process feeding themselves? These key questions lead us to the next point of the study.

3. Democracy and Inclusion: Assessing an ambivalent relationship

3.1 21st century democracy: From quantity to quality

Democracy has become the only desirable and even conceivable form of political regime in practice, almost unquestionable in public (and academic) debate, and called for even by its detractors. Democracy expanded on a global scale in the last third of the 20th century (Southern Europe in the 1970s, Latin America in the 80s, Eastern Europe and Africa in the 90s...), consolidating its success but at the same time beckoning the end of the unequivocal western, liberal cultural framework in which the discourse had been born and extending the meaning of democracy to a wide range of new meanings, different from or even contrary to the liberal original.

In the last two decades, political science has therefore moved from studying the differences between democratic and non-democratic regimes towards a qualitative analysis of democracy that takes in consideration phenomena such as efficacy, corruption and participation. In this sense it has been particularly interesting to identify a category on which to place the ever more numerous regimes which formally present themselves as democracies, but have such serious structural faults and shortcomings that they end up being placed halfway between democracy and non democracy, leaning towards one or the other.

The paradigm of democratic quality is based on the conviction that democracy is the least harmful of the systems of government created by humankind, but that it has to be constantly revised and perfected, changing everything that doesn't work. We should be open to all possible forms of democracy, as far as they respect certain legitimacy and effectiveness standards, for each may be useful in one context or for a certain function, provided they are applied correctly. A rigid consideration is therefore not recommendable in the sense of believing, for example, that an electoral majority system is always better than a proportional one; instead, we should always analyse the different factors in play.

In their introduction of the *Report on the state of Democracy in Catalonia* 2007, Anduiza and Pardos[31] write that it is enormously difficult to assess the quality of the democratic system, considering the number of factors to be analysed and the need for normative criteria for all of them. Their analysis is very complete and bears in mind both the instrumental dimension (the procedures for taking decisions) and the substantive dimension (the results of the decisions) of democracy. The model they

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[31] Anduiza, E. & Pardos, S: "Introduction: how to analyse the state of democracy?", in: Anduiza, pp. 15-46.

propose is structured through three different levels or areas of analysis: the government, the citizens and the intermediate players.

Table 3: Framework for evaluating democratic quality

Area	Aspects to be considered	Regulatory principles
Government	Representation. All citizens should be properly represented, without exclusions or discriminations.	Equality between electors
		Proportionality in the political preferences
		Likeness between represented and representatives
	Accomplishment. Institutions must be capable of taking decisions that meet the preferences of the public.	The government has the capacity to take decisions with the most possible degree of support.
		The content of the government decision reflect the demands of the public.
		The government respects the electoral commitments of the party or parties that form it.
	Control. Institutions must be subject to controls to prevent abuse.	Influence of the citizens in choosing and controlling their representatives
		Capacity of action of the horizontal control mechanisms over de executive branch (Parliament, Ombudsman, Public Audit Office...).
	Performance. The institutions' satisfactory performance must be reflected in a positive public assessment and in the quality of the public services.	Provision of quality public services
		Good assessment of public institutions by the citizens
		Low level of corruption
Citizens	Rights and freedoms.	Physical security and legal efficacy
		Respect for fundamental rights
		Social rights and equal opportunities
	Participation.	Structure of political opportunities for participation 32
		Extension
		Equality in participation
	Political culture.	Interest and awareness of the political sphere
		Trust in democracy
		Agreement on basic political questions
Players acting as intermediaries between the government and the citizens	Associations	Associative pluralism and density
		Internal democracy and performance
	Political parties	Linkage between parties and society
		Internal democracy
	Media	Pluralism
		Independence
		Professional ethics

Source: Adapted from: Anduiza and Pardos.

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[32] Anduiza and Pardos refer here to the existence of institutional mechanisms that enable a direct participation of the individual citizen that may have consequences in the public decisions, including aspects such as popular legislative initiative and referendum, among others.

In addition to showing the large number of fronts that a democratic regime has to deal with simultaneously and satisfactorily if it wishes to attain quality, the Anduiza and Pardos model enables us to understand why participation is the key element for the existence of true democratic citizenship. In fact, this can be exercised only through participation, and the model shows us three principles that might be used to measure its quality: 1. There should be significant opportunities for taking part in the decision-making; 2. participation should be open to all citizens, and 3. The participation of each individual must receive the same consideration and the same weight in the event of voting.

Furthermore the model tells us that for participation to be feasible a series of requirements concerning rights and freedoms have to be met, among which we point out the existence of social rights. This is further evidence that without strong social commitment, a democratic regime cannot achieve high quality. We will see how this relationship may be established empirically.

