**TODAY AND TOMORROW:**

**PRINCIPLES IN THE TRAINING OF FUTURE ICONOGRAPHERS[[1]](#footnote-1)**

.

INTRODUCTION

In this article I discuss the training of iconographers, not primarily the practical ways that this can be achieved, but the more fundamental question of what sort of iconographers we are trying to train. Or to put the question another way: What constitutes a well painted icon? Icon schools and teachers are working blind if we do not first give deep consideration to the qualities that we wish to nurture in the works of our students.

The effective training of iconographers is a pressing and practical issue. As the number of Orthodox churches increases, both in the West and in traditionally Orthodox countries, more icons and wall paintings are required. Also, Roman Catholic and Anglican/Episcopalian churches and individuals are increasingly wanting icons.

But given this demand, churches will be filled with mediocre work if our training of iconographers is mediocre. Forward planning is needed. It takes many years to become a good painter. According to the master iconographer Archimandrite Zenon, 10,000 hours of practice are needed to become proficient. (**01. Archimandrite Zenon)**

So is a good icon simply an accurate copy of a past masterpiece, or are there timeless principles within which there is room for creativity and variation, both from artist to artist and from epoch to epoch? Or perhaps the formal qualities of an icon have little theological significance and it suffices that the image simply bears the name of its subject?

Icons fulfil many roles, but I would like to concentrate here on two main functions that can be summarized with the words communion and illumination. I will give particular consideration to the role of illumination because this has the most importance for the formal or stylistic qualities of icons, and therefore on the ability and training of the iconographer.

Most of the article will outline various qualities which I believe are fundamental to well made icons. Some of these are theological, some aesthetic, some practical.

I have arrived at this “list” through a combination of close observation of actual icons over the past thirty years that I have been a full time iconographer, and from my teaching – in particular the Diploma in Icon Painting that I run for The Prince’s School of Traditional Arts. I will attempt to relate these principles to the theology of the Church as expressed through her liturgical texts, the Scriptures and writings of the Fathers, and also to current debate among Orthodox thinkers.

To illustrate my points I have mostly chosen examples from contemporary iconographers, and especially from some of those who tried to go beyond mere copying.

Contemporary debate about icons

I will begin by outlining a debate current among some Orthodox writers regarding why icons tend to be painted the way they are, what distinguishes them stylistically from other paintings. It is an important debate since the outcome will affect the future of icon painting and the training of iconographers. Fr. Silouan Justiniano has already covered this subject admirably in his series of three articles in OAJ, “The Pictorial Metaphysics of the Icon”

<http://www.orthodoxartsjournal.org/the-pictorial-metaphysics-of-the-icon-abstraction-vs-naturalism-reconsidered/>. Here, I will therefore only give a summary of the matter as it relates to our subject of training.

For the past century the most commonly held view, led by Pavel Florensky **(02 Pavel Florensky (1882-1937),** Photis Kontoglou (1895-1865) **(03 Photis Kontoglou (1895-1865),** and Leonid Ouspensky **(04 Leonid Ouspensky (1902-1987)** is that the stylistic abstractions found in traditional icons exist to indicate the transfigured world, and that this style is integral to what makes a traditional icon what it is.

Although patristic writings dwell not on the formal quality of icons but on the theological fact that the icon is holy because it depicts holy persons, these writers argued strongly that icons, to be worthy of the name, must reflect spiritual realities in their style or form. Much of their writing was therefore centred on developing what we might call a “mystagogy of style”. As Ouspensky wrote:

The historical reality alone, even when it is very precise, does not constitute an icon. Since the person depicted is a bearer of divine grace, the icon must portray his holiness to us. Otherwise, the icon would have no meaning.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The Orthodox critics of this notion, for example Evan Freeman[[3]](#footnote-3), Irina Gorbunova-Lomax[[4]](#footnote-4), Julia Bridget-Hayes[[5]](#footnote-5), and George Kordis [[6]](#footnote-6)assert that since patristic or historical accounts make no reference to such a thing, this mystagogy of style is a non-Orthodox innovation. As Bridget-Hayes writes:

The equation of abstraction with spirituality is found nowhere in Byzantine and patristic sources but is rather a modern phenomenon.[[7]](#footnote-7)

They remind us that the Church Fathers defended icons purely on the basis that they depict the visual reality of the person and inscribe their name, and did do not refer to any capacity of icons to indicate the inner spiritual state of their subject. As the Acts of the 7th Ecumenical Council state:

Therefore it is in this form, seen by men, that the holy Church of God depicts Christ, according to the tradition of the Holy Apostles and Fathers. She does not divide Christ, as they frivolously accuse her of doing. For as we have said many times, what the icon shares with the prototype is only the name, not what defines the prototype.[[8]](#footnote-8)

The icon lacks a soul – something impossible to describe, for it is invisible. Thus if it is impossible for one to depict a soul – even though soul is created – how much more is it impossible for one to consider depicting, in a perceptible way, the incomprehensible and unfathomable divinity of the only-begotten Son? – unless one is totally out of his mind.[[9]](#footnote-9)

In his paper, Freeman calls the iconology of Florensky, Kontoglou and Ouspensky an “essentialist” approach, because the latter assert that icons must indicate the essence of the subject and not just the visible aspect of the holy persons that they depict. He argues that this mystagogic approach therefore contains the error of the iconoclasts, who believed icons shared in the essence or nature of their prototypes, whereas in reality the iconodules asserted that the image is linked to its subject through *likeness* to its subject and not at all through identity of essence. An icon is wood and pigment, not flesh and blood.

The critics argue that essentialism in iconology stems not from Orthodox theology but from modernist western aesthetics and philosophy. Florensky, Ouspensky and Kontoglou were not reflecting an Orthodox tradition at all, they say, but in fact owed their approach to the western mind that they so vehemently criticized. A pioneer of this essentialist conception of abstraction was the German art historian Wilhelm Worringer, whose work *Abstraktion und Einfühlung* (“Abstraction and Empathy”), was published in 1908. Worringer argued that abstraction in art aims to:

…wrest the object of the external world out of its natural context, out of the unending flux of being, to purify it of all its dependence upon life, i.e. of everything about it that was arbitrary, to render it necessary and irrefragable, to approximate it to its absolute value.[[10]](#footnote-10)

While most of these critics acknowledge that icons do and should have stylistic parameters and should not be naturalistic, they give reasons other than essentialist. Juliet Bridget-Hayes writes for example:

There are reasons for the abstraction used in Byzantine iconography, but as we will see, it has nothing to do with symbolizing Christ’s divinity and the deification of the saints. Rather it is what helps the icon achieve its function of making the persons depicted present in the same time and space as the viewer.[[11]](#footnote-11)

And later in the same text:

The icon, for the Fathers, shows historical reality. It shows the persons and events (“feats and braveries”) that took place, it doesn’t describe their spiritual state.

