UNIVERSITIES, DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: A HUMAN CAPABILITIES PERSPECTIVE

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And, in educating for freedom, how can we create and maintain a common world? *(Maxine Greene)*

INTRODUCTION

What should universities contribute to building decent societies which value creating human capabilities (den 1979, 1999; Nussbaum 2000, 2011) for all citizens? This is the overarching question I shall address in this presentation.

Spain currently has 75 universities, of which 50 are classified as public universities and in receipt of public funding. The Organic Law of Universities sets out that a university provides a public service through research, teaching and learning and has significant obligations to society: to create, develop, disseminate and critique science, technology and culture; to prepare students for professional activities; to produce and disseminate knowledge for culture quality of life and economic development; and to distribute knowledge and culture through university extension programmes (Santiago et al 2009: 16). These are good aims; but we need to know what overarching ideal informs them, and how the aims are implemented when there are competing priorities because, for us here, what universities do and the kind of graduates they form is a matter of some public and educational importance.

Drawing on an ideal of human development for all, by which I mean the UNDP definition that human development involves creating 'an enabling environment for people to live long, healthy and creative lives'; and, is 'a process of enlarging people's choices' (UNDP, 1990:1), and core principles of empowerment, equity, security and the sustainability of people's valued achievements and opportunities (Boni and Walker, 2013). Human development gives rise to such questions as: Do people have the opportunities for moving about freely and safely? Do they have a decent place to live? Are they able to read and think critically? Do they have good friendships? Are they treated by others with dignity? Do they have secure economic opportunities, and so on?

Moving on to universities more specifically, we can ask: what would a university which took human development values seriously look like and what would it do? What picture would emerge if we used human capabilities – the opportunities to choose many valuable ways of being and doing for our well-being - as the yardstick to evaluate higher education? What policies would be designed and implemented? What would curriculum and pedagogy, governance, research, and relationships with publics look like? What would students have reason to value doing and being, and how would this be shaped by their education and experiences at university? How would graduates use their knowledge and skills to make good lives for themselves while also contributing to sustainable human development?

The paper tries to address these questions using a lens from the human capabilities approach as a metric for scrutinizing social justice in higher education and in society because education and society are intertwined and mutually influencing. Capabilities implies an expansive scope of benefits from university education, which include enhancing the well-being and freedom of individuals and peoples, improving economic development

and influencing social change in the direction of a decent society. This point is captured by Martha Nussbaum in a recent book:

> Cultivated capacities for critical thinking and reflection are crucial in keeping democracies alive and wide awake. The ability to think well about a wide range of cultures, groups and nations in the context of the global economy and of the history of many national and group interactions is crucial in order to enable democracies to deal responsibly with the problems we currently face as members of an interdependent world. And the ability to imagine the experience of another – a capacity almost all human beings possess in some form – needs to be greatly enhanced and refined if we are to have any hope of sustaining decent institutions across the many divisions that any modern society contains.
> (Nussbaum 2010: 10)

For Nussbaum, and for a human capabilities approach, universities produce knowledge but should also contribute to sustainable democratic societies through educating socially critical and concerned citizens, who will also contribute to economic development for themselves and for others with fewer advantages.

Universities and development

Turning to wider development agendas, in current times, universities, and especially science, technology and engineering, are central to development strategies globally (World Bank 2002; UNESCO, 2009). In this global agenda, notwithstanding the tremendous equity gains in the expansion of access to higher education, [1] it is economic growth and human capital that is prioritized over equity within countries and across countries. Concerns about rising inequalities within and across countries emerge primarily from threats to growth (OECD 2012) - but nonetheless point to growing inequality gaps across OECD countries.   There appear to be two broad development possibilities. On the one hand a central focus on knowledge, technology, innovation as the human capital engine for knowledge-based economies in Europe , and on the other the possibility that economic development - advanced though higher education – while important - would be a means to good lives, but not an end in itself. Rather the question would be what contribution can a university education make to building a more just society with human dignity (Nussbaum 2000) and well-being for all (Sen 1999), and, how are graduates being educated in universities to be the responsible and critical citizens?

