cit.*, pp. 114–115. A recent study defines the new category of "designer-entrepreneur", a professional model that becomes increasingly important in the 21st century. Mike Press and Rachel Cooper, *The Design Experience: The*

idea of the entrepreneur, who is regarded as an agent of change and carries out "new combinations" or "innovations".[10] The concept of innovation is central in contemporary design scholarship, to the point that "design" and "innovation" are considered to be very similar or even interchangeable terms.[11] The present paper traces the very first steps of design as a factor of innovation in Greece; it is expected this study will provide a new and hopefully useful perspective on the study of inter-war Greek society, and on innovation and entrepreneurship in general.

Inter-war Greek design in context

During the transitional period preceding the inter-war years, namely from 1880 to 1922, the Greek economy was gradually transformed from its purely agrarian past through a generalized capitalist penetration. This transformation was supported by foreign loans and was expressed primarily by the development of infrastructure, as well as by an attempt to rationalize the institutional and educational contexts. These measures, together with a large influx of refugees, helped to create an internal market of considerable size and gave a significant thrust to the local industry. The emergence of a market where design gradually acquired a certain importance may be particularly connected to the political and social upheavals of the inter-war years. The "Catastrophe of Smyrni", or in other words the Izmir disaster of 1922 which brought a terrible end to the Greek-Turkish inter-war conflict, constitutes a major event in the collective consciousness of Greek people. The event signalled a crucial turning point for both countries: Turkey moved with more confidence towards its nationalist and secular future, while in Greece the arrival of one and a half million refugees fuelled industrialisation and accelerated the pace of capitalist expansion. The "'22" has been seminal for the formation of a consumer society in the country and is perhaps the real starting point of modernity in Greece. Following the disaster, Greek society was fertilized by the refugees on many levels and their contribution in the formation of modern Greece has been invaluable.[12] Their massive number was itself a major factor, as it added significantly to the available workforce and at the same time enlarged demand in the local market.[13] The population ex-

Role of Design and Designers in the Twenty-First Century, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, pp. 154–155.

[10] Casson (1999), *op. cit.*.

[11] Walsh et.al., *op. cit.*, pp. 15–16.

[12] Renee Hirschon, *Klironomoi tis Mikrasiatikis Katastrofis: I Koinoniki Zoi ton Mikrasiaton Prosfigon ston Pirea*, Athens: Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, 2004, p. 23 (English edition: *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). See also Kostas Katsapis, I Apokatastasi ton Prosfigon stin Ellada tou Mesopolemou: To Geniko Perigramma (The Rehabilitation of Refugees in Inter-war Greece: The General Outline), in Yorgos Tzedopoulos, *Pera apo tin Katastrofi: Mikrasiates Prosfiges stin Ellada tou Mesopolemou* (Beyond the Catastrophe: Asia Minor Refugees in Inter-war Greece), Athens: Foundation of the Hellenic World, 2003, pp. 38–40.

[13] As Anastassopoulos notes in his history of Greek industry, "1922 is a landmark for the local industry, by enriching the country with 1 350 000 refugees, used as working force but as consumers at the same time." Georgios Anastassopoulos, *Istoria tis Ellinikis Viomichanias, Tomos C (1923–1940)* (A History of Greek Industry 1840–1940, Vol. C, 1923–1940), Athens: Greek Publication Company, 1947, p. 1436. See also Costas Vergopoulos, *Ethnismos kai Oikonomiki Anaptiksi: I Ellada sto Mesopolemo* (Nationalism and Financial

changes resulted in the creation of a rich, multilingual and multicultural human force, bearing numerous traditions and different types of professional knowledge, including weaving, tapestry, ceramics, woodcarving, metalwork, and decorative painting.[14] Special skills and competencies were transplanted and new industrial sectors introduced, such as carpet-making and tobacco cultivation. The novel skills of Asia Minor refugees certainly constituted the motivation behind the establishment of several new industries in the 1920s.[15] Furthermore, many Greek entrepreneurs who were relocated from Asia Minor enriched the local business environment through their know-how and networking.[16] The ramifications of the 1922 events acted as a major catalyst and it may be argued that they signalled the true start of Greek modernity.[17] In his discussion of Greek industrialization efforts in the 19th and early 20th centuries, a Greek historian notes that perhaps the local society needed external pressures to change; these were provided by the 1922 events.[18]

After 1922, capitalist methods of production became consolidated and Greek industry made substantial progress, but at the same time, due to the international financial crisis, Greece was directed to a strategy of withdrawal and protectionism.[19] A recent study emphasizes the need to understand the impact of the 1922 disaster both in terms of the conjecture, as well as within an international context.[20] The presence of refugees affected in three ways the

Development: Greece in the Inter-war Years), Athens: Exandas, 1978, pp. 17–24. On the other hand, as Dritsa observes, the refugee influx restricted local demand to products aimed at the lower financial strata. Margarita Dritsa, *To Chroma tis Epitichias: Elliniki Viomichania Chromaton 1830–1990* (The Colour of Success: The Greek Dyestuff Industry 1830–1990), Athens: Trohalia, 1995, p. 55.

[14] Eugenios Matthiopoulos, "Kales Technes" (Fine Arts), in Christos Hadziiossif (ed), *Istoria tis Elladas ston Eikosto Aiona, 1922–1940 O Mesopolemos, tomos B2* (History of Greece in the 20th Century, 1922–1940 The Inter-war Years, vol. B2), Athens: Vivliorama, 2003, p. 402 and p. 412. The importance of know-how in ceramics and hand-painted decoration brought by Asia Minor refugees is also stressed by Rousetos Leivadaros, "Aggeioplastiki Etaireia 'Kerameikos"' ('Kerameikos' Ceramics Company), in Odos Pireos: Ekei Opou Stekoun Akomi Kaminades (Pireos Street: Where Chimneys Still Stand), *Kathimerini* (Epta Imeres insert), 13 October 2002, pp. 15–17.

[15] Hirschon, *op. cit.*, p. 165. Mark Mazower, *I Ellada kai i Oikonomiki Krisi tou Mesopolemou*, Athens: Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, 2002, p. 129. (English edition: *Greece and the Inter-War Economic Crisis*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1991).

[16] Hirschon, *op. cit.*, pp. 43–44.

[17] Alkis Rigos, *I Defteri Elliniki Dimokratia 1924–1935: Koinonikes Diastaseis tis Politikis Skinis* (The 2nd Greek Democracy 1924–1935: Social Dimensions of the Political Scene), Athens: Themelio, 1999, p. 74; Vergopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[18] Alexis Politis, "Ena Mikro Kommati tis Pagosmias Empirias" (A Small Piece of Global Experience), *Apotypomata tou Chronou: Istorika Dokimia gia mia Mi Theoritiki Theoria* (Imprints of Time: Historical Essays for a Non-theoretical Theory), Athens: Polis, 2006, p. 204. However, Christodoulaki challenges several aspects of the "established orthodoxy" regarding Greek inter-war industrialisation and the impact refugees have had on industrial growth: Olga Christodoulaki, "Industrial Growth Revisited: Manufacturing Output in Greece During the Interwar Period", London School of Economics Working Paper no 50/99, `http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/economicHistory/pdf/wp5099.pdf` (accessed June 2008).