According to Irina Gorbunova-Lomax, herself an iconographer and teacher, one practical outcome of what she considers the pseudo-spiritualisation of style is that it tends to hinder iconographers from studying form and other aesthetic principles, and thus it becomes an unwitting cloak for artistic ineptitude.

Father Silouan Justiniano’s three OAJ articles present I think a very well argued case for finding the best in both of these two schools of thought. Arguing against those who claim that Byzantine icons were not stylistically different from secular work, he shows by examples that Byzantines were in fact selective about what they took from their classical and Hellenistic heritage, leaving aside its overtly naturalistic trends whilst retaining its respect for basic laws of form and drapery.

Father Silouan also addresses the curious fact that the few Byzantine passages that do comment on the stylistic aspects of icons actually praise them for their life-likeness. They do not comment on any departure from Hellenistic naturalism, in the way that Florensky, Ouspensky and Kontoglou later did, let alone give a spiritual explanation for it. Father Silouan argues, I think persuasively, that the Byzantine concept of being “life-like” cannot be identified with its current associations of photographic verisimilitude. A degree of abstraction is in fact required to do justice to the life of the subject, who is not of course simply a body but is a union of matter and spirit. As he writes:

… reality itself consists of intelligible (noetos) and sensible (aisthetos) realms. These spheres of being are symbolically conveyed by abstraction and naturalism respectively.[[12]](#footnote-12)

I would add that, according to a Greek scholar friend, a better translation of the original Greek would in fact not be “life-like” but “living”, “full of life”, “as though alive”. This being the case, the emphasis in the Byzantine texts is not on the image’s likeness to the saint but on how the image makes the saint come alive for the devout viewer.

So, while on the face of it the silence of the patristic writings seem to side with the critics of the mystagogic approach, the witness of actual icons tells us that they have consistently favoured a considerable degree of abstraction. The question is why.

Because this stylistic abstraction has been such a constant feature of liturgical images in Orthodox countries, reason tells us that this surely must be related in some way to their liturgical use and their subject matter. Just what the actual reason for this is what is being debated. And I do not think that this is a debate just for cleaned fingered academics. Active, paint-dirtied iconographers must engage in it if they are to execute their ministry with intelligence and understanding.

Icon as agent of union and of transformation

My personal view is that these critics of Florensky, Ouspensky and Kontoglou do have a point, and must be listened to. They are a corrective to an uncritical spiritualisation of every stylistic aspect of icons, and often of just one particular school.

But I also believe that in some aspects the critics have, by way of over-reaction, gone too much the other way, especially in neglecting the capacity of style to affect the way that we see things.

I believe that the icon acts in two respects. First, as a likeness it helps draw us into relationship with the holy persons depicted. This is the icon’s primary role. But secondly, through its formal or stylistic qualities an icon can also be a means of transforming the way we see things.

While the quote from the Seventh Ecumenical Council given above makes it clear that icons *cannot depict* invisible divine realities as such, the ancient witness of icons themselves show that icons through symbolism *do* *indicate* their existence. All icons of the transfiguration, for example, indicate Christ’s glory by painting a nimbus around Christ.

After all, the Church Fathers had no hesitation in writing about divine things, albeit in a very guarded and provisional way. **(05 St Gregory Nazianzus and the Transfiguration (by the author). The Church Fathers wrote about divine invisible realities without thereby dishonouring them, and so in the same way icons can indicate their existence without claiming to encapsulate them (like the mandorla around Christ in icons of the Transfiguration which indicate uncreated light)).** While they preferred apophatic terminology to katophatic – describing what God is not rather than what He is - we must remember that words are themselves a form of image, indicating things without claiming to be them. So if the Church Fathers believed that they could signify divine realities in words without thereby limiting or debasing those realities, then surely a painted image can do the same. Just as the great preachers and writers of the Church opened people’s hearts to their message through elevated oratory, so the painted image can do so by its elevated form.

The painted image invites us to see with the inner eye as well as with the outer eye. Abstraction can jolt us, awaken us from the slumber of familiarity with the material world as seen solely through the retina, and help us to see noetically. But more of this later.

Pioneers or corrupters? Apologists or compromisers?

If the form or style of icons can be transformative, why is this not written about in Byzantine texts? If the truth be known, we do not know why for sure. But perhaps the Byzantines did not feel the need to write much about this because it was taken for granted. The icon tradition was healthy and under no threat. Most patristic writing is after all a response to heresy or error rather than an attempt to codify theology for its own sake. To write about the formal elements of iconography had not been a requirement in the Byzantine epoch since, apart from the 120 years of iconoclasm, the icon tradition had remained effectively unchallenged and only tangentially in contact with post medieval western art. Iconography was Byzantium’s first language, her mother tongue, and it came naturally.

So why did people, such as Pavel Florensky, and then Photis Kontoglou, start writing about the way icons are painted? As icon painting returned to a more traditional style in the early decades of the 20th century, thinkers were needed to discern the theological differences behind these traditional icons and those of the previous three centuries which had been heavily influenced by western art. Part of this analysis was the need to develop an Orthodox response to the post medieval art of the West. Iconography in Ottoman Greece, and in Russia after Peter the Great, had been influenced by western art to a greater or lesser extent, most would say for the worse.

