



ATHENS INSTITUTE

Abstract Book

& a Short Guide to Themes
Developed in Dialogue at the

13th Annual International Conference on
Humanities & Arts in a Global World
3-7 January 2026, Athens, Greece

Edited by
David P. Wick & Olga Gkounta

2026

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This book includes abstracts of papers presented at the 13th Annual International Conference on 'Sustainable Development in a Global World' (3-7 January 2026), Athens, Greece.

A full conference program can be found before the relevant abstracts. In accordance with Athens Institute's Publication Policy, the papers presented during this conference will be considered for inclusion in one of ATINER's many publications only after a blind peer review process.

The purpose of this abstract book is to provide members of the Athens Institute and other academics around the world with a resource through which they can discover colleagues and additional research relevant to their own work. This purpose is in congruence with the overall mission of the association. The Athens Institute was established in 1995 as an independent academic organization with the mission to become a forum where academics and researchers from all over the world can meet to exchange ideas on their research and consider the future developments of their fields of study.

To facilitate the communication, a new references section includes all the abstract books published as part of this conference (Table 1). I invite the readers to access these abstract books -these are available for free- and compare how the themes of the conference have evolved over the years. According to the Institute's mission, the presenters in these conferences are coming from many different countries, presenting various topics.

Table 1. *Publications of Books of Abstracts of Proceedings, 2014-2026*

Year	Papers	Countries	References
2026	29	12	Wick and Gkounta (2026)
2025	25	15	Wick and Gkounta (2025)
2024	19	13	Wick and Gkounta (2024)
2023	33	14	Wick and Gkounta (2023)
2022	26	13	Wick et al. (2022)
2021	17	9	Papanikos (2021)
2020	25	10	Papanikos (2020)
2019	23	16	Papanikos (2019)
2018	25	11	Papanikos (2018)
2017	24	12	Papanikos (2017)
2016	30	14	Papanikos (2016)

2015	37	23	Papanikos (2015)
2014	29	16	Papanikos (2014)

It is our hope that through Athens Institute's conferences and publications, Athens will become a place where academics and researchers from all over the world can regularly meet to discuss the developments of their disciplines and present their work. Since 1995, the Athens Institute has organized more than 400 international conferences and has published over 200 books. Academically, the institute is organized into 6 divisions and 37 units. Each unit organizes at least one annual conference and undertakes various small and large research projects.

For each of these events, the involvement of multiple parties is crucial. I would like to thank all the participants, the members of the organizing and academic committees, and most importantly the administration staff of the Athens Institute for putting this symposium and its subsequent publications together. Specific individuals are listed after the Editors' Note.

Gregory T. Papanikos
President

Introduction from the Editors

A Short Guide to the Presented Studies as Clustered by Athens Institute and the Themes that Developed in Discussion as They were Presented

The first appearance of something like an Athens Institute conference was not the famous *symposium* we often talk about when opening one of our meetings under the shadow of Lykavittos and the Acropolis hills. Likely funded by Pericles and Aspasia, and celebrating their import of 'sophist' expertise from all over the Mediterranean, crossing most of its cultures, the first conference of intellectuals in the arts, humanities and such was held just a year or two before the war began, not during it as below, and it held so many controversial and unpopular voices it had to be held in the Piraeus harbor-town, not the urban core. It's "chair" and keynote speaker was Protagoras of Abdera, like most a non-Athenian, but working as many of the speakers were part-time in a 'think tank' intended by its funder (Aspasia) to keep Pericles in power. Its intent was to be jarring and to make a power statement about an Athens that dared any question or dangerous point of view because it 'could' ... the same attitude Thucydides illustrates by Athenians who crashed the council of Corinth just a year or so later - the council that began the war to end Athens.

The symposium we work from or try to emulate at the Institute, the one (of many) we happen to have Plato's notes on (and a similar one recorded by Xenophon) occurred during the harsh years of the Peloponnesian War, the war that would end the brief age in the sun we call 'Classical Athens' and its cultural adventurousness. The town needed badly to celebrate all those scholars it had invited in, and the questions they had asked, the uncertainties they dug up in the urban

psyche ... the meeting where Plato played 'fly on the wall' had been to celebrate a syrupy but rather implausible play by a young idealist named Agathon – the 'Flowers' – in which the families, the town and the world healed themselves by rediscovering love (one thinks of the 'flower child' days of the 1960s) ... the symposium topic all the speakers had to address was the transformative or healing power of love. But that is not the reason the Athens Institute chose it as a template.

No, we chose it because in spite of a wild mix of good and bad 'papers' ... of disruptions, time-limit violations and unexpected things going wrong, the symposium took its final shape from conversation shared and arguments made in good humor, respectfully – a celebration of human beings *talking* all around the edges of a difficult, perhaps impossible topic. If we can take Plato as an example, no one was more *changed* by the experience than the young 'flies on the wall' who listened.

Our first conferences were in the Arts and Humanities, and while the Athens Institute hosts dialogue over scores of fields in conferences and academic journals today, we still meet each winter holiday season for a special year-opening session kept intimate and small – some 35 years of these now – at which we try to mix a motley collection all across the arts and humanities in which we are looking for voices that find startling, complementary themes around unexpected sides of the problems, and the achievements, of human culture over time.

And when we are done, the online record is a mix of the abstracts presented and some hint of how the dialogue at the conference mixed and enlightened and energized them.

You can use what is below to prepare something to pitch to a future conference of ours, or to gauge the kind of experience you might have by visiting, or simply to follow the conversation. No abstract appears here that was not a presented paper, and while some of these may later appear as formal articles in one of the "Athens Journals" the Institute publishes, none got any guarantee of that as a condition of acceptance for *presenting*. The editors have tried to preserve as well, in the 'Readers Guide' comments, some hint of where the dialogue went after presentation.

And with that ...

A Short Readers' Guide to the Themes that Developed in Dialogue at our 2026 Conference on Humanities and Arts

The Complex Mix of Contemporary Heritages from Ancient Greece Resonating in Our World

Meihuizen in many ways set the frame for conference's mix of timeless humanities issues set onto living 'period' stages with a look at the way the Homeric oral narrative created (creates) an extremely immersive narrative 'present' while anchoring narratives as they unfold in a 'past' both distant and immediately felt by the audience. His focal point today lay in techniques and expression used by Christopher Logue to render the flowing verse narrative. **Oberhelman** chose two Byzantine female saints (Agia Mavra and Agia Irini Chrysovlantou) as examples of divine (or divine-energized) healing – Mavra more with children and Irini with issues of womens' health – that might have been associated with nymphs or semideities in the far past, or with alternate medicine in the present (both a type of healing that has co-existed with 'diplomate' or 'scientific' medicine since classical and on into modern Greece); his focus lay in the anthropology and locality of the healing traditions, but he emphasized the legitimacy 'in-culture' for these alternates in our own world. **Wick** looked at the 'foodways' anthropology of ancient Greek cooking (like most fuel-starved cultures it relied on fast-applied heat – stir-frying and grilling) as it faced the challenge of the Greek winter, when most available foods for cooking were hard-preserved and needed a slow-cooking technique. He followed the fuel issues of ancient Attica (charcoal and driftwood) finishing on the revolutionary effect of the boom in pottery production as the high classical period internationalized Greek trade, the new larger kilns producing equally over-sized bakery ovens that became capable of supporting a slow-cook technology for many Athenin (and Greek-Hellenistic) neighborhoods, the cooling ovens after morning baking had finished handling a new 'casserole cuisine' that still dominates traditional winter cooking in Greece today.

Jing Gao followed the concept of 'energeia' in Aristotle's analysis of effective art in display or performance, teasing out examples from contemporary art that might illustrate the 'infusion of life' Aristotle was trying to filter out and identify. **Junlei Yang** finished the mix with a very ancient-contemporary analytic bridge – following the use of numerous, and surprisingly varied, themes and story-shapes from ancient Greek mythology (and on hearing the presentation, from ancient folktale used in argument and from ancient belief-experience) to flesh out or add shape to contemporary science fiction, especially in film. **Luce**, a working theatrical director and teacher, added a final element of 'voice over time' this topic by describing a decades-long project that (on various stages, all of them intimate as an early Archaic poet's fireside singing space, or a smaller polis's theater might have been) has worked to constantly re-imagine the *Iliad* in live presentation adapted to changing times and venues yet keeping the same small organic cast.

The Polyphony of Music Rooted in Human Experience

There is often a "daring retro" element to the points of view **Cozma** advances at Institute presentations; in this case her rebuilding of an old Aristotelian idea that certain experienced musics expand the soul or analytic thinking not by engineered unease (the foundation of most contemporary aesthetics) but by creating a 'eudaemoneia' or sense of other, possible, energizing happiness that pushes humans toward something greater – her examples ranged from Beethoven to Enescu's *Ballad for Violin & Orchestra*. **Osbon**, an active composer and conductor, and long-time collaborator/performer Timothy Schwarz, attempted to go from analysis of the relationship between composer and performer to produce a living example of an intentional collaboration between the two, with shared 'ownership' of the result experienced by the listener. That this always happens in realtime musical experience has not kept many composer/performer dialogue-of-results from feeling like duels, but Osbon's effort at an intentional sharing faces serious challenges, both from the world that produces experienced music, and from shortcuts that AI may offer composers (or more likely producers) in the future, not all of them positive. **Calina** exhibited considerable detective work profiling an 'almost forgotten Romanian Mezzosoprano' – the remarkable Aurelia

Chitu, who had a long and celebrated career in Austria and Italy before emigrating her performances first to Latin America and later to distinguished seasons with both the New York Metropolitan and Chicago Operas. She and her husband (the baritone Arimondi) settled finally in Chicago, anchoring the voice element of one of its earliest elite musical schools. **Carter (Matthew)** took this contemporary thread into the 21st century and its tangle of arts and violence with a balanced but worried look at urban 'violence-framed' music (or performance art using elements of music) that look to legitimize or mythologize some sub-cultures into a closed spiral of inescapable, deadly, confrontation. That his look at "Brooklyn drill" has so many urban parallels across contemporary North America (one could add, with a bit of variation, Europe), needs further thought.