[19] Rigos, *op. cit.*, p. 29–31. Also Nikolaos Mouzelis, *Neoelliniki Koinonia: Opseis Ypanaptiksis*, Athens: Exantas, 1978, p. 313 (English edition: *Modern Greece: Facets of Underdevelopment*, London: MacMillan, 1978), and Margarita Dritsa, *Viomichania kai Trapezes stin Ellada tou Mesopolemou* (Industry and Banks in Inter-war Greece), Athens: Cultural Foundation of the National Bank of Greece, 1990, pp. 71–72.

[20] Christos Hadziiossif, "To Prosfygiko Sok: Oi Statheres kai Metavoles tis Ellinikis Oikonomias" (The Refugee Shock: The Constants and Changes of Greek Economy), in Christos Hadziiossif (ed), *Istoria tis Elladas ston Eikosto Aiona, 1922–1940 O Mesopolemos, to-*

development of the manufacturing domain (of both large and small-size industries): first through the expansion of the internal market that it caused, secondly through the entrepreneurship skills that the refugees brought with them, and thirdly through the increase in workforce availability. All three factors were related to design. The first one, the expansion of the internal market, increased the demand for manufactured consumer goods, contributed to the maturing of a consumer society and in this sense paved the way for developments in the design domain. The second one, the import of entrepreneurial skills, is also relevant if we consider design as one of the tools in the arsenal of an entrepreneur, although this point might not be as clear at that time as it is to a modern firm.[21] The third one, the increase in workforce availability, had a crucial quantitative dimension but also an important qualitative one, as many of the refugees were skilled workers and agents of significant know-how in their respective, applied arts domains. Thus, they enabled an increase in productivity and supported the development of the manufacturing sector. In practice, however, the effect of the disaster was not an isolated phenomenon and should not be examined within a deterministic conception of history; its action relied heavily on pre-existing structures of Greek industry.[22] Between 1917 and 1922, warfare conditions had created increased demand for products but also made imports more difficult. Thus, they had created favourable conditions for local industries producing consumer goods.[23] In this context, several consumer-oriented industries became active, especially in the areas of ceramics, tapestry, glass, kitchen equipment, metal furniture, and small appliances.[24]

Generally speaking, Greek industry was characterized by intense fragmentation into small or very small firms based on the exploitation of low wages and there was no tendency towards the accumulation of capital. This feature was further intensified by the urgent employment needs of the refugees, who had to be incorporated into the workforce as quickly as possible. Light industry was an appropriate outlet for the newly arrived masses of unemployed. By joining the mass of poorly paid workers, they contributed to the increase of production for an expanded market, while at the same time they helped keep the investment demands at a low level.[25] It has been argued that the disaster turned out to be a blessing for industrial capital, because it provided the missing element for a decisive transformation of merchant capital to industrial capital: a proletariat formed by the uprooting of Greek-speaking populations from Minor Asia.[26] Thus, there was a complementary, dynamic relationship between the numbers and types of refugees and the structures and priorities already established in the country. Furthermore, limited capital availability meant that companies had to

mos B1 (History of Greece in the 20th Century, 1922–1940 The Inter-war Years, vol. B1), Athens: Vivliorama, 2002, p. 10.

[21] Walsh et.al., *op. cit.*; Press and Cooper, *op. cit.*.

[22] Hadziiossif (2002), *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[23] Katsapis, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

[24] The present study does not consider wooden furniture production, which is a domain of major importance but has been studied extensively in a recent monograph: George Parmenidis and Efrossini Roupa, *To Astiko Epiplo stin Ellada 1830–1940: Enas Aionas Sigrotisis Kanonon Schediasmou* (Bourgeois Furniture in Greece, 1830–1940: A Century of Construction of Design Rules), Athens: National Technical University of Athens Press, 2004.

[25] Hadziiossif (2002), *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[26] Aristotle Tympas, "What Have We Been since 'We Have Never Been Modern'? A Macro-Historical Periodization Based on Historiographical Considerations on the History of Technology in Ancient and Modern Greece", *ICON*, vol. 8, 2002, pp. 76–106.

resort to banks for loans on a regular basis. Companies would usually resort for such purposes to the National Bank of Greece, which was the most powerful and respected institution of its kind.[27] Today, the presence of the files of these companies in the Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece (HA/NBG) provides a valuable source of information about their activities and the context in which they had to operate.[28]

Emergence of design awareness

In the inter-war period, the modernization of the Greek society was gradually being realised and Greece was emerging as an average capitalist country incorporated into the international market. The Greek urban citizen was being accustomed to new lifestyles glorifying consumption and, through consumption, the individual attempts to define one's own social and national identity.[29] This was complemented by the fact that the consumer power of middle- and lower middle classes increased substantially, thus creating larger groups of potential consumers who were more and more interested in what the market had to offer.[30] Reports of the period document a high level of conspicuous consumption.[31] Increase in spending power led to the creation of a more conscious public and there are numerous indications of growing design awareness. Advertising in particular

[27] Christos Hadziiossif, *I Girea Selini: I Viomichania stin Elliniki Oikonomia 1830–1940* (The Elderly Moon: Industry in the Greek Economy, 1830–1940), Athens: Themelio, 1993, pp. 258–264; Dritsa (1990), *op. cit.*, pp. 71–72; Aliki Vaxevanoglou, *Oi Ellines Kefaleouchi 1900–1940: Mia Koinoniki kai Oikonomiki Prosegisi* (Greek Capitalists 1900–1940: A Social and Financial Approach), Athens: Themelio, 1994, pp. 77–78.