3.2 Democratic quality and human development

Although there is no official institution with enough recognised authority to define what a high (or low) quality democracy is and to evaluate the truly existing democracies, there are private institutions that carry out methodical, serious work on the subject. Two of them, the Freedom House and The Economist, each year prepare and publish rankings of democratic quality by countries, in which the large part of the world states are assessed and classified. The so-called Democracy Index, drawn up by the intelligence unit of the British weekly The Economist, is calculated from an extensive list of questions (60) distributed in five blocks: electoral process and pluralism, government operation, political participation, democratic political culture and civil rights, all interrelated and making up a coherent whole. Nevertheless, there are four aspects which are considered critical and score higher when making an overall evaluation of the democratic quality of a system: 1. whether the national elections are free and fair; 2. voter security; 3. the influence of foreign powers in the government, and 4. the public administration's capacity to implement policies. As we see, these are essential, almost foundational elements of democracy, without which the rest becomes impossible or loses its meaning.

Seeking empirical data to allow us to see whether there is a significant, positive correlation between democracy and inclusion, we found another key reference, the Human Development Index[33] (HDI), drawn up by the United Nations Development Programme. The HDI had been repeatedly criticised for the fact that it failed to sufficiently contemplate the social equality variable, but when it was last updated in

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[33] The HDI is obtained by calculating three dimensions: 1. a long healthy life (measured by life expectancy at birth); 2. Access to knowledge (measured by average and expected years of schooling) and 3. A good standard of living (measured by national gross per capita income). The complete report can be downloaded from: http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2010_EN_Complete.pdf

November 2010, the authors for the first time calculated an inequality-adjusted HDI. This version of the HDI includes the losses of human development caused by inequalities that can be seen in the three basic dimensions considered in each country (life expectancy, education and income) and has logically caused movements with respect to the unadjusted ranking of the same year 2010, which are reflected in the table with green arrows (position gain), or red arrows (position loss).

The following table containing the 30 countries with the highest scores in each index reveals two important things: 1. the strong similarity between the results of both columns[34] and 2. The similarity between democratic quality and human development is more intense with the adjusted HDI, when inequalities in health, education and income are included in the equation.

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[34] Japan does not appear on the adjusted HDI ranking; apparently because it failed to provide the required data.

Table 4: Comparison between DI 2008 and adjusted HDI 2010 (top-30)

Democracy Index 2008 (The Economist Intelligence Unit) top-30 of 167 states			Inequality-adjusted HD Index 2010 (United Nations Development Program) top-30 of 169 states	
1	Sweden	9.88	1.	Norway 0.876 (▬)
2	Norway	9.68	2.	Australia 0.864 (▬)
3	Iceland	9.65	3.	Sweden 0.824 (▲ 6)
4	Netherlands	9.53	4.	Netherlands 0.818 (▲ 3)
5	Denmark	9.52	5.	Germany 0.814 (▲ 5)
6	Finland	9.25	6.	Switzerland 0.813 (▲ 7)
7	New Zealand	9.19	7.	Ireland 0.813 (▼ 2)
8	Switzerland	9.15	8.	Canada 0.812 (▬)
9	Luxembourg	9.10	9.	Iceland 0.811 (▲ 8)
10	Australia	9.09	10.	Denmark 0.810 (▲ 9)
11	Canada	9.07	11.	Finland 0.806 (▲ 5)
12	Ireland	9.01	12.	United states 0.799 (▼ 8)
13	Germany	8.82	13.	Belgium 0.794 (▲ 5)
14	Austria	8.49	14.	France 0.792 (▬)
15	Spain	8.45	15.	Czech Republic 0.790 (▲ 13)
16	Malta	8.39	16.	Austria 0.787 (▲ 9)
17	Japan	8.25	17.	Spain 0.779 (▲ 3)
18	United states	8.22	18.	Luxembourg 0.775 (▲ 6)
19	Czech Republic	8.19	19.	Slovenia 0.771 (▲ 10)
20	Belgium	8.16	20.	Greece 0.768 (▲ 2)
21	United Kingdom	8.15	21.	United Kingdom 0.766 (▲ 5)
22	Greece	8.13	22.	Slovakia 0.764 (▲ 9)
23	Uruguay	8.08	23.	Israel 0.763 (▼ 8)
24	France	8.07	24.	Italy 0.752 (▼ 1)
25	Portugal	8.05	25.	Hungary 0.736 (▲ 11)
26	Mauritius	8.04	26.	Estonia 0.733 (▲ 8)
27	Costa Rica	8.04	27.	South Korea 0.731 (▼ 15)
28	South Korea	8.01	28.	Cyprus 0.716 (▲ 7)
29	Italy	7.98	29.	Poland 0.709 (▲ 11)
30	Slovenia	7.96	30.	Portugal 0.700 (▲ 10)

Source: Gabba in preparation from data provided by the official reports.

