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Omnipresent And Omnipotent Authoritarianism: Authoritarian Media Vs. Social Media? (Hazır Ve Nazır Ve Kadir-İ Mutlak Yetkecilik: Yetkeci Medya Vs. Sosyal Medya?)

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**OMNIPRESENT AND OMNIPOTENT AUTHORITARIANISM:
AUTHORITARIAN MEDIA VS. SOCIAL MEDIA?**

**HAZIR VE NAZIR VE KADİR-İ MUTLAK YETKECİLİK:
YETKECİ MEDYA VS. SOSYAL MEDYA?**

Ulas Basar Gezgin¹

ABSTRACT

This study reviews the empirical works on authoritarianism and discusses the distinctions between mainstream media (MM) and social media with regard to the major communication theories, models and approaches. For that purpose, political psychological research on right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) which consists of 3 dimensions (authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression and conventionalism) is reviewed. In the previous research, RWA is found to be associated with a set of variables such as support for war, military intervention, attitudes toward violence, prejudice, age and cohort, endorsement of traditional gender roles, sexually aggressive beliefs etc. The presentation of the links between authoritarianism and intergroup relationships is followed by the discussion of RWA and social dominance orientation (SDO). The former refers to submissive authoritarians (masses),

¹ The author would like to thank two anonymous referees who shared their precious comments.

while the latter corresponds to dominating authoritarians (leaders). Previous research shows that authoritarians follow the norms set by authorities; and when the norms are not clear, they resort to other sources. For them, the world is a dangerous place, full of threats. Thus, authoritarianism appears as a response to feelings of threat. The critique of the individualism in early and recent authoritarianism studies leads the researchers to develop the notion of group authoritarianism which fares better with the complementary position of RWA and SDO. A contribution of this line of research is the emphasis on interactivity of authoritarian dispositions, feelings of threat, in-group identification and social context. Just like group authoritarianism, SDO provides a framework on the basis of groups. Not pathologizing the subject, SDO researchers investigate beliefs on social hierarchy and egalitarianism. The next discussion involves the notion of left-wing authoritarianism. Together, these provide the background for elaborating on authoritarianism, media and social media. The paper ends with future research ideas.

Keywords: Political Psychology, Authoritarianism, Right-wing authoritarianism, the Mainstream Media, and Social Media.

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada yetkecilikle ilgili görgül çalışmalar aktarılıp ana-akım medya ile sosyal medya arasındaki ayrımlar, belli başlı iletişim kuramları, modelleri ve yaklaşımları üzerinden tartışılıyor. Bu amaçla, 3 boyuttan oluşan (yetkeci itaat, yetkeci saldırganlık ve görenekçilik) sağkanat yetkecilik (SKY) üstüne yapılan politik psikolojik araştırmalar gözden geçiriliyor. Önceki araştırmalarda, SKY'nin savaşa ve askeri müdahaleye destek, şiddet tutumları, önyargı, yaş ve kuşak, geleneksel cinsiyet rollerinin onaylanması, cinsel olarak saldırgan inançlar

gibi bir küme değişkenle ilişkili olduğu bulunuyor. Yetkecilik ve gruplararası ilişkiler arasındaki bağlantıların sunuluşunu, SKY ve toplumsal baskınlık yönelimi (TBY) tartışması izliyor. İlki, itaatkar yetkecilere karşılık gelirken (kitleler); ikincisi, baskı kuran yetkecilere (liderler) denk geliyor. Önceki araştırmalar, yetkecilerin, yetkililerin belirlediği normları izlediğini; ve normlar, açık seçik olmadığında, başka kaynaklara yöneldiklerini gösteriyor. Onlar için, dünya, tehditlerle dolu tehlikeli bir yer. Bu nedenle, yetkecilik, tehdit hissine karşı bir tepki olarak ortaya çıkıyor. Erken dönem ve güncel yetkecilik çalışmalarındaki bireycilik eleştirisi, araştırmacıları, SKY ile TBY'nin tamamlayıcı konumuyla daha uyumlu olan grup yetkeciliği kavramını geliştirmeye yöneltiyor. Bu yöndeki araştırmaların katkısı, yetkeci eğilimlerle, tehdit hissini, iç-grup özdeşleşmesinin ve toplumsal bağlamın etkileşimine yapılan vurgu oluyor. Grup yetkeciliğinde de olduğu gibi, TBY, gruplar üzerinden gelişen bir çerçeve sağlıyor. TBY araştırmacıları, konuya hastalık gibi bakmayarak, toplumsal hiyerarşi ve eşitlikçiliğe ilişkin inanışları inceliyorlar. Bir sonraki tartışma, sol-kanat yetkeciliğe ilişkin. Bunlar, birlikte, yetkecilik, medya ve sosyal medya üstüne bir inceleme yapmak için bir arka-plan sağlıyorlar. Çalışma, gelecek çalışmalar için çeşitli önerilerle sona eriyor.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Politik Psikoloji, Yetkecilik, Sağ-kanat Yetkecilik, Anaakım Medya ve Sosyal Medya.

1. INTRODUCTION

How is authoritarianism related with mainstream media (MM)² and social media? What does the relevant literature say about the likely relationships? What

² The term 'mainstream media' is preferred over merely 'media' in this study; as alternative media which to lesser or greater degree question government, capitalism and social institutions in general

might be the potential applications of the communication theories, models and approaches to this discussion? This article intends to provide preliminary responses for these questions. In one way or another, authoritarianism is everywhere. This omnipresent and omnipotent authoritarianism reproduces itself in authoritarian institutions such as family, schools, peers and role models, media, military, politics, religion, work etc. The next sections of this paper reviews current political psychological research on authoritarianism, excluding non-psychological studies on authoritarian governments; authoritarianism and intergroup relations; Right-Wing Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO); Right-Wing Authoritarianism and the left; and omnipresence of authoritarianism. The penultimate section contrasts media and social media and discusses them in terms of authoritarianism. The final section concludes with recommendations for future research.