(**06 Our Lady of Kazan. Moscow, late 19th century. An example of the somewhat sentimental style that was common in 18th and 19th century Russia.**)

(**07** **Our Lady of Vladimir, painted in Constantinople c.1120, cleaned 1918/1919. It was the cleaning of Medieval Russian icons such as this one and Andrei Rubliof’s of The Hospitality of Abraham in the second decade of the 20th century that helped revive traditional iconography.)**

**(08 The Mother of God contemplating a crucifix, Greece, 18th century. An Italian influenced work typical of icons painted in Greece from the 17th to early 20th century.)**

**(09. Virgin Glykophilousa, by Photios Kontoglou, 1955. The icons and writings of Kontoglou were a key factor in the revival of traditional iconography in Greece.)**

So, in quite a real sense pioneers such as Florensky, Ouspensky and Kontoglou were innovators in that they were treading new ground. And this was true in two respects. On the one hand they were in a similar position to that of the early Christian thinkers - the Apologists such as Justin Martyr - in that they were trying to discern what was usable in their surrounding culture, only of course their culture was the modern epoch and not the Hellenistic one of the Apologists. There were treading new ground because modernity was new.(**10. Justin Martyr, 100-165 AD. Icon by the author.)**

On the other hand, while the Apologists were dealing with philosophies clearly described in written form, iconologists of our time are trying to understand the world-view behind the style of icons and other art. This interpretation of aesthetics from a theological point of view is a new discipline and therefore requires creative thinking, debate, and will inevitably meet with some excesses and disagreements. It is a work in progress and therefore requires both honesty and a forebearing spirit.

Perhaps inevitably, these pioneers sometimes reacted too strongly to non-iconographic art and became, to my mind at least, unnecessarily anti-Western in their polemic. Their writings often echo Tertullian’s cry, “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy [of the philosophers] and the Church?”[[13]](#footnote-13)

They could also sometimes be somewhat partisan. Kontoglou claimed that Byzantine icons were on a higher plane than Russian, and Ouspensky that the Moscow school was the summit of iconography.

To return now to our subject of training iconographers and what consists a well painted icon. For all the great things that have come out of studies on iconology over the past century, there have also been two unfortunate effects. Firstly, by way of reaction against untraditional innovations, there has been a tendency to associate tradition with the copying of old icons.

Secondly, the strong reaction against the naturalism of western art has too often meant that it is not deemed necessary for iconographers to obtain a good understanding of form, anatomy, drapery, proportion and colour theory. As the Romania sculptor Constantin Brancusi said, “Simplicity is complexity resolved”. Authentic abstraction in iconography must arise from a deep understanding of the form that it seeks to simplify.

To my mind the answer to the question of iconographic form must centre on the fact that Christ transfigures matter: He does not dematerialise it. **(10. The Transfiguration, by Federico Jose Xamist, a Chilean iconographer. The Transfiguration of Christ expresses all the theology fundamental to the icon: the incarnation of God; the transfiguration of the created world; the communion of the saints.)**

So on the one hand icons must affirm the materiality of things. Icons can and should affirm form and matter, for this is part of the divine creation. We are not cardboard cut-outs. Every iconographer worthy of the name must therefore study and understand the form and colour of the material world.

On the other hand, icons equally show us a world in which this matter shines like Christ’s garment on Mount Tabor, transformed from mere matter to radiant adornment. So as well as understanding what is visible to the naked eye – creation’s form and colour - the iconographer must also learn how to abstract this visible reality so as to indicate its transfiguration.

TWO MAJOR ROLES OF ICONS

We shall now pass to an outline of the two major roles of icons. Let us remember also that iconography cannot be limited to painted panel icons, for wall painting, relief carving, mosaic, embroidery and so on are media also used to create holy images. Most of the principles described below apply also to these other media.

*Icon as image*

An image that bears the name and received likeness of the subject helps connect us with this subject – Christ, the Mother of God, the saints or angels. As the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council put it:

For the honour which is paid to the image passes on to that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented.

This communion with the prototype is possible regardless of how well the icon is painted; even an unskilfully painted icon should be venerated, for we are venerating not the icon of itself but the holy person depicted. So this liturgical role of the icon as an object of veneration is primarily dependent upon *what* it depicts, not how it is depicted. (**11. The veneration of icons is valid regardless of the icon's aesthetic qualities.)**

*Icon as aid to illumination*

But I believe that the icon has also a second role, which is to help us see the world not just as a bush, but as a bush burning with God’s glory without being consumed. **(12. Moses and the burning bush. One task of the iconographer is to see and to help others see the whole creation transfigured, like the bush aflame with divine presence.)** This role of illumination is more to do with *how* Icons depict their holy subject, with their formal or stylistic qualities. Although the divine glory cannot be depicted in its naked form, its existence can be hinted at through colour and line, through its embodiment in matter and holy persons. After all, light itself only becomes visible to us through reflection off surfaces. It would be to contradict patristic theology if we were to depict merely the outer aspect of things. As St Maximus the Confessor wrote:

…a view of the sensible world that relies exclusively on sense perception, are indeed scales, blinding the soul’s visionary faculty and preventing access to the pure Logos of Truth.[[14]](#footnote-14)

**(13. St. Maximus the Confessor, painted by Archimandrite Zenon, one of the great iconographers of our times.)**

A traditional icon slightly abstracts the physical world in order to help us see deeper, to see the holy fire within all things, to awaken us. As we shall see later, the icon’s unusual way of depicting things throws us off balance in order to look for a deeper explanation. We recognize what we are looking at in the image – St Peter, St Paul, a tree, an historical scene or whatever - and yet the image is nevertheless different. The colours, the perspective, the abstract composition all suggest a deeper way of seeing than what our eyes and brain by themselves can see. They suggest the existence of ‘the pure Logos of Truth’ within. The icon affirms as real what we see and touch, but it also affirms as real the uncreated grace of God which creates, sustains and guides what we see and touch. **(14. Saints Simeon and Daniel Stylites, by Thoma Chituc, Rumania. Chituc is part of a new generation of icon painters in Rumania who** **is helping to restore a freshness and vision to traditional iconography.)**

Even on the purely biological level we assimilate what we see in different ways. Indeed, as scientists tell us, we do not in fact see with our eyes at all, but with our brains. Electric impulses pass from our retina into our brains and it is there that an image is constructed, not in our eyes. The notions, expectations and experiences already recorded in our brains affect the way that it organises the electric data sent from our eyes. The brain is a synthesiser and not a blank slate.

