ASEM: Forgiveness, Politics and Film
(“Political Forgiveness”)

Winter (Fridays/hybrid)

Office Hours
I will be checking in online for this class basically everyday (except, perhaps, for our “day off” weekly). I can do “office hours” via meetings with you by appointment, or on Wednesdays 12-2p. We can also talk via phone or chat online. Let me know if you’d like to arrange a time to chat.

Description
What does it mean to use a framework of “forgiveness” or “reconciliation” to address ideologies, socio-economic systems, and individual actions that have led to profound injury, conflict, injustice, and even genocide? How can one group—or one individual—find peaceful ways to come to terms with another who has damaged or destroyed members of his/her community? What does it mean for former perpetrators and oppressors to “reconcile” in meaningful ways with those they have victimized? It seems confounding. And yet the framework of reconciliation has been used, sometimes with amazing results, in places as diverse as Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the United States, in settings as small as family relationships, and as large as national conflicts. Apology, forgiveness, and reconciliation are in fact potential paths to interpersonal, social, and political healing. This course will investigate a number of philosophies and applied frameworks that have been employed as transformative and peacemaking strategies in various interpersonal, social, and political contexts. We will examine the value (and limitations) of core reconciliation concepts, analyze how they have been applied, apply them to some aspect of our own lives, and consider their possible application to ongoing problems in the world today.

Objectives
In this course students will:

- Be exposed to a variety of definitions of and approaches to apology, forgiveness and reconciliation, in a number of geographic, interpersonal, and political contexts
- Learn to distinguish between individualist and collectivist approaches to apology, forgiveness and reconciliation
- Discover how idiosyncratic cultural resources like rituals can facilitate and/or hamper forgiveness processes
- Understand some of the productive tensions between forgiveness and justice models
• Be able to differentiate between political, interpersonal, psychological, and moral or religious realms of forgiveness
• Be able to explain the benefits and limitations of forgiveness-based models to prompt individual or cultural shifts
• Gain analytical skills that will help evaluate the limits of reconciliation approaches
• Research some topic related to the course in teams, and teach peers about it
• Employ personal reflection in order to leverage insights available through course materials
• Use writing, on a daily basis, to facilitate all the above learning objectives.

Required Course Readings
The following required books are available at the DU bookstore (or, if you prefer, any online source), and the Jung is also available online via the library. It will be easier for all of us if we’re reading from the same copy, but if you prefer the online versions, please bring your e-reader or laptop to class (and not just your phone, please). We will be reading them in the order listed.

Simon Weisenthal, The Sunflower (Also available online via library.)

Carl Jung, The Undiscovered Self (Nal Publishing, 2006; also available online via library.)

Desmond Tutu, No Future Without Forgiveness (Doubleday, 1999).

Hybrid Environment (In-class and online)
This class is conducted through a combination of in-class and online activities. In this context, it is important that you understand two things up front: 1) that a good portion of work for this class will take place pre-class, so as to prepare us all for the 4-hour Friday session; and 2) mid-week online commitments from all of us of 2-6 hours per week help divide the work into reasonable chunks. Given these factors, it is critical to your success that you are realistic about being able to devote the time required for in-class or other out-of-class and online activities. You may not miss more than one session of this class, as missing one is equivalent to 2 standard 2-hour class sessions.

You will complete 9 learning modules throughout the course (one per week). Each module will typically consist of a number of activities, such as:

• assigned readings from the syllabus texts
• related weblinks or videos (usually viewed online before class)
• professor-led lessons via pre-recorded audio, video or other activity
• assignments to post comments and responses to online discussion questions
• a writing, blog or small group project assignment.

Learning modules become available to you two at a time, so you can work a little bit ahead, although mostly we will all want to be in the same material for the same week. See the course schedule and weekly checklists on the syllabus and in Canvas for specific dates.
Participation
This is not a course for students who do not want to participate and contribute to a group-learning environment. Because course necessarily has hybrid (in class and online) qualities, you will need to take the responsibility to be sure that you complete the various assignments as scheduled and, more importantly, that you stay current with the course and don't let the flexibility of doing the online parts let you fall behind.

