

## **The Religious in the Advocacy of Forgiveness After Mass Atrocity**

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Forgiveness, according to the philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch, died in the Nazi extermination camps. None the less, the question whether forgiveness is possible, permissible or admirable as a response to genocide and other crimes against humanity has continued to attract scholarly as well as popular attention. In his lecture, Brudholm wants to consider what is – and what is the role – of “the religious” in discourses about forgiveness after mass atrocity? In what ways – if at all – are post-atrocity discourses on forgiveness an example of the way in which the religious appears in responses to mass atrocity? Can a belief in the possibility and permissibility of forgiveness after mass atrocity only be sustained with some kind of religious underpinning? What kind of possible pitfalls and what range of possibilities should we be aware of in relation to what one might for short call “faith-based” forgiveness-advocacy after mass atrocity?

Thomas Brudholm has written on philosophical issues arising from debates about human rights, transitional justice, commemoration and historiography. In 2005 Brudholm received his PhD degree in philosophy with the dissertation *Resentment's Virtue: Jean Améry and the Morality of Unforgiving and Unreconciled Victims of Mass Atrocity*. Brudholm is currently working on the research project “Crimes Crying Out to Heaven: A Philosophical Exploration of the Religious in Responses to Mass Atrocity.” He is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Human Rights and Reviews Editor for *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*. Brudholm’s publications include “Surveying a Gap: A Philosophical Perspective on Historians’ Responses to Discourses on the ‘Bystanders’” (*Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*, Vol. 11, No. 3); “Revisiting Resentments: Jean Améry and the Dark Side of Forgiveness and Reconciliation”(Journal of Human Rights, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2006) and “Conviction and Critique: Addressing the Skeptic”(In K. Hastrup, (ed.): *Human Rights on Common Grounds*, Kluwer 2001). A revised version of the Ph.D. will be forthcoming with Temple University Press (2007).