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# ЧТО ЗНАЧИТ БЫТЬ ПО-НАСТОЯЩЕМУ ОБРАЗОВАННЫМ: РАЗМЫШЛЕНИЯ ПО ПОВОДУ ЭПИСТЕМОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ ОСНОВЫ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИХ ВЗГЛЯДОВ ПЛАТОНА И ГЕГЕЛЯ

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*В значительной степени образование объясняет и оправдывает государство и развитие любого современного политического общества. В этом смысле образование предает степень рациональности и зрелости общества в попытке поддержать императивы демократии. Современный мир исповедует поразительную преданность некоторому диапазону ценностей. Образование – одна из таких ценностей, которые наши современные демократические государства стремятся выразить и реализовать. Почти каждая современная политическая философия подписывается под этими ценностями, предоставляя аргументы об их природе и совместимости друг с другом. Ни одна из них, однако, не возвышает образование до такого высокого, безусловного статуса, как это сделали Платон и Гегель. Действительно, почти никакая политическая теория не оправдывает действие вопреки общераспространённой законности на эпистемологической основе. Хотя Платон и Гегель были весьма критически настроены по отношению к демократии или даже отрицали ее, они оба мыслили знание как необходимую предпосылку как индивидуальной, так и социальной свободы и процветания. Это означало, что было бы серьезной ошибкой не судить на основе достаточного знания а) ответственность за принятие политического решения и б) участие в политической деятельности. Данная статья стремится осветить эпистемологические и образовательные требования в их политических взглядах. Современная политическая философия пренебрегла Платоном и Гегелем в силу недемократической природы их политического видения. Данная статья утверждает, что, несмотря на указанную направленность их видения, они оба предложили положительные аргументы в пользу укрепления институционального пространства современной демократии. В этом смысле их идеалистический критический анализ демократии может побудить нас вновь обратиться к конечной цели демократической культуры, то есть формированию ответственных и образованных граждан и рассмотреть это как центральную задачу современного политического образования.*

***Ключевые слова**: политическое образование, политическая эпистемология, демократия, гражданство.*



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# BEING PROPERLY EDUCATED: REFLECTIONS ON THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL BASIS OF PLATO'S AND HEGEL'S POLITICAL VISION

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*To a great extent, education explains and justifies the state and the development of any modern political society. In this sense, education betrays the degree of rationality and maturity of a society in its attempt to uphold the imperatives of democracy. The modern world professes an admirable allegiance to a range of values. Education is one of the values, which our modern democracies seek to express and realize. Nearly every contemporary political philosophy endorses these values providing arguments about their nature and compatibility with one another. None of them, however, elevates education to such a higher, pre-suppositional status, as Plato and Hegel did. Indeed, hardly any political theory justifies acting contrary to popular legitimacy on epistemological ground. Although Plato and Hegel were highly critical or even dismissive of democracy, they both thought of knowledge as a necessary prerequisite of both individual and social freedom and prosperity. This meant that it would be a serious mistake not to judge a) responsibility for political decision-making and b) participation in the political affairs on the basis of sufficient knowledge. This paper aims to throw some light on the epistemological and educational requirements of their political vision. Modern political philosophy has neglected Plato and Hegel for the undemocratic nature of their political vision. The paper suggests that despite the negativity of their vision, they both offer positive arguments for strengthening the institutional space of modern democracy. In this sense, their idealist critique of democracy may incite us to reconsider the ultimate goal of a democratic culture, i.e. the creation of responsible and educated citizenship and render this the central task of modern political education.*

***Key words****: political education, political epistemology, democracy, citizenship*

## 1. Introduction

In a thought provoking paper on "Paideia: The global challenge of political leadership" John Anton named economics, technocracy, business and a universalizable version of democracy as the main features of our modern global political system, which has contributed enormously to the negligence of the concept of excellence as a desideratum in personal as well as public conduct. Professor Anton wrote that "Productive efficiency and its related operations have replaced what was once indispensable to political life." (Anton, 2008:24). In the same spirit, in her latest book *Not for profit* Martha Nussbaum depicts a rather grave picture of modern education arguing in favour of resisting all those erosive forces which prevent modern education from preparing and producing true democratic citizens. In the first chapter entitled as "The Silent Crisis", Martha Nussbaum writes:

