

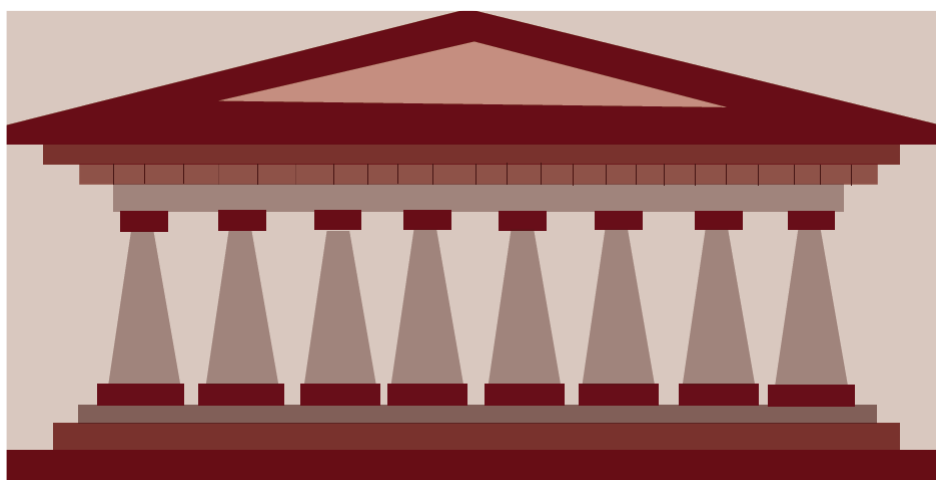
# Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts

Quarterly Academic Periodical, Volume 13, Issue 4

Published by the Athens Institute

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October 2026

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[Ethics and Academic Integrity: Lessons from Plato's Protagoras](#)

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The current issue is the fourth of the thirteenth volume of the *Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts (AJHA)*, published by the [Arts, Humanities and Education Division](#) of Athens Institute.

Gregory T. Papanikos  
President  
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#### **18<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts** **7-12 June 2027, Athens, Greece**

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- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **10 May 2027**

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The [Humanities & Education Division](https://www.atiner.gr/) of Athens Institute is organizing its **12<sup>th</sup> Annual International Symposium on Religion & Theology, 24-29 May 2027, Athens, Greece**. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers of Religion, Theology and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (<https://www.atiner.gr/2027/FORM-REL.doc>).

#### **Important Dates**

- Abstract Submission: **27 October 2026**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **26 April 2027**

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- **Dr. William O'Meara**, Academic Member, Athens Institute & Professor, Department of Philosophy and Religion, James Madison University, USA.

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## **The Linguistics and Theology of Defining, Understanding, Misunderstanding, Liking and Disliking Jews and Judaism**

*By Ori Z Soltes\**

*The words “Jew,” “Jewish,” and “Judaism” have offered a treble-definitional problem in the sweep through history and in particularly Christian-Jewish relations during the past two millennia. (1) The failure to distinguish “Jew/Jewish” from “Judaeans” is a starting point of misconceiving the group that shares a common spiritual heritage with Christianity from which each turns in its own direction in the first few generations after the crucifixion of Jesus. (2) On the other hand, the emergence in the West from a strict if troubled adherence to a religion-based identity on the part of Christianity, offered a temporary respite from 15 centuries of negative feelings regarding Jews; Jews were able to shift from the margins to the mainstream of socio-economic and cultural realities. In the end this yielded to a reinvigorated negative that, through the new academic disciplines of linguistics and anthropology, derived from a redefinition of Jews as a race, allowing a newly-coined, race-based hostility, “antisemitism” to replace the “anti-Judaism” of the medieval period. (3) One further layer of language-and-concept-based complication evolves with the development of Romantic Nationalism in the nineteenth century, with consequences both for outsider definitions of Judaism and for Jewish self-definition. These complications have merged into a newly nuanced complexity in the response to the events in Israel-Palestine-Gaza between October 7, 2023 and the time of this writing. Ignorance of the definitional and conceptual issues of the past two millennia have helped reshape the possibility of meaningful dialogue into powerful but meaning-deficient rhetoric with confusing and violent consequences.*

### **Judaeans, Jews, and Christians In and Around the Time of Jesus**

The words “Jew,” “Jewish,” and “Judaism” have offered a treble-definitional problem in the sweep of history and particularly in Christian-Jewish relations during the past two millennia.

The failure to distinguish “Jew/Jewish” from “Judaeans” is a starting point of misconceiving the group that shares a common spiritual heritage with Christianity from which each turns in its own direction in the first few generations after the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. Aside from other problematic details within the Gospels regarding the life and more importantly, the death, of Jesus, the focus on the culpable group as “Jews” and not as “Judaeans” as those texts evolve, offers a religion-based logic to more than eighteen centuries of negative Christian-Jewish relations—to say the least.<sup>1</sup>

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\*Teaching Professor, Georgetown University, USA.

1. The other problematic details include the middle-of-the-night arrest and trials by an illegitimately configured “Sanhedrin,” including the identifying kiss by Judas of an

This is a simple and at the same time complicated issue. In Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin—the key languages operative during the time of Jesus—one cannot distinguish these terms: Hebrew *yehoodē*, Aramaic *yehuday*, Greek *ioudaios*, and Latin *iudaeus*, may all be translated either as “Judaean” or as “Jewish/Jewish.” Nearly the entire population likely to have been present at Jesus’ demise—the most obvious exceptions being Roman leaders like Pontius Pilate and the Roman soldiers actually responsible for Jesus’ death, and perhaps a scattering of Idumaeans—would have been Judaeans. And the term labelling them would itself have been susceptible to at least three possible meanings. Someone called a Judaean—*yehoodē.yhooday/ioudaios/iudaeus*—could have been so-labelled ethnically: that s/he claimed decent from the tribe of Judah or at least more loosely from the tribes of Israel. One could be so-labelled religiously/spiritually: that s/he believed in the God of Israel whose primary shrine was the Temple in Jerusalem—as universal and the only true God. One could also be so-labeled politically: that s/he was an inhabitant of the polity, Judaea.

Thus, for example, by the time of Jesus’ birth, the recently deceased King of Judaea, Herod, was half-Idumaeen (on his father’s side) and half-Nabatean (on his mother’s side) in terms of ethnicity, and his sons Philip, Herod Antipas and Herod Archelaus fell into the same ethnic category. Religiously, while Herod may have begun as a follower of the Israelite-Judaean God through his father and perhaps pagan gods through his mother, by the time he usurped the Judaean throne from the last of the Hasmonean house, he had become—or at least presented himself as—a full-fledge believer in the Israelite-Judaean God. Politically he was obviously a Judaean—the King of the Judaeans!—but so were the many possibly pagan Idumaeen workers whom he imported into Judaea to work on his building projects. Most notable of these projects was the transformation of the small fishing village of Straton’s Tower into the most important Roman port in the Eastern Mediterranean: Caesarea.

So to begin with, the term “Judaean” is complicated, and then the Judaeans—most particularly those who are Judaean by religion—began to bifurcate during and after the time of Jesus, in part based on their differing perspectives on who and what Jesus *was*. One might refer to one group as “Judaeans for Jesus” and the other as “Judaeans not for Jesus.” The point is that both groups were Judaeans, and as the bifurcation became increasingly distinct—by the end of the first century and beginning of the second, not before—both groups began reaching out to pagans, to bring them into the fold of the “True Faith.” Thus both groups grew to include those who were not Judaean by ethnicity, but only became so by religion.

The two groups were competing not only with regard to the question of whose faith was the true heir to the Israelite-Judaean tradition—*verus Israel*—but with

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individual presumably known by everyone for his allegedly subversive teachings; the otherwise unheard-of Passover “custom” of allowing the Judaeans to choose between two criminals as to who would be executed; the depiction of Pontius Pilate as benign, which contradicts Roman sources significantly; among others.

regard to which of the two was accepted by the pagan Roman authorities as legitimate in the political sense. For late in the Hasmonean period, in 63 BCE, Pompey the Great, as he passed through the region on Rome's behalf, after violent complications (beyond this discussion), ended up granting to the Judaeans and their Temple in Jerusalem *religio licita* status.<sup>2</sup> This meant that their faith was accepted as legal and that the Temple was protected as were the funds sent annually from throughout the Judaeian diaspora for its upkeep. Given that both Judaeian groups claimed to be the True Israel, both laid claim to that status—the opposite of which was *superstitio*, meaning “political subversion.”

And by the third or fourth decade of the second century, one group was calling itself “Christian” while the other continued to use the term “Judaeian” (which might gradually become, in English, “Jewish”) to refer to itself.<sup>3</sup> The Christians were subject to persecution from the pagan Roman authorities, perceived as a *superstitio*, and, depending upon the specific era, either barely tolerated or severely persecuted—the latter particularly during the third-century reigns of Septimius Severus, Thrax, Decius, and, most notoriously, Diocletian. There is a logic to this, having little to do with the specifics of Christian (versus Jewish) belief, about which the pagan Roman authorities would have had little understanding. Rather, it had to do with the pagan Roman assumption that Jesus, who at least by the time of Suetonius' writings (ca 116 CE) was understood to have been executed by the Romans by crucifixion for political subversion—that he claimed, or his followers claimed, that he was the King of the Judaeians, when the only king for Judaeians and all others within the Roman ambit was the Emperor. If the applicable term was Christ—Greek: *Khristos*; anointed one—then by referring to themselves as *Christians*, the former Judaeians for Jesus were acknowledging an association with that political subversion.

Eventually the situation would not only change—Christianity would be accepted as a *religio* through Constantine's Edict of Milan, in 313—but reverse itself. By ca 380, under the Emperor Theodosius, Christianity would achieve status as the official *religio* of the empire—the *only religio*—and any and all other forms of faith, including Judaism, would be relegated to *superstitio* status. That reversal would be accompanied by a reinforcement of negative feelings on the part of Christians for Jews and Judaism. The misreference to the population who either cheered or wept when Jesus was crucified as Jews rather than as Judaeians, combined with the misconstrued mythohistory of the narrative leading up to the Crucifixion, so that the blame for Jesus' demise was removed from Roman to Judaeian—*Jewish*—shoulders, would have implications for Christian-Jewish relations for the next sixteen centuries.

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2. For details, see Solomon Zeitlin, *The Rise and Fall of the Judaeian State*, Vol I (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1962), 348-57.

3. The most obvious distinctions between Judaeian and, eventually, Jewish is that the latter term refers to a group with a definitively canonized Hebrew Bible, and a distinct array of annual festivals, and lived across a scattered diasporic landscape. In Jesus' time and its aftermath, the first and third of these features were not yet in place, and the second only partially so.

## Jews, Christians, Religion and Race in a New Era

The anti-Jewish issue, on the other hand, would undergo an apparent transformation by the late eighteenth century, encompassing a second definitional issue pertaining to “Jew” and “Judaism.” The emergence in the West from a strict if troubled adherence to a Christian religion-based identity, came about gradually, through a concatenation of events that disturbed the certainty regarding both God’s involvement in human affairs—and eventually God’s existence. Between the Age of Exploration that began with Columbus and Magellan between 1492 and 1522, and that was completely reconfiguring the European sense of the *physical* world, and Martin Luther’s 95 theses nailed to the Wittenberg church door in 1517, which initiated a radical Reformation of the Western Euro-Christian sense of proper *spiritual* reality,<sup>4</sup> the Counter-Reformation that began by ca 1550 led to more than 150 years of Catholic-Protestant religious wars. This all led, in turn, to a growing array of questions regarding the nature of God and divine engagement with humans. An array of seventeenth-century thinkers (Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz) introduced different ways of thinking about both the creation and the creator. By the time of the industrial, technological, scientific, political, and philosophical revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the central role of religion in the western Euro-Christian world was slipping off-center, toward an increasingly secular edge.

This gradual spiritual and intellectual transformation—Voltaire (1694-1778) might serve as a symbol of the new thinking at its most emphatic, since he considered anyone who still believed in a traditional God and used religion as a guide for living, particularly religion as an othering instrument, to be backwards, a medieval artifact—came to offer a temporary respite from eighteen centuries of Christian anti-Jewish negativity.<sup>5</sup> Jews were able to shift gradually from the

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4. It should not be forgotten that internal Christian belief and/or leadership problems had evolved with the evolution of the Church and its political success—from the heresy-creating Council of Nicaea in 325 to the schism separating the Western from Eastern churches in 1054, to the self-imposed exile of the papacy from Rome to Avignon in 1309-78 to the Great Western Schism that divided Western Christendom between supporters of the Pope in Rome and the so-called anti-Pope in Avignon (and a further papal claimant at Pisa), between 1380 and 1417 (with an epilogue mini-schism continuing until nearly 1430)—among other Church crises that precede the Protestant Reformation and the Age of Exploration.

5. Yet Voltaire was certainly still filled with at the very least distaste for Jews, who “are, all of them, born with raging fanaticism in their hearts, just as the Bretons and the Germans are born with blond hair. I would not be surprised if these people would not some day become deadly to the human race: (“Letter of Memmius to Cicero,” 1771, in which he placed his words in a fictional comment by the Ancient Roman politician and philosopher), and in his 1772 essay “One Must Take Sides,” as he mocks religion in general, he is most severe toward the Jews, who “have surpassed all nations in impertinent fables, in bad behavior and

margins to the mainstream of socio-economic and cultural realities. Several decrees by the Hapsburg Emperor Joseph II beginning in 1782 officially acknowledged the Jews as citizens of the regime, permitted a new range of rights (such as attending government schools, and serving the general community as lawyers, doctors, and soldiers) equal to those of imperial subjects from other Hapsburg-ruled nations; and on September 28, 1791, in the aftermath of the first phase of the French Revolution, French Jews were similarly declared to be French—who happen to be Jews who attend synagogue on Saturday rather than Catholics who attend Church on Sunday—as opposed to being considered Jews who have *incidentally* resided in France for eighteen centuries.

In the longer run, however, the antipathy toward Jews as a consequence of so many dozens of generations of religious teachings against them outlasted the theoretical dissolution of religion as an underpinning ideology for societal organization. So the brief inclusionary positive yielded again, by the 1830s, to a reinvigorated negative that, thanks to the new academic disciplines of linguistics and anthropology, legitimized itself through a redefinition of Jews and Judaism as a *race*, allowing a newly-coined, race-based hostility, “antisemitism” to replace the religion-based “anti-Judaism” of the medieval period. That is: the new discipline of anthropology, which divided humanity into three major racial categories, borrowed terminology that first emerged within comparative linguistics for the categorization of language groups. Linguistics, in turn—ironically, given the secular basis of these new disciplines—had derived the terminology from the Bible: specifically, Genesis 9:18-19 and the reference there to Noah’s three sons.<sup>6</sup>

Europeans were considered to comprise a “race” associated with Japheth; Africans were associated with Ham—the Noahide curse upon whom was also incidentally used to validate the enslavement of Africans that had already been in process for several centuries—and Asians were associated with Shem. Given the—inaccurate—assumption that all Jews came from the Middle East (the southwest corner of Asia), they were now referred to in an increasing array of

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in barbarism. You deserve to be punished, for this is your destiny.” There are many other pithy comments that he made about Jews over the years.

6. In brief: comparative linguistics had emerged in the hands and minds of German thinkers in particular in the late eighteenth century, who recognized how certain languages (eg, German and English, or French and Italian, offered phonemic-semantic patterns of consistent similarity as well as dissimilarity, from which they were understood to derive from common ancestors. With languages like French and Italian, the Latin-language ancestor was all but provable thanks to the survival of Latin language and literature and the well enough known history of the Roman Empire. Eventually, an entire family of languages—both siblings and cousins, as it were—was asserted to have a common ancestor, called Indo-Germanic (a term later emended to Indo-European). Gradually, with the emerging nineteenth-century archaeological, cultural, and later political interest in the Middle East, languages like Arabic, Hebrew, and in antiquity, Aramaic and Akkadian were perceived to be part of an altogether different family—which was called “Semitic.”

circles as Semites. The most obvious and direct implication of this formulation is that Jews could not therefore—ever—be Europeans by race and ethnicity. So for the purveyors of this tidy little racial idea, they could never actually be German, Austrian, French, etc., all of which groups are subsets of the European “race.”

There are, of course, several problems with this idea, apart from the irony that its terminology is derived from a biblical source within a self-proclaimed secular academic pair of disciplines. For one, the story in Genesis 9:25-7 refers to Shem as divinely mandated to rule over his brothers; it does not suggest that the descendants of Japheth will rule the others, contrary to the otherwise prevailing European theory of the European White Man’s Burden and its concomitants. Furthermore, the idea assumes that all Jews originated in the Middle East, ignoring the historical reality that those who joined Judaism in the Roman period were mainly Mediterranean-area Europeans. Or, further, that the Turkic—not Semitic—Khazars who apparently embraced Judaism *en masse* in the 8<sup>th</sup> century comprised a substantial wave that, arriving in the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries, eventuated as the dominant ethnolinguistic part of the Eastern European Jewish community. The notion of including as “Semites” all Asians, from Palestine to Japan, would appear absurd to anyone not blinded by the desire to find a means of specifically excluding Jews from a European pedigree. And excluding Muslim and Christian Arabs who demographically dominated the Middle East from the category “Semite,” in favor of focusing only on the Jews, also offered a profound historical miscue.

The point, however, was to find a means for re-marginalizing the Jews. Racializing them through the term “Semite” spread as a principle as the nineteenth century moved forward. One might say that it culminated with the pair of essays penned by the German political philosopher, Wilhelm Marr, in 1862 and again in a slightly different guise in 1879, in which he reflected on the notion that the Jews are not Germans and never can be—thanks to their non-German racial make-up—and on the fact that the previous few generations of Emancipation had afforded Jews opportunities and with them, great socio-economic success.<sup>7</sup> The essays’ ultimate message was one of warning: that, allowed to continue in the mainstream, the Jews will overrun and overwhelm Germany; the nation will be subservient to an outside force—an alien *race*.

Edouard Drumont offered the same sort of warning to his fellow French Catholics, in writing the book *La France Juive* (*Jewish France*), in 1886.<sup>8</sup> So a century

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7. The first version of his essays was his 1862 pamphlet “The Way to Victory of Germanism over Judaism,” in which he asserted that “Germans and Jews” were locked in a longstanding war derived from their racial differences. He warned that Jews, allowed by the process of Emancipation during the previous 80 years to dominate German industry and finance, were winning that war. Initially all but ignored, the pamphlet—under a slightly different title “The Victory of Judaism over Germanism”—was re-issued in 1879, at which time it became a best-seller.

8. The explosive emergence of antisemitism in France in the context of *L’Affaire Dreyfus* in 1894 and the years following was significantly aided and abetted by Drumont

after diverse instances of Emancipation in Western and Central Europe, Jews found themselves once again marginalized, or at least partially so, through redefining what and who “Jews” are, and reclassifying them not as a religion but as a race.

### Jewish Nationalism and Its Contexts from the 1890s to the 2020s

By that time, yet another layer of language-and-concept-based definitional complication had evolved with the development of Romantic Nationalism that had gradually emerged in the early the nineteenth century, with consequences both for the definition of Jews and Judaism and for Jewish self-definition. The notion of national identity, which grew with the proliferation of new or definitively shaped nation-states in and after the Age of Revolutions, interwove itself with cultural Romanticism to assert a ineluctable connection between who and what one is and the land where one was born—as if the earth from that land flowed through one’s veins—as well as to the music drawn from the melodies heard on one’s grandmother’s lap, to the poetry and prose built from one’s mother-tongue, and to the paintings depicting one’s people and one’s national landscape. In some cases, this would lead to unification—as with Italy in 1848–61—and in others, break-up, as in the redefinition of the Hapsburg Empire as the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1867, and eventually, through World War I, into myriad ethnocentric states.

European Jews were affected by this evolution; some of them began to re-shape their sense of Jewish identity, not as religious or ethnic/racial, but as political: are we, perhaps a *nation*? The idea—inspired by the *Risorgimento* and Mazzini’s theorizing about unifying Italian identity and thus reclaiming the glory of ancient Rome—was first articulated in 1862 by the Franco-German Jew, Moses Hess, in his *Rome and Jerusalem*, and came to an activated fruition with the 1896 pamphlet written by the Austrian Jewish journalist, Theodor Herzl, who by 1897 organized the First Zionist Congress, in Basel, Switzerland.<sup>9</sup>

The Jewish Nationalist—Zionist—Movement very quickly became preoccupied with the question of its identity: was it to be political, its purpose to offer an instrument of physical survival in the face of the ugly manifestations of antisemitism that were revealing themselves from the East in Tzarist Russia—its plethora of

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by means of his daily *feuilleton*, *La Libre Parole* (*Free Speech*), in which he continuously excoriated Dreyfus and his supporters as part of the nefarious Jewish conspiracy engaged in trying to destroy France—and the post-Christian world in general.

9. It might be noted that the initial choice for a location for this gathering was Germany, but the Reform rabbinical leadership fought against it: having spent the better part of a century trying to reinforce to their Lutheran and Catholic fellow-Germans that they were Jews only by religion, and Germans by nationality, the last thing they wanted was the promotion of the idea of Judaism as a nationality within their domain! Basel offered a hastily organized plan B location.

pogroms—and in the West, in France, as manifest in the Dreyfus Affair?<sup>10</sup> Or should it be religious, its purpose to offer an instrument of spiritual reunification and survival in the face of nearly a century of fragmentation into a Jewish community of communities—Reform, Orthodox, Conservative; Hassidic, rabbinic, secular, and further variants—often at verbal war with each other regarding what constitutes being a proper *Jew*?

The eventual shaping of a “Jewish state” by 1948 did not really answer the question, not only because of the different perspectives of different groups of Jews within it as to what “Jewish” or “Jewish state” mean—including groups like the *Neturei Karta* who, while living in the State of Israel, do not recognize its legitimacy, due to their conviction that a Jewish polity into which the dispersed exilic Jews are ingathered can and will only come about in God’s good time when the Messiah comes, rather than through human action. The question also remains unanswered because the Jewish state interweaves theocracy and secular democracy, in which there are citizens who are not Jewish at all: Muslims, Christians, Mormons, Hindus, and Baha’is are the most obvious groups.<sup>11</sup>

So, too, contrary to Herzl’s dream—that an independent Jewish polity would end antisemitism by offering Jews a new platform from which to relate to the Christian (and Muslim) world on an equal, state-to-state basis, rather than as a “guest” minority within a non-Jewish “host” majority as had been the case for eighteen centuries—was never realized.<sup>12</sup> The animosity and criticisms directed to Israel for its malfeasances, real and imagined, dwarf in size and intensity those offered across the media and popular consciousness for equally or more seriously egregious acts of malfeasance on the part of other nation-states, such as China, India, Malaysia, Russia, Turkey—or the United States.<sup>13</sup>

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10. The Dreyfus Affair was the framing, mis-trial, and incarceration on Devil’s Island of the Jewish army officer, Alfred Dreyfus, in 1894, for alleged spying on behalf of Germany; the continuation of the case toward resolution for twelve years; and the wide and deep expressions of antisemitism that emerged with it, fanned in particular, as noted in fn 8, by Edouard Drumont in his *feuilleton*, *Libre Parole*, over that entire period of time.

11. Historically—until events of the past decade under the unfortunate, ugly Prime Ministership of Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel was analogous, as a “Jewish state” to the United States as a “Christian State”—each dominated demographically by a particular religious majority that has affected certain of its norms and wide-held customs, but without imposing any sort of religious qualification in order to be either an inhabitant or a citizen of the polity (although the US initially left the matter of religion as a criterion for suffrage in the hands of individual states; non-Christians (functionally: Jews) could not vote, much less hold office, in Maryland until 1826; and in New Hampshire not until 1877.

