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War, Forced Migration, and the Politics of Religious Diversity

Wayne P. te Brake

Today we are acutely aware of the many ways that the flows of migration caused by the disruptions of civil and international war can roil the politics of both citizenship and religious diversity. From the Balkan Wars in the 1990s through the “terrorist” attacks on New York, Washington, D.C., Madrid, and London, and the ongoing civil wars in Afghanistan, Syria, and Yemen, the agents of violent political conflict have recurrently invoked religious identities to mark their enemies as well as their allies. In doing so, they have underscored the entanglement of religious differences with the forced migrations that their conflicts have occasioned. While such clusters of religious conflict are relatively rare historically, they are not unprecedented.

In the century and a half following Martin Luther’s challenge to the Latin Christian Church in 1517, a variety of political actors who had ready access to violent means—kings, princes, magistrates, militia leaders, or warlords—responded to the “problems” associated with the transnational process of religious pluralization, which we often label “The Reformation,” by deploying violence and unleashing the coordinated destruction of war. In my recent work on *Religious War and Religious Peace in Early Modern Europe* (2017), I identified six major clusters of religious war in the period 1529 to 1651 as well as six major episodes of forced migration between 1527 and the end of the seventeenth century.

This European historical record is valuable both because it is well documented and because we know how the stories end. My concern as a social and political historian has been to tell these stories of religious conflict and social disruption, correctly and dispassionately, paying close attention to getting the details right—that is, describing what actually happened during Europe’s Age of Religious War and identifying, to the extent possible, the full range of historical actors who

made it happen. At the same time, as a social scientist, I have tried to discern recurrent patterns and to explain how and why these patterns unfolded the way they did. To that end, I have identified a limited number of mechanisms that recurrently combined to move broader processes of historical change with a limited range of outcomes.¹ Here I will focus on demonstrating a rhetorical and analytic strategy for understanding recurrent historical phenomena.

While most of Europe’s infamous religious wars ended with political compromises that validated religious diversity, decisive military victories, which were relatively few and generally short-lived, recurrently resulted in deep religious polarization and massive social dislocations, including forced migrations. This chapter reexamines Europe’s bitter experience of religious war and forced migration, focusing on three recurrent developments: (1) the dislocation of refugees in the context of religious strife; (2) the accommodation of newcomers in their places of refuge; and (3) the survival of dissidents who were not able or willing to seek refuge elsewhere. Altogether, these three developments provide valuable insights into the recurrently fraught relationship

Table 1.1 The Principal Clusters of Religious War in Early Modern Europe

War	Inclusive Dates	Military Outcome or Peace Settlement
Kappel Wars (Swiss Confederation)	1529–31	National Peace (<i>Landfrieden</i>) of Kappel (1529), Second National Peace of Kappel (1531)
Schmalkaldic Wars (Holy Roman Empire)	1545–55	Peace of Nürnberg (1532), Augsburg Interim (1548), Treaty of Passau (1552), Religious Peace (<i>Religionsfriede</i>) of Augsburg (1555)
Civil/Religious Wars (France)	1562–1629	Separate Edicts ended each of the nine wars, starting with the Edict of Amboise (1563); the most successful was the Edict of Nantes (1598)
Eighty Years War (Low Countries)	1568–1648	The Pacification of Ghent (1576), Peace of Religion (1578), Twelve Year Truce (1609–21), and the (first) Treaty of Münster, which was part of the Peace of Westphalia (1648)
Thirty Years War (Holy Roman Empire)	1618–48	The Peace of Prague (1635); the Treaty of Osnabrück and the (second) Treaty of Münster, which were part of the Peace of Westphalia (1648)
British Civil Wars (Scotland, Ireland, and England)	1638–51	No formal settlement; war ended in England with the capture, trial, and execution of Charles I (1649); war ended in Ireland and Scotland with Cromwell’s military campaigns (1649–51); monarchy restored in 1660

Source: Created by Wayne P. te Brake.

between religious conflict and the production/accommodation/survival of vulnerable religious populations.

First, let me introduce the broad outlines of the historical context.² Table 1.1 identifies the six principal clusters of religious war in the post-Reformation era and indicates how and when they ended.