We are in the midst of a crisis of massive proportions and grave and global significance. … I mean a crisis that goes largely unnoticed, like a cancer; a crisis that is likely to be, in the long run, far more damaging to the future of

democratic self-government: a world-wide crisis in education. Radical changes are occurring in what democratic societies teach the young, and these changes have not been well thought through. Thirsty for national profit, nations and their systems of education are heedlessly discarding skills that are needed to keep democracies alive. If this trend continues, nations all over the world will soon be producing generations of useful machines, rather than complete citizens…" (Nussbaum, 2010:1).

To borrow Professor Anton's words once more: "Whatever the future may bring, given the trends that promote global developments, the real loser will be the *paideia* of political life and consequently of human *entelecheia*" (Anton, 2008:26).

To the extent that (quite surprisingly one might plausibly think) Plato and Hegel highlight the reasons for which we should broaden and enrich our modern conception of political education, this paper aspires to show that their discussion might have a remedying effect upon our modern predicament. To the question "Why Plato and Hegel?" the reply is that they both constitute two unique exemplary cases, whose negative argumentation against democracy has affected positively the philosophical discussions about political education and the institutional space of democracy. In a peculiar way Plato and Hegel maintained that without support from suitably educated citizens, no democracy can survive, meaning thereby an education for such a type of citizenship that encourages the exercise and the cultivation of critical thinking and the pursuit of excellence in private and public life. Therefore, in an equally peculiar way, Plato and Hegel anticipated and faced a crisis, although the crisis did not face them, at least not in the unprecedented massive manner that it faces us in the present.

## 2. Plato and Hegel: Reflections on their views on education, citizenship and democracy

In the modern world, the term democracy signifies both an amalgam of political ideals and a particular political system. Actually, the modern discourse on democracy prefers to put forward an ideal rather than describe a certain situation. This gap is supposed to reflect the internal strength, the maturity and the education of an entire culture to recognize the need for re-assessing and criticizing the institutional space and for responding to the demands of reason and morality. In any case, the term democracy is accepted, almost universally, as a necessary honorary title with loose internal cohesion and enormous conceptual elasticity. We should be rather concerned with the implications of this modern verbal expansionism, which affords the title and the privileges of democracy so freely or loosely, or without warrant. Surely, we cannot expand such an important term to the extent that it means everything, whilst we reduce it, at the same time, to the point that it may mean nothing. Hence it is plausible and necessary to hold fast on to some principles with which democracy is currently identified: a) the principle of political legitimacy and the concept of consent as a necessary (although not sufficient) constituent of a democratic culture, b) the principle of collective control and inclusiveness, c) the principle of political equality in the exercise of the control, [1] d) the principle of pluralistic and oppositional competition, e) the principle of

representation and accountability and f) a cluster of principles such as social tolerance, respect of private life and individual liberties and rights. One of the main modern concerns is to avoid identifying democracy with strict majoritarianism, for this may prove not only misguiding but also potentially dangerous.

A last, but of equal importance, element is the steady emphasis on the concepts of "the common good" and "the general will" or the "will of the people." This scheme, with evident Rousseaunean origins, has been credited with a number of assumptions about the existence of such a common good and the possibility for a monolithic definition that excludes all conflicts and insists on the ideal of a universal and uniform human nature with specific needs and preferences. To a certain extent, as citizens of the post-modern era, we have received the exceedingly realist Schumpeterian critique of this scheme (Schumpeter, 1950) with equal trepidation. We have indeed suffered much from the rather hypocritical obsession of modern politicians, who have made and still make excessive use of inspired verbal expressions and rhetoric language. We have also suffered enough from the dangers coming from the opposite direction. A modern understanding of democracy should simply refuse to accept the Procrustean dilemma between the empty rhetoric of the people and the final or exhaustive proclamation of the alleged expertise of politicians. In this sense, political education may constitute our best ammunition, or the best antidote, to the vices of empty rhetoric and feigned political expertise.