We can see that the Scandinavian countries are in the top positions in both tables, whereas other countries with a similar or even greater economic power are relegated to considerably lower positions both in the Democracy Index and in the adjusted

Human Development Index. We see a strong correlation between the two variables, but we don't have the statistical elements to assert the causal direction of the correlation, or in which direction the causality is stronger. However, it intuitively seems that democratic quality fosters a high level, egalitarian model of human development, just as a highly developed, egalitarian society provides perfect conditions for democratic quality. It is most likely that the two variables feed each other in a virtuous circle.

3.3 The dark side: Excluding and exclusion producing democracies

If the relationship between democracy and inclusion was so perfect, and being most of the countries in the world under democratic regimes, some of which hundreds of years old, why is it that we are faced with a problem of large-scale social inclusion, also present in the most consolidated democracies? Something does not quite fit. Maybe democracy is not always inclusive, or not to the extent that would be desirable in countries that have joined the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Unfortunately, the world is full of political regimes, institutions and practices that consider themselves and are mainly seen as democracies and which, under close scrutiny, exclude a fair amount of the population. Exclusion is often obvious, and even legally sanctioned, but on many occasions it is more subtle and has to be sought between the lines.

This is a worrying question that cannot be skirted. Can a society only be constituted as democratic and inclusive of certain social groups, by excluding other groups and categories of people who *necessarily* have to be left out? Is exclusion/inclusion a zero-sum game, mediated by a democratic polity inevitably ruled by the social groups with more resources and power?

3.3.1 The historical origins of democratic exclusion

According to the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor "*Democracy, particularly liberal democracy, is a great philosophy of inclusion. Rule of the people, by the people, for the people; and where the "people" is supposed to mean everybody. This offers the prospect of the most inclusive politics of human history. And yet, there is something in the dynamics of democracy which pushes to exclusion.*" The first democracies in historical record, that of Athens and other Greek cities, were indeed profoundly excluding (women, slaves, foreigners...). Two thousand years later, the same North American democracy that dazzled the world was founded on the absolute exclusion of the black population, and maintained this segregation well into the 20th century, with the so-called Jim Crow Laws that consecrated the doctrine of "separate but equal" (which by the way was copied, enhanced and maintained for longer as Apartheid in South Africa). All European democracies started with some form of limiting suffrage, normally dependent on the ownership of material assets, and maintained women's political exclusion for decades. In both cases, despite meeting of the formal

requirements of democratic participation, there was *de facto* exclusion which, through different segregation policies, deprived not a small part of the population of the right to effectively exercise democratic politics.

If the demos is defined in terms of participation and social inclusion, two types of fundamental tensions are posed: on the one hand, vertical tension brought in by the elitisation of participation, on the other hand, the horizontal tension resulting from its territorialisation. In the first classical Greek democracies, the vertical tension was made explicit through the classification of the city's populations into distinct groups, to whom different rights and freedoms were assigned. The horizontal tension, on its part, was articulated through mechanisms such as ostracism, that is, the temporary or permanent expulsion from the polis. In short, democracy was since its beginnings also a tool of social exclusion.

3.3.2 Explicit and implicit exclusion in contemporary democracies

In modern times, the horizontal tensions in defining the demos have been revealed in the question of the inclusion of two specific groups: minorities and foreigners, which in some cases account for a large part or even the majority of the total population. The oldest question is that of the rights of non assimilated national minorities that were already present inside nation states when these were created; the processes of nation and state building were carried out in no few cases by excluding national minorities, and only recently has this characteristic tendency of the nation state towards uniformity been turned round with new policies of recognition and institutional designs better suited to the plurinational nature of the majority of states in the world. The degree of complexity and diversification acquired by contemporary societies has made it ever more difficult to sustain a purely ethnonational concept of the people (the demos), without breaching the principles on which the state's democratic procedures are based. The second, more recent, kind of problem is caused by the large increase in the migrant population which has come along with the intensification of the globalisation process. Even in the most open democracies, the foreign population has found it very difficult to access political rights, and the proliferation of laws excluding foreigners from the right to the city, or even directly sentencing them to illegality, is today one of the most important challenges of democracy and an unequivocal symptom of dedemocratization[35].