It is indisputable that Spain and other countries in Europe need economic and social development, but this needs to be less about economic growth for its own sake and more about inclusive development to generate decent jobs which secure people's lives and livelihoods. Development can be inclusive and drive an equitable distribution of benefits of economic development but only if all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities share the benefits of development and participate in decision-making. Recently the global development agenda has turned to 'jobs , with the World Bank (2012) *World Development Report 2013* highlighting the need for 'transformational' jobs, i.e. have the greatest development payoffs - raise incomes, make cities function better, connect the economy to global markets, protect the environment, and give people a stake in their societies. However, is this just about insertion into the labour market, or something more? According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) work is central to people's well-being - for both income and social and economic advancement. But the ILO has in mind decent work that is a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community, democracies that deliver for people, and economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and enterprise development. The ILO claims an international consensus among governments, employers, workers and civil society that productive employment and decent work are key elements to achieving a fair globalization, reducing poverty and achieving equitable, inclusive, and sustainable development. (See http://www.ilo.org)

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[1] The numbers of the age cohort worldwide enrolled in tertiary (which can however include further and not only higher education) grew between 2000 and 2007 from 98,303,537 to 150,656,459 students (UNESCO, 2009: 205) although the proportion varies from country to country and the least dramatic gains are in low income countries where participation has only increased from 5% to 7%.

So we can have an inclusive development agenda with concerns both for human capital, decent work and inclusive development. It is possible and can be argued for. Widening income inequalities are not inevitable (OECD, 2012).

Yet Spain also currently faces tremendous challenges. In 2006, Spanish unemployment, at 8.5%, had been close to the EU average. Five years later, in 2011, it was twice as high at 21.7%. Currently it is around 25 per cent and youth unemployment has reached 53 per cent; double that of other EU countries.

