

## **Forgiveness and Reconciliation**

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(in cooperation with Heike Springhart and Markus Höfner)

### **Rationale of the Seminar**

Lived life is always shared life in which conflicts arise and interests collide. To resolve manifest and deep conflicts and to work to correct past failures is crucial for the flourishing of life. How can people, institutions, large populations, and whole nations have a fresh start in the midst of the burdens of the past? How can I -- living in a world of painful memories, atrocities, and many wounds -- be enhanced, that is to say, be opened up to pragmatic and peaceful cooperation or even to mutual trust, understanding, and support? One key strategy, or life-enhancing technique, is forgiveness. The processes of pardoning, of forgiving, and of reconciling are closely linked. The semantic field also includes mercy and peace. All these terms have a rich tradition in both religious and philosophical reflection. At the same time, the cultural alternative to forgiving is always also present: revenge is still today for both individual as well as social agents a powerful motivation for action. As can be shown in the long (and also artistic) tradition of dealing with the trope of the 'dies irae', the search for justice can come close to ideas of divine revenge. The religious imagination regarding the day of judgment might be in need of deep revisions in order to conceive the Christian religion as a religion of grace and forgiveness. So the idea and the practice of forgiveness and reconciliation as a technique of enhancing life is deeply connected with the grammar of Christian life and thought as well as social life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The seminar is designed as a master seminar moving between a variety of sub topics. Depending on the type of seminar, the weekly readings can vary between 20 and 50 pages. The first of 14 sessions will offer a general introduction, and the last one will ask students to write a review.

### **1. Biblical orientation I: "... you shall love you neighbor as yourself..." (Lev 19,18)**

Schuele, Andreas. "'Denn er ist wie Du': Zu Übersetzung und Verständnis des alttestamentlichen Liebesgebots Lev 19,18." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 113, no. 4 (2001): 515-34.

### **2. Biblical Orientation II: Forgiving and the Lord's Prayer (Matth 6, 9b-13)**

Konradt, Matthias. *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*. Neues Testament Deutsch. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 2015.

### **3. Philosophical differentiations**

Griswold, Charles L. *Forgiveness. A Philosophical Exploration*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

### **4. Reconciliation and forgiveness as a social acts**

Volf, Miroslav. *The End of Memory. Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006.

———. *Exclusion and Embrace. A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

———. "God's Forgiveness and Ours: Memory of Interrogations, Interrogation of Memory." *Anglican Theological Review* 89, no. 2 (Spr 2007): 213-25.

### **5. Forgiveness in action theory: Hannah Arendt**

Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. Charles R. Walgreen Foundation Lectures. [Chicago]: University of Chicago Press, 1958, chp. 32-34.

Bowen-Moore, Patricia. *Hannah Arendt's Philosophy of Natality*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.

O'Byrne, Anne E. *Natality and Finitude*. Studies in Continental Thought. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.

### **6. Reconciliation and forgiveness on the level of individual or social agents?**

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Ethics* [in Translated from the German.]. Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005.

Frettlöh, Magdalene L. "Vergebung Oder "Vernarbung Der Schuld"? Theologische Und Philosophische Notizen Zu Einer Frag-Wurdigen Alternative Im Gesellschaftlichen Umgang Mit Schuld." *Evangelische Theologie* 70, no. 2 (2010): 116-29.

### **7. Forgiveness inside of transitional states**

Helmick, Raymond G., and Rodney Lawrence Petersen. *Forgiveness and Reconciliation. Religion, Public Policy & Conflict Transformation*. Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001.

Shriver, Donald W. *An Ethic for Enemies. Forgiveness in Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Tutu, Desmond. *No Future without Forgiveness*. 1st ed. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

### **8. Forgiveness and a psychology/philosophy of well-being**

Toussaint, Loren L., Everett L. Worthington, and David R. Williams, eds. *Forgiveness and Health : Scientific Evidence and Theories Relating Forgiveness to better Health*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2015.

## **9. Revenge as an alternative to forgiveness**

Barton, Charles K. B. *Getting Even. Revenge as a Form of Justice*. Chicago: Open Court, 1999.

Barash, David P., and Judith Eve Lipton. *Payback Why We Retaliate, Redirect Aggression, and Take Revenge*. New York: Oxford University Press., 2011.

Murphy, Jeffrie G. *Getting Even : Forgiveness and its Limits*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

## **10. Relation between the moral act of forgiving and the legal justice and punishment**

Huber, Wolfgang. *Gerechtigkeit Und Recht. Grundlinien Christlicher Rechtsethik*. Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser / Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996, 322-345

Meireis, Torsten, and Hans-Richard Reuter, eds. *Gewalt und Gewalten. Zur Ausübung , Legitimität und Ambivalenz Rechtserhaltender Gewalt*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

Reuter, Hans-Richard. "Versöhnung Durch Strafe? Zur Kritik des Strafrechts." In *Rechtsethik in theologischer Perspektive. Studien zur Grundlegung und Konkretion*, edited by Hans-Richard Reuter, 167-83. Gütersloh: C. Kaiser / Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1996.

## **11. Dies irae – imagination in theology and art**

Chase, Robert. *Dies Irae : A Guide to Requiem Music*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 2003.

Greene, David B. *The Theology of Handel's "Messiah," Beethoven's "Credo," and Verdi's "Dies Irae" : How Listening to Sung Theology Leads to the Contemplation of God*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2012.

plus examples from music

## **12. Current philosophical debate**

Nussbaum, Martha C. *Anger and Forgiveness: Resentment, Generosity, Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.