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Remorse and Forgiveness: A Contemporary Political Discussion

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ABSTRACT The theme of 'forgiveness in politics' has come to occupy considerable attention in recent times. Yet politics is seen as one of the most difficult spheres for ideas relating to forgiveness to flourish. Dubbed as a private virtue with religious moorings, it has nonetheless proven to be useful in countries recovering from conflict, particularly when the oppressors and the victims share the same territory and a common destiny. This paper seeks to make a case for forgiveness and apology in public affairs drawing on the contributions of the main exponents of forgiveness in the contemporary world, even as it identifies some of the moral and practical difficulties of its operationalisation.