[28] The National Bank of Greece (NBG), founded in 1841, is the oldest and largest bank operating today in Greece. It began life as a private discount and mortgage institution, but was also, until 1928, the Central Bank, with the exclusive right to issue banknotes. Since its foundation, the National Bank of Greece has always been aware of the importance of the preservation of its records and the archives of the bank have always been among its priorities. Already in 1894 the NBG published an inventory of its general archives, and the 1920s saw it build the first purpose-built archive Greece, where its Historical Archives are housed today. Information contained in the archives is considered to have fundamental and continuing value for administrative, fiscal, legal, evidential or historical purposes. By safeguarding its archives, the Bank was able to safeguard a part of the country's cultural heritage. On these issues, see Gerassimos Notaras and Nikos Pantelakis, "Microfilming and Document-Image Processing: Preservation Reprography Programs of Historical Archives of National Bank of Greece", Archives and IT Solutions, *European Association for Banking History Workshop*, Istanbul, 2002; Gerassimos Notaras and Nikos Pantelakis, "The Historical Dimension in Appraising Banking Archives", Appraising Banking Archives, *European Association for Banking History Workshop*, Milan, 2003. The NBG strategy proves to be of particular importance in Greece, where few company archives survive and are available to researchers. Therefore, the existence of a well-preserved historical archive of a major institution is of great importance, but the NBG archive is all the more important because of the dominant role this bank has had in the country's history. See Dritsa (1990), *op. cit.*, Vaxevanoglou (1994), *op. cit.*, as well as Elvira: Elliniki Viomichania Radiophonon kai Ilektrikon Eidon A.E., Ekthesis tou Dioikitikou Simvouliou epi ton Pepragmenon apo tis Sistaseos tis Etaireias mas mechri tis 31/12/38 (Elvira: Greek Industry of Radios and Electric Goods S.A., Report of the Board of Directors on the Transactions from the Establishment of our Company till 31/12/38), 12 May 1939, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-050.

[29] Parmenidis and Roupa, *op. cit.*, pp. 447–454.

[30] Parmenidis and Roupa, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

[31] Dritsa (1990), *op. cit.*, pp. 97–98. See also Yannis Kairofyllas, *I Athina tou Mesopolemou* (Athens in the Inter-war Years), Athens: Philippoti Publications, 1988.

provides abundant examples of the emergence of new consumption patterns.[32] Car advertisements of the mid thirties refer to "perfection and elegance of manufacture [...] comfort and pleasure of use", and imply high sensitization of the public regarding aesthetic, ergonomic, and other design features of products.[33] The Permanent Exhibition of Greek Products that took place at the Zappeion building in Athens between 1933 and 1938 was accompanied by a catalogue which illustrates the increased public awareness in relation to design. [See figure 1 on page 9] Examples of advertising and exhibition design included in the catalogue reveal a substantial level of design awareness and emphasize modern styles. [See figure 2 on page 10] Also, many documents in the Industrial Credit section of the Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece include references to design suggesting the emergence of market-conscious and demanding buyers.

Seen from a wider perspective on Greek industry of the period, these are of course marginal references. Greek industry was in its first steps and design was hardly emerging as an issue of concern to industrialists, entrepreneurs and administrators. However, despite design being a peripheral issue, such references provide evidence of emerging trends and allow valuable insights into the opinions of business circles as well as of the general public. There is clear acknowledgement of the role of the visual aspects of products and how these are intertwined with an understanding of appropriateness or quality. For example, the annual report of a ceramics company identified interior decoration as a very promising area, where sales were continuously rising, especially that of coloured tiles for bathrooms, kitchens, and other domestic uses. The report stresses the fact that sales were boosted by the "new decorative art of the home", which had been released from the monotony of white and employed widely various colours.[34] Many companies employed promotional techniques such as illustrated product catalogues with detailed specifications, a practice which also indicates a relatively sophisticated audience or at least the desire to shape and educate such a consuming public.[35] The illustrated product catalogue of Antonakopoulos Brothers firm is one of the most interesting examples, consisting of numerous pages with black-and-white images presenting in detail the company's products, characterized by "excellent quality, artistic designs, very competitive prices". Various designs of tiles and bathroom equipment are presented together with dimensions and other technical specifications.[36] [See figure 3 on page 10] The

[32] Parmenidis and Roupa, *op. cit.*, numerous examples.

[33] Dimitra Vassileiadou, Themistoclis P. Roukis, and Sakis Spyridis, Oi Aparhes tis Katanalotikis Koinonias stin Ellada tou Mesopolemou (The Beginnings of Consumer Society in Inter-war Greece), unpublished seminar paper, Rethymno: University of Crete, 2001, p. 69.

[34] "Cyclops" Ceramics Company S.A., G. Ventouris & Co., Ekthesis Dioikitikou Simvouliou, Ekthesis ton Elegton, Isologismos 1927 (Report of the Board of Directors, Auditors' Report, 1927 Balance), Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 4-013.

[35] On the role and importance of illustrated product catalogues in the development of consumer society since the middle of the 19th century, see Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society 1750–1980*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1986, p. 62; John Heskett, *Industrial Design*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1987, pp. 60–62; Renato de Fusco, *History of Design*, Athens: Nova, 1989, p. 66; Jonathan M. Woodham, *op. cit.*, pp. 15–18. See also Maxine Berg quoted in Caron, *op. cit.*, pp. 114–115 and pp. 117–118, on the importance of innovative marketing strategies.

[36] Antonakopoulos Bros Catalogue (ceramic tiles and bathroom equipment, Athens, mid 1930s), Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 4-025.

