

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

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*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

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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 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.

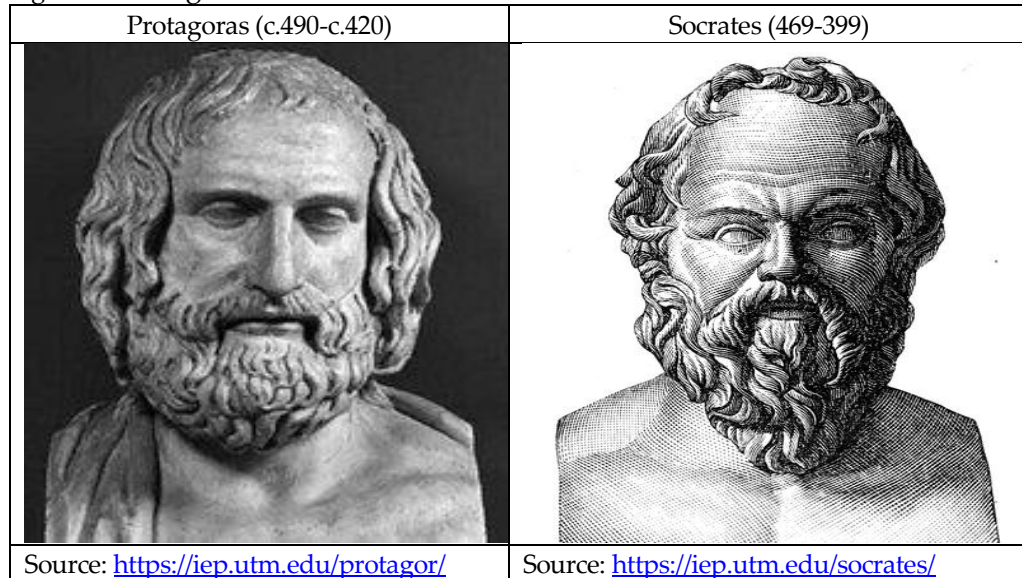
Ethical behavior encompasses much more than criminal behavior, though it includes it. Academic integrity—or academic morality or academic ethos—refers to more than simply violating state laws or a university's regulations and policies. The discussion on academic integrity is broader and relates to ideals such as virtue, honesty, truth, prudence, wisdom, empathy, sympathy, and bravery.<sup>1</sup> Within this

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1. 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

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 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



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

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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).

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	Grammarians Musicians Gymnast	Military Service only for Males	Trainers	Rhetoricians Sophists 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>2</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

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2. 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.

an entire building dedicated to gymnastics, whereas Figure 4 depicts just a single room within it.

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

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



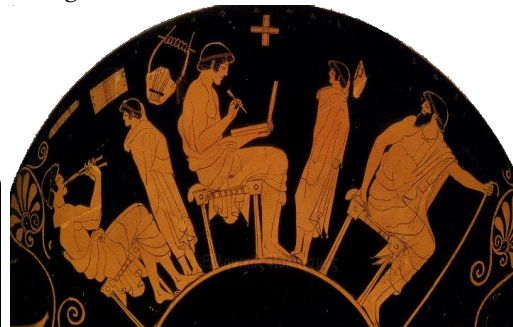
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Figure 3. Scenes from a School to Learn Grammar and Music

Image 3a. Scene I



Image 3a. Scene II

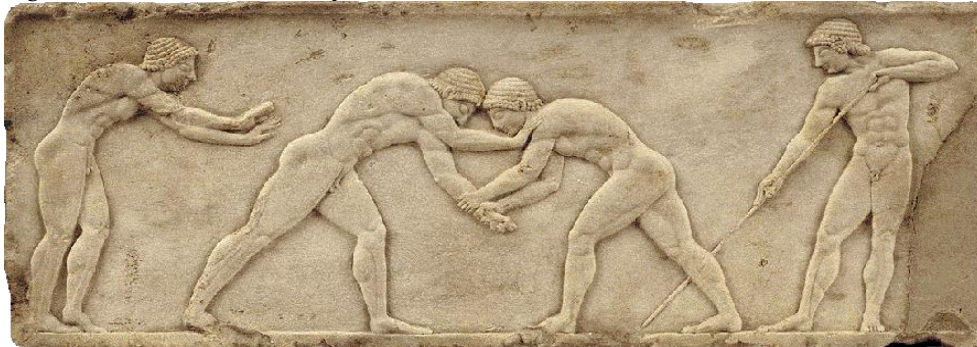


Source: <https://users.sch.gr/ipap/Ellinikos%20Politismos/Miko/Theoria%20arxaia/metafraseis%20a%20gym/a02xm.htm>