We recall that the Fathers outline three phases of the spiritual life: purification; then illumination, in which we perceive the logoi or words of Christ within each thing; union, where we are deified or enter union with the Logos Himself.

The way icons are painted suggest all three of these phases, but I would suggest that the formal elements of icons are particularly relevant for the second phase: illumination. The word abstract means to draw out, and the abstraction of a good icon draws out and manifests the inner and unique logos of its subject, be it mountain, tree, animal or saint. I agree entirely with Bridget-Hayes and others who are against essentialism, but this is not to say that the existence of the inner logos or essence cannot be hinted by visual means.

As the iconodule Fathers were emphatic to point out, the icon is not of the same essence of the persons depicted, but connects with them through likeness to their person and by bearing their name. However, this likeness cannot be a mere matter of having two eyes and a nose, but must also be a likeness that suggests the subject’s particular virtues and ministry.

We could therefore say that the icon is not naturalistic, but it is profoundly realistic. It affirms both the materiality of the world and the fact that it is created, animated and directed by the Logos. The icon depicts the world as a tent of meeting over which the glory of the Lord hovers and through which He speaks. We recall the words of St Maximus the Confessor quoted above: “…a view of the sensible world that relies exclusively on sense perception, are indeed scales, blinding the soul’s visionary faculty and preventing access to the pure Logos of Truth.”

Icons are above all visual, and are therefore connected with the eye of the heart, what the Fathers call the *nous.* Words are good at instructing and explaining, at describing detail, whereas images are good at initiating us into a different way of seeing, and of giving us a unified vision of the whole. Indeed, St John of Damascus extols sight as “the noblest of senses”:

We use all our senses to produce worthy images of Him, and we sanctify the noblest of the senses, which is that of sight. For just as words edify the ear, so also the image stimulates the eye.[[15]](#footnote-15)

This primacy of sight is surely linked with the primacy of the highest of human faculties, the nous. We recall the scripture’s description of the disciples’ meeting with Christ on the road to Emmaus:

As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognising him…Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him, and he disappeared from their sight. (Luke 24: 15,16, 31)

The words spoken between Jesus and the disciples prepared them, but the relationship was not complete until “their eyes were opened and they recognised him”. (**15. The Breaking of the Bread on the Road to Emmaus. Wood carving by the author.)**

Over the centuries Orthodox iconography has developed numerous ways of assisting this process of initiation or illumination. It is the task of an iconographer to learn these principles for they are his or her vocabulary. One of the most important works over the past century has been for iconographers and scholars to rediscover and disseminate both the timeless theological aims of icons and the many technical and aesthetic ways that iconographers can use to fulfil these aims. Among these ‘explorers’ is Dr. George Kordis, an influential iconographer, writer and teacher who is currently assistant professor in Iconography (Theory and Practice) at the University of Athens. **(16. Holy Prophet Elijah, by George Kordis.)** Of these timeless principles he has written:

The immutability of Byzantine technique means that there has to be an artistic system with specific rules and principles governing the execution of icons throughout all periods of artistic trends; and, because such a system exists, it must be possible to discover and set out its principles. These principles obey an inner logic, and describing them is the first step stage in learning the art of icon painting. They can be described without endangering Byzantine iconographic style because they are constant and so unchanging.[[16]](#footnote-16)

To these principles we shall now turn. I will illustrate them with particular reference to various contemporary iconographers.

SOME PRINCIPLES BEHIND THE FORMAL QUALITIES OF ICONS

Affirmation of matter and form

There has been some mistaken writing about iconography that associates transfiguration with dematerialisation. This is a Doscetic heresy. Icons depict a material world transfigured, not dematerialized. So icons must therefore show a profound understanding of and respect for the form of the material word as God has created it. Although we are in a fallen world, the lineaments of this world nevertheless remain incredibly beautiful and divinely inspired.

In order to affirm this two-fold aspect of the transfigured world - its material form and spiritual grace that transforms it - the Byzantine icon tradition seems to have drawn inspiration from earlier epochs. According to George Kordis, who has studied this field much more than myself, the Byzantine tradition used techniques from the Hellenistic period to achieve plasticity, movement and rhythm (**17. An example of Hellenistic art, showing its developed modelling of form and movement. 1st century BC Copy of a Hellenistic mosaic, produced by Dioskourides of Samos found near Pompeii (Villa of Cicero),** and from the more expressive Late Antiquity it learned the use of line and colour to construct form, vertical perspective, linearism, and compositional method. (**18. An example of Late Antique art, showing a more abstract arrangement of forms, such as vertical perspective. From the Arch of Constantine c. 320 AD,, Rome.)** In his own words:

Byzantine iconographers…instead of devising their own solutions, they turned to the great inheritance of classical and Hellenistic art as well as to that of late antiquity. It was the art of these periods that provided them with the answers they needed. Taking away depth, and using line and local colour to construct a form in sculpture or painting, was a technique already prevalent in the second century AD…It was from this important period, the expressionism of late antiquity, that they borrowed the vertical system of perspective, linearism, and of course compositional method. However, Byzantine iconographers also sought to express movement and rhythm in their art. For this they looked at the classical naturalistic tradition, from which they borrowed…plasticity, the dynamic manner of drawing figures on the surface, and the philosophy of rhythm. They took their fundamental artistic principles from these two main sources and used them to construct their own artistic system.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Asceticism

St John Maximovitch wrote:

The task of the iconographer is precisely to render, as far as possible and to as great an extent as possible, those spiritual qualities whereby the person depicted acquired the Kingdom of Heaven[[18]](#footnote-18)

An icon should therefore inculcate a sobriety that leads the viewer toward repentance. A well painted icon does not impart aesthetic delight without also offering the means of the venerator becoming themselves beautiful. This is why faces possess their characteristic bright sadness, a mixture of joy and sorrow, a compassionate peace. One brow is often softer in curve, while the other is more arched. One cheekbone is more sunken or pronounced, while the other is gentler of curve. The regard of the face is attentive without being tense. **(19. St Simeon of Chilandar. Wall painting in Simonopetra, Mt. Athos, by Archimandrite Zenon. The face shows a union of serenity, ascetic struggle, joy, and sorrowful compassion.)**

Asceticism means training, the stripping away of superfluous weight so we can run the good race. An icon therefore strips away superfluous decoration and detail in order to focus on the content and to engage the viewer with the saint. Although there is movement, there is no agitated, wasted movement. The saint concentrates on us, is focused, is in a state of prayer and listening.

