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Pro- and anti-system behavior: a complementary approach to voice and silence in studies of political behavior

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Theories of participation and non-participation are largely unable to capture and distinguish anti-system behavior, which ranges from deliberate silence to political violence. To better understand and measure these diverse forms of citizen participation, and to distinguish these from forms of alienation and marginalization, this article builds a new model of anti-system behavior in a way that facilitates the development of empirically observable variables and hypotheses. To do so, I draw upon sociological approaches to alienation – which examine intensities of rebellion and contestation – and combine them with the standard political scientific approach – which examines intensities of engagement based on resources. The problem, I argue, is that each approach only partially explains the motivations behind aberrant political behavior in modern democratic systems; they are in fact two sides of the same coin. I consider three cases of apparent silent citizenship: Muslims in Western Europe, Roma in Eastern Europe, and white working-class people in North America and Europe.

Keywords: political behavior; silent citizenship; anti-system; alienation; political violence; participation; marginalization

Most empirical scholarship on political participation makes a distinction between 'active participation' and 'passive non-participation' in democratic societies. Active participation is associated with the concept of 'voice', which is variably described as 'empowered', 'mobilized', or 'engaged', whereas passive non-participation is associated with the concept of 'silence', which is variably described as 'apathetic', 'disadvantaged', or 'alienated'. But are all forms of voice in democratic societies the same? Are all forms of silence the same?

For the most part, the answer given in empirical studies of political participation has been 'yes'. The most prominent empirical studies of political participation, which look at civic culture (Almond and Verba 1963), mobilization (Rosenstone and Hansen 2002), voluntarism (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012), and associational membership (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nannetti 1993), associate active participation with activities of voice – including, not only voting, but also organizational belonging, civic volunteerism, engagement with social movements, and other forms of social and political mobilization.

One result is that 'silence' has come to be used as a blanket term in empirical studies of political participation to describe any and all of those who do not participate in politics. However, shouldn't empirical studies of political participation differentiate between the

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activism of a unionist who writes letters to legislators and the activism of a disillusioned protestor who uses violence to make a point? Shouldn't these studies also distinguish the silence of a single working mother, who is perhaps too busy to advocate for her interests, from the silence of an estranged immigrant on society's periphery? It depends what we are interested in capturing and explaining – how, or how much. In order to figure out 'how', we must first conceptualize different forms of voice and distinguish these from different forms of silence. We must frame the decision to participate in politics not only as a choice between modes of activity and inactivity, but rather as a choice of one particular type of political act among a selection of many (Leighley 1995, 198). Doing this requires us to go beyond the conventional dichotomy of active participation and passive non-participation. It requires us to pay closer attention to the orientation of silent individuals themselves.

Consider three cases that will serve in this article as running examples of behavior that can be overlooked when too sharp a distinction is drawn between active and passive participation in democratic societies. The first case concerns Muslim citizens of countries in Western Europe, North America and Australia, most of who are politically active in the countries but remain peaceful in their political activities. A small fraction of Muslim citizens belong to exclusivist, nominally Islamic organizations, which aim to disrupt or topple the current regime to establish an Islamic state or advance similarly related political goals. The political activities of these organizations are clearly oriented against the political system. A second case concerns populations of Eastern European Roma, a substantial number of whom live in isolation from their societies and the democratic institutions that govern them. Their passivity is not a matter of incapacity, but rather inclination – again, an orientation against the political system. Finally, a third case concerns white working class people, in North America and Europe, who are struggling to adapt to postindustrial realities of 'Rust Belts' in their home countries. Their political responses range from the xenophobia of far right, neo-Fascist organizations, to the purposeful withdrawal from the democratically rich associational ecologies that unions, clubs, and community groups ideally provide. The prevalence of cynicism, distrust, and passivity displayed among this minority of working class whites clearly has the potential to undermine democracy. But, as with the cases of the Roma and Muslim extremists groups, this is clearly not a matter of political passivity or civic incapacity.

As the above cases illustrate, established theoretical and empirical models of active and passive political behavior do not take up the issue of extreme forms of political activism and committed non-participation that do not contribute to (or actually diminish) the robustness of democracy. My goal in this article, then, is to expand these earlier understandings of active and passive behavior to more fully capture the nuances of active and passive political behavior to reflect an orientation I term *anti-system*. An *active* anti-system variant encompasses citizens' disruption or circumvention of the political system. A *passive* anti-system variant encompasses citizens' withdrawal from the political system.[1] Both represent political choices.

I develop this argument over six sections. The first section begins by elaborating the three selected cases. These cases are employed throughout the article to provide a diversity of political behavior that the new model must accommodate in its conceptualization. Once the cases are introduced, the second section considers existing understandings of voice and silence in democracies. To address under-theorized behavior on democracies' periphery, the third section defines active and passive *anti-system behavior* as observable manifestations of political alienation, and contrasts them with current understandings of civic *engagement*. This allows me to extend current classifications by accounting for pro-system and anti-system orientations in a model described in the fourth section. Doing so

expands the range of political behavior outcomes beyond mere activity and inactivity. The fifth section then reevaluates conventional explanatory hypotheses that predict political behavior in light of the new outcomes I conceptualize. The sixth section offers my conclusions: I advocate for a more contextualized understanding of political engagement that captures subtle differences between cases in ways that concepts like 'voice' and 'silence' cannot.