12. For details, see Herzl’s 1896 pamphlet, *der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*).

13. For an interesting commentary on the phenomenon of this double standard by an American Catholic theologian, see Eva Fleischner’s “Response to Emil Fackenheim” (his paper on the Relationship Between the Holocaust and the State of Israel”), in the 1977 book that she edited, *Auschwitz: The Beginning of a New Era?*, based on papers delivered at a July 1974 conference in NYC. She had organized the conference, specifically, to reflect on

Even within the context of Israel's unhappy relationship with the Palestinians, while legitimate upset over Israel's role is repeatedly offered in so many fora, far less awareness of or interest in the responsibility for the difficulties on the part of the Palestinians and the Arab world is shown—most obviously, Jordan and Egypt, in the evolution of the conflict between 1920 and 1947 regarding the proposed shaping of British-controlled Palestine, and between 1949 and 1967.<sup>14</sup> It is hard to disconnect the disparity between criticism of Israel and other countries or Israel and her neighbors from the long negative history of defining and redefining Jews. That history, on the part of the Christian majority—and eventually, thanks to European colonialist interventions in the Middle East, the Muslim majorities—witnessed the ongoing evolution of anti-Jewish sentiment, culminating with political, cultural, and other expressions of antisemitism.

These complications have merged into a newly nuanced complex in the response within the Christian and Muslim worlds to the events in Israel-Palestine-Gaza between October 7, 2023 and the time of this writing. The horrifying nature of the Israeli response to the slaughter of Israelis on that day engendered by the leadership—specifically Mr Netanyahu and his right-wing adherents—is abhorrent. Intense criticism is not only justified but necessarily expansive, as the list of egregious Israeli acts expands. But the astonishing lack of an equivalent response against Hamas is disturbing.<sup>15</sup> This organization, that has had no interest in the welfare of Gazan or West Bank Palestinians at any point in its brief, ugly history; that has used literally billions of dollars of funds that were donated to build schools, hospitals and provide other socio-economic services to Gazans—instead using the funds to dig hundreds of miles of tunnels and secure an extraordinary array of armaments to be used against Israel—has received virtually no comments from across the world.

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the Western responses to the Yom Kippur War between Israel and Egypt and Syria of October, 1973. Many other papers echo her comments—and the situation that she and others describe has hardly changed in the half-century since the conference took place and the book came out.

14. I am referring first to the half-dozen proposals for how to divide the 25% that remained of the original "Palestine Mandate" after the British had handed over governance of the 75% east of the Jordan River to the non-Palestinian Hashemite family (who fled the Kingdom of the Hijaz—now Saudi Arabia—after losing a civil war for power to the family of Ibn Sa'ud). The Jews reluctantly accepted each proposal but one, including the final one offered by the United Nations in 1947; the Muslim/Christian Palestinians rejected every single one, demanding nothing less than all of it. I am referring, secondly, to the seizure of Gaza and the West Bank by Egypt and Jordan, respectively, in the aftermath of the 1947-49 war that yielded an independent State of Israel, and their refusal to permit the establishment in either or both spaces of a Palestinian state; nor did they grant Palestinians Egyptian or Jordanian citizenship, relegating that population to a grey no-man's-land regarding political identity. In short: nobody but Palestinians worried about the Palestinians until after the June 1967 Six-Day War. See Soltes, *Untangling the Web of the Middle East*, 36-8,95-104,126-74.

15. It would have been nice to hear or see some awareness of what Hamas did on October 7 and why, in terms of the history of the organization in Gaza during the last 15 years.

That there is rarely a comment regarding how Hamas so fully divides its *raison d'être* between destroying Israel and Jews in general and expanding its own power at the expense of Gazan lives, is distressing. It would be *astonishing*, were it not for the fairly consistent pre-October 7 history of uneven responses to events in that corner of the world.

A double standard between how Israel and others are judged in the courtroom of world opinion is not so astonishing given the history briefly outlined in the previous paragraphs. And ignorance of the definitional and conceptual issues of the past two millennia has helped reshape the possibility of meaningful dialogue into powerful but meaning-deficient rhetoric with not only confusing but exceedingly violent consequences.<sup>16</sup>

That potential, in turn, continues to be actualized by a perfect storm: current Israeli-Jewish leadership that does not care about Israel and its Jewish (much less non-Jewish) population, meeting nose-to-nose a Gazan leadership that is similarly disinterested in the welfare of its own Muslim population. One of the pre-Herzl Zionist thinkers, Leon Pinsker (1821-91), a physician by training, referred to antisemitism—after the Odessa pogroms in Tzarist Russia of 1871 and 1881 dismantled his view that Jews could be assimilated into the Russian Empire—as a cancer, psychosis, and pathological disorder without a known cure.<sup>17</sup> Herzl thought that he had *articulated* a cure in suggesting the creation of a Jewish state. Alas, the long history of defining, understanding, misunderstanding, liking and disliking Jews and Judaism has metastasized further. For that cancer both often offers Israel as a convenient mask for antisemitism and also, for current Jewish Israeli leadership and its supporters it offers the wherewithal to turn the negative side of this series of terms not only outward toward non-Jews but also inward toward themselves. The implications that begin with language end up encompassing both politics and theology—and are, above all, disturbing.

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16. One might note, apropos of ignorance that is both linguistic and geographic, that when students—I can only attest, from personal knowledge, to those at Georgetown—were chanting “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free!” in November-December 2023 protests, many of them had no idea which bodies of water were the reference points for their shouts: asked about this, several responded: “I believe it is the Tigris River and the Black Sea, yes?”

17. He therefore preferred the term “Judaephobia” to “antisemitism,” as in the text of his 1882 pamphlet, *Autoemancipation*—published originally anonymously and in German. For more detail, see Arthur Herzberg, *The Zionist Idea*, 178-99.

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## **Globalization and Westernization of Chinese Music: A Journey through Folksongs and Cultural Transformation**

*By Anthony Olson\* & Yan (Eva) Peng<sup>‡</sup>*

*This presentation delves into the profound impact of Western influences on Chinese music during the 19th and 20th centuries. The session integrates performances of Chinese music in the dialogue, offering a comprehensive exploration of cultural exchange and transformation. Through a blend of performance and analysis, we examine how Western musical elements were assimilated into traditional Chinese music, leading to a unique synthesis that reflects broader trends of globalization and cultural adaptation. The 19th and 20th centuries were periods of significant upheaval and transformation for China, characterized by rapid modernization and increasing contact with Western powers. This era witnessed profound changes in many aspects of Chinese society, including its musical landscape. The influx of Western musical ideas and practices began to permeate traditional Chinese music, leading to the creation of new forms and styles that blended elements from both cultures. Our presentation highlights key historical moments and cultural shifts during this time, illustrating how the confluence of Western and Chinese musical traditions has shaped contemporary Chinese musical identity. One of the central themes of our presentation is the concept of cultural globalization and its implications for the arts. By focusing on the period of significant Westernization in China, we aim to offer insights into the processes of cultural globalization and their impact on musical expression. The integration of Western harmonic, melodic, and structural elements into Chinese music did not merely result in the adoption of foreign styles; rather, it sparked a creative fusion that produced a distinct musical genre, enriching the traditional Chinese repertoire. Our exploration will also touch on the socio-political factors that both facilitated and hindered this cultural exchange. The role of Chinese intellectuals and reformers, who saw Western music as a means of modernization and national rejuvenation, will be examined. By offering a rich perspective on the dynamic interplay between global and local cultural forces, this presentation aims to deepen the understanding of how Chinese music has evolved through its encounter with Western traditions. It sheds light on the broader processes of cultural globalization, illustrating how the arts serve as a medium for cultural dialogue and transformation.*

The past two couple of centuries have been marked by profound global transformation, as industrialization, colonial expansion, and technological advances accelerated cultural exchanges across continents. From the spread of new ideas to the exchange of artistic traditions, this era saw unprecedented interactions between East and West. World fairs, such as the Paris Expositions of 1867 and 1889, showcased artistic and scientific achievements from around the globe, bringing the music, art, and traditions of distant cultures into closer

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\*Professor of Music (keyboard instruments), Northwest Missouri State University, USA.

<sup>‡</sup>Freelance Musician, Bellus Music Studio & Board Member, KC Music Teachers' Association, USA.

contact.<sup>18</sup> These exchanges led to hybrid cultural forms, as societies sought to reconcile their local traditions with newly encountered practices.

In the realm of music, this period of globalization fostered significant cross-cultural influences. European composers such as Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel incorporated elements of non-Western music, such as pentatonic scales and modal harmonies, into their works after encountering East Asian music at world exhibitions.<sup>19</sup> Conversely, non-Western nations, including China, began to adopt Western musical practices as part of their broader modernization efforts. This exchange was not a one-way assimilation but rather a complex dialogue, where local traditions were preserved and reshaped within new frameworks.

China, in particular, underwent dramatic cultural shifts during this time, spurred by educational reforms, political upheaval, and exposure to Western ideas. Music became a powerful medium for negotiating these changes, with folk songs serving as a vital link between China's rich cultural heritage and its aspirations for modernization. The transformation of Chinese folk music through Western-style arrangements reflect the broader social and cultural dynamics of the era. This hybridization not only introduced new musical techniques but also symbolized China's effort to navigate the challenges of globalization while maintaining its cultural identity.<sup>20</sup>

Folk songs, traditionally passed down orally, became central to the efforts of Chinese intellectuals and musicians to forge a modern national identity. These melodies were collected, arranged, and performed using Western musical instruments and compositional techniques, resulting in a distinctive hybridization of Eastern and Western styles. This process mirrored China's broader negotiation with globalization, blending traditional cultural elements with modern aspirations.<sup>21</sup>

This article examines how Chinese educators, reformers, and musicians harnessed folk songs as tools of modernization and nationalism, using them to articulate a vision of a modern yet culturally rooted China. The hybridization of these songs not only symbolized China's adaptation to Western influences but also reflected its resilience in preserving cultural heritage amid significant societal shifts. These musical arrangements became more than artistic creations; they were emblematic of China's complex journey toward modernity in an interconnected world.

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18. Frederick Lau, "When a Great Nation Emerges: Chinese Music in the World," in *China and the West: Music, Representation, and Reception*, University of Michigan Press, 2017, 267.

19. François Lesure and Roy Howat, "Debussy, (Achille-) Claude," in *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.07353>.

20. Jianbo Zhou, *Westernization Movement and Early Thought of Modernization in China: Pragmatism and Changes in Society, 1860s–1900s* (Fudan University Press, 2008), 98.

21. Joseph Lam, "Chinese Music and Its Globalized Past and Present," *Macalester International* 21 (2008): 34–35, <https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/macintl/vol21/iss1/9>.

## First Contact

Western music was first introduced to China by Christian missionaries in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, with Jesuits like Matteo Ricci at the forefront. In 1601, Ricci gained access to the imperial court, using his knowledge of Western music, science, and mathematics to establish a cultural dialogue with Chinese scholars and officials. This led to the publication of a music theory text that blended Chinese and Western perspectives on musical practice. However, tensions soon arose, as ancestor veneration—a core Chinese practice—was discouraged by Catholic doctrine. By the early 1700s, the Pope issued a decree prohibiting Catholic missions to China. China subsequently banned the Catholic church from its country, pausing formal missionary work. This early exchange, however, laid a foundation for the deeper musical hybridization that would come with nineteenth century missionaries.<sup>22</sup>

The nineteenth century marked a major turning point as colonial forces entered China in greater numbers during and after the Opium Wars. The Treaty of Nanjing of 1842 and similar treaties opened China's ports, granting Western powers and missionaries new privileges, including the right to establish schools. In cities like Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou, Western music became standard in the curriculum of these missionary-run schools.<sup>23</sup> For many Chinese students, this was their first encounter with Western instruments such as the piano, violin, and organ, as well as Western musical notation and harmonic structures.

Western missionaries introduced music as part of their broader educational mission. As a result, Chinese students began to incorporate Western musical concepts, setting the stage for the later hybridization of folk songs. Western music, with its structured harmonies and notation, became symbolic of modernity and progress, a mark of sophistication for those who engaged with it.<sup>24</sup>

## Educational Reforms and Musical Modernization

With these foreign educational institutions, China began to transition from the Confucian-based royal examination system, which had governed social mobility and education for centuries, to a Western-style education. This

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22. Anna Chen, "Westernization and Music in China during and after the Qing Dynasty," *The Phenomenon of Singing* 9 (2013): 98-99, Memorial University of Newfoundland, <https://journals.library.mun.ca/index.php/singing/article/view/1023>.

23. Chen, 100-101.

24. Trevor Herbert and Margaret Sarkissian, "Victorian Bands and Their Dissemination in the Colonies," *Smith Scholar Works*, Smith College, May 1997: 169-170, [https://scholarworks.smith.edu/mus\\_facpubs/5](https://scholarworks.smith.edu/mus_facpubs/5).

shift was especially impactful and led to a focus on social and political changes in what became known as the Self-Strengthening Movement. The Self-Strengthening Movement focused on addressing China's weaknesses in technology, military power, and education following losses in the Opium Wars. Leaders of this movement encouraged adopting Western technologies and military strategies while preserving the Confucian and cultural principles at the heart of Chinese society.<sup>25</sup> Scholars and officials began to see Western music as a tool for conveying patriotism and discipline, particularly within the military. Military bands, inspired by Western models, became common in the late nineteenth century, marking an era where music was incorporated into China's modernization efforts as a means of expressing a strengthened national identity. The integration of Western music into Chinese schools provided a new model of learning that represented both adaptation and a move toward modernity.<sup>26</sup>

### **Influences of Western Military Bands**

Colonial powers stationed military forces in treaty port cities, and these battalions included musical units – military bands that regularly performed both Western marches and adapted local tunes.<sup>27</sup> Chinese composers absorbed these adaptations, incorporating Western instrumentation and arrangement styles. This further influenced how military and patriotic music developed in China, integrating folk elements in ways that were intended to inspire pride and unity. Following the modernization efforts of the late Qing dynasty and the Republican period, the Chinese military adopted Western-style brass bands as part of its professionalization and modernization agenda. These bands became symbols of national pride and strength, performing both Western military marches and arrangements of patriotic Chinese folk songs.<sup>28</sup>

Chinese folk songs, once seen primarily as rural and localized expressions of culture, were now valued as national treasures that could be modernized to reflect China's aspirations. For centuries, these folk songs had been passed down orally. Rooted in local traditions, they often conveyed stories of love, labor, and the land, were typically monophonic (just a single, independent melodic line), and used pentatonic scales. However, with the introduction of Western education, intellectuals and reformers began systematically collecting

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25. Ranbir Vohra, *China's Path to Modernization: A Historical Review from 1800 to the Present*, 3rd ed. (Prentice Hall, 2000), 73–74.

26. Lam, 47–48.

27. Edmund A. Bowles, "Military Music and the Emergence of Modern China," *Journal of Chinese Music Studies*, no. 5 (2005): 2–3.

28. Wei Cheng, "The Development of Military Bands in Modern China," *Asian Musicology* 10 (2010): 101.

and transcribing these songs, using Western notation and arranging them for performance in schools and concert settings.<sup>29</sup>

### Western Compositional Techniques and Their Impact

Western influence on Chinese folk music is perhaps most evident in the introduction of harmonic structures. Traditional Chinese music has long emphasized melody, particularly through pentatonic scales and modal systems, while Western music introduced concepts of harmony that involved structured chord progressions to create tension and resolution. This approach, unfamiliar to Chinese musicians initially, became a standard feature in folk song arrangements. By incorporating harmonic techniques, Chinese composers created a hybrid musical style that preserved the integrity of traditional melodies while embracing Western structural frameworks, symbolizing both cultural heritage and aspirations for modernization.<sup>30</sup>

The turn of the twentieth century was a unique time in music history. Composers used the elements of music in ways that were unthinkable just a generation earlier, and Chinese composers of this era had a wide range of musical styles from which to draw inspiration. One musical trend of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was Impressionism; this was perhaps the compositional trend that had the largest influence on Chinese composers and arrangers. The Impressionist composers revolutionized harmonic approaches, particularly in their use of parallel motion and modal harmonies. Claude Debussy, inspired by the East Asian music he encountered at the 1889 Paris Exposition, transformed his compositional style, incorporating pentatonic scales and unconventional harmonic progressions. These techniques abandoned the traditional forward-driving tonal structures of Western music, instead creating a sense of stasis and openness.<sup>31</sup>



29. Pan Feng, "The Entry of Chinese Music into the Global Space," *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук* 70, no. 2 (2023): 75, <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/70-2-9>.

30. Lam, 43.

31. Lau, 269-270.

A prime example of this approach can be found in Debussy's *Préludes*, particularly in "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair," which features a pentatonic melody underpinned by harmonies moving in parallel motion. Here is a phrase from this piece.



Audio QR code: <https://youtu.be/6istflS6oEk>

Such innovations profoundly influenced Chinese composers of the early twentieth century, who were exposed to Western music through studies abroad, travel, missionary-led educational initiatives, and other cultural exchanges. Chinese composers adopted these compositional techniques to create unique arrangements of their traditional folk melodies. An excellent example is the folk song "Flowing Stream." Here is one phrase of the melody.



Audio QR code: <https://youtu.be/tNxbrUqPUI8>

Here is that same phrase as arranged for voice and piano by Li Yinghai.

Vo. 想起我的阿哥在深山;  
望見月亮想起我的哥;

Pno.



Audio QR code:

[https://youtu.be/SGKg\\_OmBCL8](https://youtu.be/SGKg_OmBCL8)

In this arrangement, the harmonization employs chords moving in parallel motion, mirroring the melodic contour instead of driving toward a tonal resolution. This creates a floating, open quality reminiscent of Debussy's harmonic language. By using these techniques, Chinese composers like Li Yinghai preserved the simplicity and charm of their folk tunes while reinterpreting them within a global musical context. Their work highlights the successful synthesis of traditional Chinese and modern Western elements, forging a distinctive musical idiom reflective of their evolving cultural identity.

### The End of Imperial Rule

In its last few decades, the Qing dynasty embraced reforms to modernize with the aim of stabilizing its power. This transformation fostered an interest in creating constitutional monarchy based on Western models. By 1908, a draft constitution, modeled on Japan's system, promised a gradual move to constitutional governance. The plan was to hold a National Assembly in 1910 and institute parliamentary rule by 1916. Despite public celebrations, these reforms failed to address the deep-seated social and political inequities, breeding public dissatisfaction. The monarchy's final years were marked by experimental governance that aimed at modernity but remained hindered by entrenched power dynamics and external pressures. This complex period set the stage for revolutionary forces that would soon end the monarchy and reshape China's political future.<sup>32</sup>

A Republic emerged first. During this Republican period, from 1912 to 1949, Chinese intellectuals and educators began promoting folk music as part of a unified national culture. Folk songs, once emblematic of rural traditions, were now reframed as elements of a broader cultural heritage that could unite the country in the face of external and internal challenges. By arranging folk songs with Western techniques, Chinese educators sent a powerful message: China could modernize and engage globally without sacrificing its unique cultural identity. This musical hybridization became a way to convey that China could embrace both its traditions and the new global ideas and practices that came with modernization.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Vohra, 99–100.

<sup>33</sup> Lau, 270.

## A Tool for Nationalism

This sentiment was especially important during times of conflict. During the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), folk songs arranged with Western harmonies became potent symbols of resistance and unity. Military bands, orchestras, and large choral groups performed these songs to rally the populace and inspire patriotism. These ensembles were essential for boosting morale. The musical arrangements, while modern, drew on traditional Chinese tunes, showing the extent to which Chinese music had embraced Western instrumentation.<sup>34</sup>

As part of the broader nationalist agenda, the lyrics of many folk songs were adapted to reflect contemporary political themes, such as resistance against foreign invaders and calls for unity. Songs that had once been simple expressions of local culture were now repurposed to promote solidarity, inspiring the public to see themselves as part of a larger national project. An example of nationalism expressed through folk song arrangement of “Liu Yang River,” named for the river flowing through Hunan province. This folksong gained widespread popularity as a symbol of national pride, especially as Hunan was the birthplace of Mao Zedong. Many composers created arrangements of this song, including Wang Jianzhong, who composed a large number of pieces for solo piano based on Chinese folk melodies.

In this arrangement, Jianzhong employs several traditional Chinese musical techniques, notably imitating the sound of the Chinese instrument the guzheng. To get a sense of this, here is an example of the guzheng being played.



Video QR code: <https://youtu.be/9PQQfNU8PKA>

In Jianzhong’s piano piece, we hear extensive arpeggios that mirror the guzheng’s sweeping sound. This imitation brings out the cultural resonance of “Liu Yang River,” combining folk melody with pianistic techniques that evoke the sound of traditional Chinese instruments. Here is a short clip from this piece.



Video QR code: <https://youtu.be/lXdyFkbTmZU>

The music freely alternates between a classical approach to harmony and passages grounded in pentatonic glissandos. By combining these elements, composers like Jianzhong redefined the role of the piano, transforming it into a bridge between China’s folk heritage and Western musical traditions while

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34. Chen, 103.

contributing to a sense of nationalism – this time for the Communist Revolution led by Mao Zedong.

### Modern Music Conservatories

These types of arrangements were developed by musicians in China's burgeoning music conservatories in the early twentieth century, marking a pivotal moment in the formalization of Western music education in the country. Conservatories in major cities, particularly Beijing and Shanghai, became hubs for systematic training in Western musical theory, composition techniques, and instrumentation. Modeled after European institutions, these conservatories introduced Chinese musicians to advanced concepts of harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration, alongside the study of traditional Chinese music.<sup>35</sup>

Beyond their academic function, these conservatories served as incubators for cultural and political transformation. They produced a generation of composers who were fluent in both Western and Chinese musical languages and who played significant roles in shaping the modern identity of Chinese music. Figures like Wang Jianzhong and Li Yinghai emerged from these environments, drawing from their formal training to collect, adapt, and arrange folk songs. By reinterpreting these melodies, they did more than create music—they helped redefine the cultural narrative of a rapidly modernizing China.<sup>36</sup>

These folk song arrangements did not merely bridge two musical traditions; they symbolized China's negotiation with globalization and its determination to preserve cultural identity in the face of rapid change. The enduring appeal of these arrangements lies in their ability to connect past and present, offering audiences a deeply resonant musical expression that celebrates both heritage and innovation.

### In Summary

In conclusion, the hybridization of Chinese folk songs in the early twentieth century illustrates the complex interplay of tradition and modernity, local and global influences, and resilience and adaptability. By embracing Western techniques without abandoning their cultural roots, Chinese musicians demonstrated how music could serve as a dynamic medium for cultural preservation and innovation. These efforts not only enriched the global musical landscape but also underscored the profound capacity of art to reflect and shape societal change.

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<sup>35</sup> Lam, 45-46.

<sup>36</sup> Feng, 80.

The legacy of these arrangements continues to inspire musicians and scholars alike. They stand as a testament to the transformative power of music education, the adaptability of cultural traditions, and the enduring significance of folk music as a vessel for national identity in an interconnected world.

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## The Ascendancy of Chinese Animation: An Analysis of Market Performance, Production Innovation, and Policy Support

By Vincenzo De Masi\*, Qinke Di<sup>‡</sup>, Siyi Li<sup>°</sup> & Yuhan Song<sup>•</sup>

*This paper analyzes the recent evolution of the Chinese animation industry through the lenses of market performance, production innovation, and policy support. In 2023, China's film industry recorded revenues of RMB 47.8 billion (USD 7.3 billion), with animated films playing an increasingly important role. Titles such as Miles from Chang'an (长安三万里, Cháng'ān sān wàn lǐ) and Boonie Bears: Guardian Code (熊出没·伴我“熊芯”, Xióng chū mò · Bàn wǒ “xióng xīn”) each earned over RMB 1.4 billion, confirming a strong domestic demand for high-quality animation. The industry is undergoing a structural transition from quantity-driven production to quality-oriented innovation. While the volume of television animation declined from 300,000 minutes in the early 2010s to 150,000 minutes in 2023, production value and artistic refinement have significantly increased. A key driver of this transformation is artificial intelligence, which is reshaping workflows through generative tools, AI-based motion capture, and automated design systems. Projects such as Qianqiu Shisong (千秋诗颂, Qiānqiū shī sòng) and Tuan Yuan Ling (团圆令, Tuányuán lìng) exemplify how AI can accelerate production while enhancing visual and narrative sophistication. The global success of Ne Zha 2 (哪吒2, Nèzhā 2) marks a historic milestone. With over USD 2.085 billion in global box office revenue, it is now the highest-grossing animated film worldwide, surpassing Inside Out 2. This achievement highlights China's growing cultural influence and affirms the industry's potential as a global leader in animated storytelling.*

**Keywords:** Chinese animation industry, market performance, production innovation, government policy, artificial intelligence in animation

### Introduction

Animation has been deeply embedded in Chinese cultural expression since antiquity, with historical roots in shadow puppetry and narrative folk traditions. In recent decades, however, Chinese animation has undergone a structural transformation, evolving into a strategic pillar of the national cultural and creative industries. This shift is fueled by robust policy support, technological innovation, and increasing domestic and international market integration (Keane 2013, Lent 2013).

