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What is This?

Beyond the Radial Delusion: Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy and Non-democracy

Jørgen Møller and Svend-Erik Skaaning

Abstract

Typologies of political regimes in general and of democracy in particular proliferate in the literature. However, few efforts have been devoted to systematically scrutinizing the empirical relationship between the constitutive components of liberal democracy. In this article, we reassess the most promising such attempt, namely, the research agenda on "defective democracies." Doing so, we identify a more general problem, which we term the "radial delusion." This problem has to do with discarding the notion of a hierarchy among the attributes, thus creating empirically empty, diminished subtypes. We solve this by constructing an alternative typology that embraces well-established theoretical constructs and assigns referents to all relevant types. Furthermore, the empirical distribution virtually conforms to the hierarchical logic of a perfect simple order scale which justifies the construction of a democracy scale.

Setting the Stage

A decade ago, Collier and Levitsky (1997) identified hundreds of different subtypes of democracy in the literature. Since then, the attempt to distinguish between different kinds of democracies has proliferated further as a number of scholars have tried their hand at constructing new typologies of political regimes (for example, Diamond, 1999; Howard and Roessler, 2006; Schedler, 2002; Wigell, 2008; Zakaria, 1997).

The way we conceptualize and measure democracy and non-democracy is of critical importance for the descriptive and explanatory inferences we arrive at (Collier and Adcock, 1999: 537–8), and this research agenda should therefore be welcomed. However, even though many of the new conceptual constructs are well grounded in theory and have proved valuable empirically, the literature suffers from a blind spot. As O'Donnell (2004) has recently pointed out, scant efforts have been

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devoted to scrutinizing the relationship between the various components (or constitutive parts) of the root concept of liberal democracy. To quote:

> These items may be seen as vectors that tap dimensions that, depending on the data feasible for each, may be arranged in some scale or ordering ... The overall result would be a series of vectors ... of relative democraticness. In turn, the relationships among these vectors should not be presupposed; rather, it is an empirical matter for the study of which the disaggregation of vectors (and their component variables) is a necessary step. (O'Donnell, 2004: 64)

The attempt that comes closest to heeding O'Donnell's call is the "defective democracies" research agenda of Wolfgang Merkel and his associates (Merkel, 2004; Merkel et al., 2003). These scholars explicitly distinguish between different democratic attributes and there is much to recommend in their attempt to incorporate and systematize some of the most frequently used subtypes of democracy found in the literature, in particular the concepts of illiberal democracy and delegative democracy (compare Collier and Levitsky, 1997; O'Donnell, 1994; Zakaria, 1997). However, reviewing and reassessing the defective democracies typology, we show that Merkel and his collaborators suffer from what may be termed the "radial delusion," the consequence of which is that their conceptualization of different types of democracy is not empirically fruitful.

On this basis, we show that a typology based on Giovanni Sartori's (1970) hierarchical formula (which Collier and Mahon (1993) term a "classical categorization") allows us to retain the ability to embed extant constructs such as electoral, illiberal, and delegative democracy into a comprehensive property space while rectifying the imbalances of Merkel and others. More particularly, and returning to O'Donnell's inquiry, we show that the empirical ordering of democracies, established by distinguishing between the three attributes of electoral rights, civil liberties, and the rule of law, reflects the hierarchical logic of a perfect simple order scale. This equals saying that the established typology[1] paves the way for the creation of an ordinal scale of democracy.[2]

One final point deserves to be mentioned here. The conceptual exercises reviewed and proposed in this article all depart from one and the same background concept, namely, the Schumpeterian "realistic" notion of democracy as a *political regime form* focusing on procedures rather than substance (compare Diamond, 1999: 8; Linz, 2000: 57–8; O'Donnell, 1999: 304). What is important for our purposes is that it is possible to maintain Schumpeter's realistic vein of thinking while expanding the intension (or connotation) of the concept to more than his bare-bones electoral aspect. Using the terminology of Collier and Levitsky (1997), such an exercise entails "precising" the definition and it solely requires that we do not go beyond the Schumpeterian premise of democracy as a *modus procendendi*.

Defective Democracies Revisited

Lazarsfeld (1937) seminally described a typology as a multidimensional and conceptual classification (a property space) created by combining serial operations on two or more theoretically relevant dimensions. The typological edifice constructed by Wolfgang Merkel and associates clearly observes this multidimensional logic, thereby laying the basis for a high degree of measurement validity (Adcock and Collier, 2001). But before measuring defective democracies, we first have to address the issue of conceptualization.

The concept of defective democracy was originally introduced by Hans-Joachim Lauth (1997, compare 2004: 107–20). Lauth never provided any operationalizations of his terms, but some of

his German colleagues (Merkel et al., 2003) have ventured further. The result has been a large body of work on defective democracies that has evolved through several stages and, in the process, seen important changes (Merkel, 1999, 2004; Merkel and Croissant, 2000; Puhle, 2006). One guideline has been constant, however: the defective democracies have consistently and deliberately been construed as diminished subtypes, based on the logic of radial concepts. In what follows, we focus on the most comprehensive version of the arguments, originally introduced in a co-authored book in German (Merkel et al., 2003) and subsequently disseminated in English via an influential article (Merkel, 2004).[3]

Merkel's frame of reference, or root concept, is embedded[4] liberal democracy, which he basically construes as a bounded whole (compare Collier and Adcock, 1999: 543, 558; Sartori, 1987: 184). It ties together five constitutive partial regimes: (1) elections (regular, free, general, equal and fair elections), (2) political liberties (freedom of speech, opinion, association, demonstration, and petition), (3) civil rights (equal access to and treatment by the law and protection against the illegitimate arrest, exile, terror, torture, and unjustifiable intervention in the personal life of citizens), (4) horizontal accountability (lawful government action is checked by the division of power between mutually interdependent and autonomous legislative, executive, and judicial bodies), and (5) effective power to govern (the effective right to rule is placed in elected officials) (Merkel, 2004: 38–42).

If democratic principles are violated, the way a particular regime is linked to a certain type of defective democracy depends on which partial regimes have been harmed. More particularly, Merkel makes a distinction between four diminished subtypes of defective democracy (2004: 49–50). The first, "exclusive democracy," is characterized by excluding one or more segments of the population from the civil right of universal suffrage. In the second, "domain democracy," veto powers take certain political domains out of the hands of democratically elected representatives. "Illiberal democracy" constitutes a third subtype; it denotes a regime in which executive and legislative control is only weakly limited by the judiciary, constitutional norms have little binding impact on government actions, and individual civil rights are partially suspended or not yet established. The fourth and final category is "delegative democracy," in which the legislature and the judiciary have only limited control over the executive branch, while the actions of the government (often headed by a charismatic president) are rarely committed to constitutional norms.

