Deep Democracy :
A Political and Social Economy Approach

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to offer a somewhat novel theory of deep democracy from a political and social economy perspective. The theory of deep democracy presented here makes a distinction between formal aspects of democracy and the deeper structural aspects. In order for democracy to be deep, democratic practices have to become institutionalized in such a way that they become part of normal life in a democratic society. In this sense, ontologically, deep democracy overlaps with Barber's (1984) idea of "strong" democracy. There are, however, epistemological differences as well as differences of emphasis, particularly in the economic sphere. Cluster conditions for deep democracy include both cultural-political and socio-economic conditions.

1. Introduction

The main purpose of this paper is to offer a somewhat novel theory of deep democracy from a political and social economy perspective. The theory of deep democracy presented here makes a distinction between formal aspects of democracy and the deeper structural aspects. In order for democracy to be deep, democratic practices have to become institutionalized in such a way that they become part of normal life ina democratic society. In this sense, ontologically, deep democracy overlaps with Barber's (1984) idea of "strong" democracy. There are, however, epistemological differences as well as differences of emphasis, particularly in the economic sphere. Cluster conditions for deep democracy include both cultural-political and socio-economic conditions. Our theory of deep democracy also answers important skeptical challenges of postmodern philosophers. However, we do not discuss such matters--- except in so far as they relate to the moral agency of the democratic actors---in this paper. The interested reader is referred to Khan(1992;1993 a,b;1994;1998,2003 and 2007). In this note we develop the idea of movimg towards   deep democracy in the context of important failures of both capitalism and socialism in the last century.[1]

The paper proceeds in the following ways. In the next section, we discuss the meaning of the political and social economy approach as we use this term.   Next, we discuss in greater detail the economic and political dimensions of deep democracy. Finally, we take up the crucial task of defending the subjectivity of a deeply democratic individual.   Conclusions follow.

2. The Meaning of Political and Social Economy Approach

In this paper by political economy we mean the classical state and   civil society and their interactions. By social economy we mean the underlying social basis of the political economy including the family structure.

Khan(1994,1998,2007) presents deep democracy as a structure in addition to formal democratic apparatus such that the practice of such democratic life can be reproduced with the basic values intact. Change is not precluded. But all such changes should deepen democracy, not weaken it. Deep democracy in this sense is intimately connected with economic and social justice.

In order to make such a concept of economic justice tenable, however, at least a cluster of conditions connected with deepening democracy must be realized(Khan 1994, 1998). The following is a list of such cluster conditions.

Cluster Conditions for Deep Democracy[2]

1. ending of economic and other status inequalities;
2. public emphasis on furthering democratic autonomy, internationalism, and individuality;
3. adequate incomes for all socially recognized work, as well as for children, the handicapped, the aged, and others not able to work in order to promote equality of capability;

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[1] In this context, see Frame(2007), Khan(1994, 1998, 2006 and 2007).

[2] Khan(1998)p. 101

4. respect for and articulation of differences in public life and within parties;

5. downward democratic congruence of and within ordinary social institutions, including work place democracy;

6. debate over the history and future of the movement- the nature of deep democracy – in neighborhood assemblies and schools

7. cultivation of respect for civil disobedience, strikes, and other acts of protest on major public issues;

8. integration of local and national leaders into features of ordinary economic and political life and creation of arenas for criticism;

9. curtailment of all direct political intervention in the arts, religion, and personal life;

10.establishment of independent judicial, policy, communication and electoral review bodies;

11. diversity of perspective in communications and education;

12. use of differential, serial referenda on central issues;

13. public funding of issue-oriented committees as well as parties;

14. takeover of some security and civil judicial functions by neighborhood or regional democratic associations; abolition of centralized, especially secret police powers and units;

15. universal public service, military or community; restructuring of armed forces in a defensive, civilian-oriented direction; removal of authoritarianism of rank and status, and institution of democratic unit organization, allowing serious discussion of policy;

16. proportional representation of parties;

17. abolition of patriarchy;

18. adoption of democratic child-rearing practices;

19. full freedom of social intercourse of diverse groups;

20. full freedom of diverse cultural expression;

21. encouragement of the arts and varying modes of expression so that every individual can experience and struggle with the challenge of non-dominating discourse;

22. practice of radical forms of individual and group subjectivity leading to what Guattari has termed the molecular revolution;

23. adoption of technology and innovation systems which will reinforce the conditions above, rather than undercutting them.

It may be useful to elaborate upon the idea of social capabilities in condition 3 above. We can summarize following Nussbaum and Sen and give a social interpretation of all the capabilities as in Khan(1998):

<div align="center">Summary of Social Capabilities[3]</div>

1. Being able to live to the end of a complete human life, as far as possible.
2. Being able to be courageous.
3. Being able to have opportunities for sexual satisfaction.
4. Being able to move from place to place.
5. Being able to avoid unnecessary and non-useful pain and to have pleasurable experiences.

