СЕКЦІЯ 1
ТЕОРІЯ ТА ІСТОРІЯ СОЦІОЛОГІЇ

CONCEPTUALIZING AND MEASURING AUTHORITARIANISM: CONTRIBUTIONS OF ADORNO, ALTEMEYER, DUCKITT, AND RAY FROM THE PRESENT-DAY PERSPECTIVE

КОНЦЕПТУАЛІЗАЦІЯ ТА ВИМІРЮВАННЯ АВТОРИТАРНОСТІ: НАПРАЦЮВАННЯ АДОРНО, АЛТЕМАЄРА, ДАКІТТА ТА РЕЯ З ТОЧКИ ЗОРУ СУЧАСНОСТІ

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The resurgence of authoritarian tendencies in the 21'st century revives research interest in the conceptualization and measurement of authoritarianism. Sociology and social psychology have a number of theories, concepts, and measures that have accumulated over time in the study of this phenomenon. This article examines approaches to the study of authoritarianism of four key researchers in the field: a research team led by Theodor Adorno, who were the first to propose a practical tool for measuring authoritarianism in surveys – the F-scale; Robert Altemeyer, who theoretically reinterprets Adorno's concept and offers his own Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale (RWA); John Duckitt, who departs from the idea of explaining authoritarianism as a personality structure and suggests treating it as an outcome of interaction among individuals in a social group; John Ray, who emphasizes the distinction between authoritarian attitudes and authoritarian behavior, offering his own scales to measure the behavioral aspect. After reviewing the work of these researchers, the authors conclude that Altemeyer's operationalization of authoritarianism through authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism is the most practically tested and theoretically substantiated understanding of the authoritarian phenomenon. Further research into the phenomenon of authoritarianism should take into account the following caveats: the relationship between authoritarian attitudes and authoritarian behavior remains understudied; some existing scales and concepts indicate and measure not the authoritarian phenomenon as a whole, but only its aspects (aggression, submission, etc.); manifestations of authoritarianism can be different at different levels of social interaction (micro- and macro-levels).
Key words: authoritarianism, measures of authoritarianism, authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, F-scale, ACT-scale, RWA-scale.

Відродження авторитарних тенденцій у XXI столітті стимулює дослідницький інтерес до концептуалізації та вимірювання авторитарності. У соціології та соціальній психології сформувався значний доробок із теоретичного осмислення цього феномену та методик його вимірювання. У статті розглядаються підходи до авторитарності чотирьох ключових дослідників цього феномену: групи дослідників на чолі з Теодором Адорно, які першими запропонували практичний інструмент для вимірювання авторитарності в опитуваннях – Ф-шкалу; Роберта Алтемаєра, який теоретично переосмислює концепцію Т. Адорно та пропонує власну Шкалу авторитарності правого штибу (RWA); Джона Дакітта, який відходить від ідеї пояснення авторитарності крізь призму структури особистості та пропонує розглядати авторитарність як результат взаємодії індивідів у соціальній групі; Джона Рея, який робить акцент на розрізненні авторитарних настанов і авторитарної поведінки, пропонує власні шкали для вимірювання поведінкового аспекту. У результаті розгляду напрацювань цих дослідників автори роблять висновок, що запропонована Р. Алтемаєром операціоналізація авторитарності через авторитарне підкорення, авторитарну агресію та конвенціоналізм є найбільш практично доведеним і теоретично підкріпленим розумінням феномену авторитарності. Подальше дослідження феномену авторитарності має відбуватися з урахуванням таких застережень: зв'язок між авторитарними настановами й авторитарною поведінкою залишається малодослідженим; наявні шкали та концепції можуть позначати та вимірювати не феномен авторитарності комплексно, а лише окремі його аспекти (агресія, підкорення тощо); прояви авторитарності можуть бути відмінними на різних рівнях соціальної взаємодії (мікро- та макрорівні).
Ключові слова: авторитарність, шкали авторитарності, авторитарне підкорення, авторитарна агресія, F-scale, ACT-scale, RWA-scale.