2. CURRENT POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH ON AUTHORITARIANISM

Due to methodological and theoretical problems with Adorno's seminal work on authoritarian personality, political psychological studies on authoritarianism long evolved into different lines of research. The strongest and most studied among them is Altemeyer's Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA). In a nutshell, Altemeyer (2003) describes RWA by the following:

“High “RWAs” are authoritarian followers who have submissive attitudes toward established authorities, show a general aggressiveness toward persons “targeted” by those authorities, and adhere tightly to social conventions” (p.161).

In other words, RWA has 3 dimensions:

“[P]eople with high scores on authoritarianism value behavioral and attitudinal conformity (conventionalism), emphasize obedience to group authorities (submission), and are intolerant and punitive towards people who do not conform to ingroup norms and rules (aggression)” (Passini, 2008, p.52).

are out of scope of this research. As a supplementary study, alternative media can be investigated on the basis of how they challenge authorities and authoritarianism(s).

These lines could be summarized by the following scale item:

“The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas” (Altemeyer, 2003, p.161).

Altemeyer (2003) portrays the right-wing authoritarians by the following profile:

“High RWAs have proven to be relatively submissive to government injustices, unsupportive of civil liberties and the Bill of Rights, supportive of the Experimenter in the Milgram situation, high shockers themselves in a “punish the learner” situation, punitive toward lawbreakers, mean-spirited, ready to join government “posses” to run down almost everyone (including themselves), happy with traditional sex roles, strongly influenced by group norms, highly religious (especially in a fundamentalist way), and politically conservative (from the grass roots up to the pros, say studies of over 1,500 elected lawmakers). They also have remarkably compartmentalized minds, endorse a multitude of contradictory beliefs, apply a variety of double standards to their thinking on social matters, are blind to themselves, dogmatic, fearful of a dangerous world, and self-righteous to beat the band. (...)

Right-wing authoritarians are also relatively prejudiced—against just about any racial, ethnic, or nationalistic minority you can think of, and against homosexuals, women, Francophones (in Canada), atheists, and other religious people who happen to belong to different faiths” (Altemeyer, 2003, p.161-162).

RWA is associated with greater support of war and military intervention (Motyl, Hart & Pyszczynski, 2010, p.200). Benjamin (2006) finds that three out of four subscales of Attitudes Toward Violence Scale (war (e.g., “Killing of civilians should be accepted as an unavoidable part of war”), penal code violence (e.g., “Any prisoner deserves to be mistreated by other prisoners in jail.”), and corporal punishment (e.g., “Children should be spanked for temper tantrums.”)) correlate with RWA. A significant factor in this association is inhumanization whereby out-group contrasted with the humane in-group members are considered to be creatures that are not human (Motyl, Hart & Pyszczynski, 2010, p.201). Hodson, Hogg & MacInnis (2009) depicts how personality variables such as (low) openness to

experience predict RWA and are associated with prejudice and social dominance orientation. In Johnson, Rowatt, Barnard-Brak, Patock-Peckham, LaBouff & Carlisle (2011)'s study, RWA stands out as the mediator for the relationship between religiosity and racial prejudice. To be more specific, they find that aggression dimension of RWA is the mediator for the relationship between religious fundamentalism and prejudice toward Arabs and African Americans. In the same vein, Riemann, Grubich, Hempel, Mergl & Richter (1993) finds that conservatism is negatively correlated with openness to new experiences, extraversion and agreeableness, and positively with conscientiousness.

The common sense view about age and authoritarianism indicates a positive relationship, while Tilley (2005) observes no relationship between social ageing factors (such as marriage and having children) and authoritarianism at all. Instead, he proposes that the libertarian-authoritarian value change in Britain can be attributed to generational (cohort) differences. In other words, people don't get more authoritarian as they age, but the new generation is less authoritarian than the youth years of the present old generation. That this is based on a longitudinal study covering the period between 1974 and 2001 is an asset, while use of an authoritarian scale other than Altemeyer's is a deficit. In Tilley (2005)'s study, the authoritarianism-libertarianism axis is measured by the following items in addition to some other items on surveys:

- i. Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values.*
- ii. Censorship of films and magazines is necessary to uphold moral standards.*
- iii. People in Britain should be more tolerant of those who lead unconventional lives.*
- iv. Homosexual relations are always wrong.*
- v. People should be allowed to organize public meetings to protest against the government.*
- vi. Even political parties which wish to overthrow democracy should not be banned" (Tilley, 2005, p.443).*

Rubinstein & Lansisky (2013) studies "authoritarianism and gender roles of Israeli footballers, basketballers, non-athletes, and their wives" and observes that football players and their wives are more authoritarian (in the sense of RWA) compared to basketball players and their wives. They also differ in correlations with anti-feminist attitudes, masculine roles, religiosity and support for the political right.

They conclude that football involves a right-wing authoritarian subculture. Likewise, RWA is found to be related with sexually aggressive beliefs and behaviors along with sex role traditionalism and male dominance factors (Walker, Rowe & Quinsey, 1993, p.1036).