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[3] Sen and Nussbaum, as cited by Khan(1998)p. 95

6.   Being able to use the five senses.
7.   Being able to imagine.
8.   Being able to think and reason.
9.   Being acceptably well-informed.
10. Being able to have attachments to things and persons outside ourselves.
11. Being able to love, grieve, to feel longing and gratitude.
12. Being able to form a conception of the good.
13. Capability to choose; ability to form goals, commitments, values.
14. Being able to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's own life.
15. Being able to live for and to others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of familial and social interaction.
16. Being capable of friendship.
17. Being able to visit and entertain friends.
18. Being able to participate in the community.
19. Being able to participate politically and being capable of justice.
20. Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants and the world of nature.
21. Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities.
22. Being able to live one's own life and nobody else's.
23. Being able to live in one's very own surroundings and context.
24. Capability to have self-respect.
25. Capability to appear in public without shame.
26. Capability to live a rich and fully human life, up to the limit permitted by natural possibilities.
27. Ability to achieve valuable functionings.

Having summarized our approach to deep democracy from thjs political and social economy perspective, we now turn to the crucial problem of deepening democracy as a set of practices over time.

3. Towards a Deeply Democratic Society

In this section we discuss the above considerations in somewhat greater detail. The premise from which we begin is that the aim of any sane, progressive socio-economic system must go beyond the blind accumulation of capital or development at all costs. The goal of a just political and social economy is to guarantee each individual's freedom or ability to live the kind of life she chooses.   'Capabilities' can be construed as the general powers of human body and mind that can be acquired, maintained, nurtured and developed.[4]   Capabilities are economic, but they are also political, social, psychological/spiritual, and mental.   Further, no one capability can be simply substituted for another; one cannot substitute the capability of political freedom, or the capability to partake in meaningful work, with the economic capability to maintain a

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[4]As interpreted by Khan, Haider.   (1998).   *Technology, Development and Democracy.*   Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, UK. p. 95.   Here, Khan emphasizes the irreducibly social nature of certain capabilities.

certain standard of consumption- all are irreducible.   A deeply democratic society must take into account all forms of capabilities without the sacrifice of some over others.

As Frame(2007) illustrates, there are significant challenges to this aim under the capitalist system as currently implemented. For all members of a society to develop freely, one individual's capabilities cannot infringe upon the capabilities of another individual. In other words, any form of exploitation in society, no matter how legally construed or hidden systematically, infringes upon an individual's freedom.   In addition, radical change without actual participation and decision from below is impossible. What are the necessary economic, political, and social conditions for deepening democracy over time? What are the theoretical conditions for creating a society based upon egalitarianism, solidarity, self-governance within both the economic and political sphere, and the enhancement of freedom for individuals to choose the kind of lives they wish to live?

Economic Preconditions for the Construction of a Deeply Democratic Society

For a deeply democratic society to exist it must contain the political and social conditions that allow for the full development of the individual's capabilities.   Yet it must also contain the necessary economic conditions which provide the material base for egalitarian political and social participation as well as physical and psychological health. In economic systems which promote or sanction significant inequalities and/or alienating divisions of labor, deep democracy is impossible and democracy is limited to the surface rhetoric of formal democracy. Proponents of deep democracy must examine, therefore, which specific values and institutions within an economic framework would support or hinder democratic practices from taking root and flourishing.   This sub-section will first consider the principal values upon which an economic system conducive to deep democracy must strive to adhere to and second, possible institutional changes that would abet the concrete realization of a deeply democratic society.

Can the economic ever be ranked before the social?   It seems that such a fundamental question must be addressed if a humane economic system is to be constructed which is not merely propagated by the blind drive to accumulate, as in capitalism, or develop without regard to social relations, as in the more vulgar forms of economic determinism.   Sen argues that in contrast to the utilitarian approach of maximal GDP growth the fundamental goal of development should be the development of the substantive freedoms- capabilities- to choose a life one has reason to value.[5] In other words, the aim of economic growth should be to further the freedom of the individual to choose the kind of life he or she desires, be that a life of advanced education, work possibilities, favorable work conditions, etc.   The question which needs further examination as an extension to this precondition is, precisely *what* values must drive, shape, and ultimately determine an economic system so that the full capabilities of each individual are developed?   In other words, what values must be given primary consideration so that the system itself does not perpetuate a positive feedback loop in which inequality, hierarchy, and eventually exploitation and alienation come to dominate?

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[5]Sen (2000).   *Development as Freedom.*   Anchor Books, New York. p. 74

Michael Albert and Robin Hahnel suggest the evaluation of economic institutions based upon five moral and logical criteria; equity, efficiency, self-management, solidarity, and variety.   To this list I would add transparency to all those affected (consumers and producers alike) of the full social costs of every economic transaction to the greatest extent possible, and ecological consideration.   The gross forms of exploitation and income disparity which lead to capabilities deprivation can only be eliminated if the economic system is fundamentally equitable.   Albert and Hahnel chose to define equity as based upon effort alone rather than accumulated private property or fortuitous individual talents.[6] Gilbert suggests equal incomes for all socially recognized work.[7]   The capabilities enhancing viewpoint might maintain, in slight contrast, that equity is desirable only to the extent that it fulfills the individual's ability to partake socially on equal footing with other members of society.   Such a viewpoint might break with the maxim equal pay for equal effort; in the case of the physically ill or mentally handicapped, for example, greater pay above the effort expended may be necessary.   In any case, it would seem that the most vital components of equity would be the elimination of surplus value extraction and compensation for the disadvantaged.   This would include the elimination of all forms of surplus-value extraction currently found under the wage labor system of capitalism.   An economic system which eliminated the extraction of surplus value would greatly abet in the abolishment of exploitation and hierarchy, and to some extent, class disadvantages.