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

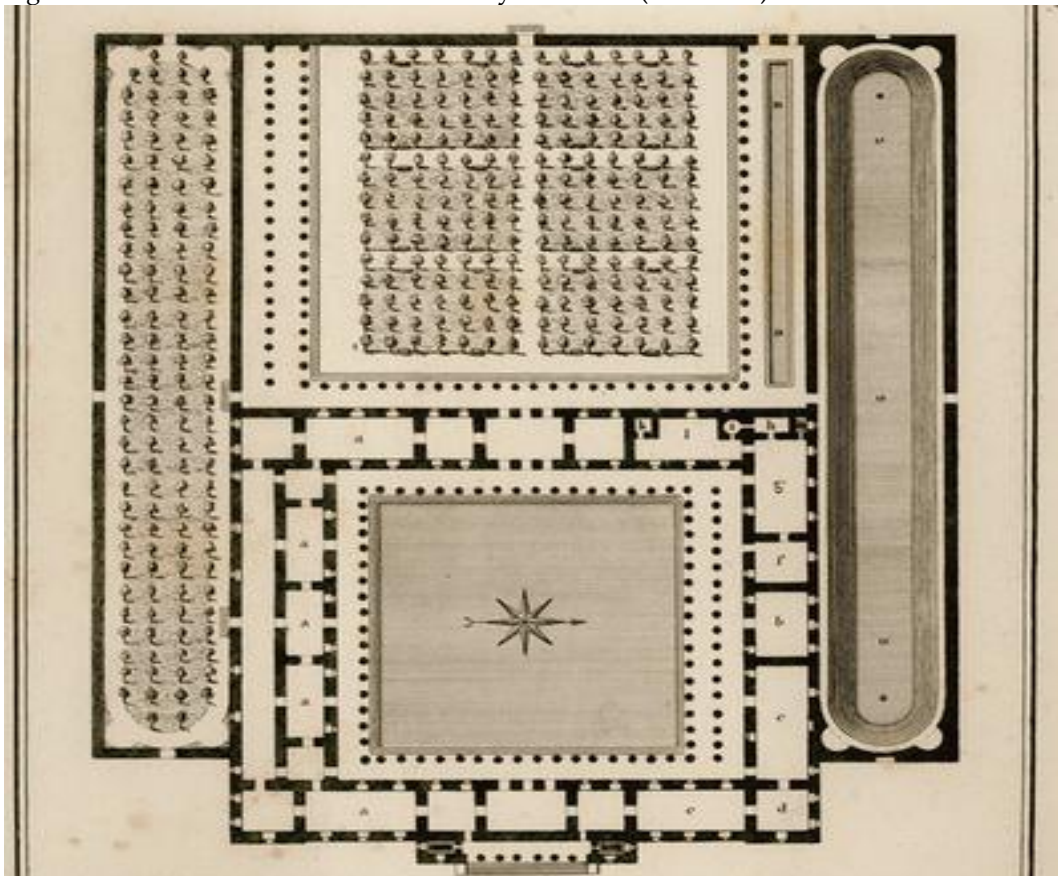
academic discussions. To the right of the gymnasium are rooms designated for activities such as youth training, a room with training bags, and baths. On the far-right side of the gymnasium lies the stadium, while the remaining area is covered with trees.