RWA has developmental dimensions, with social learning serving as a more explanatory model compared to earlier psychoanalytical ones (Altemeyer, 2004, p.90). Intergenerational transmission of racism is found to be associated with adolescent-parent concordance in RWA (Duriez & Soenens, 2009). Furthermore, Maysel, Miri Scharf & Sholt (2003) discusses whether authoritarian parenting is advantageous for adolescents in authoritarian social environments (e.g. the case of basic training in the 3-year mandatory military service in Israel); and finds that this is not the case: Adolescents of authoritative (democratic) parents in contrast to authoritarian parents are better at coping strategies in authoritarian environments.

3. AUTHORITARIANISM AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS

Miklikowska (2012)'s research focuses on support of democratic values which is measured by a 10-item 'scale of democratic values' that consists of statements such as "*Because demonstrations frequently become disorderly and disruptive, radical and extremist political groups shouldn't be allowed to demonstrate*" and "*This country would be better off if we worried less about how equal people are*" and concludes that interpersonal trust, (low) normative identity style (which refers to scale items such as "*I prefer to deal with situations where I can rely on social norms and standards*"), and empathy are good predictors of democratic values; while empathy and (low) authoritarianism are the strongest predictors. RWA and normative identity style are negatively correlated. As both RWA and empathy develop at an early age, the topic has developmental dimensions to be investigated in future studies (Miklikowska, 2012, p.606). Consistent with this notion of normative identity style, Oyamoto, Fisher, Deason & Borgida (2012) finds in an experimental study that authoritarians revamp their attitudes towards immigrants as a response to the changes in social norms. When tolerance is set as the social norm, they are more tolerant; whereas when the social norm is negative or ambiguous, they are less tolerant (excluding the differences in humanitarianism). However, Oyamoto et al. (2012) is not totally comparable with other relevant studies, as they used 'child-rearing' values rather than RWA scale to measure authoritarianism. They state that the psychometric problems of RWA scale are behind their decision. However, child-rearing values and (other) political values do not always overlap with each other. That is why the

study could be considered as inconclusive until a new study that would utilize RWA scale would be conducted.

Butler (2009) studies fears of authoritarians (as measured by RWA) and discovers that they don't differ from non-authoritarians in terms of fears and perceived threats except fear of and perceived threat from socially deviant behaviors. This notion of perceived threat can be distinguished from actual threat, as threats do not influence all people in authoritarian ways, but those with authoritarian predispositions only (Stellmacher & Petzel, 2005, p.260). In another direction, Stellmacher & Petzel (2005) tries to connect research on authoritarianism with inter-group relations theories such as social identity theory and self-categorization theory and develops a group authoritarianism scale. They list 3 problems with early authoritarianism research: The unit of analysis is individual only, excluding groups. Secondly, the influence of social context was not totally integrated in authoritarianism research. Thirdly, authoritarianism overlaps with some other phenomena such as conservatism. They define

“group authoritarianism (GA) as an individual belief about the appropriate relationship that should exist between groups and their individual members. We assume—as mentioned earlier—that group authoritarianism is a one-dimensional concept with two extremes (authoritarianism vs. autonomy). It is assumed that group authoritarianism is influenced by authoritarian dispositions and situational factors. Thus, group authoritarianism reflects the situation-specific activation of authoritarian beliefs” (Stellmacher & Petzel, 2005, p.248).

Following Altemeyer's RWA scale, GA scale consists of 3 dimensions: Conventionalism (e.g. *“A group member should do nothing that contradicts group-norms or rules.”*), aggression (e.g. *“A group member who has violated group rules should be punished severely”*) and submission (e.g. *“If a group has a leader, members have to respect and obey him in any case”*). GA scale has 2 versions. The items above are from the general version. In the specific versions, a group is explicitly stated (e.g. a nation, students etc.).

By an experimental design, Stellmacher & Petzel (2005) demonstrates that group authoritarianism can be induced by threat and in-group identification salience which assumes that it is situation-specific. However, it can be induced in people with prior authoritarian predispositions only, as stated above. Thus authoritarian behavior is an interaction of authoritarian predispositions and social context. In that

sense, Stellmacher & Petzel (2005) relates the general version of GA with a trait variable, while the specific versions with a state variable. They claim that an advantage of GA scale over RWA scale is that the former is relatively free of political confounds. GA can explain authoritarianism among both rightists and leftists. This point assumes that LWA exists contrary to Altemeyer's positions. Stellmacher & Petzel (2005) further states that group membership provides psychological and social security that authoritarians are in need of.

4. RIGHT-WING AUTHORITARIANISM AND SOCIAL DOMINANCE ORIENTATION (SDO)³

Altemeyer (2003) proposes that high RWAs submit to social dominators (in other words, people high on social dominance orientation (SDO)). Social dominators are “*relatively power hungry, domineering, mean, Machiavellian and amoral, and hold “conservative” economic and political outlooks*” (Altemeyer, 2003, p.163). RWA and SDO together account most of the variation in prejudice. High SDOs turn out to be authoritarian leaders and high RWAs are their followers. People high on both are the most prejudiced. It is proposed that Hitler was one of these double-highs (Altemeyer, 2003, p.164). In a simulation game, Altemeyer (2003) demonstrates how double-highs could lead the world to a bleak future, in contrast to high-RWA-only people and double-lows. Although this is just a simulation, the implications could point to the danger of double-highs ‘leading’ the world (Altemeyer, 2003, p.164).