The increasing self-management of workers would further erode hierarchy, division of labor, and class, as all members would gain versatile experience in organizing and decision making.   Through self-management alone can the dilemma of alienation in either hierarchal capitalist systems or within top-down command structures of centralized planning can be alleviated.   If we consider Sen's capabilities approach which advocates the freedom of the individual to choose a work environment suitable to his needs, it is hardly likely that any individual would choose less self-management over increased self-management.   If the goal of deep democracy is indeed capabilities enhancement, the development of freedom and choice must not be excluded from the sphere of work. Solidarity within the workplace through team effort, rather than competitiveness, is also crucial in the return of man to his social essence as envisioned by Marx and overcoming the alienation of 'species-being' that he experiences where economic transactions are a zero-sum game. Work as a variety of tasks rather than one specific repetition would help to develop and unite the currently disparate emotional, physical, mental and spiritual aspects of the individual.   Through a variety of tasks the breakdown of the invidious division between manual and mental labor which centralizes authority within the hands of the elite could be eroded.   Finally, a transparent, eco-friendly economic system that allows citizens full awareness of the social and environmental costs of the economic transactions within that system is vital to full citizen participation and decision making.

Is such a seemingly utopian economic system possible?   Numerous authors have written on alternative economic systems, some advocating gradual or partial changes in

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[6]Albert, Michael and Hahnel, Robin. (1991). *The Political Economy of Participatory Economics.* Princeton University Press, New Jersey. pp. 10-11.

[7]Gilbert p. 345

the direction of the above mentioned values, others theoretically constructing a hypothetical economic vision which would include all the institutions and regulations necessary should humanity ever reach a stage where it could adopt such a system.   Khan suggests furthering democratic practices through civilian participation in the oversight, design, governance, and evaluation processes of technological development.   He maintains that in a deeply democratic society, research and development expenditures, for example, will be publicly discussed and debated and some asset redistribution so that the poor can have access to markets would be necessary.[8]

Albert and Hahnel in *The Political Economy of Participatory Economics* explore the theoretical feasibility of creating highly de-centralized, democratic, economic model with a radically different system of production, consumption, and allocation. The participants in the planning procedure are the worker councils and federations, the consumer councils and federations, and an Iteration Facilitation Board (IFB). The IFB announces 'indicative prices' for all final goods and services, capital goods, natural resources, and categories of labor.   Consumer councils and federations respond with consumption proposals. Worker councils and federations respond with production proposals listing the outputs they propose and the inputs they need to make them. The IFB then calculates the excess demand or supply for each final good and service, capital good, natural resource, and category of labor, and adjusts the indicative price for the good up, or down, in light of the excess demand or supply. Using the new indicative prices consumer and worker councils and federations revise and resubmit their proposals; individual worker and consumer councils must continue to revise their proposals until they submit one that is accepted by the other councils.   The planning process continues until there are no longer excess demands for any goods, any categories of labor, any primary inputs, or any capital stocks, until a feasible plan is reached.

The three economic processes of production, consumption and allocation are determined by the production, consumer, and IFB councils, reaching from the micro-level of the workplace, the meso-level of the community, to the macro-level of the nation. Carefully regulated democratic participation in all the councils wherein each citizen is a fully recognized, equal participant promotes decentralization and inhibits the centralization of power which occurs in central planning. The construction of workers' councils that allow for democratic deliberation self-management is promoted. Solidarity is promoted through cooperation in decision making and non-hierarchal positions in the workplace while variety of tasks circumvents the ossification of the traditional divisions of labor and hierarchy.

Concerning equity, Albert and Hahnel's economic model strikes at a very central issue.   Can money as an exchange system remain as 'capital' and *not* promote competitiveness, acquisitiveness, and exploitation?   In other words, is it possible for money, as an object which can be accumulated separate from one's own labor or effort, remain the foundation of a deeply democratic society?   Equity, in their radical economic model, is insured through 'payment' for effort- which is ultimately no more than equal exchange through effort for consumption goods as opposed to capital accumulation. However, the real problem is to go beyond treating labor power as a commodity.   In other words, in terms of value theory, we need to go beyond the value form itself. This

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[8]Khan (1998) p. 132

requires going beyond what Marx calls 'bourgeois rights' in his *Critique of Gotha Program*.[9] This would indeed call for a radical restructuring of the current economic system, the feasibility of which Albert and Hahnel discuss in detail.