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:

- <https://users.sch.gr/ipap/Ellinikos%20Politismos/Ylko/Theoria%20arxaia/metafraseis%20a%20gym/a03xm.htm>
- <https://anaskafh.arsakeio.gr/stadia-zwhs-sthn-arxaia-ellada/>
- [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)
- [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**

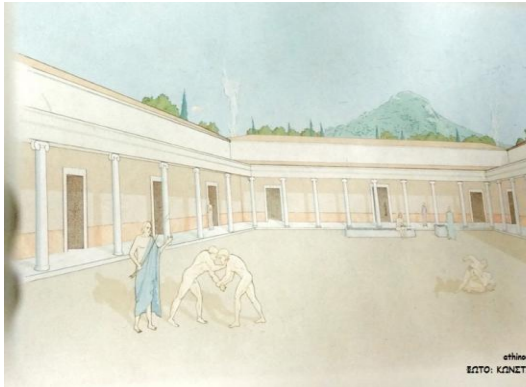


**... and Now**



Figure 8. Aristotle's Lyceum

**Then**



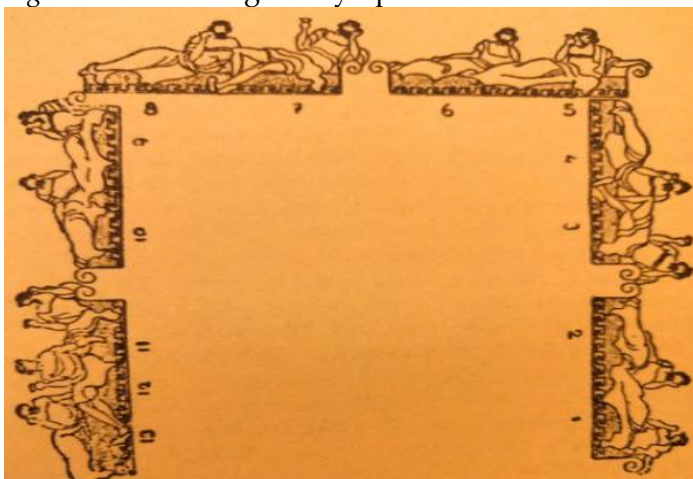
**... and Now**



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 much more attention [325e] so the child

ἐκ παίδων σμικρῶν ἀρξάμενοι, μέχρι οὐπερ ἂν ζῶσι, καὶ διδάσκουσι καὶ νοουθετοῦσιν. ἐπειδὴν θάττον συνιῆ τις τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ τροφὸς καὶ μήτηρ καὶ παιδαγωγὸς καὶ αὐτὸς [325d] ὁ πατήρ περὶ τούτου διαμάχονται, ὅπως «ὡς» βέλτιστος ἔσται ὁ παῖς, παρ' ἑκάστων καὶ ἔργον καὶ λόγον διδάσκοντες καὶ ἐνδεικνύμενοι ὅτι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον, τὸ δὲ ἄδικον, καὶ τότε μὲν καλόν, τότε δὲ αἰσχρόν, καὶ τότε μὲν ὄσιον, τότε δὲ ἀνόσιον, καὶ τὰ μὲν ποίει, τὰ δὲ μὴ ποίει. καὶ ἐὰν μὲν ἑκὼν πειθῆται· εἰ δὲ μὴ, ὥσπερ ξύλον διαστρεφόμενον καὶ καμπτόμενον εὐθύνουσιν ἀπειλαῖς καὶ πληγαῖς. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα εἰς διδασκάλων πέμποντες πολὺ μᾶλλον ἐντέλλονται

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 they give them the plate

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 πολλαὶ μὲν νοουθετήσεις ἔνεισιν πολλαὶ δὲ διέξοδοι καὶ ἔπαινοι καὶ ἐγκώμια παλαιῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἵνα ὁ παῖς ζῆλῶν μιμῆται καὶ ὀρέγηται τοιοῦτος γενέσθαι. οἱ τ' αὐτὸν κιθαρισταί, ἕτερα τοιαῦτα, σωφροσύνης τε ἐπιμελοῦνται καὶ ὅπως ἂν οἱ νέοι μηδὲν 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 ᾧσιν, καὶ εὐρυθμότεροι καὶ εὐαρμοστότεροι γιγνόμενοι χρήσιμοι ᾧσιν εἰς τὸ λέγειν τε καὶ πράττειν· πᾶς γὰρ ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εὐρυθμίας τε καὶ εὐαρμοστίας δεῖται. ἔτι τοίνυν πρὸς τούτοις εἰς παιδοτρέφου πέμπουσιν, ἵνα τὰ σώματα βελτίω ἔχοντες ὑπηρετῶσι τῇ διανοίᾳ χρηστῇ [326c] οὔσῃ, καὶ μὴ ἀναγκάζωνται ἀποδειλιᾶν διὰ τὴν πονηρίαν τῶν σωμάτων καὶ ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις πράξεσιν. καὶ ταῦτα ποιῶσιν οἱ μάλιστα δυνάμενοι «μάλιστα» — μάλιστα δὲ δύνανται οἱ πλουσιώτατοι— καὶ οἱ τούτων ὑεῖς, προβαίτατα εἰς διδασκάλων τῆς ἡλικίας ἀρξάμενοι φοιτᾶν, ὀψιβαίτατα 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 εἰκῆ πράττωσιν, ἀλλ' ἀτεχνῶς ὥσπερ οἱ γραμματισταὶ τοῖς μήπω δεινοῖς γράφειν τῶν παιδῶν ὑπογράφαντες γραμμὰς τῇ γραφίδι οὕτω τὸ