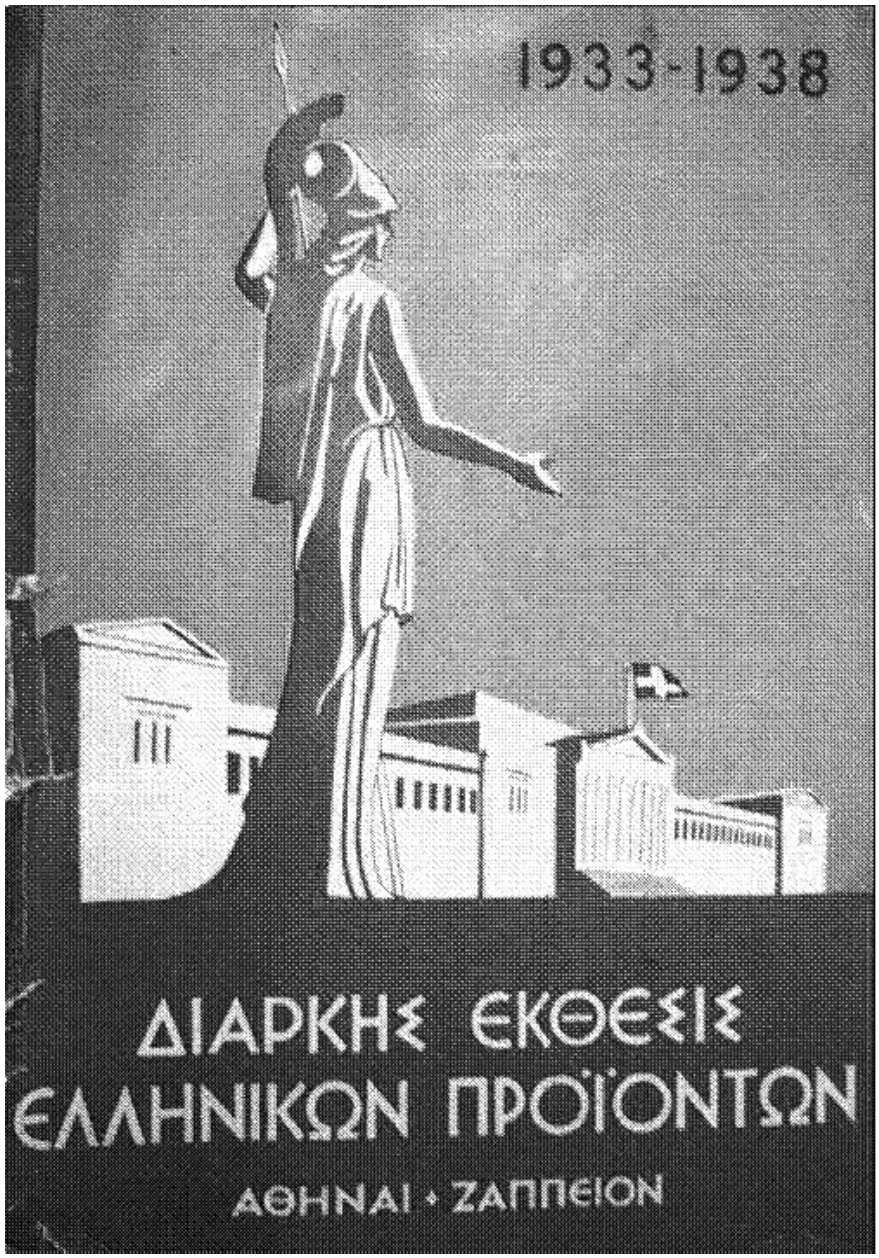

Figure 1: Cover, *Catalogue of the Permanent Exhibition of Greek Products, 1933–1938, Zappeion, Athens*, 1938.

Figure 2: Advertising of Greek firm producing brass products, *Catalogue of the Permanent Exhibition of Greek Products, 1933–1938, Zappeion, Athens*, 1938, p. 38.

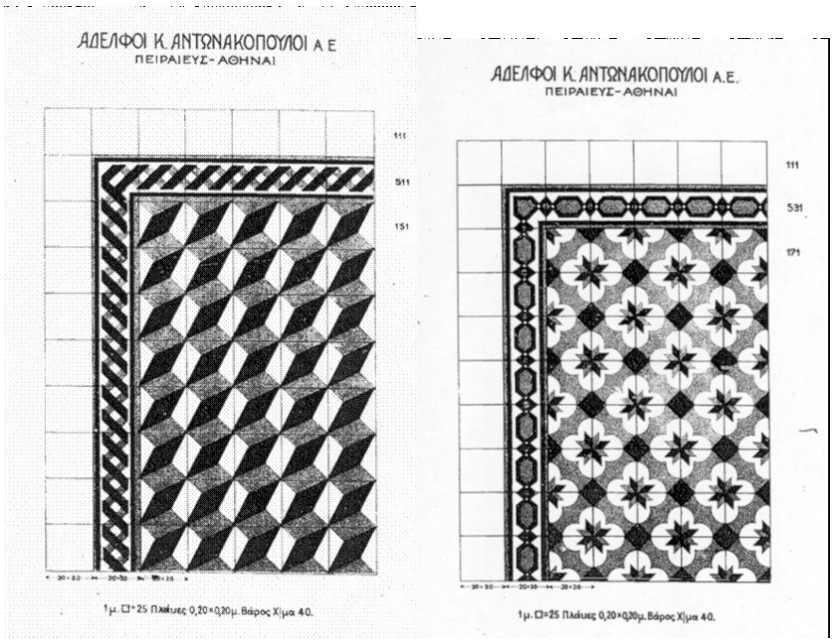

Figure 3: Ceramic tile designs, illustrated catalogue of Antonakopoulos Bros company, Athens, mid 1930s, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 4-025.

metallurgical company Kosmos, based in Thessaloniki, also furnished in 1938 an extensive, bilingual Greek-French catalogue with black and white illustrations and detailed specifications of products: coffee and tea cups, various cooking utensils, and other household items. [See figure 4 on page 12] Kosmos' advertising material promotes also the potential for customized production, to satisfy any demand.[37] However, modern marketing techniques were not limited to the domestic sector. As documents of the metallurgical company BIO reveal, Greek farmers had also been the target of marketing schemes which were quite complex by the standards of the time. BIO was employing extensive, illustrated product catalogues with detailed instructions of use, in a language that was simple and easy to understand. BIO also established a showroom of equipment for sale, as well as a showroom of equipment that could be put into operation and tested on site. Furthermore, BIO established many other measures to support consumers and buyers, such as the practice of one-year guarantee and the creation of a group of travelling technicians.[38] [See figure 5 on page 13]

Another eloquent example is expressed by advertising leaflets of the manufacturing company Thermis, which produced various items for household and professional use, especially steel furniture and stoves. The arguments presented in these leaflets in favour of Thermis products partly reflect the demands of the clients, and partly attempt to shape these demands for the benefit of the company. The advertising copy makes direct and extensive reference to product features, without mentioning prices. Such features are quality and sturdiness of construction; quality of finish; customization of construction and finish to satisfy variable needs; ease of cleaning and maintenance; modularity and ease of transportation; durability; resistance to fire, humidity, and pests; and of course elegance. The text also refers to the "popularization" of steel usage for furniture.[39] Through such campaigns, the manufacturing firms where attempting to influence public preferences in favour of their products which represented the innovative end of the market. Such a promotion was clearly targeted to compete with wooden furniture representing tradition and hand-made quality, as opposed to the new type of steel furniture created by mass production methods. By emphasizing construction quality, practicality, ease of use and other functionally-oriented features, they were gradually educating the public towards new taste and consumption patterns. Metal furniture however failed to compete seriously with wooden furniture, which dominated the domestic market. Metal furniture was successful primarily for workspace, public, and professional uses such as banks, hospitals, waiting rooms, schools and so forth. Their appeal to domestic spaces was limited to garden or veranda uses and home entrances.[40] Carpet-making was another promising and fast developing domain as well as an area where design was identified as offering a competitive advantage. An article from the late 1920s acknowledges that carpet-making is progressing greatly

[37] Hellenic Metallurgical Society Kosmos S.A. Catalogue, 1938 edition, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-048. See also the catalogue of Thermis (steel furniture, Athens, 1937), Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-020.

[38] I Megisti Simasia tis Anaptixeos par'Imin tis 'Michanopoiias' (The Major Importance of Locally Developing 'Machine Factories'), Report of the General Industrial Company BIO, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-007.

[39] Thermis 1937 advertising leaflet, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-020.

