

SCHOOL FOR POLITICS AND CRITIQUE 2022 AUTHORITARIANISM AND THE LEFT: THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

Lecturers: Frank Engster, Achim Szepanski (TBC), Joshua Clover, Katerina Kolozova, Amalia Louisson, Zachary De Jong

[10-12th of September 2022, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities – Skopje, North Macedonia]*

The Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Skopje, with support from the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Southeast Europe, is proud to announce the School for Politics and Critique 2022 – “Authoritarianism and the Left: The Future of Democracy in Southeast Europe.” The School will take place between September 10-12, 2022, and will be held in a hybrid format, both online and offline, for those attending in person, the School will be held in Skopje, North Macedonia. We are excited to announce the following keynote speakers for this year’s School: Frank Engster, Achim Szepanski (TBC), Joshua Clover, Katerina Kolozova, Amalia Louisson, and Zachary De Jong.

The School for Politics and Critique 2022 is dedicated to current political and activist issues in the region and abroad, focusing on Marxist and socialist responses and analyses of authoritarianism, nationalism, and illiberal politics as they relate to capitalist structures, and the state and future of democracy, especially as it pertains to both Southeast Europe, and Europe as a whole. Through a multi-disciplinary approach, both feminist and environmentalist perspectives will be put forward. Likewise, a special focus for this year’s School will be placed on the Non-Copyriot platform where lines of thinking that are not only anti-authoritarian but also lean toward new realisms will also be explored, with a heavy emphasis placed on issues directly related to: radical (re)conceptions of liberalism, the issue of what both Joshua Clover and Frank Engster refer to as “surplus population” in relation to an era of digitalized economy, the potential benefits and pitfalls of digital democracy (as digitalization is not beyond ideology), the intrinsic link between capitalism and authoritarianism, and the rise of illiberal politics, governments, and various forms of right-wing populisms across Europe, as well as varying ways of combatting them.

In so doing, we will seek to examine a wide array of potential Marxist and socialist responses and alternatives to the rise of right-wing movements, examine the role of digitalization in both the economy and democracy, critically examine so called “liberal” values while also not abandoning the radical core of liberalism itself, and put forward new and practical solutions to the issues of authoritarianism and democracy in Europe more generally. The school will therefore both critique and reimagine what liberalism and democracy mean without simultaneously disposing of their categorical power, thus grappling with democracy’s literal meaning, “rule by the people.” In accordance with this, the school will have a strong activist approach based around unified responses to real concrete and material struggles in the region and abroad.

The School is calling for both academics and activists from across the region of Southeast Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia) as well as wider Europe. Three applicants from North Macedonia, but outside of Skopje, as well as three applicants from the region will receive scholarships and have their travel and accommodation costs covered by the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. An additional fourteen applicants from the region (including North Macedonia) will also be accepted, but their costs not covered and ten applicants (including those from wider Europe) will likewise be accepted, without their costs being covered. Online participation will be available for those who are unable to attend in person. Applicants should note that the school itself does not charge a fee for participation, and that food and drink will be provided to the offline participants. Residents of North Macedonia are strongly encouraged to apply.

Application: Interested participants are encouraged to fill out the application form via Jotform (the link can be found below). The deadline for applications is June 30th, 2022, and applicants will be notified of their status by July 10th, 2022. If you have any questions whatsoever please direct them to the following email addresses: info@isshs.edu.mk and zach.d.dejong@isshs.edu.mk.

*It is possible that the School will be extended until September 13th. We will update everyone as to this possibility in the coming weeks.

Application form: <https://form.jotform.com/221281823821047>