Undermining Democracy with Disgust:
The Politics of Outrage and Democratic Backsliding *

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Abstract

A rising tide of anti-political ire is evident in democracies around the world, placing democracy in danger in many contexts. This article analyzes the microfoundations of faltering support for democracy through the lens of democratic backsliding in Hungary, drawing upon original survey data and a lab-in-the-field experiment to demonstrate that many citizens feel disgust towards multiparty politics, and that this causes a visceral rejection of democracy. Disgust towards political competition undermines normative commitment to the democratic system, allowing would-be autocrats to consolidate power as members of the public decline to defend a system they feel disgust towards. The data tie this disgust to a political dialogue of outrageous accusations, which elicits anger in the few citizens who hold strong partisan predispositions, but leaves the rest of the populace disgusted and less dedicated to democracy as an ideal.

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On July 26, 2014, Hungary’s Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán, delivered a speech in which he declared the failure of liberal democracy, vowing to “build a new illiberal state based on national foundations.”[^1] Though this statement follows years of systematic assault on the institutions of liberal democracy by the Orbán government, Hungarian society met his remarks with a muted shrug. At the onset of the transition, scholars worried that democracy would fail to take root in Hungary and other transitioning states in post-communist Europe (Przeworski 1991; Jowitt 1992), but their concerns that a lack of popular support would undermine the new system are more warranted today, twenty-five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Hungarian government has successfully restructured the country’s political institutions with a new illiberal constitution with little public outcry. Meanwhile, political participation continues to wane; turnout has fallen in every Hungarian election since 2002. Why would citizens in one of post-communist Europe’s most successful cases of democratization remain inactive in light of attacks on democracy? Why has experience with democracy failed to yield support for its ideals?

The answer to these questions lies in the particular nature of citizens’ democratic experience: a never-ending stream of vitriol in which all sides accuse political rivals of outrageous violations of morality. Political elites utilize these attacks to elicit anger in order to drive political action. But, in reality, a discourse that deals primarily in documenting politicians’ immorality elicits disgust rather than anger for many citizens. While anger leads to political engagement (Brader 2006) and may explain the widespread protest voting for unorthodox parties noted in the region (Pop-Eleches 2010), disgust leads to disengagement from politics so thorough as to cause a withdrawal from the very ideal of democracy. The distinction between anger — an emotion often studied by scholars of political behavior and campaign politics — and disgust — an emotion heretofore largely ignored in political science — illuminates the situation in Hungary and many other faltering young democracies.

Hungary is a member of a global cohort of young democracies playing host to the dual trend of democratically elected leaders tightening their grip on power just as the populace turns away from the ideal of democracy. It appeared to be one of the third wave’s most consolidated democracies, and is thus a compelling case for analyzing the causes of democratic backsliding. Indeed, from having the post-communist region’s most stable party system to the presence of European Union oversight, this is a country where all indicators pointed to the survival of the democratic regime. Most worryingly, the dismantling of Hungarian democracy occurred through electoral means. There was no military coup or revolution, only a Prime Minister with an institutional opportunity to write his own constitution, removing checks on his power, curtailing the freedom of the press, and reignining in the independence of the judiciary to the extent that liberal democracy is a thing of the past in Hungary (Schepele, 2013). These trends mirror developments in other young democracies. As of this writing, the Bolivian congress is putting forth a referendum to grant President Morales access to a fourth term, and leaders in Venezuela and Nicaragua already enjoy freedom from term limits. Globally, citizens are increasingly disillusioned from their democratic systems, and are therefore less inclined to resist when leaders dismantle checks on executive power.

This article draws upon a lab-in-the-field experiment and an original survey to inform our understanding of eroding normative commitment to democracy by analyzing Hungarian citizens’ emotional reactions to politics. The survey provides unique data on how citizens in a young democracy feel towards politics, documenting high levels of disgust and anger towards multiparty competition among the public. It also shows that disgust drives an abandonment of democracy as a valued good that is particularly corrosive to young democracies, where greater institutional fluidity makes the system more vulnerable (Kapstein and Converse, 2008). Indeed, public acquiescence as the government destroys liberal democracy in Hungary cannot be understood without taking the psychology of disgust into account. Finally, the lab-in-the-field experiment demonstrates that outrageous accusations of moral transgressions by political competitors are often the source of these negative emotions, and that partisanship plays a key role in determining who becomes angry and motivated to act as opposed to disgusted and turned off by the idea of democracy.
Disgust and Dedication to Democracy

Democracy requires public support to succeed and survive. As the Hungarian case demonstrates, this is particularly important in young democracies with more easily altered political institutions. Despite years of what has been dubbed by political commentators as “Orbánization” for its striking similarities to “Putinization” and the making of an illiberal Russia, there has been no united or sustained resistance to the Orbán government. Even after curtailing the independence of the judiciary, placing restrictions on the freedom of the press, and openly declaring an end to liberal democracy, Fidesz received a plurality of the vote in 2014, albeit with significantly lower turnout than in their initial 2010 victory. Moreover, because of gerrymandering the electoral system to favor its candidates, Fidesz managed to turn a 44% plurality among the public into the two-thirds Parliamentary majority needed to continue manipulating the country’s political institutions.

Why would Hungarians tolerate the continued rule of a government bent on undermining their democracy? The psychological reaction of disgust sheds light on this question. Disgust drives an automatic and powerful urge to separate oneself from its source (Rozin et al., 1999; Giner-Sorolla, 2012). Citizens disgusted by multiparty politics would display the exact pattern we observe among many Hungarian citizens, having little interest in rallying to defend a political system they feel is rotten. These dynamics are in line with recent work in American politics showing that many non-voters are disgusted, seeing politics writ large as a “poisonous idea” to be avoided (Vandenbroek, 2012). Moreover, Rose and Mishler (1998) provide early evidence that negative partisanship — identifying a party one would never vote for — is far more widespread than party identification in post-communist Europe, while Čeka (2012) shows that more robust democratic competition itself causes weaker support for democracy by exposing citizens to higher levels of nasty attacks and allegations. Indeed, citizens who become disgusted with competitive party politics will feel that the very political game is filthy and immoral, compelling them to look upon the democratic process itself with disdain.