SDO is conceptualized as a normal behavior in contrast to early authoritarianism research that had pathologized the topic. Again, unlike the psychodynamic assumptions of early research, SDO research considers SDO as a result of both temperament and socialization.⁴ Finally, SDO is based on a group

³ As an international audience was targeted in this article, the research on RWA and SDO in Turkey was not listed in the main text. However, the Turkish researchers' contributions to the field should be acknowledged here. Both RWA and SDO scales are translated and adapted for scholarly uses in Turkey (cf. Güldü, 2011; Şingir-Karaçanta, 2002). Among a handful of Turkish graduate thesis on RWA and SDO, Balaban (2013)'s work on intergroup threat, SDO, RWA and prejudice, and Akbaş (2010)'s research on social identity and intergroup relations can be noted.

⁴ Let us note that as any other conceptualization, critiques do exist for the notion of SDO. One of the characterizing properties of SDO model is its biological assumptions; and according to some critiques (e.g. Turner & Reynolds, 2003) these untenable assumptions are the weakest point of the model. However, it is possible to utilize the notion of SDO to analyze media and social media without sharing those biological assumptions.

model, while authoritarianism research relies on an individualistic unit of analysis (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth & Malle, 1994, p.751). Duriez & Soenens (2009), in their study of racism, RWA and SDO suggests that socialization agents other than the family such as peers, school teachers and media should be considered.

Duriez & Van Hiel (2002) finds that RWA, SDO and racism are correlated; however, RWA and SDO differ in a set of variables. They observe a negative association between authoritarianism and “*level of education, moral competence, relativism, and the values hedonism, stimulation and self-direction*”; a positive association between authoritarianism and “*age, cultural conservatism, orthodoxy, and the values tradition, conformity and security*”. Contrary to this, SDO is found to be negatively associated with “*age and the values universalism, benevolence and tradition*”; and positively associated with “*economic conservatism, external critique, and the values power, achievement, hedonism and stimulation*” (Duriez & Van Hiel, 2002, p.1199). Although findings on RWA is mostly in the expected direction, those on SDO needs further explanation, but this won't be explored further, as it falls out of the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, the following quotation would give an idea about the overall picture:

“The modern fascist is no longer a closed-minded bigot, but an intellectual, who is perfectly able to express his/her world-views in such a way that they not only sound acceptable, but also attractive to the general public” (Duriez & Van Hiel, 2002, p.1210).

In a meta-analysis of RWA and prejudice, Childs (2011) finds out a decrease in the correlation between RWA and racial/ethnic prejudice between 1948 and 2008; and an increase in that between RWA and anti-gay prejudice between 1969 and 2008. The link between SDO and racial prejudice is constant, while the correlation between SDO and anti-gay prejudice was found to decrease between 1995 and 2009. These may be attributed to the changes in social norms and the influence of social movements. However, this can't explain the finding on RWA and anti-gay prejudice. Childs (2011) states that this may be due to the possibility that high RWAs and SDOs feel threatened by the recent gay rights movements and bolster their anti-gay prejudices. The short span of SDO is mentioned as a limitation of the study.

According to Passini (2008)'s findings, SDO is associated with only one dimension of RWA which is authoritarian aggression (in other words, ‘intolerance of deviance’). Passini (2008) criticizes Altemeyer's one-dimensional measurement of RWA, although 3 dimensions were theoretically proposed. To overcome this

problem, he develops a 3-dimensional scale of RWA. Passini (2008) also points out the difficulty of inferring a personality type from RWA which is more like an attitude measure. Authoritarian aggression is found to be associated with all dimensions of moral exclusion which consists of components such as labeling (e.g. *"Honestly, I have to admit that we are superior to this group."*), feelings of threat (e.g. *"I think that this group is a real threat to our well-being."*), destructive ideologies (e.g. the reverse of *"I think that the members of this group deserve respect in any case."* and explicit attack (e.g. *"I think that we have to fight this group by all means."*) (Passini, 2008, p.59). Passini (2008)'s study clearly shows that authoritarian aggression which involves intolerance is distinctive compared to authoritarian submission which does not always involve intolerance. The latter matches blind following, while the former corresponds to negative attitudes against outgroups. Furthermore, authoritarian aggression is found to be associated with materialistic values which insists on personal achievement rather than equality and not necessarily associated with traditions and religion (Passini, 2008, p.58). Religious people support adherence to conventions, but they are not always in favor of harsh treatment of outgroups. It should be noted that Passini (2008)'s study was implemented in Italy. Converging with Passini (2008), Altemeyer (2004) states that SDOs are low on religion and self-proclaimed benevolence compared to RWAs. SDOs endorse hedonism, but not conformity nor tradition, as opposed to RWAs. SDOs are usually male, while RWA are of both sexes (Altemeyer, 2004, p.92). These differences can be due to Altemeyer's one-dimensional measurement of RWA and the generalized wording of SDO scale (i.e. not naming any social group).

Despite of the common sense view that the link between authoritarianism and political ideology revolves on a naive understanding of politics, Federico, Fisher & Deason (2011) observes a more sophisticated understanding underlying this link. Politically more conscious authoritarians ('experts') are different compared to the less conscious ones (Political consciousness is measured by responses to political knowledge questions). This discussion can clearly be connected to SDO. However, the main weakness of Federico, Fisher & Deason (2011) is their reliance on National Election Survey data which covers indirect measures of RWA such as child-rearing practices. On the other hand, they consider use of these rather than RWA as an asset, since they don't cover explicitly political items. Nevertheless, that they can't collect separate data on 3 dimensions of RWA is clearly a deficit.