As diminished subtypes, the types of defective democracy divide the different properties between them so that each pure type of defective democracy is defined by the attribute it lacks. However, even though Merkel emphasizes the strong interdependence of all the aspects of liberal democracy, the electoral attribute functions as a *primus inter pares* among the partial regimes. The reason is twofold. First, it is the clearest expression of the very core of democracy, namely, the sovereignty of the people. Second, and consequently, it provides the basic criterion for distinguishing democracies from autocracies (Merkel, 2004: 36–8). Countries without meaningful elections (that is, where the electoral regime is more than moderately defective) are deemed autocratic and are thus not ordered in the typology of defective democracies. As an additional criterion, countries violating one or more of the other attributes to an extreme degree are also disqualified from the set (Merkel, 2004: 55; Merkel et al., 2003: 74–5).

Despite the impressive effort to conceptualize the notion of defective democracy, some critical remarks are warranted. First, although Merkel et al. (2003: 76–95) provide guidance on how to distinguish between defective democracies and autocracies, it is not very precise. In their empirical work, they tend to base their distinctions on ad hoc considerations. Second, the match between partial regimes and subtypes is not perfect, as only four defective subtypes are constructed from a

distinction between five partial regimes. Third, the construction of one of the subtypes, exclusive democracy, does not correspond to the general definition of defective democracies: political regimes with well-functioning elections, but limited defects in one or more of the *other* partial regimes (compare Merkel et al., 2003: 15). Fourth, some sub-components are linked to more than one partial regime, for example political participation rights (linked to both elections and civil rights) and an independent judiciary (linked to both civil rights and horizontal accountability).

That said, and as already indicated, the typology has much to offer conceptually. But the ultimate test must be empirical. The creators of the typology originally stated that it is not possible to identify defective subtypes through a quantitative approach focusing on a large number of cases. The argument was that the standard democracy indices (such as those provided by Freedom House, Polity IV, and Vanhanen) were not suitable for measuring the analytical root concept of liberal democracy or, for that matter, the relevant partial regimes (Merkel et al., 2003: 293).

The disaggregated data compiled in the so-called Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) changed that, however. The BTI has been published since 2005 (covering the year 2003) and includes what the BTI terms "developing and transformation countries," that is, according to the OECD, non-donor sovereign countries with more than 2 million inhabitants.[5]

Providing disaggregated data on many aspects at a low level of abstraction, the dataset allows us to capture each of the partial regimes proposed by Merkel and his collaborators. Tellingly, one of the architects of the defective democracy edifice uses it to order a larger universe of countries (Croissant, 2008). More generally, the BTI is, in our opinion, the best dataset available,[6] not least because the scores are linked directly to narrative qualifiers, something we make use of in this article. In what follows, we use the 2008 version of the BTI (covering the year 2007 and which includes 125 countries) to order the empirical referents in the property space created by Merkel and his associates.

Among the five criteria of political transformation assessed in the BTI, only the questions linked to two of them, political participation and rule of law, are directly relevant for our purposes. The respective subcategories of these two attributes are illustrated in Table 1, in which we also indicate the letters used to denote each of them throughout this article.

If scores from more than one subcategory are used to capture one attribute, the arguments of Merkel and others make it natural to consider the elements to be mutually constitutive. Consequently, rather than using the average, we employ a minimum-score procedure to aggregate them, as recommended by Goertz (2006) and Bowman et al. (2005).

On each of the categories, the BTI scores a given country on an index ranging from 1 to 10, with 10 indicating the highest level of accomplishment. Concerning thresholds, we employ the distinctions suggested by the fourfold hierarchy of linguistic qualifiers guiding the expert assessments in the BTI codebook. In Merkel's terms, this means that a score of 9 or 10 denotes no defect; the scores 6, 7, and 8 denote a moderate defect; the scores 3, 4, and 5 denote a severe defect; while the scores 1 and 2 signify an extreme defect.[7]

Table 1. Subcategories of Political Participation and the Rule of Law

Political participation	Rule of law
A. Free elections	E. Separation of powers
B. Democrats rule	F. Independent judiciary
C. Association/assembly rights	G. Abuse of office prosecuted
D. Freedom of expression	H. Civil rights

Table 2. Linking Defective Subtypes to BTI Subcategories

	Exclusive democracy	Domain democracy	Delegative democracy	Illiberal democracy
Merkel	A	B	E, F	C, D, H
Puhle	A	B	E	C, D, F, G, H
Croissant	A, C, D	B	E, G	F, H

Note: The categories listed under each type are, by definition, defective.

However, even though the development of the BTI has been heavily inspired by the work of Merkel and others (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2005), it is not completely straightforward to connect the subcategory scores to the different defects emphasized by the German scholars. Table 2 shows the marked differences between Merkel's, Puhle's, and Croissant's respective operationalizations, based on personal communication and inferred from some of their later works (Croissant, 2008; Puhle, 2005). To be sure, Merkel, Puhle, and Croissant fully agree in assigning four BTI subcategories: free elections (A), democrats rule (B),[8] separation of powers (E), and civil rights (H). But with regard to association or assembly rights (C), freedom of expression (D), an independent judiciary (F), and prosecution of abuse of office (G), the three founding fathers seem to disagree, as illustrated in Table 2.

The empirical consequences of these differences are very salient. Merkel's and Puhle's apportionment of the various indicators leads to the identification of 76 democracies as liberal or defective (out of a total of 125), while Croissant's more demanding electoral recipe, to only 69. These countries are, to reiterate, characterized by no or only moderate defects on the electoral attribute and no extreme defects on any of the other attributes. In our operationalization, this means that they score at least 6 on the electoral dimension and at least 3 on the other dimensions (see Table 2).

Table 3 shows the distribution of cases between the 16 pure and mixed types that emerges when the matching compound of attributes is unfolded. Examples of pure diminished subtypes are to be found in the grey categories, whereas the root concept of liberal democracy is captured by the polar type in the upper-left corner. Bold type is used to highlight the count based on our operationalization of Merkel, italics the count based on Puhle, and normal type the count based on Croissant.

Besides the striking discord, notice that none of the three operationalizations lead to the identification of any instances of exclusive democracy or domain democracy. Concerning delegative democracy, only one, zero, and four referents, respectively, are identified. Finally, the corresponding figures for illiberal democracy are two, fourteen, and zero. Thus, none of the procedures lend significant support to the empirical existence of pure subtypes, except in one case: Puhle's illiberal democracies. All the other defective democracies are mixed types, and more than a third of them are situated in the lower-left polar type, indicating that they are defective in every way possible – given the general rules for inclusion in the typology.

However, Merkel et al. (2003: 69) explicitly state that mixed forms are expected to dominate the social world, implying that pure types are necessarily exceptional. As a way to overcome this problem, they suggest that it is possible to let the subtypes subsume existing defective democracies by deciding which partial regime is violated the most. This proposal represents a qualification of the dichotomous understanding of defects applied above. Nonetheless, we adjust our measurement to capture this pragmatic logic by using the four linguistic qualifiers attached to the BTI scores, thus distinguishing between the different levels of infringements, in this case between moderate and severe defects.[9] The results are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 3. The Stringent Empirical Ordering of Defective Democracies, 2008

		Inclusive elections		Exclusive elections	
		Liberal	Illiberal	Liberal	Illiberal
Effective power to govern	Control of the executive	**10**	**2**	**0**	**0**
		6	*14*	*0*	*2*
		6	0	0	0
		Liberal democracy	Illiberal democracy	Exclusive democracy	
	Delegative	**1**	**16**	**0**	**8**
		0	*9*	*0*	*6*
		4	6	2	18
		Delegative democracy			
Veto powers	Control of the executive	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
		0	*0*	*0*	*1*
		0	0	0	0
		Domain democracy			
	Delegative	**0**	**11**	**0**	**28**
		0	*11*	*0*	*27*
		0	1	0	32

Notes: Pure diminished subtypes are found in the grey categories. Bold type shows the count based on Merkel; italics show the count based on Puhle; normal type shows the count based on Croissant.