Conventional cases of unconventional politics

The sort of political behavior I attempt to conceptualize here is radical, but not necessarily rare. New means of communications technology have enabled broader and subtler expressions of alternative and dissenting worldviews. While this promotes a more equal public sphere, it also promotes greater exposure to fringe groups and their orientations. Accompanying new forms of social networking also allow like-minded individuals to associate, sometimes quite insularly. Such available opportunities to associate and isolate attract people across social boundaries. This article considers three case groups that exhibit a range of political behavior to build and test a model that accommodates a diversity of people and their political choices.

Muslim citizens in developed democracies

Western Muslims number more than 50 million people in Europe, North America, and Australia, and represent a case of an immigrant-origin minority seeking acceptance, but confronting discriminatory treatment. Despite being among Western democracies' most vilified – and in Europe, most disadvantaged – immigrant minorities, they have been observed to be remarkably politically active. Local organizations and civic causes seek to mitigate poverty, improve family health, promote development in their countries of origin, and organize cultural events (Gest 2010; Laurence 2011). Over the past three decades, there has also been a steady rise in Western Muslims' awareness about Islamist doctrine, which advocates the application of Islamic jurisprudence to non-religious sectors of life (Joppke and Torpey 2013). Polemically, greater Islamism has led to the introduction of shari'ah courts in places such as Canada and the UK, Islamic financial services, and wider reference to Quranic doctrine in protesting government actions (Roy 2006). More extremely, groups like the transnational Islamist party, Hizb-Ut-Tahrir, assemble activists to campaign for the re-establishment of a global Muslim caliphate and the undermining of local democratic politics in the interim. These Islamist activities have prompted arguments that many Muslim individuals are radically alienated from their societies and the structure of democratic engagement (e.g. Caldwell 2009; Leiken 2011).

Roma in the European Union

Roma (or more pejoratively and erroneously, 'Gypsies') represent a historically disempowered community of approximately 10 million people in the European Union (EU). Even though democratization in Central and Eastern Europe enabled excluded political minorities to actively participate in politics, the period of democratization has signified more hardship and calamity for the Roma than for any social group (Barany 2002). With notable exceptions at the European and national levels, large proportions of Roma tend to relate to governments and their local political systems in ways similar to pre-democratic times – via designated intermediaries. Many Roma dichotomize the world

between Roma and *gadje* – non-Roma – and this has contributed to the creation of parallel societies governed by parallel systems of justice and administration. Many Roma communities are ordered by the *divano* – an informal mediation procedure to rectify minor grievances – and the *kris* – the resolution of criminal, moral, or civil disputes using judges (Niremberg 2009, 96). Relations with civic authorities were managed by so-called 'Gypsy kings' or 'barons', tasked with helping Roma avoid full compliance with purportedly adversarial state policies – thereby sidelining Roma constituents from the process of governance. Current theories of political behavior would be confounded by Roma marginality because their democratic relations are ultimately mediated by interlocutors.

Working class whites in post-industrial democracies

Once the backbone of industrialized economies across the Atlantic, working class white people have drifted to the peripheries of diversifying societies and more globalized markets. Depending on whether they are classified by their education, income, or employment, they represent anywhere from a quarter to a half of most countries' populations – a major part of an ethno-cultural majority. Already subject to worsening economic mobility and the waning benefits of incumbency, white working class people are now also subject to an international 'left' that seeks to integrate the agendas of diversifying work forces, and an international 'right' that seeks to promote business interests above all (Gest, forthcoming b). Feeling disenfranchised, many white working class individuals have responded by engaging in racist militancy, supporting xenophobic parties, or withdrawing completely from the political system (Gest, forthcoming a). The political balance of many countries has been tilted by what was initially thought to be 'fringe' behavior, as far right parties attempt to collect thousands of partisan refugees leaving mainstream political deliberation. Many refuse to return.

Voice and silence in democracies

In considering the political choices of Western Muslims, Roma, and working class white people as challenges to current conceptions of active and passive political behavior, some comment on these conceptions is first required. In providing citizens with the ability to self-govern, democracies facilitate a range of advocacy tactics that enable ordinary people to express their ideas, preferences, and exert influence over the direction of their society. This range of activity is nevertheless restricted to those tactics that do not entail infringement upon the capacity of others to participate as well. Such tactics – while perhaps effective – circumvent the system's established channels for influence and, in doing so, undermine its capacity to reflect popular will.

Even with this concern for responding to popular will, democracies also depend on a citizenry that is confident in the government's capacity to govern without constant public consultation. Indeed, democracies make countless daily decisions without any consultation. To make this form of self-governance function effectively then, the system simultaneously depends on citizens' generally passive vigilance of government action and, when germane, citizens' active intervention to express dissatisfaction. While voting in elections represents an appointed opportunity for intervention, most other forms of voluntary participation are subject to the impulsive or calculated desire of citizens to advocate. In this spirit, passivity with the readiness to act and participation within democratic channels can be thought to support such a political system.