This would provide short-lived as by-elections in 2015 brought leftist and radical right candidates to parliament, ending Fidesz’s 2/3 majority.
Can politics become associated with the visceral experience of disgust? Research in psychology suggests that it can. Though disgust’s primary role is to guard the body against physical contamination and contagion, it also evolved into an important regulator of morality and social cognition (Haidt, 2003). It is often the reaction to a wide range of fairness violations (Chapman et al., 2009), and activates parts of the brain associated with moral judgments (Moll et al., 2005). Violations of social mores central to a group are particularly likely to elicit disgust in group members (Haidt et al., 1997), thereby engendering compliance to social norms within groups by providing an autonomic drive to punish morality violators through ostracism and avoidance (Kelly, 2011, 119). Thus, disgust causes a desire to get away from the offending object, whether it is rotten flesh that threatens to infect the body, or a moral transgression that threatens to infect the group.

That normative support for democracy may be hindered by disgust adds to our understanding of the determinants of popular desire for democracy. In one seminal work, Evans and Whitefield (1995) show that perceptions of how well the political process functions are key to understanding levels of normative commitment to democracy across post-communist Europe. This is an important point, as long run democratic stability requires a diffuse sense of attachment and loyalty to the system that is distinct from perceptions of the system’s performance (Easton, 1965; Almond and Verba, 1963). Bringing in disgust elucidates the cognitive mechanisms underlying the link between negative experiences with the system and reduced system support.

Disgust, however, is a more severe barrier to democratic support than frustration with weak institutional performance. It is easy for something to become associated with disgust, as “successfully protecting against poisons and parasites requires a hair trigger that is easily activated by a relatively wide array of cues” (Kelly, 2011, 132). However, once something has become associated with disgust, it is very difficult for it to become clean again (Rozin et al., 2008). Indeed, disgust leaves a more lasting impression in the memory than even fear (Chapman et al., 2013). Disgust towards politics will thus be long-lasting and harder to overcome than frustration with the political system’s performance.

Finally, recent work shows that citizens view politics through an emotional lens that subcon-
sciously shapes political perceptions and behavior (Lodge and Taber, 2013). Disgust may therefore become a stable mode of political experience, constantly repelling a citizen from new political information. Moreover, this emotional reaction is distinct from mere apathy. While disgust is a powerful emotion, apathy is the absence of emotional reaction. Whereas an apathetic citizen may simply be content with politics (Almond and Verba, 1963) but spurred to act when given reason to do so, the stickiness of disgust means even increased stakes or new information will not break the association of nastiness with multiparty politics or alter the desire to avoid them. Recent developments in Hungary demonstrate this dynamic, as the populace remains quiescent in the wake of overt moves by the governing party to dismantle liberal democracy.

**Elite Appeal Making and the Politics of Outrage**

What is the source of disgust towards politics? The negativity of the political information environment is one important cause. Indeed, Viktor Orbán’s Fidesz party swept into power in 2010 by leveraging populist-nationalist rhetoric against the incumbent Hungarian Socialist Party. Orbán accused the socialist successor party of being an unreformed group of communist oligarchs who were rotten in every way, and argued that his government’s illiberal 2012 constitution was the true revolution away from communism. Meanwhile, the radical right party, Jobbik, continued to make electoral inroads with their own brand of virulent attack aimed at the entire political establishment, equating political elites with global networks of American–Israeli conspirators out to rob Hungary of its sovereignty. Accusations fly from the left as well, as evinced by the recent polemic by Bálint Magyar calling the Fidesz government the “post-communist mafia state.” These political attacks are by no means unique to Hungary. From the drawn out impeachment battle over Romanian President Traian Basescu to the Kaczynski brothers’ nationalistic culture wars in Poland, scandals and outrageous accusations constitute the artillery of political battles across the post-communist region. Ken Jowitt’s (1992) conjecture that politics in post-communist democracies would be dominated by demagogues rather than democrats looks to be truer today than during the immediate aftermath
of the transition when he made his ominous prediction.

Political elites have strong incentives to target their opponents with accusations of immoral behavior in an effort to elicit anger, as this emotion attracts attention (Ryan, 2012) and drives political participation (Brader, 2006; Valentino et al., 2011). Moreover, there are reasons to expect these incentives to be especially strong in East Central Europe (ECE). Three contributing factors stand out: the post-communist legacy, democratization and party system development under the influence of enormous constraint from the European Union, and the changing media environment.

Post-communist politics provides plentiful raw materials for political attacks, and the transition from communism inherently involved many opportunities for corruption. Given the totality and uncertainty of the necessary reforms, the transformation from a centrally planned economy to a free market system was rife with opportunities for exploitation, all at a time of great institutional flux. The privatization of state-owned enterprises into private firms opened the door for mid- to upper-level former nomenklatura officials to use their positions in the old system to become wealthy in the new one. Inevitable short-term distortions during reforms meant the chance for early winners of reform to hijack the transition in order to continue to secure rents from these inefficiencies permanently (Hellman, 1998). Even given great pains to avoid corruption during privatization, deals were often viewed as corrupt (Dunn, 2004). It is no wonder that Fidesz framed their 2012 constitution as the real transition away from communism — public perceptions that members of the communist elite remained in power and gained enormously from the transition to the new system are both widespread and justified.

In addition to providing ample opportunities for outrageous accusations, the post-communist legacy also erected barriers to the formation of stable linkages between parties and voters. Communism left a powerful mark upon subsequent party politics. It produced a citizenry highly adverse to political institutions in general, and to political parties in particular (Jowitt, 1992). Political trust started out and remained low (Mishler and Rose, 2001), while civil society in post-communist states remained difficult for parties to penetrate well into the democratic period (Howard, 2003).

3Here conceptualized as states that were once ruled by state socialism but have joined the European Union.
Parties thus faced an uphill battle in developing stable sources of support. While political cleavages exist to structure political competition in ECE (Rohrschneider and Whitefield [2009]), the development of parties in the region occurred in a top-down process, with cadres of party elites reaching out to society from above by appealing to an undifferentiated “people” instead of developing from the bottom up out of social groups (Mair [1996], Innes [2002]).