5. RIGHT-WING AUTHORITARIANISM AND THE LEFT

Contrary to the position that authoritarianism is a right-wing phenomenon, Regt, Mortelmans & Smits (2011) studies the topic in ex-socialist countries and concludes that left-wing authoritarianism (LWA) is a reality and not a myth in Eastern European countries. The findings are mooted, since the notion of left in ex-socialist and socialist countries are different compared to capitalist ones, and since there may be major differences in the conceptualization of left in ex-socialist countries rather than actual socialist ones. Furthermore, some of the countries they covered were engaged in bloody civil wars (e.g. Yugoslavia) which would make the post-war understanding of left problematic. The findings could also reflect the disillusionment with the 'Western' democracy. Finally, the use of a measure other than Altemeyer's RWA is another obstacle against comparison. On the other hand, McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap (1992)'s study in the Soviet Union just before the collapse and right after the collapse points to the possibility that authoritarianism is a predictor of "*support for reactionary leaders and military actions and opposition to democratic and non Russian leaders and to democratic activities*" and the finding that authoritarianism and support for Marxist-Leninist ideology are correlated with each other (McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap, 1992, p.1004). A longitudinal design to check what happened to those participants in terms of authoritarianism in the upcoming years would be interesting. In the same vein, McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap (1992)'s findings conflict with Altemeyer's results that could not identify LWA among leftists in the 'West'. The more egalitarian and non-conventional nature of the left in capitalist societies could be behind this, as mentioned by McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap (1992) themselves. Whether socialism is the norm or not determines conventionalism and non-conventionalism of LWA which is central to this construct (McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap, 1992, p.1006).

McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap (1992) administered 30-item version of Altemeyer's RWA scale by adapting 5 items to the Soviet setting. E.g. the item "*People should pay less attention to the Bible...*" was replaced by the item "*People should pay less attention to the Marxism-Leninism...*". "*Support for the authorities and opposition to the enemies*" were found to be common among American and Soviet authoritarians (McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap, 1992). Secondly, they found strong correlation between authoritarianism and "*Soviet ethnocentrism and its component prejudices (toward Jews, national groups, women, dissidents, etc.)*" (McFarland, Ageyev, & Abalakina-Paap, 1992, p.1005). The differentiation between Soviet socialists and 'Western' socialists could overlap with the critique of official leftists and state

leftists. Furthermore, if RWA items would be considered one by one, it is quite unlikely for a leftist to score high on these, as they are direct opposites of leftist values. If leftism would be taken at face value or nominally, the analysis would be misleading. The reconceptualization of authoritarianism as merely the opposite of democratic values serves the ideological function of turning inherent authoritarianism of the capitalist democracies invisible, much in resemblance with Althusser's and Gramsci's positions. As stated before, Altemeyer (2004) fails to find leftists scoring high on even the LWA Scale which clearly demarcates leftists and rightists.

6. OMNIPRESENCE OF AUTHORITARIANISM

As stated in the introduction, authoritarianism is omnipresent in the social institutions. The most commonly studied institutions with regard to authoritarianism are schools, family and work. In this section, two relevant works are reviewed, before moving to the sections about media and social media.

In an early paper on authoritarianism (which was published before the emergence of the notion of RWA), Athanasiou (1968) states that authoritarianism is usually associated with "*intolerance of ambiguity, categorical thinking, responsiveness to the demands of authority, and anti-intracception*" (p.1181). He proposes that engineering curriculum is implicitly in favor of authoritarianism, as ambiguity is not tolerated with structured programs and questions, hours reserved for humanity courses are limited, the teaching style is impersonal and students' free time for social activities is scarce.

Secondly, in a leadership study from a managerial perspective, Rajan & Krishnan (2002) observes a positive correlation between authoritarianism and assertiveness, bargaining, friendliness and legitimate power; and a negative correlation between authoritarianism and coercive power for men. Authoritarianism and friendliness correlates negatively for women, while expert power is positively correlated for both men and women. Adding to the complicated nature of the corporate setting, it can be stated that the authoritarianism at work might be quite different from RWA, as violence is rarely condoned at work settings. Furthermore, cultural factors should be taken into consideration, as the study was conducted in India. If social norms are dramatically influential over authoritarians as proposed by Oyamoto et al. (2012), we have a strong reason to put cultural factors under limelight. Finally, Rajan & Krishnan (2002) measures authoritarianism with Adorno's F-Scale which is no longer common in the relevant studies.

One problem to be observed when authoritarianism is studied in institutional settings is the difficulty in applicability of RWA rather than authoritarianism in general. However, this is not a problem in studies of authoritarianism of media and social media, as media is inherently ideological.

7. AUTHORITARIANISM AND MEDIA VS. SOCIAL MEDIA

Considering the 3 dimensions of RWA again (cf. Altemeyer, 2003), it can be stated that the mainstream media (MM) is a by-product and promoter of conformity; it is submissive to the government and the industrial-military-financial complex; and often negatively represent and even target outgroup members. In some countries, MM is controlled by direct intervention by government and corporations via explicit instructions that are hidden from public eyes or by indirect intervention by the threat of financial losses (taxes, ads etc.). MM is a channel which obeys the powers as lambs and turns into a tiger, when it comes to outgroups. The authoritarianism of media can be observed at other levels as well: Firstly, the media employees are expected to obey (cf. Rajan & Krishnan (2002) above); secondly, more time and space are dedicated for RWAs on media portrayals; thirdly, RWAs and professions associated with authoritarian powers are shown in positive light; fourthly, university education and in-service training for media professionals are mostly authoritarian (cf. Athanasiou (1968) above) and finally, it is rare to see that RWAs are punished for the violence channeled against outgroups. Of course, in real life, they are rarely punished; but the portrayal of their punishment is even rarer than the case in real life. Furthermore, MM prefers to hide or minimize news on rights movements demanding fairness.