A year into the full-scale war in Ukraine has brought to light a number of issues and themes that were relegated to academic oblivion in sociology and other social sciences. Over half a century of peace in Europe rendered one of such issues – the issue of authoritarian attitudes and behavior – as merely a disturbing occurrence that resurfaced across Europe from time to time, but quickly waned to unimportance, as was the case with a short-lived rise of Jörg Haider to power in Austria in the early 2000's, Viktor Orbán's right-wing radicalism in Hungary, which unfolds outside the political and economic powerhouses of the continent, and even eight attempts of the Le Pens to get French presidency, which have all failed. Treated as minor nuisances, such developments

did little to encourage vivid and sustained interest to authoritarianism research on the European terrain, although the world beyond Europe have been signaling on resurgence of the phenomenon for years.

The recent reports on the state of democracy indicate its worldwide decline, as the number of countries backsliding to authoritarianism has peaked in the last years, doubling the number of those progressing towards democracy [17]. Concern over this trend was recently voiced, unsurprisingly, from outside Europe by the newly elected president of the International Sociological Association Sari Hanafi in his agenda-setting article in *Current Sociology* [18]. Hanafi's plea referred to supplementing postcolonial approach with an anti-authoritarian one, thereby confining the issue of authoritarianism to the world beyond Europe.

A clash of two societies and political cultures that is unfolding in Ukraine has opened eyes for many on the dormant cruelty within Europe itself, which could be so quickly set free by authoritarian excuses. In the brutalities of this war, which included mass executions, torture, rapes, and other atrocities – all considered to be left behind in the 20th century, – authoritarianism is observed not as a political choice on a ballot, but as an unleashing mechanism for unfettered violence, a use it was once put to in the continent's past. Here authoritarianism is observed in its worst manifestation – as the enabler of violence. It has, regrettably, met the conditions propitious for this role.

The threat posed by the re-emergent specter of authoritarianism raises a number of questions, both social and sociological. Why does it happen again? Why do some people feel free and justified to exercise hateful and aggressive behavior toward others? Why do they follow violent orders? Why and how this spread of unconcealed aggressiveness and its social admissibility became possible? Have authoritarian political ideologies contributed to its proliferation? And more methodologically: How authoritarian ideologies (macro level) connect to the violent behavior of individuals and their authoritarian attitudes (micro level)? Can we measure authoritarian attitudes and how and under what conditions do they translate into authoritarian behaviors?

Questions of the kind have already been raised in the past in relation to the rise of Adolf Hitler to power, and academic response to them was deposited in the archives of sociology in the form of concepts, theories, research techniques, measurement scales, and research findings. In the 1930's, a group of German social scientists began studying the phenomenon of authoritarianism on the societal level, giving rise to once bountiful literature on and multiplicity of approaches to measuring individual authoritarianism and con-

necting it to political authoritarianism. Interest to this subject of research followed a non-linear path. While authoritarianism was one of the mainstream research topics during and in the aftermath of the Second World War, in the following decades research interests have shifted towards democracy. This decline of interest notwithstanding, individual researchers from several countries continued to investigate the phenomenon into the late 20th century, although it has never returned to prominence characteristic of its early days.

The above-cited decline of democracy and the mounting threat of authoritarian backlash, which is detectable nowadays, constitute a background which will reinvigorate academic interest in authoritarianism in the years to come. In particular, social scientists are mostly interested in the techniques of measuring and predicting authoritarian attitudes and behavior, a multiplicity of which have been developed over the last seven decades. The measurement scales applied within these approaches are not only numerous, but diverse as well. Their very diversity, while proving a wide range of options to choose from, manifests differences in the definition of the concept of authoritarianism, as well as in relating it to either attitudes or behavior. In addition to variation by reliability and validity, the measurement scales also differ by the societal contexts in which they were derived and tested so far. Thus, any researcher, intent on gauging individual authoritarianism, faces a hard choice, which necessitates more detailed inquiries into the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of available scales.