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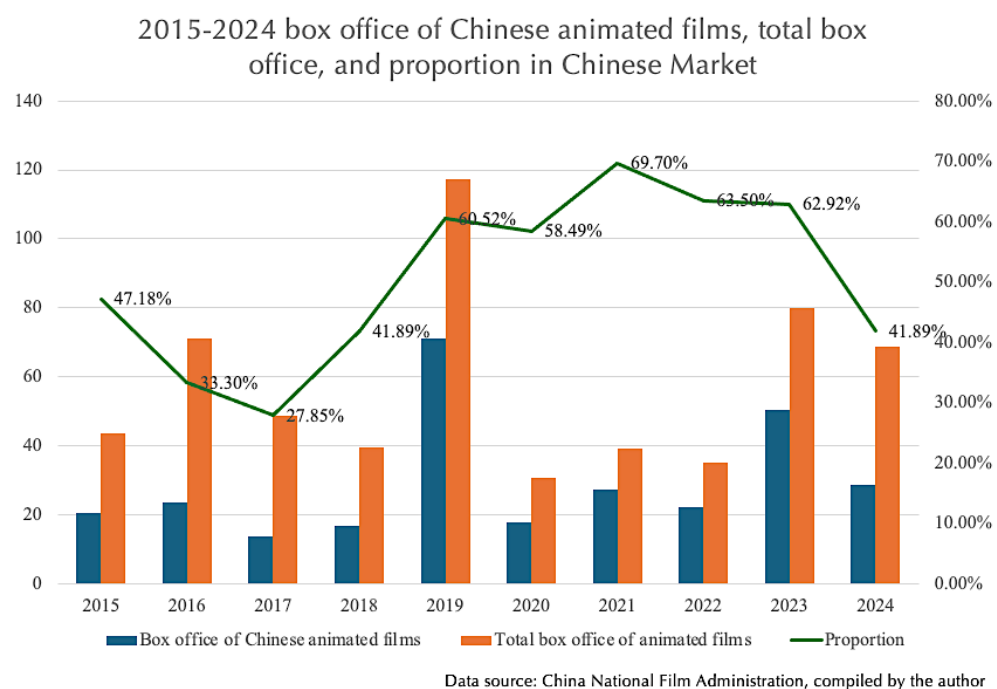
\*Associate Professor, School of Journalism and Communication, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China.

<sup>‡</sup>Teaching Assistant, Guangdong Songshan Polytechnic in Shaoguan, China.

<sup>°</sup>Master's Degree in Media Communication, Hong Kong Baptist University, China.

<sup>•</sup>Accomplished Director and Producer in the CG Industry, China.

China's animation sector, once considered peripheral in the global audiovisual landscape, has now emerged as a dynamic and competitive industry. As of 2023, China's film industry reached box office revenues of RMB 47.8 billion (approximately USD 7.3 billion), with animated features playing a central role in this recovery-driven growth (Sun & Wang, 2023). Notably, two Chinese animated films ranked among the top ten highest-grossing films of the year: *30,000 Miles from Chang'an* (长安三万里, Cháng'ān Sān Wàn Lǐ) grossed over RMB 1.82 billion (USD 275 million), while *Boonie Bears: Guardian Code* (熊出没·伴我“熊芯”, Xióng Chūmò·Bàn Wǒ “Xióng Xīn”) surpassed RMB 1.49 billion (USD 228 million), underlining the strong audience demand for domestic animated productions (Animation 2023年中国动画产业发展报告).



The industry's evolution has been marked by a transition from quantity to quality. Between 2010 and 2015, China was the world's leading producer in terms of animation output, peaking at over 300,000 minutes per year (Hong Kong Film Archive, 2014). Yet, in 2023, production was halved to around 150,000 minutes of television animation (Sun and Wang 2023). Rather than reflecting decline, this reduction signals a strategic reorientation toward higher-value, more culturally sophisticated content. In parallel, the online animation market has expanded rapidly, with 508 titles registered in 2023, distributed across major platforms such as Bilibili, iQiyi, Tencent Video, and Youku (ibid.).

A defining trend of recent years has been the industry's embrace of traditional culture and aesthetic localization. Numerous productions incorporate mythological motifs from classics like *Journey to the West* (西游记, Xī Yóu Jì), *Strange Tales from a*

*Chinese Studio* (聊斋志异, Liáozhāi Zhìyì), and *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* (山海经, Shānhǎijīng), revitalizing Chinese heritage through animation (Chen, 2005). This cultural strategy is aligned with the government's broader cultural soft power ambitions and complements its "Going Out" policy, which promotes Chinese cultural exports (Keane 2013, Qing 2006).

From a market perspective, Chinese animation has gradually moved beyond the "low-age" stereotype traditionally associated with children's content. The current trajectory points toward a "full-age" audience model, with increasing engagement from youth and adult viewers (The Development Status of China's Animation Industry's Foreign Trade 2023). Works such as *Ne Zha* (哪吒之魔童降世, Nézhā Zhī Mótóng Jiàngshì 2019) and *Deep Sea* (深海, Shēnhǎi 2023) have demonstrated not only commercial appeal but also elevated artistic ambition. The latter, for instance, employed particle ink painting style and advanced 3D technologies, earning international acclaim and entry into the 73rd Berlin International Film Festival (ibid.; Sun and Wang 2023).

Moreover, the application of artificial intelligence has begun to reshape production workflows. In 2024, CCTV aired the first AI-generated animation, *Qianqiu Shisong* (千秋诗颂, Qiānqiū Shīsòng), produced using generative AI tools to automate scene rendering and musical scoring (Xinhua News Agency 2024). This signals a new era in animation production where AI augments creative labor, reduces costs, and accelerates delivery cycles, while still requiring human oversight and cultural curation.

From a global standpoint, the internationalization of Chinese animation has reached new heights. The inclusion of *Ne Zha 2* (哪吒2) in the global all-time top 5 box office represents a historic milestone: it is the first animated film produced outside Hollywood to achieve such a ranking. As of early 2025, *Ne Zha 2* has surpassed *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* (USD 2.071 billion), with a total global gross exceeding USD 2.085 billion—USD 2.054 billion from the domestic market and over USD 31 million from international markets, according to Maoyan data (Maoyan 2025, The Hollywood Reporter 2025). It has also overtaken *Inside Out 2* (2024) to become the highest-grossing animated film in global history.

This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of the ascendance of Chinese animation, focusing on three interlinked dimensions: market performance, production innovation, and government policy. Drawing on quantitative data, case studies, and comparative insights, it investigates how the synergy between cultural strategy, technological disruption, and institutional support has redefined the animation sector's domestic and international trajectory. Special attention is given to the role of private studios, AI-assisted workflows, and the evolving audience ecology. The findings aim to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of Chinese animation's global repositioning and future potential in the creative economy.

## Historical Origins and Early Development

### Ancient Roots: Shadow Puppetry and Traditional Storytelling

The roots of Chinese animation are deeply embedded in traditional cultural forms such as shadow puppetry (皮影戏, pí yǐng xì), folklore, and oral storytelling practices. These early forms of visual performance were foundational to what would later evolve into cinematic animation. Shadow puppetry is among the oldest forms of visual narrative art in China, providing not only stylistic motifs but also narrative structures that continue to shape animation today (Lent 2013).

Narrative traditions such as storytelling (讲古, jiǎng gǔ), temple murals, and the classical pictorial art of handscrolls offered visual grammar that influenced early animation's composition and rhythm. The visual and thematic continuity between these traditions and modern animation underscores the persistent role of Chinese cultural archetypes in visual storytelling (Chen 2005, Wang and Wang 2009).

Perhaps most influential in shaping Chinese animation aesthetics is the ink-wash painting tradition (水墨画, shuǐmòhuà), whose emphasis on abstraction, minimalism, and expressive motion was later translated into animated forms. This approach prioritizes symbolic movement and poetic atmosphere over realism, contributing to what scholars later defined as a "national animation style" (民族风格动画, mínzú fēnggé dònghuà) (Teo 2011).

### The Emergence of Modern Chinese Animation

Modern Chinese animation formally began in the 1920s and 1930s, marked by experimentation with cut-paper and cel animation inspired by foreign cinematic techniques. The pivotal figures in this development were the Wan brothers (万氏兄弟, Wàn Shì Xiōngdì), especially Wan Laiming and Wan Guchan, who are widely credited with producing China's first animated short, *Uproar in the Studio* (大闹画室, Dà Nào Huàshì 1926) (Lent 2013, Du 2017).

The brothers' most influential work, *Princess Iron Fan* (铁扇公主, Tiě Shàn Gōngzhǔ 1941), was based on the mythological narrative from *Journey to the West*. It represented not only the first full-length animated feature film in China but also in Asia. According to Wang (2010), the film employed rotoscoping techniques and synchronized sound, and was heavily influenced by Chinese opera, visual stylization, and classical musical arrangements.

The influence of this film extended beyond China, with scholars noting its impact on early Japanese animation, especially in the work of Osamu Tezuka (Chen 2005). The hybridization of Chinese motifs with Western animation methods became a foundational element of the evolving Chinese animation identity.

In 1935, another milestone was reached with *The Camel's Dance* (骆驼献舞, Luòtuó Xiàn Wǔ), directed by Qian Jiajun, recognized as China's first sound-synchronized animation (Lent 2013). This marked a turning point in Chinese

animation's technical development, positioning it on par with international standards of the time.

## Pioneering Works and Notable Figures

Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, animation became a strategic tool for ideological dissemination. The formation of the Shanghai Animation Film Studio (上海美术电影制片厂, Shànghǎi Měishù Diànyǐng Zhìpiàncǎng) in 1957 institutionalized animation as a state-supported cultural sector (Keane 2013, Macdonald 2015). Funded and managed by the Ministry of Culture, the studio served as a production center, training school, and innovation hub throughout the 1950s–1980s.

Among its most iconic productions was *Havoc in Heaven* (大闹天宫, Dà Nào Tiāngōng 1961–1964), directed by Wan Laiming. The film, which portrayed the Monkey King's rebellion against heavenly authority, became emblematic of Chinese animation's aesthetic maturity and narrative independence (Macdonald 2015, Lent 2013).

Another landmark was *Nezha Conquers the Dragon King* (哪吒闹海, Nézhā Nào Hǎi 1979), directed by Wang Shuchen and Yan Dingxian. The film combined dynamic motion, expressive color palettes, and mythological storytelling in a work that gained international acclaim (Keane 2013).

Te Wei (特伟), a central figure in shaping the aesthetic direction of the studio, pioneered the ink-wash animation genre. His works, such as *The Proud General* (骄傲的将军, Jiāo'ào de Jiāngjūn 1956) and *Where is Mama* (小蝌蚪找妈妈, Xiǎo Kēdǒu Zhǎo Māma 1960), transformed traditional artistic techniques into cinematic language (Macdonald 2015, Wang and Wang 2009).

Te Wei's *Where is Mama* in particular is often cited as the clearest expression of "animated ink painting," reflecting Chinese ecological values and an aesthetic sensitivity that contrasted sharply with Western cel animation. The film received international awards and set a benchmark for "Chinese poetic animation," a genre now studied as a distinct school in animation theory (Teo 2011).

Other significant works of this era include *The Three Monks* (三个和尚, Sān Gè Héshàng 1980), a silent animated parable, and *The Nine-Colored Deer* (九色鹿, Jiǔsè Lù 1981), based on Dunhuang Buddhist murals, both acclaimed for their allegorical depth and symbolic visual construction (Lent, 2013).

Together, these artists and works forged a conceptual and visual language that continues to inform contemporary Chinese animation aesthetics. Their legacy is evident in recent productions that return to traditional narrative forms while employing new technologies, an interplay between continuity and innovation that defines Chinese animation's identity to this day.

## The Golden Era of Chinese Animation (1950s-1980s)

### The Establishment of State-Owned Animation Studios

The golden era of Chinese animation, spanning the 1950s to the 1980s, coincided with the consolidation of animation under the socialist cultural economy. This period marked a peak in artistic innovation and national cultural identity, facilitated by the institutional establishment of the Shanghai Animation Film Studio (上海美术电影制片厂, Shànghǎi Měishù Diànyǐng Zhìpiàncǎng) in 1957 (Keane 2013, Macdonald 2015).

Supported by the Ministry of Culture, the studio quickly became the epicenter of national animation production. It served not only as a creative and technical hub but also as a space for ideological education, artistic training, and state cultural diffusion (Wang and Wang 2009, Lent 2013). The studio's early productions were informed by national policy goals, focusing on narratives that promoted unity, morality, and socialist values.

The institutional structure allowed animators to work in collaborative units, following a system similar to traditional Chinese craft apprenticeships. As Te Wei noted in retrospective interviews, this structure promoted peer learning and stylistic continuity (Teo 2011). The state-supported model provided financial stability, enabling experimentation without the pressure of immediate commercial return.

### Artistic Innovation and Technical Diversification

A distinctive hallmark of this era was the integration of traditional artistic forms into animation. Chinese animators sought to develop a unique “national style animation” (民族风格动画, mínzú fēnggé dònghuà), combining heritage with innovation (Chen, 2005). Techniques such as ink-wash animation (水墨动画, shuǐmò dònghuà), paper-cut animation (剪纸动画, jiǎnzhǐ dònghuà), and puppet animation (木偶动画, mùǒu dònghuà) were developed in parallel to cel animation technologies imported from the West.

The most celebrated example of ink-wash animation is *Where is Mama* (小蝌蚪找妈妈, Xiǎo Kēdǒu Zhǎo Māma 1960), directed by Te Wei. The film, inspired by the expressive qualities of traditional Chinese painting, demonstrated that animation could serve not only as entertainment but also as a form of fine art (Macdonald, 2015; Lent 2013). It won multiple international awards and is recognized as a cornerstone of the so-called “Chinese poetic animation” genre (Teo 2011).

In parallel, works like *Pigsy Eats Watermelon* (猪八戒吃西瓜, Zhū Bājiè Chī Xīguā 1958) exemplified the tactile aesthetic and folk resonance of paper-cut animation. Puppet-based works such as *A Clever Duckling* (聪明的鸭子, Cōngmíng de Yāzi 1962) also gained popularity, demonstrating the diversity of visual techniques cultivated during this era (Wang and Wang 2009).

While cel animation (赛璐璐动画) remained foundational, it was often adapted stylistically to emphasize planar composition, stylized movement, and symbolic

visual storytelling, departing from the hyperrealistic animation trends of Hollywood (Chen 2005).

### Iconic Works and International Recognition

Among the iconic achievements of this period, *Havoc in Heaven* (大闹天宫, Dà Nào Tiāngōng 1961–64), directed by Wan Laiming (万籁鸣), is perhaps the most influential. Based on *Journey to the West*, it exemplified the combination of mythological content, traditional music, and modern animation technique. The film won international acclaim, including screenings at major festivals such as Locarno and London, and has been described as a cultural milestone comparable to Disney's *Fantasia* in terms of aesthetic ambition (Macdonald 2015, Lent 2013).

Another foundational film was *Nezha Conquers the Dragon King* (哪吒闹海, Nézhā Nào Hǎi 1979), directed by Wang Shuchen and Yan Dingxian. The film, based on the *Fengshen Yanyi* mythology, offered audiences a visually striking and morally complex tale of filial defiance and sacrifice. It remains a classic of Chinese animation and is often cited as a forerunner of the genre of mythological hero animation that continues in works like *Ne Zha* (2019) and *New Gods: Nezha Reborn* (2021) (Keane 2013, Wang and Wang, 2009).

Short-form animations also flourished. *The Proud General* (骄傲的将军, Jiāo'ào de Jiāngjūn, 1956) presented an anti-militaristic allegory with stylistic rigor. *The Three Monks* (三个和尚, Sān Gè Héshàng 1980) offered a minimalist parable about cooperation, employing visual humor and musical cues rather than dialogue. *The Nine-Colored Deer* (九色鹿, Jiùsè Lù 1981), inspired by Buddhist murals from Dunhuang, embodied a synthesis of visual poetry and moral allegory that expanded the expressive range of Chinese animation (Lent, 2013; Macdonald, 2015).

### Socio-Political Context and Institutional Constraints

Despite the achievements of this era, the relationship between animation and the political environment remained ambivalent. While the state's protection and investment facilitated artistic flourishing, the same system imposed ideological constraints and bureaucratic control.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), many studios were shut down, productions halted, and artists sent to the countryside. This interruption caused a major rupture in the animation production cycle (Keane 2013). Only in the late 1970s did studios begin to re-emerge and reassert creative autonomy, though often under the pressures of evolving ideological shifts and the need to reorient toward audience-centered storytelling.

Nonetheless, even within these constraints, animators embedded subtle social critiques and allegorical reflections on authority and collaboration, as evidenced in films such as *The Three Monks* and *The Proud General*.

## Legacy and Global Positioning

The golden era of Chinese animation laid the foundational aesthetics, pedagogical structures, and cultural strategies that continue to shape the industry today. Contemporary works like *White Snake* (2019) and *Deep Sea* (2023) reference this heritage in visual style and thematic tone, demonstrating the persistence of a national animation idiom (Sun and Wang 2023).

In comparison with global models, Chinese animation developed along a distinct path. Whereas American animation emphasized industrialization and franchise-based production, and Japanese anime evolved within a commercial TV serial format, Chinese animation maintained a painterly, auteurist tradition embedded in state-supported institutions (Lent 2013, Chen 2005).

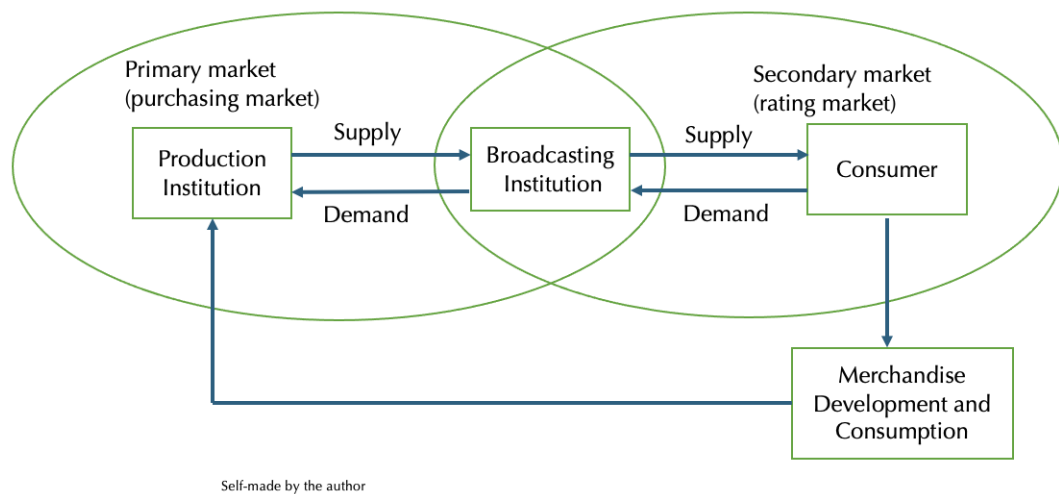
The golden era thus represents not only a historical phase but also an aesthetic paradigm, a legacy of visual lyricism, cultural specificity, and pedagogical intent that continues to influence China's animation renaissance in the 21st century.

## The Resurgence of Chinese Animation (1990s-2000s)

### Economic Reforms and the Opening Up of the Industry

The 1990s marked a transformative phase in Chinese animation, reflecting broader structural shifts in China's political economy. Following the reform and opening-up policy, cultural industries, including animation, were gradually liberalized and integrated into the broader creative economy. The end of the state monopoly over cultural production allowed private and hybrid animation studios to emerge, laying the foundation for a new industrial paradigm (Keane 2013, Chen 2005).

### Traditional mechanisms of animation production



Policy frameworks such as the 1995 “Interim Provisions on the Examination and Approval of Sino-Foreign Cooperative Animation Production Enterprises” encouraged cross-border collaborations, technological transfer, and capital investment. These developments created a diversified production ecosystem, no longer reliant solely on state-owned studios (Wang and Wang 2009).

The restructuring of public institutions, including the corporatization of the Shanghai Animation Film Studio in 2000, reflected this shift toward market logic (Lent 2013). Simultaneously, animation education experienced a significant boost. The establishment of the Animation Department at the Beijing Film Academy in 1993, followed by similar programs in other key institutions, provided the technical and creative workforce necessary for industrial upgrading.

Audience segmentation also evolved. With changing consumption patterns and the rise of youth culture, animation diversified beyond children’s programming. New genres and styles emerged, reflecting the growing influence of global popular culture and the expanding reach of television and digital platforms (Keane and Zhao 2012).

### The Rise of Private Animation Studios

A major consequence of the industrial liberalization was the proliferation of private animation studios. Studios like Huayi Brothers Media Corporation began developing animated content with a stronger market orientation and global appeal. A landmark in this trajectory was *Lotus Lantern* (宝莲灯, Bǎo Lián Dēng 1999), produced by Shanghai Animation Film Studio under a new semi-commercial model. The film became one of the first large-scale domestic animated features to

achieve national box office success and marked a stylistic shift toward modern narrative techniques and musical scoring (Wang and Wang 2009).

Smaller studios also contributed to innovation. Productions such as *The Adventures of Little Carp* (小鲤鱼历险记, Xiǎo Lǐyú Lìxiǎn Jì 2003) reflected a hybrid aesthetic combining folklore with contemporary storytelling. These productions paralleled global trends while maintaining a uniquely Chinese flavor, indicating an evolving localization strategy (Chen 2005).

Business models also diversified. Studios began adopting merchandising strategies, creating animation-related toys, games, and books. IP (intellectual property) development became central to revenue generation and audience retention, paving the way for the cross-media practices that would characterize the industry in the 2010s (Keane 2013).

### International Co-Productions and Collaborations

This period also witnessed the emergence of international co-productions, which became crucial in fostering technological transfer and narrative hybridization. *The Legend of Nezha* (哪吒传奇, Nézhā Chuánqí 2003), co-produced by CCTV and Japan's Group TAC, represents a notable example of such transnational cooperation. While grounded in Chinese mythology, the series adopted Japanese production techniques and visual styles, increasing its competitiveness in both domestic and foreign markets (Lent 2013).

Other projects like *The Magic Brush* (神笔马良, Shénbǐ Mǎliáng 2002), co-produced with French studios, and *Cubix* (酷比克, Kùbǐkè 2001), involving Korean partners, demonstrated the rising internationalization of Chinese animation workflows. These collaborations allowed Chinese studios to improve their technical standards and storytelling methods, aligning more closely with global benchmarks (The Development Status of China's Animation Industry's Foreign Trade 2023).

Participation in international festivals and markets also increased during this time. The launch of the China International Cartoon and Animation Festival (CICAF) in 2004 provided a domestic platform for international exchange, policy coordination, and industrial promotion (Sun and Wang 2023).

### Innovation and Industrial Transition

The industry's renewed momentum during the late 1990s and early 2000s paved the way for a deeper shift toward innovation and industrial sophistication. The reform period triggered a transition from artisanal production models toward integrated industrial chains, linking content creation, distribution, and ancillary products (Wang and Wang 2009). The diffusion of digital technologies, 2D and 3D computer animation, digital editing, and virtual post-production, transformed the production pipeline. Studios increasingly adopted software-based workflows, such as Flash and Maya, and began experimenting with CGI techniques. This digital

turn signaled a decisive break from traditional hand-drawn methods (Lent 2013, Macdonald 2015).