The Individual in Culture - a Mosaic of Identity Clues

Meydani's look at the problems of liberal democracy in a duelling-culture setting almost everywhere in today's world used the more focused example of the Israeli state as a test-case, and refined that further by concentrating often on the micro-examples of Israeli (and his own specific) experience in the negotiation of (the clash between ideals and compromise necessary in) the operation of a kibbutz. His argument that the communitarian ideal of a multi-cultural society embracing human rights constantly jars in collision with the multiple culture-preferences inside any mixed human group was open-ended, more (good) questions than answers. **Kanazireva** took the issue of identity back across time with an archeological examination of the self (and family) identity presented in personal mosaics from a larger estate-farm (Roman) being unearthed in the southeast of ancient Thrace (modern Bulgaria). Incidental mosaic portraits of the family show (in the full-body images of the children) a very precise echo of the modern 'disproportionate dwarfism' or *achondroplasia* (suggesting how persistently recognizable certain genetic syndromes or variations are across time), and adds an enigmatic element, as the father of the family is figured - in the same grouping - only by the head. **Preshlenov**, using very nearby landscape (the Bulgarian coast of the Black Sea) examined early Christian basilica-type churches noting a shaping formula that many civic basilicas in the late Roman world had

not had, that spaced the *naos* or space for human worship vs the altar according to a special proportion that expressed the difference in enclosed space that was the 'human' vs the 'spiritual' world. Something very parallel to this human-transcendent 'spatial algorithm' shaped **Yaney's** study of 'mediating' function urban architecture has in creating bridges between human dwelling, performance, enterprise, and identity spaces. **Beber** echoed much the same idea (or it seemed so to this editor), offered in practical, experimental design form, with her attempts to recover and reinvent an abandoned peanut-roasting facility in the German town of Emden as a viable mixture or mediation between dwelling, shopping and performance space, adding (another 'across-time' element) an intentional mixture of older and younger generations.

Eppler took a discover-and-rescue approach to her study of the RISE UP initiative and its efforts in the EU to stabilize and preserve minority-language cultures that cross state borders, and to keep them from becoming last vestiges of dead cultures. Her specific example was Aromanian, but she had several others. Her navigation of the challenges remind us that managerial globalism as goal creates many casualties, and that rescue of local identity (in which the human being is based) may get some notice or support, but that the road it must travel against a culture-leveling management environment is often steeply uphill. **Aldukhayil** used Naguib Mahfouz's *Children of the Alley* (1959) to examine whether identity both inside a birth-culture and identity re-planted to an empathically chosen culture are both legitimate and possible (earlier post-colonial argument had doubted this by forcing a 'colonial' us-them binary onto the intellectually possible choices).

History is in part a study of the mis-steps on the way to establishing identity. **Sharova and Cohen** try to unravel a truly Turkish identity beneath the startling changes the Turkish foreign policy has undergone in the years since the last World War, focusing in particular on the difference between Turkish identification of national interest (and wise political betting) during the Arab Spring and the hyper-Islamist crises following that, and the same issue during the current neo-Ottoman phase. **Boris Sharov** takes a hard look at intention vs result in the policy of Russia during the early 21st century as it attempted to rebuild itself a 'great power' in the Middle East and central Asia by playing various Arab powers and Iran off against one another; the diplomatic games are

well drawn here; the resulting identity is murkier, perhaps the lesson being that power games too cleverly played leave only confusion. Both studies suggest that identity is much harder to find convincingly in the play of power than in locality and culture.

Education in Experiment and Experience - with or without AI

The disparity of overall student performance by gender in humanities vs. math/science fields is an old story in education, but **Moreno de Diezmas** noted that one very significant area where this apparent threat to 'educational equity' does not appear as sharp statistic is in second-language studies - male and female students may not perform in the exact same fashion, but the overall test results are remarkably level across the genders. The study includes some intriguing threads on which future research might pull, and some reasons to be cautious about the apparent disparities in language-related fields of humanities studies vs. STEM. **Vitale** took a historical angle to this issue, as his series of studies has been doing, using the efforts to make education in the newly unified Italy of the 19th century a broader enterprise (in both social and gender terms) and one less dominated by the Church. His focus this time was on the need efforts to educate in the rural backwaters had to utilize local volunteer or religious organizations, as the government efforts might have some money to throw at the problem, but no infrastructure for it outside the larger cities. The result was education as the local villages (and their impromptu school-charities) saw it, resulting in odd distortions of what an Italian education (and in particular of what appropriate *womens'* education) were allowed to be away from the urban centers the government could monitor. **Bonilla's** treatment of Giannina Braschi's *Putinoika* (2024) carries a similar focus - in which both the wall between the novelist and audience and the wall between the contemporary setting and a chorus of ancient Greek protestors breaks down invasively, just as it did in Euripides' plays. Braschi, then, doing her best to redress an imbalance that had already appeared ingrained into the Mediterranean heritage many years before.

Redda paralleled this with a look at consumer behavior in ways that closely parallel student behavior when dealing with education as a

'purchase' – a parallel that the rise of remote education has made a compelling issue for many, not because remote education is inherently different, but because it forces educators to confront that fact that much student behavior in any form of school *is* consumer behavior. Redda's interesting observations on the shifting balance between utilitarian motivations (and behavior online, learning or buying) and 'hedonic' behavior simply point out how much this difference in the student (or consumer of culture/art) needs addressing. **Brown's** "Permission to Play" study looks at the effort to infuse student dramatic acting with not just the practical or audience-accessible, but with empathy toward the narrated story (in her case study the stories being a part of the immigrant experience). Her test-measure is cultural 'competence' ... but the nature of acting (at least for serious students) would pull them toward some of Redda's measures as well. Part of the dilemma of education comes from the question of *who* we are educating the students (teachings skills, smoothing life choices, adjusting values) to be? **R E Miller's** look at the now-global philosophy or life-approach of early American thinkers like Emerson and William James (add Thoreau and L M Alcott's family to the generating mix) suggests that this is something relatively new in human experience.

Two presentations perhaps put the best final (questioning) layer to this year's dialogue on the questions both about human learning and about how it could compete in future with both artificial learning attempting to replace it, and with a secondary form of human learning damaged or diminished by changed perceptions of learning formed in an AI-heavy environment. **Cresap**, as a form of homage to John Fowles' birth centenary, examined his novel (and experiment in a 'whole sight' approach to human-experience narration). Fowles' *Daniel Martin* novel attempts something like a 'whole live video capture' of human history and existence, rooted into a narrative of mid-life crisis, and tries to make the capture legitimate art because it feels synoptic (one could argue that most human life experience, as felt from the inside, does this). And this, in turn, seems much like what an AI attempt to summarize the human condition might be like, but synoptic representation is a much different experience, even attempt, than the smoothed-down and simplified version of era-long human felt-life that an AI would produce. **Wagner** who has talked on angles of the issue of thought, identity and integrity

vs. AI a number of times before at the Institute put some of these questions into dramatic, final form for 2026 (or its start) with a study of the many and rapidly changing reactions in the academic community to the crisis (scandal?) over education and research *ethics* posed by the heavy immigration of AI over the borders of the mind. Wagner in this case did not just pose questions (he poses many in every study) but offered one thread of a solution – a return to dialogic (did someone say ‘Socratic?’) form of testing, or of student qualification to prove having mastered a topic. This not only involved some *viva voce* testing but interesting inclusions of test-instant commentary on how conclusions were arrived at, how evidence is supported or legitimate in a research piece or answer. Wagner left the conference with some interesting challenges, as they represent something testable in the field.

This Abstract Book and Guide

Whether you use these abstracts and the commentary to lay the groundwork for submitting your work at an Athens Institute conference (we very much hope you do) or to get a feel for the state of the dialogue in that combination craftshop, eccentric museum and battleground that we call the world of the Humanities and Arts, we do hope this offering spreads the conversation and energizes you to join it. The breadth and depth of research approaches and topics represented in this book underscore how diverse, and how intriguing of the 2026 offering of this year-launching conference was in its Athens setting.

Athens Institute’s mission is to bring together academics from all corners of the world in order to engage with each other, to brainstorm, to exchange ideas, to be inspired by one another, and once they are back in their institutions and countries to inject what they have acquired or learned into the dialogues and learning there.

The 13th Annual International Conference on Humanities & Arts in a Global World, accomplished this goal by bringing together academics and scholars from 12 different countries (Austria, Bulgaria, China, Germany, Israel, Italy, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, UK, USA), which brought in the conference the perspectives of many different country approaches and realities in the field.

Publishing this book can help that spirit of engaged scholarship continue into the future. With our joint efforts, the next editions of this conference will be even better. We hope you find something here to enjoy, to argue with, to be inspired by, and also hope to see or hear you in Athens in years to come.

David P. Wick & Olga Gkounta
Editors

13th Annual International Conference on Humanities & Arts in a Global World, 3-7 January 2026, Athens, Greece

Organizing & Scientific Committee

All Institute's conferences are organized by the Academic Council. This conference has been organized with the assistance of the following academic members of the Athens Institute, who contributed by reviewing the submitted abstracts and papers.

1. Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos, President, Athens Institute.
2. Dr. David Philip Wick, Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute & Retired Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.
3. Dr. Or Soltes, Head, Arts & Culture Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, Georgetown University, USA.
4. Dr. Krasimir Kabakciev, Deputy Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute.
5. Steven Oberhelman, Professor of Classics, Holder of the George Sumey Jr Endowed Professorship of Liberal Arts, and Interim Dean, Texas A&M University, USA, Vice President of International Programs, Athens Institute and Editor of the Athens Journal of History.
6. Patricia Hanna, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Athens Institute, ex-Dean & Professor Emerita, University of Utah, USA.
7. Nicholas Pappas, Vice President of Academic Conferences and Meetings, Athens Institute & Professor of History, Sam Houston University, USA.
8. Robert Bishop, Head, Philosophy Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, Wheaton College, USA.
9. William Davis, Head, Literature Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, The Colorado College, USA.
10. Kenneth Moore, Head, History Unit, Athens Institute & Senior Lecturer, Teesside University, UK.
11. Snezhana Filipova, Deputy Head, History Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia.
12. Tatiana Tsakiropoulou-Summers, Director, Center for Classical & Byzantine Studies (ACCBS) & Associate Professor, The University of Alabama, USA.
13. Eliza Gardiner, Deputy Head (Theatre), Arts & Culture Unit, Athens Institute & Professor, Vancouver Island University, Canada.
14. Peter Walther Baur, Deputy Head (Culture), Arts & Culture Unit, Athens Institute & Associate Professor, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

13th Annual International Conference on Humanities & Arts in a Global World, 3-7 January 2026, Athens, Greece

PROGRAM

Saturday 3 January 2026

08:30-09:00

Registration

09:00-09:30

Opening and Welcoming Remarks:

- **David Philip Wick**, Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute & Retired Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.

09:30-11:00 Session 1

Moderator: Carmen Cozma, Professor, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Romania.

1. **Steven Oberhelman**, Professor of Classics, Holder of the George Sumey Jr Endowed Professorship of Liberal Arts, and Interim Dean, Texas A&M University, USA.
Title: The Miracles of two Women Saints of Attica, Greece: Agia Mavra and Agia Irene Chrysovalantou.
2. **David Philip Wick**, Retired Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.
Title: Acharnian Charcoal, Athenian Casseroles, Well-Nymphs named for Chronic Diseases, Dried Herbs, Citrons and 'Little Fish' ... and some Gruel for the Dead – An Introductory Sketch of the Unexpected Foodways of Ancient Athens in Winter.
3. **Nicholas Meihuizen**, Extraordinary Professor, North-West University, South Africa.
Title: Christopher Logue's 'Startling Modernity' in His Versions of Homer.
4. **Jing Gao**, PhD Student, Nanjing University, China.
Title: Art as Energeia – A Re-examination of Aristotle's Aesthetics through the Concept of Energeia and its Contemporary Significance.
5. **Junlei Yang**, Professor, Fudan University, China.
Title: Greek Mythological Metaphors in Science Fiction Films.

11:00-12:30 Session 2

Moderator: Steven Oberhelman, Professor of Classics, Holder of the George Sumey Jr Endowed Professorship of Liberal Arts, and Interim Dean, Texas A&M University, USA, Vice President of International Programs, Athens Institute and Editor of the Athens Journal of History.

1. **Carmen Cozma**, Professor, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Romania.
Title: On the Aesthetic and Moral Experience of Listening to Classic Music: A Phenomenological Outlook.
2. **David Osbon**, Professor, London College of Music – University of West London, UK.
Title: The Composer Performer Axis.

3. **Nicoleta Presura Calina**, Associate Professor, University of Craiova, Romania.
Title: An Almost Forgotten Romanian Mezzosoprano: Aurelia Chițu.
4. **Matthew Carter**, Lecturer, The City College of New York, CUNY, USA.
Title: Platformed for Violence: Branding, Virality, and the Crisis of Authenticity in Bronx Drill Music.

12:30-14:00 Session 3

Moderator: David Philip Wick, Director, Arts, Humanities and Education Division, Athens Institute & Retired Professor of History, Gordon College, USA.

1. **Assaf Meydani**, Professor, The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel.
Title: The Crisis of Liberal Democracies: Identity, Ontologies, and the Challenge of Governance in a Fragmented World – The Israeli Case.
2. **Dimitrina Kanazireva**, Associate Professor, Varna Medical University, Bulgaria.
Title: Ancient Roman Mosaics Presenting a Rare Genetic Disorder (Case Study SE Thrace).
3. **Hristo Preshlenov**, Associate Professor, National Archaeological Institute with Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria.
Title: Sacred Modules. Studies of Christian Architecture along the Southwestern Black Sea Area (4th – 7th c. AD).
4. **Mina Yaney**, Architect, Practice for Architectural Interfaces, Austria.
Title: The Architecture of Mediation.
5. **Lucila Costa Beber**, Master Student, Hochschule Wismar, Germany.
Title: Ültje Area in Transformation: Sustainable Heritage and Renewal in Emden.

14:00-14:30 Lunch

14:30-17:30 Session 4

Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk

The urban walk ticket is not included as part of your registration fee. It includes transportation costs and the cost to enter the Parthenon and the other monuments on the Acropolis Hill. The urban walk tour includes the broader area of Athens. Among other sites, it includes: Zappion, Syntagma Square, Temple of Olympian Zeus, Ancient Roman Agora and on Acropolis Hill: the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion, and the Parthenon. The program of the tour may be adjusted, if there is a need beyond our control. This is a private event organized by ATINER exclusively for the conference participants.

18:00-20:00

An Ancient Athenian Symposium: Continuous Dialogues, Timeless Flavors (featuring authentic ancient Athenian dishes, local wine, and sweet delicacies from ancient Athens)

Sunday 4 January 2026

09:00-10:30 Session 5

Moderator: Ephrem Habtemichael Redda, Research Professor, North-West University, South Africa.

1. **Esther Nieto Moreno de Diezmas**, Full Professor & Chair, Department of Modern Languages, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain.
Title: CLIL as a Gender Gap Leveller: Exploring How Bilingual Education Shapes Inclusion.
2. **Zakarya Aldukhayil**, Associate Professor, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia.
Title: Transformative Intellectual Journeys: Confronting Colonial Logic in Children of the Alley.
3. **Noah Luce**, Director of the Arts Center and Assistant Professor, Lake Superior State University / Lecturer, University of California, Santa Cruz / Associate Artistic Director, New Canon Theatre Co., USA.
Title: Re-Singing the Song: Reimagining an Iliad Across Space, Gender, and Time.
4. **Kelly Cresap**, Senior Lecturer (Retired), University of Maryland, USA.
Title: John Fowles's Synoptic View of Human Existence.

10:30-12:00 Session 6

Moderator: Noah Luce, Director of the Arts Center and Assistant Professor, Lake Superior State University / Lecturer, University of California, Santa Cruz / Associate Artistic Director, New Canon Theatre Co., USA.

1. **Michael Wagner**, Professor and Department Head of Digital Media, Drexel University, USA.
Title: Rediscovering Dialogue and Authentic Learning in the Age of Artificial Intelligence.
2. **Ran Yang**, Associate Professor, Sichuan Conservatory of Music, China.
Title: The Generation of Action Relationships and Aesthetic Mechanisms in Socially Engaged Art.
3. **Ephrem Habtemichael Redda**, Research Professor, North-West University, South Africa.
Title: How Do Utilitarian and Hedonic Motivations Influence Consumer Behavior in the Digital Environment?

12:00-13:15 Session 7

Moderator: Michael Wagner, Professor and Department Head of Digital Media, Drexel University, USA.

1. **Inmaculada Lara Bonilla**, Full Professor, Hostos Community College - CUNY, USA.
Title: Giannina Braschi's Putinoika (2024): The Moving Seat of Radical Polyphony and Freedom.

2. **Ruth-Ellen Miller**, President, Emerson Institute & Researcher Director, Gaia Living Systems Institute, USA.
Title: The Evolution of the New Thought Philosophy as a Psycho-Spiritual Movement in the Global Culture.

13:15-15:00 Session 8

Moderator: Orna Almog, Deputy Head, Politics & International Affairs Unit, Athens Institute & Senior Lecturer (Retired), Kingston University, UK.

1. **Eva Maria Duran Eppler**, Associate Professor, University of Roehampton London, UK.
Title: The RISE UP Horizon Europe Project: A Focus on Cross-border Aspects of Aromanian.
2. **Boris Sharov**, PhD Candidate, Ariel University, Israel.
Ronen A. Cohen, Associate Professor, Ariel University, Israel.
Chen Kertcher, Lecturer, Ariel University, Israel.
Title: Examining Regional Rivalries: Russia's Diplomatic Engagements within the United Nations Regarding the Iran-Saudi Arabia Rivalry, 2012-2021.
3. **Danye Brown**, Assistant Professor, Ithaca College, USA.
Title: Permission 2 Play: Empathetic Acting as a Roadmap for Intercultural Competence.
4. **Natalia Sharova**, PhD Candidate, Ariel University, Israel.
Ronen A. Cohen, Associate Professor, Ariel University, Israel.
Title: Reinventing New Order: Turkish Revisionist Aspirations in the MENA Region through a Constructivist Lens: 2002-2022.
5. **Francesco Domenico Vitale**, PhD Student, Pegaso Online University, Italy.
Title: Lessons in Nationhood: Power, Gender, and Schooling in Post-Unification Southern Italy.
6. **Maria Rosaria D'Acierno Canonici Cammino**, Associate Professor, University of Naples Federico II, Italy.
Title: Dream and Art.

15:00-15:30 Lunch

20:30-22:30

Athenian Early Evening Symposium (Sequence of Events: Ongoing Academic Discussions, Dinner, Wine and Water, Music, Dance)

Monday 5 January 2026
Visiting the Oracle of Delphi

Tuesday 6 January 2026
Nafplio & Mycenae Visit

Wednesday 7 January 2026
An Educational Visit to Selected Islands

Zakarya Aldukhayil

Associate Professor, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

Transformative Intellectual Journeys: Confronting Colonial Logic in *Children of the Alley*

Naguib Mahfouz's *Children of the Alley* (1959) transcends its controversial reputation to offer a nuanced exploration of human existence through five interconnected narratives. While some have interpreted the work as a critique of religion, its true depths lie in its examination of broader themes like power, oppression, and the human condition. Through allegory, Mahfouz portrays the struggles of the lower classes in Egypt while simultaneously exploring universal questions of morality, liberation, and existential struggle. This analysis argues that *Children of the Alley* presents a model of intellectual resistance that breaks free from colonial binaries of self/other. Mahfouz exposes how this logic underpins exploitation and constructs hierarchies based on gender, race, and class. The novel depicts the brutal enforcement of this logic and the dangers of succumbing to fear or nihilism in the face of oppression. Focusing on Gabal as a prototypical figure, the study examines his transformation into an organic intellectual (as defined by Antonio Gramsci) who rejects colonial logic. By applying postcolonial theory, particularly Gramsci's work on organic intellectuals and Edward Said's analysis of power dynamics, the analysis explores conflicts within resistance movements, including class and gender dynamics. This study ultimately challenges traditional interpretations of the organic intellectual, arguing that solidarity with any marginalized group, not just one's own, can be the foundation of this intellectual project.