To make a very long story short, let me suggest that the history of these wars has taught me that religious peace is always possible, even after the most destructive wars, though ending war can be very hard work. Negotiated *religious* settlements (as in the Swiss, German, and French cases) could be very helpful, but they quite readily failed if they were not accompanied by the demilitarization of the religious parties to the conflict. Negotiated *political* settlements (as in the Eighty Years War) and even *decisive military victories* (as in the British Monarchies) that did not entail religious agreements could also make religious peace possible, as long as they brought a durable end to the coordinated destruction of war. What these diverse settlements had in common, then, was something we might call *grudging consent*, in the sense that the forces in conflict agreed, reluctantly in all cases, that more war would be fruitless—that the ongoing coordinated destruction of war was the problem, not the solution to the problem of religious pluralization.

Table 1.2 Forced Migrations in Early Modern Europe

Original Location	Time frame	Refugee populations	Destinations
Swiss Confederation (Zürich, Bern, St. Gallen)	Sixteenth to eighteenth centuries	Anabaptists	Moravia, the Low Countries, North America
Southern Netherlands	Beginning in the 1560s, but especially after 1585	Anabaptists, Calvinists	Emden, Wesel, London, United Provinces
Bohemia	After 1620	Brethren, Utraquists, Lutherans, Calvinists	Saxony, Poland, Hungary, United Provinces, Sweden
Ireland (east of the Shannon River)	1650s	Catholics	Western province of Connaught
France	Beginning in the 1660s, but especially after 1685	Calvinists (Huguenots)	Switzerland, Rhineland Germany, the Dutch Republic, England, Ireland, North America
Salzburg (Prince-Bishopric)	The 1680s and the 1730s	Lutherans	Adjacent territories. Saxony, Prussian Lithuania, North America

Source: Created by Wayne P. te Brake.

Though I have not made a systematic study of forced migrations, I offer this summary of the principal flows of migration that I covered in my recent work (Table 1.2). This historical record, while less familiar to most of us, is nevertheless very instructive when juxtaposed with the more familiar record of approximately 130 years of episodic religious war.

Today we are likely to associate massive flows of religious refugees with dislocations and upheavals caused by civil and international warfare; this was also the case in the forced migrations within and from the Southern Netherlands, Bohemia, and Ireland (in the middle of my list). Each of these was predicated on the authoritarian claims of recently “victorious” rulers—the Spanish Habsburgs following their reconquest of the provinces and cities of the Southern Netherlands in the early phase of what eventually became an Eighty Years War; the Austrian Habsburgs following their victory at White Mountain in the first phase of what ended up being a Thirty Years War; and the British Commonwealth government following the defeat of the revolutionary Confederates in Ireland.

By contrast, the first example and the last two, in Switzerland, France, and Salzburg, are not immediately related to the dislocations of religious war. In the Swiss Confederation, the active persecution and the subsequent internal dislocation and eventual exodus of Anabaptists—more precisely, the Swiss Brethren—began in 1527, before the first of the two Kappel Wars, when the cities of Zürich, Bern, and St. Gallen concluded a “Concordat” that was intended to rid their territories of persons they considered dangerous radicals. In France, the exodus of Huguenots began following many decades of peaceful religious coexistence when the government of King Louis XIV began to misuse and eventually revoked the provisions of the Edict of Nantes. And the exodus from Salzburg began well after the Peace of Westphalia offered protection to religious minorities, when the prince-bishops expelled a small group of Lutheran “dissenters” from Tyrol in the 1680s and, then, some 20,000 Lutherans from the Pongau in 1731.

Learning from History

So how can this history of religious war and forced migration help us to think about the troubled relationship between refugees and religion today? To be sure, the history of post-Reformation Europe will not simply be repeated today in the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, or even Europe and North America. But there are important perceptual and analytic cues we can learn from this kind of

broadly comparative history. Here I will focus on the principal actors and the dynamics of their interactions in relation to the production of religious refugees; the accommodation of religious newcomers into their places of refuge; and the survival of religious dissidents who could not seek refuge elsewhere. I will look at each of these in turn.