Hirschman referred to this as 'an alternation of involvement and withdrawal' (1970, 32; also see 'monitoring citizenship' in Schudson 1999). Hirschman argued that democracy benefits from a mix of 'alert' and 'inert' citizens – a situation in which political participation is somewhere between 'permanent activism' and 'total apathy'. The 'alert' citizens are the active members of the polis. They are the whistle-blowers, bringing attention to salient issues and pressuring the government to better serve their interests. But if everyone acted in this manner, Hirschman argues, the democratic state would suffer. Perhaps it could not even function. On the other hand, if all citizens were 'inert', there would not be enough pressure on the government to serve the people. Though Hirschman's argument does have an appealing logic to it, it does not account for the possibility that one group of citizens may remain 'alert' while another group remains 'inert. ' Under this scenario the democratic state still has a mix of activism and apathy, but it is hard to argue that democracy flourishes under conditions in which substantial groups of people are marginalized.

Hirschman does provide us with a simple, yet powerful, model to understand the choice each individual faces in the public sphere. Given an unfavorable turn of events, does the individual stay within a given political party and try to reverse the negative outcome – what he terms 'voice' – or does that person 'exit' by seeking an alternative, like by switching parties? A critical weakness of Hirschman's model is that he focuses almost exclusively on actions *within* the political system (or market). That is, Hirschman considers 'exit' in the sense that an individual may leave an association or political party in order to switch to a new group, simply changing affiliations. However, he does not address the possibility that the same individual might just as easily exit the political system entirely, and certainly not with the intention of doing so indefinitely, as we have witnessed among disenfranchised working class whites or isolated Roma. He also does not address the possibility that the same individual might actively attempt to circumvent the political system to express her preferences or achieve his objectives, as we have witnessed among violent xenophobic or Islamic extremists.

The bulk of scholarly attempts to conclusively define the nature and expression of alienation was carried out in the 1960s and 1970s (e.g. Bell 1959; Meier and Bell 1959; Josephson and Josephson 1962; Dill and Ridley 1962; Finifter 1970; Schwartz 1973; Zeller, Neal, and Groat 1980). In 'On the Meaning of Alienation', Seeman (1959) set the tone by proposing five variants of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. Since then, the vast majority of literature has sought to refine Seeman's list of understandings or apply them socio-psychologically. However, after establishing the many variants and expressions of alienation, the term now serves as a weak, flawed reference for social scientific enquiry. The different 'dimensions' described and measured (Seeman 1959; Finifter 1970; Zeller, Neal, and Groat 1980) all simply suggest that 'alienation' is a sociological construct that is too plastic to facilitate explicit empirical reference or any real examination of its effects.

One of the reasons that this has not been a major problem thus far is because alienation has been mostly considered theoretically. When it has been examined in practice, it has generally been reflected by 'non-participation' or 'silence'. Indeed, without a semblance of agreement about the meaning of alienation, investigations into the subject often entail limited empirical evidence in support of their contentions. There is thus a distinct need for a conception of alienation that draws upon classic theories of social failure, relates to contemporary forms of silence and voice, and identifies specific empirical expressions of these contrapositions.

Active and passive anti-system behavior

One such contraposition exists among individuals with potential cause to advocate, who choose to never make any claims of the system – a conscious withdrawal. The key here is that such individuals' passivity is not a choice to temporarily 'sit out' with an intention to return when it is more feasible or they feel more motivated. Instead, it represents a conscious commitment to inactivity, the removal of oneself as a stakeholder in the political system, regardless of their desire for reform. Isolated Roma have no intention of engaging a political system they believe to be angled against their interests. Despite representing a significant plurality of their national populations, some white working class individuals relate. A second such contraposition exists among political actors who act to coercively impose their preferences on other citizens or the political system – rebellion. Supporters of the Golden Dawn or Islamic extremism employ tactics that circumvent the system's established channels for influence and, in doing so, undermine its capacity to reflect popular will. Such activities may include violence, bribery, exclusion, intimidation, or campaigning for civic abstention. I refer to both of these contrapositions as anti-system.[2]

The *active* anti-system individual is committed to behavior that undermines or attempts to topple the democratic system. He or she may engage in clubs, organizations, and other political efforts that become substitutes for the democratic political system or are detrimental to it. His or her form of protest is not intended to reform the system, but to undermine or defeat it. An example might be a violent English Defence League protestor, but also a Hizb-Ut-Tahrir activist who encourages others to not vote or otherwise participate. This removes the active anti-system individual from political claims-making, along with those they are able to persuade. This definition excludes strong critics of the democratic political system who see struggles against 'powers-that-be' as a struggle for improving democracy in a system that they perceive to have become less democratic. As long as such a movement attempts to improve the democracy in non-coercive ways that do not infringe on others' capacity to dissent, there is no reason to think of them as anti-system. Indeed, such movements attempt to improve the system using the mechanisms of the system.

