

AHMET AKTAS

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Curriculum Vitae

SPECIALIZATION

AOS: Early Modern Philosophy; Social and Political Philosophy.

AOC: 20th Century European Philosophy; Philosophy of Emotions; Topics in Philosophy of Mind

EDUCATION

2023-present **PhD, Philosophy** | Purdue University (Indiana, US)

Dissertation **Reason, Affects, and Democracy: Essays on Spinoza's Political Philosophy**

Committee: Dan Frank (Advisor), Dan Smith, Molly Scudder.

Dissertation Abstract: Spinoza was among the first philosophers to defend democracy as the most desirable form of government on explicit rationalist grounds, arguing that it alone preserves the natural right of the multitude, yet neither the founders nor contemporary theorists of democracy have taken this defense seriously. This dissertation addresses that gap through three exegetical essays on the relationship between affects, reason, and democracy in Spinoza's political philosophy. The first reconstructs his thesis of the co-extensivity of the conative and cognitive, arguing that the communication of affects functions as a problem-identifying mechanism while the communication of reasons functions as a problem-solving mechanism in political life. The second asks what affective dispositions are required to sustain a communicative environment capable of supporting a well-functioning democracy, dispositions that stably motivate people to act reasonably and respond capaciously to disagreement and conflict. The third examines the power, limits, and paradoxical role of government in creating and sustaining these affective dispositions.

2021 – 2023 **M.A., Philosophy** | Middle East Technical University (METU) (Ankara)

Thesis Title: Precarious Necessity: Deleuze and the Theory of Thought
 Committee: Assoc. Prof. Corry Shores, Prof. Daniel W. Smith, Assoc. Prof. Barış Parkan

- 2016 – 2021 **B.A., Philosophy** (with a minor in French), Boğaziçi University (Istanbul), High Honors
- 2020 – 2021 **Visiting Student, Philosophy** | Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (Paris)

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- 2026 APA Graduate Student Stipend (\$300) x 2 (Eastern & Central)
- 2024, 2025 PROMISE Grant (\$1.000) | Purdue College of Liberal Arts
- 2023-2025 Fulbright PhD Scholarship (\$100.000)
- 2021-2023 2210/E Graduate Scholarship (Continuation of the Undergraduate Scholarship) | The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK)
- 2016- 2021 2205 Undergraduate Scholarship (Supporting the top 0.01% of Turkish students in the National University Entrance Exam) | The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK)

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

1. Aktas, Ahmet. 2026. "Empowering Sadness: Spinoza on Grief, Love, and Loss." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2026.2672616>
2. Aktas, Ahmet. Forthcoming. "Precarious Necessity in a Contingent World: Time, Thought, and Necessity in Deleuze." *Deleuze and Guattari Studies*.
3. Aktas, Ahmet. 2025. "Was Spinoza a Deleuzian: Rethinking the Politics of Emotions and Affects." *Theory, Culture & Society*. 42 (3). pp. 95-114 <https://doi.org/10.1177/02632764241301334>
4. Aktas, Ahmet. 2024. "Thrown into the World, Attached to Love: On the Forms of World-Sharing and Mourning in Heidegger." *Human Studies*. 47, pp. 479–499. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10746-023-09701-6>
5. Aktas, Ahmet. 2018. "A Critical Assessment of Spinoza's Theory of Affect: Affects, Beliefs, and Human Freedom" (in Turkish), *Beytulhikme An International Journal of Philosophy* 8 (1), pp. 251-272. <https://doi.org/10.18491/beytulhikme.446507>

Invited Articles and Book Chapters

1. Aktas, Ahmet & Shores, Corry. Forthcoming. "The Fascinating Communication of Plants: Phyto-Semiogenesis through Deleuze & Guattari." Ed. Valeria Bizzari, Springer, [Phaenomenologica](#) Book Series.
2. Aktas, Ahmet 2026. "Rethinking the Spinoza–Machiavelli Encounter for the Twenty-First Century" [In Turkish, for a special issue on "Spinoza's Philosophers, Philosophers' Spinoza"], *Doğu Batı*. 115. pp. 33-54.
3. Aktas, Ahmet 2025. "Is Sadness Useful? Two Correctives on the Nature of the Affects and Their Relation to Good Life in Spinoza" [In Turkish, for a special issue on "Spinoza Problem"], *Doğu Batı*. 114. pp.136-169.

