

# ***POLS 60214 - The Politics of Reconciliation***

Professor Daniel Philpott

Office Hours: 2034 Nanovic Hall; Mon 3:30-5:00 pm; Tues 2:30-4:00 pm; or by appointment

E-mail: Philpott.1@nd.edu

## Course Description

Restoration of broken relationships through acknowledgment, repentance, and forgiveness: These practices of reconciliation are familiar in personal relationships. But might they also apply to political orders? Over the past decade, philosophers, theologians, politicians, lawyers, and religious leaders have come to think so. And sundry countries making the transition to peace from war and to democracy from communism, right-wing dictatorships and apartheid have sought to put the concept of reconciliation into practice. But what is reconciliation? Does it really belong in politics? Can it be justified? On what grounds? Philosophical? Theological? Practical? Does it work, for that matter? Does it sacrifice important principles like justice? What other dilemmas does it invoke? These are our questions as we explore the politics of reconciliation.

## Course Objectives

1. To gain a theoretical and moral grasp of reconciliation and arguments for and against it.
2. To analyze and evaluate actual countries' experiences of transitional justice.
3. To explore a chosen angle of reconciliation through an extended paper.
4. To develop speaking skills through an oral presentation.

## Course Readings

- Following each reading is a symbol that indicates mode of access.
  - S = Sakai
  - HBS = Hammes Bookstore on campus
  - HLR = Hesburgh Library Reserve Room
  - HLO = Hesburgh Library Online
- The following books can be purchased at the Hammes Bookstore on or checked out in the Hesburgh Library Reserve Room

- Daniel Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace: An Ethic of Political Reconciliation*
- Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men*
- Simon Wiesenthal, *The Sunflower*
- Catherine Lu, *Justice and Reconciliation in World Politics*
- Other readings are available through *Sakai*

### Course Requirements

- One 6-8 pp. paper due in class on November 4<sup>th</sup> (25%)
- Class participation – contribution to discussion, periodic short assignments (20%)
- Presentation of term paper (25%)
- Final term paper of 15-20 pp. (30%)

### The First Paper

Your first paper will be an argumentative piece based upon the reading for the course up through November 4<sup>th</sup>, the day on which it is due. Its purpose is to encourage you to reflect carefully on what you have read up to this point in the course. The basic task is to formulate and carry out an argument on a question of your choice that arises in the reading for the course. You can take issue with one of the author's arguments, side with one author against another, agree with an author but extend his or her argument, engage a question of your own in a way that uses one or more of the authors as support, or use the literature in any way that you like – as long as the paper revolves around a central argument that answers some genuinely controversial question. The paper ought to have a clear, identifiable, thesis, take up and answer plausible counterarguments, and offer strong evidence and supporting reasons for your view in addition to other standard qualities of any good paper. Although you may draw from outside knowledge, the paper requires no outside research. Rather, it requires a central focus on one or more readings from the course. It should be 6 to 8 pages and use standard 12-point font, 1" margins, double spacing, and the like. Please format citations according to a standard protocol; I recommend, but do not require, the Chicago Manual of Style. Please append a bibliography of works used.

### The Term Paper

The final project is to write an analytical paper that makes an argument about an interesting issue regarding the politics of reconciliation. In addition, you will present the argument to the other students in an oral presentation. The purpose of the assignment is to challenge you to reflect deeply on a particular facet of reconciliation that interests you, to think critically about it, to learn about a particular subject in depth, and to develop your skills in public speaking.

The subject matter is wide open, as long as it relates directly to reconciliation in politics. You could write a philosophically or theologically oriented paper, look closely at a case study, write about one particular facet of reconciliation like forgiveness or punishment, or look critically at a work of art or literature. You may well write about a subject that pertains to your own country.

Any good paper, though, will involve 1) an analytical question that is both important and controversial; 2) a carefully laid out thesis and argument that answers that question convincingly; 3) evidence, supporting data, or other information appropriate to the subject matter of the paper. You are expected to do background research for your paper, involving at least five sources, at least of three of which must not appear exclusively on the internet.