Following, Altemeyer (2003)'s profile for RWA, it can be stated that the government and oppressors in general are often right on MM; prejudices, dehumanization and inhumanization are rampant and the law and order framework which depicts the world out there as a dangerous place full of threats (in parallel with the widespread screening of the horror movies) is the staple of MM (cf. Butler, 2009; Stellmacher & Petzel, 2005). If the victim is an outgroup member, blaming the victim is the norm with the just world hypothesis. Contrary to these, the genders are not always in traditional roles; and religion is not ubiquitous except in fundamentalist media. MM is frequently pro-war and militaristic. Depictions of violence on MM normalize aggression. MM, as an authoritarian socializer seeps into even pre-school materials, cartoons and teen movies. It is a major channel for the intergenerational transmission of authoritarianism and other political values (cf.

Duriez & Soenens, 2009). Following Miklikowska (2012) and Oyamoto et al. (2012), MM sets the norms for authoritarians, when other sources of social norms don't send clear messages.

From the perspective of Social Dominance Orientation, MM is guilty again. MM features worlds in which egalitarianism is either an exception or a utopia. Social norm violators are usually shown to be fiercely punished. Liberal-looking youngsters are attacked by monsters, wild animals, serial killers etc. in the prime-time movies of MM channels. Furthermore, MM reflects social institutions that promote authoritarianism and social dominance (family, schools, peers and role models, military, politics, religion, work etc.) in their most conventional outlook. In fact, when their norms are violated, that makes surprise news or action movie as in the case of crimes and protests.

Is RWA and SDO of media reflected in social media? As stated in Gezgin (2012a), media and social media can be compared and contrasted by the following points: Interactivity, user-generated content, synchronicity, anonymity, impact on user identity, credibility/genuineness, media-real life connection, personalization, and celebrity patterns among many others. The notion of interactivity challenges a form of authoritarianism that is specific to mass media: The social media user is no longer a passive recipient of contents; instead, s/he is the generator. Synchronicity does not allow the censor to block the content. It can only take place afterwards. Anonymity frees some of the users from the authoritarian norms. Social media strengthened the doubts cast over the credibility of the MM. Far from an escape, it served as an extension of the real life for many users, whereby they not only modify their attitudes, but move to action. It has a strong impact on the user identity, which means it has the potential to act as an alternative socializer. As to personalization, social media provides the opportunity for users to develop their own identities which challenges standardization imposed by authoritarianism. Furthermore, social media users question celebrity patterns which contradict egalitarianism in a society. On the other hand, contrary to this rosy view, many negative papers appeared on journals (e.g. Pearce & Kendzior, 2012); however, these studies seldom investigate authoritarianism in the political psychological sense. Thus, studies connecting political psychological notion of authoritarianism and social media are necessary.

On the top of all, theoretical works on social media are rare. That is why this effort for comparing and contrasting media and social media with regard to authoritarianism is obviously not comprehensive. However, if we turn our attention to the communication theories, models and approaches used to analyze and explain

mass communication for this comparison, the following could be listed as a set of preliminary considerations:⁵

The Early Mechanistic Media Effects Models: The early mechanistic media effects models which started with the 2nd World War- styled propaganda models that assumes blind obedience once exposed to media has long been defunct for mass communication (Yüksel, 2013, p.21). It is even less relevant for social media. People do not obey social media and in fact, social media does not demand their obedience.

The Late Media Effects Models: Late media effects models such as spiral of silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1974) and agenda setting (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) are definitely relevant for media. As stated before, MM sets the norms and this determines viewers' intellectual latitude of safety. Secondly, MM is still a major tool for oppressors to set their own artificial agendas. As to social media, it is clear that oppressors can not completely intimidate netizens to accept the official views on social media spaces and they are rarely successful to set the social media agenda which can be measured and evaluated based on hashtags and top viewed contents. However, the oppressors have equipped themselves with internet laws and censorship to put pressure on individual, collective and institutional content generators (cf. Kelly, Truong, Earp, Reed, Shahbaz & Greco-Stoner, 2014; Reporters Without Borders, 2013).

Thirdly, cultivation theory (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1986) which is a return to strong effect models but on long term is definitely relevant for MM, as it involves long-term effects of the stereotypical portrayals of outgroups on MM. On the other hand, it is difficult to identify Gerbnerian effects of social media without longitudinal studies. Without such studies, we can only speculate that Gerbnerian effects could be partially observed over the users; but these effects would be weaker compared to those of MM. It is weaker, because the social media users mostly decide on which contents to be exposed to. But this opens up the possibility that such use of social media may lead to bolstering of a user's attitudes in the way of self-confirmation. So it is likely that social media users are exposed to various content effects which spring from the channels that they choose by their own. Of course, this channel choice may not necessarily be rational or individualistic. There are emotional and group effects over social media decisions. Another dimension of this issue refers to the blended and/or hybrid nature of the social media contents.

⁵ The classification of the communication theories, models and approaches aligned to the one presented in Yüksel (2012), for ease of explanation and discussion.