The *passive* anti-system individual does not voluntarily participate in democratic political life. He or she is withdrawn. Apathy in the form of non-participation does not necessarily mean a person is alienated. They may be satisfied, complacent, ignorant, or lack the resources to participate. So passive anti-system behavior encompasses individuals' conscious removal from the political system. Unlike active anti-system behavior, this passive variant neither intentionally weakens the democratic system, nor intentionally hinders or overrides other citizens' capacity to make claims. Instead, it allows disagreeable governance to continue, under circumstances in which citizens believe they have a legitimate grievance. One reason why discrimination against Roma has been institutionalized in much of Europe is that few Roma vote or are involved in government consultations. France's 2010 expulsion of Roma from France was met with disproportionate resistance considering its doubtful EU constitutionality. Withdrawal leaves a lack of government accountability, a less representative political system, and a widening social rift between those citizens who make claims of the system and those who do not (see Figure 1). Whereas active anti-system behavior circumvents the democracy's mechanisms and impairs the capacity of other citizens to make claims, passive anti-system behavior atrophies democratic mechanisms and mutes the claims of the alienated themselves.

It is worth noting that the anti-systemic nature of political choices is not a matter of contemporary legality. Illegal behavior may strengthen self-governance, as long as it does

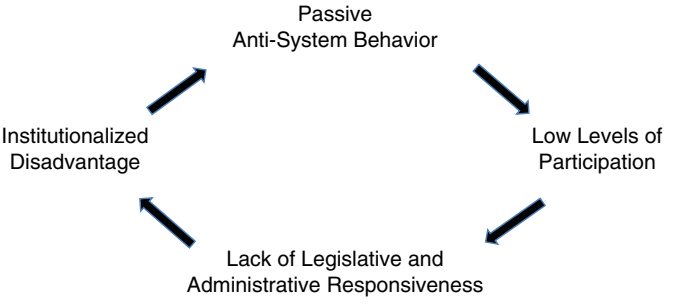

Figure 1. Passive anti-system behavior initiates a self-reinforcing cycle of non-participation.

not coerce or infringe on others' right to advocate. Laws are variable, and while some are made to facilitate equal participation, others are made to entrench a status quo. The distinction made here is not concerned with normatively validating or invalidating forms of political behavior. Indeed, all behavioral choices may exist equally authentically in the democratic political system. This distinction instead objectively acknowledges that anti-system behavior hinders the ability of the anti-system individuals and others to make claims and thrive in the democratic system. It is not unique to one group or one type of democracy.

In all democracies, the variants of anti-system behavior each restrict the process of equitable self-rule in some way. In the case of active anti-system individuals, this is because those who engage in coercive political activity that infringes on others' capacity to dissent or make claims of the system obstruct self-rule by silencing or perverting the speech of others. This removes the active anti-system individual from political claims-making. Equally, 'if citizens' ability to speak sets the threshold for self-rule, then those who refrain from speech – who are silent citizens – deny themselves, or are denied, equal say in directing the collective powers that shape their lives' (Gray 2012, 3). More harmfully, passive anti-system behavior initiates a cycle in which alienation leads to non-participation, which leads to a lack of legislative and administrative responsiveness to citizens' needs, which leads to institutionalized disadvantage, which fosters further passive anti-system behavior – a self-reinforcing cycle of marginalization, as depicted in Figure 1. As Dowding and John (2012) observed, when citizens are perpetually inert, there is a structural insensitivity to citizens' exit, leading to what they term 'neglect'.

Counterfactual: engagement

That which is anti-system can also be defined by its counterfactual. In many ways, Easton (1965, 272) idea of 'diffuse support' encompasses the general affect for the entire political system that is lacking among anti-system individuals. Not dependent on specific benefits or deprivations, diffuse support suggests an individual's connection to the political system – whether he or she is actively or passively supportive. However, without precise empirical references, diffuse support has been overshadowed as a term of political behavior scholarship in favor of 'engagement' or 'participation'. Like alienation, theories of active engagement exist as abstract ideals, but engagement ideals are more applicable to empirical reality. They also tend to supplement one another, rather than compete with one another. For example, Putnam's associationalism would supplement the cognitive engagement suggested by Zukin et al. (2006) rather than mitigate its impact. For this reason, I have elected to merely outline the various expressions of active engagement in

Table 1. Possible expressions of active engagement.

A. Citizen duties (variably compulsory)
(i) Voting
(ii) Jury duty
B. Institutional (voluntary)
(i) Party membership
(ii) Participation in a commune, union, or cooperative
(iii) Affiliation with an NGO, a special interest or advocacy group
(iv) Attending meetings of community authorities, or other local boards
(v) Serving in or running for a position as an elected official
C. Extra-institutional (voluntary)
(i) Participation in a peaceful protest, strike, civil disobedience, etc.
(ii) Writing or corresponding with an elected representative or official
(iii) Non-compulsory volunteer or community service work
(iv) 'Cognitive' engagement: Regularly reading news publications and following political/community news
(v) Membership in an inclusive club/group that builds normative agreement or social capital
(vi) Writing letters to the editor, blogging, or engaging in other means of public or collective political expression

Table 1 below. Drawn from a variety of sources, the list is not exhaustive but is a comprehensive practical application of different forms of active engagement.