By the early 2000s, the notion of animation as part of a cultural industry ecosystem began to take shape. Animation was no longer considered an isolated artform but a key node within broader media convergence. The establishment of animation zones and incubators in cities like Shenzhen and Hangzhou reflected this industrial transition (Sun and Wang 2023).

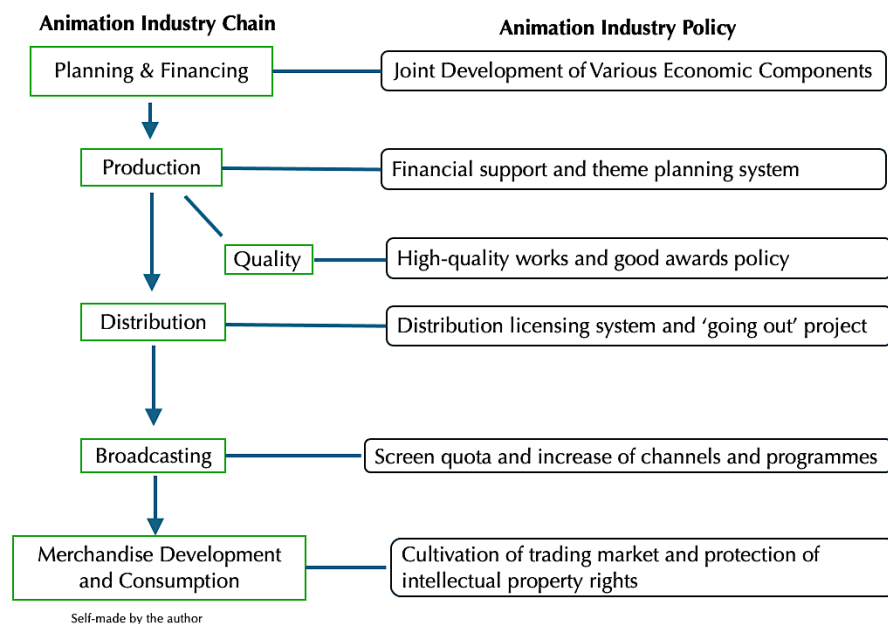
Government policy continued to support this transition. The Ministry of Culture issued new funding instruments and tax incentives for studios developing original IPs, while educational institutions were encouraged to update their curricula with digital content creation and industry-aligned training (Keane and Zhao 2012).

Despite these advances, structural limitations remained. As noted by industry scholars, many projects suffered from weak scripting, derivative aesthetics, and insufficient investment in long-term IP development (Wang and Wang 2009). Nonetheless, this period laid the groundwork for the subsequent boom in quality, innovation, and global projection that would characterize the following decade.

## **Government Policies and Support**

### **Market Consolidation and Audience Diversification**

Since the early 2010s, the Chinese animation industry has experienced a phase of rapid market consolidation, digital expansion, and audience diversification. According to recent reports, the total industrial output value of Chinese animation exceeded RMB 200 billion in 2020 and remained above RMB 220 billion in 2022, confirming its status as one of the strategic pillars of China's cultural industries (Sun and Wang, 2023, *The Development Status of China's Animation Industry's Foreign Trade* 2023).



Animation is no longer confined to children's entertainment. The transition from a "low-age" model to a "full-age" audience engagement strategy is evident in the popularity of films such as *Big Fish and Begonia* (大鱼海棠, Dà yú Hǎi táng 2016), *White Snake* (白蛇: 缘起, Bái Shé: Yuán qǐ 2019), and *Deep Sea* (深海, Shēn hǎi 2023), which target young adults with aesthetically refined and thematically complex narratives (Chen 2005, Macdonald 2015).

Streaming platforms such as Bilibili, Tencent Video, iQiyi, and Youku have played a significant role in transforming consumption patterns and production strategies. These platforms do not merely serve as distributors but also fund original content, gather audience data, and foster interactive communities. Digital platforms have become integral to China's cultural economy, blurring the boundaries between audience and creator through participatory culture (Keane 2013).

## Industrial Scaling and Capitalization

In recent years, large animation conglomerates such as Light Chaser Animation (追光动画, Zhuīguāng dònghuà), Coloroom Pictures (彩条屋影业, Cǎitiáowū yǐngyè), and Fantawild (华强方特, Huáqiáng Fāngtè) have led the sector's industrial scaling, supported by investments from Alibaba (阿里巴巴, Ālībābā), Tencent (腾讯, Téngxùn), and other cultural industry funds (Keane and Zhao 2012). These studios are no longer merely content producers but operate comprehensive IP ecosystems encompassing merchandising, gaming, theme parks, and transmedia storytelling.

The Boonie Bears (熊出没, Xióng chūmò) franchise exemplifies this model, evolving from a television series into a multi-platform IP with theatrical films, mobile games, and branded products. The 2023 release *Boonie Bears: Guardian Code* (熊出没·伴我“熊芯”, Xióng chūmò · Bàn wǒ “xióng xīn”) exceeded RMB 1.49 billion

at the box office, confirming the financial viability of such integrated production models (Sun and Wang 2023).

Public listings of animation companies and access to venture capital have provided studios with greater financial stability and global competitiveness. Regional governments have also contributed to sectoral development by creating animation industrial zones, cultural parks, and subsidy programs for content development (Animation 2023年中国动画产业发展报告, 2023 nián Zhōngguó dònghuà chǎnyè fāzhǎn bàogào).

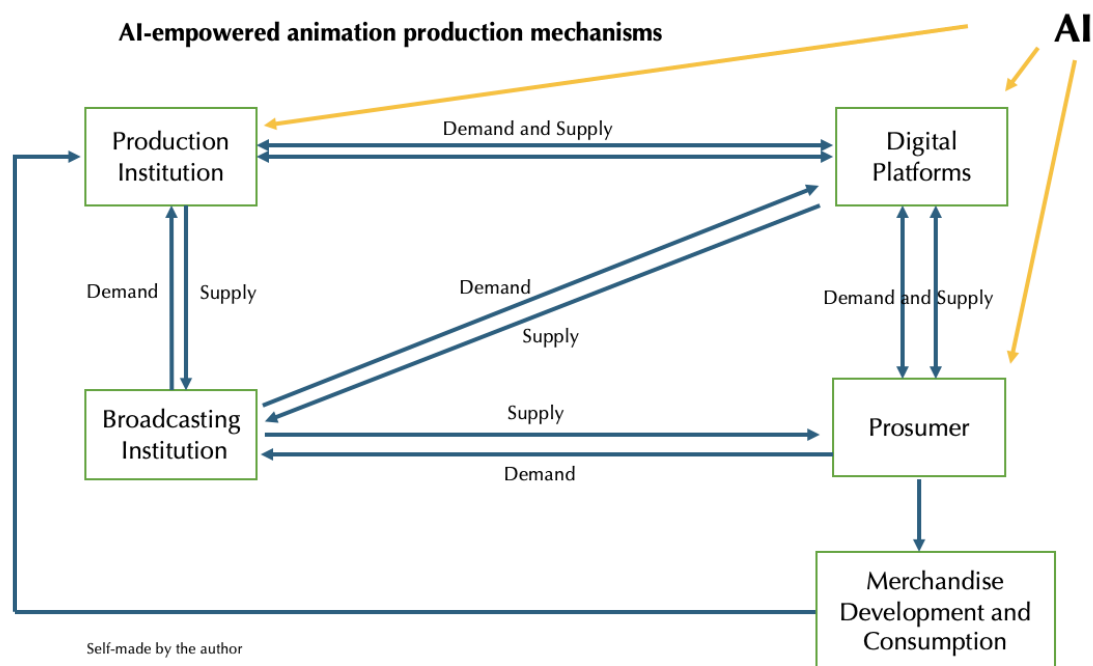
## Digital Technologies and AI-Driven Production

The transformation of the production pipeline has been accelerated by digital technologies. Studios now use 3D CGI, motion capture, virtual rendering, and AI-assisted animation systems. This shift has not only improved production efficiency but also enhanced visual sophistication (Lent 2013).

In 2024, the AI-assisted animated film *Qianqiu Shisong* (千秋诗颂) aired on CCTV, employing generative algorithms for background design and music composition. This project exemplifies the rise of human-machine collaborative workflows in Chinese animation (Xinhua News Agency 2024).

Platforms like Baidu's ERNIE-ViLG and Tencent's AI-assisted post-production tools are increasingly embedded in mainstream pipelines, enabling automation of repetitive tasks and supporting creative experimentation (The Development Status of China's Animation Industry's Foreign Trade 2023).

Digital innovations extend to distribution and engagement. NFTs, blockchain-based IP protection, and metaverse-based animation experiences are gaining ground. Companies like iQiyi and Bilibili have launched VR/AR-integrated animated content, suggesting that the future of animation lies in immersive, interactive formats (Sun and Wang 2023).



## Global Outreach and Soft Power Expansion

Chinese animation's international presence has grown significantly since the 2010s, both through festival participation and global platform distribution. Works such as *Big Fish and Begonia* (大鱼海棠, Dà yú hǎi táng), *White Snake* (白蛇: 缘起, Báishé: Yuánqǐ), *Jiang Ziya* (姜子牙, Jiāng Zǐyá) and *New Gods: Nezha Reborn* (新神榜: 哪吒重生, Xīn shén bǎng: Nèzhā chóngshēng) have been released globally and have garnered critical acclaim (Macdonald 2015, Wang and Wang 2009).

The recent global success of *Ne Zha 2* (哪吒2, Nèzhā 2) marks a historic milestone. As of early 2025, the film has surpassed USD 2.085 billion in global box office earnings—USD 2.054 billion from China and over USD 31 million from overseas markets—making it the highest-grossing animated film in history, surpassing even *Inside Out 2* by Pixar (The Hollywood Reporter 2025, Maoyan 2025).

This achievement is emblematic of China's cultural soft power strategy, in which animation functions as both cultural export and symbolic representation. The *14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural Industry Development* (文化产业发展“十四五”规划, Wénhuà chǎnyè fāzhǎn “shísìwǔ” guīhuà) emphasizes the global projection of Chinese IPs and encourages international co-productions, overseas distribution partnerships, and participation in festivals such as Annecy and MIPCOM (Keane 2013).

Furthermore, localization strategies, including multilingual dubbing and culturally adaptive scripting, have facilitated the reception of Chinese animation in global markets. Bilibili (哔哩哔哩, Bìlǐbìlǐ) content is now distributed across more than 180

countries, reflecting the effectiveness of China's digital soft power infrastructure (Sun and Wang 2023).

In this context, Chinese animation is no longer an isolated sector but a global cultural actor, capable of shaping international aesthetic norms and redefining global storytelling paradigms.

## Policy Support and Cultural Strategy

### From Protection to Promotion: The Evolution of Policy Frameworks

The development of the Chinese animation industry has been closely tied to state policy. In the early 2000s, animation was formally recognized as a strategic sector within the cultural industries, leading to the implementation of a series of supportive policies at both national and local levels (Keane 2013, Wang and Wang 2009).

Key national policies such as the *"National Cultural Industry Development Plan"* (2004) and the *"Several Opinions on Promoting the Development of the Animation Industry"* (2006) marked a turning point, shifting the role of the state from cultural gatekeeper to industrial promoter (Chen 2005). These policies provided tax incentives, credit support, and funding channels for animation studios and educational institutions (Keane and Zhao 2012).

Municipal governments in cities such as Hangzhou, Changsha, and Shenzhen also invested in animation parks and incubators, facilitating cluster economies and industry-university partnerships (Sun and Wang 2023). The synergy between top-down planning and local-level implementation enabled the rapid expansion of animation infrastructure and talent cultivation.

In subsequent Five-Year Plans, including the 13th and 14th, animation and related cultural IP development were reaffirmed as priority areas. These frameworks promoted domestic content production while also integrating international collaboration into the state's long-term strategy for cultural export (The Development Status of China's Animation Industry's Foreign Trade 2023).

### Cultural Soft Power and National Image Construction

Animation plays a key role in China's soft power strategy, as articulated in the discourse of *"telling China's story well"* (讲好中国故事, Jiǎng Hǎo Zhōngguó Gùshi). Animated films serve as visual platforms through which Chinese mythology, ethics, and aesthetics can be transmitted to global audiences (Keane 2013, Chen 2005).

Films like *White Snake* and *Jiang Ziya* not only reflect narrative heritage but also embody the integration of high production values with culturally specific content. Their international success demonstrates how animation has become a soft power vector that complements traditional diplomacy and state-sponsored international broadcasting (Macdonald 2015).

The Chinese government actively supports the international promotion of animation through film festivals, trade events, and cultural exchange initiatives. Events such as CICAFF, the Beijing International Film Festival, and China's presence at Annecy and MIPCOM are integral to global positioning (Sun and Wang 2023). Furthermore, animation is increasingly tied to the cultural component of the Belt and Road Initiative, promoting joint productions, distribution agreements, and training programs with BRI partner countries (The Development Status of China's Animation Industry's Foreign Trade 2023).

### **Education, Training, and Talent Incubation**

Human capital development has been another priority in state policy. Since the 2000s, animation programs have proliferated in universities, art colleges, and vocational schools across China. Institutions like the Beijing Film Academy, Communication University of China, and China Academy of Art have expanded their animation curricula, balancing traditional techniques with digital innovation (Wang and Wang 2009).

Government policies have encouraged stronger industry-academia partnerships, leading to practical training programs, internship placements, and collaborative R&D projects between studios and educational institutions (Keane and Zhao 2012). Talent development is further supported by national competitions, such as the Golden Dragon Awards (金龙奖, Jīnlóng Jiǎng) and student festivals, which offer exposure and career opportunities for young animators.

Nonetheless, challenges persist. The quality of education varies across institutions, and gaps remain in key areas such as narrative development, IP planning, and production management (Sun and Wang 2023). Addressing these limitations is critical to maintaining a pipeline of skilled talent in line with industry needs.

### **Policy Limitations and Structural Challenges**

Despite positive outcomes, policy support has also generated structural distortions. Some scholars have warned of the emergence of a "subsidy-driven industry model", where studios focus more on qualifying for state funding than on audience engagement or content quality (Keane and Zhao 2012). This can lead to inflated production volumes and a mismatch between market expectations and actual output.

Resource distribution remains uneven. While coastal regions benefit from better infrastructure and policy access, studios in inland areas often face financial constraints and limited exposure (Wang and Wang 2009).

Additionally, frequent changes in content approval mechanisms and overlapping regulatory authorities create uncertainty for producers, particularly in international co-productions (Chen 2005). The lack of long-term planning frameworks and clear content guidelines can hinder creativity and risk-taking.

Furthermore, while export-oriented policies have increased the global visibility of Chinese animation, international success still depends on storytelling, brand identity, and cultural translation—dimensions less easily addressed by top-down planning (The Development Status of China's Animation Industry's Foreign Trade 2023).

### **Towards a Strategic and Sustainable Animation Policy**

Moving forward, Chinese animation policy must evolve from a volume-based approach to a value-oriented strategy. This includes greater emphasis on qualitative indicators, such as audience engagement, critical reception, and cultural impact, rather than mere production quotas.

Policy should support mid-sized and independent studios, encourage genre diversification, and promote international mentorship and co-financing mechanisms. Greater regulatory transparency and decentralized cultural governance would enhance creative freedom and encourage long-term innovation (Keane 2013).

Importantly, policy must support ecosystem development: not just animation production, but also screenwriting, IP law reform, branding, and cross-media integration. This would allow Chinese animation to mature not only as an industrial sector, but also as a culturally resonant artform capable of long-term global relevance.

## **The Future of Chinese Animation in the AI Era**

### **Integration of AI and Traditional Animation Techniques**

The integration of artificial intelligence into the Chinese animation industry is triggering a transformative shift, reshaping production processes, aesthetic possibilities, and professional roles. From generative algorithms and automated motion capture to advanced text-to-video models, AI has become increasingly central to how animated content is created and consumed. This transformation is not solely technological but also cultural, enabling new forms of storytelling while revitalizing traditional narratives.

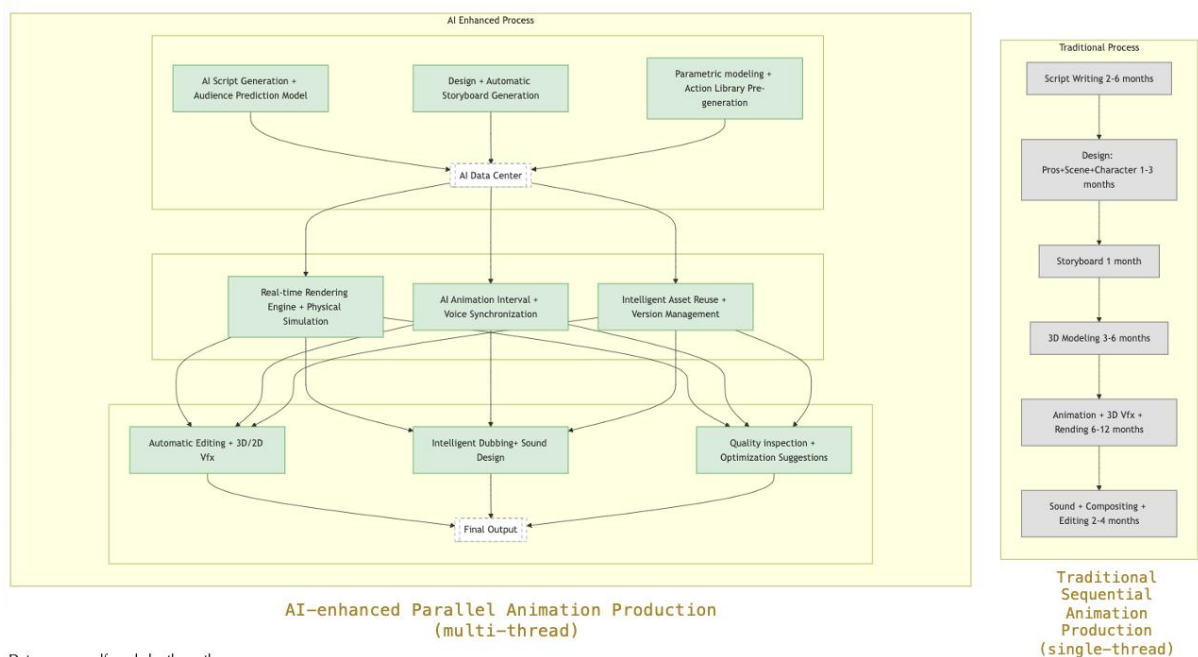
The convergence between AI and traditional animation techniques in China is redefining creative workflows. Machine learning and deep learning models allow AI systems to recognize artistic styles and generate coherent animated sequences. A prominent example is Media GPT (媒体生成预训练模型, Méitǐ shēngchéng yùxùn liè móxíng), jointly developed by China Media Group (中央广播电视总台, Zhōngyāng guǎngbò diànshì zǒngtái) and Shanghai Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (上海人工智能实验室, Shànghǎi réngōng zhìnéng shíyànshì). Trained on vast corpora of poetry, visuals and audio archives, the model generates scenes with a refined, traditional Chinese aesthetic (Cartoon Brew 2024).

The series *Qianqiu Shisong* (千秋诗颂, Qiānqiū shī sòng), China's first AI-generated animation, illustrates how AI supports the entire animation pipeline—

from art design and scene generation to post-production. Released by CCTV (中央电视台, Zhōngyāng diànshìtái) in February 2024, its 26 episodes were produced three times faster than average thanks to Media GPT (Global Times 2024). Similarly, motion capture technologies enhanced by AI are revolutionizing character animation. Studios like Zoland Animation (中南卡通, Zhōngnán kǎtōng) in Hangzhou have adopted both marker-based and markerless AI-enhanced motion capture. The Zhijiang No.1 Studio (之江一号, Zhījiāng yī hào) uses full-body and facial sensors to reduce frame-by-frame manual labor. Over one-third of Zoland's animations now rely on these techniques (eHangzhou.gov.cn 2024).

## Generative Technologies and Industrial Innovation

Generative AI tools, especially text-to-video and image-to-video models, are reshaping content production pipelines. Platforms like Alibaba's Wan 2.1 (万象2.1, Wànxiàng 2.1) and Tencent's HunyuanVideo (混元视频, Hùnyuán shìpín) allow creators to convert text prompts into animated sequences. Wan 2.1, released as open-source software in early 2025, integrates 14 billion parameters and supports complex multi-object motion (Reuters 2025). HunyuanVideo, with 13 billion parameters, enables high-quality video generation and digital avatar services that automate lip-sync, facial animation and voice synthesis (Tencent Cloud 2024).



A particularly significant application of these technologies is *Tuan Yuan Ling* (团圆令, Tuányuán lìng), China's first fully AI-generated animated feature, produced by Guanmu Culture Media (灌木文化传媒, Guànmù wénhuà chuánméi). The film employed AI at every stage, from concept art, based on

prompts like “gentle panda in ink-brush style”, to final rendering. Production time dropped from two years to six months and costs were cut by nearly 30% (Science and Technology Daily 2025). Producers noted that multiple production tasks progressed simultaneously thanks to AI coordination, signaling a shift from sequential to parallelized workflows (Yicai 2025).

This technological shift also impacts labor and creative roles. Repetitive tasks like in-betweening and background rendering are now automated, while animators increasingly function as AI supervisors, prompt designers or quality controllers. The emergence of new professional roles reflects an evolving production ecosystem that maintains human creativity at its center (Global Times 2024). AI also contributes to a cultural revitalization process, giving new life to traditional visual languages. In Qianqiu Shisong, AI facilitated the visualization of classical Chinese poetry with visual fidelity and expressive resonance (Cartoon Brew, 2024). A similar experiment is Dragon Gate (龙门, Lóngmén), a three-minute short by Duan Wenkai (段文凯, Duàn Wěnkǎi) from Communication University of China (中国传媒大学, Zhōngguó chuánméi dàxué), which uses AI-generated ink painting aesthetics to animate historical narratives (Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2024).

## **Democratization, Global Reach and Strategic Development**

AI is also contributing to the democratization of animation production. Tools like Vidu, developed by Shengshu Technology (生数科技, Shēngshù kējì), and Kling, by Kuaishou (快手, Kuàishǒu), allow non-specialists to create animations with minimal resources. By late 2024, Kling had surpassed six million users and generated over 65 million videos (PingWest 2024). Such tools are expanding access to animation production, empowering creators and small studios previously excluded from the industry.

Despite rapid progress, challenges remain. Industry experts emphasize the need to improve AI model stability, artistic expressiveness and semantic coherence. Hybrid workflows combining human direction with AI generation are considered a viable path forward, alongside the development of training programs and continuous refinement of algorithms to meet cinematic standards (Science and Technology Daily 2025). Chinese policymakers see AI as a catalyst to enhance productivity and enrich cultural expression, not as a substitute for human creativity. As the integration of AI continues, the domestic animation industry is positioning itself as a global innovator in digital content creation.

## Conclusions

The evolution of Chinese animation demonstrates a long-term trajectory from traditional visual culture to a technologically advanced and globally competitive industry. Over the decades, the sector has shifted from artisanal experimentation to state-supported industrialization, and more recently, to innovation-driven digital production. This transformation is deeply intertwined with policy direction, market development, cultural strategy, and, increasingly, the adoption of artificial intelligence.

Recent trends confirm a structural transition from quantity-focused production to quality-oriented development. Data from 2023 indicate a reduction in overall animation output in terms of minutes produced, yet a parallel rise in narrative depth, visual sophistication, and audience reception. Productions such as *Miles from Chang'an* (长安三万里, *Cháng'ān sān wàn lǐ*) and *Boonie Bears: Guardian Code* (熊出没伴我“熊芯”, *Xióng chūmò · Bàn wǒ “xióng xīn”*) have achieved remarkable box office performance, reflecting a growing demand for domestic animated content that blends cultural heritage with contemporary visual storytelling.