Here are some broad suggestions for topics:

- Evaluate a particular country's approach to past injustices (involving trials, truth commissions, or some combination of measures), making an argument about its strengths and weaknesses, justice or injustice. Exs: South Africa, Rwanda, Germany after communism or Nazism (or a comparison between the two – which would be fascinating!), Northern Ireland, Poland, East Timor, Chile, Brazil, Guatemala, El Salvador, some episode in U.S. history, and many others. Or, make a comparison between two countries, showing that one approach worked better than another.
- Make an argument about a philosophical or theological issue – the bases of punishment, forgiveness, reparations, or acknowledgment, the relationship of divine action to human or political action, or some other foundational question. Or, offer a solution to a conceptual problem like the compatibility of punishment and forgiveness.
- Make an argument about an “applied” issue, but not necessarily with reference to a single case or two cases. For instance, is it necessary or is it justified to give amnesty to war criminals in order to secure a regime transition or a peace agreement? Or, in terms of actual institutions and practices, is it possible to conduct both punishment and forgiveness? How so?
- Make an argument that is not primarily about morality or justice, but is rather an empirical one about why countries adopt the approaches to

transitional justice that they do. You might ask, for instance: Why do some countries conduct trials, others truth commissions, and others a combination of the two? Is it solely explainable by power dynamics? Or does culture matter? Or do international institutions like the U.N. and the International Criminal Court explain what happens?

- Do a critical review of a work of art or literature that engages issues of reconciliation. Exs.: the film *Unforgiven*, Wole Soyinka's *The Burden of Memory*, *The Muse of Forgiveness*, Ariel Dorfman's play about Chile, *Death of the Maiden*, the film about East Germany, *The Lives of Others*, and many others.

You are to hand in your topic and a short bibliography of at least three works by the class of October 14<sup>th</sup>. I strongly urge you to consult me about it both before this date and after this date and before your presentation, and to begin thinking about and researching it as early as possible. I recommend (but do not require) that you have a draft of your paper done by the date of your presentation. In your presentation, you will present your argument to the class. You will have exactly 20 minutes. As in your paper, you will make clear what your question and your central arguments are and then proceed to defend your case using supporting reasons and evidence. You are welcome to use any audio-visual materials that you like, including power point, videos, etc., but certainly will not be downgraded for not using them. If you do use them, then they must be well integrated. Videos should not take up more than 2 minutes of the presentation in total. You will be graded primarily on clarity, quality of argument, effective use of time, effective introduction and conclusion, and the like. You may find it helpful to think of your classmates as a jury or a board of trustees to whom you are making a presentation – it is your job to persuade them.

After your presentation, I will give you a grade on it as well as feedback, which you can use as you revise your final paper. The final paper will be due in my mailbox in Nanovic Hall 2060 on Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. Length should be between 15 and 20 pages with the normal double spacing, 12-point font, 1” margins, etc. All sources must be cited according to a standard citation method. I recommend but do not require that you use the format of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Please also attach a bibliography to your paper.

## Resources

I use the online resource *Sakai* to keep track of your grades and to post assignments, helpful resources, and other items. You can access it through Inside ND.

One of these resources is a document called “What Makes For An A Paper and Presentation.” This is a summary of the criteria that I use for grading papers and presentations. I strongly advise you to consult it.

I have posted on Sakai another document for your interest, “One Professor’s Guide To Studying International Relations and Peace Studies From a Catholic Perspective,” which is a statement of my philosophy on teaching in a Catholic university. It is written primarily for undergraduates, but you might nevertheless find it of interest.

Finally, a quick guide to the protocol of the *Chicago Manual of Style* can be found at [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

## Policies

- 1) *Attendance* is required for every class. Each unexcused absence results in a reduction of 1 point in your final grade on a scale of 100. Excused absences are granted in the case of 1) death or serious crisis in the family; 2) a preventative illness; 3) a university-approved event (documented). Other situations are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 2) *Late papers* are penalized 5 points (on a scale of 100) of ½ grade per day, up to a maximum penalty of 20 points (or two grades). Note that you have every incentive to turn in a paper no matter how late. It’s much better to lose points than to receive a zero for not having turned anything in.
- 3) *Cheating* of any kind carries significant penalties. The course honors the University’s Honor Code: see <http://honorcode.nd.edu/the-honor-code>. In choosing to take this course you are bound by the pledge: “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty.” Graduate students are bound by the Graduate School's policies on academic integrity which are summarized here: [https://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/76118/bulletin\\_2012\\_2013.pdf](https://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/76118/bulletin_2012_2013.pdf)
- 4) Eating and uses of electronic devices, including laptops and smart phones, are prohibited.

## Class Sessions

### Week One – Introduction (September 2<sup>nd</sup>)

#### Film:

- *Long Night's Journey Into Day* (S, HLR)

### Week Two – On the Nature and Wounds of Political Injustice (September 9<sup>th</sup>)

#### Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 30-47 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Browning, Christopher, *Ordinary Men*, entire (HBS, HLR).