Course Requirements

Engagement and Community Membership
This course is intellectually challenging, writing intensive, and emotionally intense. But as we explore this material together, we will also be building a supportive community of learning, in which you can integrate difficult course concepts and develop your own personal take on the topic(s) of forgiveness and reconciliation with support from the other members of the class.

Class Participation: My baseline expectation for participation includes showing up (physically or virtually, depending on the assignment) having thought about and ready to discuss the readings, participate in small group work in a cooperative learning environment, or other online or in-class activities. NOTE: Missing one day of this class is the equivalent of 2.5 days of a regular class, and will hurt your grade. You really cannot miss more than one class without seriously impacting your grade. If you have a conflict, let me know ASAP, so we can figure out a plan, if that is possible (which is not guaranteed).

Online Discussion Board: Students will reflect regularly (at least weekly, sometimes twice) on the reading via Canvas’s Discussion function. Sometimes you will be responding to specific questions for analytical and personal reflection on the reading, other times the reflection topics are un-guided. You will also regularly be in discussion with one another on Canvas via replies to threads. Due times/dates will be listed on the discussion forum and/or the learning module checklist.

Journal: This will be a private (just between you and me as professor) forum designed for more personal reflection. Sometimes we will use this space to brainstorm or draft for longer writing assignments.

Teach-Ins: In groups of 2-3, student will present some background research on one subtopic week that complements that week’s theme. Students essentially teach about 45 minutes worth of material, which should include some kind of class discussion and/or activity that enhances the learning. The days you lead a Teach-In you do not need to post a discussion entry.

Writing: ASEM courses are designed to involve a good deal of writing, but in an interdisciplinary context—meaning you are often drawing from different kinds of disciplinary frameworks (such as political science, memoir, psychology, sociology).
You will write two formal papers that result in a total of three turned-in papers: (1) a **personal essay**, written in two different stages, that draws from some of the approaches to political forgiveness you will be exposed to in order to analyze how reconciliatory processes might be relevant to a challenge in your own life; and (2) a more traditional **“compare and contrast”** essay in response to guided analytical prompts I provide. The final, expanded iteration of the personal essay will involve a synthesis of theoretical material and personal insights gained in the class. I may decide to assign a brief final oral presentation based on this sequenced assignment.

We may also do a fair amount of in-class or pre-class (online) writing, either to begin or edit an assignment, or in conjunction with course discussion. When possible, there will be opportunities to workshop and redraft papers.

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<th>Scoring Breakdown</th>
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<td>Participation (inc. attendance &amp; timeliness)</td>
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<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Journal and other online activities</td>
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<td>Teach-In</td>
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<td>Personal essay, phase 1 (5-6 pgs)</td>
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<td>Analytical paper (6-8 pgs)</td>
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**General Paper guidelines:** I will post full paper assignments once we get going. But, in general, please know that I expect your papers to be thoughtful, clear, reasoned essays in response to the assignments I will hand out. If you already know your writing skills need improvement, **please take extra time on your papers and, if possible, get some outside help by making appointments with DU’s Writing Center.** I am happy to work with you during my office hours if you are struggling, and you can “talk through” a paper, although I do not read entire paper drafts.

The grading criteria will vary according to the different written assignments, but here are some general guidelines:

**Canvas Reflections:** (Scored on a 0-5 point scale, 5 being highest score.)

1. Select one or two ideas from the reading that resonate for you, positively, negatively, or in some other way, and write approximately 1 paragraph’s worth of careful (not just stream of consciousness) response. How do these passages interest (which could be move, bother, or challenge, etc.) you in some way?
2. *Be specific* about what in the passages gets you thinking, and try to tie your thoughts to questions about or themes in the course. That may mean quoting a passage directly, or at least referring to the page numbers on which the ideas that interests you are raised.

3. Where possible, consider drawing out the connections you see between the passage(s) and other readings, films, or conversations we’ve been having in the class. In other words, *use your reading reflections to develop ideas across the readings.*

4. Edit your reflections for errors, coherence, and clarity, as sloppy writing will detract from your score.

5. I encourage you, where possible, to respond to fellow students’ posts and depending on how productive our discussions are, I may end up assigning one follow-up response to some discussions.

6. You are always expected to take the time to read everyone else’s response in any discussion forum. That may mean returning to the forum after everyone else has posted.

