What does it mean to forgive someone? Is it simply a matter of regulating one's feelings toward a wrongdoer, or something more? Are certain kinds of wrongdoers, like genocidal dictators, *undeserving* of forgiveness? Can victims of systemic injustice forgive the institutions that wronged them? Should they?

These and several other questions remain topics of lively debate, both in the philosophical literature and in broader culture. This volume, edited by Brandon Warmke, Dana Kay Nelkin, and Michael McKenna, brings together twelve papers on forgiveness from leading moral philosophers, each seeking to address questions like the above.

The first three contributions take forgiveness to involve withdrawing blaming attitudes and examine existing accounts of these attitudes and/or provide a novel account. David Shoemaker ("The Forgiven") suggests that we replace our typical way of theorizing about forgiveness—which focuses on what it takes to *forgive*—with what he deems a more fruitful approach: focusing on what it takes to *be forgiven*. Theorizing this way, he proposes an alternative account to the prevailing view that forgiveness involves withdrawing resentment. Glenn Pettigrove ("Fitting Attitudes and Forgiveness") raises worries for those who use fitting attitude theories of value to defend resentment as a fitting response to wrongdoing and hence the attitude withdrawn in forgiveness. Finally, Derk Pereboom ("Forgiveness as a Renunciation of Moral Protest") identifies a non-emotional variety of moral protest as the blaming attitude withdrawn in forgiveness, offering an account of forgiveness he deems compatible with hard determinism.

The next two contributions engage with norm-changing accounts of forgiveness, per which forgiveness changes how the victim and the wrongdoer ought to treat each other. Ishtiyaque Haji ("Forgiveness and the Freedom to Do Otherwise") defends the controversial conclusion that norm-changing accounts implicitly assume that the wrongdoer is free to do otherwise. Meanwhile, Richard Swinburne ("Forgiveness as a Performative Utterance") defends a norm-changing account that he uses to explicate the Christian account of divine forgiveness through Christ's atonement.

Next, Angela Smith ("Institutional Apologies and Forgiveness") offers a way to understand apologies from institutions, and explains what forgiving an institution entails. The next three contributions address forgiving serious wrongdoings and heinous evils. Eleonore Stump ("*The Sunflower:* Guilt, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation) defends the strong conclusion that forgiving wrongdoers—even perpetrators of heinous evils like the Holocaust—is *obligatory*, but reconciling with wrongdoers is *not* obligatory. Eve Garrard and David McNaughton ("Forgiving Evil") argue for the moral permissibility—but not the obligatoriness—of forgiving evildoers. Lastly, Margaret Holmgren ("Forgiveness, Self-Respect, and Humility") discusses how the virtues of self-respect and humility can enable a victim to forgive serious wrongdoing, even when the wrongdoer remains unrepentant.

The last three contributions discuss forgiveness from the perspectives of different normative theories. Christine Swanton ("Forgiveness as a Virtue of Universal Love") relies on Kant and Aristotle to offer an account of the *virtue* of forgiveness. Lucy Allais ("Frailty and Forgiveness: Forgiveness for Humans"), uses Kant's account of agency and Strawson's account of reactive attitudes to offer an account of the forgiver's change of heart in forgiving, which she contends solves a famous paradox about forgiveness. Finally, departing from the trend of non-

consequentialist accounts of forgiveness, Richard Arneson ("Forgiveness and Consequences") discusses forgiveness and its norms from an act-consequentialist perspective.

I will briefly discuss just one of these contributions: Angela Smith's engaging essay "Institutional Apologies and Forgiveness".

Institutional apologies are rather peculiar. Suppose a university apologizes to the African American community for its historical involvement with slavery two centuries earlier. Can we make sense of, as Smith puts it, "one group of people apologizing on behalf of another group of people to a third group of people for wrongs…done to a fourth group of people?" (p. 146). Smith thinks so, and goes on to explain why.

She first characterizes sincere *interpersonal* apology; it involves accepting responsibility for wronging another moral being, unequivocally renouncing one's wrongdoing, expressing genuine remorse, and communicating one's willingness to make amends. If forgiveness involves withdrawing resentment and/or other attitudes of moral protest, sincere apologies like these offer victims moral reasons to forgive.

