



Syllabus

Title of the Course	Right and Violation: A Critique of Violence	Course breakdown	1.5 teaching hours online 1.5 hours independent study
Name of instructor	Ahmet Murat Aytaç	Total course hours	42
Language	English	ECTS	
Hosted by	Free Univeristy of Berlin	Certificate issued by	
min. number of participants	5	max. number of participants	15
Weekly class time	3h.		



1. About the instructor:

Ahmet Murat Aytaç is an Assistant Professor of Political Science. He received his PhD in Political Theory from Ankara University in 2009. His research interests deal with issues of human rights philosophy, political theory and history of political thought, and radical democracy. His books, *Ailenin Serencamı: Türkiye'de Modern Aile Fikrinin Oluşumu* (2007), and *Kitlelerin Ruhu: Sosyal ve Siyasal Tahhayülde Kalabalıklar* (2012) published by Dipnot Publications. He is also one of the co-editors of the book, *Göçebe Düşünmek: Deleuze Düşüncesinin Kıyıları* (2014), published by Metis Publications. He published many articles and book chapters in various journals or publications. Now he is writing weekly opinion pieces for online daily *Gazete Duvar*.

2. Course description:

This course explores the controversies of human rights theory with a special emphasis on acts of violation. How is an act of right violation possible? What are the conditions of possibility of being exalted to the level of human rights for an ordinary political or moral demand? Keeping these questions in mind, we will examine main issues of human rights discipline through the use of **video lectures, audio-visual files, interactive digital contents, and engaged online discussions**. These materials will construct a more complete image of what a “human rights culture” looks like when it is approached from the viewpoint of people suffering the violence of violations. We will discuss topics like torture, extra-judicial execution, enforced disappearance, religious intolerance, ethnocentrism and cultural discrimination, and violation of the right to equal respect and concern as mainly they are experienced in Turkey and some other countries around the world. In the beginning, we are going to develop a conceptual framework that will support the analysis of issues under discussion. After this, we will delve into arguments concerning theoretical aspects of concrete problems caused by violations targeting oppressed individuals and groups. Our course goes beyond explaining and analyzing theoretical aspects of controversies by addressing recent efforts of human rights defenders to overcome adverse effects of violations.

3. Learning aims :

- 3.1. To understand the historical evolution and institutionalization of violation practices as the sovereign regime of the political body.
- 3.2. Critical assessment of dominant human rights approaches.
- 3.3. To develop an emancipatory understanding of rights that will support advocacy practices.

4. Upon the successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- 4.1. Identify the myths, we are told about rights and violations.
- 4.2. Develop an awareness about violence disguised under the label of legal actions.
- 4.3. Approach and appreciate critically different human rights understandings.



5. Course requirements

- **Assignment 1 (40%):** *Short essay*

The short essay of students will be a paper not exceeding 9-10 double-spaced pages. This paper will not be different from the final paper, as I am going to give open topics for your reflection. In this paper, I will be looking to a well-articulated argument. The thesis of the argument should be clearly stated in the first paragraph. All essays must end with a strong conclusion paragraph that summarizes the whole argument.

- **Assignment 2 (60%):** *Final Paper*

The final paper of participants will be a critical research paper not exceeding 20 double-spaced pages. These papers will be on topics of interest to students, based on research drawn from different resources. The papers should highlight the information gathered, why the issue is important, what is being currently done about it, and your own conclusions. The paper is expected to offer a critical analysis and not a summary, and highlight biases, blind spots or hypocrisies in how human rights play out in theory and practice

6. Organization of the course and course schedule

Weekly schedule:

Ses #	Key Dates	Topics
Week 1		Introduction: How to think about human rights?
Week 2		Advocacy: Rights must be defended
Week 3		Violation: The consciousness of right
Week 4	Short Essay Topic to be determined	Censorship: National Security, Defamation and Obscenity
Week 5		Intolerance: Difficult freedom of religious belief
Week 6	Final Paper Topic to be determined	Discrimination: Demanding equal respect and dignity.
Week 7		Torture: Human Beings Confront the Sovereign
Week 8	Short Essay Due	Disappearance: Understanding political persecution
Week 9		Discussion (One to one): Student's short essays
Week 10		Discussion (One to one): Student's short essays
Week 11		Protest: Mothers against perpetrators of forced disappearances
Week 12		Genocide: Crimes against humanity
Week 13		Immigration: Moral economy of the immigrant.
Week 14	Final Paper Due	Class Discussion: New directions in human rights theory



7. Reading List

1. (DJ) Donnelly, Jack. *Universal Human Rights in Theory & Practice*. 3rd ed. Cornell University Press, 2013
2. (EB) Evans, Brad, T. Carver (ed.), *Histories of violence: post-war critical thought*, London: Zed Books, 2017