Any embellishments - be they decoration, buildings, furniture or landscape – need to act as a throne to support the all-important figures depicted, and also to crystallise or articulate the spiritual dynamics of the event. The mountains in many Theophany icons, for example, seem to part like the waves of the Red Sea, or the structure behind Mary in the Annunciation icon might indicate her role as temple, door, throne or veil. These types are mentioned in the liturgical texts, so that image and word are in synergy. **(20. Feasts of the Virgin, by Phil Davydov and Olga Shalamova. This icon shows a very modern reduction of background detail and decoration to a minimum, whilst retaining the essential symbolic elements.)**

Perspective

In writings about icons one hears much about the so-called inverse perspective. There are in fact numerous other techniques also used. Apart from inverse perspective we have: flatness; multi-view; isometry (in which lines remain parallel); hierarchical (more important figures are enlarged); deliberately enigmatic (somewhat like the famous M.C. Escher illustrations): and sometimes also, mathematical perspective in which the vanishing point lies on the horizon. This last method has never been applied rigorously and throughout the whole image, as was done in the Renaissance period and after. **21. Detail from a wall painting, showing some of the forms of perspective used in iconography: multi-view, inverse (the roof), enigmatic (the stairs). Simonopetra Monastery, Mount Athos, by Archimandrite Zenon.**

Broadly speaking there are three schools of thought (not necessarily mutually exclusive) offering explanations why these various perspective systems are used in icons.

That which teaches the mystagogy of style (as discussed above) says that these techniques help us to see the world in a more divine way.

The ‘psychological’ school denies the need for any spiritual explanation, and says that these abstract means correlate with how we actually experience what we see, and not just how our retina receives them. For example, we know that a building has sides as well as a front, so even if our eyes do not see the sides, our mind nevertheless registers them as there. Multi-view perspective therefore represents our subjective experience more accurately than the mathematical vanishing point system.

The liturgical school asserts that the mystagogic explanations are too esoteric, are not Orthodox, and are not mentioned in any patristic writings. This school avers that the purpose of iconographic perspective is to ensure that the icon draws the devout viewer to share in the reality depicted and to ensure the image is participant in the liturgical life that is its natural and intended setting.

This school points out that symbol in the traditional Christian context does not mean a mental reminder of some reality but rather a means of participation in that reality. It means, as its Greek roots implies, a bringing together (*sym – bolis*) of two parts. This is certainly true, but using this to criticize the essentialist school makes the assumption - mistaken I think - that the latter understand iconographic abstractions merely as signs to be read mentally and consciously. My own view is that - at least some of - the various abstract forms found in icons act directly on the soul to help create a state more receptive to the Spirit. These stylistic constructs can act somewhat like the modes of traditional Byzantine, Russian or Gregorian chant, that are designed to help carry the words deeper into the soul as well as to support liturgical worship.

Enigmatic perspective for example, as in the non-sensical staircase in the work illustrated above by Father Zenon, is difficult to explain in terms of liturgical participation only. A more natural explanation would be that its inscrutable nature is designed to confound our rational faculty and thereby help us to accept that there are some things beyond our comprehension.

The fact that some of these techniques of abstraction were adopted and adapted from non-Christian art forms makes no difference. The Church has always sought for and affirmed truth wherever it is found. One scholar, for example,[[19]](#footnote-19) lists 28 instances of the Apostle Paul either quoting from, or making statements clearly paralleled in, Greek and Roman philosophers and writers, including Euripides, Seneca and other Stoics, Aratus, Aristotle and Plato.

Personally, I think all three explanations for abstraction in icons have a part and are not mutually exclusive. They are valid since all three are rooted in the realities of God’s world. One interpretation does not exclude the other. Either way, the iconographer needs to know these perspective systems and know how to use them.

Non-centric viewing

Some of the perspective systems used in icons encourage us to move beyond our self-centric world view and see the world more as God sees it. Multi-view perspective is one such system. An object, such as a building, is shown as viewed from three or more vantage points at once rather from a single viewpoint.

Also, nothing is far from God, and therefore those further away in the field of depth are shown close to us. Icons therefore tend to express depth through the axis of height; someone further away is simply put higher up on the panel, but of the same size of those closer and further down the panel.

Using this technique the iconographer is also able to preserve the flatness or compressed field of depth that is so characteristic of icons. This flatness in turn allows the figures and features to be arranged in a more theologically meaningful way, often using geometry.

Inner Geometry

As we have seen, a festal icon can be a commentary on the liturgical texts. One way it can do this is to possess an underlying geometry that elucidates the event’s theology. The individual elements of the scene can be arranged within this structure and thereby create a single whole, whose arrangement and movement interpret the dominant theology of the event.

The somewhat complex icon of the Nativity is a good case.( **22. The geometry underlying some icons of the Lord’s Nativity. The lower square contains the earthly participants, the semi-circle the heavenly, while Christ the divine Child is at the centre of the circle which encompasses representatives of all creation: rich, poor, angels and humans, male and female, animals, trees and rocks.)**

It can be approached in many ways, but in the illustrated icon I have arranged the key elements in a circle whose centre is the Christ Child. This circle is then combined with a square. All the earthly elements are contained in this square, while the heavenly subjects (the angels and the star) are contained in the top half of the circle. These two shapes are combined to suggest a domed church. The dome represents heaven and the square represents earth. The whole icon is therefore an image of the Church, the body of Christ, God and creation united.

Communion

The icon exists above all to aid communion, communion between the person depicted and the praying viewer. (**23. St Gregory Palamas, by Gabriel Toma Chituc**.) The face of the saint is therefore usually toward the viewer, or if in a scene or deisis, no more than three quarters view. Sometimes they look at us, sometimes slightly beyond us, as though contemplating something, seeing with the heart and not just the eye: “She pondered these things in her heart” as the Scriptures tell us of the Virgin Mary.