Neither Plato nor Hegel expresses any allegiance to all, or even the majority of, the above principles. But, once we can agree that Plato's interest was not to deceive future ages by "dressing up illiberal suggestions" (Russell, 1945:105) or Hegel cannot be safely regarded as the father of modern totalitarianism (Popper, 1945), we can envisage a position according to which their negative critique of democracy "highlights the case for it rather than against it" (Brooks, 2006:25). In a peculiar way both philosophers help us to re-direct our attention to some issues for which modern political philosophy has shown an unshakeable predilection to neglect. We mean, basically, the inextricable link between education, citizenship and good government to which the political idealism of philosophers such as Plato and Hegel evidently betrays a strong commitment. In fact, their political philosophy enjoyed raising questions about the form of good government. It would be fair to say that we have not witnessed any similar questions in modern post-contractarian political philosophy. By "good" form of government, in the Platonic and Hegelian scheme of things, we should understand a kind of political arrangement that meets certain requirements:

a) For both Plato and Hegel the art of good governance presupposes expert knowledge**.** They both invite us to endorse the view that they should rule those who, as Aristotle said, "are able to rule best" (*Politics*, II, 1273b5-6). They both see as a problem the fact that in democracies all citizens possess an equal voice in political decision making, whereas some are more capable of good governance than others. Professor Anton usefully suggests that we should discern two levels on which Plato deals with democracy (1997:18). On the first level, Plato inquires the status of the candidature democracy itself offers in an attempt to secure the paradigm of both the just man and the just political or institutional space that enables man to cultivate all his abilities in order to be

just. Let us briefly remember, at this point, that justice (both in the individual soul and in the political state) presupposes a certain hierarchy of man's mental, emotional and volitional powers and a certain epistemic authority that is granted to those who respect this hierarchy. This is finally reflected in the role of the philosopher king, who rules the polis. Plato recognizes that true political knowledge carries a certain epistemic authority that is never to be found in uneducated opinion (*Republic* 558c). Therefore, the republic is to be ruled by philosopher kings whose exclusive craft is ruling and serving the interests of the citizens. The right to rule is conferred by expertise in statesmanship. [2] In Book 8 of the *Republic* Plato offers a negative, almost hostile, critique of democracy; he depicts a decadent, corrupted and fragmented polis that lapses into an unfortunate degenerative process, a stage of which is democracy, a really serious misfortune. On a second level, we find a more lenient depiction in the *Statesman* (426b) and a more constructive social assessment later in the *Laws*. In these texts Plato feels free to respond to democratic claims in a positive way. In the *Laws* he defends a form of government composed of a legislator with a democratically elected body of citizens, who enforce the laws created by the unelected legislator. In the same text Plato writes: "It is absolutely vital for a political system to combine them … if it is to enjoy freedom and friendship applied with good judgement." (693d-e). Thom Brookes rightly suggests that this move brings Plato closer to "the so called Schumpeterian tradition of elite theories of democracy … and … provides an improved justification for democratic government as we practice it today than rival theories of democracy." (2006:24).