Even this brief review of the European historical context suggests who the principal actors were in the production of religious refugees: on the one hand, rulers, ranging from well-established authorities to rival claimants to political authority in revolutionary situations, who privileged one religious group over other alternatives in religiously diverse polities, and, on the other hand, “dissident” subjects—that is, people who chose religious beliefs, practices, or affiliations that were different from those privileged by their rulers. Figure 1.1

Figure 1.1 Principal actors in the history of religious conflict/coexistence. Created by Wayne P. te Brake.

shows how these actors fit into a larger array of political actors within complex political contexts.

Since religiously diverse rulers and subjects are not always in conflict, it is important to sort out the dynamics that lead toward conflict, violence, war, and, in exceptional cases, mass migrations. Because Europe's principal migrations were not always linked to the coordinated destruction of war, it is important to recognize what distinguished them from other religious conflicts. As I see it, what all of these cases had in common is that they were forceful expressions of *official religious intolerance* and, as such, they were the result of profoundly authoritarian political actions, in alliance with specific religious authorities, in situations where religious dissidents were powerless to counteract the (threat of) coercive force. In each case, rulers attempted to achieve religious "unity and purity" within their political domains by demanding conformity from all their subjects, under the threat of harm or expulsion (cf. Terpstra 2015).

If official intolerance was the *sine qua non* of the forced religious migration process and experience, it was hardly the whole story or the end of the story. Official intolerance necessarily forced religious dissidents, either explicitly or implicitly, to make choices. In some cases, like the Southern Netherlands and Bohemia, the triumphant rulers ordered their dissident subjects either to conform to the reestablished Catholic religion or to leave. In Ireland, Catholics east of the Shannon River were faced with the choice of either converting to Protestantism (under the Commonwealth there was no established version of Protestantism) or being deprived of their property and deported to Connaught, on the barren western periphery. In France, by contrast, the royal government pressured religious dissenters to conform to the established Catholic religion—in part, by annulling their marriages and by placing their children in the care of Catholic families!—but forbade them from leaving the kingdom. In all these cases, we have evidence that some "dissenters" did choose to conform to established religious practices, while many others chose to leave, even in France where this was expressly forbidden. In addition, I want to highlight a third alternative: the decision of many religious dissenters, under conditions of official repression, not to conform to the religious practices of the established religion and to remain "illegally" where they were. We will return to their experience in a moment.

The forced religious migrations in early modern Europe were smaller than the forced religious migrations we have seen in recent history—hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands rather than millions of people—but they had an enormous impact on both the sending countries and the places where they found refuge. In the largest migrations—from the Southern Netherlands,

Bohemia, and France—the sending countries lost the human capital of relatively well-educated and commercially active populations, and in some places, like Antwerp, urban populations were reduced by half. Meanwhile, in the places of refuge, the experience of dislocation and the process of accommodating newcomers varied considerably in relation to religious differences among the migrants and the structures of political authority and patterns of religious diversity they encountered. In terms of the constellation of political actors I identified in Figure 1.1, the migration process effectively transformed the “external allies or enemies” on the left side of the figure into the rulers and local allies/competitors of the migrant groups in the places of refuge.

Let me begin with the patterns of religious coexistence and the structures of religious/political authority that the migrants encountered in the places of refuge. In my work on religious peace, I developed a new typology of religious coexistence that comprehends the broad variety of historical experience and incorporates the religious politics of rulers as well as relative visibility/salience of the religious identities of their diverse subjects in public life. Table 1.3 explicates briefly the terms I have used to describe the most common relationships.

