

The Humanities, Humanistic Education, and Democratic Governance

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Abstract

This paper seeks to explore any linkages there may be between the humanities disciplines and the ideals of democracy. It starts out by looking at the broad group of academic disciplines banded together and called the Humanities; the humanistic values they have sought to impart over the years; and what has led to their denigration globally in recent years. It briefly considers the hostile arguments raised against the Humanities by scientists, technologists and economists, aided by what appears to be the global demand for skill-based education as a key to survival in today's economy. In looking at the ideals of true democracy, the paper acknowledges that democracy is not indigenous to Africa, but then neither is it to any other country or continent on the globe. Democracy as an ideology, whether fully actualized anywhere or not, embodies certain values for good governance that compel virtually all rulers on earth to pay at least lip service to it. If the humanistic values imparted by the Humanities and the values for good governance upheld by democracy can be closely aligned, as this paper seeks to achieve, then the conclusion will follow inevitably that democracy needs the Humanities for sustainability.

Keywords: Humanities, Humanistic education, Democracy, Globalization, Values, Governance.