Post-communist democratization on the doorstep of the EU reinforced the difficulty in cultivating stable bases of party support. For democratizing states in ECE, EU membership represented a near universal political goal (Vachudova [2005]). However, the accession requirements embodied in the voluminous *acquis communautaire*, including more than 20,000 individual laws, meant parliamentary politics were often more about implementing EU policies off the shelf than enacting distinct party platforms (Innes [2002], Follesdal and Hix [2006]). Thus, parties have often been unable to offer policy alternatives on crucial matters, and in many key domains, such as the cleavage over economic reform that structures political division across the region (Rohrschneider and Whitefield [2009]), their policies have become indistinguishable from both the position of the EU and their primary domestic political competitors (Mair [2013], Nanou and Dorussen [2013]). This helps explain why parties in post-communist Europe are ideologically inconsistent in terms of policy output (Tavits and Letki [2009]) and “vacuous and fickle when it comes to policy content” (Carey and Reynolds [2007], p. 271).

Concurrently, the development of multiparty politics in the contexts of the contemporary fragmented media environment affected the trajectory of ECE party competition by providing incentives for parties to rely on negative appeals. In the age of plentiful cable channels, competition for ratings is fierce and advertising revenue dictates programming decisions. This shifts the target for political programming to a more entertainment-based paradigm (Prior [2005]), making outrageous political coverage more frequent, as a scandal attracts much more attention (and profit) than tedious policy debate (Berry and Sobieraj [2013]). Moreover, politicians are aware of the fact that political attacks attract more attention from news outlets and on social media, and leverage these attacks to get free coverage (Geer [2012], Ryan [2012]).
These factors encourage political elites to utilize a charismatic form of linkage and mobilization (Kitschelt, 2000), and using accusations of moral transgressions by political competitors is an effective tool for doing so. By leveraging or inventing outrageous scandals, politicians can hope to elicit moral anger among voters. This form of anger is the result of perceptions of a violation of fairness or justice (Haidt, 2003; Batson et al., 2007, 1,272). It is the emotion of “how dare they” so often employed by politicians, and for good reason. Like other forms of anger, it “fires up the base,” encouraging action through passion (Brader, 2006; Carver and Harmon-Jones, 2009; Valentino et al., 2011). Anger towards a political actor is likely to result in a vote against them, and political elites can leverage accusations of immoral behavior on the part of competitors to elicit anger in a process of “emotional entrepreneurship” yielding political support by defining a group of morally upright patriots and their opponents without reliance upon policy differences (McDermott, 2010). These accusations run the gamut from bribery and corruption allegations to cries of treason to sexual infidelity, but are all marked by a core claim of a violation of justice or fairness. Therefore, accusations of hypocrisy, betrayal, and lying are common themes.

The Public Reaction: Anger and Disgust towards Politics

While political elites exploit accusations of immoral behavior by their competitors to elicit anger and inspire political passion, many citizens feel disgust instead of anger in response. The central role of disgust in regulating morality suggests that multiparty politics dominated by loathsome moral transgressions leads to disgust towards political competition. The consequences of disgust upon political behavior differ from the political consequences of anger. The latter is associated with the urge to confront while the former leads to avoidance and rejection of the offensive object (Roseman et al., 1994; Haidt et al., 1997; Carver and Harmon-Jones, 2009; Giner-Sorolla, 2012). In other words, we want to confront and fix a situation that angers us, but we distance ourselves from objects of disgust. The implication for politics is clear: angry citizens are spurred to act, while citizens who are disgusted by multiparty politics will want them to stop.
What determines whether a political attack causes anger or disgust? These emotions are elicited through different processes; anger typically involves an appraisal of threat, wrongdoing, or blame, while disgust is the result of associations with something nasty or offensive (Giner-Sorolla, 2012). Thus, anger results from an evaluation that some actor has committed a transgression, meaning attributions of blame and intentionality are central to the response (Quigley and Tedeschi, 1996; Petersen, 2010). Conversely, repeated association with something offensive, either to the physical senses or to deeply held convictions about morality, is sufficient to elicit disgust. Given these distinctions, when it comes to politics it is partisans who will likely become angry when they hear the details of an outrageous accusation. Ever since the *The American Voter* (Campbell et al., 1960), we have known that partisans see things in a way that favors their own side. Previous work on emotions in politics has documented that anger works well on partisans, strengthening their predispositions and spurring them to action (Valentino et al., 2011). Partisans operate with a “perceptual screen” filtering their understanding of political events (Westen et al., 2006; Lodge and Taber, 2013). They are therefore more likely to see one side as worthy of blame for either committing the alleged transgression or for manufacturing it for political gain. Meanwhile, those in the middle without a stake in the matter will be less likely to judge either the accuser or the accused of blame, instead feeling the general sense of offense at a morally reprehensible act that leads to disgust. When that situation is multiparty political competition, the very contestation at the heart of democracy becomes the object of disgust.

In light of this theoretical framework, this study thus puts forth six hypotheses.

- **H1**: High levels of anger and disgust characterize public feelings towards politics in Hungary.
- **H2**: Disgust is a distinct response from apathy.
- **H3**: Disgusted citizens are less likely to desire democracy.
- **H4**: Angry voters are more likely to wish to take action to fix the offending situation.
• **H5**: Accusations of moral transgressions are a source of anger and disgust in citizens.

• **H6**: The presence and strength of ideological conviction predicts which emotion citizens feel when presented with a moral transgression, such that aligned voters respond with anger and unaligned voters with disgust.

## Analysis

Two studies were fielded to evaluate these hypotheses: an original survey and a lab-in-the-field experiment. These studies complement one another in order to measure the prevalence of anger and disgust towards politics in Hungary, evaluate their political consequences, and test the extent to which accusations of moral transgressions made by political elites drive these emotional reactions.