Figure 1: Unemployment
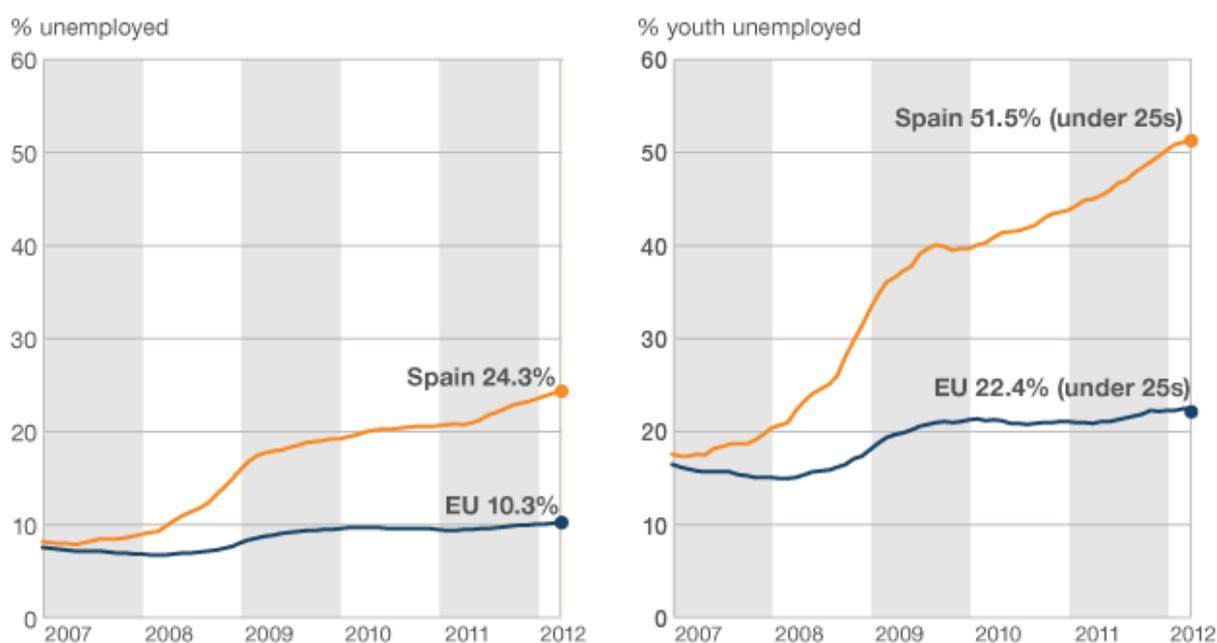
Source: Eurostat

Poverty is increasing; it is estimated that 12.5 million people in Spain (27 per cent of the population) live in relative poverty or are at risk of social exclusion. By March 2013 Spain's jobless figures had risen to more than five million unemployed people, with questions asked as to how many will be able to afford a place to live. And if they cannot, where will they go? In education, Spain suffers from the highest early school leave rate in Europe (26.5 per cent in 2011). Moreover, young student graduates are emigrating because they cannot find jobs that match their qualifications. Between January and June, 2012 40,625 Spaniards are reported to have left the country, a 44.2 percent rise from the same period last year, according to population estimates released by the National Statistics Institute (INE). 'We have become a land of emigration, after being a land of immigration. More people leave than enter the country because we are unable to retain them', explains Antonio Izquierdo, a professor of sociology at ACoruña University. 'If a country's wealth lies in its population, then we are losing wealth'.

To be sure, historically what, how and for what purposes universities teach arises out of and is always realized within socio-historical contexts. For the most part of their history, far from being progressive, universities have legitimized dominant social and political values. Nevertheless, we can draw on other 'ideas' of the university (Newman 1852): the critical and emancipatory power of knowledge and reason; the usefulness of knowledge

for society; and, potential for equality, critical citizens and democracy. Universities can disrupt hierarchies, opening out significant opportunities and achievements for marginalized or under-represented groups and individuals, and can instill altruistic values and outcomes as a contribution to more justice in society. While higher education has a reproductive role in reproducing existing social hierarchies of social class, gender, race and language, it also has this potentially transformative role. But we need tools to enable us to know when higher education is being transformative and when it is being reproductive.

This then is the challenging situation facing Spanish higher education. What does it then mean for a student or graduate to take responsibility for contributing to changes to make Spanish society fair when enabling conditions look quite bad? This paper proposes that educationally valuable 'human capabilities' (Nussbaum 2000; Sen 1999) and plural functionings can take us forward in examining equitable educational futures for higher education, for its graduates and for the contributions of graduates to expanding the basic capabilities of others in society (Walker and McLean 2013).

Human capabilities approach and equitable futures

Consider Clara, a student studying engineering, who is the first in her family to go on to university level study. She has some financial resources (perhaps family savings, a student loan, a scholarship from an engineering company) and the grades (schooling outcomes) to come to University. On the surface she appears to have well-being and good opportunities which have enabled her to access higher education. But now she is struggling because she feels that she does not belong to the University or in the programme, which seem far removed from her upbringing in working class home. She feels alienated. She feels she cannot ask questions of her lecturers or turn to other students for help, or say that she does not understand or try out her own ideas in dialogue.

What theoretical approach would help us to explain Clara's situation and the inequalities she faces? Do we give her more money and resources? Do we ask how satisfied she is? Or do we ask what she can be and do?

This paper proposes the last approach – capabilities - aligned with dialogic educational processes. The approach was conceptualised by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen (1979) in his Tanner lectures as an alternative to other ways of thinking about human well-being. In the capabilities approach to human development the focus is not only on income and other resources (computers, libraries, university buildings and infrastructure, for example) as ends in themselves. Sen rejects GDP or average income in a country as the single measure of human well-being because resources are the means but not the ends of development and further, do not tell us who has how much.[2] A focus on GDP can give a high ranking to countries, even if they are unequal in all sorts of other ways. Spain for example has by no means the worst gap between the richest 10% and the poorest 10% (OECD, 2012), with countries like the UK and the United State far less equal than Spain in income terms. But this gap, or the resources that the University has, or even the average allocation per student does not tell us much about distribution to each student or their meaningful participation and success in university education.