In this article we aim to provide a general overview of some existing approaches and techniques of measuring authoritarianism and discuss their weaknesses and strengths in terms of applicability in the contemporary context. In particular, the article will cover the work of Theodor Adorno, Robert Altemeyer, John Duckkit, and John Ray, who contributed to the study of authoritarianism by expanding on, criticizing, and improving each other's concepts. It is impossible to comprehensively treat all published works of the named authors, so we will focus only on those that constituted major milestones in the development of authoritarianism measures.

It is generally recognized that the first comprehensive attempt to understand the roots of authoritarian attitudes and behavior was made by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford in the monograph "Authoritarian personality", first published in 1950 [16]. However, the concept of authoritarianism was addressed even earlier in the work of Erich Fromm who coined the concept of authoritarian character and defined it as a desire to abandon personal freedom in exchange for safety. Expanding the explanatory framework of psychoanalysis, eh claimed that personality

is a product of the constant interaction of innate needs, on the one hand, and the pressures of social norms, on the other [9]. "Authoritarian personality" continued this line of thinking. Its title clearly implies how the authors treated individual authoritarianism. To them, it was a stable personal trait that characterized a person over his or her life course and, hence, can be treated as definitive of a specific personality type, called authoritarian personality. In order to comprehensively study this type of personality, the authors resorted to a variety of methods. Since methodology is not the major concern of our article, suffice it to say that they innovated by combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. On the quantitative stage, their respondents filled out questionnaires with three measurement scales, open-ended questions, and questions about life situations in addition to the Thematic apperception test and some other projective techniques. Thereafter, findings of the quantitative stage were validated by in-depth interviews.

Their findings pointed to nine dimensions of the authoritarian personality, which served to define authoritarianism for years, because the authors did not provide another clear definition of the concept. The dimensions included:

– Conventionalism: rigid adherence to conventional, middle-class values;

– Authoritarian submission: submissive, uncritical attitude toward idealized moral authorities of the ingroup;

– Authoritarian aggression: tendency to be on the lookout for, and to condemn, reject, and punish people who violate conventional values;

– Anti-intraception: opposition to the subjective, the imaginative, and the tenderminded;

– Superstition and stereotypy: the belief in mystical determinants of the individual's fate; the disposition to think in rigid categories;

– Power and "toughness": preoccupation with the dominance-submission, strong-weak, leader-follower dimension; identification with power figures; overemphasis on the conventionalized attributes of the ego; exaggerated assertion of strength and toughness;

– Destructiveness and cynicism: generalized hostility, vilification of the human;

– Projectivity: the disposition to believe that wild and dangerous things go on in the world; the projection outwards of unconscious emotional impulses;

– Sex: exaggerated concern with sexual "goings-on" [16].

Considering Adorno's approach, it is important to keep in mind that the scale, which was developed by his research team, measured personal values and ideological preferences, rather than personality type. Known as the F-scale, where "F" stood for fascism, this multiple-item measure has several limitations that should be mentioned.

First, it included 30 items (statements), quite a large number to integrate it into surveys covering other aspects of respondents' lives. Second, the wording of items referred to the mid-20th century – post WWII contexts. Thirdly, the F-scale was applied in a one-sided manner, in other words, all of its items were pro-trait statements, which increased the likelihood that the so-called yes-sayers, i.e., respondents prone to agree with everything, can negatively affect the validity of measurement by contaminating their scores. The latter aspect contributed to the measure's high scores of internal consistency and reliability, the former being also boosted by its large number of items. In our study, which compared three different measures of authoritarianism, the F-scale overperformed the other two with Cronbach's alpha and retest reliability being 0,85 and 0,73 correspondingly [19].