Book Reviews

1. The Review of *Aesthetics in Grief and Mourning: Philosophical Reflections on Coping with Loss* by Kathleen Marie Higgins, *Review of Metaphysics*, 78 (2). <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/rvm.2024.a947057>.
2. The Review of *Insurrectionist Ethics: Radical Perspectives on Social Justice*, edited by Jacoby Adeshei Carter & Darryl Scriven. *Journal of Moral Philosophy*, 23 (1-2), 249, 295-252. <https://doi.org/10.1163/17455243-20262007>

Public Pieces

1. Aktas, Ahmet and Sibel Nisam Samlı. 2023. "Bir Ders Arası Sohbeti: Değer mi Hiç?,"in *Gençlerle Başbaşa: Felsefenin Bahçesinde* by Yıldız Silier, Yordam Kitap, 2023. (A philosophical Essay in the form of dialogue discussing cynicism, appeared in one of the sections dedicated to the essays authored by students in a book by Yıldız Silier).
2. Aktas, Ahmet. 2021. "Moby Dick: A Spinozist Tritone Fugue", in *ThinKnow Magazine*, vol 2, pp. 23-27.

PRESENTATIONS

Peer-Reviewed

1. "Affective Challenges to Deliberative Democracy" | APA Central (Symposium Session)| 2026
2. "Two Disregarded Distinctions in Spinoza" | North American Society for Spinoza (NASS) Philosophical Salon for Junior Scholars | 2026 (May)
3. "Affective Challenges to Deliberative Democracy" | APA Eastern (Poster Session)| 2026
4. "Governing Through Affects: Spinoza on The Political Uses and Abuses of Passive Joys" | North American Society for Spinoza (NASS) Conference | 2025 (May)
5. "One or Many Cognitions? A Theoretical Sketch for the Ontological Pluralism of Cognitions" | The Southern Society for Philosophy or Psychology (SSPP) 116th Annual Meeting | 2025 (April) & Commentary on "Not quite dead yet: A Heideggerian take on the phenomenology of Obsessing"
6. "Spinoza's Account of Grief" | North American Society for Spinoza (NASS) Philosophical Salon for Junior Scholars | 2024 (May)
7. "Was Spinoza a Deleuzian: Rethinking the Politics of Emotions and Affects" | Society for the Study of Affect (SSA) Conference | 2024 (October)

8. "World-Building and World-Losing" | Annual Conference of the Central and East European Society for Phenomenology | 2024 (September)

Invited

1. "Was Spinoza a Deleuzian: The Birth of Affect in Deleuze" | Purdue University | The Fall 2023 Graduate Symposium.

LITERARY WRITINGS & TRANSLATIONS

1. Carol Ann Duffy, [Alem'in Karısı, Translation: Ahmet Aktaş 160. Kilometre Yayınları](#). (Turkish Translation of Carol Ann Duffy's famous poetry collection *World's Wife*). 2025.
2. Turkish translation of "[12 Poems by Iryna Shuvalova](#)", with Semiha Mengüllüoğlu, published online on www.160incikilometre.com. 2022.
3. Turkish Translation of "[Communism and Poetry](#)" by Alain Badiou, in Bu Çağ (Bu Çağ Poetry Journal), vol. 2. pp. 1-5. 2022
4. Aktaş, Ahmet and Avcı, Mehmet. 2022. "Becoming-Verb of Poetry" ("Şiirin Eylem Oluşu," Essay in Turkish on a Deleuzian analysis of two eminent contemporary Turkish Poets, co-authored with Mehmet Avcı), in Bu Çağ (Bu Çağ Poetry Journal), vol. 2, pp. 9-11.
5. Aktaş, Ahmet. 2021. "Revealing Gesture" ("Açımlayıcı Jest", Essay in Turkish on contemporary movements in Turkish poetry), in Bu Çağ (Bu Çağ Poetry Journal), vol. 1, pp. 89-97.
6. Turkish Translation of "Carol Ann Duffy: Interview by Andrew McAllister," in Natama Şiir ve Eleştiri Dergisi (Natama Journal of Poetry and Literary Criticism), vol. 21, pp. 42-50. 2021.
7. Turkish Translation of Carol Ann Duffy's poem Mrs Faust, in Natama Şiir ve Eleştiri Dergisi (Natama Journal of Poetry and Literary Criticism), vol. 21, pp. 39-41. 2021
8. Aktaş, Ahmet. 2021. "The Poet of the Other: Carol Ann Duffy" (An essay in Turkish on the poetry of Carol Ann Duffy), in Natama Şiir ve Eleştiri Dergisi (Natama Journal of Poetry and Literary Criticism), vol. 21, pp. 36-38.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2026 (Fall)	TA, Introduction to Philosophy, (Daniel W. Smith), Purdue University
2025 (Fall)	TA, Introduction to Philosophy (Daniel Kelly), Purdue University