Artificial intelligence is now a transformative force in this development. Its integration into various stages of production—from script visualization and style replication to motion capture and post-production—has accelerated workflows, reduced costs, and expanded creative possibilities. Case studies such as *Qianqiu Shisong* (千秋诗颂, *Qiānqiū shī sòng*) and *Tuan Yuan Ling* (团圆令, *Tuányuán lìng*) reveal how AI has already reshaped production cycles, artistic processes, and professional roles in animation. The emergence of figures such as prompt designers and AI supervisors reflects the changing nature of work in the creative industries, confirming a broader shift toward hybrid human-machine collaboration.

The increasing use of AI also raises important questions concerning artistic authenticity, cultural integrity, and semantic coherence. While algorithmic tools offer new expressive capacities, the role of human oversight remains essential to preserve the narrative and symbolic richness that defines Chinese animation. As noted in various industry reports and scholarly analyses (Keane and Zhao, 2012; Wang and Wang, 2009; Chen, 2005; Sun and Wang, 2023), the future of the sector depends not only on technological advancement but also on the ability to integrate innovation with tradition in meaningful and culturally grounded ways.

The convergence of digital intelligence and traditional aesthetics suggests a new configuration of animation as a space where symbolic heritage and algorithmic imagination intersect. Productions such as *Dragon Gate* (龙门, *Lóngmén*) and *Qianqiu Shisong* (千秋诗颂, *Qiānqiū shī sòng*) exemplify how AI technologies can revitalize classical visual forms such as ink painting and poetic storytelling, aligning with broader strategies of cultural soft power and media export (Macdonald, 2015; Animation 2023年中国动画产业发展报告 2023).

The milestone reached by *Ne Zha 2* (哪吒2, *Nǎzhā 2*), which has entered the global top five highest-grossing films and become the most successful animated film worldwide, is emblematic of this evolution. It signals not only the financial

strength of Chinese animation but also its capacity to resonate with global audiences through culturally specific yet technologically advanced storytelling.

In this light, the future of Chinese animation lies in its ability to synthesize artistic heritage, technological innovation, and international engagement. As long as human creativity continues to guide AI development, Chinese animation will not only maintain its cultural distinctiveness but also expand its influence within the global audiovisual landscape.

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## Artistic Innovation as a Catalyst for Corporate Creativity: Integrating Arts into Business Strategy

By Nirbhay Kumar Trigun\* & Anjuli Jain<sup>±</sup>

*This paper explores the integration of artistic innovation into corporate strategies to enhance creativity and foster innovation. In an increasingly volatile and competitive business environment, companies must constantly reinvent themselves to remain relevant. Artistic methodologies, traditionally associated with creative expression, are emerging as transformative tools for business innovation. By examining theoretical frameworks, case studies, and best practices, this study illustrates how incorporating arts into business processes can unlock new ideas, enhance employee engagement, and create unique value propositions. The research also identifies challenges and strategies for effectively bridging the gap between artistic and corporate cultures, emphasizing the role of leadership and collaboration in driving this integration.*

**Keywords:** Artistic Innovation, Corporate Creativity, Business Strategy, Creativity Integration, Organizational Innovation

### Introduction

For years, academics formally debated whether art and business could be seamlessly tied together. The question, though, was always a moot point for many practitioners. Companies and businesses usually maintained strict boundaries between work that might be thought of as business-oriented and that which was arts-based. Indeed, integration of the arts with a business had customarily involved relatively compartmentalized activities (Montuori 2011).

When the two paths crossed, more often than not, such activity had been part of a company's community relations mission statement. The arts were "boosted" by strategic annexation and financial contributions on the part of the business, while the business was enhanced by access to lowered-cost facilities, enhanced corporate image and potential future consumers who could be encouraged to attend concerts or art museum exhibits. For a relatively brief span of time, those with a bent toward seeing businesses as being able to learn from arts' best practices had begun to draw attention to the process orientation and creativity of many artists and creative persons (Mumford & Gustafson 1988). It's worth noting that where art had been concerned, such change has been described in terms of a benign character - "assimilative Ness." In this respect, the purpose of the paper is

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\*Ph.D. Scholar, Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, India.

<sup>±</sup>Associate Professor, The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, India.

to show that there are a number of discrete ways in which businesses can tap into the rich potential that surrounds the world of arts. Some of the principal benefits are, of course, potentially accessible to any business from virtually any arts institution, while others might be particularly beneficial if blended into an emerging or future corporate strategy (Nissley 2010).

The integration of creativity into organizational life has deep historical roots. For instance, the invention of the wheel demonstrates creativity beyond the arts, while Michelangelo's design of military fortifications and Leonardo da Vinci's work on river locks illustrate how the arts have long intersected with strategic and practical innovation.

## Background

In a world that has become increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, change is the only constant, and disruption can be expected. Creativity and innovation have become the mantra of survival going into the future. Creativity or innovation flourishes in the interplay of different disciplines, such as business and the arts, which inspire each other, leading to new methods, knowledge, and utopias (O'Connor 2010).

In this context, the concept of artistic innovation breaks new ground. It shows how art has always broken the ruling norms and inspired - born of a revolutionary attitude - new ways of doing business. In particular, art has encouraged businesses to come up with alternatives to existing problems, to embrace originality in their views and actions, to encourage freedom of expression, and to let the rules serve flexible goals, akin to the effect of a catalyst (Pink 2005).

Artistic innovation, as a process, researches how art has motivated businesses to come up with creative solutions and new strategies. Thus, as a result of their interaction, today's businesses can consider artistic innovation as a source of organizational vision and inspiration for innovative business models. The integral part of a business model is whether the proposed value is appealing to and supported by customers. In other words, does the particular business model help the company to attract and retain customers (Potts & Cunningham 2008)?

While the arts business model is attractive to business as it stands, artistic innovation is key to a means-end chain as it relates to customer value. The basis of this interpretation is that artistic innovation changes the means of delivery (processes as proposed by Porter) to an innovative customer value (outcome) (Pratt 2012).

This enriched context justifies the necessity of exploring artistic innovation within corporate environments, particularly as businesses increasingly seek novel, human-centered approaches to strategic problem-solving.

## Objectives

This study aims to investigate how integrating artistic practices into corporate strategy enhances creativity and innovation, to analyze successful case studies of artistic-business integration, and to evaluate their impact on employee engagement while proposing best practices for implementation.

## Theoretical Framework

Creativity and innovation are two key concepts in the current business world. However, defining "creativity" is like defining "art": it is hard to do it and the definitions may differ greatly since according to the disciplines where they are framed, the definitions may overlap, contradict or complete each other. The term "creativity" is often associated with artists and musicians to describe their ability in painting, writing, and producing art and music. "Creativity," in fact, belongs to individuals who have potential and capability to create new ideas and think of unfamiliar ways. Given that not everyone is creative, companies are interested in recruiting creative individuals who have ability in thinking differently in order to work for them (Schein 2010).

Numerous approaches posit the transformative role of the arts in the generation of innovation, in some cases re-branding creativity as "artistic thinking" or imaginative thinking that can be turned to practical advantage; others frame the arts as a force in the "creative class" responsible for urban economic boom; while others still think of it as a tool for "thinking outside the box" and "improvising change (Sasmal 2024)." In the business world of such visionaries, the arts are assumed to function as a speedboat to corporate creativity, supplying new ideas and enhancing corporate problem solving (Reddy 2024). The arts in this vision are the fishermen of creative ideas and effective empathy-trainers for CEOs. In this section, we will set out an overview of the literature and debates on where businesses and the arts meet and have met, in order to assess the type of studies and paradigms that have produced the vision of artistic innovation that currently predominates within the admin-sphere (Schiuma 2011).

## Creativity in Business

It is important to distinguish between creativity and innovation. Creativity refers to the generation of novel and valuable ideas, while innovation is the structured application of these ideas to produce tangible outcomes. Thus, creativity acts as a precursor and inspiration for innovation, but the two processes are distinct.

Creativity is generally regarded as the ability to generate ideas that are original and valuable. Propositions regarding managing the creative process, accessing the creative resources of groups, and guiding individuals from dormant

knowledge to new creations accordingly appear to offer an attractive suggestion that corporations should adopt an attitude that supports creativity. There has been growing interest in creativity within the corporate world, and a growing recognition that creativity has enormous potential to contribute to organizational vitality and efficiency, by way of increasing adaptability, problem-solving appetite, and developing processes of news making inside businesses (Scott 2006).

In theory, creative entrepreneurial behavior may lead to innovations, from which substantial growth may result. As a process, corporate creativity suggests a methodological innovation, which is to some extent related to idea generation, opportunity sense-making, and a processual approach to strategic management. Yet creative corporates as strategic makers come from a long tradition in strategic management (Ritwik Sasmal 2024). The search placed on corporate creativity carries considerable weight. It is contended that corporations must be capable of actively searching within the corporation as well as in its environment for new knowledge and alternative courses of action. Adaptive learning shows that the corporation is efficient in learning from existing experiences. In essence, therefore, adaptive learning is a conservative ideal. It is that learning precisely drawn from direct experience (Simonton 2004).

## **Arts and Innovation**

There has been a great deal of academic and managerial attention on innovation in recent years, and most analyses have considered change and the generation of new ideas largely in objective terms (e.g., the impact of market uncertainty, the role of information provision, the importance of leadership style and ideology, etc.). Few authors have explicitly addressed the question "Where do new ideas come from?" Exploring the potential contribution of artists to the process of innovation and creativity within organizations is one way of exploring the answer to this question (Throsby 2001).

Vance (1986: 28) has made the point that "getting involved in and learning through the arts is not sought for its own sake so much as for its contribution to such qualities as inventiveness, resourcefulness, imagination, and originality; and for its avoidance of such qualities as routinization, homogenization, and unimaginativeness." The "hard art" of sector integration is therefore presented here in terms of the development of an ideological base for innovation and competitive advantage through the assimilation and transformation of art-based methodologies. The explanation of the inter-relationship between artistic and corporate practice below will be placed within a framework that acknowledges artists as writers of new institutional script in a context in which it is not simply product attributes (inventions) that are at stake, but the underlying paradigm of the institution as a creator of invention (innovations) (Van Gogh 2015).

## Intersections of Art and Business

Intersections of art and business, as displayed in Table 1, comprise styles of project development (learning networks and design thinking), tools for specific tasks (metaphor in management, harnessing serendipity, and social responsibility), operations (transdisciplinary research), recruitment practices (art and business at the intersection of science), curiosity, humanistic focus, and means to trigger intrinsic engagement (play/games as a driver of organizational identity formation and branding). An overlapping interest of art and business is the role of argument or storytelling. The explication can be distinguished between functions in Table 1, and it is central to exploratory examples and policy documents (Verganti 2009).

Curiouser and curiouser, cultural and artistic explorations and theories about curiosity emerge in an ongoing row in such diverse fields of research and practice from organization studies over the philosophy of science to creative teaching curricula to those outlined below under Humanistic Focus.

In a different vein, however, art and business can serve as showcases of the various forms of "us" versus "them" with different evaluative consequences: those of an "us" in politics and business schools and those similar but different in theaters or in art and art theory.

And if serendipity is a poor man's curiosity and considered in its simplest case, then it has good chances of being among these widely acclaimed landmarks of human cognition and research for the common good and for the good of business.

*Table 1. Intersections of Art and Business*

| <b>Domain</b>   | <b>Art Element</b> | <b>Business Application</b> |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Design Thinking | Visual/Spatial     | Problem-solving             |
| Storytelling    | Narrative Arts     | Branding & Identity         |
| Curiosity       | Artistic Inquiry   | Innovation Catalyst         |
| Empathy         | Performing Arts    | Leadership Development      |

It is important to distinguish between systematic integration of artistic practices-such as design thinking embedded in corporate processes-and occasional, one-off interventions like team-building games. While the latter may provide short-term benefits, they often fail to generate lasting organizational impact compared to sustained programs.

Figure 1. Pathway from Artistic Practices to Organizational Outcomes



## Methodology

Ethical clearance has been obtained, and the study uses qualitative exploratory methods through focus groups and interviews. This design aims to observe emerging patterns in how businesses adopt artistic strategies to enhance innovation (Schein 2010).

Data collection involved focus groups and semi-structured interviews with 25 senior managers across different industries who had participated in arts-related corporate initiatives. Thematic analysis was applied to the interview transcripts, enabling identification of recurring patterns related to employee engagement, leadership perspectives, and innovation outcomes. Case study data were triangulated with company reports to ensure reliability.

## Research Design

This study is exploratory in that it seeks to engage in an empirical investigation of the commencement of the integration of art into business strategy for the importance of art to the innovativeness of the corporation. The research goal is first to inquire what the corporate commitment to innovation is in relation to the arts; and second, to understand more deeply the process of integration by which the potential of the arts to innovate product, process and company is made concrete. "Situation analysis" as Elliot and Cohen claim we must when we consider "tingling points" in research requires us to reflect on the distinctiveness of the present era (Verganti 2009).

Our research is focused on observing the beginning of a trend: the recruitment of art into corporate strategy as a central, not a peripheral, means of stimulating innovativeness. Innovation, in the "society of specialists," is the new mantra. From it, growth cannot but emerge. The problem is, when everyone needs to innovate, how can an elite business innovate? The answer across the Fortune 500 seems to be: "innovate ourselves." Our research is designed to observe this beginning more closely. As a result, the research will adopt a

qualitative form. In order to uncover the variables salient to the first question and in order to open the issues, the research will use a "judgmental sample" in sharing senior managers involved in the arts marketing initiative. A diversity of sectors is expected and welcome. The expansion to a larger sample is currently on hold, pending the development of a refined coding schedule guided by emerging insights. (Zander & Zander 2000).

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

In order to test the Straits-fusion model, where the National Arts Council of Singapore in conjunction with the Economic Review Committee has developed tasks, composition, and objectives for the artists based on intensive research to find out the target emotions and responses of the speakers and the message that the government seeks to convey. Participants were encouraged to change their way of thinking and look at a problem from the perspective of an artist rather than as a businessman. In less than four years, the exchange loss suffered by the speaker was no longer there anymore. However, the most fundamental issue and without a resolution approaches is the lack of empirical study based on the influence of art in the organization. For a relationship between the official arts and members of the organization, a profound research was conducted by the authors to find the impact and simulated ways to gather data are collected carefully through a step-by-step experiment (Throsby 2001).

In the first experiment, which ran over a period of a year, a contemporary painting is placed in the workshop room on a overwork desk and just let go of it. A total of ten paintings with different styles were used in this experimental design. Thirty-nine were monitored for change and then asked again whether they had the opportunity to assess the company's performance in an 81-item questionnaire where a maturity of the customer, one task, creativity, information, direct care, business network, innovation, the business network of the labor market, motivation, quality intellectual property rights, the other, a single buyer, on the basis of salaries, and motivation. Managerial reports on the fear of new activities in the competitive advantage department are identified as development principles. However, researchers will investigate the above findings and must also look at objective methods across all the resources required in this process (Montuori 2011).

### **Case Studies**

To exemplify and deepen the theoretical analysis provided in the previous sections, we present and analyze four cases from the business world: Shiseido, Matsushita, IBM, and Young Presidents' Organization (YPO). These four cases

correspond to the three archetypes that we introduced when making reference to corporate reactions to discontinuous change: continuous improvement, discontinuous change involving the entire organization, and discontinuous change that concerns the management of changing operations (responding to local challenges) respectively (Scoot 2006).

Looking now at the mainstream of creativity literature, we can define the following categories of business art for increased creativity in business: "Artistic creation to make the organization stand out in the industry and secure a unique position," "arts as a way of developing the necessary competencies of the organization by improving the environments into which we all find ourselves born," "business arts as a CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) 'business art integrated within society'," "business as art and artist" offering a product as a work of art (Simonton 2004).

### **Artistic Interventions in Corporate Settings**

Artistic interventions can be broadly classified as applications of artistic actions or techniques to positively influence different organizational entities. These interventions are temporal and disrupt the routine central to organizational life in a manner which is symbolically powerful and yet temporary. The interventions may be delivered in a variety of media that include and go beyond visual arts to include music installations, performances, written contributions, dance events, or a variety of other artistic languages. As interventions, they are more than performances, workshops, or training and are often one of a kind creative experiences. They are presented in a manner that takes the viewer's cognitive faculties away from their work and places them in a zone where a meaningful and potentially transformative experience can change their perception of their work or organization (Mumford & Gustafson 1988).

This intervention followed research regarding organizational behaviors unique to different units of the business that was disguised as an organizational development activity. In so doing, participants learned about the company, debated the patterns of behavior, and helped to codify the varied norms that were unique to stated units through nomenclature, which became further aligned within the organization. The value of working with an artist to identify the corporate meme is derived from the research not remaining distant from the corporate body, but directly ensuring that the corporate ethos is indelibly linked to what was discovered about the subject and preserved by a corporation (Simonton 2004).

### **Impact on Employee Engagement and Innovation**

The engagement and growth of a company's employees are key drivers of innovation. Fostering the discovery and expression of individual creativity, while enhancing communication within the team, can optimize collective performance and provide the confidence to voice ideas and explore new directions. The arts

open up new pathways of personal and professional growth, treating individuals as whole human beings who need creative growth and self-awareness for inner fulfillment. The benefits for employees of an arts program in the workplace include heightened professional self-expression, increased self-awareness, self-exploration, enhanced exploratory reasoning, and reduced stress levels both negative outcomes, like burnout, and positive outcomes, like feeling comfortable in diverse or chaotic work environments, and being able to maintain creative thought processes. For an arts program to impact employee engagement, it should include such strong attributes as broad participation, offering employees some latitude to customize their programs, while still being monitored by professional artist educators (Simonton 2004).

Menlo Innovations in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is one such company that experienced the positive business results of having a broad-based creativity program for its employees. It is a custom software design and development company with a business strategy of providing joy for its customers, team members, employees, and stakeholders. The company used to enable constraints, like having pair programmers work in a shared studio, the wearing of microphones by all team members, to facilitate open communication (Montuori 2011). There is a joyous feeling about the mission combined with a commitment to mutual respect, learning, and human dignity. Members, who were traditional engineers, started playing the marimba together and participating in regional marimba festivals during weekends. All of the company's expansion has occurred through referrals by employees, while its management believes they have developed a culture that repels members who carry any element of negativism. Menlo's physical environment, training within the team on how to handle ambiguity, and a focus toward team cohesiveness are factors that create a business success with resourcefulness. Another surprising business result was the level of customer empathy that the music program brought to its members, making them more introspective as they connected better with client needs (Scott 2006). An interesting anecdote developed when the legal department considered asking employees to sign a statement attributing to the company joint copyright ownership of any music composed while employed; both the company and prestige that music ownership brings proved to be great selling points for the company's employment establishment.

These cases demonstrate a spectrum of artistic engagement across industries. Common factors include leadership support, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the use of art as both medium and message for strategic transformation. They reinforce the potential of arts to serve as a catalyst for systemic organizational change.

Table 2. Summary of Case Studies

| Case       | Industry           | Type of Artistic Intervention                                 | Key Outcomes                                   |
|------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Shiseido   | Cosmetics          | Continuous improvement through design aesthetics              | Enhanced branding and product innovation       |
| Matsushita | Electronics        | Organization-wide cultural transformation                     | Improved adaptability and creativity           |
| IBM        | Technology         | Localized operational changes with arts-based problem solving | Stronger employee engagement                   |
| YPO        | Leadership network | Leadership development via artistic practices                 | Enhanced collaboration and innovation capacity |

### Benefits and Challenges of Integrating Arts into Business Strategy

The progression of time, combined with consistent technological and economic development, is such that organizations are now more than ever in need of strategic capabilities, as illustrated in the Knowledge Society. Job insecurity and the unpredictability of the environment due to turbulent world events, accelerated change, information technology explosion, globalization, and consumerism mean that companies must constantly reinvent themselves and innovate. One possible way of achieving differentiation, innovation, and change is by applying the institutional perspective to the analysis of artistic milieus. Application of this perspective shows that the essence of an artistic milieu comprises the identification and selection of novel meanings and forms that affirm the artist. Artistic milieus are in a perpetual state of change and contain one or more inventive cores, although how these inventive cores become sheepfolds, then institutes, and finally dominant aesthetic and managerial paradigms has only now begun to be researched (Rentschler & Hede 2007).

The ideas briefly presented can be applied as a method of reinforcing the creative and imaginative potential so as to balance the routine of commercial societies. However, prior to the conceptual arbitrate concerning the applicability of the idea, the objective of the present article was to define the benefits and challenges to a company from integrating the arts so that they underpin the corporate innovation and differentiation strategy (Schiuma 2011). This article provides an overview of the major benefits and challenges facing a company that adopts the strategy of integrating the arts. We began by presenting the primary benefits of using art for managerial purposes. Research conducted thus far has underlined three major advantages for companies: stimulation of consumer reactions; improvement in internal motivation of employees, whose orientation changes to focus on company interest, on the establishment of the group and on commitment to clients; and the development of particular artistic management capacities. The primary challenges *inter alia* are: the incomparability of art and

business; the resistance of employees and artists, particularly in cultural companies who perceive this method of managing as vulgar and a restrictive or distorted use of art. Other possible challenges may arise after empirical research has been conducted (Zander & Zander 2000).

### **Enhanced Creativity and Innovation**

Innovative groups and organizations have a greater potential to survive and thrive in the global economy. Creativity and innovation are deeply interconnected, with creativity often serving as the spark that enables innovative processes. Studies in creativity have found that the performance of creative thinking is facilitated by an "artistic" perspective. For instance, art education can significantly boost aspects of creative thinking among high-ability individuals, including fluency, flexibility, and visualization. Individuals trained as artists tend to score higher on measures of openness to new experiences than non-artists. They are more discomfort with routine and have a greater interest in discovery and are attracted to innovative organizational environments (Mumford & Gustafson 1988).

Enhancing Creativity and Innovation In large business units, the operational rules are specific. As a result, there are those who are aware of the rules or have been trained to follow them. However, if everyone who is familiar with the rules is allowed to be creative, creativity will quickly become stifled. A large workforce that is hired to maintain operational excellence in an existing business may inadvertently stymie true innovation. The integration of the arts into a corporation fosters a highly creative organizational culture, one that is actively supported by human resources in the form of artists, poets, designers, and storytellers. These individuals are hired and supported throughout the organization as a means for creativity to flow more smoothly through a business. When the collective consciousness is enhanced by artistic activities, it is a catalyst for organizational creativity and innovation, if this individual is not confined by traditional business unit operations (Rentschler & Hede 2007).

### **Organizational Resistance and Overcoming Challenges**

To leave one's comfort zone and enter new territory or a new situation, a person must generate momentum. This new energy has to be provided by the designers/ doctors involved in guiding companies towards integrating the arts into their business strategies. When encouraging innovation, especially within an arts-based context, organizations may face resistance on both a personal and organizational level, as suggested by Ford and Ford (1993). It has been the objective of this section to identify and predict the potential reaction that incorporating or integrating artistic thinking may generate in business and how these barriers can be addressed (Zander & Zander 2000).

Integrating art and business is a complex genetic task as well as a utopian dream. Adding creativity tools to standard methodologies is only possible when business goals and the resulting methods of the arts share the same assumptions – that is, money is put in as a medium, as fuel for one's passion and means of livelihood. Because money is only a cultural impression of worth equivalent, this becomes a universal requirement. In addition, the breath of living and dying-the spiritual, rather than the mundane – shades 'things dealing with the artistic and management process. When art is medium, one follows the other in a natural sequence. However, this philosophy is in open conflict with individual segments of business; not only industrial, rural, crafts, etc. The three critical success factors have coalesced: strategic clarity, a Think-Run-Grow mindset, and sustainable working relationships with key partners. From the very first day of my management training forty years ago until today, participants have had to manage a complex, time-consuming methodology to obtain a strategic management format which they almost always don't understand and rarely feel able to implement (Pink 2005).

While the benefits of arts integration include increased innovation, employee engagement, and unique branding opportunities, challenges persist in aligning artistic freedom with business objectives. Understanding these tensions is key to developing adaptive, culturally competent strategies.