The survey provides unique data on the emotions citizens in a young democracy feel towards their political system. In November 2014, Ipsos Hungary used cluster sampling to recruit a sample of 1,000 Hungarian adults. This questionnaire was part of an omnibus survey including demographic indicators and other modules from private businesses. Ipsos’s interviewers visited participants’ homes and conducted computer assisted personal interviews (CAPI), allowing participants privacy in responses on a laptop while also providing the personal connection and accountability of an in-person interview. The survey module consisted of two sets of measures: indicators tapping emotional responses to politics and indicators measuring political attitudes and self-reported behavior. At the beginning of the module, participants were asked to rate how politics makes them feel in general, and then were asked to do the same to several instances of outrageous political behavior that varied both by the age of the scandal and the political side that was implicated. These events were notorious allegations that had received wide coverage either over recent years or in the 2014 campaign. Participants were asked to rate their dominant emotional reaction to

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4 The resulting sample is representative of the Hungarian populace, but to ensure accurate statistical representation, controls are used in the models to follow. The survey also includes survey weights based upon the most recent census. All models were estimated both with and without weights. Unweighted models reported here, but no substantive differences were present in the weighted models, which are reported in the Appendix in Table 5.

5 There were three events implicating the left and three implicating the right.
each, choosing only one response per stimulus from a menu of: happy/pleased; proud/enthusiastic; angry/outraged; disgusted/repulsed; anxious/afraid; apathetic/unconcerned or Don’t know / not familiar with this. The second half of the survey asked a series of questions regarding political attitudes, such as intention to vote and desire for democracy.

Democratic Commitment and Disgust among the Hungarian Public

The survey includes several measures that serve as a starting point for the analysis. First, it provides data on the key dependent variable of interest: normative support for democracy. The survey asked participants to rate their agreement or disagreement with the statement “Democracy is the best political system for a country like ours.” The responses are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Democracy is the best political system for a country like ours

The data show that there is indeed variation in normative support for democracy in Hungary twenty-five years after the move to competitive multiparty politics. Though 54.9% of participants at least somewhat agree with the statement, these data are cause for alarm. Only 14.7% of respondents “completely agree” that democracy is the best political system for the country. Meanwhile, 20.5% of the sample neither agrees nor disagrees with the sentiment, showing a sizable portion of the electorate holding ambivalent views of democracy. Finally, 18.2% of the populace openly
report antagonistic views of the desirability of democracy for the country. This is higher than the 13% of normative opponents to democracy that Evans and Whitefield (1995) find in their 1994 Hungarian survey suggesting that, if anything, the subsequent twenty years of democratic experience lessened normative commitment to democracy. Moreover, this is likely to be a conservative estimate. The question wording opens up the possibility of acquiescence bias favoring a positive valuing of democracy, while the format of the survey in which the interviewer was present (though responses on the laptop were anonymous) runs the risk of social desirability bias in favor of reporting a desire for democracy. Thus, while normative support for democracy is widespread in Hungary, at least 40% of Hungarians are ambivalent towards or outright critical of the idea of democracy.

The next step is to evaluate the hypothesis that anger and disgust towards politics exist among the Hungarian public (H1). To do so, emotions variables were computed by adding the number of times a participant felt a given emotional reaction towards the various political prompts. For instance, a score of three for the Anger variable indicates that anger was the dominant emotional response reported by a given participant for three out of the eight prompts. Table reports levels of these variables among the population, sorting individual respondents by the number of times they reported feeling disgust, anger, and apathy as their dominant response.

The survey data suggest that anger and disgust are widespread feelings toward politics, and that disgust is distinct from apathy. A majority of participants report feeling disgust and anger at least once, and often many more times than that. Though anger is the most common reaction to the prompts, disgust is also widespread. Indeed, 10% of the population reports feeling disgusted at least by half of the prompts. The final column of Table isolates the indicator asking participants to rank their overall feeling towards Hungarian politics. The trends here are similar to what we see in the total count variables, with 17.5% reporting feeling disgust over any other emotion when it comes to Hungarian politics in general, 23.1% more angry than anything else, and 21.4% simply apathetic.

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6Table 1, page 489
7The majority of the participants who did not feel one of these emotions felt anxious (22.8%). 8.7% answered
Table 1: Negative Emotions Towards Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instances</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5+</th>
<th>Mean count</th>
<th>Towards Politics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disgusted</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>17.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>23.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apathetic</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>21.4 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another key consideration is whether disgust is the same thing as apathy. The data indicate participants who respond that they feel disgusted are not apathetic. Disgust and apathy are negatively correlated at \( r = -0.303 \) (Spearman correlation significant at \( p < .001 \)), garnering support for \( H2 \). Indeed, this is similar to the degree of the correlation between anger and apathy at \( r = -0.368 \) (Spearman correlation significant at \( p < .001 \)). Finally, while anger and disgust are emotions that frequently co-occur, self-reported anger and disgust are independent in this sample. The Spearman correlation between these two emotions is \( r = 0.29 \), which is far short of statistical significance (\( p = .368 \)).

The Emotional Roots of Backsliding

What are the consequences of disgust for public opinion? The survey also included measures that illuminate the role that anger and disgust play in public opinion in Hungary. Models including these measures as dependent variables are presented in Table 2. All of these variables were measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7). Vote intention and attitudes towards democracy were included in this battery as dependent variables, and sociotropic economic evaluations were included to control for the possibility that economic hardship, not emotional reactions, accounts for weaker support for democracy. Thus, the variable Economy taps agreement with the statement that “Over the past years the state of the Hungarian economy has improved,” with higher values indicating agreement and more sanguine views of the economy.

“Don’t know” or refused, while only 2.2% responded “Happy/content.”

Alternative specifications including a control for ideological extremism did not change the substantive results and are included in the Appendix in Table 7.
The first column of Table 2 presents an OLS model predicting agreement with the statement “If there were to be an election this Sunday, I would definitely vote.” Education is associated with increased likelihood of voting, which is to be expected given long-standing findings that education endows citizens with social and cognitive resources that encourage political participation (Verba and Nie, 1972). Age is another strong predictor of self-reported turnout, which is in line with a view of voting as a habit acquired over time and with age (Miller and Shanks, 1996; Gerber et al., 2003). Positive evaluations of the economy also increase the likelihood that a participant reports willingness to vote. Meanwhile, Anger is positively and significantly associated with self-reported vote intention, while disgust is not related to intention to turn out. This is precisely what we would expect according to H4: angry citizens are mobilized to take action.