Table 4. The Pragmatic Empirical Ordering of Defective Democracies, 2008

	Exclusive democracy	Domain democracy	Illiberal democracy	Delegative democracy	Defective democracy
Merkel	0 (0)	2 (0)	4 (2)	15 (1)	66
Puhle	0 (0)	0 (0)	36 (14)	1 (0)	70
Croissant	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	19 (4)	63

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to the number of cases linked to the pure types through the previous operationalization procedure.

Table 4 shows that even this (intrinsically questionable) move assigns few referents to the types of exclusive democracy and domain democracy, which remain almost completely empty. The types of delegative democracy and illiberal democracy, on the contrary, become somewhat more relevant, empirically speaking. However, the differences between the three scholars persist. In fact, they are accentuated even further. Bearing these observations in mind, it is time to take stock of the general merits of Merkel and his associates' typological constructs.

The Radial Delusion

Even though the discussed typology of defective democracies has much to offer conceptually, empirically it has been somewhat disappointing. In a nutshell, most of the theoretically important types contained few or no empirical referents when pinning one's faith on the BTI of 2008. This empirical inadequacy flows from an underlying conceptual difficulty, which we term the "radial

delusion." It was inaugurated in 1993 when Collier and Mahon published their otherwise seminal elaboration of Giovanni Sartori's ladder of abstraction. In the article, Collier and Mahon contrasted Sartori's (1970) classical categorization with two other logical treatments of concepts, namely Wittgenstein's notion of "family resemblance," which can be ignored for our purposes, and Lakoff's (1987) notion of "radial categories." To elaborate, a classical categorization is one

> in which the relation among categories is understood in terms of a taxonomic hierarchy of successively more general categories ... Each category possesses clear boundaries and defining properties that are shared by all members and that serve to locate it in the hierarchy. (Collier and Mahon, 1993: 845)

With radial concepts, this logic is turned on its head. Such concepts do not exhibit the described hierarchy. The core of a radial concept is not found at the most abstract level, but in a central subcategory containing all the defining attributes of the concepts. The more abstract versions of the concept should be seen as subsets of this primary category. As Collier and Mahon (1993: 848) explain, "they do not share the full complement of attributes by which we would recognize the overall category, as they do with classical categories. Rather, they *divide* them."

This equals saying that, as opposed to a classical categorization, no *one* necessary and sufficient condition, placed at the highest level of generality, can be identified. Important for our purposes, Collier and Mahon (1993: 848–50) use the concept of democracy to exemplify this radial logic. Their (illustrative) point is that democracy has no "thin" core, only a number of juxtaposed attributes, all of which must be present to make for democracy proper. The task, therefore, becomes one of creating diminished subtypes from this central category, subtypes placed at a higher level of generality.

As already hinted, there is absolutely nothing wrong with this logic. On the contrary, it clearly sharpens the general tools available for our conceptual endeavors. The problem is much more particular, namely, that Collier and Mahon (we argue below) misconstrued democracy when highlighting it as a specimen of radial concepts. Much of the literature has been led astray by this notion, turning the typological game into one of creating diminished subtypes from a primary, radial category.

This is exactly what Merkel and his associates do, as their type of embedded liberal democracy, a bounded whole of all the partial regimes, constitutes such a radial category. But as we have also seen, their conception of democracy does, in fact, conform to the notion of hierarchy in one very important respect: the status of the electoral criterion differs from the other criteria. In fact, in the defective democracy typology the noun "democracy" denotes only the presence of meaningful elections. This means that the electoral attribute is construed as a necessary and sufficient condition for democracy,[10] whereas the other attributes (when absent) are only necessary conditions for the respective adjectives. There is a qualification to this criterion, namely, the very few cases in which observance of the electoral attribute goes hand in hand with a severe defect on any of the other attributes. But this is a small exception which does not change the fact that the electoral attribute is construed as the most important.

Our contention is that it makes more sense to spell out the hierarchic structure of the construction. As Merkel also recognizes, it is very difficult to imagine using the word "democracy" to denote a concept if it does not contain the electoral attribute (see also Collier and Adcock, 1999: 559). Literally, this would entail naming a diminished subtype, which has one or more of the other attributes, yet lacks the electoral attribute "non-electoral democracy" when using the missing

attribute to name the construct. Intuitively, this does not make sense because elections are the *condiciones sine quibus non* of democracy.[11]

We therefore argue that it is pertinent to embrace Sartori's classical logic when moving along the ladder of abstraction with a view to creating a typology of democracy and non-democracy. Our point of departure is that the electoral criterion is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for democracy and that, *ipso facto*, any country exhibiting the presence of this attribute should be counted as an instance of democracy.

Rather than construing the various subtypes as semi-democracies and only the root concept as democracy proper, we thus distinguish between "thinner" types of democracy, placed on a relatively high level of abstraction, and "thicker" types of democracy, placed on a relatively low level of abstraction. This also allows us to observe another critical point which emerges from our reassessment of the Merkel edifice: that it is pertinent to work with a clear dividing line between democracy and autocracy at the highest level of generality.[12]

Once again, this is only the conceptual side of the coin. The pivotal question is whether the notion of hierarchy also makes sense empirically. The former analysis of defective democracies does indeed point to the existence of such a hierarchy on the ground. For even though the diminished subtypes of Merkel and others divide the defining properties between them, they do not divide the empirical referents. This indicates that the thresholds delimiting the presence of the other defining attributes are fulfilled in a particular sequence, one which groups the countries in only some of the diminished subtypes. In the subsequent part of this article, we provide a more systematic test of the hierarchical nature of the ordering.

Towards a Typological Corrective

Our own suggestion distinguishes between three attributes. This tripartition mirrors the development within the field in recent decades, as it embraces the distinctions between the electoral core (free elections) described by Schumpeter (1974), Dahl's (1989) elaboration of political rights (rights of speech, assembly, and association), and O'Donnell's (2001, 2004) rule of law addition.

To say this slightly differently, we accept the conceptual distinctions developed by O'Donnell in order to deliver the empirical research about the relationship among the different components of liberal democracy that he has called for. O'Donnell (2001: 13–14, 18) points out that "Realistic definitions of democracy, then, contain two components. The first spells out the attributes of elections that are considered fair ... The second lists conditions, designated as freedoms, guarantees, or 'primary political rights', that surround fair elections." He then goes on to argue that "the combined effect of the freedoms listed by Dahl and other authors (expression, association, and access to information) cannot fully guarantee that elections will be fair." It is on this basis that he introduces a third attribute, namely, "a legal system that enacts and backs the universalistic and inclusive assignment of these rights and obligations."