Because of the popularity of the social media, MM has also been ‘socialized’, in the sense that MM has social media presence, commentary spaces on their websites and videos specifically prepared for social media world. That means in some of the cases, the distinction between MM and social media contents is blurred. Furthermore, Twitter (and Facebook at a narrower scope) is increasingly used as a source of news for MM, as it is used by politicians and celebrities as public diaries and announcement boards (Gezgin, 2013a; 2013b). In that sense, it is possible that authoritarianism of MM seeps into social media that is supposed to serve as alternative media.

The Audience-Centered Approaches: The audience-centered approaches are the ones that focus on what people do with the media, rather than what media do to people (Gezgin, 2013c; Gezgin & Ng, 2012; Ruggiero, 2000). Although this active audience assumption is questioned for mass communication due to its potential engagement with conservatism and neo-liberalism (Erdoğan & Alemdar, 2010, p.158); it can be stated that it is applicable for social media uses. According to these models, the audience actively chooses the media and media contents. Under this functionalist framework, media use serves the needs of escape/entertainment, social utility, personal identity and surveillance (Gezgin, 2012b). This list of needs has been explored in Facebook research (Bonds-Raacke & Raacke, 2010; Gezgin & Ng, 2012; Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2009; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2010; Urista, Dong & Day, 2009). Without any personality discussion, such an understanding may conclude that individual is the agent to make his/her decisions over social media use. However, considering the RWA and SDO literature reviewed above, the users are definitely far from making their own decisions. People low or high on RWA and SDO would pick different social media contents and use social media in different ways, as exemplified by the way pro-government users utilize social media in contrast to anti-government users (e.g. Bianet, 2011; Büyükkaya, 2013). Windahl’s uses and effects model can be integrated to this point, as the model proposes that the audience chooses the media and media contents and get exposed to the effects of them accordingly. In other words, both effect models and active audience assumption are reconciled in this model (Ruggiero, 2000). Likewise, Rubin & Windahl’s uses and dependency model which is another attempt at reconciliation (cf. Rubin & Windahl, 1986) can be considered for discussion. DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach’s dependency model can be relevant as well. Finally, Palmgreen & Rayburn’s and McQuail ve Windahl’s expectancy value model could be applied for the comparison of MM and social media, since this model focuses on the repeated uses of media. It differs from the other models, as it incorporates personal history of use and gratification into the analysis whereby media use that gratified the needs in

the past are more preferred in the future (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1982). Although it looks like behaviorism from the backdoor, its focus on repeated uses is more realistic than cross-sectional one-time-only approaches. This model also supports the above claim that high RWA and/or SDO people differ from low RWA and/or SDO people in their social media use.

The Technology-Centered Approaches: The technology-centered approaches usually rely on a version of technological determinism which is also their weakest point. By these approaches, for instance, 2011 Arab uprisings⁶ are considered to be the result of the social media age; in other words, it is claimed that they would not take place without social media (Huang, 2011; Reardon, 2012). The alternative is the social media as the facilitator rather than the determining factor (Dewey, Kaden, Marks, Matsushima & Zhu, 2012; Lever, 2013; O'Donnell, 2011) which looks like more realistic, as the social dynamics of uprisings such as the economic, political and social breaking points and power differentials existed before the advent of social media and it will continue to exist as long as capitalism reigns supreme. Such technological determinism theses also ignore the fact that uprisings did not start with social media; since the Spartacan revolt and even before that, the history of humankind recorded rebellions and power takeovers spanning all the world tempero-geography including ancient Mesopotamian city-states as well ancient Chinese societies. Thus social media has the potential to challenge authorities and authoritarianism(s), but it is not the initiator of social movements.

These approaches may take the form of psychological/perceptual determinism as in the case of Marshal McLuhan (McLean, 1998) or social determinism as in the cases of Harold Innis and Lerner (cf. Babe, 2008; Servaes, 2002). These are usually criticized by the fact that they ignore social aspects of media use (Croteau, Hoynes & Milan, 2011, pp.289-290). Another form is the focus on diffusion of innovation (e.g. Rogers, 1983) or Vernon's product life cycle framework (Morrison, 2008). Although such models are readily applicable to the spread of social media use, their links with authoritarianism needs another paper-length review and discussion. Likewise, 'information age' theorists such as Daniel Bell, Brzezinski, Castells and Masuda are centrally relevant for the discussion of media and social media (cf.

⁶ The term 'Arab spring' is avoided in this article, as it has an ideological hidden background that not everybody would like to share. A minority of authors (e.g. Bertrand Badie in al-Khalil, 2011 and various authors in Varlı, 2013) including the current author prefer to use the term 'Arab winter' considering its restorative, negative consequences for the democratization of the Arab countries. However, the term 'uprising' refers to a more descriptive and less prescriptive or normative conceptualization. That is why it is preferred in this article.

Rahman, 2009), but it is not clear how RWA and SDO could be articulated with direct links to the notion of highly-criticized 'information age' or 'information society'.