[40] Parmenidis and Roupa, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

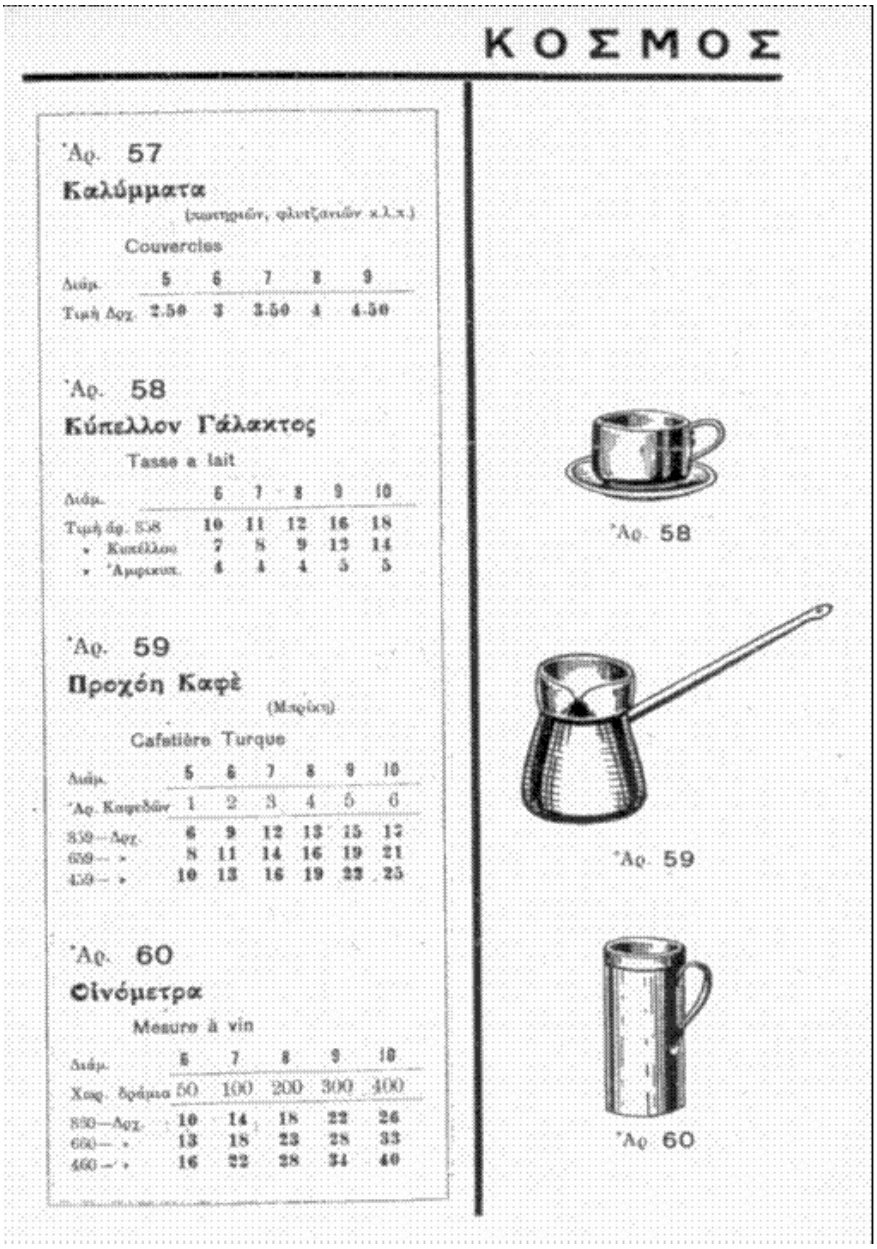

Figure 4: Household products, illustrated catalogue of Kosmos metalware company, Thessaloniki, 1938, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-048.

Figure 5: Exhibition stand for BIO company, *Catalogue of the Permanent Exhibition of Greek Products, 1933–1938, Zappeion, Athens*, 1938, p. 84.

and presents significant export opportunities, especially to the United States. Design quality is however stated as a necessary prerequisite for continuing success: "Greek products, especially tapestry ones, may find a good market in the United States. To this end, it is however necessary to retain their exquisite quality and to improve the artistic composition of designs. America will pay expensive prices for artistic carpets of first quality."[41] The aforementioned examples suggest that the financial importance of design was acknowledged in many different product areas.

Challenges and shortcomings

Despite the favourable prospects, the Greek industry could not face the new challenges posed by the international as well as the local conjuncture.[42] This has been attributed to a range of factors. First of all, most governments were convinced that the country's development would come from the agrarian and the commercial sector, rather than from industry. Longstanding arguments had been expressed in favour or against the potential of Greece for industrial development.[43] The dominant belief was that industry would create a social chasm between the rich and the poor, between the few capitalists and the working masses, a chasm which was threatening the myth of an homogenous and classless Greek society. This belief was closely related to the aim of preserving social stability in favour of the bourgeois upper and middle classes. It was feared that redirection of the whole system towards industrial development would inevitably cause significant social tensions and perhaps collapse of the system itself. Foreign powers encouraged the anti-industrial views of the Greek governments, because such views served well their own purposes: servicing of the huge public debt of Greece to foreign creditors, preservation and increase of Greek markets for imported products, as well as preservation of the general dependence of the Greek state and society.[44] As a result, governments from all areas of the political spectrum preferred to promote agriculture rather than industry.[45] Greek nationalism was deeply ingrained with an anti-industrial spirit.[46] The banking system itself was unfavourable to industrial investments, considered to be very high-risk activities.[47] Nevertheless, despite the predominant suspicion towards industry, the period from 1922 to 1938–1939 is considered to be an industri-

[41] *Erga*, no 93, 15 April 1929, p. 600.
[42] Dritsa (1990), *op. cit.*, pp. 439–441.
[43] Hadziiossif (1993), *op. cit.*, p. 166, p. 217, p. 258, p. 280, and p. 304; Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 309; Vergopoulos, *op. cit.*, pp. 79–80; Christina Agriantoni, Oi Michanikoi kai I Viomichania: Mia Apotichimeni Sinantisi (Engineers and Industry: An Unsuccessful Meeting), in Hadziiossif (2002), *op. cit.*, pp. 268–293; Note also the systematic publications in favour of industrialisation by the journal *Erga*: "Parasitismos kai Viomichania" (Parasitism and Industry), *Erga*, no 118, 30 April 1930, p. 625; untitled article, *Erga*, no 133, 15 December 1930, p. 357; "I Elliniki Viomichania Exipiretei to Koinon Symferon" (Greek Industry Serves our Common Interest), *Erga*, no 134, 30 December 1930, p. 385; "I Oloklirosis tis Paragogis mas" (The Integration Of Our Production), *Erga*, no 136, 30 January 1931, p. 435; "To Kyvernitikon Endiaferon yper tis Viomichanias" (The Governmental Interest for Industry), *Erga*, no 144, 30 May 1931, p. 649; etc.
[44] Hadziiossif (1993), *op. cit.*, pp. 98–99 and p. 286. See also Dritsa (1995), *op. cit.*, p. 55, and Dritsa (1990), *op. cit.*, pp. 74–80.
[45] Mazower, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–57.
[46] Mazower, *op. cit.*, pp. 129–132.
[47] Hadziiossif (1993), *op. cit.*, pp. 245–264 and pp. 401–405; Mazower, *op. cit.*, pp. 96–97.