Nor does a focus on university education for economic growth and human capital – however important - tell us much about the hopes of Clara's family, of her struggles for higher level skills and knowledge, how these and other things are important in her life, or what the circumstances are that have affected her access to and participation in higher education. So a resourcist approach, even if it was egalitarian in giving each person an equal amount would still not tell us about Clara's ability to convert her bundle of resources into actual achievements. While decent income is tremendously important it is not a proxy for *all* aspects of human

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[2] This is captured in Nussbaum's (1995: 49) quote from Charles Dickens' *Hard Times,* referring here to Mr Gradgrind's school: 'And he said, "Now this schoolroom is a nation. And in this nation, there is fifty million of money. Isn't this a prosperous nation? Girl Number twenty, isn't this a prosperous nation, and aren't you in a thriving state?" "What did you say?" asked Louisa. "Miss Louisa, I said I didn't know. I thought I couldn't know whether it was a prosperous nation or not, unless I knew who had got the Money and whether any of it was mine. But that had nothing to do with it. It was not in the figures at all", said Sissy wiping her eyes.

development in higher education, or the plural good things that make up a flourishing life. Once sufficient resources are in place have we done enough to implement education which is equitable and transformative?

Nor do we only ask how about people's perceived welfare, that is how satisfied people are with their lives (and then aggregate satisfaction across the nation). Although we would certainly want to know the answer to this question, it is not the only question we need to ask, and we would want also to know how satisfaction is distributed. The difficulty here is that people adapt to bad as well as good circumstances. Generally in adapting to the bad they ask and expect less, or if better off people are very satisfied and some very poor people are not, the overall satisfaction calculus will not tell us this. For example, Clara decides not to try hard in her course because she thinks will fail and rather aims for a low passing grade, because, she says that she knew that if got 50 per cent she would be happy. She ends up setting a low goal for her success but she adapts her preferences (Nussbaum 2000) so as to be satisfied with this reduced goal. If we were to ask if she were satisfied with her study achievements, she would then say she was indeed 'happy'. Have we then done enough for the well-being of Clara and other students?

To evaluate well-being, Sen (1979) rather proposed capabilities as the metric of justice. The approach asks us to consider what people value being and doing, and to work to increase their freedom to be in those ways or to do those things in terms of living lives they regard as good. As Nussbaum explains:

> We ask not only about the person's satisfaction with what she does, but about what she does, and what she is in a position to do (what her opportunities and liberties are). And we ask not just about the resources that are sitting around, but about how those do or do not go to work, enabling [a university student] to function in a fully human way. (2000: 71)

Functioning achievements (beings and doings) indicate what a person manages to do or to be in comparison with others. Thus the functioning may be critical thinking, and the real opportunity for critical thinking is the corresponding capability. Education allows the functioning to be exercised, so that the capability is effectively possible (Robeyns, 2011). Having the freedom to choose functionings from an individual's capabilities set is also intrinsically valuable. But we do not look only at a single functioning (e.g. thinking critically) and then say that a student has well-being. Capabilities are the freedoms each person has to choose and exercise a *combination* of ways of beings and doings they have reason to value. The opportunity overall to choose a good life is then constituted of many different functionings. A student or graduate with a wide capability set of values, knowledge, and skills is empowered to do more with their life, to have more well-being. As educators we would ask: what combinations of well-being functionings are open to our students? For example, to study engineering, to think critically, to read with understanding, to develop good academic arguments, to assist peers in their learning, to have access to work-based experiences, to develop career networks, to move about campus freely and safely, to have good friendships with diverse students, and so on.

Here is an example of student who is developing his capabilities for cosmopolitan thinking through his university education. Sebastian is from Germany and describes participating in his English language course in this way:

> Because I think … the world is becoming kind of smaller and there is so much interaction between different nationalities and so on and so I think it's very important that people become aware of other nationalities and other customs, other behaviours and understand why people act in a certain way. Yeah, I think it is also very interesting because we are here in Ireland, a foreign country for us. You meet different cultures and different behaviour and so there is a comparison between the globalization and what we did in the module as well as the experience and practice. It's very interesting I think. (Quoted in Crosbie 2013: 187)

Here the student is acquiring knowledge and critical thinking to re-evaluate in some way what is important in his life.