In regard to the vertical tension, in modern times democracy has sketched a much more appealing historical horizon, with the seemingly unstoppable extension of suffrage, overcoming class and gender barriers. The universal suffrage, introduced in practically all democratic regimes, although some even as late as the end of the 20th century, represented an enormous success in the process of inclusion through

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[35] The concept of "de-democratization" is borrowed of Charles Tilly (2007), who has theorized about the historical process of democratization as far-reaching, complex, ambiguous and reversible.

citizenship. However, the achievement of suffrage in many cases failed to immediately and effectively include the most disadvantaged social classes in democratic politics. By simplifying the pluralism of society, the very principle of political representation already is not very functional for social inclusion. But the most serious problem is that, in many places, the electoral systems have been set up in such a way that certain ideological options are underrepresented or directly excluded from representation. The examples might range from the majority electoral systems with a single round voting, which discriminate third political forces and seriously hinder new parties entering the system, from the percentage barriers of some proportional systems, which have similar effects, to more subtle forms of manipulation, such as designing or redesigning the electoral districts with the intention of modifying the electoral map, often known as gerrymandering[36]. In a pure representative system of democracy, where participation is restricted to exercising one's vote every x years, the falsification of the representation systems means that large sectors or even the majority of society are in fact, if not legally, excluded from democratic politics.

Whether it is due to the endogamy of the political elites, or to the structural "shortcomings" in the representation systems, electoral abstention has risen in almost the entire world, and this, along with the large social layers systematically left outside the democratic processes, turns the idea of universal suffrage into something of a chimera. In the context of the crisis of representative democracy, the discussions point at two clearly opposed types of response:

- Firstly, democracy should be deepened or *democratised* by reconceiving the effective conditions for exercising citizenship and promoting political inclusion, not only from institutional policy, but through mobilisation and social policies to guarantee the material bases of participation.

- By contrast, and obviously banishing the democratic ideal, the decision-making should be transferred in key areas (monetary policy, employment regulation, education, technological development,...) to supposedly "independent" bodies formed by "experts" who are generally no more than representatives of each country's economic elites.

The demands for democratisation and dedemocratisation coexist in the public debate, sometimes within the same government or the same ideological current, and this not only confuses citizens, but hinders changes that might improve the quality of the real existing democracy.

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[36] This practice is known by the name of gerrymandering. The term comes from Elbridge Gerry, governor of Massachusetts (USA). By 1812, Gerry, worried that his party, the Democratic-Republican, failed to win in districts north and west of the state, decided to unify all these districts into one, which thereby got less seats in the legislature. Reporters noticed that the district thus created had the shape of a salamander, which they named Gerry-Mander. The term was successful, moving to designate any form of manipulation of electoral districts for partisan purposes (a very complete explanation of the term and its contemporary uses can be found at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerrymandering).

Note: Associations and exclusion: the dark side of civil society

The democratic state maintains a complex, ambivalent relationship with inclusion, but what happens to the organisations that do, in principle, represent social interests even though they don't form part of the state? The concept of "civil society" includes an enormous range of players, with specific approaches and practices. As intermediate bodies between family and society, most are privileged spaces of participation and inclusion, an inclusion, however, that is selective in many cases. We cannot forget the fact that a large part of the formally constituted institutions operate along the lines of a club, which strictly limits the benefits of its activity to its members or reserves the right to admit new members, regulated according to the composition and purpose of the institution. Furthermore, to be attractive to their potential members, institutions often try to maximise their partners' benefits, logically at the expense of those excluded. This is how the classic, well-positioned institutions work, for instance the political parties, business organisations and unions. Although they might achieve general benefits which are reinvested in the whole of the population, the most attractive, tangible benefits are usually reserved for their members.

We can observe the growth of new phenomena of exclusion, as for example the so-called "gated communities", along with the modernisation of ancestral excluding practices, such as private "exclusive" schools promoted by groups of parents, but also other, apparently more open figures, which, also apply the logic of exclusion, in a more or less covered manner, which is the case of some co-operatives. According to some authors[37], this is a growing phenomenon explained as a strategic response by individuals and families to the progressive dismantling of the structures and security networks provided by the welfare state. As the public "umbrella" collapses, whoever is able will rush to form and enter ever more particularistic, and therefore excluding, groups.

Therefore, without pretending to question the need for strong and autonomous associations, we should be aware of the fact that any institution may stage excluding practices, sanctioned by the democratic will of its members. That's the reason why while the democratic state requires civil society to counter possible excesses and respond to the public demands, civil society also requires a sufficiently strong, legitimised state to defend the public rights and to express a view of general interest, opposed to the excluding pulse of private interests.