**Personal Essay Sequence: (Scored on regular grade scale.)**

1. Take the risk to grapple with something difficult from your life experience for the assignment. You do not have to be specific about what it is if you wish to keep that information private. (For instance, you may be writing about an abuse experience, but you don’t have to specify what kind of abuse.)

2. Carefully answer each of the question prompts given.

3. Grapple with questions, confusions and ideas that come up; these will be useful for class discussion later. (Remind me to talk about what “grappling” is.)

4. For Phase Two, really consider how the frameworks we’ve been exposed to might shed light on your dilemma and/or experience, as well as where those frameworks might be limited.

**Analytical Paper: (Scored on regular grade scale.)**

1. Do you have a *thesis* – that is, a central assertion, argument or analytical question up front according to which the rest of the essay is organized?

2. Do you use *concrete evidence* from the readings or class material to support your thesis? Have you engaged directly, not just in a vague way, with the relevant readings?

3. Have you written *clear transitions* that lead the reader from one idea to the next?

4. Did you *proofread* your work for typos and grammar?

5. Did you push yourself to *think* carefully and critically – not just throw out a sloppy, impressionistic, last-minute document that you expect at least a B on? (You won’t get it.)

6. Is there a real *conclusion* in the paper that summarizes what you’ve done and offers any relevant last thoughts?
Late papers and missing assignments: Work uploaded late will lose 1/3 grade per day. Work not uploaded at all will receive a minus grade, which then will be averaged in with your other grades. If you face a legitimate emergency, contact me beforehand and perhaps an extension can be arranged.

Classroom etiquette

- If you are disruptive in class (or online), I reserve the right to dismiss you immediately. (Ringing cell phones, incidentally, are disruptive; turn them off.)
- The class may raise provocative and/or emotional issues for some of us; please respect that we come from different perspectives and always avoid personal attacks when making a point.
- It is important that we respect a safe climate for debate and discussion. That also means taking the time to listen carefully to one another.
- Whenever possible, use evidence from the course material to make an argument or ask a question. This will enhance your credibility, and factor into your final grade.
- Try not to interrupt each other during discussion. In small groups, you may want to select a discussion facilitator to make sure that everyone who wants to has a chance to speak.
- If you tend to dominate discussion and have a lot to say, do hold back sometimes so that other people have a chance to jump in. Likewise, if you tend to be quiet, push yourself to engage more actively than you are used to doing. It's all good for intellectual growth.

Students with Disabilities

I encourage students with disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury and attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, or other psychiatric disabilities, to see me within the first two weeks of class so that necessary accommodations can be made to facilitate the learning experience. See me either after class or during my office hours. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit the relevant letter from Disability Services Program early in the semester so that your needs may be addressed. For more information about disability services at DU, go to http://www.du.edu/disability/.
Course Schedule
*subject to change, with notice

Part 1: History, Psychology and Memory

**Week 1: Dilemmas at the End of Time**

**NOTE:** Reading Wiesenthal’s*The Sunflower* (see below) before class on 1/9 is a requirement.

W, January 7 (pre-class)
- Read class syllabus and expectations (via Canvas).
- Post personal introduction to Canvas.
- Read *The Sunflower*, Part 1 (the story itself).

Th, January 8 (pre-class)
- Post to Discussion Board Prompt by 6 p.m.

F, January 9 (class)
- Class introduction.
- Student teach-in sign-up sheet.
- Discuss the following essays from Part 2: Alkalaj, Améry, Bejski, Berger, Brown, Cargas, Dalai Lama, Fisher, Fleischner, Fox, Goulden, Hertzberg, Hollis, Kushner, Langer, Ozick, Praeger, Pran, Speer, and Wu.
- Go over Personal Reflection Paper.

**Week 2: Forgiving the Unforgivable**
(abbreviated week)

T, January 13
- Personal Reflection Paper due by noon, via Canvas upload.

W, January 14
- Canvas: Voices from the Holocaust Archives assignment, due by Thursday, 10pm. Response post (to classmate) by class on Friday.