Political Preconditions for a Deeply Democratic Society

Rights which enhance the ability of each individual to participate politically, equally and fully with respect to all other members of society, constitute a vital component of a deeply democratic society.   The extent to which political rights are relevant can be argued from a variety of perspectives. From the Marxist perspective, political rights are reflective of the extent to which citizens are not alienated from the political processes in society. Our theory of deep democracy does not separate political processes from all other forms of power in society, be they social, political, or economic, or ideological. The extent to which the disadvantaged class in a society suffers from the exploitation of the oppressive classes is as much reflected in the political alienation of the oppressed as their economic alienation. Deep democracy criticizes the separative characteristic of the state. As an alien power, it stands above and apart from the subordinate classes.   Like the fetish character of commodities, wherein the human created product comes to dominate its creators, the state, a creation of human political endeavors, comes to dominate the individual.   The individual has no direct control over the instruments he is being governed by.   In fact, he does not have any true influence whatsoever.   Legislatures, executive agencies, courts, political parties, constitutions and laws, in effect, all the processes of legislating, administering, and governing, are remote processes to the average citizen.   However, they govern entirely his public life.   Hence, with the increasing power of the state, the public life of the individual is increasingly governed by an alien power that stands separate and apart from him.   Hence, if class, economic, social or any other form of oppression is to cease, political rights must be given priority.

Barber's *Strong Democracy* argues for political rights from a somewhat different but no less important vantage point.   He criticizes the liberal concept of democracy as inherently limited in its conception of both the individual and the social contract between individual and state.   The individual in liberal theory is no more than, "….a creature of appetite, or of reason indentured to appetite, liberal man is seen as incapable of bearing the weight of his ideals."[10] The role of the state in liberal democracy, Barber claims, is no more than that of a 'zookeeper.'   The conundrum which liberal democracy finds unable to resolve is the tension between the freedom of the individual and the power of state.   The state, a necessary apparatus to protect the freedom of the individual from being infringed upon by others, ends up usurping the freedom of the individual itself. The origin of this dilemma arises because liberal democracy does not truly regard the citizen's role as a participatory one; hence the characteristic of the state as usurping the natural freedom of the citizen arises.   Only a political system which associates 'with a civic culture nearer to the themes of participation, citizenship, and political activity that

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[9] Refer to Khan, "Value, Social Capabilities, Alienation: The Right to Revolt."

[10] Barber, Benjamin. (2003). *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age.*   University of California Press, Berkeley CA. p. 24

are democracy's central virtues,'[11] in other words, a political system which helps men and women to realize their potential best through democratic participation rather than their worst, remedies the political alienation and apathy found in formal democracies.

From the developmental and capabilities approach, Sen offers three different perspectives as to why political rights are necessary. First, political rights are inalienable rights as capabilities and inherent to an individual's well-being as much as any other capabilities, economic or social. Self-determination, liberty, and democracy are just as much capabilities to be developed as any other. Second, the instrumental role of political rights is crucial in enhancing the hearing that people get in expressing their political and economic needs. As Sen points out, no famine has ever been known to occur in a democracy. Last, political rights are necessary in the constructive role which they play in the conceptualization of "needs" in a social context. Public debate, discussion, and the civil liberties to engage in them shape how people conceptualize their own needs.[12]

The question which one must engage with then is not so much whether or not political rights are necessary. The question, then, is what hinders political rights as capabilities, whether it is the capability to engage politically on equal footing as any other member of society, or the capability to engage in a political setting which fosters self-governance, fellowship of civic association, or mutual deliberation, decision and work.[13] Progress in this direction, like the question of economic capabilities, must consider the complex issue of political alienation which arises, as radicals note, from the disparate capabilities of individuals caught in a class based society. In the call for liberty and democracy, the difference between formal rights, which are possessed by both the poor and the rich, and effective rights, which are profoundly affected by hierarchy, division of labor, economic inequality, political elitism, cannot simply be ignored.

In addition to the social and economic structures which hinder the political rights of individuals, deeply democratic societies must evaluate the institutional structures of formal democracy and critique their effectiveness in providing real political capabilities to citizens. As Barber argues in *Strong Democracy* liberal democracy is both too limited both in its concept of the individual, and lacks the necessary political institutions for truly participatory democratic processes. A deeply democratic society must strive to implement concrete institutions that promote democracy. Accountable institutions of representation and leadership, participatory political processes enjoined by a highly informed citizenry, and progressive legislation are three areas of focus here.

A deeply democratic society seeks to enhance the political capabilities of each citizen in respect to self-governance, freedom, equality, and justice. Certain features in formal democracy appear unable to fully provide political capabilities to citizens. The first feature which stands prominent is the issue of representation. In cases of small communities, direct democracy may allow for equal representation and participation of each citizen; however, large regimes or nation-states necessitate some form of political representation. Yet formal democracy, or representative democracy, can be criticized as

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[11]Barber p. 25
[12]Sen p. 148
[13]Barber p. 24

the political rule of electorally chosen elites, who are often biased with partisan interests. Benjamin Barber criticizes the concept of representation itself as fundamentally flawed, "…men and women who are not directly responsible through common deliberation, common decision, and common action for policies that determine their common lives are not really free at all…..citizens become subjects to laws they do not truly participate in making; they become the passive constituents of representatives who, far from reconstituting the citizens' aims and interests, usurp their civic functions and deflect their civic energies."[14] To a great deal this can be attributed to the problem of class and economic inequalities. With a more equitable socio-economic system such as the participatory economic system envisioned by Hahnel and Albert which decentralizes economic decision making and checks the usurpation of resources by elites, the partisan interest of politicians representing class-bias and political alienation of ordinary citizens would be greatly reduced.