For the purposes of this article, the relative quality of the different modes is less important than their basic employment, as there is no singular activity above that necessarily triggers the state of ideal active engagement. Instead there are various activities that suggest a certain degree of engagement, and the absence of anti-system behavior. As a result, any activity from Groups B or C suffices to suggest that a subject is engaged in behavior that makes peaceful claims of the democratic system and its spheres of dialogue. We are thus able to embrace a variety of forms of active political engagement because each indicates a general connection to the political system. Correspondingly, I understand passive engagement as a state of inactivity within democracies. Such a state may be occupied by someone who is complacent, satisfied, lazy, ignorant, or otherwise too busy to actively participate. However, if motivated or enabled, the passively engaged person would be inclined to become active in the ways described above. This complicates current ideas of engagement by acknowledging that the engaged take breaks from active civic life without necessarily withdrawing from the political system.

Modeling pro- and anti-system behavior

Figure 2[3] is a classification of engaged and anti-system behavior, given this passive/active distinction. It is separated into four quadrants delineating activity and passivity, pro- and anti-system behavior. In Quadrant II, those citizens engaging in conventional and unorthodox forms of political and civic engagement are represented. This list is not necessarily exhaustive but derived from a compilation of common forms of engagement. While they may be actively engaged for normative, instrumentalist, or traditionalist reasons, they are nevertheless observably active (see Held 2006, 251.) Quadrant I contains those citizens who are actively attempting to undermine, disrupt, or destroy the political system. These rebellious individuals are actively anti-system. Quadrant III is composed of those citizens who report themselves to be 'sitting out' or temporarily inactive in the democratic political system. Some of these individuals feel no current motivation to

PRO-SYSTEM	ANTI-SYSTEM
II. Active: Activity that engages the institutions and channels of the democratic system. Examples: a. Voting, parties, holding office b. Commune, union, cooperative c. Association or NGO membership d. Civil disobedience, protest e. Volunteer or community work	**I. Active:** Activity that impairs, disrupts circumvents or overthrows the system. Examples: a. Violence for political purpose b. Membership in an exclusivist organization c. Revolutionary action d. Clandestine activity
III. Passive: State of inactivity within the system: a. Complacent, satisfied b. Ignorant, disinterested c. Otherwise occupied	**IV. Passive:** Committed inactivity and withdrawal from the system a. Rejection b. Withdrawal

Figure 2. Variation in political behavior. The four quadrants model the observable behavior of individuals who are anti-system or engaged, passively or actively.

participate. Others are too busy with other matters of priority. Still others might be fully satisfied, or might simply not know the means of participation. As discussed earlier, democratic governance – to some extent – requires citizens to be complacent and trustful enough to not participate in the deliberation of every political issue, but only those chosen with discretion. Finally, Quadrant IV encompasses those citizens who report having permanently withdrawn from the sphere of civic life. These individuals are passively anti-system.[4] Importantly, this approach understands activity and inactivity, along with pro- or anti-system orientations, as individual political behavioral choices. Figure 3 classifies them in shorthand language.

Where conventional conceptualizations of political participation are less sensitive to the assortment of political activity reported by some Western Muslims, European Roma,

	PRO-SYSTEM	**ANTI-SYSTEM**
ACTIVE	ENGAGEMENT	REBELLION
PASSIVE	SITTING OUT	WITHDRAWAL

Figure 3. Variation in political behavior. This is a shorthand edition of the four quadrants modeling observable political behavior.

and white working class people, this model accounts for orientational differences in political behavior and enables us to make objective distinctions. The anti-system axis also differentiates acts that employ democracy's channels from those that circumvent or disrupt them. For example, while they do supplant the authority of civil courts, *shari'ah* panels' decisions are appealable to their government-backed counterparts as a form of delegated, voluntary self-rule in places such as Canada and the UK. In this way, they render citizens the option of religiously informed intermediaries and dispute resolution, not so differently from Jewish rabbinical courts and arbitrations for credit card debt resolution (Feldman 2010). Similarly, the use of religious doctrine to justify political opinions is nothing new to democracies, even if it is anathema to 'secular' societies. Democracies do not instruct individuals about *how* to develop their ideas, nor what their convictions should be. Indeed, American politics has been strongly influenced by the opinions of evangelical Christians who regularly cite biblical passages to justify their issue positions. On the other hand, groups such as Hizb-Ut-Tahrir clearly exhibit active anti-system behavior. Its neo-caliphatist campaigns actively work to undermine participation in the democratic government by discouraging voting, working to topple the democratic political system, and – in the case of its fractional offshoots – using violence to express their ideas.

This model of anti-system behavior also provides a clearer means of evaluating the political behavior of Roma, which is complicated by its mediation. Roma interlocutors are conventionally un-elected and tend not to solicit the common will of their constituents. Some are not even Romani. As a result, Roma do not expect honesty or altruism; they simply expect that the successful 'king' will recognize community needs and resist monopolizing all gains (Niremberg 2009, 96). Their yielding reinforces a greater separation between Romani and non-Romani governance, and suggests that Roma may not approach the state as vested citizens. While it can be argued that the process of determining community needs involves political deliberation between the intermediary and the concerned individuals, many Roma community members are excluded from such discussions, and civic engagement with the state and political system remains ultimately tasked to a liaison. Such a political model removes individual actors from the process of self-governance, and promotes a clientelist relationship with the state and its mediators. Indeed, because Romani tribes and factions have frequent difficulty collaborating, it has been reported that Roma find it difficult to even act as a bloc anyway. Therefore, in effect, the clientelist relationship with civic authorities necessarily means that the minorities of inactive Roma individuals, on the fringes of Romanian, Hungarian, and Greek polities, qualify as passively anti-system. They remain disengaged, unsupportive of their country's relatively new democratic institutions, without much intention to reach out to political systems deemed to be the instruments of foreign communities. Established models of political behavior can identify Roma clientelism, they can identify Islamist violence, but they cannot accommodate this diversity into a single, coherent understanding of political behavior as we see in Figure 4.