As in the case of Merkel, the ordering can be said to rest on a general electoral premise. However, we avoid Merkel's inconsistencies in the treatment of this attribute by relaxing the definitional requirements of (minimalist) democracy. It is thus not free and fair elections, but the mere presence of effective electoral competition that makes for inclusion in the overarching class of democracy (see Figure 1 below). This criterion conforms to Schumpeter's (1974: 269) famous definition of democracy as "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for people's vote." Such is the case because Schumpeter explicitly presents leeway for grouping a country as a case of democracy if it

has what we term "exclusive elections," for example by restricting the right to vote to a certain part of the adult population. To quote Schumpeter:

> If persons below the age limit are not allowed to vote, we cannot call a nation undemocratic that for the same or analogous reasons excludes other people as well ... The salient point is that, given appropriate views on those and similar subjects, disqualifications on grounds of economic status, religion and sex will enter into the same class with disqualifications which we all of us consider compatible with democracy. (Schumpeter, 1974: 244–5)

Moreover, it is very likely that Schumpeter would also accept partial restrictions on the sovereignty of the people in the form of "tutelary powers" or "reserved domains" (compare Valenzuela, 1992), especially because such restrictions were prevalent in the "constitutional-democratic monarchies" of his time.

Regarding scores, we stay as close as possible to the reassessment of Merkel's typology. This means that countries scoring 6 or better on free elections and democrats rule (A and B in Table 1) are included in the class of democracy. However, we also wish to include autocracies in our ordering and we therefore unfold Merkel's implicit serial operation with regard to the Schumpeterian electoral attribute, trichotomizing it into the three classes, of "inclusive elections" with a score of 9–10 (corresponding to free and fair elections without significant (illegitimate) tutelary powers), "exclusive elections" with a score of 6–8 (corresponding to meaningful electoral competition with uncertain outcomes or winners), and "no meaningful elections" with a score of less than 6. This separate treatment of the electoral attribute is justified by its status as the very core of democracy, which places it in a league of its own.[13]

The other two attributes can then either be present (scores of 9 or 10) or absent (scores of 8 or less). The first comprises the Dahlian civil liberties of freedom of expression, association, and assembly (C and D) that are included in most contemporary conceptualizations of democracy. The second comprises the O'Donnellian qualifications of horizontal accountability and civil rights, such as judicial independence and personal integrity rights (E, F, G, and H). This attribute, too, has made significant inroads into democratic theory in recent decades (for example, Diamond, 1999: 11–12).

Concerning nomenclature, we name the former attribute "civil liberties" and indicate its presence with "+" and its absence with "–." The same distinction is made with respect to the latter attribute, which we term "the rule of law."[14] Drawing on O'Donnell (1999, 2004), we consider the rule of law to be defined by the following properties: the legal system upholds political and civil rights for the whole population and all public and private agents are subject to appropriate, legally established controls on the lawfulness of their acts, that is, no one is *de legibus solitus*.

Table 5 illustrates the ordering of the empirical referents in the consequent property space. Out of the 125 countries included in the BTI, 67 achieve a score of 6 or higher on the electoral attribute and thus qualify as democracies. Six countries have no defects at all: Chile, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Taiwan, and Uruguay. These six countries are situated in the polar type in the upper-left corner. This type works as a frame of reference as it makes up the bounded whole of liberal democracy, defined by the presence of all three attributes and corresponding to the thickest definition of democracy in our setup. The reason that it contains so few referents is that the BTI only includes "developing and transformation" countries. As shown in the robustness tests, most of the developed western countries would also inhabit this type if included in the ordering.

The polar type in the lower-right corner houses no less than 57 countries and can be construed as the opposite bounded whole of illiberal autocracy or autocracy proper. It is defined by the absence of all three properties, that is, it works as an explicit contrary example in the spirit of

Table 5. Ordering of Cases in the Typology of Democracy and Non-democracy, 2008

		Inclusive elections	Exclusive elections	No meaningful elections
+ Civil liberties	+ Rule of law	6 Liberal democracy	0	0 (Liberal autocracy)
	– Rule of law	10 Polyarchy	2	I
– Civil liberties	+ Rule of law	0	0	0
	– Rule of law	13 Electoral democracy	36 Minimalist democracy	57 Illiberal autocracy

Sartori (1970). The type that captures the Dahlian (1971, 1989) construct of polyarchy[15] houses 10 countries. If named with reference to its absent attribute, this type can also be construed as O'Donnell's (1994, 2001) delegative democracy, as it combines the presence of inclusive elections and civil liberties with the absence of the rule of law. The type that captures Vanhanen's (1984: 11) construct of pure electoral democracy[16] subsumes 13 countries. If named with reference to its absent attribute, it can also be construed as Zakaria's construct of illiberal democracy. This type combines the presence of the free election of political power-holders with the absence of both civil liberties and the rule of law. Finally, the type reflecting an absolute minimalist Schumpeterian notion of democracy houses no less than 36 countries. It combines the presence of exclusive elections with the absence of both civil liberties and the rule of law. If named with reference to its absent attributes, one might consider using Levitsky and Way's (2002) concept of "competitive authoritarianism."[17]

To relate these conceptualizations explicitly to the ladder of abstraction, each step down to a lower rung is performed by the addition of criteria. All liberal democracies, placed at the bottom of the ladder, also fulfill the respective criteria of polyarchy, electoral democracy, and minimalist democracy; all polyarchies also fulfill the respective criteria of electoral democracy and minimalist democracy; and all electoral democracies fulfill the criteria of minimalist democracy. In Table 5, the types are named after the "most demanding" or thickest category that they qualify for. This means that, for instance, type 4 is named "polyarchy" even though it (logically) also meets the criteria for electoral democracy and minimalist democracy (but not for liberal democracy). In Figure 1, this classical categorization is illustrated in the context of the ladder of abstraction.[18]

In the last section of the article, we identify all 65 countries classified in the four different types of democracy. But notice two stark contrasts to the ordering proposed by Merkel and others. First, all of these types of democracy are empirically meaningful, as are the two bounded wholes of liberal democracy and illiberal autocracy. Second, only three countries fall in any other types.