However, some institutional changes to formal democracy would be necessary that would limit the purely political power of representatives and leaders. Gilbert recommends institutionalized possibilities of recall, criticism, and restriction on pay of representatives.[15] Representatives at the local, state, and national level could be subject to public evaluation and/or criticism and in cases of transgressions recall, allowing for greater accountability. Restrictions on pay comparable to salaries of other workers (in a society wherein roughly equal incomes are the norm) would discourage individuals from political involvement for monetary gains. In addition, measures taken to guard against the growth of a 'political elite'- wherein certain individuals become professional politicians for life and can thereby manipulate political power for their particularistic interests- would be necessary. Such measures would include a limit to one's time in office and a limit to one's involvement in politics overall. Additional measures might have to be implemented to avoid the development of political familial dynasties. The establishment of independent judicial, policy, communication and electoral review bodies would maintain a system of checks and balances. To check the monopoly of one or two powerful parties, Gilbert also recommends proportional representation of parties in accordance to the percentage by which the party is elected.[16]

Beyond institutional checks and balances of representatives, a deeply democratic society must be as highly decentralized as possible. This would entail both a highly informed, active citizenry combined with institutions which delegate decision making power directly into the hands of the people. Barber's 'strong democracy' advocates unmediated self-governance through local, state, and national institutions which allow for discussion, decision-making and action at all three levels. At the local level, Barber recommends a national system of neighborhood assemblies of from one to five thousand citizen with deliberative eventually local legislative competence as well as selective local elections to local office by lottery with pay initiatives. At the national level, he recommends a national initiative and referendum process which permits popular initiatives and referenda on congressional legislation. In contrast to current trends of

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[14]Barber p. 147
[15]Gilbert p. 317
[16]Khan p. 101

political apathy, self-governance would call for a highly informed citizenry.   Barber recommends such programs as a civic videotext service and civic educational postal act which would promote full civic education, and a program of universal citizen service. Khan and Gilbert call for the establishment of a universal public service which would involve either military or community service.

Similar to the democratic, civilian based ideals of the Chinese People's Liberation Army practiced during the Chinese Revolution, Khan and Gilbert call for the restructuring of armed forces in a 'defensive, civilian- oriented direction' along with the 'removal of authoritarianism of rank and status, and institution of democratic unit organization, allowing serious discussion of policy.'[17] In addition, deeply democratic governance would necessitate the abolishment of all centralized, secret police powers and units as well as secret military interventions in foreign governments. Deep democracy, and the possibility of internationalism and solidarity, cannot exist when many foreign policies, some of a more nefarious nature, are regulated to elite decisions, as in the case of the U.S.A. when many foreign military interventions circumvent both congressional and public oversight.[18] The appendix offers a full recount Barber's strong democratic program for revitalizing citizenship.

Finally, the adoption of progressive legislation similar to the U.N. Charter on Human rights, which calls for both the protection of individual rights as well as the explicit rights of women, minorities, or other disadvantaged groups would ensure, beyond deeply democratic, decentralized deliberation, a standard of human rights.   Even if a decision settled through democratic deliberation, it must be invalidated in cases where that decision oppresses particular groups in society, or upholds exploitative norms.   A deeply democratic society in all cases must seek to uphold the equal economic and political rights of all citizens.

Social Capabilities

Beyond economic and political preconditions, for a deeply democratic society to be both sustainable and fully human, we need to question more deeply the meaning of well-being. The development of 'social capabilities' is no less crucial but perhaps more difficult to define. Social capabilities are capabilities which can only be developed in relation to others.   They consist of positive relations to other members of society as well as a healthy relationship to oneself. Sen and Nussbaum list the capabilities to think and reason, to imagine, to be able to form a conception of the good, to be capable of having self-respect, to be able to participate in a community, among others.   If we conceive of social possibilities in the context of legislation, Khan includes as part of the set of cluster conditions for a deeply democratic society the abolition of patriarchy, the adoption of democratic child-rearing practices, the full freedom of social intercourse of diverse groups, and the full freedom of diverse cultural expression.[19]   A progressive legislation which ensures these basic rights would be the first step for the establishment of social capabilities.

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[17]Khan p. 102

[18]See Johnson, Chalmers.   (2004). *The Sorrows of Empire.*   Henry Holt and Company, New York. pp. 131-151.

[19]Khan p. 101

Beyond progressive legislature, truly deep democracy would call for a breakdown of the monopoly of intellectual, artistic, scientific, and spiritual elitism. It is as impossible to judge scientifically, given this historical elitism, the extent to which the majority are capable of developing in these areas as it would have been to determine the intellectual/spiritual potential of women two hundred years ago under patriarchy. The bias of class based societies towards these social capabilities has pervaded social norms to such a profound extent that only an elite few are able, or even believe they are able, to develop in any of these areas. The elite produce art and culture, the many simply consume it. At the same time, overwhelmingly art and culture portray a life style and culture alien and inaccessible to lower classes. Science, or other intellectual endeavors are equally inaccessible to the majority both due to the gulf between mental and manual labor, as well as the price of education. It may be argued that under the current capitalist society education is more widespread and accessible than ever before. Yet this, too, comes at a price. As already discussed extensively under the section on alienation, in a consumerist society, even the limited artistic, scientific, intellectual and spiritual fields are commodified, infringing upon the individual's ability to perceive anything without a price. A deeply democratic society would both have to disentangle the elitism which typically surrounds these areas as well as distance material means from the decision to participate or not in these areas. This could be done by free, accessible, lifelong adult education with the reduced working hours available under participatory economics.