Complexity in political behavior

The activism of democratic engagers (Quadrant II) and active anti-system individuals (Quadrant I) is easily distinguishable by the nature of their observable behavior and affiliations. However, the difference between the passivity of individuals engaged within the democracy (Quadrant III) and the passivity of anti-system individuals (Quadrant IV) is not behaviorally observable. Indeed, both are inactive. Instead, the difference is that the passive anti-system individuals *never* intend to become active democrats, while the

Figure 4. The four quadrants now house different observations of political behavior across the three different cases touched upon in this article.

passively engaged individuals still *may*, given a change in circumstances or resources. While the former is effectively divesting from participatory opportunities, the latter remains alert in their abstention.[5] Still, all that is observable to the researcher is a signal or an intention. So she or he must interact with the actor to understand the basis and nature of the actor's choice, or solicit the actor's intentions.

It is important here not to conflate actors' self-conception of their behavior with the objective appraisal and classification of the behavior. This is because actors' behavior may defy their self-understood purpose. As a result, the form of behavior and its effect on the robustness of the democratic system is central. Does it degrade, diminish, atrophy, or circumvent the system? Or does it reinforce, reproduce, maintain, or support the system?

A complication arises when individual actors occupy more than one classification simultaneously. These borderline examples are included in Table 2.

Such cases are hardly anomalies; indeed, they are conventional. For example, by virtue of their social incumbency, white working class people often have developed habits of democratic engagement such as periodic voting and participation in legacy organizations such as working man's societies, sporting clubs, or unions, even while they pursue anti-system means of activism in racist pseudo-militias or exclusivist parties. In these cases, it is useful to suggest the key triggers of classification. Any actor who exhibits active anti-

Table 2. Actors occupying more than one classification simultaneously.

Type I/II Engaged/rebellious	An actor who engages in both active democratic engagement and active anti-system behavior (such as an activist who occasionally uses violence)
Type II/III Engaged/sitting out	An actor who is democratically active about some issues and complacent about others
Type III/IV Sitting out/withdrawn	An individual who is universally passive, envisions future action in some respects, but is otherwise withdrawn

system behavior (Type II/III) may be considered actively anti-system, because their choice to rebel against or circumvent the system corrupts any other activity within it.[6] Any actor that is ever actively democratic and not actively anti-system (Type I/II) may be classified as actively democratic, as this reflects a (most common) form of selective activism. Passive democratic engagement may be characterized by universal passivity with openness to one-day engaging (Type III/IV), whereas passive anti-system behavior is characterized by withdrawal without any intention to one-day engage.

Such complications raise questions about the 'stickiness' or 'shiftiness' of political behavior. Regarding stickiness, Hirschman's model of 'loyalty' suggests that many actors tolerate otherwise unacceptable or uncomfortable circumstances simply because they are attached to a candidate, an ideology, or an organization. In many ways, 'loyalty' may be simply a product of the psychological desire to reduce complexity in the world around us. It is difficult to assess all of the new information that we receive in real-time, and loyalty simplifies political choices by identifying something that we like enough to stop reconsidering it. While Hirschman considers loyalty in the context of loyalty to a company, a brand, or a political party, we can also apply this concept to the political system as a whole – now that we have fleshed out the possibility that an individual might exit the system altogether. Loyalty to the democratic system, or a political institution within the system, increases the stickiness of pro-system orientations and engaged behavior. Likewise, we may see the same trend occurring in the opposite direction. Those individuals who have grown loyal to anti-system orientations are unlikely to return to democratic political life.

However, political capital tends to be free-flowing, as people adjust their behavior and orientation over lifetimes. For this reason, a model's boundaries cannot be rigid. The primary analytical classes are abstractions from reality, capturing important behavioral aspects. So there are possibilities for movement between categories.[7] Indeed, it is possible to observe that individuals who normally work within the democratic system may onetime stray into exclusivist organizations or efforts undermining the democratic process. And it is possible that those once committed to the destruction of the democratic system find a way to satisfy their goals by reforming the system, rather than by upending it. It is equally possible that citizens may move from passive withdrawal to inspired anti-system behavior, at different times and with regard to different issues. This approach therefore suggests that political behavior – both engagement and anti-system – has an attitudinal basis. If so, it could be hypothesized that anti-system behavior is to some degree dependent on how the world is interpreted by the agent.[8]

Explaining pro- and anti-system behavior

The approach of this article to political behavior unites political science and sociological lenses to participation and alienation. Currently, many political science accounts – defined by the progress of resource-based models – encompass the (pro-system) left side of Figures 2 and 3, but miss the (anti-system) right side. The more sociological accounts of alienation consider the deviance and estrangement on the right side, but in a way that is largely disconnected from the engagement on the left side.