Regardless of all the criticism on theoretical and methodological grounds, the monograph of Adorno et el. laid foundations on which all future students of authoritarianism have capitalized. Its major and most consequential revision took place in the 1980's in the works of a Canadian psychologist Robert Altemeyer. Altemeyer offered a new approach to authoritarianism and a new scale to measure it. In his 1981 book "Right-Wing Authoritarianism" he suggested a scale, which is now know under the same name as the title of the book – the RWA scale. Since then and to this day Altemeyer stays as an important and active authority in the authoritarianism research, while his RWA scale remains the most widely used measure in the research field. His further major publications included "Enemies of Freedom: Understanding Right-Wing Authoritarianism" (1988), "The Authoritarian Specter" (1996), "The Authoritarians" (2006) and "Authoritarian Nightmare" (2020) [1–4], all being influential contributions to the field of research. His original scale comprised 22 items (and additional two "warm-up" items at the beginning, which did not count into the score), while in a recent publication the author suggested even shorter 10-item version of the scale [20].

The crucial difference between Altemeyer's and Adorno's approaches derives from the former's reliance on Bandura's social learning theory. It follows from the theory, that the origins and explanation of individual authoritarianism should be sought in the complexity and variability of human reactions in different life situations. A key point in Bandura's approach is the importance of constant interaction between behavior, cognition, and environment. Human behavior can be explained in terms of social stimuli that cause it and likely consequences of this behavior that sustain it [10]. Therefore, Altemeyer rejects the concept of authoritarian personality type as a rigid conceptual imposition on the dynamic real-

ity. Any individual can acquire authoritarianism in the course of life, and, accordingly, such traits should be rather treated as attitudes, which are changeable and dependent on personal experience. In fact, anyone can become authoritarian under certain life circumstances or, alternatively, depart from authoritarianism.

Altemeyer also departed from Adorno's approach by subdividing authoritarianism into three constituent subconcepts of authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism, although all three are listed among the nine dimensions of authoritarian personality. Adorno and his collaborators, as well as Altemeyer himself and other researchers concentrated mostly on authoritarian submission, because the main problem seemed to social scientists to lie in the authoritarian followers. While Adorno's approach was criticized for excessive complexity in measurement (9 personal traits, or dimensions), Altemeyer found that only 3 of the 9 traits really intercorrelate. He defined authoritarian submission as excessive submission to authority: "We would expect authoritarian followers especially to submit to corrupt authorities in their lives: to believe them when there is little reason to do so, to trust them when huge grounds for suspicion exist, and to hold them blameless when they do something wrong" [2]. Authoritarian aggression is a safe way to vent personal inner hostility, which is commonly used by authoritarian followers. The third aspect of authoritarianism is conventionalism – a strong belief that society (all individuals) must strictly follow the rules and laws established by the authorities.

Following this tripartite conceptual composition of authoritarianism, Altemeyer developed his RWA scale. Basically, it is a modified version of the original F-scale. Taking into account criticism of the F-scale, the author reduced its complexity, converted half of the items into contrait statements, and shortened it. It is important to bear in mind that RWA measures authoritarian attitudes and some of its items are context-dependent, varying with the prevailing ideology or cultural norms. While applied in other societal contexts, it can exhibit reduced internal consistency and falling-out of individual items from the general pattern. Another limitation was noticed by Altemeyer himself and other researchers: the scale works better to predict authoritarian followers than dominators.

RWA's development became a milestone in the authoritarianism research, as this measure replaced F-scale as the model and reference point for further contributions. An important example of such contribution is the Authoritarianism – Conservatism – Traditionalism scale (hereafter ACT) by John Duckitt. In contrast to F and RWA scales, this one completely avoids overlap between the aspects of authoritarianism. While

also distinguishing authoritarian aggression, authoritarian submission, and conventionalism as the three significant constituents of authoritarianism, Duckitt does not consider them as coherent and interrelated. In RWA many items were used to measure two or even all three aspects of authoritarianism simultaneously, as its author believed in the unidimensionality of the phenomenon. Duckitt, instead, develops three completely separate sets of 12 questions to measure each dimension, thereby admitting that authoritarianism is a multidimensional construct, whose components can vary partly independent of each other. This special attention to the dimensions has led to the swelling of questionnaire, the most reliable version of which included 36 items (12 per dimension), each subset being equally divided between protrait and contrait statements. Despite its good performance, the usability of such a long measure was problematic. To tackle the issue, Boris Bizumic and John Duckitt presented the Very Short Authoritarianism scale (further VSA), consisting of only 6 best-performing items (one protrait and one contrait per each dimension), selected from the original ACT scale [6].