alisation phase, which was characterized by a smooth upward climb without an abrupt discontinuity.[48] The inter-war years witnessed the establishment of several industries for the production of consumer goods; these were however small, family-run companies based on low investment, cheap labour and dated technical equipment. The structure and nature of these firms contributed to the intensely petit-bourgeois character of Greek society and perpetuated the individualistic values shared by middle and lower-middle class strata.[49] The local small and medium size industry was characterized by extreme segmentation of production and generated products of low added value and limited competitiveness.[50] In that period, Greek industrial production was described as "purely tariff-dependent".[51]

The competitiveness of Greek products, sustained by high tariffs rather than quality, was a major cause of concern to industrialists and business analysts alike. Comparison with other countries was often unfavourable for Greek products, which were characterized by low price, but also poor quality and low competitiveness.[52] The qualitative evaluation of Greek industrial output produced mixed results.[53] A 1931 report on the Kerameikos potteries claimed that their faience products had improved considerably and were very well received in exhibitions abroad, and in a 1940 report Greek faience products were judged to be of higher quality than German, Italian, or French ones, but not as good as Finnish and British ones.[54] A crucial question was whether the local industry would manage to retain this fragile competitiveness after the looming second world war, especially as it would not be feasible to keep the same level of tariff protection. Awareness of the role design could play to face this problem was clearly introduced at this point, as indicated in a report which acknowledged that, in the faience product area, "shape and colour play a very significant role".[55] However, the Greek faience industry could not fully cover the demands of consumption, as it could not cater for wide product variety. This was attributed to the lack of special mechanical equipment, as well as to the small size of the local consumer market which prevented high production runs. For these reasons, local production could not face the competition by German and

[48] Helen Louri and Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou, "A Hesitant Evolution: Industrialisation and De-Industrialisation in Greece over the Long Run", *The Journal of European Economic History*, vol. 31, no 2, 2002, pp. 321–348.

[49] Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[50] Rigos, *op. cit.*, p. 12; Hadziiossif (1993), *op. cit.*, pp. 312–313; Dritsa (1990), *op. cit.*, p. 91; Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 133, pp. 329–332, and p. 385; Vaxevanoglou, *op. cit.*, pp. 55–57.

[51] Peri tis Argilloplastikis en genei (idia de peri tis Viomichanias Faventianon kai Porselanon) kai tis Viomichanias Plastikon (On Potteries in General (and Particularly Regarding Faience and Porcelain Factories) and Plastics Factories), National Bank of Greece Report, Department of Enterprises and Funding, September 1940, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, Sub-series 0, p. 10; Rigos, *op. cit.*, p. 71 and p. 87; Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 134 and p. 341.

[52] Dimitris Zannos, Ekthesis peri tis Poreias kai Mellonikis Exelixeos ton Ergasion tis Etaireias "Kioutacheia" (Report on the course and future evolution of the works of Kioutacheia Potteries), National Bank of Greece, October 1929, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 4-020, pp. 1–2.

[53] "Viomichanika Proionta" (Industrial Products), *Erga*, no 152, 30 September 1931, p. 222.

[54] Ekthesis tou Dioikitikou Simvouliou tis Aggeioplastikis Etaireias "O Kerameikos" pros tin Genikin Sinelefsi ton Metochon epi ton Pepragmenon tis Chriseos 1930 (Report of the Board of Directors of Kerameikos Potteries to the General Assembly of Shareholders for the Balance of the Year 1930), 15/5/1931, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 4-019, p. 2. Peri tis Argilloplastikis... *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[55] Ibid.

English firms which produced items in very large quantities and of far higher quality, respectively. Thus, Greek production was unsatisfactory and market demands were met to a great extent by imported goods. The author of the report formulated the view that Greek industry could not possibly prevail over these foreign competitors and expressed a gloomy prediction for the post-war years.[56] New materials and their potential had also come to the attention of analysts, however the latter did not anticipate a bright future for new materials for domestic uses. It was believed that "plastic household items cannot conquer the wide popular consumer mass, but they are directed only to the limited consumer public of travellers and tourists." This was clearly a case of misjudgement and an opportunity was missed to develop a new product area.[57]

Furthermore, it was widely acknowledged that the Greek public was very attracted by imported products and at the same time very suspicious about local products, which were considered to be inferior, an issue of concern to the government as it led to swelling of imports.[58] A newspaper article discussed enamel products manufactured in Greece, which were sometimes of higher quality than imported ones, but local people preferred the imported ones, "because they are foreign". "Of course these must be banished" claimed the newspaper reporter, "to the interest of consumers and to the interest of our National economy."[59] Similarly, in a report which examined the prospects of engineering industries, the Greek consumer was characterized as a "xenomaniac". The Greek buying public was convinced that factories in other European countries were by far more serious and their products of higher quality than the Greek ones.[60] This was acknowledged as partly true by the analyst and was attributed to the long history of foreign companies, whereas in Greece industrial firms had not had the time to develop. The extensive customer-support measures by the BIO company constituted a response to the preference of Greek consumers for imported products. Especially in the case of highly technical products that BIO was manufacturing, local firms were not to be trusted. In many cases, the obsession of Greeks with foreign products led to employing foreign-sounding brand names for various local products, such as textiles and hats, in order to make them more attractive. To make things even worse, many representatives of foreign brands systematically defamed Greek products, without considering "the blow which they strike this way on our National economy"![61] Various institutions campaigned in favour of Greek products, however with limited success.[62]

[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Kairofyllas, *op. cit.*, pp. 164–165; "Ta Ellinika Proionta" (The Greek Products), *Erga*, no 144, 30 May 1931, p. 649; "Viomichanika Proionta" (Industrial Products), *Erga*, no 152, 30 September 1931, p. 222.
[59] I Elliniki Viomichania ton Eidon Emagie tis Keas (The Greek Industry of Enamel Goods in Kea), newspaper article, circa 1933, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-022.
[60] I Megisti Simasia... *op. cit.*, p. 11. See also Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 334, for the preference of merchants towards imported products.
[61] I Megisti Simasia... *op. cit.*, pp. 11–12.
[62] Hadziiossif (1993), *op. cit.*, pp. 356–357; Georgios K. Strigos, "N'Anaptixomen tin Agapi tou Laou pros ta Proionta tis Ellinikis Viomichanias" (Let's Develop the Love of the People for the Products of Greek Industry), *Catalogue of the Permanent Exhibition of Greek Products, 1933–1938, Zappeion, Athens*, p. 59; Artemis Yagou, "Metamorphoses of Formalism: National Identity as a Recurrent Theme of Design in Greece", *Journal of Design History*, Special Issue on South-Eastern European Design, vol. 20, no 2, 2007, pp. 145–159.