Danye Brown
Assistant Professor, Ithaca College, USA

Permission 2 Play: Empathetic Acting as a Roadmap for Intercultural Competence

Stereotyping simplifies human beings into categories, fostering prejudice, misunderstanding, and exclusion. This presentation introduces *Permission 2 Play*, a practice-based research initiative that challenges stereotypes through docudrama performance and empathetic actor training. Rooted in documentary interviews and theatrical reenactments, the project provides actors with permission to play across difference, cultivating empathy, humility, and honor while inviting audiences into dialogue about racism, privilege, and human connection.

As part of this initiative, I am developing *American Promise*, a verbatim play constructed from transcribed interviews with immigrants in the United States. The project asks a central question: how may actors—many without personal migration experience—develop intercultural competence by embodying the lives and words of people whose experiences differ radically from their own? To test this, participants in the study engage with immigrant narratives through rehearsal and performance while their levels of implicit and explicit bias toward immigrants are measured over time.

Preliminary findings suggest that embodied performance of lived narratives can disrupt entrenched assumptions and expand empathetic capacity. The research contributes to broader conversations on theatre as a pedagogical tool for intercultural training and offers a replicable framework for using empathetic acting practices to deepen understanding across cultural divides. This talk will share the methodology, initial outcomes, and implications of *Permission 2 Play* and *American Promise*, inviting reflection on how theatre may function as both art and research in building intercultural competence.

Matthew Carter

Lecturer, The City College of New York, CUNY, USA

Platformed for Violence: Branding, Virality, and the Crisis of Authenticity in Bronx Drill Music

Since the mid-1980s, corporate brand logos in the United States have served as distinguishing markers on otherwise homogeneous, interchangeable products. Tommy Hilfiger, for example, does not *make* clothes; it purchases mass-produced garments from a manufacturer, then emblazes them with the Tommy Hilfiger logo. Corporations then hire advertising firms to market brands as reflecting consumers' identity, lifestyle, and sense of belonging—thus a brand's perceived authenticity is foundational to its longevity.

The stakes of authenticity are no less existential in the Bronx drill scene. Given the relative uniformity of beat structure, rapping style, and visual imagery, drill rappers differentiate themselves through violent threats, mocking the deceased, and menacing braggadocio. A prolific and confrontational social media presence serves as both a valuable branding tool and a mechanism through which authenticity is continually assessed, challenged, and performed. In navigating this authenticity paradox, Bronx drill has become deeply entangled in youth violence, including dozens of fatal incidents across New York City.

In this paper I explore the "crisis of authenticity" that pervades Bronx drill by first examining the strategies through which rappers harness their brands to authenticity and violence, and the role of those generic features as constraining and affording forces within that process. I then interpret the Bronx drill scene as a potent case study of how social media platforms traffic in a pernicious form of extremism by incentivizing violence among Bronx teens as a pathway to perceived authenticity. By furnishing a desire for conflict escalation by associating it with virality, and virality with cultural and financial success, social media manifests a musico-cultural ecosphere in which success obtains through an admixture of violence-based *branding* online on the one hand, and the need for audiences to perceive that violence as tied to deeds in the "real" world to vouchsafe that brand authenticity on the other.

Lucila Costa Beber
Graduate Student, Hochschule Wismar, Germany

Ültje Area in Transformation: Sustainable Heritage and Renewal in Emden

This study presents a project built around adaptive reuse and sustainable practice in architecture. It is based on my Master Thesis developed within the Master in Architecture program at Hochschule Wismar and focuses on the reuse of the Ültje-Turm, a former peanut roasting facility constructed in 1953 in Emden, Ostfriesland, Germany. The aim is not only to preserve the building as an important part of the city's history and culture but also to renovate the surrounding area in a way that benefits the community. The proposal envisions the Ültje-Turm as the center of a mixed-use development that supports urban growth while strengthening community connections. The research phase examines the historical, cultural, and climatic context of the site, supported by documentation, photographs, and literature, while also investigating material technologies and the role of local resources. These findings lead the design process, which integrates sustainability, heritage, and community values, balancing respect for the past with the needs of the present and future. The central strategy is reuse, chosen as a way to reduce environmental impact. Renovating the existing structure produces fewer emissions and less waste than demolishing and replacing it with new construction. At the same time, reuse maintains the building's presence in the collective memory of the community, preserving its role in the city's identity. The project reflects the idea that permanence is achieved through transformation. Buildings, like societies, survive and remain relevant by adapting to changing needs. The Ültje-Turm is envisioned as a living structure that can evolve over time, improving while still holding on to its cultural and historical meaning, demonstrating how history and transformation can coexist. The project illustrates that transformation, when guided by continuity, allows architecture to remain both resilient and meaningful, offering insights for similar contexts worldwide.

Carmen Cozma

Professor, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, Romania

On the Aesthetic and Moral Experience of Listening to Classic Music: A Phenomenological Outlook

A peculiar consequence of the dynamic unity of the 'aesthetic work' and the 'perceiving subject' - so speaking in terms of Mikel Dufrenne -, listening to music art is herein accounted as aesthetic experience able to reveal basic articulations for the *moral living* at a high level. Actually this latter type of *experience* (in the sense given by Hans-Georg Gadamer to the concept of *Erlebnis*) will be addressed in the endeavor to emphasize a sort of virtue that contributes to the development of human sense-bestowing under the auspices of a *eudaemonist ideal in life*. Perhaps more than many other kind of the 'appearing' of the artwork, *the musical sensuous/sensible* with its in-depth meaning - to be disclosed through the very (so-called) time spatialized expression, in the interplay of melody, harmony and rhythm - can stimulate and inspire man/woman in his/her condition of *moral being*. Following the listener's journey during a musical performance, we'll reach to pinpoint a significant transformation, that is, a transition which occurs as regards the true and complete one's beingness-in-becoming, from tension toward a harmonization oriented moral telos. Grounding on the 'ontopoietic' phenomenology of life, we'll get that the aesthetic musical experience opens unlimited creative opportunities for grasping and assuming the human need of *moral idealization in living*. And not in any way, but encompassing the strength of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the *moral joyfulness* as the discovered and embraced 'mean' from the point of view 'of the highest good', so speaking with Aristotle. We'll proceed to listening to a short piece of classical music: *Ballad for violin and orchestra*, op. 4a, by George Enescu; and thus we'll better comprehend the defining of the unique mode of classic music presence to the listener's consciousness; by observing the metamorphosis the 'perceiving subject' does undergo through the experience of an authentic *moral joy*, even a particle of *happiness (eudaimonia)*.

Kelly Cresap

Senior Lecturer (Retired), University of Maryland, USA

John Fowles's Synoptic View of Human Existence

The 2026 birth centenary of English author John Fowles is an opportune moment to unveil a continent that has hidden in plain sight in his fiction for many decades.

An oft-quoted line late in the Fowles novel *Daniel Martin* (1977) confirms an omnibus agenda: the titular hero expresses a desire “to discover what had gone wrong, not only with Daniel Martin, but his generation, age, century.” Indeed, as its narrative aperture widens, the novel concomitantly serves as a full-bodied biography; as a portrait of Daniel's 1950s Oxford generation; as a study of mid-life reckoning; and as an assessment of England after 1945. As the novel's cornerstone opening line signals, though, even more is at stake than this: “Whole sight; or all the rest is desolation.” Scholars as well as lay readers have thus far underestimated this line. Fowles was invested in it not only philosophically but materially, phenomenologically, and – if we are able to restore full significance and dimension to the term – existentially.

Daniel Martin raises the stakes on its “whole sight” premise in a quietly cumulative way that avoids flashiness. It is surreptitious enough to escape most readers' conscious detection. Under the radar, as it were, the novel provides an encyclopedic treatment of life on Earth and of the history of life on Earth – investment in cultures both ancient and modern; references to over 300 historical figures spanning 25 centuries; and a Noah's Ark treatment not just of zoological but also botanical, geological, ethnic, socio-economic, psychological, and intellectual diversity. It manages to do this without reading like an encyclopedia. I interpret clues found in the novel, as well as in other writings by and about Fowles, to argue that *Daniel Martin* emerged out of the author's aspiration, stated in his nonfiction work *The Aristos*, toward creating a “synoptic view of human existence.” Such a view is uniquely valuable at a time of widespread myopia and vision crisis.

I will speak to issues of what, how, why, who, and when. Passages from the novel will help illuminate methods that Fowles used in his synoptic project, as well as the rationales that guided him. Primary and secondary materials will assist me in delving into matters of potential bias. For instance, how could a white, male, heterosexual author from a country with a history of imperialism rise above, or at least address, charges of egocentrism, sexism, heterosexism, and ethnocentrism? Further, how could a “synoptic view of human existence” avoid pitfalls

of over- and under-representation, as well as misrepresentation? In nearly half a century, has *Daniel Martin* become outdated? From a different angle, if it has gone unremarked for so long, is the “hidden continent” perhaps a matter only for specialists?

Clues embedded in the novel indicate that Fowles anticipated many of these issues. The fact that *Daniel Martin*'s final sentence acknowledges that “whole sight” may be impossible neither lessens its imperative nor minimizes the book's achievement. Indeed, it invites readers into processes that Fowles was engaged in while writing the book.

Maria Rosaria D’Acierno Canonici Cammino
Associate Professor, University of Naples Federico II, Italy

Dream and Art

The present paper wants to highlight the interconnection between the practices of dreaming and painting by means of an evaluation of the main paintings from the Renaissance to Surrealism.