Duckitt's operationalization of authoritarianism was based on his theoretical assumption that peculiarities of interpersonal interaction may well be explained by differences in personality structure (individual qualities and characteristics of interacting personalities). However, differences in individual personality structures are insufficient to account for collective or group behavior, which are rather more closely related to the modalities of group identification. Duckitt, like Altemeyer, believes authoritarianism can be operationalized through submissiveness, aggressiveness, and conventionalism [7], but suggests that each of these three aspects reflects the intensity of an individual's emotional connection with the social group, which he belongs to. In his opinion, the higher the intensity of identification with the group is, the stronger the need for group cohesion is. Therefore, he proposes to define authoritarianism as an individual or group concept of relations and a vision of how a group's relations with its individual members should be built. In the latest publication, he understands authoritarianism as "a morally absolutist and intolerant desire for the coercive imposition of particular beliefs, values, way of life, and form of social organization on individuals irrespective of their wishes and of any human costs involved" [5]. It implies that the groups or individuals who believe that the needs and values of individual members of the group should be secondary to the values and needs of the group are characterized by a higher level of authoritarianism. By advancing such an understanding of authoritarianism, the author eliminates another significant shortcoming of the "authoritarian personality" approach – its lack of

understanding of what exactly lies on the opposite side of the continuum where authoritarianism is just one of the poles. Duckitt contends that it is libertarianism – the belief that the values of individual freedom should take precedence over the values and needs of the group. The strength of such beliefs and, accordingly, the level of authoritarianism depend on the external circumstances in which the group finds itself. For example, if a group's unity is threatened, the importance of group cohesion increase dramatically. A key point, which should be highlighted in this Duckitt's approach is that by considering authoritarianism as a group phenomenon it gives importance to the social context within which the group finds itself and which has a direct impact on fluctuations in the level of authoritarianism among the group member.

Duckitt agrees with Altmeyer's division of authoritarians into authoritarian followers and authoritarian dominators. Altemeyer outlined four criteria to distinguish them: "[H]uge differences exist between these two parts of an authoritarian system in (1) their desire for power, (2) their religiousness, (3) the roots of their aggression, and (4) their thinking processes" [2]. Duckitt picks up this line of thought and continues, referring to the social dominance orientation (SDO) scale, that "RWA and SDO are factorially distinct, have different personality, genetic, and worldview origins, and are differentially reactive to different kinds of perceived threats with SDO more reactive to competitive threats to status and power differentials and RWA to threats to social order, stability, cohesion, and personal security" [5].

As a matter of fact, John Duckitt elaborates a new theoretical approach to the understanding of authoritarianism. This approach, however, is not supplemented by a new measure. The ACT and VSA scales, he proposed, are still only improved versions of the RWA scale, measuring attitudes rather than preference given to group, and biased to emphasize one side of authoritarianism – right authoritarian submission. Moreover, both of his scales, being ultimately derived from F and RWA, fall into the same trap of dependence on the social context and dominant ideology. In other words, ACT and VSA scales are reliable tools to monitor proliferation of the right-wing ideological values, rather than group-individual relations, and prove to be most effective in English-speaking liberal democracies.

One of the first researchers who focused on authoritarian behavior rather than attitudes and on authoritarian dominators was Australian psychologist John Ray. Most of his publications are methodological, dealing with practicalities of measuring authoritarianism. He was also one of the researchers, who tried to fix the original F-scale by constructing its balanced version. In contrast to Adorno, Altemeyer, and Duckitt, Ray gave primary attention to authoritarian dominators, defining authoritarianism as "the desire or tendency to impose one's own will on others" [13].

