



JWAC'S World Affairs Forum 2024:

Political Authoritarianism on the Rise in the 21st Century

October 18 & 19 @ KTOO Studio 1

Two days, Five presentations, Two panel discussions.

Experts explore political authoritarianism by examining the role of the politics of memory in post-Soviet Russia; illiberal democracy as a form of authoritarianism in Turkey and Mexico; the role of religion in authoritarian ideology; and an anthropologist's view of authoritarianism. The Forum will conclude with two moderated panel discussions exploring questions on the nature of authoritarianism and how free societies can defend themselves against the attacks of authoritarian movements while maintaining their open and free institutions.

The Juneau World Affairs Council (JWAC) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), non-partisan organization. Its goal is to encourage dialogue and understanding of important international, economic, political and social issues through expert presentation, informed discussion, and other educational activities. Our 2024 season is generously sponsored by Coeur Alaska Kensington Mine.

Schedule

Thursday, October 17, 2024

(5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.)

Community Reception

5:00 - 7:00 p.m. | TK Maguire's Douglas Conference Room (off the lobby)

Join our speakers and JWAC leadership at a no-host reception to welcoming our guests.

Friday, October 18, 2024

(9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

Welcome and Introduction

9:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. | KTOO Studio 1

Opening remarks by 2024 Forum organizer Geron Bruce.

Friday, October 18, 2024 - continued

Session I:

9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. | KTOO Studio 1

"Elections and Authoritarianism: The AKP's Rule and the Paradox of Democracy in Turkey"

-with **Dr. Ayça Alemdaroğlu**

For 22 years, the AKP has dominated Turkey, navigating the country through 19 elections. While elections are typically hallmarks of democracy, in Turkey, they have become tools for consolidating an increasingly authoritarian regime. This talk will explore how the AKP's electoral strategy has shaped its autocratic grip on power, and whether the recent decisive victory of the opposition signals a genuine shift towards democratization.

Session II:

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. | KTOO Studio 1

"The Politics of Memory in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia"

-with **Dr. Tyler Kirk**

Two months before Russia invaded Ukraine, the Russian Supreme Court banned the country's oldest civic organization responsible for the commemoration of the victims of Soviet repressions -- the International Memorial Society. This talk examines the politics of memory in the Soviet Union from the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 to the outbreak of the Russo-Ukrainian War in 2022. It explores how the state and society have struggled to come to terms with the legacies of Stalinist repression and highlights the links between memory politics and democracy.

Lunch break

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Session III:

1:15 p.m.- 2:15 p.m. | KTOO Studio 1

"Mexico's New Leadership: A Turning Point or Continuation?"

-with **Maria Fernanda Bozmoski**

As Mexico welcomes its first female president, the country is at a critical juncture. With concerns over democratic backsliding and increasing authoritarian tendencies in recent years, many are wondering if Sheinbaum's new administration will mark a significant shift or follow the patterns of her predecessor. This talk will explore the key challenges facing Mexico's democracy, including security, recently passed judicial reforms, and increased militarization while also considering whether this new leadership can bring about meaningful change for the country and its relations with both Central America and North America.

Session IV:

2:30 - 3:30 p.m. | KTOO Studio 1

"The Role of Religion in the Ideology of Authoritarian Movements"

-with **Dr. Mark Silk**

Religion plays a wide variety of roles in the ideology of authoritarian movements before the movements come to power. In power, the movements coopt and adapt religious ideas, values and practices in order to sacralize their regimes.

Session V:

3:45 - 4:45 p.m. | KTOO Studio 1

**"The Intellectual, Social, and Cultural Origins of Contemporary Political Authoritarianism"
-with Dr. Peter Knutson**

Proceeding from his life as a community college teacher of anthropology and as a commercial fisherman, this talk will pose questions about the increasingly authoritarian character of institutions and attitudes in 21st Century United States. Are the guardrails against social disintegration and anomie being removed? Is fascism a useful term to describe the cultural and political trajectory of the present moment? What are the sources of popular anxiety which lead to the desire for submission to a strong leader? How do we engage in practices which maintain an open society?

Saturday, October 19, 2024

(10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

Session VI:

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. | KTOO Studio 1

The Nature of Authoritarian Movements

Our speakers will explore: 1) Why are some citizens in free, democratic societies attracted to authoritarian movements? 2) What are the social, economic, political, and cultural conditions conducive to authoritarian movements? 3) Are there elements that all authoritarian movements share? 4) Is an origin myth important in authoritarian movements? 5) How do authoritarian movements shape events? 5) How are authoritarian movements shaped by events? 6) Other questions?