Consequently, the empirical distribution almost completely conforms to the logic of what Bailey (1973) terms a "perfect simple order scale" since there are (virtually) no tie scores on the properties.[19] Any country obtaining the attribute of the rule of law necessarily obtains the attributes of civil liberties and inclusive elections. Likewise, with the three exceptions noted above, any country obtaining the attribute of civil liberties necessarily obtains the attribute of inclusive elections. Conversely, with only two exceptions, any country failing to obtain the attribute of inclusive elections is characterized by the absence of the other two attributes. This logic even extends to countries
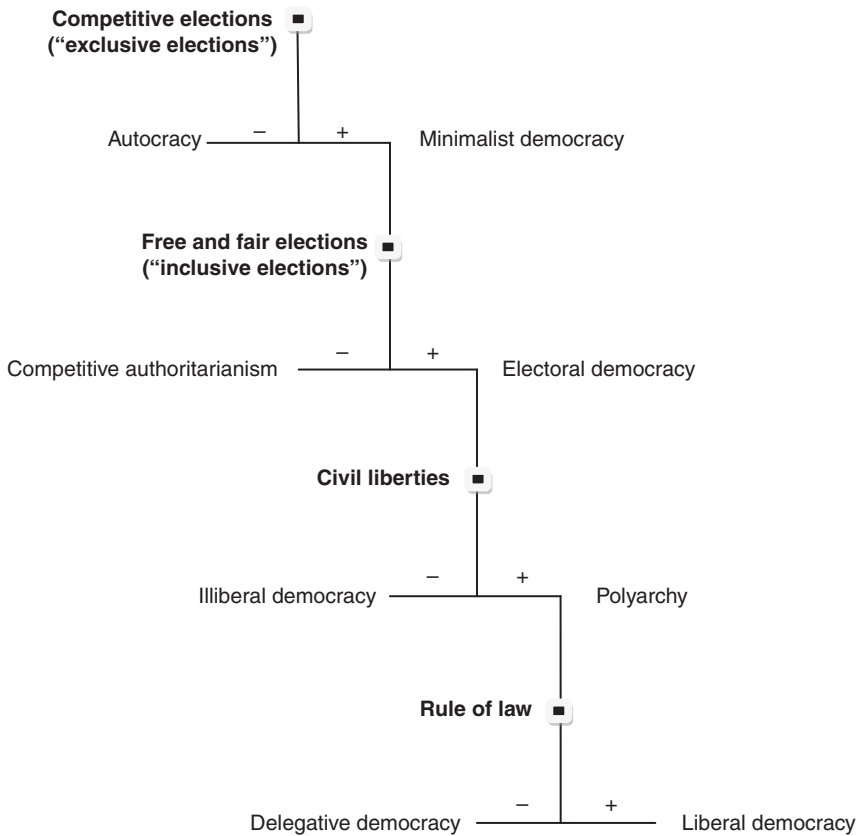
Figure 1. Descending the Ladder of Abstraction to Construct Types of Democracy

characterized by exclusive elections and those characterized by no meaningful elections, since virtually none of these exhibit the presence of any of the other two attributes.

With only three exceptions (out of 125),[20] the scale thus stretches from one corner of the typology to the other, that is, from the polar type of liberal democracy to that of illiberal autocracy. More technically, the coefficient of reproducibility conventionally used to assess the strength of such a hierarchical pattern is no less than 0.98 (122/125). This is equivalent to saying that a very clear hierarchy, stretching far beyond the electoral premise, is in fact discernible on the ground. The order is this: the thin electoral attribute is most easily obtained; subsequently, we encounter the thick electoral attribute; thereafter follows the civil liberties attribute; and finally there is the rule of law attribute. The five types that conform to this hierarchical logic are shaded grey in Table 5.

Are the Findings Robust?

The empirical regularities of the typological ordering are extremely evident. But, one might object, this could be a result of tailoring the threshold or of the choice of dataset. To avoid such speculations, and to support the reliability of the analysis, we test the robustness of the findings in two steps. First, we alter the BTI thresholds. Second, we reorder the referents using the *Freedom in the World*

(FH) survey provided by Freedom House, in turn employing different thresholds here as well. The reason we have chosen the FH survey is that it is the only other widely employed dataset which makes it possible to distinguish the three attributes of electoral rights, civil liberties, and the rule of law. The other predominant democracy measure, Polity, does not include the two latter criteria.

To limit the total number of illustrations, we refrain from reproducing the new typologies in the text proper, but interested readers may find the tables in the Appendix. The BTI robustness test is straightforward, as the dataset has already been described. This time we use a threshold of 8 (instead of 9) to denote the status of "no defect". To explain the difference, the earlier BTI ordering can be construed as a strict ordering, with this new ordering being more lax. The results do not differ much. As illustrated in Appendix Table A1, an additional two exceptions exist in the lax ordering.[21] Consequently, the coefficient of reproducibility is still an impressive 0.96 (120/125), strongly supporting the existence of a hierarchical logic to the ordering.

The FH robustness tests require some elaboration. First and foremost, it is not possible to carry them out using the FH's general distinction between political rights and civil liberties, the latter of which combine both civil liberties and the rule of law.[22] However, since the FH chose to release their sub-component scores beginning in 2006, it has indeed become possible to distinguish among the three attributes using these disaggregated measures. We once again use the 2008 scores, covering the year 2007. To mirror the BTI operationalization as closely as possible, the electoral attribute is covered by the two components of Electoral Process and also Political Pluralism and Participation. The civil liberties attribute is covered by the components Freedom of Expression and Belief and also Associational and Organizational Rights. Finally, the rule of law attribute is covered by the component Rule of Law.

Regarding thresholds, matters are a bit more complicated than in the case of the BTI as we do not have any linguistic qualifiers to rely on, an absence for which the FH has, with good reason, been criticized (for example, Munck and Verkuilen, 2002). We have recalibrated the scores from 0 to 100 because the different components are not measured using the same range. Once again, we have employed a minimum score procedure to aggregate them when necessary. We first rerun the empirical analysis with a threshold of 90 to mark the presence of inclusive elections, civil liberties, and the rule of law and the additional threshold of 60 for exclusive elections. This we refer to as the "strict FH ordering." Second, we use the threshold of 85 to mark the presence of inclusive elections, civil liberties, and the rule of law and the additional threshold of 49 for exclusive elections. This we refer to as the "lax FH ordering."

Both times around, and as illustrated in Appendix Table A1, we encounter more misfits to the hierarchical pattern than was the case in the BTI orderings. In the case of the strict FH ordering, 13 countries defy this pattern, 10 of them inhabiting the by now familiar type which combines exclusive elections with a status of no defects on civil liberties. In the case of the lax FH ordering, the equivalent number is 11, with eight once again residing in the type that combines exclusive elections with civil liberties. However, the FH for 2008 contains no less than 193 referents (as opposed to the 125 countries of the BTI) because it includes small countries and OECD countries. This adds a dimension to the robustness test. Hence, it is all the more striking that the coefficient of reproducibility is only marginally lower this time around, namely, 0.93 (180/193) in the strict ordering and 0.94 (182/193) in the lax ordering.

As the rule of thumb says that a coefficient of reproducibility higher than 0.85 indicates a strong simple order scale, we conclude that the hierarchical pattern is indeed robust, both across different thresholds and across different datasets.[23] What these additional analyses do indicate, however, is that the one commonly encountered aberration, combining exclusive elections with civil liberties, may be of theoretical interest, too.

Reintroducing Scales

The fact that we have demonstrated the empirical existence of a simple order scale is worth elaborating as it allows for various more specific uses of the constructed typology. Such a scale is strongly one-dimensional and characterized by a unique way of reaching any combination of attributes if they are awarded a particular score.