Dreaming has been a fundamental element in the evolution of painting, and its representation in this art form has played a significant role in shaping its development. In this study, the evolution of this link will be traced from its inception during the Renaissance up to the Surrealism. The concept of “dreaming representation” has undergone an evolution that has been influenced by the development of psychology, particularly of psychoanalysis. This theoretical framework was pioneered by Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, who utilized it as a means to assess individuals’ unconscious reactions to significant life events. During the Renaissance personal dreams did not exert a significant influence on the artist’s creative process. Instead, the artist drew inspiration from religious texts, particularly the New Testament, with the aim of promoting religious faith. In order to symbolize the spirit’s ascension, Raphael, in 1518, painted *The Dream of Jacob*.

Subsequently, in 1525, Albrecht Dürer was the first artist who depicted his own dream in a watercolor, entitled *The Vision*, accompanied by a detailed description of his dream. A sort of ‘pictopoetry’ as established much later by Man Ray. However, it was during the Romantic era that dreaming became a source of both inspiration and self-exploration. Johann Heinrich Füssli in his work, *The Nightmare* -1781, explores, through a sleeping woman, a tortured soul.

In the 19th century, the aesthetic movement, known as Symbolism, emerged as a reaction against the prevailing Naturalism and Realism in the domain of art. This shift is characterized by the convergence of the dream motif with Symbolist themes, marking a significant departure from the traditional approach to artistic expression. Odilon Redon was an artist, a dreamer and a poet who, between 1879 and 1899, in his lithographs, unveiled the inner human suffering (*La Vision*, 1890-1900 and *L’Araignée qui pleure*, 1881).

Surrealism is widely regarded as the zenith of the connection between the realm of dreams and the domain of artistic expression. In their paintings, artists such as Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, Max Ernst, Paul Klee, Giorgio de Chirico, Marc Chagall convey dreams as an experience standing halfway between the visible and the invisible. Man

Ray, the Romanian artist, includes words and poems into his artistic oeuvre. His art is designed 'pictopoetry.'

Eva Maria Duran Eppler

Associate Professor, University of Roehampton London, UK

The RISE UP Horizon Europe Project: A Focus on Cross-border Aspects of Aromanian

This paper introduces the Horizon Europe Project RISE UP which aims at promoting sustainable linguistic ecologies that support peaceful co-existence and multilingual expertise. It also seeks to identify effective ways and methods to support the use and revitalisation of endangered languages. RISE UP works with five European minority language communities, most of which are spread across national borders: Aranés (Spain, France); Aromanian (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Serbia and Romania), Cornish (UK), Burgenland Croatian (Austria) and Seto (Estonia, Russia). The current talk will focus on Aromanian and cross-border aspects that affect intergenerational transmission (such as language prestige and stigma, language ideologies), language maintenance and revitalisation, language policy and standardisation.

The results presented are based on an online sociolinguistic questionnaire currently taken by 364 participants, out of which 201 are Aromanians from Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Serbia and Romania. Even stronger than the survey results for the other languages RISE UP is looking into, the self-ratings of the Aromanian participants indicate that there is a strong group of users who are confident about their proficiency in all four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing), but there is a marked drop in competence self-ratings between fluent and the other five Likert scale options offered by the survey. This group is predominantly composed of adults (30-64 years of age) and senior citizens (65 or older). These two age groups indicate that they learnt Aromanian from their grandparents, parents and other family and community members in roughly equal measures, a result that is supported by the main use of Aromanian in the home/family and friendship/neighbourhood/ community contexts/domains. 67.8% of Aromanian respondents are bi- or multilingual, predominantly in Aromanian and the national languages of the countries they live in. The language attitude results show that Aromanian is the variety closest to 90.5% of respondents' hearts. There is even stronger support for keeping Aromanian alive (97.5%), and the use of Aromanian is an important part of participants' identity (97.5%). Being able to use Aromanian makes 93% of the participants feel good/positive about themselves, and 86.6% consider Aromanian as beneficial for their mental well-being.

The results indicate that the will and possibility to maintain Aromanian is there, but it's high time to take action to broaden the base of Aromanian users and to bridge the intergenerational gap. 58% and 55% of participants believe that enough is being done to keep Aromanian going by members of the Aromanian community and community organisations/representative respectively, a more positive rating than the other language communities RISE UP is investigating. This said, 30.9% of respondents state that they do not have enough opportunities to learn and improve their Aromanian, and 21.9% that they do not have enough opportunities to communicate/practice with other speakers of Aromanian.

In the talk I will go into more detail on the cross-border aspects of Aromanian, compare the findings of the RISE UP questionnaire with the existing literature and share our findings with other projects involving Aromanian such as VLingS.

Jing Gao

PhD Student, Nanjing University, China

**Art as *Energeia* - A Re-examination of Aristotle's Aesthetics
through the Concept of *Energeia* and its Contemporary
Significance**

In traditional interpretations, mimesis is often regarded as the central category of Aristotle's aesthetics, emphasizing the representational relationship between art and its object. However, with the profound transformations in art practice since the 20th century, the mimetic paradigm has gradually lost its efficacy. In this context, Aristotle's *energeia* has reemerged in the discourse of aesthetics. Carrying both ontological and teleological significance, *energeia* serves as the fundamental ground for the reality of art. This paper begins with an examination of the concept of *energeia* and an analysis of the interrelations among Aristotle's multiple texts, re-examining Aristotelian aesthetics to understand art as *energeia*: art is an agentive activity that unfolds toward its own purpose in its complete form, ultimately manifesting in the aesthetic experience of spectators or readers. In the contemporary context, the significance of art as *energeia* lies in its generative response to the technologized and globalized practices and realities of art, opening up new possibilities for the relationships among humans, the world, and art amid uncertainty.

Dimitrina Kanazireva

Associate Professor, Varna Medical University, Bulgaria

Ancient Roman Mosaics Presenting a Rare Genetic Disorder (Case Study SE Thrace)

Archaeological excavations have discovered in 1964 well preserved remains of an ancient Roman villa near the Bulgarian city Ivailovgrad (SE Bulgaria) (now known as "Villa Armira") - one of the largest and most richly decorated Ancient Roman villas, unearthed in Bulgaria. The villa dates to the second half of 1st century AD and originally has belonged to a noble of Roman Thrace, who is thought to have been the owner of the surrounding area. Villa Armira has twenty two separate rooms on the ground floor and a garden with impluvium in the middle. The entire ground floor is covered in elaborately decorated white marble, but the most impressive findings are the mosaics, seen on the floors.

One of the mosaics in the master's chamber depicts the owner (?) with two children: these are the only Roman period mosaic portraits, discovered in Bulgaria. The pictures of the two boys are so vivid and realistic, that one can get good knowledge of the anthropomorphic characteristics of the people of that time.

The focus of the presentation is on the medical condition of the two children, which can be well evaluated by clinical features. They share a number of common dysmorphic features - disproportionate dwarfism (short stature), shortening of the limbs, large head with prominent forehead, small midface with a flattened nasal bridge, varus (bowleg) or valgus (knock knee) deformities. All this refer as to the diagnosis of a rare genetic disorder Achondroplasia.

The artefacts, found in Villa Armira, along with their huge historical and art value, give us also the unique chance to trace this particular disorder back in time and find out that ancient people have been affected by hereditary diseases, preserved in the DNA until recently.

Inmaculada Lara Bonilla

Full Professor, Hostos Community College – CUNY, USA

Giannina Braschi's *Putinoika* (2024): The Moving Seat of Radical Polyphony and Freedom

The contributions of Latina literary authors to theory and philosophy are too often overlooked or relegated to the fringes of philosophical or theoretical discourse despite the many ways in which their work addresses questions of identity, memory, colonialism, language, and other issues from philosophical or theoretical perspectives. My paper seeks to explore the elements that underpin the philosophy of writing of Puerto Rican author Giannina Braschi as proposed in her hybrid novel, *Putinoika* (2024). Titled, "Giannina Braschi's *Putinoika* (2024): the Moving Seat of Radical Polyphony and Freedom," my presentation will analyze the deep dialogism, the philosophical ideas and formal disruptions that inform Braschi's most recent work, as well as her phenomenology of reading and writing as a multivalent proposal for liberation.

The text opens and an array of characters from ancient Greek tragedies enter: Cassandra, Electra, Antigone, Tiresias, Oedipus, Clytemnestra all initiate a dialogue with Giannina, a self-referential Puerto Rican thinker ready to discuss modes of cultural appropriation and colonial impositions. My paper takes these ideas as departure to delve into the discourses and ideologies that, in *Putinoika*, impede the realization of liberty and free expression, as well as into Braschi's proposal for political and aesthetic change. This analysis is guided by several research questions such as: what are the key literary tools that she employs in her contribution? And can we consider her reconceptualization and disruption of genre and of Western forms a practical phenomenology of writing? What is the role of humor and anachronistic dialogism, for instance, in generating change that she seeks in the cultural and political realities of United States, Puerto Rico, and beyond? Ultimately, can *Putinoika* function as an artifact that invites, expects, or instigates readers to engage with philosophical notions of liberty, and ignite the pursuit of freedom beyond the page and in the face of current oppressive voices? My hypothesis is that tools such as the deployment of anachronic polyphonies, of translanguaging practices, of genre-shattering rhetoric, and other aesthetic ruptures, *Putinoika* can be read as a radical, moving, transformative treatise on the phenomenology of writing and reading.

Noah Luce

Director of the Arts Center, Assistant Professor, Lake Superior State University / Lecturer, University of California, Santa Cruz / Associate Artistic Director, New Canon Theatre Co., USA

Re-Singing the Song: Reimagining an Iliad Across Space, Gender, and Time

In ancient Greece, the *oidos* (the bard) was not a static performer, but a living, evolving storyteller. Each performance of *The Iliad* was a new act of creation, shaped by space, circumstance, and audience. My multi-year journey with Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare's *An Iliad* has become a modern echo of that tradition: a living performance text continuously reinterpreted through collaboration, adaptation, and place.