During the inter-war years, industrial production was generally treated as a source of national pride as well as a ground for competition among different countries, a form of financial nationalism. In Greece, the discourse of industrial development was inseparable from expressions of nationalism and from the rhetoric of "Greekness", namely of an intangible essence expressing the national spirit. Kioutacheia potteries, established on the tradition and expertise of the art brought from Kioutacheia, Asia Minor, by Greek refugees, furnish a relevant case. The Board of Kioutacheia potteries were claiming that their productive efforts were directed towards "saving this very Greek art and enabling it to continue its tradition in contemporary Greek life." Kioutacheia products had been presented in international exhibitions and had received various awards, they were thus considered to be proofs of "Greek performance and creativity."[63] A 1929 report on the activities of this company referred to "the colossal importance that the applied FOLK ARTS have for every country from a National and from a wealth-producing point of view."[64] The same report emphasized that, especially in the last years, there had been a very intensive mobilization in the biggest European states regarding the development of "applied Folk Arts". This mobilization had been primarily expressed by the establishment of more and more Schools of Arts and Crafts, in which the major role was held by decorative arts initially based on the Folk motifs of each country. The writer of the report stressed that in Greece there is great wealth of motifs from ancient, Byzantine, and contemporary Folk art, which could be used to create a "synchronized Folk art" of very high commercial value and increased market competitiveness.[65] In the last paragraph of his report, the author makes a rather sentimental call to all "patriotic men", and especially to "rich patriots" who are particularly interested in "our Folk art", to support industry in its first steps for the sake of "our National Economy."[66] Thus national pride and prowess merge through the pursuit of a rather ill-defined national aesthetics.[67] A newspaper article on an enamel factory on the Greek island of Kea noted with disappointment that the country was lagging behind from other European states, which treated industrial development as a priority of their economic strategies. Balkan states had also realized the importance of the industrial factor and had accordingly reoriented their efforts. The article placed special emphasis on the achievements of Turkey in the industrial sector, which caused surprise as well as admiration, and constituted "at least shame" for Greece.[68] Industrial production was thus presented not just as a matter of economic importance but indeed as an issue of

[63] Ekthesis tou Dioikitikou Simvouliou tis Anonimou Aggeioplastikis Etairias "I Kioutacheia" pros tin Genikin Sinelefsin ton Metochon epi tou Genikou Isologismou tou Etous 1926 (Report of the Board of Directors of Kioutacheia Potteries to the General Assembly of Shareholders for the Balance of the Year 1926), 31/3/1927, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 4-020.

[64] Zannos, *op. cit.*, p. 1 (capitals in the original).

[65] Ibid., pp. 1–2.

[66] Ibid., p. 7.

[67] Similar concerns about the meaning of "modern" and its blending with local traditions rocked the literary establishment. The concepts of Greekness, cultural purity and foreign influences dominated the discourse of inter-war intellectuals and reflected an agonizing quest for personal and collective identity. Takis Kayalis, *I Epithimia gia to Moderno: Desmeuseis kai Aksioseis tis Logotechnikis Dianoisis stin Ellada tou 1930* (The Desire for the Modern: Engagements and Claims of the Literary Intelligentsia in 1930s Greece), Athens: Vivliorama, 2007, especially pp. 204–234.

[68] I Elliniki Viomichania ton Eidon Emagie... *op. cit.*.

utmost national significance. In this vein, exporting was particularly desirable, as it was very important from the point of view of "commercial penetration and propaganda."[69] Carpet making in particular, was considered to be an example of national strength in design and entrepreneurship. As the development of this field had been established on the know-how and expertise of Asia Minor refugees, the official discourse about this field was ideologically loaded.[70] A company report of 1925 stated: "Our first products sent to the major international market of London have generated great impression of 'Greek Carpets' to the local consumers, as our London correspondents report in a very flattering manner. [...] We hope that our company [...] will present itself in the future as a unified National industrial power, able to cope with the International industrial horizon in order to the Greek Carpet."[71]

Financial and other difficulties notwithstanding, Greek small and medium sized firms faced the problem of inadequate or inappropriate staffing. As appropriate know-how was totally lacking from the local population, industrialists were forced to import not only machinery and tools but also specialist staff, including engineers, technicians and specialist workers.[72] Elvira, an Athens-based company producing radio sets, was facing great difficulties in "acquiring basic members of its staff".[73] Similarly, the Board of directors of the Thermis company emphasized the fact that constructing steel furniture had proved to be a tough procedure, as "[steel furniture] is a very complex product, demanding maximum experience and specialization." The company was forced to consume many months in experiments and tests and hire temporarily, for a relatively high remuneration, specialist technicians for the training of staff.[74] These examples refer primarily to technical staff needed to cover manufacturing needs, but the absence of design specialists was also identified. The establishment of Sivitanidios School of Arts and Crafts in Athens was hailed as an admirable initiative to this direction. It was observed that, for a ceramics company, the establishment of this School is of the highest importance, "both for the creation of good and inspired technicians, as well as for the creation of designs, of product shapes, and of decoration".[75] The manual work associated with design activities was however held in very low esteem by the wider public, especially as the applied arts domain was positioned and in a sense suppressed between fine arts on the one hand and engineering on the other. Emerging craft and design professions were stigmatized as being of little social and professional status, a fact which seriously inhibited their development. Applied arts jobs were unattractive, as middle- and lower-middle class families were aspiring to

[69] I Megisti Simasia... *op. cit.*, p. 19.
[70] Hadziiossif (1993), *op. cit.*, p. 102.
[71] Ekthesis tou Dioikitikou Simvouliou tis Anonimou Etairias "Elliniki Tapitourgia" pros tin Genikin Sinelefsin ton Metochon epi tou Isologismou kai tis en genei Xriseos tou Etous 1925 (Report of the Board of Directors of the Greek Carpet Manufacturing Company S.A. to the General Assembly of Shareholders on the Balance of 1925), 1926, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 11-107 (initial capitals in the original).
[72] Vaxevanoglou, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
[73] Elvira... *op. cit.*.
[74] Thermis, Ekthesis Dioikitikou Simvouliou pros tin Genikin Sinelefsin ton Metochon epi tou Genikou Isologismou tou Etous 1933 (Report of the Board of Directors to the General Assembly of Shareholders on the General Balance of 1933), 1934, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-020, p. 7.
[75] Zannos, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