The Linguistic/Semiological Approaches: The linguistic/semiological approaches can be roughly divided by structuralist vs. post-structuralist types. In general, they differ in whether the texts are considered to be reflections of social structures or the audience actively constructs the meaning, a lot in parallel with uses and gratifications approaches (cf. Biocca, 1988). After the pioneering work of Saussure in linguistics, Levi Strauss extended the semiological approaches by applying Saussurian ideas to the field of anthropology in his search for cultural universals (Stasch, 2006). While Peirce is recognized with his contribution to early Saussurian ideas, Jakobson is listed as a major figure in structuralism with analyses of communication in general and literary and non-literary text in particular (cf. Deledalle, 2000). Early Barthes was a structuralist in his analyses of modern myths following the footsteps of Levi Strauss, while the late Barthes is one of the first to offer post-structuralist analysis with his notions of readerly text and writerly text (Allen, 2003). Barthes' seminal work was followed by Stuart Hall, Morley, Baudrillard and feminist researchers such as Ang, Radway & Hobson (cf. During, 1999; Turner, 2003). Hall's notion of multiple readings (dominant reading, negotiated reading and oppositional reading) and use of Kristeva's notion of intertextuality, Morley's applied studies in this direction, feminist studies, Baudrillard's simulation, simulacra and hyper-reality were the milestones in post-structuralist research (cf. During, 1999; Turner, 2003). The structuralist and post-structuralist concepts have rarely been discussed with regard to the distinction between media and social media. However, we can propose that structuralist view would consider social media as the venue where popular myths (including authoritarian ones) are produced, transmitted and reproduced; while post-structuralist approaches would re-instate the power of the social media users to challenge the dominant readings of texts. Before all, authoritarianism and hate speech as its reflection can find a safe haven in racist, fascist and discriminating websites and social media. Thus, despite its emancipatory potentials, social media use is not always progressive. In that sense, the notion of legitimizing myths that are central to the SDO model (cf. Pratto et al., 1994) could be blended with structuralist point of view to analyze the breeding and reproduction of discriminatory practices on social media.

The Critical Approaches: The critical approaches revolve on the critique of MM and society in general (cf. Taylor & Harris, 2008). They are roughly classified as

political economical approaches and cultural approaches. The political economic approaches usually challenge the mainstream neo-liberal economic approaches and focus on ownership structures of the media markets and companies. The topic of the links of media bosses with the government, capitalists and military complex;⁷ and monopolization (e.g. Bagdikian, 1983) is one of the major themes via such an approach. The scholarly works on how social media bosses are linked with the authoritarian oppressors are quite rare, although news on how and why governments ask social media companies to pass data about some users sometimes appear on newspapers (e.g. McWeigh, 2013).

Moving to the second type of the critical approaches which focus on cultural issues, Frankfurt School is the first school that comes to mind. The notion of cultural industry was based on the idea that cultural products including media products were produced and distributed massively as any other industrial product in the mass communication era (Strinati, 2004). Although this critique is reasonable and fruitful, its underlying pessimism was criticized, as it gives no chance to people to resist against the system (cf. Arato & Gebhardt, 1985). A Frankfurter approach would consider mass communication as a factory of obedience, but how this could be broadened to cover social media is a moot. With less pessimism and more complicated analyses, Herbert Schiller's notion of cultural imperialism, Armand Mattelart's critical approach and Oliver Boyd-Barrett's notion of media imperialism could be relevant for discussions of MM and social media with regard to authoritarianism (cf. Mosco, 2008); but this is another understudied subject. Obviously, the cultural imperialism approach can be utilized to analyze how the advent of social media in non-American and especially non-Anglophone contexts lead to lexical borrowings which already have vernacular substitutes (e.g. 'like', 'hashtag', 'trending topic', 'follow' etc.) and to analyze the implicit internalization of American cultural elements that appear to be a part of the global social media culture. Finally, Enzensberger's 'consciousness industry' (Enzensberger, 1974) and Herman & Chomsky's notions of 'media and propaganda model' and 'manufacturing consent' (Herman & Chomsky, 1988) could be useful to analyze and criticize MM, but how it may take account of social media is far from clear.

To conclude this section, we can state that although theoretical approaches and models provide significant insights to discuss MM and social media in relation with authoritarianism, even seminal works are still lacking. Nevertheless, this

⁷ Given the fact that Internet started as a military project, these ties could be more vital than noticed by the public opinion.

section listed the major concepts that could be applicable to the central topics of this work.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relevant literature review evidences the dearth of research on RWA, SDO and social media. Ditto for the communication theories, models and approaches on the one hand, and social media on the other. Nevertheless, at first blush, the notions of spiral of silence, agenda setting, cultivation, uses and gratifications and their variants such as uses and effects models, 'information age', multiple readings, intertextuality, readerly and writerly texts and cultural imperialism that are mentioned in the penultimate section appears to be readily applicable for social media.

The following could be the recommendations for future research:

- Assuming that social media forms a more egalitarian platform, social media usage patterns could be associated with RWA and SDO. It may be likely that those low on RWA and SDO would prefer to use social media, rather than being exposed to the mass media.

- It is likely that social media usage patterns of low vs. high RWAs and SDOs would be different as well as content they share. Content analysis of the posts could be fruitful.

- The conceptualization of anti-authoritarianism and egalitarianism as the polar opposites of RWA and SDO could be problematic, as they were derived from the authoritarian and dominant personalities respectively. Disobedience rather than obedience might be the central research topic to understand how dissidents can appear in a society despite of the authoritarian and hierarchical social institutions.

- Usually, printed media is analyzed for authoritarian contents. The development of TV search engines (e.g. <http://tvarsivi.com/>) allows content analysis of TV programs as well. Thus, RWA and SDO of TV channels can be analyzed in terms of news coverage and especially prime-time films and programs.

- Following the notion of group authoritarianism, how MM builds in-group identity (e.g. nationalism and ummahism), and how it awakens a feeling of threat (e.g. crime news, horror movies etc.) can be analyzed.

- The negative socialization function of MM could be studied on the basis of age groups.

In this paper, relevant research on authoritarianism and social dominance orientation are reviewed to briefly analyze mainstream media and social media with regard to political psychology. This was followed by a discussion of communication theories, models and approaches as applied to social media with regard to authoritarianism. This work is just a background-setter for the future studies.

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