Table 1.3 Types of Religious Coexistence in Early Modern Europe

Type	Characteristics	Examples
Confessional Parity	Multiple groups share responsibility for and access to the public domain	Shared churches in Germany, France, and the Low Countries; multi-confessional German cities; Swiss Thurgau
Political Integration	No dominant group; all are integrated into public life regardless of religious affiliation	Kingdom of France (under the Edict of Nantes); German imperial politics; Swiss confederal politics
Repression	Dominant group actively prohibits religious differences	Habsburg domains (Spain and Austria); France after 1685; Ireland; some constituents of the German Empire and Swiss Confederation
Confessional Privilege	Dominant group does not enforce uniformity; imposes restrictions/costs on diversity	Dutch Republic; Great Britain; some constituents of the German Empire and Swiss Confederation
Ad Hoc Tolerance	Specific exceptions are made to exclusionary rules	Jewish communities in London, Metz, Amsterdam and Hamburg; Jewish and Orthodox Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire; Merchant communities in commercial cities; Embassy chapels

Source: Created by Wayne P. te Brake.

Figure 1.2 Variable patterns of religious coexistence. Created by Wayne P. te Brake.

Figure 1.2 represents this variation graphically.

What I offer, then, is a simple conceptual map of the variable patterns of religious peace I found in early modern Europe; though these terms are derived from European history, I believe they are also usefully descriptive of variations that are evident today.

So how can this help us to think about the process of accommodating religious newcomers in the places of refuge? At first blush, it might seem likely that officially inclusive regimes, located on the right side of Figure 1.2, might be most readily receptive of religious refugees. As it happens, however, the carefully negotiated compromises that recurrently make official inclusion possible can become rigid and resistant to religiously different newcomers, who might disrupt the compromises and threaten to alter delicate balances among competitive groups. By comparison, officially exclusive regimes that do not prosecute “dissenters” (in the upper left quadrant of my conceptual map) have proved to be capable of absorbing and accommodating large numbers of relatively diverse migrants, often by making ad hoc exceptions to otherwise operative rules of exclusion. Here the examples of the Dutch Republic and the German territory of Saxony are instructive.³ Both of these regimes were officially exclusive—in the early sixteenth century, the Electors of Saxony broke with Rome and privileged the official Lutheran Church; at the end of the sixteenth century, during the Dutch Revolt against Spain, all of the provinces of the Dutch Republic recognized the Reformed (Calvinist) Church as the exclusive “public” church—but they both absorbed repeated waves of forced religious migration. Still, the experience

of settlement in a place of refuge varied considerably, depending on both the nature of the host regime and the religious identities of the migrants.⁴

In the diverse Dutch territories that emerged as a loose independent confederation during the Eighty Years War, each province had the authority to regulate its own religious affairs, which gave local authorities considerable latitude to accommodate religious differences, but the Union of Utrecht, which served as the framework for their confederation, explicitly guaranteed freedom of religious conscience. Thus, from the mid-sixteenth century through the end of the seventeenth century, the Low Countries and eventually the Dutch Republic famously provided refuge to successive waves of both Anabaptist/Mennonite and Calvinist migrants from Switzerland, the Southern Netherlands, Bohemia, and France. Each of these groups had long-standing allies who were willing to advocate for and assist in the resettlement of their coreligionists, but in general, it is safe to say that cities were more receptive to the outsiders than the countryside, and Calvinists were more readily accepted by the official “public” church than the Anabaptist/Mennonite refugees who, like their very numerous Dutch coreligionists, were expected to keep a low profile and to worship in spaces that did not resemble traditional churches.

By comparison, in the early sixteenth century, the Electors of Saxony had undertaken an exclusive “Lutheran” reformation, though the actual transformation of religious practices throughout the territory was a slow and incomplete process that left (largely invisible) remnants of Catholic worship. In the first quarter of the seventeenth century, however, this bastion of Lutheran orthodoxy received a flood of refugees from neighboring Bohemia as a result of the defeat of the Protestant-led Bohemian revolt against their staunchly Catholic Habsburg overlords. In very short order, the religious landscape of “orthodox” Lutheran Saxony underwent a dramatic transformation, and Saxony’s rulers, both civil and religious authorities, were forced to accommodate a dizzying variety of Protestant “guests”—not just Lutherans, but Calvinists and the distinctively Bohemian “Brethren” and “Utraquists.” After the Peace of Westphalia brought an end to the Thirty Years War, it became clear the non-Lutheran guests would not be leaving Saxony, much to the chagrin of the Lutheran authorities. Despite official objections from the exclusive established church, however, the dissenting guests were able to use the legal provisions of the Peace—in particular, the freedom of religious conscience—to secure a permanent and visible place in a significantly more diverse Saxony. Not surprisingly, the next wave of forced migrants to enter Saxony—the Lutheran dissenters of Salzburg—were more readily accommodated in this no-longer overwhelmingly Lutheran territory.