### **Best Practices and Recommendations**

At least one study, by Sullivan and Eccles (2000), suggests that a structured approach to artistic change within organizations is the best way forward. Based on their review, the authors suggest that corporations seeking to use the arts must strike a delicate balance. To improperly focus artistic activities restricts performance, similar to a large corporation that cannot foster the culture of an entrepreneurial enterprise. To not focus artistic activities at all results in poor performance. According to Sullivan and Eccles (2000), corporations must design an approach that engages employees in performance-improving dialogue about the essence of the particular company's business. This should start at the top and then focus on initiating activities in the workplace during the day (Zander & Zander 2000).

Based on the findings, a number of best practices and ideas to further support and spark interest in artistic activities are suggested. Networking for creativity across all sectors can only serve to implant arts into business strategies and consumer services. It is suggested that companies should partner with local art schools, attend local arts performances, and engage in arts activities themselves. Management can be a catalyst by understanding the benefits of providing access to and sponsoring artistic activities as a form of recreation that ultimately heightens creativity in the workplace. Several activities are already started by companies, yet additional systematic steps can ensure optimal benefits. These include creating a work environment that encourages artistic expression, promoting wellness and recreation activities, providing employees access to computerized music feeds, and providing resources that foster team building.

Program implementation can begin at employee orientation by representing/sharing the employer's interest in workplace programs (Scott 2006).

### **Leadership Support and Cultural Change**

Innovation must be a top priority for success in today's companies. This view is reflected in management literature and practiced in corporations worldwide. Without doubt, to remain one step ahead in the competitive race requires, to use Tushman and O'Reilly's famous term, an "Ambidextrous Organization" that can cherish existing competencies and at the same time cut old roots to sow new seeds. Organizations need efficiency to manage their employees and meet their customers' current needs requiring at least some degree of cultural regularity-but they must also cultivate organizational stamina to constantly renew and rethink how to organize themselves for better results (Montuori 2011).

While much is known about how to establish and nurture the needed seedbed for culture change and creativity-generally a diverse work environment, information systems, employee training and empowerment, a merger and acquisition strategy, ideas screening, reward systems-no work has addressed how the arts can contribute to creating a continuously renewing and refreshing seedbed that will inspire and catalyze corporate creativity. Music, distinctively, offers companies a lens onto the heart of creative innovation. Executives, however, rarely use it to their full advantage. Since most companies rely on specific pedagogical methods and training programs but seldom integrate the arts into their core business strategy. this is an unexplored territory upon which we will now embark (Zander & Zander 2000).

### **Collaborations with Artists and Cultural Institutions**

Collaborations with more talented and creative individuals from art and cultural institutions can create an effective flow of artistic innovation into the corporation. Opportunities for collaborations range from joint research projects, training programs, artists-in-residence programs, to the creation of cross-functional teams of corporate employees and artists contracted for a specific project. Companies benefit from a fresh viewpoint, knowledge of innovation and creativity methods used in the arts, as well as the skills that artists are trained in. Collaboration also offers opportunities for the public presentation and recognition of achievement in either art or business (Nissley 2010).

There are several ways in which an effective transfer between seemingly unconnected areas of art and business could be achieved. Good results can only be achieved when planned thoughtfully and seriously, rather than being ignored and conducted with indifference or non-seriously. Both arts and business communities have to consciously invest and pursue collaboration possibilities as a more familiar collaboration with government and political organizations in both the union and state governments. This changes the nature of public-private partnership. Such projects are characterized by a long-term engagement with the

local community, partners, and gardens (Verganti 2009). Beyond partnerships with art schools, strategic fertilization should be understood as an ecosystem-level process involving cultural institutions, universities, startups, and government initiatives. Such diverse collaborations ensure that creativity evolves in adaptive, unpredictable ways that are more likely to yield sustainable innovation.

## **Conclusion and Future Directions**

This study offers profound conversations about the ways in which the arts are being transformed both from within using creative uses of technology, as well as from the outside across industry sectors by the intensification of collaboration to achieve innovative ends. It reveals processes from the inside and mechanisms that invite arts-based approaches to innovate collectively. The insights sharing across the many case organizations in this study give us an overarching model that describes the evolution of innovation within these pioneering ventures, as well as the artifacts that they create by virtue of their delivering innovative artistically driven products and services (Pratt 2012).

The integration of arts into business strategies fosters more than aesthetic enhancement; it builds cultural capital, improves human-centered design, and supports adaptive innovation. Through cross-sector partnerships, companies evolve into learning organizations with a distinct competitive edge.

In a plainly commercial context, these organizations contribute to the emerging economy, but more crucially, they are providing evidence of a new context for the practice of arts in the creative industries sector. This must be a positive development for the current generation of artists and should contribute to their social inclusion by practitioners in the justice sector. When the arts are used within organizations to work with people, organizations create new ways of doing business, develop innovation capabilities, and produce new commercial offers and artistic works. The mechanics of forming alliances underpinning these goals lie in the practices demonstrated by the case organizations from three very different parts of the creative economy, in which we identified a model. These insights will be used to inform organizational consulting, arts practice, and business curricula (Zander & Zander 2000).

## **Key Findings and Implications**

This study demonstrates that when strategically implemented, artistic innovation transforms business operations and unlocks latent creative capacities. Future research should develop frameworks to measure these impacts and scale best practices across sectors.

By emphasizing the importance of integrating artistic genres and discipline knowledge associated with creative artworks in "Artistic Innovation as a Catalyst

for Corporate Creativity: Integrating Arts into Business Strategy," the cameras and drawings in new product design activities show that employing art in business is promising as it can enhance the innovation activities. Under the four settlement strategies that use different types of art for facilitating, adopting, and integrating art internal and external to business, these findings are discussed. Triggering activities that leverage business-art relationships through external integration not only led to the success of individual innovation activities that predominantly leverage art and knowledge but also lead to competitive advantages (Zukav 2001).

When businesses integrate art strategically, they will be able to continuously unleash the innovative power by leading to more successful innovation activities at the individual, unit, and business level. This strategy can help change the view on the art-business relationship. With guidance and practice knowledge, this identification of effective business-art relationships combines artistic and business skills, creativities of product, design, brand, and business model activities. With high aesthetic-quality artifacts that typically involve the consumer's entire sensory system, the enhancement of successful innovation activities is driven by unique artistic genres that are able to provide individuals with impressive experiences rather than merely cognitive learning. The effective strategic use of art in a corporate setting is of great importance as it will lead to a positive perception of a product and, in turn, to the individual's adoption decision (Montuori 2011).

### **Areas for Further Research**

A thorough examination of the implications of artistic innovation for corporate creativity in a strategic sense has yet to be undertaken. The acceptance of art as a generator for fresh creative ideas in an organization may require the need for redefinition of existing business strategy. The eventual strategic integration of arts into business strategy will likely call for the redefinition of sub-strategies such as marketing, human resources, quality, etc. Given their pioneering engagements in artistic innovation and the role of its contributions as suggested by this study, the arts provide a number of potential target areas for examination leading to corporate innovation. First, since artistic innovation provides a conceptual context for the commercialization of a broader range of arts output, it opens the door for both established arts organizations and "new class" artists to collaborate in ways that have yet to be explored. Second, the creative opportunities which arise through a deliberate emphasis on risk taking and the fusion of multiple sectors can serve to inspire and stimulate other entrepreneurs. Third, the extensive role of external partners within the arts can provide a valuable perspective on collaboration and potential role models (Nissley 2010).

The case studies conducted provided the opportunity to piece together data cross-sectionally at a single point in time. The uncovering of a large category of output from multiple case studies indicates that the approach taken represents one with considerable promise for scholarly inquiry. Clearly, case-based modes of

investigation, in conjunction with in-depth field work, appear well suited to the study of the genesis of new areas of business practice. Because the corporations in question approach the commercialization of art in such varying and disparate ways, the potential applications for this approach are numerous. Some researchers have referred to collaboration with external partners as the second wave (Simonton 2004).

### Recommendations for Business Leaders

This integration is reciprocal: while businesses gain creativity and differentiation, artists benefit from sustainable opportunities, visibility, and collaboration. Based on the findings, organizations seeking to integrate the arts into business strategy should:

- a) Foster sustained, cross-sector partnerships with artists, cultural institutions, and academic organizations.
- b) Embed arts-based methodologies into employee training, leadership development, and innovation processes.
- c) Encourage creativity at all organizational levels while aligning artistic freedom with business objectives.
- d) Develop internal metrics to assess the impact of artistic interventions on innovation, engagement, and customer value.

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## Ethics and Academic Integrity: Lessons from Plato's Protagoras

By Gregory T. Papanikos\*

*Ethics has become an integral part of the academic world. Nearly all academic institutions develop ethics policies that typically outline how individuals should behave. Universities encourage all stakeholders to act with ethics and integrity. The central issue discussed in this paper is whether ethics and integrity can be taught. Members of the academic community are expected to conduct their activities in accordance with good ethical practices and the highest standards of integrity. Guidelines are established to instruct members of the academic world on ethical behavior. However, these guidelines fall short of aiming to teach individuals how to become virtuous—people with ethos. The focus is often on enforcing ethics and academic integrity through punitive measures rather than teaching how to cultivate virtue. This raises the question: is it possible to teach virtuousness and ethos? This inquiry takes us back to 432 BCE in Athens, where a debate took place between two men of knowledge—what we would today call academic teachers and researchers. One argued that virtue could be taught (and he was the best person to teach it, for a fee), while the other maintained that students can learn sciences and arts but not ethos. This debate, later documented by Plato, is now known as Plato's Protagoras. In this paper, I discuss this dialogue and apply its ideas to today's academic world. While this is the main issue addressed, several related topics are also explored, including (a) the organization of the educational system in Ancient Athens, (b) its purpose, (c) the etymology and definitions of ethos, virtue (ἀρετή), pedagogy (and the distinction between pedagogue and educator), sophism (sophists), rhetoric (rhetoricians), and philosophy (philosophers), and (d) the stakeholders in education. I conclude with the implications of these discussions for ethics and academic integrity in modern-day educational institutions.*

**Keywords:** Ethics, Virtue, Academics, Education, Plato, Socrates, Protagoras, Ancient Athens

### Introduction

The academic world consists of various people and institutions—students, parents, professors, researchers, administrators, funders, donors, publishers, and society at large—who engage in studying, teaching, researching, administering, managing, publishing, advising, and more. These individuals and groups are commonly considered the stakeholders of the academic world. Regardless of how much they enjoy their work, many participate because they earn money from it, either currently or with the expectation of future compensation. I have yet to meet anyone in academia who is not motivated, at least in part, by financial compensation—whether through salaries, grants, or fees—either paid now or

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\*President, The Athens Institute, Greece and Professor, MLC Ljubljana, Slovenia. The author has previously taught in various Canadian, Greek and U.K. Universities.

anticipated later. Equally important are the so-called fringe benefits, as being part of the academic world provides a certain level of power, which can be abused.

Money and fringe benefits create a strong pecuniary incentive for some members of the academic world to behave unethically. At this stage in the paper, I leave terms like *ethos*, *virtue*, and *integrity* undefined, as I will clarify these at the end of the paper. However, I will illustrate with a few examples. Professors may ask students for money (or, worse, perform sexual favors) in exchange for a passing grade. The reverse is also true: students may offer money or other incentives to pass a course. Researchers might falsify data to produce publishable results or conduct research tailored to please funders—such as governments, nonprofit organizations, or corporations. These are typical examples of academic misconduct, demonstrating a lack of integrity in the academic world. Of lesser concern is when some professors teach personal opinions and ideologies unrelated to the subject matter in the classroom, a tendency that often extends to their writing, which may amount to sheer propaganda or misinformation.

Many people mistakenly expect academics to behave ethically simply because they are educated, assuming that educated individuals—especially those who teach the youth and are regarded as the peak of the educated class—are more ethical than those without formal education. Since we do not have data on individuals' morality, we cannot verify this hypothesis. Data on ethical or unethical behavior are neither sufficient nor necessary to determine the *ethos* of an academic, as will be discussed further below. However, if we consider crime to be immoral (e.g., violating human laws as determined by democratic courts), we know that education alone is insufficient to make people ethical. It is true, though, that educated people tend to commit different types of crimes than the uneducated. The literature on crime distinguishes these as white-collar and blue-collar crimes, a substantial field that is beyond the scope of this paper.

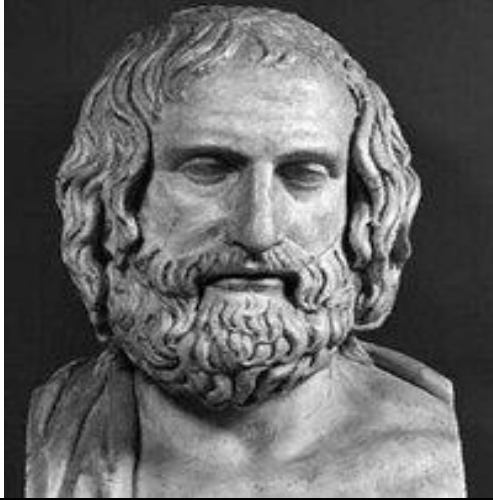
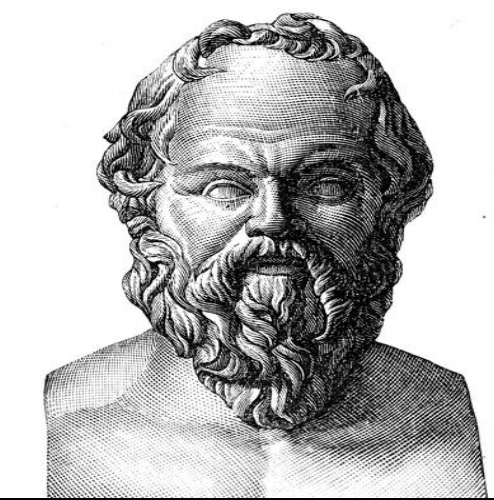
Ethical behavior encompasses much more than criminal behavior, though it includes it. Academic integrity—or academic morality or academic ethos—refers to more than simply violating state laws or a university's regulations and policies. The discussion on academic integrity is broader and relates to ideals such as virtue, honesty, truth, prudence, wisdom, empathy, sympathy, and bravery.<sup>37</sup> Within this context, I discuss the ethos and integrity of the academic world in this paper using *Plato's Protagoras*, a dialogue between Socrates and the well-known

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37. There is extensive literature on the topic of morality. Moral philosophers have discussed moral and ethical issues since antiquity. One of the most significant issues addressed since Hesiodic times, especially by Herodotus, is the question of relativism and subjectivism. The argument is that moral behavior is relative to historical period and society. These comparisons were made by Herodotus in *Histories*, written in the 5th century BCE. Cultural differences are considered as being very important in determining what is wrong and what is right and is developed from childhood; see Miller & Collette (2022). What is missing from these is the concept of love which becomes the central tenet of ethics in Christianity; see O'Meara (2023).

sophist Protagoras (Figure 1). The debate centers on whether virtue can be taught. Protagoras asserts that it can, while Socrates argues that it cannot because no one is truly capable of teaching it.

Figure 1. Protagoras and Socrates

| Protagoras (c.490-c.420)                                                          | Socrates (469-399)                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |
| Source: <a href="https://iep.utm.edu/protagor/">https://iep.utm.edu/protagor/</a> | Source: <a href="https://iep.utm.edu/socrates/">https://iep.utm.edu/socrates/</a>  |

This dialogue took place in 432 BCE, just before the Peloponnesian War, during the height of Athens' glory—often referred to as the Golden Age of Ancient Athens. At this time, Athens was considered the center of the known world, as Pericles proudly claimed in his "Funeral Oration" in 431 BCE, recorded by Thucydides in *The Peloponnesian War*. Protagoras traveled between cities, delivering lectures for which many paid high fees to learn how to become virtuous individual—people with both virtue (*ἀρετή*) and ethos (*ἦθος*). I define virtue and ethos later in this paper.

In Plato's *Dialogue Meno* (91d), Socrates sharply criticizes Protagoras, who had been teaching for 40 years and earning a great deal of money—more than the famous sculptor Pheidias—while corrupting the youth by making them worse. Socrates' dialogue with Meno, a Thessalian political figure from a wealthy family and a student of the sophist Gorgias, took place about 30 years later (in 403 or 402 BCE), after Protagoras had already died.

This paper examines Plato's *Protagoras* dialogue and applies its insights to the contemporary issue of academic integrity. The discussion is organized into seven sections, beginning with this introduction. The second section provides an overview of the educational system in ancient Athens, where the stated aim at all levels of education was to teach *ethos* and cultivate virtue—at least in theory. Socrates challenges this view, as discussed in the third section. The fourth section explores two conflicting hypotheses and the arguments supporting each, as developed in the dialogue. The fifth section defines the term "virtue," which, as it

turns out, comprises five parts, adding complexity. The sixth section establishes three rules that define academic integrity as guided by ethical behavior. The final section presents the conclusion.

### The Educational System of Ancient Athens

Plato's *Protagoras* provides a detailed description of the educational system in ancient Athens, as summarized in Table 1. According to the dialogue, only wealthy families could afford to educate their children. The educational process consisted of five stages, similar to the structure of modern education in Athens and many other countries worldwide. However, the key difference is that today's education is compulsory for both sexes up to the age of 15 (grade 9), with both academic and vocational education now more formalized and institutionalized.

Table 1. The Education System of Ancient Athens

| Type           | Preschool                                                 | Basic School Education                                                            | Army                                                     | On the Job Training to learn a trade (techne) | Academic Education                                                                           |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Age            | 0-6                                                       | 7-17                                                                              | 18-19                                                    | Adult life: Poor Families                     | Adult life: Rich Families                                                                    |
| Instructors    | parents, a pedagogue and a nanny                          | Grammarian<br>Musicians<br>Gymnast                                                | Military Service only for Males                          | Trainers                                      | Rhetoricians<br>Sophists<br>Philosophers                                                     |
| Infrastructure | House (oikos)                                             | Private Schools and Gyms                                                          | Military barracks                                        | Workshops                                     | Rich Houses & Academic Schools                                                               |
| Purpose        | Learn read and write. Learn what is good and what is bad. | Develop mind (soul?) and body. Courses Grammar, Gymnastics & Music (guitar, lyre) | Learn about the city of Athens and citizens' obligations | Learn a trade to earn a livelihood            | Learn how to be a good citizen with ethos and virtue and/or learn the political art (techne) |

Source: Author based on Plato's *Protagoras*.

All family members, both young and old, lived together in the same house (Image 1). The family (Figure 2 and Image 2a) held a central role in ancient Athenian society, much as it does today. It was the family's responsibility to provide education for both boys and girls. Initially, the parents (father and mother) were

responsible for educating their children—both male and female—with assistance from a pedagogue<sup>38</sup> and a nanny (τροφός).

The wife managed the household and raised the children (Figure 2, Image 2b). She had a special room called the women's quarters (γυναικωνίτης) (Figure 2, Image 2c), where the women of the household worked and taught the young girls household management skills, along with basic grammar, music, and dance (Figure 2, Image 2d).

*Image 1. A House of a Rich Family in Ancient Athens*



Source: [http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2174/istoria\\_d-dimotikouhtml-empl/ind ex3\\_22.html](http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2174/istoria_d-dimotikouhtml-empl/ind ex3_22.html)

Around the age of seven, boys began attending school, accompanied by a pedagogue. At school, they learned to read and write, practiced a musical instrument, and engaged in gymnastics to strengthen their bodies. Three types of teachers were responsible for this education: a grammarist (γραμματιστής) for reading and writing, a music teacher (κιθαριστής), and a gym teacher (παιδοτρίβης).

Figure 3 depicts two scenes from a school: in one, a teacher instructs a student on a musical instrument (a harp in the left image and a flute in the right image), while other teachers teach reading (left image) and writing (right image). Figure 4 shows a scene from a gymnasium, where two teachers are training the youth.

One of the greatest achievements of ancient Athens was its beautiful architecture, remnants of which still stand proudly atop and around the Acropolis hill even after 2,500 years. While many of these structures have not survived the passage of time, others were destroyed by various invaders. In relation to education, Figure 5 shows an entire building dedicated to gymnastics, whereas Figure 4 depicts just a single room within it.

---

38. A pedagogue differs from an educator (or teacher) in the modern sense of the word. Etymologically, 'pedagogue' derives from the Greek words παιδεία (paideia, meaning 'education' or 'child-rearing') and ἀγωγή (meaning 'guidance' or 'leading'). Thus, a pedagogue not only assists the student in learning but also guides them in ethical behavior.

Figure 2. Images from Inside a Rich Athenian House (Oikos)

Image 2a. Family

Source: <https://shorturl.at/oeB0b>

Image 2b. Babies

Source: <https://shorturl.at/0EoNK>

Image 2c. Women's Quarter

Source: <https://shorturl.at/0EoNK>

Image 2d. Dancing

Source: <https://shorturl.at/0EoNK>

Figure 3. Scenes from a School to Learn Grammar and Music

Image 3a. Scene I



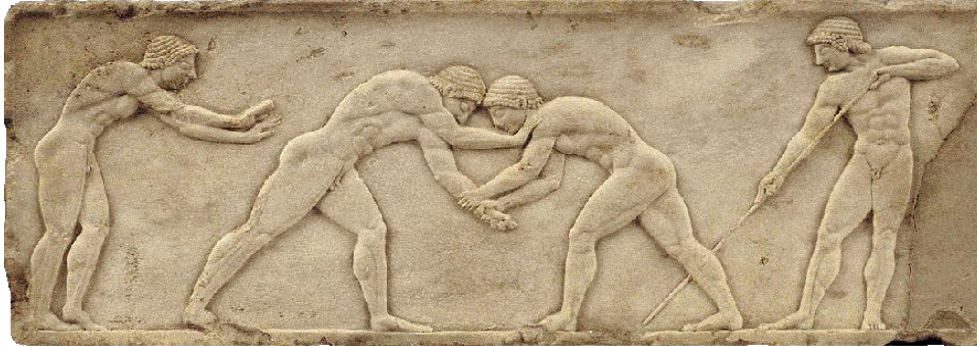
Image 3a. Scene II

Source: <https://users.sch.gr/ipap/Ellinikos%20Politismos/Yliko/Theoria%20arxia/metafraseis%20a%20gym/a02xm.htm>

Figure 5 presents a floor plan of an ancient Greek gymnasium. The central area of the gymnasium is a square space surrounded by columns that form porticoes on all four sides. Around these colonnades are rooms with various functions. The rooms on the left side are labeled "philosophers' rooms" and were likely used for academic discussions. To the right of the gymnasium are rooms designated for activities such as youth training, a room with training bags, and

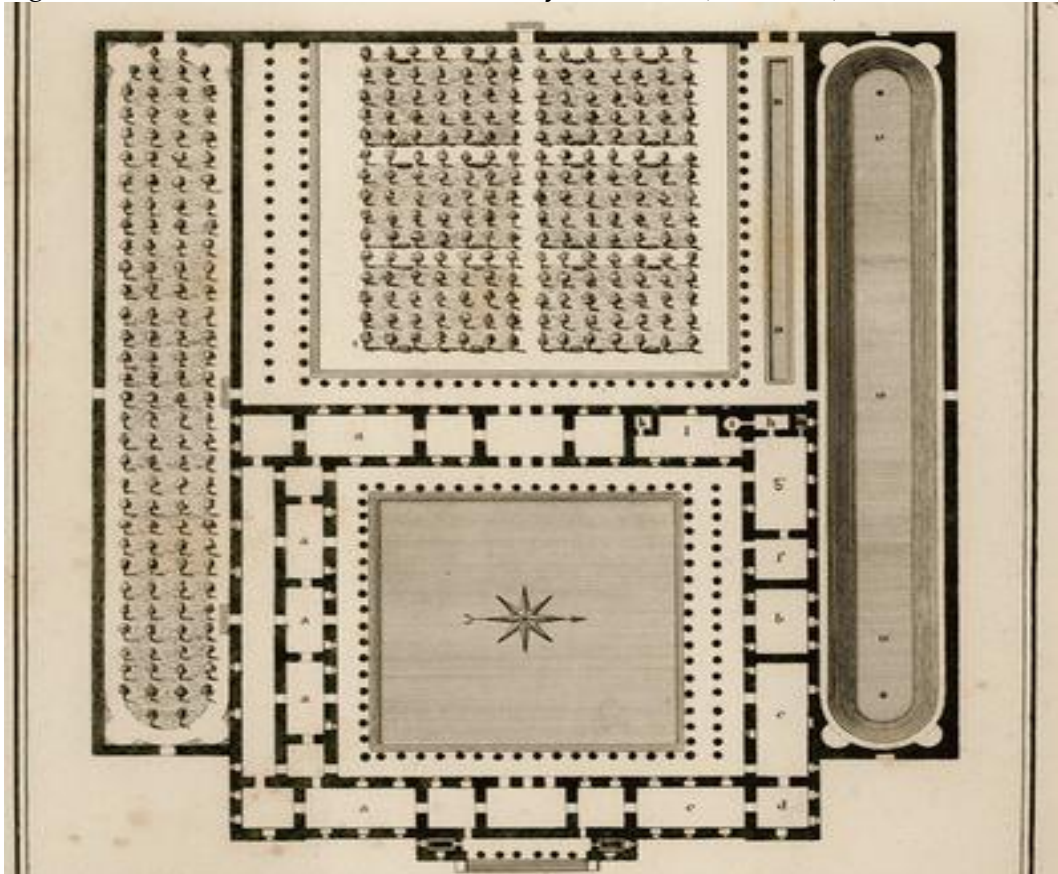
baths. On the far-right side of the gymnasium lies the stadium, while the remaining area is covered with trees.