F, January 16
- Substitute professor Jing Sun.
- Watch and discuss documentary, *Forgiving Dr. Mengele*.
- **Student teach-in** on WWII apology.
**Week 3: Carl Jung and the Human Shadow**

Before Tuesday, watch:
- Canvas: Prof. Wadsworth Jung Intro/Orientation comments (video)

W, January 21
- *The Undiscovered Self*, chapters 1-3.
- Canvas discussion prompt, due by Thursday, 10 a.m.

F, January 23
- *The Undiscovered Self*, chapters 4-7.
  - Jung explication and discussion
  - Student teach-in on Jung’s *The Red Book*.
  - In-class exercise “Finding Your Own Shadows”
  - Analytical paper assignment, due Sunday, February 8.

**Week 4: Shadows, Trauma, and Memory**

T, January 27
- Aptheker, excerpts from *Intimate Politics*
- Canvas: Watch video clip of Bettina Aptheker introducing her book
- Prompted journal post due by Wednesday, midnight.

Th, January 29
- Judith Herman, “A Forgotten History.”
- Canvas discussion by Thursday 6 p.m.

F, January 30
- Readings from Caruth, and Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart from *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*
- Discussion of week’s readings
- Student teach-in on post-traumatic stress and memory.
- In-class exercise (NPR, This American Life, *Maul in the Family*)
- Possible visit from Brenda Baumgardner, licensed counselor and survivor.

**Part 2: The Problematics of Social and Political Apology**

**Week 5: Trauma and Collective Memory: Australia’s Stolen Generations**

Note: See assigned sections for Friday’s reading.

T, February 3
- Martha Minow, “Memory and Hate”
- Journal prompt
Week 5, continued
Th, February 5
☑ Martha Minow, “Breaking the Cycles of Hatred” and TBA [Ramona Beltran]
☑ Canvas discussion

F, February 6
Discussion
Nicholas Tavuchis, Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation (Stanford University Press, 1993), sections.
Student teach-in on Australia’s Stolen Generations and reconciliation process. Watch and discuss Kevin Rudd’s apology to Australia’s Stolen Generations Possible visit from Paula Palmer.

Sun, February 8
☑ Analytical Paper upload due by noon.

Week 6: Collective Memory and Responsible History: The Sand Creek Massacre
T, February 10
☑ Canvas discussion

Th, February 12
☑ DU John Evans report, pp. iii-14
☑ Journal post

F, February 13
☑ John Evans Report (sections assigned to groups).
☑ All: Girma Negash, “The Problematic of Political Apology” Discussion
Viewing of Governor Hickenlooper’s Apology for the Sand Creek Massacre. Panel discussion with descendants.

Week 7: Mourning and Moving Forward: Post-Genocide Rwanda
T, February 17:
☑ Rwanda genocide BBC backgrounder
☑ Lindsey Hilsum, The Rainy Season, Granta 125
☑ Journal entry

Th, February 19:
☑ Readings on New York Times coverage of Pieter Hugo’s “Portraits of Reconciliation”
☑ Canvas discussion
Friday, February 20:

- **Student teach-in** on post-genocide Rwanda or Rwandan colonial history
  - Girma Negash, “Mourning Rwanda,” and Minow, “Between Nations and Between Intimates”?

View and discuss documentary, *In the Tall Grass* (Penrose KTD182.9)
- Discussion forum on the film and readings.
- Final paper assigned.

**Week 8: South Africa’s Truth & Reconciliation Process**

**T, February 24**
- Desmond Tutu, Chs 1-8
- Journal entry

**Th, February 26**
- Desmond Tutu, Chs 9-12
  - Online: Watch video segment on South Africa and Nelson Mandela
  - Canvas discussion

**F, February 27**
- Desmond Tutu, end
  - **Student teach-in** on Desmond Tutu or South Africa post-Apartheid
  - Discuss No Future without Forgiveness, Chs. 8-end
  - Watch and discuss film: *Long Night’s Journey into Day*

**Week 9: Breaking Cycles: Interpersonal Psychology Model**

**T, March 3**
- Everett L. Worthington, Jr., *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Theory and Application*, Chs. 1-3
- Journal entry

**Th, March 5**
- Worthington, 8-10
- Canvas discussion

**F, March 6**
- Worthington, 12 and 14
- TaNahesi Coates, “The Case for Reparations.”
  - Discussion
  - Final paper ideas sharing.
  - Final paper due Sunday, March 15.