Ses #	Topics	Readings
Week 1	Introduction: How to think about human rights?	No readings assigned.
Week 2	Advocacy: Rights must be defended	1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 2. DJ, Chapters 1, 2, and 4. 3. Gilles Deleuze, "Power and Classical Natural Right", url: http://webdeleuze.com (access date: 6.9.2018) Recommended: I. Cranston, Maurice. <i>What are human rights</i>, Basic Books, 1961., Chapters 1 and 3. II. Shue, Henry. <i>Basic Rights</i>, Princeton University Press, 1981., Chapter 1.
Week 3	Violation: The consciousness of right	1. Mehta, Uday S. "Vilence", url: politicalconcepts.org (access date: 2.9.2019) 2. Benjamin, Walter. "Critique of Violence", in <i>Reflections: essays, aphorisms and biographical writings</i>, tr. E. Jephcott, New York: Schocken Books, pp. 277-300. 3. BE, Chapters 1 and 2. Recommended: I. Bernstein, Richard. "Violence", url: politicalconcepts.org, (access date: 2.9.2019)
Week 4	Censorship: National Security, Defamation and Obscenity	1. Jansen, Sue Curry. "History of Censorship", url: onlinelibrary.wiley, (access date: 2.9.2019) 2. Mill, John S., "Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion", <i>On Liberty</i>, Chapter 2., url: utilitarianism.com, (access date: 3.9.2019) 3. Butler, Judith. "On Linguistic Vulnerability", in <i>Excitable Speech: The Politics of Performative</i>, Routledge Pub., 1997, p.1-43 Recommended: I. Mackinnon, Catharine A. "Defamation and Discrimination", in <i>Only Words</i>, Harvard University Press, 1993. p.1.43 II. Dworkin, Ronald. "Is there a right to pornography?", <i>Oxford Journal of Legal Studies</i>, Vol.1, No.2, pp.177-212.
Week 5	Intolerance: Difficult freedom of religious belief	1. Walzer, Michael. <i>On Toleration</i>, Yale University Press, 1997, Chapters 1,2 and 5.

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		2. Dworkin, Ronald. "Religious Freedom", <i>Religion without God</i>, Harvard University Press, 2013, p. 105-49. Recommended: I. Taylor, Charles. "The collapse of tolerance", url: theguardian.com, (access date: 1.9.2019). II. Aytaç, Ahmet Murat. "Lifestyle and rights: A neo-secular conception of human dignity", <i>Philosophy & Social Criticism</i> 43(4) · December 2016
Week 6	Discrimination: Demanding equal respect and dignity.	1. Taylor, Charles. "The Politics of Recognition, in <i>Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition</i>, Princeton University Press, 1994, pp.25-75. 2. Kymlicka, Will. <i>Multiculturalism and Minority Rights: West and East, Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe</i>, 2002. Recommended: I. Aytaç Ahmet Murat, Zafer Yilmaz. "In Search of an Alternative Perspective on Minority Rights...", in <i>Democratic Representation in Plurinational States</i>, Palgrave Pub., 2018, pp.41-57.
Week 7	Torture: Human Beings Confront the Sovereign	1. Améry, Jean. "Torture", in <i>At the Mind's Limits.</i>, Granta Pub., 1999, pp. 21-40. 2. Scarry, Elaine. "The Structure of Torture: The Conversion of Real Pain in the Fiction of Power.", in <i>The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World</i>, OUP, 1985. Pp.27-60 3. Crelinsten, Ronald D. "In Their Own Words: The World of the Torturer." In <i>The Politics of Pain: Torturers and Their Masters.</i>, Westview Press, 1995, pp. 35-64. Recommended: I. "Alan Dershowitz and Ken Roth Debate." url: cnn.com , (cccess date: 2.9.2019). II. Rejali, Darius. <i>Torture and Democracy</i>. Princeton University Press, 2007 Chapters 21, 22 and 23
Week 8	Disappearance: Understanding political persecution	1. Edkins, Jenny. <i>Missing: Persons and Politics.</i>, Cornell University Press., 2011, Introduction, Chapter 7, and Conclusion. 2. Gatti, "A Catastrophe for Identity and Meaning: forced Disappearance, Modernity, and Civilization", in <i>Surviving Forced Disappearance in Argentina and Uruguay</i>, Palgrave Pub., 2014, pp. 15-33. Recommended: I. Edkins Jenny. "Introduction: trauma, violence and political community", <i>Trauma and Memory of Politics</i>. CUP, 2003, pp. 1-16. II. Améry, Jean. "Resentments", in <i>At the Mind's Limits</i>, Granta Pub., 1999, pp. 62-82.
Week 9	Discussion (One to one):	No readings assigned.

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	Student's short essays	
Week 10	Discussion (One to one): Student's short essays	No readings assigned.
Week 11	Protest: Mothers against perpetrators of forced disappearances	1. Butler, Judith. <i>Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly</i>, Harvard University Press, 2015, Introduction, and Chapter 5. 2. Bouvard, Marguerite Guzman. <i>Revolutionizing Motherhood</i>, SR Books, 1994, Chapters 7, 9, 10. 3. Ruddick, Sara. "Fostering Growth", in <i>Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace</i>, Beacon Press, pp.82-103
Week 12	Genocide: Crimes against humanity	1. Fein, Helen. "Genocide: A Sociological Perspective." in <i>Genocide: An Anthropological Reader</i>. Ed. Alexander Laban, Blackwell Publishers, 2002, pp. 74-90. 2. Arendt, Hannah. "Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil." In <i>Genocide: An Anthropological Reader</i>. in <i>Genocide: An Anthropological Reader</i>. Ed. Alexander Laban, Blackwell Publishers, 2002, pp. 91-109. Recommended: 1. BE, Chapters 3 and 11.
Week 13	Immigration: Moral economy of the immigrant.	To be determined
Week 14	Class Discussion: New directions in human rights theory	No readings assigned.