The next models predict agreement or disagreement with the statements “I am satisfied with the way that democracy works in Hungary” and “Hungary is a completely democratic country,” respectively. While both anger and disgust are associated with less agreement with these statements
of democratic support and vigor in the country, anger is more strongly associated with disagree-ment. Thus, both of these emotions detract from perceptions that democracy exists and works in Hungary. It would also appear that there is some support for Przeworski (1991)’s concern that economic success is important to sustaining support in nascent democracies; positive economic evaluations are associated with a rosier view of democracy in Hungary.

The final column of Table provides evidence of the unique influence of disgust upon the key dependent variable of interest: normative commitment to democracy. This model predicts agreement with the statement “Democracy is the best system for a country like ours.” The model shows that disgust, but not anger, is significantly associated with a lack of agreement. This is precisely what $H3$ predicts: disgust causes an overall rejection of the political system. Thus, the results support the suggested disjuncture between angry and disgusted citizens. Angry participants are moved to action, but the disgusted are left so repulsed by politics that they abandon the very ideal of democracy. Indeed, this evidence suggests they do not even hold democracy as an important or desirable value for their country.

The Origins of Anger and Disgust

A lab-in-the-field experiment provides evidence for the theory presented above by analyzing the immediate emotional reactions to accusations of moral transgressions. This study was conducted in Budapest in the summer of 2014 with the help of the Political Ideology Lab of Budapest’s Eötvös Loránd University. Three hundred and four undergraduate students at the university participated by completing the study in person in the psychology computer lab and receiving modest cash compensation upon leaving. The study consisted of four conditions: two controls and two treatments. As results from focus groups and a pilot indicated that the mere mention of politics causes a strong negative emotional reaction on the part of many Hungarians, a political control condition is included for comparison to a non-political control in case the mere mention of politics, and not outrageous accusations in particular, elicits anger and/or disgust among participants. Two treatment conditions — one in which the opposition left attacked the right (left versus right:
LvR), and another in which the right attacked the left (right versus left: RvL) — allow for an
analysis of ideological perspective.

During the manipulation, participants were told they were going to read an article titled “The 5
sins of .........,” but that they would do so one statement at a time. For the sake of maximum possible
experimental control, each condition took the form of allegations. The control condition was “The
5 sins of the Paleo diet,” the political control was “The 5 sins of Hungarian agricultural policy,”
the left versus right (LvR) treatment was “The 5 sins of the Orbán government,” and the right
versus left (RvL) was “The 5 sins of the Gyurcsány coalition.” The treatment statements were
adapted from political attacks made during the 2014 campaign and were reviewed by Hungarian
political scientists, psychologists, and laypeople. These statements were altered to mirror one
another as closely as possible, swapping out names and particular issues or scandals but using the
same argument structure and inflammatory language.

Figure 2 displays mean levels of emotional reactions as a function of ideological self-placement
and experimental condition along with 95% confidence interval bars. Emotional reactions were
measured both by direct self-reporting of specific emotions and by constructing indexes from mul-
tiple measures. First, participants were asked to focus on their emotions, not thoughts, and to rate
how strongly they felt a series of distinct emotions. Next, participants also completed another bat-
tery in which they rated how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a list of statements targeting
these same emotions but with metaphors such as “makes me see red” for anger and “leaves a bad
taste in my mouth” for disgust. These were then combined with the explicit measures to create an

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9 Using a single article as a manipulation was ruled out because when this was done in an online pilot, failure to
treat was a major obstacle; many participants did not spend time on the article stimulus in the manipulations. Indeed,
the primary purpose of conducting a lab-in-the-field study was to overcome the problem of failure to treat prevalent in
the pilot. This was successful; out of 304 students who took part in the research, only five needed to be removed from
the analysis for failing to spend sufficient time on the manipulation, answering with a response set, or because they
chose to withdraw their data upon learning about the study’s full purpose and hypotheses in the debriefing.

10 Viktor Orbán is the right-leaning Prime Minister and Ferenc Gyurcsány is a former Prime Minister and the most
widely maligned figure on the left (the “lying Prime Minister”).

11 The complete text of the back-translated manipulations is in the appendix.

12 Participants were asked to place themselves on an 11-point left-right scale. Those in the middle point (24% of
participants) were coded as center, leaving 34% of participants in the sample identifying on the left and 42% of
participants self-identifying on the right.
Figure 2: Emotional reaction means (scaled 0-1) and 95% confidence intervals in the experiment as a function of ideology (self-placement on left, right, or in center) and condition. Treatment conditions labeled LvR (left versus the right) and RvL (right versus the left).
anger scale and a disgust scale. These scales are used in the analyses that follow, but substantive results are identical when relying on the direct emotion measures alone.

The treatment conditions successfully elicited anger and disgust, confirming H5. As Figure 2(a) shows, the composite anger scale rises as a function of the political attacks in the treatment conditions. The political control is not statistically distinguishable from the non-political control by any measure of anger, while with the notable exception of political centrist, the treatments are much higher. Figure 2(b) shows that disgust is even more powerfully elicited by the treatments than anger and that this is especially true for centrist. Thus, participants in the political center are much more disgusted in the treatment conditions than they are angry. This confirms the hypothesized distinction between anger and disgust: those who are unaligned and less inclined to follow politics become more disgusted when they are faced with a political attack (H6). The caveat is that participants on the left and the right, not only centrist, report very high levels of disgust, a result we will return to in the conclusion.