In the capabilities approach, the ultimate ends of interpersonal comparisons – how Clara or Sebastian is doing compared to other students - are a person's capabilities developing, not just his or her resources or the satisfaction he or she may claim with regard to aspects of their life. Our question then is: what capabilities does this person have, in comparison with others? Our answer would reveal what is going well or badly in students' lives, and any significant interpersonal variations. We can then turn to educational and social arrangements and social norms, and the fairness of the conditions for students to participate in higher education in order to understand what needs to change. If we agree collectively that critical thinking is important for all students, then justice and transformation would require addressing the shortfall if at all possible whereby some student are able to develop as good critical thinkers and others are not. It would not be helpful to offer money to compensate the students doing badly; even if in the short term this looks attractive it would be to undermine seriously our educational goals. Nor could we just go on what students say as many may adapt to low achievement and yet say they are happy, as Clara does.

The capabilities approach is sensitive also to diversity through the focus on a plurality of functionings and a wide informational basis for social justice evaluations (Sen, 2009).
It allows an analysis of how different individuals can convert available resources into functionings through attending to conversion factors: personal [internal] conversion factors, social conversion factors and environmental [external] conversion factors (Sen, 1999). All make a difference to how an individual converts her resources into functionings. However, conversion factors need to be understood not only one by one in each person's life but relationally – one person's conversion factors will be affected by and affect others and high quality higher education might also operate as a significant social and environmental conversion factor. In a capabilities-friendly education, education would aim to secure and distribute valuable education capabilities to diverse students paying attention to the social arrangements in education (pedagogies, institutional culture, and education policy) and to conversion factors and barriers that might impede the development of opportunities and valued outcomes. Such diversity and conversion factors can also be captured by pedagogical arrangements, as these students indicate in an example taken from students on an international education programme in development studies in the Netherlands:

> During discussions … this year and among ourselves, we found that the most remarkable element of our experience here, outside of the lectures and academic reading, was the sharing of ideas, identities, cultures, ambitions, concerns and experiences with our fellow students. Where and when would we be in a position like this again, able to speak so fluidly, freely, candidly and without (as much) pretence with peers who represent more than 60 nations? Where else would we have this opportunity to see our own reflections in the actions, emotions, behaviours and eyes of others with whom we may not initially have believed we shared certain characteristics? Perhaps to an even greater extent, we began to value the characteristics we do not share and learned from them as well.
> (Quoted in George 2013: 209-2010)

Here is a third example taken from Alejandro Boni and her colleagues' research on students studying a global citizenship curriculum here in Valencia. These students are keen not only to be efficient professionals (although this technical proficiency is of course fundamental and important because we want engineers to build bridges which last, for example), but to also be critical citizens and professionals. Thus one student comments on the importance of the knowledge base in the course, saying: 'The subjects have given me a framework to interpret the world, showing me the structural motives. They were also useful to structure what I already know. They helped me to reflect and think about social justice' (quoted in Boni et al 2011: 10). Another student spoke about the importance of critical thinking: 'Nowadays when I read news in the papers or Internet that tries to give an excessively nice picture of certain issues; I know it is not like that. Of course, in this respect critical thinking has changed us, as you have provided the information that allows us to say: No, it not like that (ibid.: 13). A third student comments on the importance of developing self-awareness: 'being self-aware in the direction you want to take in life [in this way] stops you from seeing yourself as a person who goes with the flow and changes you into an active agent. This awareness to be able to change or not is generated from critical thought and participation'. (ibid)

A capabilities-friendly university would educate students to be critical and responsible citizens, with knowledge of a subject, knowledge about themselves and their goals and values in life, and knowledge for action to make lives go better. Such graduates could work simultaneously for their own well-being and as professionals their functionings could enhance the basic capabilities of others, for example by helping to create jobs or by providing high quality public services.