Within social institutions such as education, greater democratic practices are also necessary. Alternative systems of education have experimented with such practices to considerable success. Education centers built upon the philosophy of the Indian thinker Krishnamurti attest to this. His educational philosophy protests against the typical use of reward/punishment, competition and fear and hierarchy which, according to him, condition the individual so deeply that real self-discovery, questioning, and creative thought is impossible. Instead, more emphasis is placed upon self-inquiry around such vital life questions as why do we fear? Why do we feel the need for power? What is love? Only by such expansive questioning free from authority, Krishnamurti, maintains, can we become whole human beings. Only through understanding of issues such as the ego and separateness can the deeper aspects of the human psyche be developed healthily. Democratic practices within the educational system could be expanded to include more spiritual institutions with similar democratic practices of non-elitism and non-hierarchy, and full participation in both thinking and interpreting spiritual script.

Important studies by Victor Frankl reveal that 'will to meaning,' the ability to find meaning in one's life, is an essential necessity to living. The capability to discover one's 'will to meaning' is an irreducible social capability as much as proper clothing or political participation. Logotherapy helps patients find meaning in any given situation in their life, even in suffering. Therapy such as logotherapy, along with community, spiritual support and deeper education, would help provide members of a deeply democratic society with the psychological wherewithal to possess this capability. While Frankl's logotherapy is primarily individualistic, Khan recommends continuous therapy available for all members of a deeply democratic society which would include forms of

group therapy.[20] This would be an affirmation of the necessity of social healing in class based societies where disparate groups are, by and large, alienated from one another. Most importantly, this could allow the development of empathy between individuals from disparate backgrounds. The point here is not to emphasize one form of education or social institution above all others, but to draw attention to the variety of alternative institutions that could help to positively develop the social capabilities of members in a deeply democratic society.

4. The Problem of Moral Agency in Deep Democracy: Is there a subject?

In this section we address another difficulty that any theory of deep democracy must confront in the age of postmodernism. If indeed there is no real subjectivity for humans as many postmodernists have claimed then the task of theorizing about   deep democracy and economic justice would seem completely hopeless.   This is really the problem of agency or—as it is well known in the French postmodernist and poststructuralist circles—*the problem of the subject*.

In France it was made popular by Althusser's discussions of ideology.[21]   However, the deeper philosophical and psychoanalytic motivations for considering the subject problematic have been articulated by Lacan.

In Lacan's view the subject has both consciousness and unconscious motivations. The unconscious part is the source of the problem.   No matter how coherent (and thus capable of agency) the person might *seem to be* as a *conscious* agent, the unconscious is in fact quite chaotic.

Lacan buttresses his claim with the hypothesis that the structure of the unconscious is the same as the structure of repressed signifiers in early entry into the symbolic realm by the child.   This chain of repressed signifiers hides the actual incoherence of the subject's subjectivity.

Lacan's position raises several intriguing possibilities for explaining ideology, not the least of which is the explanation of patriarchy.   By an assimilation of what he calls the "phallus" as a transcendental signifier while other contradictory signifiers are simply suppressed, patriarchy gains a semblance of naturalness.   As long as the socialization processes that make such simultaneous transcendence and repression possible, patriarchy cannot be eradicated.   More generally, the much vaunted individualism in a bourgeois society can also be seen as a suppression of all contradictory tendencies and relegation of such tendencies to the unconscious.

Undoubtedly there is a great deal of truth in this, even if one does not go all the way towards accepting all the pieces of this neo-Freudian poststructuralist semiotic psychoanalysis.   However, the leap from a nuanced analysis of the unconscious aspects

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[20] Khan (1998) p. 105

[21] See, for example, Althusser's essays on ideology in *For Marx and Lenin and Philosophy*. Althusser seems to misconstrue Lacan's concept of the *imaginary* (and implicity, the mirror stage) in the former.

of the psyche to the conclusion that there is no subject with a moral capacity for action is illegitimate for several reasons.[22]

First, the idea of a subject can have a limited warrant even if the unconscious motivations are discerned as contradictory. This is close to the idea of a juridical subject. The potential for moral capacity of such a subject is weaker than the formulation that follows. Nevertheless, even such weakly constituted, quasi-juridical subjects can serve as putative agents of moral actions.