Figure 4. A Scene from a Gymnasium (Palaestra)



Source: <https://users.sch.gr/ipap/Ellinikos%20Politismos/Yliko/Theoria%20arxaia/metafra%20seis%20a%20gym/a02xm.htm>

Figure 5. The Floor Plan of an Ancient Gymnasium (Palaestra)



Source: <http://photodentro.edu.gr/aggregator/lo/photodentro-aggregatedcontent-8526-4089>

Of course, most Athenian families could not afford to send their children to school due to two main costs. The first was the direct expense of paying teachers. The second was the opportunity cost of attending school, as most children had to

work to support the family income and therefore lacked the time for formal schooling. In fact, the etymology of the word "school" (σχολείο) originally meant "leisure" or "free time." Only those who did not need to work for a living could attend school, at least up to the level of academic education. Interestingly, the modern Greek word for "work" (δουλεύω) shares its root with the word for "slave" (δούλος).

In ancient Athens, the economy was predominantly agrarian. While Athens produced a few agricultural products, herding was rare. Another significant component of the Athenian economy was craftsmanship and trade, with mining also playing a crucial role. Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* (401 BCE) offers an excellent overview of the Athenian economy at the end of its golden age. Figure 6 illustrates various professions from ancient Athens.

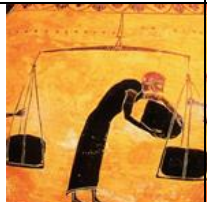
Among the professions depicted in Figure 6 are those from Socrates' time. Interestingly, Socrates' mother was a midwife, a profession many believe inspired his development of the dialectic, also known as the maieutic method. One of Socrates' teachers was a female philosopher named Diotima, mentioned in Plato's *Symposium*. Socrates was well-known for his belief in gender equality, asserting that if given the same education and training, women could achieve the same accomplishments as men. His father was a sculptor, and although Socrates did not have to work, he served in the Athenian army, fighting in three wars between 431 and 422 BCE. He earned a reputation for bravery in battle and was considered a model citizen. Notably, he refused to escape from prison to avoid his death sentence, strongly arguing that society cannot function without its citizens obeying the law.

Athens was home to many artisans who worked in small workshops. Like today, these artisans were concentrated in specific areas, often with open-front shops so that potential customers could see them and their products. One famous district in ancient Athens, which still exists in downtown Athens today, was Kerameikos, an area known for its potters who produced ceramics.

All young men reaching adulthood were required to serve the city as soldiers for two years. The first year was spent in a barracks where, under the guidance of city officials (a deacon and ten jailers), they practiced discipline and learned the city's traditions. During the second year of their military service, they served as border guards. At the end of their service, they took an oath pledging their devotion to the gods and the city's welfare.

After completing their military service, they began a new life as free citizens with many rights and obligations. The wealthiest Athenians could spend their free time pursuing what we would today call academic education.

Figure 6. Examples of Ancient Athenian Professions and Trades

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                      |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Marble Crafter                                                                      | pottery workshop                                                                    | shoe craft shop                                                                     | Shoe-maker                                                                           | Sandal Maker                                                                          |
|    |    |    |    |    |
| Spinner                                                                             | Dyer                                                                                | Loom-wrokers                                                                        | Carpenter                                                                            | Miners                                                                                |
|    |    |    |    |    |
| Fisherman                                                                           | Fishmonger                                                                          | Hunters                                                                             | Butcher                                                                              | Metal Workers                                                                         |
|   |   |   |   |   |
| Farmer                                                                              | Pickers of Olives                                                                   | Merchant                                                                            | Barber                                                                               | Water Carriers                                                                        |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Midwife                                                                             | Medical Doctor                                                                      | Perfumer                                                                            | Metallurgy                                                                           | Dyer                                                                                  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Sources:

1. <https://users.sch.gr/ipap/Ellinikos%20Politismos/Yliko/Theoria%20arxaia/metafraseis%20a%20gym/a03xm.htm>
2. <https://anaskafh.arsakeio.gr/stadia-zwhs-sthn-arxaia-ellada/>
3. [http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2290/Istoria\\_A-Gymnasiou\\_html-empl/index\\_05\\_05.html](http://ebooks.edu.gr/ebooks/v/html/8547/2290/Istoria_A-Gymnasiou_html-empl/index_05_05.html)
4. [https://www.ime.gr/chronos/05/gr/society/craft\\_workshops.html](https://www.ime.gr/chronos/05/gr/society/craft_workshops.html)

The final level of education in ancient Athens corresponded to what we would consider a university education today. There were two main types of institutions offering this level of education. The first type consisted of formal schools, the most famous being Plato's Academy (Figure 7) and Aristotle's Lyceum (Figure 8), which operated for nearly a thousand years.

Figure 7. Plato's Academy

Then

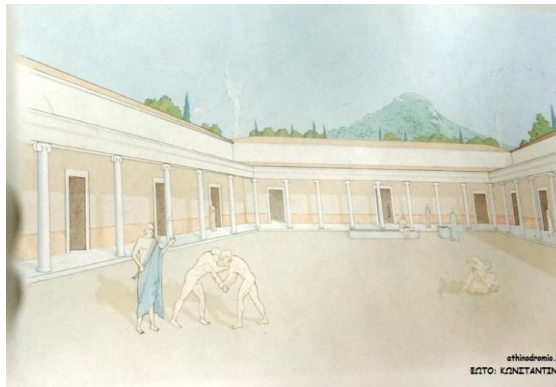


... and Now

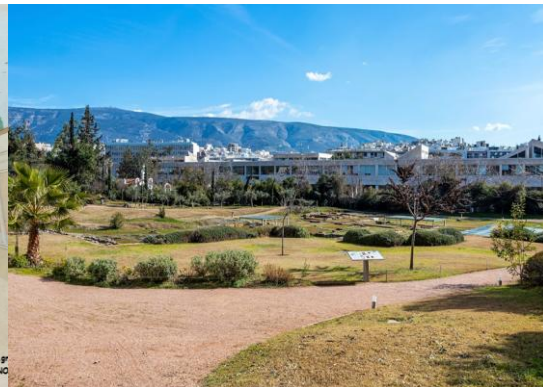


Figure 8. Aristotle's Lyceum

Then



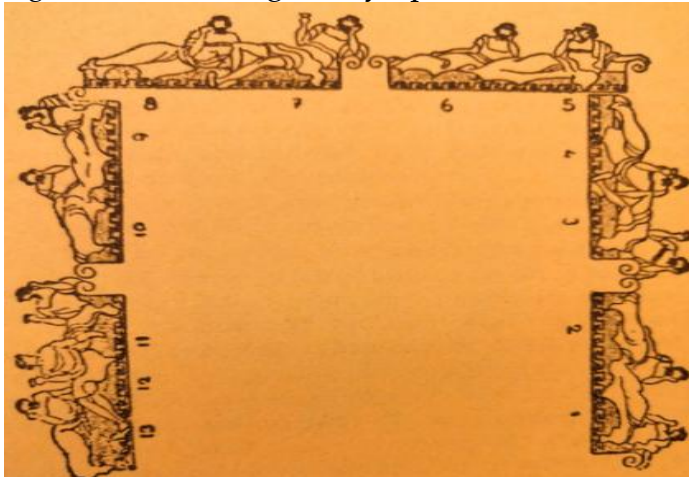
... and Now



The second type of advanced education took place in symposiums, gatherings hosted by wealthy men in their homes. These gatherings were held in large rooms with seating arrangements similar to those depicted in Figure 9. The dialogue examined in this paper occurred during a symposium hosted at the home of Kallias, a wealthy Athenian.

From the above analysis, it is clear that there was a significant distinction between rich and poor families in ancient Athens. The sons of very wealthy families were educated to serve as politicians, as some, like Protagoras, believed that virtue could be taught. In contrast, most Athenian citizens, who were not wealthy, pursued other paths, such as trade.

Figure 9. The Seating in a Symposium



Source: Sykoutris (1976, p. 31\*).

In ancient Athens, there was also a clear distinction between *episteme* and *techne*, as highlighted in Plato's *Protagoras*. *Techne* referred to craft or art, which was learned through practice, while *episteme* referred to theoretical knowledge.

### The Purpose of Academic Education in Ancient Athens

In the dialogue, it becomes evident that the purpose of education at all levels extends beyond learning to read and write; it is also to discern between what is good and what is bad. Protagoras, in a compelling speech, outlines this purpose of education. Here, I present the original text along with my English translation, assisted by Artificial Intelligence (AI) (325c-326e):

They start when their children are young and, as long as they are in life, they **teach and advise** them. From the very moment that the child understands what is said to him, both the nanny and the mother and the teacher, even [325d] and the father, strive for this: **in what way will the child become better**; thus, over every act and reason they teach him and explain to him that one is just, the other unjust, the one beautiful, the other ugly, the one honest, the other dishonest — and the first to do, the second not to do. And if the child obeys of his own free will, it goes well; otherwise, like a crooked and crooked rod, they beat him with sticks. Later they send him to the teacher, who bids him to pay

ἐκ παίδων σμικρῶν ἀρξάμενοι, μέχρι οὐπερ ἂν ζῶσι, καὶ διδάσκουσι καὶ νοουθετοῦσιν. ἐπειδὴν θάπτον συνιῇ τις τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ τροφὸς καὶ μήτηρ καὶ παιδαγωγὸς καὶ αὐτὸς [325d] ὁ πατήρ περὶ τούτου διαμάχονται, ὅπως «ὥς» βέλτιστος ἔσται ὁ παῖς, παρ' ἑκάστον καὶ ἔργον καὶ λόγον διδάσκοντες καὶ ἐνδευκνύμενοι ὅτι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον, τὸ δὲ ἄδικον, καὶ τότε μὲν καλόν, τότε δὲ αἰσχρόν, καὶ τότε μὲν ὅσιον, τότε δὲ ἀνόσιον, καὶ τὰ μὲν ποιεῖ, τὰ δὲ μὴ ποιεῖ. καὶ ἂν μὲν ἐκῶν πείθεται· εἰ δὲ μὴ, ὥσπερ ξύλον διαστρεφόμενον καὶ καμπτόμενον εὐθύνουσιν ἀπειλαῖς καὶ πληγαῖς. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα εἰς διδασκάλων

much more attention [325e] so the child learns how to conduct properly, read and write and the art of the lyre. In turn, the teachers take care of this. And when the children now learn grammar and are able to understand what they see written—as then words—the teachers make them stand up from their seats to read poems of good poets [326a] and force them to learn them by heart. In these poems one finds a lot of advice and a lot of stories and songs and hymns about the virtuous people of the old days, so that the child will envy them and imitate them and long to be like them. On their side, the teachers of the lyre do something similar, that is, they do everything they can, so that the young people become prudent and do no harm; near them, after they have been taught the art of the lyre, then they teach poems of good poets, different from the former—the lyric poets—[326b] fitting their music to the voice of the lyre; thus, they compel the rhythms and harmonies to be kindred to the souls of the children, so that they become both more tame and useful in their words and actions, by being imbued with rhythm and harmony; for the life of man in all its manifestations needs rhythm and harmony. Well, as if all this were not enough, they send them even to the gymnasts, to make the body stronger, so that their enlightened mind may have an assistant [326c] and that they may not be forced to show cowardice in wars and other actions, because the body betrays them. And those who have more means at their disposal do this more; and the wealthiest have the most means. So their sons are the first among the children of their age to start going to school and stop studying years later than the others. And when they are out of the hands of the teachers, the state in its turn forces them to learn the laws and live according to them, [326d] so that each one does not do his own thing, but just like the teachers (for the children who still do not succeed in writing) first draw soft lines with the pencil, and then

πέμποντες πολὺ μᾶλλον ἐντέλλονται ἐπιμελεῖσθαι [325e] εὐκοσμίας τῶν παιδῶν ἢ γραμμάτων τε καὶ κιθαρίσεως· οἱ δὲ διδάσκαλοι τούτων τε ἐπιμελοῦνται, καὶ ἐπειδὴν αὐτὰ γράμματα μάθωσιν καὶ μέλλωσιν συνήσειν τὰ γεγραμμένα ὥσπερ τότε τὴν φωνήν, παρατιθέασιν αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τῶν βάθρων ἀναγιγνώσκειν ποιητῶν ἀγαθῶν ποιήματα καὶ ἐκμανθάνειν [326a] ἀναγκάζουσιν, ἐν οἷς πολλὰ μὲν νοουτήσεις ἔναισιν πολλὰ δὲ διέξοδοι καὶ ἔπαινοι καὶ ἐγκώμια παλαιῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἵνα ὁ παῖς ζηλῶν μιμῆται καὶ ὀρέγῃται τοιοῦτος γενέσθαι. οἱ τ' αὐτὸ κιθαρισταί, ἕτερα τοιαῦτα, σωφροσύνης τε ἐπιμελοῦνται καὶ ὅπως ἂν οἱ νέοι μὴδὲν κακουργῶσιν· πρὸς δὲ τούτοις, ἐπειδὴν κιθαρίζειν μάθωσιν, ἄλλων αὐτῶν ποιητῶν ἀγαθῶν ποιήματα διδάσκουσι μελοποιῶν, εἰς τὰ [326b] κιθαρίσματα ἐντείνοντες, καὶ τοὺς ῥυθμούς τε καὶ τὰς ἀρμονίας ἀναγκάζουσιν οἰκειοῦσθαι ταῖς ψυχαῖς τῶν παιδῶν, ἵνα ἡμερώτεροί τε ᾖσιν, καὶ εὐρυθμότεροι καὶ εὐαρμωστότεροι γιγνόμενοι χρήσιμοι ᾖσιν εἰς τὸ λέγειν τε καὶ πράττειν· πᾶς γὰρ ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εὐρυθμίας τε καὶ εὐαρμωστίας δεῖται. ἔτι τοίνυν πρὸς τούτοις εἰς παιδοτρίβου πέμπουσιν, ἵνα τὰ σώματα βελτίῳ ἔχοντες ὑπηρετῶσι τῇ διανοίᾳ χρηστῇ [326c] οὕσῃ, καὶ μὴ ἀναγκάζονται ἀποδειλιᾶν διὰ τὴν πονηρίαν τῶν σωμάτων καὶ ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις πράξεσιν. καὶ ταῦτα ποιοῦσιν οἱ μάλιστα δυνάμενοι «μάλιστα» —μάλιστα δὲ δύνανται οἱ πλουσιώτατοι— καὶ οἱ τούτων ὑεῖς, πρωαίτατα εἰς διδασκάλων τῆς ἡλικίας ἀρξάμενοι φοιτᾶν, ὀψιαίτατα ἀπαλλάττονται. ἐπειδὴν δὲ ἐκ διδασκάλων ἀπαλλαγῶσιν, ἡ πόλις αὐτοὺς τε νόμους ἀναγκάζει μανθάνειν καὶ κατὰ τούτους ζῆν κατὰ παράδειγμα, [326d] ἵνα μὴ αὐτοὶ ἐφ' αὐτῶν εἰκὴ πράττωσιν, ἀλλ' ἀτεχνῶς ὥσπερ οἱ γραμματισταὶ τοῖς μήπω δεινοῖς γράφειν τῶν παιδῶν ὑπογράψαντες

they give them the plate and oblige them to write as the lines show them, so the state draws the laws, which its good legislators found of old; he compels them both to give and to take orders according to them. But whoever strays from them is punished, and this punishment in your city [326e] as well as in many other places is called "responsibility", because punishment brings the transgressor to the straight path. Family and state, then, show so much care for virtue — and you, Socrates, are out of your mind, and wonder if virtue can be taught? Much more should you be baffled if it could not be taught—not now.

γραμμὰς τῇ γραφίδι οὕτω τὸ γραμματεῖον διδάσιν καὶ ἀναγκάζουσι γράφειν κατὰ τὴν ὑφήγησιν τῶν γραμμῶν, ὥς δὲ καὶ ἡ πόλις νόμους ὑπογράψασα, ἀγαθῶν καὶ παλαιῶν νομοθετῶν εὐρήματα, κατὰ τούτους ἀναγκάζει καὶ ἄρχειν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι, ὅς δ' ἂν ἐκτὸς βαίνει τούτων, κολάζει· καὶ ὄνομα τῇ κολάσει ταύτη καὶ παρ' ὑμῖν [326e] καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοῦ, ὥς εὐθυνούσης τῆς δίκης, εὐθύναι. τοσαύτης οὖν τῆς ἐπιμελείας οὐσης περὶ ἀρετῆς ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ, θαυμάζεις, ὦ Σώκράτες, καὶ ἀπορεῖς εἰ διδακτόν ἐστιν ἀρετῆ; ἀλλ' οὐ χρὴ θαυμάζειν, ἀλλὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον εἰ μὴ διδακτόν.

However, I wish to make some essential observations on what is discussed. One of the primary challenges in translating philosophical texts—particularly Plato's writings, where AI assistance has its limitations—is that words often carry multiple meanings.<sup>39</sup> Choosing one meaning over another may not always capture Plato's intent accurately. Many scholars of Plato's works have noted this issue. Allow me to provide a few illustrative examples.

I translate the significant phrase διδάσκουσι καὶ νουθετοῦσιν as "teach and advise." This reflects the scope of education that a wealthy Athenian family would provide for their children. The word διδάσκουσι is straightforwardly translated as "teach," so no issue arises here. However, translating νουθετοῦσιν as "advise" is not entirely precise. In the dialogue, another term, βουλεύω, appears, meaning "advise, think, consult," among other interpretations. When Protagoras responds to Socrates' question about what a student would learn from him, he says, εὐβουλος, meaning, "I'll make him prudent."

By contrast, the word νουθετοῦσιν conveys something closer to "setting someone's mind," "exhorting," "warning," or "advising," which aligns more closely with what a family might do for a child. Etymologically, it combines νοῦς (nous) and θέτω (set), suggesting that the purpose of education is not so much to instill virtue (ethos) as to teach the child that certain words and actions are "BAD" and others are "GOOD." A child should do the "GOOD" because failing to do so incurs "PUNISHMENT." Often, it is the fear of punishment that drives people to act as though they possess ethos.

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39. In Papanikos (2021a), I used five verses from Homer's *Odyssey* to demonstrate how various interpretations of this epic poem can emerge based on the translation of key words. In many cases, it is a matter of interpretation to discern what Homer intended to convey and what was actually in his mind.

This distinction is not necessarily explicit in the dialogue. Rather, it seems that the discussion revolves around cultivating ethos through teaching. But what is to be taught? There is an inherent ambiguity in the discussion. Protagoras argues that children should be taught to distinguish between good and bad; if they act well, they are rewarded, and if they act poorly, they are punished. Socrates, on the other hand, has a different perspective: he speaks of making a child good and implies that this cannot be achieved through teaching alone.

Protagoras states early on that he teaches sophism. But what exactly does this discipline entail? In Protagoras's own words (318a):

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>If you become my student, here is what you will get: every day that you listen to my teaching, you will go home improved, and the next day, the same will happen. Day by day, you will keep progressing until you reach your best.</p> | <p>ἔσται τοίνυν σοι, ἐὰν ἐμοὶ συνῆς, ἡ ἂν ἡμέρα ἐμοὶ συγγένῃ, ἀπιέναι οἰκαδε βελτίονι γεγονότι, καὶ ἐν τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ταῦτ' αὐτὰ καὶ ἐκάστης ἡμέρας ἀεὶ ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ἐπιιδόναι.</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The purpose of school education is to learn something new each day to foster improvement. However, Socrates found this idea vague. Vagueness, he noted, is characteristic of sophism, particularly when educating future politicians. This is why the objective of sophism was to teach students rhetoric, making them effective public speakers.

Socrates immediately responded by pointing out that, while this may sound insightful, any academic instructor could make a similar claim, regardless of their subject area. He then poses a pointed question: if someone attends a lecture on sophism, how exactly will they improve? For instance, Socrates observed that if a student follows the teachings of a painter, they will learn to paint, and if they follow a music instructor, they will learn to play a musical instrument. But what, precisely, would a student of sophism improve upon?

Protagoras is compelled to reply that he teaches *εὐβουλία*, aiming to enable the student to manage both their household affairs (*οἰκίαν*) and the city's affairs (*πόλεως*) (318e-319a):

|                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>The lesson teaches how to best govern private affairs within households and how to become stronger in both action and speech in public affairs.</p> | <p>τὸ δὲ μάθημά ἐστιν εὐβουλία περὶ τῶν οἰκείων, ὅπως ἂν ἄριστα τὴν αὐτοῦ οἰκίαν διοικῶι, καὶ περὶ τῶν τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως τὰ τῆς πόλεως δυνατώτατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

This statement is too general and could even encompass the profession of a manager. In fact, the phrase *οἰκίαν διοικοῖ* can be translated as "business management," since the words *οἰκίαν* and *οἰκείων* refer to household and private affairs in the context of business.<sup>40</sup>

This is why the word "economics" is derived from the synthesis of *οἶκος* and *νέμω*. While *νέμω* has various meanings, in this context, it signifies "to rule" or "to manage." In ancient Greece, the word *οἶκος* denoted business, as eloquently described by the 8th-century BCE poet Hesiod.<sup>41</sup>

The works of Homer and Hesiod were standard "textbooks" in the academic education of both the ancient Greek and non-Greek worlds. However, Socrates is not satisfied with this general response and directly asks Protagoras (319a):

|                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>"If I understand your words correctly," I said to him, "it seems to me that you are speaking about the political profession and promising to make people virtuous citizens."</p> | <p>Ἄρα, ἔφην ἐγώ, ἔπομαί σου τῷ λόγῳ; δοκεῖς γάρ μοι λέγειν τὴν πολιτικὴν τέχνην καὶ ὑπισχνεῖσθαι ποιεῖν ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας.</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

And Protagoras admits this (319a):

|                                                                                     |                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>"That is precisely the profession I practice, my dear Socrates," he replied.</p> | <p>Αὐτὸ μὲν οὖν τοῦτό ἐστιν, ἔφη, ὦ Σώκρατες, τὸ ἐπάγγελμα ὃ ἐπαγγέλλομαι.</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

This is a masterful example of Socrates' dialectical method. He achieves his goal by compelling Protagoras to admit that what he does is, in fact, to make men good citizens (*ποιεῖν ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας*). Socrates then responds sarcastically (319a):

|                                                                        |                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>really very beautiful profession you possess<br/>if you possess</p> | <p>Ἦ καλὸν ... τέχνημα ἄρα κέκτησαι, εἴπερ κέκτησαι</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|

At this point, Socrates introduces his hypothesis that people are taught to become good citizens through instruction in the political art. The discussion then

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40. In modern business environment, the pressure of performance forces many business leaders to compromise ethical principles. This important issue is not examined here even though is of tremendous importance and relates to what was already mentioned "white collar" crime. On this issue see the study by Ngcobo & Reddy (2024)

41. Hesiod wrote two works, *Works and Days* and *Theogony*. The first can be considered, in modern terms, an economic and business textbook, while the latter is a metaphysical work explaining the origins of the gods and the creation of the world. Both of Hesiod's works, along with Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, have been used as standard texts for educating future generations of Greeks and non-Greeks alike. On Greeks see Papanikos (2024). I have written a series of four papers interpreting Hesiod's first work as an economics textbook (see Papanikos 2023, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c). I have also written a paper examining ten meetings mentioned in Homer's *Odyssey* (see Papanikos 2021b).

takes an unexpected turn, shifting to a more general conversation about goodness, which they refer to as ἀρετή (virtue). The word itself shares the same root as ἄριστος (the best) and, as a political concept, appears in the term "aristocracy." It contrasts with democracy in that, in a true aristocracy, the best rule, whereas in a democracy, the people rule. Both systems have their darker sides: democracy can devolve into ochlocracy, and aristocracy can deteriorate into oligarchy.<sup>42</sup>

In summary, the purpose of teaching is to cultivate skills in individuals based on what a teacher imparts. For instance, if you follow the lessons of an architect, you would expect to become an architect. But what if you follow a sophist like Protagoras? According to him, sophists teach the youth how to effectively manage their own households and become good citizens who can oversee their city's affairs. Socrates, however, holds a different view. The next section contrasts the two basic hypotheses of the dialogue.