Sen and Nussbaum make a distinction between capabilities as the opportunities and functionings as actual achievements. They both argue that the focus of public policy should be to develop capabilities, leaving it up to people to decide on how to lead their lives (that is, which functionings to realize). However, this does not work well in the space of education where the relationship between capabilities and functionings is rather important. Functionings are achieved living, and having the functioning (for example of critical thinking) in turn strengthens the underlying capability so that both functionings and capabilities matter, the former in terms of actual achieved living and the latter in terms of freedoms to achieve (Sen, 1999). Nussbaum (2000) explains that to develop a capability (for example for lifelong learning), we might need to promote a relevant capability 'by requiring the functioning that nourishes it' (ibid.: 91). She suggests that 'the more crucial a function is to attaining and maintaining other capabilities, the more entitled we may be to promote actual functioning in some cases, within limits set by an appropriate respect for citizen's choices' (ibid.: 92).

Thus, in a forthcoming book (Walker and McLean 2013), with regard to public-good professionalism, we suggest that it is crucial for neophyte professionals to *practice* being public-good professionals, and for university educators to evaluate public-good functionings in order that students might develop and enhance their capabilities through the course of their higher education. It is to functionings that we turn to assess how students are developing and what kind of graduates they might potentially be; an absence of a functioning can indicate an absence of valued capabilities. Moreover, observed functionings are proxies for assessing whether or not the underlying capabilities have been formed and are being sustained. For example, a mathematics literacy access course can enable a student to proceed to the first year of the degree. But unless teaching and learning works to sustain those mathematics literacy gains this is not a secure functioning and may even become a 'corrosive disadvantage' (Wolff and De-Shalit 2007).

There is a further education-specific issue, that of selecting core valuable capabilities because not any form of university education will do. Historically some universities have sustained authoritarian and even cruel governments, and we have examples from Europe as well as my own country of South Africa. So educators need to deliberate and agree which capabilities and corresponding functionings are valuable and so should be supported in policy and practice. Sen and Nussbaum disagree on the matter of capabilities lists but the disagreement turns on the place of a canonical list of universal capabilities. In Nussbaum's (2000, 2011) approach the philosopher formulates, justifies and defends the conception of the good life and a central list of human capabilities, all of which Nussbaum judges as important and incommensurable. To remove any of the central capabilities would be to make a life 'not worthy of human dignity' (2011: 31). All democratic nations should therefore specify minimum thresholds of each of these capabilities for everyone. Sen's (2009) capability approach is deliberately incomplete. He accepts that there are some basic capabilities which could be agreed by everyone, for example those captured in the Human Development Index. But he argues that to specify a single list of capabilities is to change the approach into a theory, whereas he intends it to operate as a general framework for making normative assessments about quality of life. Therefore he does not stipulate basic human capabilities, nor how different capabilities should be combined into an overall indicator of quality of life. For him a 'workable solution' is possible without complete social unanimity being achieved. For Sen (1999) the process of public discussion is crucial, with people (and not just governments) as co-creators of development and change.

My approach steers a middle way between one list and no list to argue for workable agreements around core valuable higher education capabilities which could draw on the lists of others and on empirical investigations. An open-ended approach may not work well if it comes up against erroneous common sense understandings of disadvantage, for example people might not understand that gender equity is not settled even though the overall majority of undergraduates are now women. In our application to professional education, Monica McLean and I (Walker and McLean, 2013) bring together elements of public reasoning, the idea of a partial

ranking – some professional capabilities which can be agreed are valuable for a comparative assessment of justice - and an ideal value of human dignity, which morally guides the right thing to do in concrete professional situations. We suggest that in thinking about professional education (and here we include engineering education as one of our case studies), it is not possible to support just any freely chosen capability and functioning, for example, to be able to patronize poor communities, or for professionals to treat immigrant workers in a racist way, or to be professionally indifferent to suffering.