All in all, the experience of forced religious migration varied considerably, depending both on the religious identities of the migrants and on the existing patterns of religious affiliation within the places of refuge. From the refugees' point of view, having coreligionists who were willing/able to assist them was a great advantage, even when their local allies were "dissenters" within a regime of religious privilege. Still, even refugees whose faith was regarded as "foreign" or "heretical" were accommodated as "dissenters," who usually had to keep a low profile to avoid further trouble. In some cases, religious refugees eventually migrated even further from their homelands, like the French-speaking Calvinists (Huguenots), who fled to the German Rhineland and from there to the New World (e.g., South Carolina, New York, and Canada), and the Lutherans, who were expelled from Salzburg and ended up in the new English colony of Georgia.

But what is the experience of those who are not willing or able to flee the persecution of intolerant rulers? Here again, historical experience is instructive. What emerges clearly from my work on early modern Europe is that systematic repression was always a costly failure that inflicted enormous harm but never succeeded in eliminating religious diversity. In order to underscore the powerful agency of religious "dissenters," allow me to explicate what I see as the principal "subversive" mechanisms that enable survival under conditions of repression. While these are considerations that may not seem particularly germane to the questions of this volume on refugees, they are important for our understanding the problem of forced religious migrations in their full complexity. In addition, these dynamic mechanisms are important for understanding the "survival" of refugees who are not particularly welcomed, and sometimes considered dangerous, in the places where they seek refuge.

The most obvious of these survival mechanisms is *secrecy*. In situations of active repression of dissent, maintaining collective secrecy and worshipping clandestinely or privately is essential to the dissenting community's survival, but secrecy, even when an urgent necessity, is never absolute. As Benjamin Kaplan (2002) has shown, in a broad range of settings, the "privacy" of dissenting worship or devotion can be an elaborate fiction or a useful façade that is acceptable to both sides in order to keep up appearances and to maintain good order. Still, trying to be invisible is a recurrent feature of the experience of persecuted minorities that, over time, can become an essential element of dissident identities.

For individual dissenters, *dissimulation* or hiding under the false appearance of conformity can be a necessary means of not standing out and thus avoiding persecution. From the perspective of persecuting authorities, by the same token, dissimulation was perceived as a perennial and especially insidious threat to

the privileged community's unity and purity. In the Southern Netherlands, members of the clandestine Calvinist Church not only hid their dissent under the nominal conformity of occasional attendance at the Mass but also presented their children for baptism, especially when a Calvinist pastor was not available. But the local priests were apparently not fooled to the extent that they identified these children as illegitimate in the parish registers.

Then there is *casuistry*, by which I mean to identify unauthorized adjustments to the strict demands of religious purity. In order to cope with the exigencies of persecution, dissenting communities frequently make ideological/theological adjustments in order to rationalize their failure to meet the strictest norms of public witness and ritual purity. I borrow the term "casuistry" from Marc Furner's (1998) careful reconstruction of Anabaptist survival in the Swiss Emmental to describe this largely defensive mechanism employed by clergy and laymen alike. The Catholics of Ireland, for example, developed or adapted a wide range of popular devotional practices, especially the ritual "patterns" that were associated with holy wells and certain pilgrimage sites, that looked profoundly suspect to the Counter-Reformation Church as well as the Protestant rulers of Ireland (Carroll 1999).

Clandestine communities of faith recurrently turned to *private education* in order to counteract official indoctrination and to pass on to future generations the essentials of a dissenting tradition. Women frequently played significant educational roles, not only within the household but also in the so-called hedge schools of the Irish Catholics. Likewise, "education in the Word of God" was explicitly stated as the core mission of formally trained pastors sent to the underground Flemish churches from the Reformed Classes of Zeeland in the Dutch Republic.