The second and more important objection to the Lacanian fallacy is that Lacan's position can actually be used effectively to reformulate the view of a subject. In fact, recognizing the inevitable unconscious contradictions allows one to distinguish between two kinds of subjecthood in a dynamic sense.[23]

On the one hand we have the (relatively) unaware subject who is the ideological construct "individual." Such a person may be shored up by all the reassuring dogmas and ideologies of our contemporary society. The crack in the mirror where such a person observes himself is invisible as long as he is ignorant of his own inner turmoils at the conscious level. This is not to say that archaic thought-processes or emotions do not invade the person from time to time. And this happens, not as is usually assumed, just in a dream-state. As Lear (1990, p. 37) expresses it in connection with his (re)reading of Anna O.'s fantasy:

> It is because fantasies of mental functioning are pressed from the beginning of mental life and actually influence mental functioning that psychoanalysis can be a "talking cure." If mental functioning were as remote from a person's self-understanding as, say brain functioning, there would be no reason to think that a person could tell us about his mental processes. But it seems that even the most archaic unconscious mental process contains within it an implicit fantasied "theory" of that process. A "theory" of the mental process is part of the person's (perhaps unconscious) experience of that process. Thus the fantasied "theory" becomes part and parcel of the mental process, and in altering the fantasy one alters the mental process itself.

Lear explains that the strangeness (to us) of the above formulation comes only from our habit of equating the fantasy to "a mental image, projected on the screen of the mind." But the confusion dissolves if we ask: how can such an image affect mental functioning? Without assuming in a circular way that mental functioning is affected by images of its functioning, no answer consistent with the mental image equation seems possible. The way out of this conundrum is to reject the equation itself. As Lear puts it:

> A person's subjectivity is powerful not merely because it is striving for expression but also because it may be expressed archaically. Archaic mental

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[22]It is not clear if Lacan himself would go so far, but most postmodernists, French and non-French alike (e.g., Foucault and Rorty), have taken this position.

[23]I hope it will become clear in the following discussion that actually there is a continuum of subjects within this dynamic setting.

functioning knows no firm boundary between mind and body, and so archaic mind is incarnate in the body. Although fantasies may be expressed in images, they may also occur in paralyses, vomiting, skin irritations, spasms, ulcers, etc., and even by being dramatically acted out by the person whose fantasy it is. In this way a person's subjectivity permeates his being. So, for example, if a person's fantasied "theory" of catharsis is that it is an emotional purgation, this "theory" should be manifest in various aspects of that person's experience: he may feel "drained", or "depleted", "spent", "exhausted", "empty", after a cathartic emotional experience. This is the sense in which every person must have the truth within him. (pp. 37-38)

Actually, Lacan's discussion of "petit objet `a" shows that within the context of a radical objects relations theory the development of the *homlette* does leave behind residues of archaic mental functioning. Without considerable indulgence in a "talking cure," perhaps of the Lacanian variety, one may not be able to give conscious, conceptualized symbolic form to these archaic fantasies. But this in no way negates the fact that such is the way of the unconscious expressing itself.

Thus, the insertion of the child into the *symbolic* universe creates both repression and the possibilities for overcoming the repression. It is this second aspect of *the symbolic* that holds the subject's potential for moral capacity.

As a person yet unable to fully conceptualize her condition, she is not incapable of a moral personality. As Jonathan Cohen argues persuasively in his "A View of the Moral Landscape of Psychoanalysis," the trained analyst can perceive both the moral capacities and moral failures of such "subjects." Conceptually, the argument simply establishes the possibility of the subjecthood of a person. The precise content of the subjectivity may indeed be unhealthy in a clinical sense. But such characterization only re-establishes the moral potential of the person as an agent. Denying this potential is itself an act of ideological repression.

Such considerations lead us to think of a second type of moral agent. This is a subject whose awareness has unfolded to such an extent that she is able to *conceive* of herself as a moral agent. However, such awareness also encompasses the repression that accompanies our insertion into the symbolic. Thus her moral insights about herself and the world also include a recognition of human vulnerability, epistemic shortcomings and the need for a *twofold dialogue*. This dialogue is, on the one hand, a conversation within oneself[24] and, on the other, a dialogue with the outside world. Depending on the state of the individual psychoanalytic therapy may or may not be necessary for such subjectivity to occur. However, as I have argued elsewhere (Khan, 1992, 1993a,b, 1995), in a just and democratic society, the resources for such therapy will be available to all.

Here a further source of confusion may arise. There is a widespread view both within and outside of psychoanalysis that analysis "shrinks the realm of the moral responsibility." As Nancy Sherman puts it, "there is the surface paradox that while morality is ubiquitous, the clinical hour boasts of time and space that is morally

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[24]Or, to be more precise, an "interior monologue" where the unconscious processes are symbolized, interpreted and conceptualized.

neutral,…" (Sherman, p. 1).   But as Wallwork (1991) has argued, psychoanalysis is uncompromisingly situated within an ethical perspective.   Sherman follows and develops Aristotle's critique of the Socratic denial that one can know what is good and fail to act on it.   Aristotle, of course, claimed that Socrates' denial of *akrasia* was simply "against the plain facts" (*ta phainomena*).