Contemporary political behavior scholarship is largely concerned with understanding why some people participate more than others – between passive and active (down to up, and up to down). In other words, scholars try to predict the intensity of civic engagement, and have done so with reasonable accuracy (perhaps on both sides of Figures 2 and 3). To date, a broadly supported conclusion is that resource possession is the most significant

determinant affecting people's behavior. This has been explained as socioeconomic status (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), civic skills (Ayala 2000), social networks (Rosenstone and Hansen 2002; La due lake and Huckfeldt 1998; McClurg 2003), and internet usage (Weber, Loumakis, and Bergman 2003), among many other ways. Other prominent theories have pointed to differences in individual personality (Milbrath 1965), (ir)rationality (Green and Shapiro 1996), institutional opportunity structures (see McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1999; Meyer 2004), and more recently, social pressure (Rolfe 2012; Green and Gerber 2008).

However, resource-based and network-based models are unable to explain pro- and anti-system orientation (left to right, and right to left). Indeed, if poverty or networking were sufficient to explain anti-system behavior, there would be little to no participation by the majority of many countries' citizenries. Resource deficiency as a necessary condition is similarly defied by terrorism executed by well-educated Islamists or extreme-right parties with middle class support. Such rebellious groups are often not defined by their isolation but by strong networks among members.

Structures are rarely 100% determinant anyway. As Giddens argues, agents are knowledgeable – reflexively constituting their respective realities – but ultimately always bounded by structural conditions and unintended consequences (see structuration theory in Giddens 1984, 1991). A further hypothesis might emphasize the underlying importance of agency and judgment, and individuals' subjectivity in *how* they interpret their surrounding social circumstances. So perceptions are not completely exogenous of resources or institutions, but the effect of resources and institutions is significantly modified by perceptions.

Historical conceptual understandings of alienation have always acknowledged the relevance of attitudes and interpretive biases. For many definitions, alienation *is* an attitude. Examining alienation in light of what he more broadly observes to be 'allegiance', work by Lane (1964) links alienation to a sense of homelessness – a disconnection from other humans, the absence of belonging, a lost sense of social role. However, many of today's most alienated individuals are members of tightly knit but collectively estranged minority communities, such as Western Muslims in European suburbs or Eastern European Roma. Even among white working class individuals, ostensibly a part of a state's ethno-religious majority, many have been empirically observed to associate with hate groups, militias, and fringe parties, as discussed above.

A next step will be to test causal hypotheses by asking respondents to report structural disadvantages, but also by soliciting respondents' subjective perceptions and attitudes. Given this article's nomination of new classes and dynamics of political behavior, we must first identify quantifiable variables that reflect alternative determinants of anti-system behavior. Over the past several decades, scholars have already sensitized examinations of political behavior to the different ways actors interpret their circumstances. For a time, many surveys solicited actors' appraisal of internal, external, and collective *personal efficacy* (Campbell, Gurin, and Miller 1971, 187; Almond and Verba 1963, 257; Balch 1974; Mcpherson, Welch, and Clark 1977; Yeich and Levine 1994, 260). A further possible determinant is actors' sense of *relative deprivation* – the discrepancy between individuals' expectations of the political system and their perceived levels of attainment (e.g. Gurr 1970, 23). Here, scholars must consider innovative ways to measure the extent of actors' satisfaction and disappointment over time. Work by King et al. (2004) has been useful in considering ways of measuring complicated perceptions. The authors generalize ideas in application-specific research by asking survey respondents for self-assessments and for an assessment of several hypothetical persons from written vignettes. In this

manner, we may better understand the impact of individual subjectivity on political behavior, and its relationship to more standard, structural variables such as resources, networks, age, education, and ethno-religious culture.

The importance of perceptions is also suggested by the classic, resource-oriented work of Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995). Though significantly less emphasized than resources, the authors point to non-participants' lack of 'psychological engagement with politics' (269). It is this suggestion that activism is modified by people's perceptions of their personal efficacy that merits further examination – particularly in circumstances where disengagement is documented among those with strong social networks and without great resources. Verba et al. indeed recognize this when they acknowledge that 'activity frequently takes place in the context of rich interpersonal networks' and 'personal connections among acquaintances, friends, and relatives' (17). Still, while the anti-system behavior approach fills the explanatory void of passive and active anti-system behavior left by the Civic Voluntarism Model, it may be subject to the same criticisms directed at Schlozman, Verba, and Brady (2012). These critiques argued that the authors do not account for unknown, unmeasured structural variables, or confounding psychologies. My emphasis on specified perceptions may help narrow our focus on these confounding psychologies, which can then be tested to see if they are correlated with resources anyway.

Conclusion

Given the extent of conceptual ideas about alienation, the intentions of this article are developmental. In the interest of better understanding the objective nature and causes of marginalized political behavior, I have sought to disentangle this complicated, amorphous concept in a way that facilitates the development of empirically observable variables and systematic empirical theory. Indeed, despite abundant analysis, there is a paucity of objective, descriptive terminology – particularly of the sort that is relevant to emerging forms of political behavior. More simply put, the field of political behavior lacks clarity about the varieties of activity and inactivity, voice and silence. This article seeks that clarification before proceeding to test more advanced theories of political activism, extremism and withdrawal.