This has several interesting consequences. First, the property space of the typology is easy to reduce. When such a simple order scale exists empirically, one does not need to resort to more sophisticated techniques, such as weighting different attributes to combine them into a composite index that treats the same aggregate scores as equivalent.[24] Rather, one may resort to simple, functional reduction (that is, deleting the empty cells), which allows one to preserve the notion of a hierarchy among the attributes.

Second, the systematic sequencing in attribute fulfillment allows us to take advantage of two recommendations of Collier and Adcock (1999). They emphasize that it sometimes makes sense to conceptualize "democratization as a sequence of steps, rather than as a single event," an approach that "in effect introduces gradations" (Collier and Adcock, 1999: 552). Subsequently, they point out that a sharper differentiation can be provided by combining gradations with named categories, thus creating an ordinal scale based on a limited number of categories (Collier and Adcock, 1999: 560). These two options can be combined when a perfect simple order scale has been established. Because there are virtually no exceptions, the scale can be construed as an ordinal scale stretching from the thinner to the thicker types of democracy.

Hence, we have come full circle. For what we argue here is that the presence of a perfect simple order scale allows us to create a one-dimensional index of democracy. As announced in the first section of the article, we have thus provided a tentative answer to what O'Donnell (2004: 84 n. 129) terms a "major methodological issue" that his studies on the issue had left unresolved, namely, "if it would be possible or convenient to reduce these vectors to some kind of index."

Our answer is in the affirmative. Notice, however, that this conclusion can only be reached on the basis of the typological exercises. Moreover, the scale has to be an ordinal scale. An interval scale is not fully supported (or at least requires additional assumptions) because that would entail assigning weights to the attributes. The great advantage of a perfect simple order scale is, in fact, that the weights are irrelevant "as long as the countries' ratings match the perfect scale types" (Coppedge and Reinicke, 1990: 56).

Table 6 illustrates the consequent ordinal scale of democracy[25] as well as the empirical referents assigned to each class. Here we use the original BTI ordering (the strict one) as this is the one most solidly grounded in the distinctions between linguistic qualifiers, but similar scales could be constructed for the three robustness tests (we report the lax FH-based ordinal scale in the Appendix).

Notice that the aggregate scores of 4, 3, 2, and 1 tell us much more than that, say, the Czech Republic (with a score of 3) ranks higher than, say, Bulgaria (with a score of 2). If one knows the score of a country on the scale, one can reproduce the country's ratings on each of the attributes (Coppedge and Reinicke, 1990: 61). To elaborate, an aggregate score of 3 means that the country in question has inclusive elections and civil liberties, but lacks the rule of law (2,1,0), since no other empirical combination produces this score. Similarly, an aggregate score of 2 necessarily means that the country in question has inclusive elections, but lacks both civil liberties and the rule of law (2,0,0).[26]

Finally, a caveat: the particular classifications of referents are, of course, no better than the quality of the datasets employed. If the designation of individual countries seems baffling to some area experts, this might be the reason. However, in this article we are primarily interested in the

Table 6. Linking Cases to Democracy Types, 2008 (BTI strict)

Liberal democracy (2,1,1)	Polyarchy (2,1,0)	Electoral democracy (2,0,0)	Minimalist democracy (1,0,0)
Chile	Costa Rica	Argentina	Albania
Estonia	Czech Republic	Botswana	Bangladesh
Lithuania	Ghana	Brazil	Benin
Slovenia	Hungary	Bulgaria	Bolivia
Taiwan	India	Croatia	Bosnia
Uruguay	Jamaica	Dominican Republic	Burkina Faso
	Latvia	Georgia	Burundi
	Mauritius	Macedonia	Colombia
	Slovakia	Montenegro	Ecuador
	South Africa	Poland	El Salvador
		Romania	Guatemala
		Serbia	Honduras
		South Korea	Indonesia
			Kenya
			Madagascar
			Malawi
			Mexico
			Moldova
			Mongolia
			Mozambique
			Nicaragua
			Niger
			Panama
			Paraguay
			Peru
			Philippines
			Russia
			Senegal
			Sierra Leone
			Sri Lanka
			Tanzania
			Turkey
			Uganda
			Ukraine
			Venezuela
			Zambia

sequencing of countries on the identified properties of democracy, rather than in comparing the regime types of particular countries. Said differently, though some readers may feel that the trees have got lost in our view of the wood, we, on the contrary, seek to avoid the situation in which one cannot see the wood for the trees in the first place.

Conclusions

We have attempted to provide research on the empirical relationship between the constitutive components of liberal democracy that O'Donnell has recently called for. Revisiting the best current offer

on the market, that is, the typology of defective democracy proposed by Merkel and his associates, we identified a salient problem which we termed the "radial delusion." On this basis, we made the case for an explicitly hierarchical corrective. Rather than ascending the ladder of abstraction from a primary radial category, we descended it from a primary classical category.

This equals saying that instead of construing the types in the grey zone (Carothers, 2002) between liberal democracy and autocracy proper as semi-democracies (or semi-autocracies for that matter), we construe them as thinner types of democracy. This is possible because, based on a careful reading, the famous electoral definition of Schumpeter, the very stepping stone for most contemporary conceptualizations of democracy, is more minimalist than is normally acknowledged. In gist, Schumpeter explicitly allows restrictions with regard to universal suffrage and implicitly with regard to tutelary powers. His definition is therefore based on electoral competition only (that is, exclusive elections), not on free and fair elections (that is, inclusive elections).

Using the Schumpeterian construct to capture the overarching class of democracy allowed us to embed and systematize other valuable extant constructs such as electoral democracy, illiberal democracy, and delegative democracy. When ordering the referents in the consequent typology using the BTI (and when retesting the relationship using the FH), it turned out that this conceptual hierarchy is mirrored on the ground. In fact, empirically speaking, we identified a robust ordering for 2007 that almost completely conformed to the logic of a perfect simple order scale, extending from one corner of the property space to the other. This finding supports the merits of our construction and, in sum, our contention is that when creating typologies of democracy and non-democracy, the classical categorization should be brought back.

Other than that, the most important contribution of this article is the empirical establishment of a scale with a systematic hierarchical pattern. Coppedge and Reinicke previously used such a scale to measure the concept of polyarchy. But even though their endeavors were quite impressive, almost 20 percent of their referents (33 countries out of 170) did not fit the scale types perfectly. In the most conceptually sound version of our ordering, the equivalent proportion is less than 2 percent (3 countries out of 125). The consequent one-dimensional scale is thus virtually perfect. As Bailey (1973: 20) stresses, this situation fulfills Stinchcombe's classical requirement for a fundamental typology, namely, that "a large number of variables have only a small number of combinations of values which actually occur, with all other combinations being rare or nonexistent."

Based on this, our answer to O'Donnell's query is the following: with few exceptions, effective civil liberties presuppose inclusive elections, while the rule of law presupposes civil liberties. Needless to say, this answer is based on a set of synchronic observations, and the lack of proper diachronic data prevents us from assessing the pattern over time. But it is surely so robust that it seems fair to conclude that it is not incidental.