In Hegel we have a different picture. In the *Philosophy of Right* the political state is presented as an absolutely rational living unity (paras.257, 258), "glimmering as the power of reason in necessity" (para.263). The idea of the political state, its structure and function, its scope and goal are not matters of private caprice, subjective opinion and empirical expediency. These are all matters of what Hegel entitles in the Preface of his *Philosophy of Right* "the inherently rational and objective treatment" of the new philosophical science. In this spirit, for Hegel, it follows quite naturally the fact that the appointment of individuals in crucial institutional posts is determined by objective factors such as "knowledge and proof of ability" (para.291). Such proof, Hegel says, guarantees that "the state will get what it requires" and every citizen will be able to participate in the exercise of state power, because of the presence of this determining factor (ibid.). What the inherent rationality of the political state really requires is that men overcome their subjective ends and care only for the dutiful fulfillment of their public functions. This implies that men should develop the capacities that enable them to become aware of the link between their particular interests and the universal interests of the state. This is of course an educational task and Hegel assigns his *Philosophy of Right* the responsibility to set the profoundly educational role of a number of mediating sociopolitical institutions which secure not only the political education of their individual members and leaders but also the maturity and rationality of the entire political culture. We read in the *Philosophy of Right*:

[t]his very substantiality of the state is mind knowing and willing itself after passing through the forming process of education. The state, therefore, knows

what it wills and knows it in its universality, i.e. as something thought. Hence it works and acts by reference to consciously adopted ends, known principles and laws which are nor merely implicit but are actually present in consciousness… (para. 270).

The rationality and knowledge with which Hegel endows the political space presupposes an educational vision regarding the possibilities of transforming modern man from a selfish pursuer of private interests into an educated, conscientious and responsible citizen. [3]

b) A form of good government should be consonant with the idealist requirement that the political state should serve an ultimate goal, justice in Plato's case, freedom in Hegel's. Justice and freedom are two thematic concepts around which the epistemological, metaphysical and political theories of Plato and Hegel evolve. Unless one grasps their significance, one has simply missed the point of these philosophies. Beside their multi-dimensional nature, these concepts concern both the individual soul (in Plato) and subjective *Geist* (in Hegel) and the broader social space with its political articulation and institutional arrangements. The dialectical bond Plato and Hegel create between individual subjectivity and the social substance of the *polis* or *Sittlichkeit* (an ethical form of life with political articulation) is meant to secure the existential traffic that is created between the individual "part" and the social "whole". Not only is, for Plato, the just state dependent on the virtue of its leaders, but it also reflects the psychological, mental and moral qualities of its individual members. The state is just, when its members embody justice in the balance of the parts of their soul and this can only happen in a state that reflects justice. Similarly, in Hegel, modern individuality embarks upon acts of self-constitution in and through the constitution of the social space. The theory of modern *Sittlichkeit* is nothing but a paraphrase of the theory of individual freedom.[4] In the *Philosophy of Right* we are given a number of stages and activities endorsed by the human individual as part of his social and political *Bildung* (education). The schooling process, the education according to the norms of civil society, the pursuit of common professional activities in and through corporate membership are all, to name just a few, examples of a mediating, educational process. Whilst the special bond between the individual and the social is broadly recognized, what is usually overlooked is the fact that education renders the traffic between the poles of this bond possible. It is only the existence of such a paideutic procedure that renders all kinds of individual quests, private and political, an edifying experience and not a mere aimless wandering from one error to the other. It is only the existence of such a paideutic process that enables a state to be a candidate for serving such an admirable ultimate goal. Unless we stress the importance of education in the articulation of the ultimate goal and the specification of the means through which we accomplish this goal, we end up with interpretations that caricature, in the well known Popperian fashion, both Plato and Hegel.

c) Finally, a form of good government should re-enact the dialectic of reason and reality. This means that it should follow the imperatives of organicism and respect the relation between the "part" and the "whole". In the eyes of both philosophers this secures a certain conception of the common good, whilst it also constrains unlimited negative freedom and presupposes a conception of