If interpersonal apology and forgiveness are intelligible in this way, can't we offer an analogous account of *institutional* apology and forgiveness? One might hesitate to say yes. For one, it is not clear that institutions are *moral agents*, capable of bearing blame and moral responsibility. Even if they are moral agents, it is not clear why *present-day* members of institutions should apologize for the actions of *past* members.

In response, Smith characterizes institutions as "functionally-defined, temporally-extended entities whose continued existence does not depend on the continued mortal existence of their individual representatives" and are "characterized by shared beliefs, goals, and values" (p. 155). Institutions also have mechanisms that allow for members to arrive at decisions that can be

meaningfully spoken of as the *institution's* decisions. They also have spokespeople whose speech acts can be attributed to the institution as a whole. All of this, Smith says, suggests that institutions can be treated as moral agents in their own right, capable of bearing moral responsibility for their actions.

If this is so, why can't institutions issue sincere apologies for their past wrongdoings through their spokespeople? Perhaps one might object that institutions cannot *feel* remorse and hence cannot *sincerely* apologize. In response, Smith suggests that emotions play a less important role in institutional apologies; what matters is "the forthright acknowledgment of moral wrongdoing and the affirmation of the human dignity and legitimate feelings" of victims (p.164). And if institutions can issue sincere apologies, then such apologies give their victims moral reasons to withdraw resentment or other attitudes of moral protest and thereby forgive, although she admits that "other sincere efforts at atonement, including efforts of commemoration and memorialization" (p. 170) may also be necessary before victims forgive. Hence, she concludes, institutional apology and forgiveness are morally and conceptually intelligible.

I find Smith's case for the intelligibility of institutional apologies compelling, because she makes the case for treating institutions as moral agents in their own right, capable of bearing moral responsibility and performing acts like sincere apology. But her case for the intelligibility of institutional forgiveness is far less compelling, because she doesn't explain why the victimized groups that are typically recipients of these apologies should *also* be deemed moral agents in their own right, capable of acts like accepting apologies and forgiving.

Let me elaborate. Suppose a university issues an apology to the African American community for its historical ties to slavery. Smith's account helps make sense of how the university can do so; *qua* institution, it has procedures to arrive at the collective decision to apologize, as well

as spokespeople who represent its members and can apologize on behalf of them. But groups like the African American community are unincorporated collectives, lacking procedures to make collective decisions or de facto representatives to accept apologies and forgive the university on behalf of all its members.

So, to make the notion of institutional forgiveness intelligible, Smith needs a further account of how unincorporated groups, who are often the addressees of institutional apologies, can accept these apologies and extend forgiveness on behalf of their members. Perhaps such an account could be provided. Or perhaps not. Perhaps things are such that, while individual victims can forgive institutions that wronged them and institutions can forgive other institutions that wronged them, unincorporated groups cannot collectively forgive offending institutions. In such a scenario, institutional apologies would still retain one of the functions that Smith attributes to them; they would serve as unequivocal acknowledgments of collective wrongdoing and re-affirmations of the victimized group members as morally significant persons. But they would not, as Smith puts it, "lay the groundwork for institutional forgiveness and reconciliation," (p. 147). An upshot of this sort of skepticism about institutional forgiveness is that not all sincere apologies seek forgiveness; some apologies, like institutional apologies to unincorporated groups, seek only to publicly acknowledge and unequivocally renounce past wrongdoing.

Nevertheless, Smith's essay is an important contribution, both to the literature on forgiveness and the literature on institutions, and I hope it motivates further discussion on the issues it discusses. Furthermore, my failure to comment on the eleven other essays in this volume shouldn't be deemed a slight on their quality or the contribution they make to the existing literature. Indeed, a common theme across several contributions involves posing challenges to prevalent ways of thinking about forgiveness, blame, and related attitudes, as well as proposing novel,

nonstandard accounts of these phenomena. The contributions from Shoemaker, Pettigrove, Haji, Swanton, and Arneson deserve particular mention in this regard. I also commend the editors for including a helpful introduction that offers a quick overview of the current debates about forgiveness and its norms, given that the other contributions often presuppose some knowledge of those issues.

All in all, I highly recommend this volume to those interested in the ethics of forgiveness and in related issues to do with free will, moral responsibility, emotion, the ethics of institutions, and the philosophy of religion.

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