Notice, furthermore, that the three democratic attributes of electoral rights, civil liberties, and the rule of law can be tied to one and the same theoretical dimension via the concept of accountability, both vertical and horizontal.[27] Vertical accountability entails interactions between rulers and the ruled, in particular the bottom-up control of the former by the latter via elections as well as restrictions on the top-down exercise of power via fundamental rights and the absence of judicial arbitrariness. Horizontal accountability has to do with interactions between branches of the state, in particular via the separation of powers (O'Donnell, 1994, 2004; Schmitter, 2004). These considerations provide theoretical underpinnings for constructing the one-dimensional scale of democratic accountability insofar as this is justified empirically.

However, the analysis begs a particular question: what explains the described pattern? It might either be a consequence of a causal relationship between the components or of unidentified exogenous variables. The literature presents some help here. A number of influential scholar have emphasized that

the itinerary to democratization has changed dramatically under the so-called "third wave of democratization." Whereas civil rights and the rule of law preceded inclusive elections in the Western European past (witness T.H. Marshall's (1996) famous sequence of citizenship rights), the route followed in the developing world of today seems to be the opposite (for example, O'Donnell, 2001).

Two reasons are normally put forth here. First, the present "liberal hegemony" (Levitsky and Way, 2002) means that most developing countries are affected by the pressure to democratize. Second, many authors quickly add, structural constraints such as low levels of modernization, problems of "stateness" and state capacity, and a modest linkage with the developed democracies mean that this external pressure has lopsided effects (for example, Diamond, 1999: 57). In gist, whereas elections are spreading like wildfire, the same is not the case for the more demanding attributes of democracy. Most notably, obtaining the rule of law is beyond the reach of countries with such inauspicious structural constraints.

Christian Welzel's (2009: 87–8) distinction between "responsive democratization," "imposed democratization," and "opportunistic democratization" is a nice way of elucidating this. Only in the former instance do elites fully respect and sanction democratic freedoms, including the rule of law. In the two latter paths to democracy, most of these rights are precarious. Critically, responsive democratization is intimately linked to auspicious structural conditions that ensure a socially embedded and sustainable democracy via mass pressure and a vibrant civil society. On the other hand, countries lacking such features are normally located on the two less fortunate trajectories.

It is possible to make sense of the identified hierarchy of types of democracy by invoking these dynamics. Though we have not fully analysed these theoretical arguments due to the inductive approach taken, this study supports the claims of these authors.

However, the findings do not support the claim about a "gap between electoral and liberal democracy" which Fareed Zakaria (1997) and Larry Diamond (1999), among others, made in the late 1990s (see also Møller, 2008). The type combining free elections with a lack of civil liberties and rule of law is in fact not so crowded. Instead, it is the minimalist democracies (that is, those only exhibiting the less demanding criterion of electoral competition) which are the most numerous cases in the grey zone between liberal democracy and autocracy proper. At the very least, then, the thesis about a gap involves a proposition about political competition, not free and fair elections.

What is more, Zakaria's prescriptive conclusion that western donors begin privileging constitutional liberalism at the expense of elections to overcome any such gap also seems questionable based on our analysis. As mentioned above, except for the autocratic polar type, virtually all of the types which include referents exhibit either exclusive or inclusive elections. Hence, there are no empirical cases of Zakaria's "authoritarian" or "constitutionalist" route. This does not in itself exclude that possibility. But, at the very least, it is not one that exists at the moment. Also, as Thomas Carothers (2007) has recently argued, the very notion that autocrats may favor the development of constitutionalism, including the rule of law, is difficult to sustain theoretically. It is therefore unlikely that countries will move towards constitutional liberalism in the absence of some kind of elections to check the power-holders (see also Lindberg, 2006).

More generally, the analysis makes for a somewhat disheartening reading of the current dynamics of democratization. Such is the case for two interrelated reasons. First, the very fact that the thinner types of democracy proliferate in the developing world means that the third wave of democratization has not brought the rule of law to the majority of newly democratized countries. Second, for the reasons suggested above, the empirical distribution indicates that the possibility of using political and economic conditionality to spread democracy is to a large extent limited to electoral aspects only. Differently put, the very structural constraints which impeded democratization *in toto* in the past now seem to hinder progression from thinner to thicker types of democracy.

Appendix 1

In this appendix, we first reproduce the typological orderings of the three robustness tests (in Table A1). As the lax BTI ordering is very close to the strict BTI ordering, we do not reveal the identity of the referents in this case, but refer to Table 6. Similarly, we only identify the cases of the lax FH-based ordinal scale of democracy in Table A2.

Table A1. Robustness Tests of Case Ordering using Different Datasets and Thresholds

		Inclusive elections	Exclusive elections	No meaningful elections
+ Civil liberties	+ Rule of law	**13**	**0**	**0**
		31	2[c]	*0*
		40	2[d]	0
		Liberal democracy		(Liberal autocracy)
	– Rule of law	**23**	**3**[e]	**2**[h]
		21	*10*[f]	*0*
		22	8[g]	0
		Polyarchy		
– Civil liberties	+ Rule of law	**0**	**0**	**0**
		1[a]	*0*	*0*
		1[b]	0	0
	– Rule of law	**6**	**22**	**56**
		6	*35*	*87*
		6	43	71
		Electoral democracy	Minimalist democracy	Illiberal autocracy

Notes: Bold type refers to BTI lax, italic type refers to FH strict, and normal type refers to FH lax. The cases diverting from the hierarchical pattern are [a, b] Japan; [c, d] Monaco and Taiwan; [e] Ecuador, Kenya, and Ukraine; [f] Belize, Benin, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Namibia, South Africa, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Vanuatu; [g] Benin, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Namibia, Serbia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Vanuatu; [h] Lebanon and Papua New Guinea.

Table A2. Linking the Cases to Democracy Types (FH lax)

Liberal democracy (2,1,1)	Polyarchy (2,1,0)	Electoral democracy (2,0,0)	Minimalist democracy (1,0,0)
Andorra	Argentina	Brazil	Albania
Australia	Belize	Grenada	Antigua and Barbuda
Austria	Bulgaria	India	Bolivia
Bahamas	Costa Rica	Jamaica	Bosnia-Herzegovina
Barbados	Croatia	Peru	Botswana
Belgium	France	Sao Tome and Principe	Burundi
Canada	Ghana		Colombia
Cape Verde	Greece		Comoros

(Continued)

Table A2. (Continued)

Liberal democracy (2,1,1)	Polyarchy (2,1,0)	Electoral democracy (2,0,0)	Minimalist democracy (1,0,0)
Chile	Hungary		East Timor
Cyprus	Israel		El Salvador
Czech Republic	Italy		Guatemala
Denmark	Latvia		Guinea-Bissau
Dominica	Mauritius		Guyana
Estonia	Panama		Haiti
Finland	Poland		Honduras
Germany	Romania		Indonesia
Iceland	Slovakia		Kenya
Ireland	South Africa		Lesotho
Kiribati	South Korea		Liberia
Liechtenstein	St. Kitts and Nevis		Macedonia
Lithuania	St. Lucia		Madagascar
Luxembourg	St. Vincent and Grenadines		Malawi
Malta			Mali
Marshall Islands			Mexico
Micronesia			Moldova
Nauru			Mongolia
Netherlands			Montenegro
New Zealand			Mozambique
Norway			Nicaragua
Palau			Niger
Portugal			Papua New Guinea
San Marino			Paraguay
Slovenia			Philippines
Spain			Samoa
Sweden			Senegal
Switzerland			Seychelles
Tuvalu			Sierra Leone
United Kingdom			Solomon Islands
USA			Sri Lanka
Uruguay			Tanzania
			Turkey
			Ukraine
			Venezuela
			Zambia

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. We use the kind of typology that Bailey (1973: 27) terms "Classification, then Identification," meaning that we first create our conceptual typology and then order the empirical referents within it. Moreover, we work with what Bailey (1973: 21) terms a "monothetic" typology, that is, the "possession of a unique set

of features is both necessary and sufficient for identifying a specimen as belonging to a particular cell of the typology."