Table 3 provides more evidence that supports these results, presenting models predicting anger and disgust as a function of experimental condition and ideological strength. The Treatment variable is a dummy for inclusion in either treatment condition (LvR or RvL), while the variable Extreme captures the distance of the participant from the ideological center by folding their placement on the self-reported ideological placement scale such that lower values indicate closeness to the ideological center and higher values indicate distance towards either the left or the right. As the dependent variables are the 0–1 scales constructed from multiple indexes, ordinary least squares (OLS) models are estimated. The results clearly show that the treatment elicited these negative emotions. However, the key point is that an interaction of the distance from the center of

---

13 Degree to which participants report feeling “angry,” “outraged,” and the extent to which they agree with the statements “I get so angry when I think about this sort of thing I could shout,” and “This sort of thing makes me see red.” Cronbach’s alpha = .86

14 The degree to which participants report feeling “disgusted” and the extent to which they agree with the statements “This sort of thing is completely disgusting,” “This article left a bad taste in my mouth,” and “Statements like these make me sick to my stomach.” Cronbach’s alpha = .78

15 For this figure as well as the disgust figure, results from the indexes are identical to the results to the individual self-report emotion measures.

16 All results and levels of significance reported here validated using ANOVA as well as Kruskal-Wallis and Wilcoxon nonparametric rank ordering tests.
Table 3: Strength of Ideology and Emotional Reactions to Outrages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Anger Scale</th>
<th>Disgust Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.28***</td>
<td>.21***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.03)</td>
<td>(.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>.12***</td>
<td>.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.04)</td>
<td>(.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.07)</td>
<td>(.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment*Extreme</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.10)</td>
<td>(.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R-sq.</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1

the ideological spectrum and receiving the experimental treatment predicts anger but not disgust. Thus, those on either political side become angry in response to political outrages relative to those without a political team, who are left disgusted. These results are robust to including a measure of ideological placement rather than extremity, as well as to using separate dummy variables for the two treatments.

Conclusions

Many Hungarian citizens, disgusted as they are by the parade of outrageous allegations of moral violations standing in for political dialogue, have turned away from the idea that democracy is a worthy end for Hungary. These are not “critical citizens” (Norris 1999) or “distrusting democrats” (Moehler 2008) empowered by experience and driven by skepticism to hold their leaders’ feet to the fire. Instead, the studies presented here reveal disgusted citizens so fed up with politics that they do not see democracy as desirable. This finding accounts for the ability of the current Hungarian leadership to tighten its grip on power while the majority of the populace turns a blind eye. It also raises several noteworthy implications for the study of democratization and public opinion in the twenty-first century.
The distinction between anger and disgust sheds light on contradictory findings in the study of voter turnout in post-communist Europe. While numerous scholars posit an abandonment of democratic participation because of disappointment with corruption (Kobach, 2001) and a lack of fairness (Mason, 2003) in the political process, actual empirical evidence has been thin. Indeed, in their comprehensive analysis of turnout in the region, Pacek et al. (2009) show that political disillusionment can both increase or decrease the propensity to vote, depending upon measurement and specification. While this leads them to the conclusion that the stakes of an election are a better predictor of turnout, the distinct attitudinal and behavioral effects of anger and disgust shed light on the contradictory findings concerning disillusionment. Discontent inspires different emotions in different people; the angry will turn disappointment into action, while the disgusted reject the entire system.

Meanwhile, the co-occurrence of anger and disgust among many participants in the studies calls for further research. The hypothesis that partisan predilections determines anger and disgust was only partially borne out: partisanship does predict anger, but outrageous moral violations elicited disgust across the board, among those in the middle and those on the ideological extremes. While a shortcoming of these studies was a lack of measurement of negative emotions towards groups within society, this is a likely explanation for those on the left and right reporting high levels of disgust. This points to the possibility that citizens are disgusted by their political opponents, a problematic scenario given that disgust is a key driver of dehumanization. The language of disgust is nearly always employed in the process of dehumanization (Miller, 1998), and where disgust accompanies out-group prejudice, neurological studies show that the regions of the brain associated with interacting with other people fail to activate (Harris and Fiske, 2006). Worse still, given the widespread practice among the Hungarian right of targeting their outrageous accusations at immigrants and the Roma minority, these vulnerable populations may be the target of moral disgust. This merits further investigation and would go a long way in explaining the Hungarian government’s brutal treatment of refugees attempting to enter the EU from Syria and other conflict zones in 2015, a policy that increased support for the Orbán government.
The role that partisan predilections play in determining whether a citizen reacts to outrageous accusations with anger or disgust in these studies mirrors a trend observed in democracies old and young: while many citizens are able to stay permanently enraged by their political opponents, many others in the middle fall into a chasm of inaction. As Ansolabehere and Iyengar (2005) observe, voters are increasingly divided into the unaligned who do not participate and the partisan loyalists who do. Those with a dog in the fight become ever more enraged while those in the middle become more and more disgusted and disillusioned with the very process of politics, removing exactly the moderates that an angry, polarized political environment requires most.

However, the role of partisanship is also the current study’s greatest shortcoming. The data in these two studies cannot parse out the extent to which anger drives partisanship, or partisanship drives anger. While these data offer a snap-shot, over time dynamics in the acquisition of partisan and ideological predispositions are at play. Future research to trace the relationship between emotional response and the evolution of partisanship is necessary in order to increase our understanding of political behavior in young democracies. It is notable, however, that most of these young democracies are characterized by very low levels of partisanship. Indeed, even among established democracies, reliable party identification is on the decline (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000). Given the large and growing segments of the population that are unaligned, political disgust is an increasingly important emotion to measure and confront.

That these disgusted citizens are less likely to believe democracy is a worthy ideal is the present work’s most problematic finding, and it carries implications that travel far beyond the particular circumstances of Hungary or post-communism. Democratic backsliding becomes a real possibility where citizens become so disgusted by political crimes that they simply do not care whether their leaders adhere to the norms of liberal democracy. Where politics is characterized by infuriated partisans on either side accusing one another of horrendous moral crimes, it is no wonder that so many become disgusted with the entire process. It is likely no coincidence that from Turkey to Argentina to Hungary, countries experiencing the authoritarian creep engendered by vast disgusted populaces are also characterized by uniquely polarized political systems with skyrocketing levels
of political vitriol.