-Moderated by Jim Clark

Session VII:

11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. | KTOO Studio 1

How Can Free Societies Forestall Authoritarian Takeover

Our speakers will explore what free societies can do to strengthen democracy and forestall authoritarian movements. Among the questions they will address are:

1) How, in a highly diverse and polarized society such as the United States, do we build a governing consensus? 2) How should a free society respond to political violence? 3) How does a free society, in the age of the Internet and social media, regulate propaganda that incites violence and spreads falsehoods? 4) Can educational institutions play a larger role in protecting democratic institutions and norms? 5) Other questions?

-Moderated by Keira Alkema

Speakers



Dr. Ayça Alemdaroğlu is the Associate Director of the Program on Turkey and a Research Scholar at the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law at Stanford University. She is also a Global Fellow at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO). As a political sociologist, Ayça explores social and political inequalities and changes in Turkey and the Middle East. Her publications focus on topics including social inequality, nationalism, Kurdish politics, gender, social change, and youth issues in Turkey and the Middle East. Her most recent publications include a book titled "*Kurds in Dark Times: New*

Perspectives on Violence and Resistance" and she serves on the editorial committee of the Middle East Report.

She received her Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Cambridge, her MA in political science from Bilkent University, and her BSc. degrees in political science and sociology from the Middle East Technical University. Prior to joining Stanford, Alemdaroğlu was an Assistant Professor of Research in Sociology at Northwestern University and served as the director of Keyman Modern Turkish Studies Program at the Buffett Institute for Global Studies.



Dr. Tyler Kirk is Associate Professor and the Arthur T. Fathauer Chair in History at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where is also the Assistant Director of Arctic and Northern Studies. He is most recently the author of "*After the Gulag: A History of Memory in Russia's Far North*" (Indiana University Press, 2023) which examines the legacy of Stalinist repression in Russia's Komi Republic. Kirk received his Ph.D. in history from Arizona State University School of Historical, Philosophical, and Religious Studies, and his M.A. from the University of Chicago. He has visited and studied in Russia multiple times, including at the Komi State

Pedagogical Institute in Syktyvkar. He is an historian of the Soviet Union, Russia, and the circumpolar North.



María Fernanda Bozmoski is deputy director, Atlantic Council's Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center, where she leads the center's work on Mexico and Central America and supports the director with the center's operations. During her time at the Atlantic Council, she has co- led the center's Northern Triangle Task Force, helped shape the center's trade work, and scheduled events in Asia for US policymakers.

Before joining the Atlantic Council, Bozmoski worked at the Cato Institute and the Council of the Americas. She also completed an externship at the Inter-American Dialogue. Bozmoski is fluent in Spanish, English, French, and Italian, and is able to do media in those languages. She is a frequent commentator in several US and regional outlets including Voice of America, El Financiero-Bloomberg, and Univision, among others.

Originally from Costa Rica, Bozmoski earned a BA in European studies from the Sorbonne University in France as well as a MA in Latin American studies and political economy from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, and a MA in international law and human rights from the United Nations University for Peace.



Dr. Mark Silk is Professor of Religion in Public Life Emeritus at Trinity College in Hartford, CT. After receiving his Ph.D. in history from Harvard University, he edited the Boston Review and spent 10 years as a reporter, editorial writer, and columnist for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. In 1996 he became the founding director of the Leonard E. Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life as well as a faculty member at Trinity College. He is the author of "*Spiritual Politics: Religion and America Since World War II*", "*Unsecular Media: Making News of Religion in America*," and (with Andrew Walsh) "*One Nation,*

Divisible: How Regional Religious Differences Shape American Politics." He has co-edited two book series, "*Religion by Region*" (8 vols.) and "*The Future of Religion in America*" (5 vols.). Currently he is a contributing editor and weekly columnist for the Religion News Service and a visiting scholar at the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life at Boston College.



Dr. Peter Knutson is senior anthropologist at the Seattle Colleges, having taught a working-class, culturally diverse student body there since 1989. He teaches courses on human evolution, environment, labor, global cultures, art and the concept of anarchy. His existential approach to the teaching of anthropology was podcast by the American Anthropological Association at its 2022 national meeting.

His autoethnographic doctoral work at the University of Washington examined power and language in the culture of commercial fishermen.

His subsequent publications in applied anthropology have appeared over decades in many international, national and regional academic and popular publications and websites. His Vietnam-era coming-of-age memoir/audiobook was widely aired on public radio stations.

He is a life-long independent commercial fisherman, political activist, advocate for salmon habitat and working waterfront, and participant in the farmer's market movement. In 2016 Martha Stewart honored his direct marketing family business, Loki Fish Company, as one of her ten national American Made honorees. His work has been profiled in many books, articles, and documentaries. His 1971 Congressional testimony was cited by Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in the anti-war case *Gillette v. United States*.