However, Aristotle views *akrasia*   as an *intellectual* failure rather than a failure of desire.   In discussing Freud's own case of being afflicted by the "blindness of the seeing eye" in his struggle to understand the case of Miss Lucy R.'s knowing and not knowing her love for her employer, Sherman explains:

> The Socratic dogma that knowledge can't be tyrannized by desire has long been abandoned.   But against Kant, it is not simply the inner tribunal of conscience and moral judgment that will track down secret but motivating desires. Conflictual and concealed mental contents need a therapy of self-knowledge that does something other than continue to disavow them.   They need to be heard from, in parliamentary fashion, and given their own voice as a part of coming to be united with avowed and endorsed interests.   Therapeutically working through what is disavowed or repressed requires freedom from the stance of moral appraisal, even if the decision to submit to the analytic process might be thought of as a morally praiseworthy act in the most general sense of taking charge of one's character, and pursuing that project with courage.   (Sherman, p. 13)
>
> But the outcome of the therapy when it succeeds is to produce a new type of agency.
>
> No longer split off from emotion's testimony, agency takes on a newer and bolder form.   *Psychoanalysis transforms the notion of moral agency by bringing the emotions to the center.*   In an ironic way, the "talking therapy" seems to be able to bring to moral agency those potential allies that moral theory, so often on its own, does not quite know how to train or enlist.   (Sherman, pp. 22-23, emphasis mine)

Therefore, for both types of subjects, it should be emphasized, the possibility of acting justly (or otherwise) remains open.   In an unjust economy and society, most are victims of oppression and injustice.   In a nearly just society, such institutionalized injustice disappears, but there could still be unjust actions by individuals for which they should be culpable.   However, in a well ordered society, the view towards crime and punishment may be very different from ours.   Instead of responding to issues of guilt with conventional punishment, a more compassionate, therapeutic approach may be taken.

The point of this paper, of course, is not to produce a blueprint for a future just society, but to open up the possibility of such a discourse even under the postmodern conditions of epistemic uncertainty and anti-foundationalism.   Enough has been said, I believe, to show that even a radical epistemic uncertainty is consistent with the two kinds of subjects discussed here.   The previous discussion of a Hegelian approach to foundationalism was intended to show that anti-foundationalism is also consistent with a systemic approach to economic and social justice.   Thus both at the level of large-scale social and economic structures and at the level of the individual's epistemological

uncertainties, anti-foundationalism need not lead to skepticism, relativism and ultimately nihilism.

5. Conclusions

We have offered a somewhat novel theory of deep democracy from a political and social economy point of view. The theory of deep democracy presented here makes a distinction between formal aspects of democracy and the deeper structural aspects. In order for democracy to be deep, democratic practices have to become institutionalized in such a way that they become part of normal life in a democratic society. In this sense, ontologically, deep democracy overlaps with Barber's (1984) idea of "strong" democracy. There are, however, epistemological differences as well as differences of emphasis, particularly in the economic sphere. Cluster conditions for deep democracy include both cultural-political and socio-economic conditions. Our theory of deep democracy also answers important skeptical challenges of postmodern philosophers.

Epistemologically, the postmodern dilemma arises from a correct critique of metaphysics and transcendentalism. However, the critique is partial and negative. It is partial in the sense that it does not take the challenge of Kant to develop normativity seriously enough to explore alternatives as Hegel did. It, therefore, pursues entirely the negative critical path leading to thoroughgoing skepticism and nihilism.

In our approach, a concrete set of institutions consistent with the development of self-determination can be seen as necessary for the idea of deep democracy and economic justice to have meaning. In the spheres of production, distribution, exchange, law and contracts among others, the development of appropriate political, economic and social institutions allowing this inter-subjective idea of freedom to unfold becomes the thematic development of economic justice and democracy.

An important problem in this context is the coherence of the concept of the moral subject. By carefully considering poststructuralist psychoanalytical theory of Lacan and others a dynamically oriented approach to the question of the subject becomes possible. Pre-Freudian thinkers such as Hegel or Marx did not see the formation of the individual in all its deeply problematic aspects. However, the "speaking subject," though not innocent (as Hélène Cixous wittily put it), is nevertheless capable of agency under specific social and economic conditions. A continuum of subjectivity ending with the fully liberated individual offers various possible levels of moral agency. In an economically and socially unjust setting radical analytic and social interventions will be necessary for these possibilities to materialize.

Deep Democracy and economic justice, therefore, can be presented as a coherent set of positive requirements. It is part and parcel of the need for rational autonomy in our world. The cluster conditions we give together with the social capabilities perspective offer a way of defending and advancing the justification for deepening democracy.

Appendix

Strong Democratic Program for the Revitalization of Citizenship[25]

1. A national system of neighborhood assemblies of from one to five thousand citizens; these would initially have only deliberative functions but would eventually have local legislative competence as well.

2. A national civic communications cooperative to regulate and oversee the civic use of new telecommunications technology and to supervise debate and discussion of referendum issues.

3. A civic videotext service and a civic education postal act to equalize access to information and promote the full civic education of all citizens.

4. Experiments in decriminalization and informal lay justice by an engaged citizenry.

5. A national initiative and referendum process permitting popular initiatives and referenda on congressional legislation, with a multichoice format and two stage voting plan.

6. Experimental electronic balloting, initially for education and polling purposes only, under the supervision of the Civic Communications Cooperative.

7. Selective local elections to local office by lottery, with pay incentives.

8. Experiments with an internal voucher system for selected schools, public housing projects, and transportation systems.

9. A program of universal citizen service, including military option for all citizens.

10. Public sponsorship of local volunteer programs in 'common work' and 'common action.'

11. Public support of experiments in workplace democracy, with public institutions as models for economic alternatives.

12. A new architecture of civic and public space.

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[25] Barber p. 307

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