Professional capabilities ought to be worthwhile and to capture worthwhile functionings for public service. We think there is a need for capability dimensions both to give some content to professional education, to work out what public-good professional education might look like, and to then consider how practice and reality accords with the ideal; we need some yardstick to judge whether things were more or less just and fair and indeed, effective. We have therefore developed a list of eight professional capabilities extrapolated from empirical functionings which were seen to be of value to various stakeholders: Informed vision; Affiliation (solidarity); Resilience; Social and collective struggle; Emotional reflexivity; Integrity; Assurance and confidence; Knowledge and skills. Spanish educators would similarly need to consider what the core capabilities are for a graduate, and the underlying human development oriented educational ideal which informed any selection. (For us this was public-good professionalism)

There are other examples; here I offer one more taken from the work of Alberta Spreafico (2013) in her study of graduates from Barnard College in the USA. From the college's own policies and goals, she derived these nine capabilities: to be an empowered and active agent; to be able to lead a professionally satisfying life; to be able to learn for the pleasure of learning and be creative; being able to develop meaningful social relations; being able to be respected and relate in a constructive manner with diversity; being able to be healthy in one's body, mind and spirit; being able to adapt and relate to different and changing situations; being able to be a responsible global citizen; being able to appreciate and respect the natural environment (ibid.: 136-139). Each of these broad capabilities is supported in her research by more detailed functionings that Barnard College students have reason to value to choose.

Both lists might form a starting point for discussions in other contexts about the capabilities which a particular University would want to secure for all its students.

While philosophically capabilities would appear to support an individual maximizing calculus (what each person has reason to value being and doing for their own good life), in our work on public-good professionalism, a concern for and obligations to others and the foundational value of human dignity directs this maximizing calculus to take into account the improvement of the well-being of others as a means to my own well-being. What I have reason to value as significant to my own good life then includes advancing the well-being of others. University education could play a role in shaping such ethically worthwhile and non-instrumental personal calculations. Students would learn to deliberate about the possibilities for a life well lived, and develop insight and self-awareness about lives of significance and responsibility. For example, students and graduates could reflect and deliberate on the reasons and values upholding their professional agency, on their freedom and power to act in society, but also their freedom and power to question and reassess prevailing norms and values (Dréze and Sen 2002). They could learn that being more advantaged generates obligations to others because, 'it would be a mistake to see capability only as a concept of human advantage, not also as a concept in human obligation' (Sen 2008: 336). If someone has the power to make a change that he or she can see will reduce injustice in the world, then there is a strong social argument for doing just that (ibid.).

Curriculum, capabilities and functionings

The kind of education that forms the capabilities of graduates who care about and act for social justice would have instrumental, intrinsic and social value, and transformative potential. Crucially, having education affects the development and expansion of other capabilities so that an education capability expands other important human freedoms. Sen (2009) gives some indirect helpful curriculum and pedagogical guidance in that he ascribes a central role to our powers of 'public reasoning' as a moral and political imperative. The advancement of justice depends on democracy – deepening democracy depends on discussion and collective reasoning that

injects more information and knowledge, diverse perspectives and plural voices into debates. This process of public reasoning with, and listening to others and their perspectives enables continuous scrutiny and assessments about how a society (or university) and its members are doing through open debate, including debate about values and principles and the curriculum. Open, critical and scholarly discussion in universities is essential to this education project; discussion has a central role in human life and it is itself educative.

Nussbaum has written more extensively on the specificity of education. Unlike Sen, she is in favour of a list of ten central universal capabilities (Nussbaum, 2000: 78-80) and education is implicit and explicit in the development of these capabilities like 'practical reasoning' and 'affiliation', while her capability of 'senses, imagination and thought' is more explicitly educational. This capability includes: 'Being able to use the senses to imagine, think and reason – and to do these things in a "truly human way", a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including but by no means limited to literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training'. Education involves being able to seek meaning in one's life, to have pleasure in from learning, and to use imagination and one's intellect protected by basic liberties such as freedom of expression.