an integral human nature. There are basically two reasons that guide both philosophers in arguing that democracy violates the principles of organicism.[5] Firstly, democracy is alleged to involve anarchy and incoherence. This might mean either that anarchy is mistaken for freedom, [6] leading, as a consequence, to an ever growing insecurity about the protection of individual rights. Or, it might also mean that such societies lack political unity and structure to the extent that they constitute mere collections of separate individualities and not an integral political organization. For Plato, this has enormous implications for what is regarded as a legitimate political obligation (*Republic*, 557e-558a). For Hegel the loss of internal bonds renders the political body incoherent and fragmented, nothing but a "general and one-sided determination", a completely empty phrase, the people.[7] Plato's and Hegel's suggestions aim to remedy the situation. In Plato we have two such structures: in the *Republic*, there is the tripartite division of labour on the basis of psychological determining factors and in the *Laws* it is a lawgiver that creates laws and educates the public about their necessity and a democratically elected assembly that enforces them. Similarly, in Hegel, the aim is to come up with a form of popular sovereignty that manages to overcome the troubled notion of the "people" by recognizing clear political structures such as the government, courts of law and public authorities that assume the role of fostering some form of political unity and coherence. Even the presence of the monarch in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* secures both the viability of the diffusion of power due to the political differentiation and the necessary stability due to the presence of a leading figure. We should note, however, that Plato's and Hegel's criticisms do not concern modern liberal democracies which seem to take account of their worries about the lack of political unity. In this sense, the fact that modern political culture is determined to address their concerns betrays the plausibility of their remarks.

Secondly, democracy is also alleged to give in to the lures of unlimited negative freedom, being thus indifferent or even hostile to a conception of the common good. Unlimited negative freedom leads to unlimited conflicts of interests and needs and unlimited egoism. Any attempt to overcome or resolve the conflict leads to an unsurpassable impasse, since all individuals are guided by their private passions and not by reason and the rule of law. [8] Democratic citizens are either people who "grope in the dark" and do not know how to govern, [9] or people who acquire a sense of self-confidence simply from a sense of caprice and subjective opinion.[10] Plato remarks plausibly that democratic citizens are quite untroubled by the fact that they lack sufficient political knowledge. Their involvement in politics and their political status are given. [11] Democracies do not show any respect for knowledge and epistemic authority. Plato is happy to conclude that a democracy is run by fools, i.e. by people who are unable to govern both themselves and others. Professor Anton hits the mark when he points out that "democracy in the *Republic* is the dramatization of the soul in a state of crisis" (1997:18). Both Plato and Hegel restrict popular participation in order to leave more space for those with political expertise. In Hegel's case, the state is a "great architectonic structure, a hieroglyph of reason". [12] It is worth noticing again that modern democracies pay tribute to such philosophical concerns, when they make room for a rather

Schumpeterian understanding of democracy in terms of "the rule of the politician" and not "the rule of the people". [13] This is another case where modern democratic culture has actually tried to accommodate Plato's and Hegel's concerns

A critique of Plato and Hegel should abandon the extreme and unfair interpretations of Russell (1945), Popper (1945) and Berlin (1958). Still, a critique of their overall political program could expose many points. We will focus on two points, which we regard as rather crucial for modern political culture. On the one hand, in Plato's case, we should not fail to stress the fact that the psychological determination of the division of labour and the subsequent social division is contrary to the modern educational imperative of lifelong learning. Plato assumed that education has the means to determine everyone's exact psychological profile, which places everyone in the class to which they belong. The assumption is that everyone engages in the suitable forms of activity which procure in turn satisfaction. However, Plato never discusses whether and how an educational system could ever succeed unquestionably in such an act of psychological determination, or indeed that no man's psychological profile would never change or develop in the course of a lifetime. In other words, this educational act of psychological determination lies in immediate contrast with our modern allegiance to one of the most profound principles of lifelong learning as being dependent on the didactic value of our experiences and the context within which they are acquired. It is plausible, therefore, to assume or to expect that learning has a strong transformative influence upon one's psychological profile and even upon one's life in general.