LANGUAGES

Turkish	Native
English	Fluent

French	Full Research Command, Reading & Writing
German	Intermediate, actively learning
Latin	Elementary, actively learning

Professional Service

Service to Purdue University

2026	Conference Coordinator, Purdue Undergraduate Philosophy Conference Purdue University
2025	Graduate Student Representative, Purdue University
2024 & 2025	Reviewer, Purdue Undergraduate Philosophy Conference Purdue University

Service to the Profession

Referee	<i>Body & Society</i>
2023 - Present	Founder and Organizer, Deleuze Research Group , Purdue University
2025	Conference Organizer, %100 Deleuze Symposium , Ankara
2021	A contributor of Phil-Free Community

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

20th Century European Philosophy

Sem Recent Contintl Phil	A	Daniel W. Smith	(Purdue)
Introduction à la Phénoménologie	A+	Renaud Barbaras	(Université Paris 1 Sorbonne)
Philosophy of Communication I	A	Corry Shores	(METU)
Philosophy of Communication II	A	Corry Shores	(METU)
Seminar in Continental Phil (Heidegger)	A	Aret Karademir	(METU)
Deleuze Reading Group x6		Daniel W. Smith	(Purdue)

19th Century European Philosophy

Philosophy of Kant	B+	Jacqueline Mariña	(Purdue)
Nietzsche (Audit)		Daniel Smith & James Mollison	(Purdue)
Du scepticism à la Post Modernité:	B-	Quentin Meillassoux	(Université Paris 1 Sorbonne)
L'épreuve du réel	A	Jocelyn Benoist	(Université Paris 1 Sorbonne)
Hegel's Encyclopedia Logic	A	Elif Cirakman	(METU)

History of Philosophy

Studies in Greek Phil	A	Lea Schroeder	(Purdue)
Islamic & Jewish Phil. and their Critique by Spinoza	A	Dan Frank	(Purdue)
Independent Study on Spinoza	A	Mike Jacovides	(Purdue)
Spec Tops Ancient Phil	A-	Dan Frank	(Purdue)
Studies in Ancient Greek Philosophy	A	Refik Guremen	(METU)

Value Theory & Political Phil

Studies Social Polit. Phil.	A	J.P. Messina & Molly Scudder	(Purdue)
Seminar in Ethics	A	Leonard Harris	(Purdue)
Studies in Political Philosophy	A	James Griffith	(METU)
Polit. Phil Reading Group x4		J. P. Messina	(Purdue)
Philosophy of Money (Audit)		Christopher Yeomans	(Purdue)
Seminar on Norms (Audit)		Daniel Kelly & Evan Westra	(Purdue)

Others

Reason and Cognition	A	Javi Gomez Purdue)	(Purdue)
Philosophy and AI (Audit)		Corey Maley	(Purdue)
Philosophy of Technology	A	Daniel W. Smith	(Purdue)
Philosophy of Technology	A	Murat Bac	(METU)
Mathematical Logic	A-	Dana Tulodziecki	(Purdue)
Studies in Theory Know	A-	Michael Bergman	(Purdue)

REFERENCES