More specifically, she (1997) has identified three education capabilities for the formation of democratic citizens. Her first is a focus on the examined life, which involves the capacity for self-awareness and autonomy developed through critical thinking in which one asks, 'what do I want to stand for and for what am I personally accountable', exposing these questions to scrutiny, evidence and argument. Students learn to deal with differences among themselves and their disagreements; they take responsibility for their own reasoning and debate ideas with others in an atmosphere of mutual respect for reason. Second is the ability to see oneself as a world citizen; Nussbaum's global citizens are bound not only to a local community but interconnected to distant others human beings by ties of equal dignity and genuine curiosity about the lives of others. It requires us to think about the glaring inequalities in the world and the defects in models of global development based on GDP and incomes. In this way students acquire the understanding that makes it more possible to solve common problems in the world, because these are everyone's problems and not just the problems of one group or one country. The third ability is that of 'narrative imagination', by which Nussbaum means the ability to understand intelligently how the world is experienced by someone different from oneself, their emotions, desires and vulnerability. It requires empathy and a genuine and humble attempt to understand the lives of others. These capabilities require appropriate curriculum content including learning about racial, ethnic and religious differences and about the history and experiences of women, discussed at length in her account of liberal humanities education (Nussbaum, 1997), together with Socratic teaching methods which can 'generate excitement about rational debate' (ibid.: 300) and complex understandings.

Based on human development values and Nussbaum's and Sen's guidance, the overarching aim of education (and in the light of Spain's own higher education law), should be *to educate graduates who contribute well to public service & social justice, in small and big ways*. Specific education aims, pedagogies and outcomes would be aligned and might look something like this as a framework for interrogation and discussion:

Table 1: Curriculum, pedagogy and capabilities: a framework for discussion

Curriculum aims	Capabilities formed through curriculum, for example:	Teaching and pedagogy, for example:	Functionings, for example:
Empowerment Participation Equity Sustainability	Practical reasoning, higher knowledge & 'deep' critical thinking Imagination, empathy & meaning Global citizenship	Coherent curriculum design and progression Making knowledge accessible and meaningful through skilful teaching Discussion and dialogue Reflexivity about knowledge, inequalities/advantages, self and action Inclusive &intercultural methods Culture of respect for all Appropriate assessment methods	A knowledgeable & critical agent & lifelong learner A disciplined, independent thinker, having multiple perspectives on the world, open-minded, reasoning A graduate able to decide what they stand for and for what they are accountable A graduate who recognises the full human dignity of all; is decent humble, curious and tolerant towards others A graduate who respects the natural environment and life

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

A capabilities-friendly education in universities, such as that outlined in the table above, would be instrumentally, intrinsically and socially valuable. It would ask what students need to know and do instrumentally in order to deal innovatively and confidently with rapid technological change and the exploding access to information and to get a decent, career-building job. But it would also be concerned with how education and knowledge are intrinsically valuable (a love of mathematics or physics or solving engineering problems), and also socially important in enabling an understanding of the lives of others and a concern to develop people's 'basic' capabilities though professional contributions (for example simple technologies for water supply in a developing country community, developing sustainable power sources, contributions to sophisticated well-constructed infrastructure projects or technologies which benefit the lives of all, as well as fair employment practices, treating workers with respect, and so on).

CONCLUSION

What is at stake is not just an academic debate but practices, processes and outcomes towards an educational future for universities in Spain in which the direction of travel is towards 'redressable injustices' (Sen 2009: vii). Concerns for equity in higher education and society and decent lives would direct students, graduates, researchers and university teachers as bearers of knowledge (basic, 'blue skies' and applied) , technology and information to economic and social development which promotes human capabilities and well-being for all. How a university education actually does this, with what effects, would need to be evaluated empirically according to a capabilities metric to understand how well students were doing in the space of educational arrangements and graduate identity formation.

It is important, as Nussbaum (2010) argues, that university education is for rich human lives, rather than obtuse but technically proficient and knowledgeable professionals with limited affiliation to the lives of others or concerns for building an inclusive democracy. The challenges seem tremendous when the economy is struggling and jobs are harder to come by. On the other hand if universities do not see human development as a moral urgency and a democratic imperative, something to which they and their students can contribute even in the smallest ways, hopes for responsible citizens building better futures seem very remote indeed.

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