On the other hand, Hegel shrunk the conceptual horizon of citizenship and political participation to the voting procedure. He received extensive criticism for constraining the expression of the public voice through voting procedures. Much of this criticism reveals the educational limitations of the Hegelian state. The latter may rest on certain educational presuppositions, but Hegel is in real difficulty to conceal successfully his lack of real confidence in the educational institutions and the influence they exercise on the shaping and re-shaping of political consciousness. His rejection of the voting procedure presupposes a minimalist understanding of political participation. But surely, this means only that the Hegelian state suffers from such kind of inadequacies and not that the idea of democratic participation and representation is itself invalid and worthless, or that the voting procedure is the exclusive and exhaustive expression of the idea of democratic participation and representation. In fact democratic participation, in the modern social setting, lies in all aspects of what we understand today as political education.

This brief and by no means exhaustive exposition of Plato's and Hegel's ferment critique of democracy shows that it was primarily due to their focus on a rather direct form of democracy, whose immature, uneducated and unmediated political electorate threatened the unity of the political state. This fear became their counsel in making the art of government an affair with profound epistemological presuppositions in an exclusive fashion, whereas we are interested in endorsing these presuppositions but in an inclusive way. We have seen earlier, at least on two different occasions, that modern political

culture, which professes and exercises various representative forms of democracy, has responded positively to Plato's and Hegel's concerns in an attempt to avoid the vices of political fragmentation and a rather excessive or purely negative political atomism. However, having said that, our primary concern should not be the plausibility of their remarks. This may be of some, or great, interest to historians of political thought. Given that, nowadays, we accept Platonic and Hegelian imperatives about political knowledge and government to a larger extent than we have perhaps realized, we should reflect on how it is possible for us to serve the modern rights to political education in an attempt to resolve the modern tensions and respond to the modern challenges of the 21st century.

**3. The challenges of modern political education**

Philosophers such as Anton and Nussbaum urge us to respond to the present dire situation and focus on the deepest purposes of education, the creation of responsible and educated citizens. We have been arguing that one should not be surprised to find Plato and Hegel as strong allies in the effort to broaden and enrich current political education. Many of their political suggestions are of course outdated or simply wrong. Given that modern cultural and political conditions have changed, we should utilize their emphasis on the significance of various epistemic and educational factors in a more inclusive type of political education that takes account of the following tasks.

a) Firstly, modern political education should respect the imperative of lifelong learning. The lifelong learning concept rests on the idea of learning to acquire all forms of knowledge and all learning skills that surpass the current shortsighted focus on profitable skills, fashionable qualifications and the need for productive efficiency. It also rests on the assumption that education is not exhausted in what is countable and assessable by an economic measuring tape. A key philosophical strand in our thinking about learning and education has traditionally been a practical (both moral and political) one. This betrays that concepts such as education and learning carry an inevitable normative charge, as they absorb both facts and values. It also means that the desire to widen participation has always been one of the motivating forces behind the movement to lifelong learning. In other words, the concern to provide lifelong learning opportunities to all modern learners is primarily a practical (both moral and political) one. If there is something stable about the notion of "learning" in its constant changing under new circumstances, this is its internal, unbreakable bond with the demands or practical reasoning and the conditions of real life.

In our analysis we have been arguing that it rests on the shoulders of modern political education to face up to the great tensions that emerge on a number of issues. To name just a few, we should take into account the ever growing tension between the incredible expansion of knowledge and the capacity of people to learn, the tensions between the universal and the individual, the global and the local, between the traditional and the modern. It is argued that the stake of the new era is to equip all modern learners with the necessary tools in order to learn to recognize and respond appropriately to modern challenges in a rapidly changing local and global space. To achieve this, the modern learner needs to nurture, exercise and develop a developing capacity to make context-sensitive

judgements, informed choices and knowledgeable assessments in an attempt to qualify as a candidate capable of responding to the huge challenges on all fronts of knowledge and political culture. Broadening the horizon of political education in all these cases really means that people are taught how to exercise reason and criticism, how to acquire a better sense of judgment and an increasing sense of responsibility, how to be knowledgeable and empathetic citizens. Lifelong learning means that learning lasts a complete lifetime; if the learning process is to be successful, it is essential that education should respect all human skills.