As this article demonstrates, anti-system behavior can assume a variety of forms, ranging from passive estrangement to active political opposition. If political science accounts of 'participation' are limited by their parsimony, sociological accounts of 'alienation' (or even related ideas of anomie, marginality, and estrangement) have been hindered by a vagueness that prohibits the concept's application as a meaningful term of empirical measurement. To re-conceptualize the range of political behavior, I connect the sociological approach to alienation and the political scientific approach to engagement as two sides of the same coin. Indeed, I argue that each approach only deals with half of a coherent phenomenon. Although I suspect that each respective half is accurately understood in isolation, my perspective is critical of both, and constructive in a way that employs ideas from each side to build a more comprehensive approach to political activity and passivity – voice and silence.

The anti-system behavior I derive classifies extreme political action and inaction, and contextualizes them among different forms of engagement in a way that previous ideas about 'activity' and 'passivity', 'voice' and 'silence' do not. This enables researchers to distinguish those behaviors that reinforce the political system and those which do not. The proposed classification reflects the keys to the democratic system's sustainability by focusing on citizens' employment of its channels for participation and consultation. The

concerned forms of behavior can therefore serve as an objective dependent variable for future investigations of contemporary political communities – allowing researchers like me, who hypothesize that political behavior is significantly dependent on individuals' sense of deprivation or fulfillment, to test for relationships.

There is no shortage of testing grounds. In light of contemporary political conflicts, we must be careful not to over-interpret these new concepts and apply them beyond their scope and intention, nor attribute any normativity to them. The world does not require another adjective to patronize or criticize the marginalized. It simply requires a more precise vocabulary to classify, contextualize, and understand their and other individuals' political behavior.

Disclosure statement

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Notes

1. The political system here refers to the overarching approach to governance, rather than the government tasked with its responsibilities – the procedures of deliberation and the exchange of rights and obligations, not the individuals or parties tasked to protect and enforce them.
2. Anti-system behavior has few antecedent definitions in political science and political sociology, particularly in studies of democracies. Most other works of scholarship use the term without definition, often in reference to deviant behavior. Perhaps the most significant use was by Muller, Jukam, and Seligson (1982), in their article, 'Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior'. In this paper, the authors define 'antisystem behavior' – like others – as exclusively active or aggressive in nature. It included: '(1) fights with police or other demonstrators, (2) a wildcat or unofficial strike, (3) a group who refused to pay taxes, (4) taking over factories, offices, or other buildings, and (5) a group which wanted to overthrow the government by violent means'. I argue that there is nothing anti-democratic about sit-ins, unofficial demonstrations, or civil disobedience in the form of tax evasion – even if they may be illegal. Historically, there have been many peaceful, democratic movements that have advocated a political position by using forms of disobedience – such as boycotts, sit-ins, strikes, protests, or non-compliance that do not infringe on others' capacity to express themselves or employ forms of coercion. It is worth noting that, in defining 'anti-system' political parties, Capoccia (2002) makes a distinction between 'ideological anti-systemness' and 'relational anti-systemness'. He argues that 'ideological anti-systemness' regards a political party's opposition to the democratic system, while 'relational anti-systemness' regards the party's opposition to the values of the democratic system. This study is concerned with both forms of 'anti-systemness' as it is expressed in individual actors' behavior.
   Sartori's theory of anti-system parties considers that an anti-system party (like the Partido Comunista Italiano) may ultimately become a component of the system, if accepted after the use of anti-system means. While the same issue lingers here, this article and its conceptualization of political behavior is concerned with means – unconditional on the normative question about whether ultimate incorporation justifies them.
3. The design of this diagram was aided by one created by Koff (1973).
4. It is worth noting that the discussion of non-participation and passivity in the context of 'political behavior' complicates the way we conventionally conceive of 'behavior'. Indeed, the term connotes an affirmative nature. However, I think it is reasonable to consider abstention, withdrawal, and rejection as behavioral, as more activist forms. Indeed, if actors must choose to participate, then they must also choose to abstain. Volition is still entailed.
5. Note that the distinction here is not about whether an individual accepts the public goods and provisions afforded by the political system, like health services, welfare, education, or housing. Consumption does not indicate support or participation as much as it suggests instrumentalism.
6. One might consider a member of a contemporary militia or the historic Ku Klux Klan, which maintained an active democratic role in the Southern United States by producing electoral candidates, sponsoring community- and church-based events (typically considered indications

of high social capital). However, it ultimately pursued an exclusivist political agenda using violence and intimidation. This suggests that the actor possesses an underlying lack of confidence in their capacity to influence the system through conventionally democratic means.

7. This shiftiness across time means that behavior (and its causal factors) can be inquired at different moments, and movement between boxes can be traced. Indeed, it would be interesting to see trends of movement as they relate to changes in the measurement of independent variables and different social or political contexts.
8. Critics may contend that this approach to anti-system behavior is normative – that it authenticates democratic participation over other behavior. My response is twofold. First, this new approach is no more normative than resource-based models and others that seek to typologize political behavior and its impetuses (see Held 2006, 197, 251). Second, the approach to anti-system behavior quite objectively observes whether certain behavior is within the scope of democratic channels for advocacy and engagement without necessarily suggesting that anti-system behavior is anything other than circumventive.

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