Light

We can identify four sources of light in icons: shining from within the saint; surrounding the saint; light for modelling form; and sometimes, though more rarely, directional light from a single external source. A good example to illustrate all four of these is the famous mosaic of Christ in the gallery of Agia Sophia. **24. Agia Sophia mosaics in situ, showing the direction of light for the nearby window. 25. Detail, showing the directional lighting on the neck.**

1. The halo suggests light radiating from within the person. In icons of Christ He is Himself this light. In icons of saints, the light is from the indwelling Holy Spirit.
2. Background gold as in this mosaic, or else a radiant colour such as vermilion, affirms the words of St Paul: “In Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17.28). This light is therefore not so much a background as the all encompassing divine “atmosphere” within which all things are sustained and directed.
3. Modelling light, to create a sense of plasticity. The rule of thumb for icon painting is that what is closer is lighter, and what is further away is darker. Or very often it is not so much that the shading is darker but that it is painted with a cool colour, such as green or even blue. Although icons do not use extreme contrasts of light and dark created by a single strong light source (a technique called chiaroscuro), Leonid Ouspensky was incorrect in asserting that icons do not have shadows. There are clearly areas darker than others. This contrast of light and dark is used to suggest the materiality of the subject. It is dangerous to associate spirituality in art with dematerialization.
4. What is unusual in the Agia Sophia mosaic is the casting of a shadow on the neck which can only be created by a single source of light, above and to the left of the figure. This is rarely found in icons, but is not outside the tradition. The point in this mosaic is that the direction of the light in the mosaic that creates the neck shadow is identical to that passing through a window to the left of the mosaic. The shadow on Christ’s neck is exactly where it would be if He were standing where the mosaic is. The creator of the mosaic is surely showing us that Christ is present here, in this gallery, in this place. Directional “naturalistic” lighting is thus still used liturgically, and in conjunction with the other three techniques described above.

The iconographer’s way of life

All Christians are called to live the sacramental life of the Church, to fast, to pray, to live according to Christ’s commandments of love. This is also incumbent on iconographers, for if they are to depict Christ, the saints, and the angels, as well as knowing the received tradition of their icons they must aspire also to know them personally. Otherwise they would merely be painting a painting rather than painting a person.

In the world of secular art it is easy to distinguish a portrait made purely from photos from a portrait painted from life. Encounter with the subject helps the artist to discover and indicate the sitter’s character, to discern what is essential and what is secondary. Many small decisions are taken during the making of an icon – where to put a line, what colour or tone to use, and so on. Unless one has the music of heaven within oneself one cannot detect things in one’s painting that are off key.

Harmony with hymnography

The icon is liturgical, designed to be part of the greater liturgical life of the Church. Its content and form must therefore correlate with the Church’s hymnography and with Scripture readings appointed for its commemoration day. This is especially so with festal icons. One should be a commentary on the other. It is therefore essential that an iconographer know the liturgical texts of the feasts.

A good example is the icon of the Transfiguration where, among other things, we often see a cave depicted under Elijah and under Moses. **(26. The Transfiguration, showing the caves which are referred to in the Biblical and liturgical texts. By the author.)** This stimulates the viewer to wonder why they are there. The Scripture readings for the Vespers remind us that both Moses and Elijah had partial theophanies in relation to caves. Moses is hid in the cleft of a rock and sees only the back parts of God. Elijah hears only a still small voice as he stands at the mouth of his cave. But here on Tabor, thanks to the incarnation of God, they stand outside their caves of partial knowledge and behold the Lord face to face. This contrast is witnessed to by the hymns of the feast:

As for Moses and Elijah, when they conversed with Christ they made manifest that He was the Lord of the living and the dead, and that He was the God Who spoke of old in the law and the Prophets. (Great Vespers)

Appropriate to architectural space

Be it panel icon, wall painting or mosaic, an icon ought to fit the architectural space and lighting for which it is made. (**27. Archbishop Dimitri Memorial Chapel, St Seraphim Cathedral, Dallas. By Vladimir Grigorenko. An excellent example of a wall painting designed beautifully for the given architectural space and its liturgical function. Its theme is the Second Coming since, as the artist writes, it will be “the place of eternal rest for Archbishop Dmitri – the place where he will wait until the Second Coming”).** The whole of a parish or monastery's liturgical life can be considered as a single icon, and so each addition should supplement and complement what is already there. A certain understanding of liturgics, church architecture and art history is therefore required of an iconographer. An icon in a dark corner, for example, might be painted in lighter tones than one on a highly lit space. Or when painting for a British Orthodox church, for example, one could draw inspiration from Romanesque, Celtic or Anglo Saxon work.

Uniqueness of persons

Each of us is unique, a profound mystery, possessing our own name and face. This uniqueness is the presupposition of communion, for unity is not possible without distinction. Icons have often failed to value this uniqueness. Icons of female saints in particular suffer from this, the same face being used endlessly with only the inscription and clothes varying.

The uniqueness of persons is very evident in icons of the first eight centuries of church iconography, such as in the mosaics of the Rotunda (St George’s) in Thessaloniki. But it seems to have suffered after iconoclasm. Faces became more formulaic.(**28. St George's Rotunda, Thessaloniki. Each face in this ensemble of mosaics, dating sometime from the late 4th to the mid 5th century, reveals a remarkable distinctiveness.)**

Life-likeness is a particular challenge when we depict saints within living memory for whom we have painted portraits or photographs, such as St Paisius of the Holy Mountain or New Martyr Elizabeth. We need to affirm their physical likeness without becoming naturalistic. **(29. A photo of the contemporary Saint Paisios of the Holy Mountain, 1924-1994. 30. A wall painting of the recently canonized St Paisios. At least those of us who knew him would wish his icons, while not becoming naturalistic, to reflect something of his unique personality.)**

Harmony

We are unique, but our unique face and personhood is fulfilled in relationship. Our unity arises also from our shared single human nature. There are many persons but one nature. An icon should therefore arrange its figures so that they are in harmony, especially in harmony with the workings of God expressed in that particular feast. **31.Ioachim and Anna. By Nun Olga, Rumania. An excellent example of an harmonious icon. The colours are rich but harmonious, the detail instructive but not distracting, and the design balanced without being rigid.)**

George Kordis has an unusual theory on this matter. He suggests that icons can use colour to affirm unity of nature, while line (the icon’s drawing and form) can uphold the uniqueness of persons. (**32. St John the Baptist, by George Kordis. This work illustrates the above point, that colour can create unity, while the drawing distinguishes each element from its neighbour.)**

An icon depicts a redeemed world, a world where we see God’s hand in all things. In this sense it is prophetical, unveiling God’s hidden purpose in events. An icon is therefore a microcosm in which opposites are reconciled. It ought therefore to possess profound harmony, the elements being arranged in relationship to the boundaries of the panel with nothing arbitrarily cut off. An icon is therefore not so much a window with an arbitrary view, but a door through which all the characters must pass.