b) Secondly, it follows quite plausibly from our first point that the modern imperative of lifelong learning should have certain implications for what we call education in democratic politics, particularly in relation to what may be called as strict democratic skills. To these we should draw our special attention. If Plato and Hegel are right on something, this is their contention that a good form of government, a democracy in our eyes, is not something like a mechanical clock, which can be left after its initial set up to work on its own. It is rather a process. This implies that education in democratic politics does not end once all the parts of the machine have been put in their proper place. If Plato is right in stressing the epistemic authority of certain claims and practices and if Hegel is also right in maintaining that modern individuals constitute their social space and by doing so they also constitute themselves, then it is of incredible worth to examine the democratic skills that need to be cultivated today.

We may discern here three different types of skills. Firstly, there are cognitive skills which concern the certain level of knowledge that citizens must reach in order to be able to understand the operation of the political system and its institutions as well as the facts upon which they need to rely in order to reach political decisions.

Secondly, there are procedural skills which bear an integral relation to the knowledge of and participation in the processes of political decision making. Thirdly and lastly there are habitual skills, which might be understood as the virtues that support motivation to act in favour of, or against, certain situations. In his *Philosophy of Right* Hegel is highly critical of the dependency on virtue. Therefore, he invested his political prescriptions with the concept of social duties and roles in order to achieve an adequate type of social ethic. This might have worked in an era when the principles of individual rights and liberties were not given or well established. In contrast to Hegel's era the modern world professes a strong allegiance to these principles. Since, today, we do not order people to be fair, tolerant, honest and empathetic of the other's point of view, we have many extra reasons to embrace the idea of cultivating such habitual skills.

Thirdly, modern political education should teach and encourage the practice of political participation in as many as possible aspects of the political space. This is possible only if people are taught to live with others, understand local and global commitments, be involved with conflict solution strategies and engage in democratic dialogue. To this end, then, political education should focus on teaching values such as pluralism, toleration, humility and intercultural understanding. Modern politics does not amount any more to the realization

of an ultimate and all encompassing goal like the Platonic justice and the Hegelian freedom. The implementation of a historical or moral code is no longer one of the objectives of modern democratic cultures. We can agree, however, that the idea of having certain goals and ideals is not necessarily bad or wrong. The idea of regulating conflict, of learning to negotiate and deliberate in an attempt to avoid dramatic conflicts should not be overlooked. Political participation today requires teaching people to participate in argumentative decision-making processes and handle the significance of certain values and issues accordingly.

Lastly, we also need to look at the way democratic education affects the educational reality of our schools and universities and other lifelong learning institutions. Is the presence of democratic education in all these contexts powerful and relevant to current morally and politically demanding situations? Are there any structures and programs that inform, enlighten and train modern citizens and civil servants? Unless somebody tells us that there is another way to secure the existence of properly trained and uncorrupt civil servants, we will stubbornly insist on the importance of education. We need to compromise the importance of knowledge and epistemic authority with the idea that modern democratic government should lead through persuasion and deliberation and that nobody is beyond public scrutiny.

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3. **We discuss** the details of the educational requirements of Hegel's political vision in Karavakou,V., 2002, ch.6 and Karavakou, V., 2009, chs. 7 & 8.
4. **We defend** this thesis in detail in Karavakou, V., 2002, ch.4.
5. There is an excellent analysis of the platonic critique of negative freedom and its social implications in Thom Brooks's paper on "Plato, Hegel and Democracy", (2006, pp.24-50). We have argued elsewhere how much important the principle of organicism is for the political philosophies of both Plato and Hegel, see Karavakou, V., (2007).
6. **Plato,** *Republic* 557b, 560e, 572d-e.
7. ***Philosophy** of Right*, paras. 290A, 273R, 274, 274A, 276, 278R, 290A, 302.
8. **Plato,** *Republic,* 561b-c, Hegel *Philosophy of Right*, para.273R.
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