the more secure and respected clerical jobs in the public sector.[76] The lack of specialist personnel was complemented and exacerbated by the difficulties of incorporating design-related professionals into the production process. Many artists and craftspeople were employed by industries, but did not produce designs for industrial production, they simply created hand-made decorations on industrially produced forms. There is evidence that design input for mass production was not considered as such, but rather as a purely artistic endeavour that happened to take place within an industrial environment. This was for example the case of artists by the ceramics company Kerameikos, where "distinguished artists/painters worked with a sense of honour for the creation of an indigenous type of decorated and illustrated pottery." The Board of Directors of this firm further believed that the activities of a pottery factory, because of the artistic nature of its work, contributed to the aesthetic development of the people and the shaping of a "National art".[77] A newspaper article presenting the enamel factory on the island of Kea, includes a detailed description of the production process. Design, labelled "artistic decoration", was clearly positioned at the final part of the process, performed by a female artist, who has studied in France.[78] Arts, crafts and industrial production did not operate within a co-ordinated national strategy, and the roles of artists and craftspeople were often unclear. The anti-industrial orientation of the local economy and of State policies in general made design the object of a rather confused discussion on the relationship between arts, crafts and industry. The author of the Kioutacheia Potteries report claimed that current crafts-based industries such as Kioutacheia would constitute the basis and starting-point for evolution towards the future creation of a "real, big industry".[79] This ambiguous stance towards industry blurred its character and aims, and nailed it down to an intermediate, hybrid, as well as vague state, thus impeding substantial improvement.

The early, hesitant steps of design in inter-war Greece were very far from the pioneering, forward-looking views of Elias Eliou, who advocated new forms for the novel uses of a new epoch.[80] Unfortunately such progressive ideas remained without applications in mainstream practice, to which they could provide a rigorous background for developing the connection between industry and the applied arts. As this paper has sketched, this connection emerged as a viable possibility in the inter-war years, but did not reach maturity.[81] The primitive state of Greek design was in symphony with the description of the inter-war period as one of "embryonic industrial policy".[82] After the mid-1930s, as the

[76] In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the magazine *Erga* conducted a passionate, sustained, albeit hopeless campaign in favour of technical and applied arts education. See Yagou (to be submitted), *op. cit.*.

[77] Ekthesis tou Dioikitikou Simvouliou tis Aggeioplastikis Etaireias "O Kerameikos" pros tin Genikin Sinelefsi ton Metochon epi ton Pepragmenon tis Chriseos 1930 (Report of the Board of Directors of Kerameikos Potteries to the General Assembly of Shareholders for the Balance of the Year 1930), 15/5/1931, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 4-019.

[78] Ena Ergostasion en Kea, Monadikon eis to Eidos tou (A Factory in Kea, Unique of its Kind), newspaper article, 1 January 1937, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-022.

[79] Zannos, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[80] Elias F. Eliou, "Koution Egomio" (In Praise of Boxes), *Kritika keimena gia tin Techni 1925–1937* (Critical Texts on Art 1925–1937), Athens: Themelio, 2005, pp. 83–123.

[81] This is compatible with the findings by Louri and Minoglou (2002), who argue that industrial "maturity" was not to be attained over the long run.

[82] Ioanna Pepelasis Minoglou, "Greece: From Rent-Seeking Protectionism to Direct Inter-

spectre of the impending war was appearing more and more threatening, the opportunities for developing design for industry had practically evaporated.[83] Production gradually shifted towards military needs and away from ordinary consumer products. War preparations were absorbing most creative energy as documents from various companies indicate.[84] The temporary interest in design for consumer goods was brought to an end. Design would become again an issue more than two decades later, in the late 1950s and especially in the early 1960s, as the country would finally begin to recover from the Second World War and the civil war that followed. Any attempts for design development had then to start from scratch.[85]

Conclusion

The focus of this project has been to identify qualitative information from the inter-war years regarding the perception of design in Greece by various stakeholders, such as entrepreneurs and shareholders of industrial firms, policy makers and administrators, as well as product users. Research from a design perspective into business-related sources has proven to be quite rewarding and consolidates our understanding of Greek design in that period. Although it has not been possible to identify a wealth of data focused on design, however several documents have proven to be useful and often revealing. Evidence suggests that the inter-war years in Greece witnessed considerable design awareness among managerial circles and the public alike. The potential of design to contribute to the desirability of products was recognized and the role of applied arts in providing industrial products with added value was clearly understood. The agents of innovation were certain firms with progressive attitudes and international outlook. Design development was however inhibited by the financial and technical limitations of local industry, as well as by the lack of appropriate specialists. Product aesthetics and design in general was also closely connected to the question of "Greekness", an issue which went along with the search for identity amidst turbulent political and social conditions.

Our research has indicated that, despite certain design activities emerging in the inter-war years, such activities failed to mature into consistent and far-reaching industrial design strategies and practices. Initiatives remained in an embryonic state and generated fragile outcomes. Novel challenges were not treated systematically and were eventually brought to an end by the war decade

vention", in James Foreman-Peck and Giovanni Federico, *European Industrial Policy: The Twentieth-Century Experience*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 295–318.

[83] Thanos Veremis, *Ellada-Evropi: Apo ton Proto Polemo ston Psichro Polemo* (Greece-Europe: From the First War to the Cold War), Athens: Plethron, 1992, p. 21.

[84] For example: Elliniki Viomichaniki Etairia Emagie A.E., Ekthesis tou Dioikitikou Simvouliou (Greek Enamel Industrial Firm S.A., Report of the Board of Directors), August 1935, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-022, Ekthesis tou Dioikitikou Simvouliou epi tou Genikou Isologismou tou Etous 1937 tis Anonimou Ellinikis Etaireias Viomichanias Amaxon Autokiniton P. Tagalakis (Report of the Board of Directors on the General Balance for the Year 1937 of P. Tagalakis S.A. Car Chassis Production Company), Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-011; Anonimos Etairia Ilektrikon Epichiriseon, Egkyklios no 5 (Electrical Enterprises S.A., Circular no 5), 1939, Historical Archives of the National Bank of Greece, Series XXXIV, file 8-039.

[85] Vergopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 100. See also Rigos, *op. cit.*, pp. 268–269.

that followed. Our evidence supports a view of design development in Greece which is compatible with general trends and ideologies of that period, particularly the predominantly anti-industrial orientation of the Greek State and society, the neglect of applied professions in favour of clerical jobs, as well as the formalist obsession with national identity. Further work from the point of view of design would be crucial in broadening the scope of design history far beyond the visual aspects of products, in expanding the connections with entrepreneurial history and in demonstrating the interaction of design with a wide array of financial and social parameters. Future research might be directed in particular towards identifying and analysing the profile of design-minded entrepreneurs, their backgrounds and influences, as well as their ideas and visions on the role of applied arts in the Greek marketplace.

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Magazine articles

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