This presentation traces a three-year process (still ongoing) of engaging with *An Iliad*, first as assistant director and fight choreographer with Dr. Patty Gallagher, and later as the director for two distinct productions with New Canon Theatre Co. The first staging, at Lake Superior State University in Michigan, featured a male-identified pianist as the Muse—a deliberate choice emphasizing the percussive, martial energy of the text. The second, presented in Monterey, California at California's First Theatre—the oldest theatre building in the state—re-envisioned the piece with a female-presenting violinist. The transformation was not merely musical but structural and emotional: the violin's lyricism reframed the Muse as both witness and healer, softening and complicating the Poet's rage.

Equally compelling was the site itself. California's First Theatre, which had not hosted a professional performance since the 1990s, offered an unusually intimate space steeped in history. Its proximity between performer and audience blurred the lines between retelling and reliving, between the mythic and the immediate. Reworking *An Iliad* within that environment became an exploration of the architecture of storytelling; how place reshapes performance, how intimacy alters scale, and how history breathes through bodies and walls.

Nicholas Meihuizen

Extraordinary Professor, North-West University, South Africa

Christopher Logue's 'Startling Modernity' in His Versions of Homer

I call Logue's uses of modernity in his versions of Homer contemporization. The term is best explained by going back to Milman Parry's sense of the oral performer as a conduit of pre-existing images and structures of timeless 'traditionality', inhabiting a type of aesthetic present which automatically generates narrative in the moment of utterance. This extreme view has been criticised over the decades, of course, but in modified form the notion that a composition as impressive as the *Iliad* might be created during performance with the aid of customized formulae and type-scenes, still captures the imagination and helps inform an awareness of the power of the present utterance.¹ Further, if, as Egbert Bakker shows with his study of deixis in Homeric epic, that the epic's performance is centred in a 'now' that 'is its own narrative present', that it is 'less interested in locating the epic events in time than in positioning itself, its own present, as the moment of activation of the past', then a poetic text which through various means suggests the energy associated with 'its own narrative present' (though, to swerve from Bakker, not in an atemporal way), might itself be able to convey the feeling of an animated performance.² My paper considers a few passages from Logue in relation to those of other translators of Homer in an attempt to underline what is specific in Logue.

Johannes Haubold, 'Homer after Parry: Tradition, Reception, and the Timeless Text', ¹ in *Homer in the Twentieth Century: Between World Literature and the Western Canon*, ed. by Barbara Graziosi and Emily Greenwood (Oxford, 2007), pp.27-46 (p.33).
Egbert Bakker, *Pointing at the Past: From Formula to Performance in Homeric Poetics* ² (Cambridge, MA, 2005), p.xii, p.xiii. Logue's narrative present, again, because of its concurrent textuality, is situated within its historical moment, is not atemporal..

Assaf Meydani

Professor, The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel

The Crisis of Liberal Democracies: Identity, Ontologies, and the Challenge of Governance in a Fragmented World – The Israeli Case

This paper examines the crisis of liberal democracies through the lens of *ontologies* – the fundamental ideas and value frameworks that underpin institutional design and policy change. Using Israel as a case study, it analyzes how competing ontologies of democracy, identity, and religion shape governance and public discourse in contexts of deep cultural, ethnic, and religious fragmentation.

The paper develops the **communitarian-liberal model**, which seeks to reconcile universal human rights with collective identities. It envisions Israel as both Jewish and democratic by defining Jewish identity primarily as a cultural category. The model advocates for the separation of religion and politics, while recognizing the symbolic role of dominant traditions, thereby grounding democratic resilience in a dynamic negotiation between individual rights and communal belonging.

Special emphasis is given to the role of **education, literature, and cultural studies** in making these ontological foundations visible and actionable. These fields provide the intellectual resources through which societies interpret values, contest meanings, and to explore alternatives to the prevailing social and political order. In this spirit, the paper calls on the Israeli Supreme Court to adopt a communitarian-liberal perspective when addressing value-laden controversies, thereby offering an approach with broader relevance to liberal democracies worldwide.

Ruth-Ellen Miller

President, Emerson Institute & Researcher Director, Gaia Living
Systems Institute, USA

The Evolution of the New Thought Philosophy as a Psycho-Spiritual Movement in the Global Culture

In the mid-1800s two men in the New England region of North America set the groundwork for a new psychological and philosophical approach that another New Englander called “a religion of healthy-mindedness”. Ralph Waldo Emerson of Concord, Massachusetts, laid out the principles in his essays and lectures, Phineas Parkhurst Quimby of Belfast, Maine, developed the methodology through hundreds of experiments, and in 1902 William James, a Harvard professor speaking at the Gifford Lectures in Scotland, captured its essence, as published in his *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Since then, thousands of study groups, centers, and churches have been formed to apply this approach, and, in the 21st century, many of its fundamental concepts have been integrated into the global corporate and pop culture. This paper lays out the principles of what has become called the New Thought movement and describes their historical progression into the mainstream American, and now global, culture.

Esther Nieto Moreno de Diezmas

Full Professor, Chair, Department of Modern Languages, University of
Castilla-La Mancha, Spain

**CLIL as a Gender Gap Leveller: Exploring How Bilingual
Education Shapes Inclusion**

Over the past three decades, bilingual education has expanded rapidly across the globe, becoming a central element of educational innovation and internationalisation (Nieto Moreno de Diezmas & Custodio Espinar, 2022). In Europe, this expansion has been framed under the term *Content and Language Integrated Learning* (CLIL), an umbrella label adopted to describe educational programmes in which curricular subjects such as Science, Physical Education or Arts, are taught through a foreign language, most commonly English. The primary objective of CLIL is to enhance foreign language competence by increasing students' exposure to the target language during school hours, while fostering a more natural acquisition process in which language is learned while used to learn. This dual-focused approach aims not only to improve communicative competence but also to reinforce European cohesion, intercultural understanding and mobility.

Parallel to the growth of CLIL programmes, educational research has documented persistent gender gaps across school subjects. These gaps are not homogeneous: girls tend to outperform boys in languages and humanities, showing higher academic achievement, stronger learning strategies and greater motivation (Cameron, 2005). Conversely, boys frequently obtain higher results in mathematics, science and physical education (OECD, 2019; Stoet & Geary, 2018). Such disparities are shaped by a complex interplay of sociocultural expectations, classroom practices, identity construction and learner beliefs, raising concerns about equity and participation in various domains of knowledge.

In recent years, a growing body of research has begun to examine how gender dynamics operate within CLIL contexts and whether this pedagogical approach may contribute to reducing existing gender gaps. CLIL methodologies typically emphasise communication, cooperation, task-based learning and meaningful interaction – features that align with areas in which girls often excel. At the same time, CLIL integrates content areas traditionally associated with higher performance among boys, such as science or physical education, potentially creating a more balanced learning environment in which strengths associated with both genders are valued and mobilised. In fact, recent studies seem to point to the

leveller effect of CLIL in different areas such as motivation, use of learning strategies, language outcomes and content learning.

Against this backdrop, this contribution explores the potential of CLIL to foster greater gender equity through a review of existing empirical evidence, and a theoretical analysis of how its methodological principles intersect with documented gender differences in mainstream education.

Steven Oberhelman

Professor, Texas A&M University, USA

The Miracles of two Women Saints of Attica, Greece: Agia Mavra and Agia Irene Chrysovalantou

In the early Byzantine period of Greece, pagan temples and healing centers in ancient times were transformed into Christian places of healing performed by Jesus, saints, or Mary Theotokos. The saints conducted business just as Asclepius had done, in that they appeared in a dream to a suppliant; they either cured the suppliant during the dream or gave instructions for a cure that he was to follow the next day. This miracle tradition continued throughout the post-Byzantine centuries down to the present day. The most famous healers today are Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Agios Nektarios. Aegina and Tinos are meccas for suppliants seeking a miracle, although onsite presence is not required as prayers may still be answered.

In this paper, I will discuss two lesser-known miracle-working saints, both women, with holy centers in Attica, Greece: Agia Mavra with a church in Ilioupoli, which lays at the western foot of Mount Imettos; and Agia Irini Chrysovalantou whose monastery is in Likovrisi, 11 km northeast of Athens. I will provide for each saint short biographies and then discuss their wonders and miracles. Using published newsletters and social media accounts, I will analyze the kinds of marvels imputed to each saint. Interesting patterns emerge; for example, Agia Irini is highly sought for the conception of a child and for restoring the wellbeing of young children, while Agia Mavra answers prayers dealing with serious physical ailments like cancer, circulatory problems, viral infections, and mobility issues. Agia Irini, of course, is not the only recourse for women seeking a child. For example, the Monastery of Panagia Tsambika, located about 25 km south of Rhodes Town, between Kolymbia and Archangelos, is visited by thousands of couples from all around the world each year (both Greek and non-Greek) who have struggled to conceive, while on the island of Tinos, on the day of the Dormition of the Panagia, the icon of Mary is carried down the main street and is passed over women wanting to conceive. But for the women of Athens, Agia Irini is only a Metro and bus ride away to their prayers being fulfilled.

David Osbon

Professor, London College of Music - University of West London, UK

The Composer Performer Axis

In the two sonatas for solo violin “Into the Sun,,,,” and “Fantasia” composer David Osbon has confronted the dual challenges of creating a work that aligns with the canon of virtuosic solo violin music and advancing research into rotational arrays as an harmonic tool in contemporary composition. If, as Kubiak-Kenworthy claims, “it is the presentation of newly-formed compositions that connects most obviously with innovation, the widening of artistic expression and ‘newness’.” Then, as she also states, “that gives unique opportunities for dialogue between the composer, the performer and the audience.” (Kubiak-Kenworthy 2020). This paper interrogates the collaboration between composer and performer that refines a new work and yet is predicated on an understanding between the two protagonists that might align with the idea that “creativity presupposes a community of people who share ways of thinking and acting, who learn from each other and imitate each other’s actions.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999).