Ray raised another critically important question – do those who adhere to authoritarian attitudes behave in an authoritarian way in reality? In short, his answer is "no": "[A]ttitudes and behavior often do not go together. People who acknowledge prejudiced attitudes may or may not behave in a discriminatory way toward members of other ethnic groups. The same is true of people who deny prejudiced attitudes" [13]. Ray cited studies by Titus and Hollander, Sherell de Florance as well as his own study to show that there is only a "slight relationship between authoritarian attitudes (F scale score) and submissive behavior", but not aggressive or domination behavior [11]. His own behavioral "Directiveness" scale consisted of 26 items and has shown high internal reliability (0,74) and predictive ability (0,54). The scale had a different structure from the other ones discussed in this article: it was a list of questions with three possible answers – "Yes", "?", and "No". All questions referred to the personal preferences of respondents. Later Ray improved his Directiveness scale and presented a "Dominance" scale which aims to measure authoritarianism among general populations [11].

Directiveness scale did not correlate with attitudinal scales measuring racism or ethnocentrism. The author explained that the scale measures authoritarianism, which he reduces to only one personal trait – the desire to dominate and control. Such narrowing down of the concept raises a logical question – why directiveness means authoritarianism? Other researchers, who treated authoritarianism as a complex of covariate traits, always included directiveness or dominance as one of the core elements of the concept. Ray, however, refers to studies, which show that directiveness does not correlate with submissiveness (another core element of authoritarianism). Altemeyer also did not find correlation between RWA and SDO: "Social dominance scores and RWA scale scores correlated only weakly with each other – about 0,20. But in the first instance, it meant persons who scored highly on the social dominance test were seldom high RWAs, and high RWAs were almost never social dominators" [2]. At the same time, Altemeyer found respondents with high scores on both scales. Therefore, the approach which considers submissive and dominant behaviors as indicative of authoritarianism is not completely meaningless.

It seems more plausible that the discrepancy between their findings does not mean that either of the approaches is wrong, but rather that their measurements operate on different social levels and refer to different dimensions of social life. While all complex authoritarianism scales, like F,

RWA, ACT, VSA etc. measure personal attitudes on the macro level (in other words – ideology), behavior scales mostly concentrate on interpersonal relations.

To summarize, despite a plethora of studies, theories, and measurement scales, the fundamental questions regarding authoritarianism remain unanswered and contended even within a single tradition of research inaugurated by Adorno's pioneering F-scale. First, how authoritarianism can be defined? Second, how authoritarian attitudes and authoritarian behavior are related to each other? Third, do people identified as authoritarians behave and think in the authoritarian way in all spheres of their life? At the moment, Altemeyer's theoretical approach and operationalization of authoritarianism as a covariation of submissiveness, aggression, and conventionalism remains the most elaborated and well-tested treatment of the phenomenon. Both history and the present remind us once again that there are individuals who obey authority and behave cruelly toward others. But the best measurement scales, which are in existence today, mostly consist of items measuring political ideology (usually right-wing) and, therefore, attitudes. Another common problem with the scales is that they usually overemphasize one of the traits (in most cases, submission) within the whole construct.

The vast majority of empirical studies of authoritarianism are devoted to examining relationship between authoritarianism and social factors that impact its rise and/or spread. In such studies, however, situations are not uncommon when researchers end up with contradictory results. For example, social protests in a city change the level of authoritarian attitudes on the RWA scale, but fail to impact Directiveness scores, which are also treated as a measure of authoritarianism. It is clear that such contradictory conclusions result from the diversity of definitions of the concept rather than from flawed data collection procedures or incomprehensibility of reality.

To conclude, there are several common traps in the authoritarianism studies, of which the most significant are the following ones: overextension or excessive reduction of the concept (on the theory part) and application of measurement scales which operate at different levels of social reality (on the methodology part). Therefore, a researcher should ask three main questions while planning an empirical study of authoritarianism with a measurement scale: does the scale measure attitudes or behavior; does it measure the whole concept or only a part of it; and on which level of social reality it is focused? To summarize the approaches discussed in this article, we can divide them into the ones measuring the whole concept of authoritarianism, measuring only separate aspects of it, measuring attitudes, measuring behavior, as well as approaches which focus on the macro or micro levels of social interaction.

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