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.

γραμματεῖον διδάσιν καὶ ἀναγκάζουσι γράφειν κατὰ τὴν ὑφήγησιν τῶν γραμμῶν, ὡς δὲ καὶ ἡ πόλις νόμους ὑπογράψασα, ἀγαθῶν καὶ παλαιῶν νομοθετῶν εὐρήματα, κατὰ τούτους ἀναγκάζει καὶ ἄρχειν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι, ὅς δ' ἂν ἐκτὸς βαίνειν τούτων, κολάζει· καὶ ὄνομα τῇ κολάσει ταύτη καὶ παρ' ὑμῖν [326e] καὶ ἄλλοθι πολλαχοῦ, ὡς εὐθυνούσης τῆς δίκης, εὐθύναι. τοσαύτης οὖν τῆς ἐπιμελείας οὔσης περὶ ἀρετῆς ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ, θαυμάζεις, ὦ Σώκратες, καὶ ἀπορεῖς εἰ διδακτόν ἐστιν ἀρετή; 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>3</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, βουλευώ, 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 νοϋς (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.

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

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3. 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.

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, εἰάν ἐμοὶ συνῆς, ἢ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ ἐμοὶ συγγένη, ἀπιέναι οἴκαδε βελτίονι γεγονότι, καὶ ἐν τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ταῦτὰ ταῦτα· καὶ ἐκάστης ἡμέρας ἀεὶ ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ἐπιδιδόναι.</p>
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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 διοικοῖ, καὶ περὶ τῶν τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως τὰ τῆς πόλεως δυνατώτατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν.</p>
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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>4</sup>

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4. In modern business environment, the pressure of performance forces many business leaders to compromise ethical principles. This important issue is not examined here even

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>5</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 ἐγὼ, ἔπομαί σου τῷ λόγῳ; δοκεῖς γάρ μοι λέγειν τὴν πολιτικὴν τέχνην καὶ ὑπισχνεῖσθαι ποιεῖν ἀνδρας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας.</p>
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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>
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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 ἀνδρας ἀγαθοὺς πολίτας*). Socrates then responds sarcastically (319a):

<p>really very beautiful profession you possess if you possess</p>	<p>Ἦ καλόν ... τέχνημα ἄρα κέκτησαι, εἴπερ κέκτησαι</p>
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At this point, Socrates introduces his hypothesis that people are taught to become good citizens through instruction in the political art. The discussion then 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

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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)

5. 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).

democracy, the people rule. Both systems have their darker sides: democracy can devolve into ochlocracy, and aristocracy can deteriorate into oligarchy.<sup>6</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 behaving ethically or unethically. If the behavior is deemed unethical, we might conclude that this person lacks *ethos*—that is, lacks virtue.

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6. 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).