3.4 Is it possible to achieve inclusion in an undemocratic context or one of low democratic quality?

Having reached this point, we have enough evidence the reach the conclusion that democracy and inclusion are two associated phenomena that are mutually conditioned and reinforced, but we have also seen that all democracies consent or actively promote

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[37] See Jordan.

varying degrees of political exclusion in their structures and procedures, which are an obvious sign of poor democratic quality. The generalised crisis of the model of representative democracy is a fact that we cannot ignore.

In all processes of political exclusion, through either the electoral roll or the electoral system, not only do we see resistance to share power, but also strong mistrust on the part of the dominant elites towards citizens in general and towards the most disadvantaged groups in particular. The criterion and capacity of the socially excluded or vulnerable to live autonomously and responsibly in a democracy is mistrusted, but the argument used to try to justify the exclusion is not this, for politically it would be unsustainable, but rather that the elites are better prepared. It is argued that the people or groups at the forefront of the institutions are the only ones that can provide the necessary (political) view and (technical) knowledge for drawing up the right policies.

The most consequent elitists claim that it is possible to advance towards social inclusion without a democratic policy, as shown by certain historical and modern examples such as the giddy development of the People's Republic of China and other Asiatic countries. Indeed, from a strictly economicist viewpoint, inclusion without participation might seem plausible. One of the most striking things about the new global economy is precisely the unequal relationship between democracy and market. While democracy seems to need the market (we do not have examples to contradict this for the moment), the market does not seem to need democracy in order to function reasonably well. Nonetheless, we have already seen that the economic variable in itself cannot entirely explain exclusion and therefore, to take it as the sole protagonist of inclusion policies opens the door to insufficient or erroneous responses to the problem of exclusion.

The question that must be put is: Can excluded people -and those whose strong vulnerability leaves them at risk of exclusion- advance towards inclusion without taking part in the policy process, by deliberating, (co)deciding or (co)producing?

Certainly, the cases of the so-called illustrated despotism, that is of leaders and elites endorsed with enough social awareness and capacity to drive beneficial policies for the most vulnerable, excluded classes cannot be underrated or discarded right away. To mention a very well-known example, there are people in Spain who defend the forty years lasting General Franco's regime as it supposedly enabled economic opening which generated growth and jobs in sufficient quantities to be able to bring millions of people into an urban consumer society. This is a highly idyllic view that hides the enormous costs and shortcomings of that dictatorship, for the people who emigrated to the cities (because life in the country was one of poverty and frequently outright misery, due to the structural lack of work) usually endured in their new accommodations long years of severe exclusion, getting subsistence salaries, precarious housing and deficient or non-existent services. This was all largely overcome thanks to a social and political activation neither foreseen nor desired by the regime, through neighbours' and workers' unions and political parties that were initially clandestine, afterwards tolerated and finally protagonists of the transition to democracy. By extrapolating the Spanish experience to that of other societies that are changing fast to economic modernity in

undemocratic contexts, we might consider the hypothesis that the inclusion achieved by non-democratic ways probably will be:

- **Precarious**, because it doesn't imply the incorporation of the person in society in a stable form, under equal rights and obligations, but it all depends rather on more or less temporary and volatile situations.

- **Spurious**, because in the best case inclusion is "graciously" granted by the well-off social groups, thus preventing awareness-raising and change in the side of the excluded individuals and groups, in the sense of acquiring skills for personal autonomy and social transformation.

- **Assimilating**, in the sense of denying individuality, for often the price of inclusion is to renounce the cultural and social bases of one's own identity and (to aim) at becoming a new "normal" and "integrated" person.

- We might say that this is a **subordinated inclusion**, subordinated to the state and to those that dominate it: the leader, the landowners, the bureaucratic caste, the parties... In subordination, the routes for inclusion become clientele paths, where access to basic goods and services comes in exchange for political-partidist loyalty, thus opening broad areas for corruption.

If social exclusion/inclusion is understood as a plural, dynamic, open process subject to substantial modifications depending on the players' attitude, their participation in all spheres of daily life (neighbourly, school, cultural, economic...) must clearly play an important role. Public rights only materialise to the extent that social players make them real (for themselves and also in support of those objectively impeded due to their age, legal situation, etc.). Inclusion can therefore only be caused with the direct involvement of its beneficiaries. The short-term and reactive inclusion policies may briefly relieve extreme situations, but fail to confront the causes of the problem and they don't aim at the training and empowerment of the persons at risk.