Long time collaborators Timothy Schwarz (violin) and David Osbon (composer) embarked on two projects: “Into the Sun...” (2018) and “Fantasia” (2023) that sought to interrogate the composer/performer dynamic within the solo violin repertoire. Why was this a challenge? David Osbon can’t play any string instruments! Whilst he has composed string quartets, sonatas and concerti for string instruments they had, up to this point, followed a traditional model of the composer handing the finished manuscript to the performers and trusting to their musical skills to execute the music correctly. In seeking to explore Kubiak-Kenworthy’s “dialogue” and Csikszentmihalyi’s “community” the two collaborators refined the music to not only where it was ready for performance and recording but also where ‘ownership’ of the finished artefact was shared.

This was not an exercise in compromise. Osbon’s research into rotational arrays had developed Krenek’s (1960) investigations and the compositional techniques of Stravinsky, Messiaen and Knussen etc. to a point where it could, potentially, become entirely algorithmic. These two sonatas for solo violin pared back the algorithm to the pitch generation only thus allowing freedom of expression across the compositional parameters. Refining and elevating the artefact was the “dialogue” between members of the “community” and it was this that facilitated the composer/performer collaboration that resulted in, not the final

composition, but the finished artefact i.e. the performed and recorded composition.

This paper will combine score and performance analysis and will chart the journey from algorithm to artefact to performance within the realm of the solo violin repertoire and predicated on creativity as action research.

Hristo Preshlenov

Associate Professor, National Archaeological Institute with Museum -
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria

**Sacred Modules. Studies of Christian Architecture along
the Southwestern Black Sea Area (4th - 7th c. AD)**

The study is focused on the building schema and architecture module used in the early Christian churches on the Southwestern Black Sea area. After the apostolic age, the church, apart from the community of believers, is also a building where laymen and clergy commune with God. The stone-built church is an image of the world - its naos symbolizes the visible material world, and its altar - the invisible spiritual world.

The liturgical architectural environment, following mainly the differentiating ritual in Constantinople, is clearly expressed in the plan schemes and the volume-spatial construction of the naos and the altar space in the 46 basilicas, that have become known in the 19th-21st c., toponymically, topographically and/or as a plan, constructive and/or decorative architectural plastique and liturgical equipment, along the Southwestern Black sea coast, in the church communities in the provinces *Scythia*, *Moesia Secunda* and *Haemimontus*.

The Early Christian basilicas are one/three-nave, with a wooden roof, with a predominantly elongated nave in the coastal zone of *Scythia* and *Moesia Secunda*, like in Bizone (1: 1.55) and in Odessos - 1: 1.33 (the Episcopal basilica), and to a shortened nave in the south in *Haemimontus*, like in Mesembria - 1: 1.01 (the Episcopal basilica "St. Sophia") and 1: 0.991 (the monastery basilica "The Holy Mother of God Eleusa").

The planning of the space is in accordance with the "golden section" in a building module, corresponding in practice to the standard Byzantine foot (0.3123 m). The spatial organization of the side and central nave is based on symmetry as a forming compositional principle. The composition and the volumes of the naoses change in accordance with the differentiation of the church liturgical rite.

Inherited during the Middle Ages as an architectural environment and memory, the preserved early Christian basilicas are organically inscribed in the contemporary settlement environment.

Nicoleta Presura Calina

Associate Professor, University of Craiova, Romania

An Almost Forgotten Romanian Mezzosoprano: Aurelia Chițu

The purpose of this work is to offer a portrait as close to reality as possible of a personality that has been almost unstudied and about whom almost nothing has been written after the cessation of her activity, neither in Craiova, her hometown, nor in Romania after the 1930s: a century of oblivion in which Aurelia Chițu / Kitzu (1866-1941) immersed herself.

Therefore, we consider it a necessary step to promote such a Romanian cultural value, chronologically following this extraordinary life and activity path of Aurelia Chițu (Kitzu) Arimondi, which starts in Craiova, the birthplace of the mezzo-soprano, continues at the Milan Conservatory between 1886-1888, where she studies, passes through a multitude of opera houses in important Italian cities (Venice, Rome, Turin, Verona, Genoa), European cities (London, Vienna, Berlin), but also across the ocean, starting with Latin America (Havana, Buenos Aires) and culminating with the most prestigious American opera stages (Metropolitan NY and Chicago Opera House).

In the last decades of her life, her vocation as a lyric artist would be complemented by her career as a singing teacher, in New York, and later in Chicago - where she would initially open a private studio for the singing lessons she would give and where she would give various lectures on topics with references to famous works, but especially at the Chicago Musical College, where she would become a teacher at the Voice Department and where she would perfect this artistic and pedagogical mission.

Aurelia Chițu / Kitzu would die in Chicago, where she would be buried in 1941, and from that moment on, oblivion fell over her fabulous image.

Ephrem Habtemichael Redda

Research Professor, North-West University, South Africa

How Do Utilitarian and Hedonic Motivations Influence Consumer Behavior in the Digital Environment?

This study investigates how utilitarian and hedonic motivations shape consumer behaviour within the digital environment, with a particular emphasis on online shopping satisfaction and purchase intentions. Adopting a descriptive and cross-sectional research design, data were collected from 215 South African online consumers through a structured SurveyMonkey questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and mediation analyses were employed to assess the relationships among the study variables. The findings reveal that both utilitarian and hedonic motivations significantly influence online shopping satisfaction, which subsequently affects consumers' purchase intentions. Notably, utilitarian motivations demonstrate a stronger predictive effect on online shopping satisfaction, while hedonic motivations are more strongly associated with emotional engagement and impulsive purchase tendencies. Mediation analysis shows that online shopping satisfaction partially mediates the link between hedonic motivations and purchase intentions, but not between utilitarian motivations and purchase intentions. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of digital consumer behaviour by highlighting the dual role of rational and experiential motivations in shaping online engagement and purchasing outcomes. Practically, it offers insights for digital marketers and e-commerce retailers seeking to design customer experiences that balance functional efficiency with emotional appeal to foster satisfaction, loyalty, and sustained online purchasing behaviour.

Boris Sharov

PhD Candidate, Ariel University, Israel

Ronen A. Cohen

Associate Professor, Ariel University, Israel

&

Chen Kertcher

Lecturer, Ariel University, Israel

Examining Regional Rivalries: Russia's Diplomatic Engagements within the United Nations Regarding the Iran-Saudi Arabia Rivalry, 2012-2021

The principal objective of Russia's revisionist strategy in the Middle East during the period from 2012 to 2021 was to reaffirm its status as a global power by engaging in revisionist activities in collaboration with Iran, another revisionist state. This partnership emerged within the framework of a zero-sum rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, particularly evident in the conflicts in Syria and Yemen. This study aims to investigate how Russia's position in the conflicts in Syria and Yemen intersects with the interests stemming from regional rivalries, focusing specifically on the competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia. To achieve this objective, the research employed the method of content analysis, examining Russian members' speeches, voting patterns, and vetoes in the UN Security Council (UNSC) in relation to the conflicts in Syria and Yemen. The results indicate that Russia's policies within the UN regarding Syria were predominantly advantageous for Iran, whereas its policies concerning Yemen provided only partial benefits for both Iran and Saudi Arabia. This study paves the way for further investigation into the approaches of global powers towards the rivalries among regional middle powers in the Middle East.

Natalia Sharova

PhD Candidate, Ariel University, Israel

&

Ronen A. Cohen

Associate Professor, Ariel University, Israel

Reinventing New Order: Turkish Revisionist Aspirations in the MENA Region through a Constructivist Lens: 2002– 2022

In recent decades, Turkish foreign policy has pursued a more independent and ambitious foreign policy that can be considered revisionist. This study aims to reveal how Türkiye constructed its revisionist foreign policy toward the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region in 2002-2022. The study relies on the constructivist view that state identity plays an important role in international relations and therefore considers the changing Turkish identity from pro-Western and Kemalist to neo-Ottoman and Islamic as a key factor in the examination of Turkish foreign policy in the region. The Arab Spring and the attempted coup in 2016 catalyzed and manifested these changes.

Thematic analysis is used to define the major patterns of Turkish revisionism construction. Statements, speeches, and interviews by Turkish politicians were taken from the official Turkish sites. Among the politicians taken for analysis are Abdullah Gül, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ahmet Davutoğlu, and Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, and Ibrahim Kalın. The timeline of the text search period was limited to the last two decades (2002-2022) and is associated with the coming to power of the AKP, whose period of rule has led to numerous changes in Turkish foreign policy, especially since the Arab Spring and the attempted coup in 2016. As a result, three interconnected main themes, the main pillars in Türkiye's construction of its revisionist aspiration in the MENA, were identified: Turkish historical responsibility, justice, and anti-colonialism.

This paper contributes to the research of Turkish identity and its foreign policy. In a broader sense, it also adds to the study of the revisionism of rising regional powers, which, unlike the great powers, often remain outside the scope of deep study. The most unexplored subjects remain revisionism through constructivist lenses and the consideration of revisionism as a social construct. The article suggests that changes in Turkish foreign policy are based on its revisionist aspirations toward the post-Ottoman territories and have been under the growing influence of neo-Ottomanism and Islamism since the beginning of the Arab Spring. The personal worldviews of Turkish political leaders

whose speeches were considered in the thematic analysis also designate the construction of Turkish identity and its revisionism. The identified themes contribute to a deeper standing of how rising powers construct their revisionist aspirations.

Francesco Domenico Vitale
PhD Student, Pegaso Online University, Italy

Lessons in Nationhood: Power, Gender, and Schooling in Post-Unification Southern Italy

This paper continues the research presented at the *13th Annual International Conference on Humanities & Arts in a Global World* (<https://www.athensjournals.gr/history/2024-6369-AIHIS-HUM-Vitale-02.pdf>). It expands the analysis of the relationship between state power, ideology, and public education in post-Unification Southern Italy. The focus is on the former province of Terra d'Otranto as a representative case study of the Mezzogiorno, an area marked by high illiteracy rates, socio-economic backwardness, and a strong clerical presence in education.