Another reason for the need of aesthetic harmony in icons is that the world is an image of the Trinitarian God. A good icon therefore reflects a world in which there is both distinction, as in the three Persons of the Trinity, and equally also unity, for God is one.

The colours should be harmonious, therefore the iconographer needs to know colour theory: how complementary colours work, the action of warm, cool and neutral colours upon each other, and so on.

As many writers remind us, being a liturgical object means that an icon is more than just an art object. But I would assert that it is at least art. It should contain all that a good painting contains, and more. An iconographer should therefore strive to know more about their craft than a secular artist, not less. Most of the patristic writers were highly skilled in rhetoric and pagan learning, and turned this skill to the service of the Church. Should not an iconographer do the same, availing themselves of any knowledge available, regardless of its source?

Authenticity and innovation

Whilst learning from past masters, a mature iconographer goes beyond imitation. Mere copying gives the false sense that to follow Church tradition is to live a mindless, robotic, and fearful existence. If the Gospels and Book of Acts are anything to go by, life with Christ is a rather daring and unpredictable adventure!

Romania is quite a leader in creative contemporary iconography. Situated geographically between Russia and Greece as it is, Romania is in a good position to take the best of both those traditions. They are also a Latin culture, and so feel at home with certain Western traditions. The reader is referred to a splendid article in OAJ on this subject: *The New Romanian Masters: Innovative Iconography in the Matrix of Tradition* <http://www.orthodoxartsjournal.org/the-new-romanian-masters-innovative-iconography-in-the-matrix-of-tradition/>.

When operating creatively the challenge is how to work within the received language of iconography without changing it so much as to render it unusable for liturgical use. One solution is to experiment initially not with icons but with non-liturgical art, what we might call “gallery art”. After this period of trial, the iconographer then imports into their icons those elements that seem appropriate to a liturgical setting. In the illustrated work (**33. Portrait, by the author. Egg tempera.)** I wanted to explore how I could paint a naturalistic portrait that, while not being a liturgical icon, nevertheless imbibed some of the ethos of an icon. I was also influenced by the Romano-Egyptian portraits painted in encaustic (melted wax and pigment), that were the basis for many of the first panel icons. This portrait helped me at a later date to make icons of female saints which were not as generic as before, such as the illustrated one of St Etheldreda. (**34. St Etheldreda of Hexham, by the author. In this icon I tried to import some elements from the above portrait, and from early iconography such as the 4th/5th century mosaics of the Rotunda, Thessaloniki.)**

 The Greek contemporary iconographer, print maker and painter, Markos Kampanis, is a good example of one who comfortably works in both liturgical and gallery art, one feeding the other. **35. Fresco panel, by Markos Kampanis, 2012. 36. 'Kavafis', by Markos Kampanis, 2012. Charcoal. 37. Fresco, by Markos Kampanis. 38. Milopotamos tower, Athos, by Markos Kampanis. linocut print, 1988. 39. Kornofolia wall paintings, by Markos Kampanis.**

The illustrated icon below (**40. Ioan Popa, church of Alba Iulia**) is a splendid example of an icon style that is inventive but still recognizably iconic. On the other hand, the illustrated work by Sorin Dumitrescu, *The Iconic Model of the Brancovan Martyrdom*, **(41. Sorin Dumitrescu, ‘The Iconic Model of the Brancovan Martyrdom’)** while being a powerful painting, is to my mind too reductionist to work successfully as an icon.

Logic in drapery

A common failing in novice iconographers is their drawing, especially of drapery. Icons go beyond naturalism in that they are not naturalistic, but they should at least be rational. A well drafted icon is supra-rational, not irrational. Drapery must have an inner logic, the lines indicating the horizons or boundaries of real forms. Once this rational language is understood, then the direction, volume and detail of the drapery can be simplified and adapted.

It is for largely for this reason that I have changed from the proplasmos technique to using primarily (though not solely) the membrane technique, both in my own work and in my teaching.

In the membrane technique one models the main forms in monochrome before laying up the colour in semi-transparent glazes. The form is thus created first, and then this is enhanced with colour.

In the proplasmos technique one begins with a laying down a flat layer of the darkest shade, and then builds up form with increasingly lighter areas of colour.

Both of these techniques are traditional, but the former at least compels one to understand form in a clearer way. **(42.The membrane technique being used by Archimandrite Zenon. The monochrome underpainted figures on the right, and the more developed figures in various states of completion on the left. Feodorovsky Cathedral, Petersburg, 2013.)** I have often heard it asserted that the only correct and traditional way to paint icons is with the proplasmos technique since one is following the Genesis account of creation, which passes from darkness and chaos towards light. While a particular technique can be used to illustrate a theological point, it is dangerous to create a parallelism to justify one technique to the exclusion of others. One can read anything into anything. The membrane technique could, for example be equally asserted as the only correct method by saying that, like the Biblical account, it fashions the body first (the monochrome underpainting of form) and then breathes into it the breath of life (colour and light). A bit of common sense is needed. It is the end result that matters, not spurious use of theology that stops one studying the wide range of techniques used in the icon’s history – and perhaps also new ones in the future.

Good figurative proportion

Even though icons are slightly abstract - for example they might elongate certain features, or even the whole figure - they nevertheless must preserve basic principles of proportion. Abstraction and distortion are very different things.

There is great variety in figurative proportion between different schools of iconography, ranging from four heads high in Coptic icons **(43. Christ and St Menas, Coptic, 6th century.),** through the more usual seven to eight heads high and upto almost eleven heads high in the case of icons by Dionysius of Moscow. **(44. The Crucifixion, by Dionysius of Moscow c. 1500).** But to do this well, one needs to know what one is changing. One needs to abstract from a place of knowledge of proportion and form and not from ignorance. I therefore encourage my students to study icon models, such as Father Zenon’s, that use the more average proportions of around seven-and-a-half heads high. Once these proportions are well understood, then they are free to branch out, but with an understanding of what they are doing.

