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The Gift of Authoritarian Experience: Determinants of Online Political Efficacy in New Democracies



Lecture by

ANDREW X. LI

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Please join us to PERG Picnic followed by the Lecture on the Rooftop (or in FT 10th floor in case of bad weather)

27TH OF SEPTEMBER 2019, 2:00 P.M. | NÁDOR U. 15 (N15), 203

ABSTRACT | *This paper represents an effort to investigate the impact of perceived new media (Internet) credibility on citizens' online political efficacy (OPE) in new democracies. Unlike their counterparts in mature democracies and outright authoritarian regimes, citizens of new democracies face the challenge to reconcile their democratic presence with the authoritarian past and their online political behaviors are likely to be shaped by the interaction between democratic realities and authoritarian legacies or memories. The current study argues that in new democracies, the relationship between credibility of new media and OPE is contingent upon citizens' authoritarian experience in the past. Since past authoritarian experience delivers a sense of relative acquisition through comparison mechanism, it is expected to play a positive role in moderating the association between credibility of new media and OPE. We test the proposition by studying a sample of Taiwanese residents interviewed during the 2015 Taiwan Communication Survey (TCS). Our empirical analyses produce strong supportive evidence for the positive conditioning effect of authoritarian experience and the result is robust to different model specifications and alternative measures of authoritarian experience.*

BIO | *Andrew X. Li is Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations, Central European University. He earned a joint PhD from National University of Singapore and King's College London, UK. Prior to joining CEU, he was a research fellow at Nanyang Technological University, working on a project funded by Singapore's National Research Foundation. His research focuses on the political economy of international finance, migration, and development as well as foreign policy (re)alignment and global power shifts. He has published in journals such as *Economics & Politics*, *Journal of International Relations and Development*, and *Science and Public Policy*, and contributed to the edited volume *BRICS and the Global Economy* (World Scientific, forthcoming).*

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