The long-term consequences of disgust also raise serious concerns for scholars and policymakers. This emotional response is endowed with a hair-trigger that is prone to false positives and difficult to undo (Kelly, 2011), and it is easy for something to become an object of disgust but nearly impossible for it to become clean again. Thus, for those who come to feel disgust towards democratic politics, it will be difficult to turn them back toward the idea of democracy as a worthy ideal or of politics as a realm in which to address pressing social concerns. Indeed, there is evidence that political scandals cause many citizens to feel that the disgraced politicians accused of outrageous transgressions are the tip of the iceberg of a system that is rotten to the core, not exceptions (Sabato, 1991; Patterson, 2009). This highlights the delicate balancing act office-seeking elites face when working to attract support and mobilize the public. In trying to “fire up the base” with righteous indignation, they may instead poison the water with disgust. This constitutes a tragedy of the commons problem in which an individual politician may benefit in the short-term from riding a tide of anger to victory, but as this tactic metastasizes throughout the body politic, citizens exit the political system.

Despite these bleak implications, there are reasons to be hopeful. In each of the cases mentioned above — Hungary, Turkey, and Argentina — recent years have seen mass protests sparked off by particularly egregious government actions. Protesters in Hungary even named their 2014 movement “the days of outrage.” These protests were sparked by the Orbán government’s announcement of a tax on internet usage but snowballed into a much broader airing of anger at the government’s assault on liberal democracy. It seems that there is something about certain moral transgressions that inspires political action on behalf of democracy. Yet in each of these cases, brief moments of widespread popular mobilization passed and left the domestic political situation unchanged, with many citizens likely even more disappointed and disgusted than before. What was different about these instances that led to these brief sparks of participation? Can they be harnessed to increase the pressure upon leaders over the long term? These and many more questions remain, and understanding the distinct causes and consequences of political disgust and anger offers enor-
mous insight for scholars and policymakers invested in deepening democratic governance.
References


Appendix

Experimental Conditions

Control:
In light of the many kinds of diets available today, there is a large debate about the best diets. The Paleo diet has received a lot of attention recently. Please read this opinion piece — The 5 sins of the Paleo diet — and let us know how you feel about it. In order to best understand your emotional reactions to each point, we are going to present them to you one at a time. After you see each, please indicate the emotion that each statement makes you feel the most, as well as the degree to which you feel the statement is credible.

The 5 sins of the Paleo diet:

1. The diet steals many important nutrients from your body by denying it of numerous types of food, making it harder for you to stay energetic and healthy.

2. The diet condemns both dairy and fortified cereals, meaning calcium intake can fall to dangerously low levels. This increases the risk of bone related injuries and illnesses.

3. As with other diets that are extremely low in carbohydrates, as soon as people on the diet eat carbohydrates again they often gain any weight they have lost back, plus some.

4. The diet advocates far too much red meat and therefore makes people take in too much saturated fat. This can cause dangerous increases in cholesterol and all the heart and cardiovascular problems related to cholesterol.

5. The diet industry pushing the Paleo diet is filled with the same people who have presented numerous other fad diets in the past. Just because cave men ate a certain way does not mean it is the best way for humans to live.
**Political control:**

In light of the importance of the agricultural sector to the economy, there is a large debate about the best agricultural policies. Potential agricultural reforms have attracted a lot of attention recently. Please read this opinion piece — The 5 problems with agricultural policy — and let us know how you feel about it. In order to best understand your feelings about each point, we are going to present them to you one at a time. After you see each, please indicate the emotion that each statement makes you feel the most, as well as the degree to which you feel the statement is credible.

The 5 problems of agricultural policy:

1. Farm subsidies steal from many of the farmers who need help the most, and instead benefit larger farms that would be fine without them anyway, argues Attila Meszterhazy, of MSZP

2. According to Lajos Kosa of Fidesz, most parts of agricultural policy are highly out of date and need to be re-considered for new farming techniques in the twenty-first century

3. As noted by the spokeswoman for LMP in a recent press release, agricultural policies as they are now contribute to farm practices that are bad for the nation’s environment

4. According to Hedegűs Lorántné, a candidate for Jobbik, agricultural policy in Hungary today does not take into consideration the preservation of the social structure in the small towns and villages where Hungarian agriculture mainly happens.

5. Many political and economic experts argue that agricultural policy as it stands now is partly responsible for rising food prices in our supermarkets.
Outrage: Left attacks the right  In light of the importance of the events in parliament to the country, there is always a debate about those in parliament. Please read this opinion piece — The 5 sins of the Orbán government — and let us know how you feel about the article. In order to best understand your emotional reactions to each point, we are going to present them to you one at a time. After you see each, please indicate the emotion that each statement makes you feel the most, as well as the degree to which you feel the statement is credible. The 5 sins of the Orbán government

1. The Fidesz government stole benefits from those who our society depends on the most, like fireman, soldiers, and pensioners. Of course, they lied about this all along.

2. The corruption of the Fidesz henchmen knows no ends. They have always used any political power they could get for their own benefit, lining their own pockets and getting themselves and their connections rich while real Hungarians suffer. Just think of the shady trafik scandal: they stole the livelihoods of several thousand families who had those stores for 20 years and divvied up the rewards among themselves. They’re not fooling anyone with these nasty tricks.

3. The past years of their government have been the most undemocratic time since the system change. Their biased redistricting and their media law gutted Hungarian democracy and has almost left the country a one-party dictatorship under Fidesz. Because of all their treachery and damage to Hungarian democracy, they deserve a room in the House of Terror, NOT a role in Hungarian political life.

4. The Orbán government is completely out of touch with real Hungarians. They waste state money on stadiums when so many Hungarians are unemployed and need the dignity and security of a job. We can’t pay our bills with stadiums!

5. The Fidesz ultra-nationalists have turned Hungary into an international laughing stock with their phony constitution and their all out assault on Hungarian democracy. The party is full of liars from Antál with his hidden luxury apartments to Pál Schmitt with his plagiarized PhD. They have lied, cheated, and stolen at every turn and naturally they’ll do it again!
Outrage: Right attacks the left

In light of the importance of the events in parliament to the country, there is always a debate about those in parliament. Please read this opinion piece — The 5 sins of the Gyurcsány coalition — and let us know how you feel about the article. In order to best understand your emotional reactions to each point, we are going to present them to you one at a time. After you see each, please indicate the emotion that each statement makes you feel the most, as well as the degree to which you feel the statement is credible.