### Week Three – Reconciliation and Its Critics (September 16<sup>th</sup>)

#### Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 48-73 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Murphy, Colleen, *A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation*, pp. 1-38 (S).
- Murphy, Colleen, *The Conceptual Foundations of Transitional Justice*, 1-37, 83-118 (S).
- Ash, Timothy Garton, "True Confessions," pp. 33-38 (S).
- Olsen, Tricia D., Leigh A Payne, and Andrew G. Reiter, *Transitional Justice in Balance*, pp. 1-28, 97-108 (S).

### Week Four – Religion and Reconciliation (September 23<sup>rd</sup>)

#### Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 97-167 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Van Antwerpen, Jonathan, "Reconciliation as Heterodoxy," 77-117 (S).
- Katongole, Emmanuel, *The Sacrifice of Africa*, 1-81, 148-197 (S).

### Week Five - Acknowledgment and Truth Telling (September 30<sup>th</sup>)

#### Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 171-191 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Hayner, Priscilla, *Unspeakable Truths*, pp. 1-44 (S).

- Krog, Antje, *Country of My Skull*, pp. 318-340 (S).
- Havel, Vaclav, “The Power of the Powerless,” 23-96 (S).
- Olsen, Tricia D., Leigh A Payne, and Andrew G. Reiter, *Transitional Justice in Balance*, pp. 131-151 (S).

Week Six – Punishment  
(October 7<sup>th</sup>)

Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 207-250 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Johansen, Robert, “Peace and Justice? The Contribution of International Judicial Processes to Peacebuilding,” pp. 1-51 (S).
- Van Ness, Daniel, “Accountability,” pp. 118-137 (S).
- Clark, Philip, *The Gacaca Courts, Post-Genocide Justice, and Reconciliation in Rwanda: Justice Without Lawyers*, pp. 1-28, 342-355 (S).

Week Seven - Amnesty  
(October 14<sup>th</sup>)

Readings:

- Mallinder, Louise, “Amnesties in the Pursuit of Reconciliation, Peacebuilding, and Restorative Justice,” pp. 138-173 (S).
- Snyder, Jack, and Leslie Vinjamuri, “Trials and Errors,” pp. 5-44 (S).
- Cobban, Helena, *Amnesty After Atrocity? Healing Nations After Genocide and War Crimes*, pp. 1-24, 136-195 (S).
- Mark Freeman, *Necessary Evils, Amnesties and the Search for Justice*, pp. 1-109 (HLO).

**Term Paper Topic and Short Bibliography Due Today**

**\*\* Fall Break \*\***

Week Eight – Reparations  
(October 28<sup>th</sup>)

Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 191-198 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Waldron, Jeremy, “Superseding Historical Injustice,” pp. 4-28 (S).
- De Grieff, Pablo, “Justice and Reparations,” pp. 451-478 (S).
- Coates, Ta-Nehisi, “The Case for Reparations,” 63 pp (S).

Week Nine – Apology  
(November 4<sup>th</sup>)

Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 198-206 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Lind, Jennifer, *Sorry States*, pp. 1-100, 179-198 (S).
- Art, David, *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria*, pp. 1-144 (S).

**Short paper due today**

Week Ten – Forgiveness  
(November 11<sup>th</sup>)

Readings:

- Philpott, Daniel, *Just and Unjust Peace*, pp. 251-285 (HLO, HBS, HLR).
- Wiesenthal, Simon, *The Sunflower*, pp. 3-98, 170-171, 208-219, 266- 270, and any other selections of interest (HBS, HLR).
- Pope, Stephen J., “The Role of Forgiveness in Reconciliation and Restorative Justice: A Christian Theological Perspective,” pp. 174-196 (S).
- Refugee Law Project, *Forgiveness: Unveiling an Asset for Peacebuilding* (S).
- Brudholm, Thomas, “On the Advocacy of Forgiveness after Mass Atrocities,” pp. 124-153 (S).

Week Eleven – Traditional Mechanisms With A Focus on Fambul Tok  
(November 18<sup>th</sup>)

Readings:

- Braithwaite, John, “Traditional Justice,” pp. 214-239 (S).

Week Twelve – Book Discussion  
(November 25<sup>th</sup>)

Readings:

- Lu, Catherine, *Justice and Reconciliation in World Politics* (HLO, HBS).



Week Thirteen – Presentations  
(December 2<sup>nd</sup>)

Week Fourteen – Presentations  
(December 9<sup>th</sup>)

**Final Paper Due Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 pm in Professor  
Philpott's mailbox in 2060 Nanovic Hall**