The research is based on an extensive body of **bibliographic sources** and **numerous unpublished archival materials**, including official correspondence, ministerial circulars, school regulations, and annual reports by school directors and inspectors. This dual methodological approach makes it possible to reconstruct not only the legislative and pedagogical framework of the period but also its concrete daily application, the local resistance it faced, and the discrepancies between theory and practice.

The study examines how the newly unified Italian state sought to centralize, secularize, and standardize primary education through the Casati Law (1859) and the Coppino Law (1877). These reforms introduced compulsory schooling, separated male and female education, and progressively reduced the Church's direct control over public instruction. However, the evidence shows that implementation was partial and uneven: structural deficiencies, insufficient funding, and the delegation of financial responsibility to individual municipalities severely limited their effectiveness, especially in rural and impoverished areas.

A central tension explored in this work is the competition between the state school system and unauthorized private religious institutions, particularly those run by female congregations such as the Daughters of Charity. Despite the legal requirement for official authorization, many of these schools operated without permits, supported by local communities for their moral authority and accessibility. They promoted a model of female education focused on domesticity and religious devotion, contrasting with the state's goal of fostering civic loyalty and national integration.

The research highlights how education became a battleground for cultural and political hegemony. Through the teaching of the Italian language, patriotic history, and civic duties—alongside compulsory religious instruction—the state aimed to create disciplined citizens. However, gender-specific curricula, including *lavori donneschi* (needlework and domestic economy), reinforced patriarchal roles, confining women's contribution to nation-building to the private sphere.

The case of Terra d'Otranto reveals the contradictions of the nation-building process: while promoting literacy, modernity, and secular governance, state policies often reproduced pre-existing inequalities and left space for alternative, sometimes oppositional, educational networks. The school thus emerged not only as a vehicle for instruction but also as a site of negotiation, resistance, and adaptation between central authority and local realities.

Placed within the broader historiography of education and cultural policy, this study demonstrates how public instruction in post-Unification Italy functioned both as a tool of state legitimation and as an arena of ideological conflict, while also anticipating, in part, the educational strategies later adopted under the Fascist regime.

Michael Wagner

Professor, Head, Department of Digital Media, Drexel University, USA

Rediscovering Dialogue and Authentic Learning in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

The sudden arrival of sophisticated AI writing tools like ChatGPT has created an unprecedented crisis in academic integrity. These systems can instantly generate polished, original prose on virtually any topic, making traditional notions of plagiarism detection practically meaningless. When a machine creates text that exists nowhere else, how can we prove a student didn't write it? When detection algorithms offer only probabilistic guesses rather than proof, how can we fairly adjudicate academic misconduct? These questions reveal a deeper problem: our entire framework for understanding cheating and authenticity in education requires fundamental reconsideration.

This paper examines how generative AI has destabilized the concept of academic cheating itself. Drawing on recent philosophical and pedagogical scholarship, I argue that attempting to catch or prevent AI use through technological surveillance represents a futile and counterproductive arms race. Detection software produces unacceptable rates of false accusations, particularly affecting non-native speakers and students from marginalized backgrounds whose writing may appear "too consistent" to algorithms. More troublingly, this surveillance approach erodes trust between educators and students while deflecting attention from education's core purpose: developing understanding, critical thinking, and intellectual agency.

Rather than policing the undetectable, I propose embracing pedagogical approaches that make unauthorized AI use irrelevant by design. The paper advocates for reviving Socratic dialogue as a primary mode of teaching and assessment. This ancient method, which unfolds through questioning, reasoning, and dynamic exchange, shifts evaluation from static written products to active intellectual engagement. In dialogic settings, students must articulate their understanding, defend interpretations, respond to challenges, and show genuine comprehension in real time. Even if AI assists with preliminary research or drafting, the student's ability to explain, extend, and think through ideas under questioning remains irreducibly human.

The paper presents practical strategies for implementing dialogic pedagogy across diverse educational contexts. These include structured oral examinations, collaborative annotation exercises, peer-led discussions, and innovative uses of technology like asynchronous video

responses. I examine successful case studies from literature, philosophy, and law classrooms where such methods have transformed AI from a threat into a learning tool. When students know they must discuss and defend their ideas, they engage more deeply with AI-generated content, using it as a starting point for thought rather than an endpoint.

Ultimately, generative AI invites us to reconsider what constitutes evidence of learning. Rather than viewing these tools as enemies of academic integrity, we can seize this moment to revitalize education through more authentic, engaging practices. By centering human dialogue and intellectual exchange, we can render the very concept of “cheating” obsolete, not through resignation, but through pedagogical transformation. The future of education lies not in detecting machines but in cultivating irreducibly human capacities for understanding, judgment, and creative thought.

David Philip Wick

Retired Professor of History, Gordon College, USA

**Acharnian Charcoal, Athenian Casseroles, Well-Nymphs
named for Chronic Diseases, Dried Herbs, Citrons and
'Little Fish' ... and some Gruel for the Dead - An
Introductory Sketch of the Unexpected Foodways of
Ancient Athens in Winter**

A significant literature has developed on ancient Greek foodways (the intersection between ancient food production/cooking, cuisine, folk health-ways, and the urban culture of the polis and its farms), in spite of the tendency for classical Greeks not to write or comment heavily on cooking. Even Socrates (in the *Gorgias*) remarked that it was the *Magna Graecia* expatriates that wrote cookbooks, not the proper homeland Greeks, and he took a dim view of the habit himself. Nevertheless, the domestic foodways of a culture as well as its more crafted cuisine are a true 'humanities' study, especially where that crosses paths with seasonal culture, religion, etc. and impacted every element of ancient Athenian life from seasonal survival (especially in winter as foodways dealt with both scarcity and illness), to the cyclic religion of the year and of cycle of politics.

This small study, working from an earlier one presented at ATINER on the character of winter in ancient Athens, looks in particular at the impact of winter - the packing of citizens from farms and seashore into the polis itself, the dwindling of food-stores and fuel as the winter lengthened, the interaction of food and food-based medicinal practices as chronic winter illnesses concentrated in the packed neighborhoods, and on the foodways of the winter festivals. Mostly in this instance it will sketch the development of a second seasonal set of cook-ways (or 'work-culture cuisine') reacting to what foods and seasonings could be preserved and what fuel - even what kind of fuel - was left, what venues or techniques were available just to cook a cuisine not suited to many of the working-culture urban homes - that is not what most outsiders think of as ancient or modern 'Greek cooking' ... but has left a considerable legacy in the cooking of wintertime Greece today, if the modern scholar or visitor knows where to recognize it.

Mina Yaney

Architect, Practice for Architectural Interfaces, Austria

The Architecture of Mediation

This paper addresses a fundamental trans-scalar and transdisciplinary problem of *mediated coherence*: How can meaning, identity, or form persist and transform across heterogeneous domains and temporalities – neurological, biological, linguistic, architectural, and cosmological – without flattening difference, reducing complexity, or relying on fixed systems or reverting to an absolute dimensional space?

The paper is addressing a fundamental epistemological and ontological problem- but it manifests as a compositional, cultural, and transdisciplinary design problem. It's not *just* philosophical or spatial - it's structural, dynamic, and generative, cutting across how we think, compose, and mediate identity, form, and continuity across domains that don't speak the same language or exist on the same scale. Hence, I intend to address the problem of how coherence, identity, and form can be generated, sustained, and transformed across incompatible domains and scales – without reduction or systemic closure – through mediated, performative, and *topological compatibility*.

This paper develops therefore a *general theory of skin* as a *multimodal, mediative, and performative interface* - a universal, topological field through which identity emerges from difference *devoid of homogenization*. Reframing the Platonic relation between *identity and difference* as a non-orientable mediation, the paper introduces the notion of *cascadic dynamism* to describe how coherence is achieved through modulation. Topics include: consciousness (neural layering), evolution, enzymatic cascades, linguistic *différance*, stochastic harmony (Xenakis), psychoanalytic identity (Anzieu), anthropological layering (Gamble), and ritualistic performance (Tambiah). The metropolis becomes a *metropolitan skin* – a dynamic and *multimodal mediator* of continuity, coherence and transformation. The theory culminates in a reading of Einstein's *space-time as a cosmological and tensorial skin*.

The paper is intended for scholars across the arts and humanities as well as in education, architecture, urbanism, philosophy, linguistics, systems theory, cognitive science, biology and cultural theory.

Junlei Yang
Professor, Fudan University, China

Greek Mythological Metaphors in Science Fiction Films

The uniqueness of Greek mythology lies not only in its origins as a primitive human construction of nature, filled with mystical and obscure meanings, but also as one of the foundational ideas of European cultural traditions. Through epic poems and dramas, it has become a crucial source of thought for Western culture. This tradition has profoundly influenced modern Western film creation, especially in the realm of science fiction films. Creators of science fiction often draw upon the imagery and metaphors of Greek mythology to convey the thematic ideas of their works and reveal the deeper implications of the functioning of modern technological societies, which could be described as Technology-Driven Society.

Ran Yang

Associate Professor, Sichuan Conservatory of Music, China

The Generation of Action Relationships and Aesthetic Mechanisms in Socially Engaged Art

Socially Engaged Art, as a conscious relational production in contemporary cultural practices, is a strategy and method for connecting subjects with the world to form a comprehensive epistemology of the subject. It emphasizes the unique discovery of reality in the politics of action—liberating participating subjects from the procedures of singular situations and fragmented moments, connecting with other fragments, and in the remnants of the whole, reinterpreting the meanings we have lost. Thus, socially engaged art is not just a field for disciplinary linkage and knowledge exchange, but also a liberation of intellectual assessment in the complex and concrete reality, and it produces a more tension-filled framework for real action from the internal logic of culture—this is the shift in meaning of contemporary art in its function of public social participation.

In this speech, based on my numerous social experiments conducted in the form of artistic actions under "Event-Action-narration," I will discuss the issues of the observation mechanism of subject autonomy, transposition in action, and the orientation of bodily order, and how art, as a method, can intervene in social issue practices themed around ethical relationships.

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