Figure 10. Observed Ethical Actions

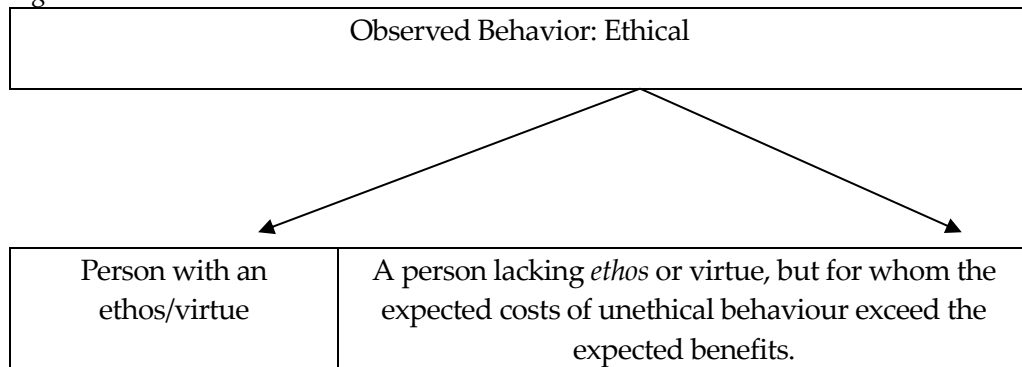
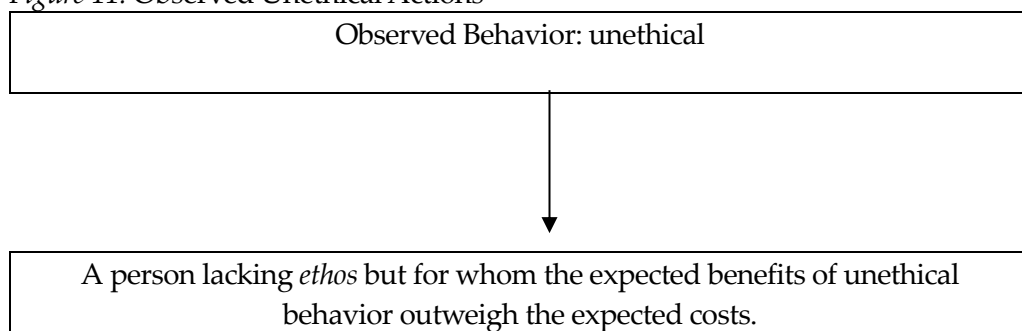


Figure 11. Observed Unethical Actions



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>7</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 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.

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7. 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.

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>8</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>9</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.

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

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8. 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.

9. 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.

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 (*moría*) 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 ἐστίν, ἢ ἐκάστῳ 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 ὡς τὰ τοῦ χρυσοῦ μόρια ὁμοία ἐστίν ἀλλήλοις καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ οὗ μόρια ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ὡς τὰ τοῦ προσώπου μόρια καὶ τῷ ὅλῳ οὗ μόρια ἐστίν 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.

## Ἐοσιότης

Ἐοσιότης 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 λυπηρὰ, καὶ τὸ ἐγγύς καὶ τὸ πόρρω στήσας ἐν τῷ ζυγῷ, εἰπὲ πότερα πλείω ἐστίν. ἐὰν μὲν γὰρ ἡδέα πρὸς ἡδέα ἰσῆς, τὰ μείζω ἀεὶ καὶ πλείω ληπτέα· ἐὰν δὲ λυπηρὰ πρὸς λυπηρὰ, τὰ ἐλάττω καὶ μικρότερα· ἐὰν δὲ ἡδέα πρὸς λυπηρὰ, ἐὰν μὲν τὰ ἀνιαρὰ ὑπερβάλληται ὑπὸ τῶν ἡδέων, ἐάντε τὰ ἐγγύς ὑπὸ τῶν πόρρω ἐάντε τὰ πόρρω ὑπὸ τῶν ἐγγύς, ταύτην τὴν πράξιν πρακτέον ἐν ἧ ἂν ταῦτ' ἐνῆ· ἐὰν δὲ τὰ ἡδέα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνιαρῶν, οὐ πρακτέα. μὴ τι ἄλλη ἔχει, φαίην ἄν, ταῦτα, ὦ ἄνθρωποι; οἶδ' 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 *ἀγαθὸς* 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 μικρότερα
III	Pleasures > Sads	Choose these actions	ταύτην τὴν προᾶξιν πρακτέον ἐν ἧ ἂν ταῦτ' ἐνῆ
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, enmities, and persecutions of every kind οὐ γὰρ μικροὶ περὶ αὐτὰ φθόνοι τε γίνονται καὶ ἄλλαι δυσμένεαί 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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