2. Regarding the choice of a typological approach, we follow Collier and Adcock (1999) in arguing that there is no principal solution to the basic choice between construing democracy in terms of categorical distinctions and in terms of gradations. Both methodological approaches have merits and a pragmatic stance is therefore appropriate. More particularly, Collier and Adcock (1999: 561) stress that the justifications for the choice should depend on the problem and the empirical data at hand.

3. The article was published in a special issue of *Democratization* on defective democracies. We focus on this article as it is easily accessible in English, much quoted, and represents one of the latest, authoritative descriptions of the typology.

4. The (internal) embeddedness of a liberal democracy refers to the "specific interdependence/independence of the different partial regimes of a democracy [that] secures its normative and functional existence" (Merkel, 2004: 36).

5. A few exceptions to this numerical criterion exist: Bahrain, Botswana, Estonia, Mauritius, and Montenegro are all included in spite of their smaller populations.

6. We are almost certain that Merkel and others share this opinion, as they have been involved in the construction and development of the BTI. Our general assertion about the competitive edge of the dataset builds on the standards presented by Munck and Verkuilen (2002). However, the dataset is not without problems as, among other things, no formal inter-coder reliability test is carried out and the method (simple average) used to aggregate sub-scores is not explicitly justified.

7. See the *BTI 2008 Manual for Country Assessments* (Bertelsmann Foundation, 2008b).

8. This attribute measures whether the elected rulers have the effective power to govern, including whether veto powers are in existence.

9. These refer to the scores 6–8 and 3–5, respectively.

10. Merkel (2004: 38) explicitly writes that "a democratic electoral regime is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for democratic governing." It is, however, because he equates democratic governing with the root concept of "liberal democracy" – a country can, as he recognizes, be termed a democracy of a kind modified by an adjective (that is derogatory) based on the electoral attribute only (Merkel, 2004: 52).

11. In Collier and Mahon's (1993) exemplification of the radial logic, the electoral attribute (effective political participation) is in fact placed on a different footing than the other attributes. We take this as a tacit acknowledgment that democracy cannot be conceptualized without some appreciation of hierarchy between the attributes.

12. Following Sartori (1970: 1042), even at the most abstract level there must be something that stands contrary to a given concept.

13. This trichotomy mirrors that which Coppedge and Reinicke (1990: 53–4) created with respect to the electoral attribute. We have simply borrowed the designation "no meaningful elections" from their ordering.

14. These properties are also part of many definitions of the related concepts of horizontal accountability, constitutionalism, and *Rechsstaat* or *estado de derecho* or *état de droit*.

15. Observe that Dahl's (1989: 221) polyarchy criteria are as follows: free and fair elections, elected officials, inclusive suffrage, the right to run for office, freedom of expression, alternative sources of information, and associational autonomy.

16. Vanhanen's (1984: 11) definition of pure electoral democracy is this: "In modern societies democracy means that people and groups of people are free to compete for power and that power holders are elected by the people and responsible to the people."

17. Notice that Levitsky and Way (2002) (witness the nomenclature) do not construe this as a type of democracy. However, their definition constitutes an equivalent frequently referred to in the literature on regime change.

18. We are indebted to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this graphical presentation. Our distinctions are rather similar to those suggested by Howard and Roessler (2006: 367). However, the conceptual framework proposed here has several advantages vis-à-vis that of Howard and Roessler. First, we distinguish more systematically between democracies and non-democracies, on the one hand, and between civil liberties and the rule of law, on the other. Second, the hierarchical pattern necessary to make both conceptual frameworks useful is merely assumed by Howard and Roessler, whereas we demonstrate it empirically (see below).

19. This also means that it mirrors the distribution of a Guttman scale. The Guttman scale was first introduced in the context of statistical surveys. A perfect Guttman scale consists of a set of items that are ranked in order of difficulty from the least extreme to the most extreme position. For example, a person scoring a 6 on a 10-item Guttman scale will agree with items 1–6 and disagree with items 7, 8, 9, and 10. However, a Guttman scale conventionally requires a preliminary theoretical statement of intrinsic one-dimensionality. Our finding is more modest as it solely rests on an empirical demonstration, although we do hint at a theoretical one-dimensionality in the Conclusion.

20. The three exceptions to the perfect simple order scale are Mali and Namibia (which have the attribute of civil liberties, but only exclusive elections) and Papua New Guinea (which has the attribute of civil liberties but no meaningful elections).

21. Once again, the deviant cases inhabit the twin types which combine exclusive elections with civil liberties (one additional case) and no meaningful elections with civil liberties (one additional case).

22. Furthermore, on both political rights and civil liberties, the FH includes components (namely, the Functioning of Government and also Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights) that measure something other than our three attributes. Hence, using Munck and Verkuilen's (2002) terms, there is a problem of conflation, meaning that the components do not tap into the overarching concept.

23. As the last step in our robustness tests, we investigated whether a similar hierarchical pattern exists when construing the differences within the overarching class of democracy (scoring at least 6 on our election dimension using the BTI data) as differences of degree only. To do so, we use the more fine-grained distinctions of the original scores associated with the respective dimensions, meaning that information is not lost through collapsing values (for example, 6, 7, and 8 into moderate defect). The results show that the general findings are not overturned. Indeed, they are clearly supported as the hierarchical pattern between the dimensions shows consistency levels of 98 percent for electoral rights versus civil liberties, 100 percent for electoral rights versus the rule of law, and 100 percent for civil liberties versus the rule of law when applying the formula provided by Ragin (2006: 297) to calculate the consistency of necessary conditions.

24. Lazarsfeld and Barton (1951) term this "arbitrary numerical reduction."

25. Table 6 comprises the non-autocratic part of the complete scale. On the trichotomized electoral attribute, 2 denotes inclusive elections and 1 denotes exclusive elections. On the two other attributes, 1 denotes the presence of civil liberties and the rule of law, respectively, whereas 0 denotes their absence.

26. Note that this disregards the two exceptions of Mali and Namibia.

27. It was Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl who "hit upon the concept of accountability as the key to the broadest and most widely applicable definition of 'modern representative political democracy'" (Schmitter, 2004: 47).

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