The 5 sins of the Gyurcsány coalition:

1. Gyurcsány and Bajnai stole benefits from pensioners, students, and pregnant mothers – the people our society relies upon most. Of course, they lied about this all along.

2. The corruption of MSZP knows no ends. They have always used any political power they could get for their own benefit, lining their own pockets and getting themselves and their connections rich while real Hungarians suffer. Just think of Gábor Simon: his foreign bank accounts were filled with money he stole from Hungarian citizens. It’s clear to see that Gyurcsány wasn’t clear of that mess either. They’re not fooling anyone with these nasty tricks.

3. The last MSZP government were the worst years in Hungary since the system change. Their biased economic policies gutted the Hungarian economy and left it in a pathetic state, and they lied about it at Őszöd. Because this treachery, along with everything else they did, they deserve a room in the House of Terror, NOT a role in Hungarian politics.

4. The left wing are completely out of touch with real Hungarians. Their policies led to the credit crisis that crippled so many Hungarian families. We don’t have Swiss francs to pay MSZP’s friends in foreign banks!

5. The former communists in MSZP turned Hungary into an international laughing stock with their backwards policies and constant stream of scandals. The party is full of liars, from Mikos Hagyo’s extortion to Gyurcsány’s “lost” diploma. They have lied, cheated, and stolen at every turn and naturally they’ll do it again!
## Experiment Measures

Table 4: Summary Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger Scale</td>
<td>4–item scale ($\alpha = .86$); see text note 7</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>.3951</td>
<td>.2632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust Scale</td>
<td>3–item scale ($\alpha = .78$); see text note 8</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>.3946</td>
<td>.2627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>When people talk about political themes they often use the expressions “left” and “right.” Referring to your own views, where would you place yourself on the scale below? (0 – 11)</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td>.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Computed by folding ideology</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td>.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt Sat</td>
<td>How satisfied are you with the current government’s job in office? (Very unsatisfied — Very satisfied)</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>.401</td>
<td>.260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote if unhappy</td>
<td>(Agree/Disagree) If you are unhappy with politics, the best thing to do is to vote</td>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>2.953</td>
<td>1.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Complicated</td>
<td>(Agree/Disagree) Generally politics is too complicated for people like me to understand</td>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>2.650</td>
<td>.993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Care</td>
<td>(Agree/Disagree) Politicians don’t care about people like me</td>
<td>1–4</td>
<td>2.215</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>3–item scale; see appendix note 1</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>.291</td>
<td>.224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>6 open-ended questions identifying who fills prominent political offices</td>
<td>0–1</td>
<td>.407</td>
<td>.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Dummy variable 1 = Female</td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td>.434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Measures

Emotion measures:
Instructions: We would like to ask you about your emotional reaction to a number of aspects of Hungarian social and political life. We are going to list a number of things and ask that you provide your strongest emotion. There are no right or wrong ways to feel about these topics, we are just interested in how normal people like you feel. A lot of the time people have mixed emotions towards things like these, and if that’s the case, please try to indicate your strongest, first, reaction.

1. Hungarian politics
2. The European Union
3. The “trafik” (cigarette store) scandal
4. Former Prime Minister Gyurcsány’s speech at Oszod
5. The credit crisis
6. The Fidesz constitution
7. Simon-Welsz foreign bank account (money laundering scandal)
8. Páks nuclear plant deal

Response options: happy/content; proud/enthusiastic; angry/outraged; disgusted/repulsed; anxious/afraid; apathetic/nothing; I don’t know / not familiar with this
Table 5: Summary Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Times participant rated angry/outraged as dominant response</td>
<td>0–8</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust</td>
<td>Times participant rated disgusted/repulsed as dominant response</td>
<td>0–8</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>How old are you?</td>
<td>18–86</td>
<td>47.81</td>
<td>17.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Computed by folding ideology</td>
<td>0–5</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Dummy variable 1 = Female</td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All following measures in a single battery in which participants asked to agree/disagree with the statements on a 7–point Likert scale (1 = Completely disagree to 7 = Completely agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to Evaluate</td>
<td>I think it is better to have definite opinions about lots of things rather than to remain neutral on most issues (Bizer et al., 2000)</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>5.047</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>Over recent years, the Hungarian economy has significantly improved</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote Sunday</td>
<td>If there were to be elections this Sunday, I’d definitely vote</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>5.049</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Dem</td>
<td>Generally speaking, I’m satisfied with how democracy works in Hungary</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary a Complete Dem</td>
<td>Hungary is a completely democratic country</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem the Best</td>
<td>Democracy is the best political system for a country like ours</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>4.755</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Party to Support</td>
<td>There’s no party in parliament, that I could feel good voting for.</td>
<td>1–7</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

36
Survey Results (Weighted)

Table 6: Anger, Disgust, and Attitudes towards Democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vote Sunday Satisfaction</th>
<th>Hungary a Complete Dem</th>
<th>Dem the Best System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>0.14***</td>
<td>−0.06***</td>
<td>−0.11***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>−0.03</td>
<td>−0.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>−0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>−0.02</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
<td>−0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>0.27***</td>
<td>0.67***</td>
<td>0.60***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>2.65***</td>
<td>0.99***</td>
<td>1.96***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.33)</td>
<td>(0.21)</td>
<td>(0.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj. R²</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Num. obs.</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>948</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*OLS models with survey weights. Standard errors in parentheses.

***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1
Survey Results Alternative Specification

Table 7: Anger, Disgust, and Attitudes towards Democracy (with Extreme)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vote Sunday Satisfaction</th>
<th>Hungary a Complete Dem</th>
<th>Dem the Best System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>0.10***</td>
<td>-0.07***</td>
<td>-0.12***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgust</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.05*</td>
<td>-0.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.01***</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1