An inner and outer likeness

It is interesting, and perplexing to some, that most contemporary Byzantine descriptions of icons praise their lifelikeness. This seems to fly in the face of many recent writers who like to oppose the icon to naturalistic painting. Various explanations for the use of the term life-like have been proffered.

One explanation is that the conservative nature of homiletics, writing, and poetry in Byzantium required them to use literary forms of expression (called *topoi*) taken from classical writings. And these topoi valued art works to the extent that they were lifelike and realistic.

Other people have pointed out that we should not read back into this term our current associations of life-likeness with photographic realism. Life-likeness is more than physical recognisability, for it is also to do with the character of the person. As such, a lifelike portrait requires a considerable degree of abstraction in order to draw out the inner character. An ascetic, for example, tends to be painted with sunken cheeks, while a teacher might have a larger forehead.

It must also be kept in mind that the Greek word translated as ‘lifelike’ is more accurately translated as something like ‘living’ or ‘alive’. This explains why the passages that use this word often add that the writer almost expected the saint to step out from the icon.

Grace and stillness

What has impressed me most about the holy people whom I have met or known personally is their union of inner stillness with activity. Father Paisius of Athos, for example, in the daytime met with a constant stream of visitors seeking counsel, and at night prayed for many hours. And yet he struck me as someone inwardly at rest. As St Paul writes: “…I labour more than all the apostles, yet not I, but the grace of God within me” (I Corinthians 15:10).

An icon should depict this union of stillness and vigour. It should not be stilted or stiff, but nor should it show agitation. So there is usually a strong vertical axis, a lack of disturbing gestures, and a certain balance left to right. On the other hand, there are asymmetries and movement: heads rarely face us directly but are slightly turned; a standing figure shifts its weight slightly; drapery moves in rhythms. **(45. St Alexander, by Ivan Polverani, Italy. This work shows the classical balance of movement (the slight turning of the head, rhythmic drapery, asymmetrical pose) and stillness (absence of exaggerated expression and gesture, harmonious colours, balance – the lance offsetting the lettering for example.)**

CONCLUSION

Some iconographers manage to organise their own training, the highly gifted. But this is the exception. We need to have schools and apprenticeships to teach skills and theology, establish the parameters, set standards. By standards I do not mean the partisan promotion of one particular style, but standards of artistic excellence and theological guidelines that inspire variation as well as preclude error.

And this knowledge is important not just for the makers of icons, but also for those who commission them: bishops, priests and architects. It is no good training good iconographers if those commissioning them demand sentimental icons, or cannot tell the difference between inept and skilled work.

Apart from their function in worship, icons are proving to be a profound means of mission in our world. This presents a yet more pressing need for the highest standards in our icons, wall paintings, mosaics, and all the other forms of iconography. We do not want to become precious about our icons, art critics rather than prayers and venerators. But, like a good sermon or devout and skilful chanting, we do want icons that inspire us rather than irritate us.

1. Adapted from a talk given at Kellogg College, Oxford, Feb 27th 2015, The Christian Religious Image, organised by the St John Cassian Association. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Leonid Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon*, Vol. 1, SVS Press, 1992  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Most recently a published talk by Evan Freeman, *Rethinking the Role of Style in Orthodox Iconography:*

*The Invention of Tradition in the Writings of Florensky, Ouspensky and Kontoglou*, in “Church Music and Icons: Windows to Heaven: Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Orthodox Church Music University of Eastern Finland Joensuu, Finland 3–9 June 2013”, published by The International Society for Orthodox Church Music, 2015, p. 350-369. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. In English there is *Landscape elements in Iconography*, Irina Gorbunova-Lomax, Brussels Academy of Icon Painting, Brussels. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See for example her blogs <http://ikonographics.blogspot.gr/2016/02/revisiting-patristic-theology-of-icon.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For example George Kordis*, “Μορφή και Εικόνα. Η Προβληματική για την σχέση μορφής και εικόνας κατά τους Εικονομάχους και Εικονοφίλους*, Doctoral thesis, University of Athens, 1991..Also, in English translation,

*Icon as Communion*, Caroline Makropoulos (trans.), Brookline, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://ikonographics.blogspot.co.uk/2016/02/revisiting-patristic-theology-of-icon.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Acts of the 7th Ecumenical Council. Mansi 13, 340E  [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Acts of the 7th Ecumenical Council. Mansi 13, 340E-342A [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy*, trans. Hilton Kramer (New York: International Universities Press, 1953; originally published in German as Abstraktion und Einfühlung in 1908), 17.  [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. http://ikonographics.blogspot.co.uk/2016/02/revisiting-patristic-theology-of-icon.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *The Pictorial Metaphysics of the Icon: Part II*

by [Fr. Silouan Justiniano](http://www.orthodoxartsjournal.org/author/fr-silouan-justiniano/) • January 5, 2016, in “Orthodox Arts Journal” http://www.orthodoxartsjournal.org/the-pictorial-metaphysics-of-the-icon-part-ii/#\_edn11 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. On the Prescription of Heretics.vii, 45 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. St. Maximos the Confessor, “Second Century on Theology,” in: *The Philokalia: The Complete Text, by St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth* (ed.), G.E. E. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, Kallistos Ware (trans.), Vol. II, London, Faber and Faber, 1981, p. 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. John of Damascus, *On the Divine Images*, 1.17, translation by D. Anderson from *On the Divine Images: Three Apologies against Those who Attack the Divine Images* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1980), p. 25 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. G. Kordis, *Icon as Communion*, Caroline Makropoulos (trans.), Brookline, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2010, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Ibid., p.51. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, “Discourse in Iconography” in *Orthodox Life*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Jan-Feb 1980), pp. 42-45.

Quoted in <http://archangelsbooks.com/articles/iconography/DiscourseIcon.asp>, (accessed 7 February, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. <https://biblethingsinbibleways.wordpress.com/2013/07/14/paul-and-his-use-of-greek-philosophy/> [↑](#footnote-ref-19)