### The Hypotheses and their Supportive Arguments

At the academic level, discussing an issue follows a particular methodology—or, perhaps more precisely, an epistemology—meaning the methods used to acquire knowledge about a specific subject. Both Protagoras and Socrates are skilled in applying various methods, but it is essential that the hypotheses to be tested are clearly stated, as is indeed the case here. In Table 2, I demonstrate the basic hypotheses proposed by Protagoras and Socrates.

Table 2. Protagoras and Socrates Hypotheses on Virtue (Ἀρετή)

|                   | Beginning of the Dialogue                | End of Dialogue         |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Socrates</b>   | Ethos or Virtue (Ἀρετή) cannot be taught | Virtue = Wisdom (σοφία) |
| <b>Protagoras</b> | Virtue can be taught                     | Virtue = Wisdom (σοφία) |

Socrates sets the question at the outset: Can virtue (ἀρετή) be taught? Both philosophers agree on the significance of this question, recognizing its importance for both private (primarily business) and political (social) affairs.

The dialogue does not clearly specify how to test these hypotheses. This ambiguity arises because it fails to distinguish between individuals possessing *ethos* and those who merely act ethically. The dialogue assumes these are equivalent, but they are not, as I illustrate in Figures 10 & 11. *Ethos* is unobservable, whereas ethical behavior can be observed. Assuming we can classify an action as either ethical or unethical, we may characterize a person as

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42. On the issue of democracy see Papanikos (2020, 2022d, 2022e, 2022f). Many studies have examined the issue of politics, law and ethics; see for example Nartey (2024).

behaving ethically or unethically. If the behavior is deemed unethical, we might conclude that this person lacks *ethos*—that is, lacks virtue.

Figure 10. Observed Ethical Actions

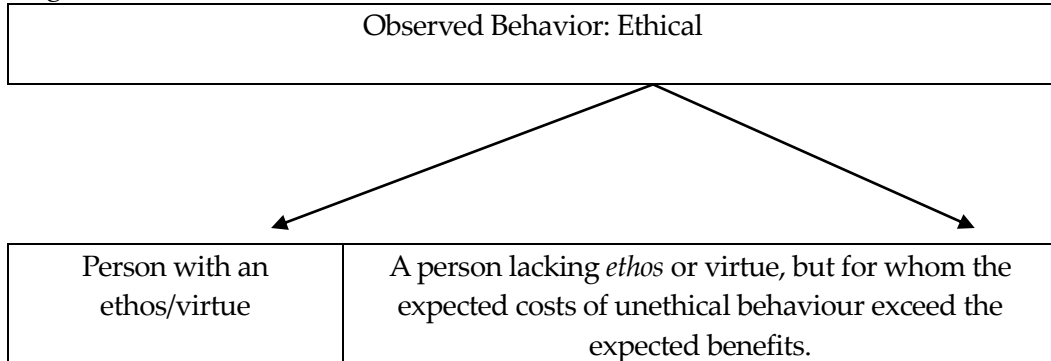
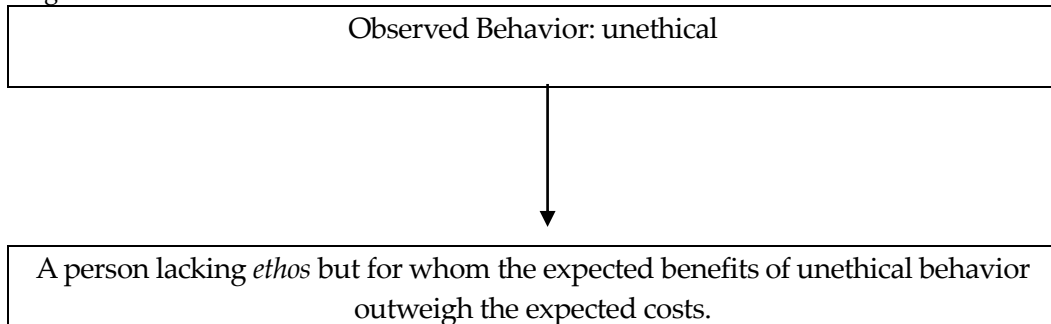


Figure 11. Observed Unethical Actions



As explained in the following section, where the multidimensionality of virtue is defined, it is possible, as Socrates suggests in the dialogue, for the same person to be considered unethical from one perspective of virtue and ethical from another. Even if all of a person's actions align with the complete concept of *ethos* or virtue, this does not necessarily mean that the person possesses *ethos* or virtue in essence. A rational individual may choose to behave ethically if the costs of unethical behavior outweigh the benefits. Conversely, a person may act unethically if the benefits significantly outweigh the costs.<sup>43</sup>

Protagoras (324a) argues that virtue is taught by all stakeholders within the education system mentioned in the second section. However, Protagoras's true contention is that youth are not taught (μάθησις) to become (ποιεῖν) individuals of *ethos*; rather, they are taught that unethical behavior will result in punishment. In other words, what is taught is not *ethos* itself but the costs and benefits of ethical

43. Rego (2023) connects the morality of actions to luck, suggesting a broader concept: the 'virtue' some people possess that allows them to conceal the consequences of their immoral acts.

behavior. This is a crucial point, one that Socrates not only acknowledges but also explicitly addresses in the dialogue, as I discuss in the next section of this paper.

It is this cost-benefit analysis that leads to an apparent agreement between Protagoras and Socrates, as shown in Table 2 above. In the end, wisdom (lack of ignorance) is all that is needed to make sound evaluations of costs, benefits, and the implications of unethical behavior.

## The Definition of Virtue in the Dialogue

In this section, I discuss the definition of *ethos* or virtue as it is developed in the dialogue.<sup>44</sup> Interestingly, this issue is addressed only at the end of the dialogue, which is puzzling. It seems that, at the outset, all participants assumed they shared a common understanding of the notion of virtue and *ethos*.<sup>45</sup> However, as the dialogue progresses, it becomes apparent that the meaning of the word virtue is not as clear and straightforward as initially assumed. This discussion leads to a compromise by accepting that virtue, after all, is wisdom (*sophia*)—but wisdom about what? The dialogue thus comes full circle: if virtue is wisdom and wisdom can be taught, as Socrates suggests, then this contradicts Socrates' earlier hypothesis that virtue cannot be taught. In this section, I'll offer my own explanation of what Socrates might have thought about wisdom and virtue. First, however, I discuss the five elements of virtue.

The most important word in the dialogue is *ἀρετή*, which may be translated into English as virtue. In Greek antiquity, *ἀρετή* had many meanings, as becomes clear throughout the dialogue. Homer uses the word to mean ability, perfection, or excellence in any field, often referring specifically to a man's virtues, prowess, bravery, or great ability. This usage was significant because Homer's work was widely used as a textbook in academic teaching in ancient Athens. This is the meaning used in Plato's Protagoras. In the works of Plato and Euripides, however, *ἀρετή* takes on a moral meaning, referring to goodness and ethical character. In the works of Theognis of Megara (6th century BCE) and Euripides (c. 480–c. 406 BCE), the term also implies aristocratic qualities, i.e., noble descent.

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44. Defining concepts such as morality, ethos, and virtue is a topic widely discussed in moral philosophy and may be influenced by language and historical context. For instance, Li (2024) argues that morality and virtue have similar, if not identical, meanings in Chinese language. Ghosh (2024) examined morality within the Indian context. However, this is not the case in the Greek language.

45. The word *ethos* (ἦθος) was first used by Hesiod in *Works and Days*, a text considered part of didactic poetry. Hesiod's work represents the earliest attempt to teach morality and the importance of ethical behavior. Homer also used the term *ethos*, but with a different meaning, referring to a fixed characteristic or instinctual drive in both humans and animals.

As will become clear in what follows, the meaning of the word virtue encompasses multiple aspects, primarily those included in the first two definitions above. The Greek word ἀρετή shares its root with ἄριστοι (the best), which is connected to the concept of aristocracy, originally meaning "rule by the best" or the wisest—the so-called philosopher-kings. In this context, the "best" referred to people of honesty and virtue. Today, however, the term often describes those descended from noble families.

### The Five Elements of Virtue

Throughout the dialogue, the definition of virtue (*ethos*) remains a thorny issue. In fact, Socrates even makes a joke about this, taking advantage of the presence of the sophist Prodicus, who was well known for his insistence on precise definitions. At the end of the dialogue (349b and following), a serious discussion begins on the unity of virtue: Is it a single entity, or does it consist of multiple parts? And if it has multiple parts, are they like the parts (*moria*) of a substance, such as gold, or are they more like the distinct parts of the face, each performing a unique function—such as hearing, smelling, or seeing? Both Socrates and his interlocutor agree that there are five elements: wisdom or knowledge (*Sophia*-σοφία), prudence (*sophrosyne*-σωφροσύνη), bravery or courage (*andreia*-ἀνδρεία), justice (*dikaiosyne*-δικαιοσύνη), and holiness (*hosiotēs*-ὁσιότης) (349bc):

Are the five words—wisdom, prudence, bravery, justice, and holiness—referring to one and the same thing, or does each of them separately conceal a distinct essence, something with its own unique function, and thus different from the others? Your answer was that these words do not signify a single thing, but rather that each of them represents something distinct from the others. Furthermore, you explained that all these are components of virtue, not like particles of gold, which resemble each other and the whole to which they belong, but more like parts of a face: they are not alike either to the whole to which they belong or to each other, as each has a unique function.

σοφία καὶ σωφροσύνη καὶ ἀνδρεία καὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ὁσιότης, πότερον ταῦτα, πέντε ὄντα ὀνόματα, ἐπὶ ἐνὶ πράγματι ἔστιν, ἢ ἐκάστω τῶν ὀνομάτων τούτων ὑπόκειται τις ἴδιος οὐσία καὶ πρᾶγμα ἔχον ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν ἕκαστον, οὐκ ὄν οἷον τὸ ἕτερον αὐτῶν τὸ ἕτερον; ἔφησθα οὖν σὺ οὐκ ὀνόματα ἐπὶ ἐνὶ εἶναι, ἀλλὰ [349c] ἕκαστον ἰδίῳ πράγματι τῶν ὀνομάτων τούτων ἐπικεῖσθαι, πάντα δὲ ταῦτα μόρια εἶναι ἀρετῆς, οὐχ ὥς τὰ τοῦ χρυσοῦ μόρια ὅμοιά ἐστιν ἀλλήλοις καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ οὗ μόριά ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὥς τὰ τοῦ προσώπου μόρια καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ οὗ μόριά ἐστιν καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἀνόμοια, ἰδίαν ἕκαστα δύναμιν ἔχοντα.

These five elements of virtue are depicted in Figure 8. However, before proceeding, I will discuss the five elements of virtue from the perspective of ancient Greek language. Understanding how these terms were used in 5th-

century BCE Athens by Plato and other authors is crucial, as the same word could have different meanings in other Greek cities and periods.

## Σοφία

The word “σοφία” is typically translated as wisdom or knowledge, which are not necessarily the same. Generally, knowledge implies something learned through education or training. In Plato, the word *γνώσις* (*gnosis*) best conveys the concept of knowledge. Plato also uses the adjective *γνωστικός* (*gnostikos*), meaning learning ability, which refers to an individual's inherent capacity to learn—distinguishing a good student from a less capable one. In Plato's time, however, the term *σοφία* in Athens often meant science, erudition, or philosophy. Ultimately, both Protagoras and Socrates agree that virtue is *σοφία*, which Socrates defines as a lack of ignorance. But ignorance of what? As discussed below, Socrates did not waver from his position that virtue can be taught; rather, he argued that knowledgeable people can discern what is good and what is bad. Yet, this knowledge alone does not make someone a person of *ethos*. We thus reach an impasse, a puzzlement—or as Socrates would call it, an *ἀπορία*.

## Σωφροσύνη

In Plato's works, *σωφροσύνη* means moderation in carnal desires, temperance, self-control, prudence, chastity, and sobriety. This aligns with the famous Delphic maxim, “Nothing in excess” (*μηδέν ἄγαν*). In the dialogue between Protagoras and Socrates, there is no issue with the interpretation of this term.

## Ἀνδρεία

The various meanings of *ἀνδρεία* create challenges in the dialogue between Protagoras and Socrates. Socrates argues that one can possess bravery without necessarily embodying all other elements of virtue. During Socrates' time, however, the word signified not only bravery and manliness but also *ethos*. In the dialogue, it is clear that *ἀνδρεία* is used primarily in the context of warfare, emphasizing bravery in battle rather than broader ethical connotations.

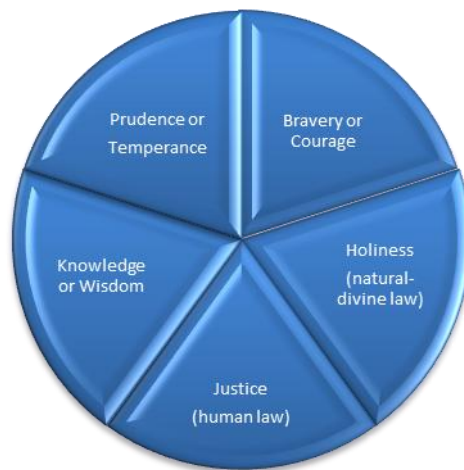
## Δικαιοσύνη

The meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* evolved from Homer's era in the 8th century BCE to the 5th and 4th centuries BCE in Athens. By Socrates' time, this element of virtue referred to people who followed the laws and customs established by their *politeia*. Notably, in 399 BCE, Socrates was sentenced to death by an Athenian court of 501 judges for allegedly violating Athenian law by (a) corrupting the youth and (b) introducing new gods.

## Ὀσιότης

Ὀσιότης is difficult to translate precisely into English, but its meaning is clear. It implies that virtuous individuals should follow divine law. In Plato's works, this term is associated with being sanctioned by divine law. The phrase τὰ ὅσια καὶ δίκαια (what is lawful by God's and the city's laws) highlights this concept. Although it would be interesting to explore the relationship between human and natural law, this issue is not fully addressed in the dialogue. The sophist Hippias briefly raises the topic, but it is ignored (337cd). The dialogue does not discuss instances where divine or natural law may conflict with human laws.

Figure 8. The Definition of Ἀρετή (Virtue)



An apparent contradiction arises in the dialogue between Protagoras and Socrates: the question is whether one of the five elements alone suffices for someone to be considered ethical, or if all five must be present simultaneously. For example, a person may be brave but fail to respect divine laws (Gods' justice).

These five elements are discussed extensively by Protagoras and Socrates. In the end, Socrates seems to persuade Protagoras and the others that there is only one virtue, which is knowledge or wisdom. Knowledge and wisdom, however, are learned from good teachers. Yet, as the discussion progresses, the focus shifts toward the concepts of knowledge and ignorance. But knowledge and ignorance of what, exactly? I will return to this question below in this section.

### Why does the Same Person Sometimes Behave Ethically and Sometimes Unethically? A Cost-Benefit Analysis

My interpretation of what Socrates says at the end is not a refutation of his thesis that virtue cannot be taught. Rather, if we define virtue as wisdom-knowledge (*σοφία*), then it can be used to evaluate (or, in modern scientific terms, perform a cost-benefit analysis) the costs and benefits of non-virtuous behavior (Table 3). Wisdom does not make people ethical, but it "compels" them to behave ethically after calculating the costs (displeasures) and benefits (pleasures), and this requires knowledge. Ignorant people cannot make these calculations, or as Socrates puts it (356b):

But, like a skilled weigher, make one bundle of the pleasant and another of the sad. Place on the scale the weights of things near and far, and tell me which way the scale leans. Because if you place pleasant things on both sides, it makes sense each time to prefer the larger and greater amount; if unfortunate things, then the fewer and smaller ones. And if you place the pleasant things on one side and the sad ones on the other, then, if you see the pleasant ones outweigh the sad, whether in the present or the future, you put into practice the action that contains them. But if you see that the sad things weigh more heavily than the pleasant ones, do not proceed in practice. My people, I would ask them, is there any other opinion on this? I'm certain they couldn't have a different view.

ἀγαθὸς ἰστάναι ἄνθρωπος, συνθεῖς τὰ ἡδέα καὶ συνθεῖς τὰ λυπηρά, καὶ τὸ ἐγγὺς καὶ τὸ πόρρω στήσας ἐν τῷ ζυγῷ, εἰπὲ πότῃρα πλείω ἐστίν. ἐὰν μὲν γὰρ ἡδέα πρὸς ἡδέα ἰσῆς, τὰ μείζω ἀεὶ καὶ πλείω ληπτέα· ἐὰν δὲ λυπηρὰ πρὸς λυπηρά, τὰ ἐλάττω καὶ σμικρότερα· ἐὰν δὲ ἡδέα πρὸς λυπηρά, ἐὰν μὲν τὰ ἀνιάρᾳ ὑπερβάλληται ὑπὸ τῶν ἡδέων, ἐάντε τὰ ἐγγὺς ὑπὸ τῶν πόρρω ἐάντε τὰ πόρρω ὑπὸ τῶν ἐγγύς, ταύτην τὴν προᾶξιν πρακτέον ἐν ἧ ἂν ταῦτ' ἐνῇ· ἐὰν δὲ τὰ ἡδέα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνιάρων, οὐ πρακτέα. μή τι ἄλλη ἔχει, φαίην ἂν, ταῦτα, ὧ ἄνθρωποι; οἷδ' ὅτι οὐκ ἂν ἔχοιεν ἄλλως λέγειν.

The statement above by Socrates is an excellent description of what we would consider today to be a cost-benefit analysis of unethical behavior. It is clear from the dialogue that there are rewards for behaving ethically and costs (punishments) for behaving unethically. A rational decision-maker will then weigh these costs and benefits.

My translation of the above statement by Socrates faces the same challenges as many translations of ancient Athenian philosophical texts mentioned above: words quite often have multiple meanings. Sometimes, a discussion of the etymological meaning of the words can shed more light on their true significance. Socrates says that skilled people (*ἀγαθὸς ἰστάναι ἄνθρωπος*). The word *ἀγαθός* here is translated as "skilled," but its more accurate meaning is "best." Best at what? Of course, it refers to the ability to perform the cost-benefit analysis that follows. Socrates' cost-benefit analysis takes into account both present and future costs and benefits. The two words *ἐγγύς* and *πόρρω* capture this distinction: the first means "immediate," while the latter means "far in the future." What is

missing here is a discount rate. Socrates refers to the costs as *λυπηρά* ("sad things") and the benefits as *ἡδέα* ("pleasures"). He then suggests comparing various actions according to the sum of all the sad things and pleasures. He distinguishes four cases and proposes a decision rule: if all actions result in sad things, then choose the one that minimizes them. In all other cases, choose the actions that provide the greatest pleasure.

Table 3. Decision Making after a Skilful Cost-Benefit Analysis

| Cases | Actions          | Decision                               | In the Greek Text the Decision Rule           |
|-------|------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| I     | Only pleasures   | Choose the ones that give the maximum  | τὰ μείζω ἀεὶ καὶ πλείω ληπτέα                 |
| II    | Only sads        | Choose the fewer that give the minimum | τὰ ἐλάττω καὶ σμικρότερα                      |
| III   | Pleasures > Sads | Choose these actions                   | ταύτην τὴν προᾶξιν πρακτέον ἐν ἣ ἂν ταῦτ' ἐνῇ |
| IV    | Pleasures < Sads | Do not choose these actions            | οὐ πρακτέα.                                   |

How does the above discussion relate to modern academic ethos and academic integrity? This issue will be addressed in the next section of the paper.

### Academic Ethos

There are many statements in the dialogue that concern the role of academics. The most obvious is what teachers should do. It is well accepted by all participants in the dialogue that the primary role of academics is to teach students what they were trained to teach. This is clear when Socrates, at the beginning of the dialogue, states that if you want to learn how to paint (and many other professions), you go to someone who knows the subject. The teacher should then teach what they know, and nothing else. In other words, teachers should not use their position to teach students anything beyond their area of expertise. This establishes the first rule of academic integrity:

#### Rule 1. Teach what you were assigned to teach and nothing else.

Protagoras acknowledges that many teachers, like himself, claim to teach one thing while actually teaching sophism. Why do they do this? Protagoras explains that there is jealousy among academics (316d):

For these things stir up great jealousies, οὐ γὰρ σμικροὶ περὶ αὐτὰ φθόνοι τε  
 enmities, and persecutions of every kind γίνονται καὶ ἄλλαι δυσμένειαι τε καὶ  
 ἐπιβουλαί.

This jealousy is directed toward his teaching of sophism. In fact, there is no issue with other forms of teaching. The problem arises when sophists disguise their teachings as something else. This has always been the case, and Protagoras gives some historical examples to illustrate it.

**Rule 2. The teacher's goal should be to make their students better at what they teach.**

Both Socrates and Protagoras agree on this point. Protagoras even claims that his students will return home better every day, and this improvement will continue as long as they follow his lectures.

**Rule 3. Nobody can be made ethical or virtuous, but they can become a person of wisdom by learning to weigh the current and future effects (positive or negative) of unethical behavior.**

We cannot determine from actions alone whether a member of the academic world is someone with ethos and integrity. In other words, we cannot teach a professor or teacher to become virtuous, but we can reduce the probability of unethical behavior. Therefore, policies and regulations must exist, just as they did in the ancient world, and those who violate them must be punished. However, there must also be a mechanism to enforce laws and regulations, as well as a way to verify whether accusations are true or false. Socrates provides an example from his own life: when he was sentenced to death by a 501-member jury in 399 BCE for corrupting the youth and introducing new gods.

## Conclusions

The main conclusion of this paper is that ethical behavior can be encouraged among all stakeholders in the academic world by educating them on what is wrong (punishable) and what is right (non-punishable or rewarding). However, this approach alone cannot transform individuals into those with intrinsic ethos and integrity. In the academic world, we cannot always distinguish between those who truly possess ethos and integrity and those who do not.

While ethical behavior is necessary, it is not sufficient to identify academics with genuine ethos and integrity. Therefore, our primary task is to educate academics on what is permitted and what is prohibited; what is good and what is

bad; what is acceptable and what is unacceptable; what is punishable and what is not. Additionally, we should teach them the consequences (punishments) of unethical behavior.

We are still far from an ideal society in which individuals naturally act with ethics and academic integrity because they embody ethos and integrity from within.

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