These four mechanisms recurrently alter the relations between dissenters or dissenting communities and the multiple claimants to political and cultural authority over them. But the "survival" of dissenting religious communities is never a solo performance, and any account of religious coexistence under circumstances of active persecution is likely to involve the kindness of strangers as well as neighbors—that is, of historical actors who stand outside the dissenting community as such. Here I should like to highlight three additional mechanisms that are recurrently evident in the histories of survival in early modern Europe.

Let me start with *indifference*. Policies of strict intolerance of religious diversity invariably require "good citizens" to avoid contact with and to report the deviant behavior of religious dissenters. Given the practical limits of secrecy or invisibility, simple indifference by outsiders to the religious differences that

authorities condemn can be a powerful brake on repression (Schwartz 2008). By extension, the more explicit refusal of neighbors, friends, or even relatives to avoid contact with or report “others,” often at their own peril, is a recurrent feature of the stories that sites of dissident memory, as well as official archives, reveal to us (Furner 1998).

In addition, no comprehensive regime of repression can be sustained or effective without the active participation of local officials, who are expected to enforce proscriptions from above. Yet, the history of Swiss Anabaptists and Irish Catholics is replete with local officials who either failed to follow orders or actively protected “their” dissidents, who might be friends, relatives, or neighbors (Power and Whelen 1990). In the Southern Netherlands, local officials recurrently subverted the “national” policy of strict religious uniformity by negotiating and/or accepting informal bargains that traded safety for Calvinists in the South for the “freedom” of Catholics across the border in the Dutch Republic. Repressive authorities frequently derided this kind of subversion or inaction as “*connivance*” with the forces of evil.

Over time, temporary compromises may become durable forms of religious coexistence, which may, in turn, be actively defended as essential attributes of the health and prosperity of the whole community (Kaplan 2007). This was not always the case, to be sure: familiarity does not always beget sympathy or understanding. In fact, durable forms of coexistence almost always beget durable forms of inequality, which might then become flash points for conflict under conditions of stress. Yet, when it did happen, the active defense of specific, local accommodations of religious difference may not rise to the level of a coherent philosophy or policy of *toleration*, but it surely did serve mightily to underwrite the assertion of official toleration by the end of the early modern period.

Thinking with History

As I suggested earlier, the history of post-Reformation Europe will not simply be repeated today; rather than looking for historical replication, then, we should practice thinking with history. By this I want to underscore the difference between a relatively static perception of where we are and a dynamic understanding of how we got to be where we are. With regard to the topic of this volume—refugees and religion—thinking with (European) history entails two kinds of *historical recognition*: recognition of the recurrent historical patterns—of forced migration or expulsion, of accommodation of (religious) refugees, and

of dissident survival under repression—as well as recognition of the recurrent mechanisms and processes that gave birth to them.⁵

Let me illustrate what I mean by historical thinking, beginning with expulsions. Obviously, I can't begin to survey all the forced (religious) migrations in recent history. Peter van der Veer's contribution to this volume underscores the enormous complexity of the history and historical memory of expulsion and accommodation in just the case of Germany. Still, thinking with European history allows us to recognize broader comparative patterns in our current experience. Three very different examples come to mind: Bosnia, Syria, and Myanmar, where both the patterns and the politics of religious diversity vary considerably, much as they did historically.

Bosnia was, prior to its brutal civil war (1992–5), perhaps the most diverse component of the former Yugoslavia, with its significant communities of Croatian Catholics, Serbian Orthodox, and “Bosniak” Muslims, alongside the remnants of the formerly significant Sephardic migrants from Iberia; its distinctive facts on the ground reflected the long history of *ad hoc tolerance* of Christians and Jews under the Ottoman Empire's *privileged* Sunni Islam. On the eve of the war, however, Bosnia's public politics were what I recognize as *integration* (in the lower right, inclusive quadrant of Figure 1.2),⁶ in the sense that religious identities were not generally a salient feature of public politics in the officially secular Yugoslavian composite.

Syria was, prior to its devastating civil war (2011–ongoing), also a richly diverse polity, with significant communities of Christians and Jews, alongside its diverse Muslim majority, which pattern was also reflective of the long Ottoman history of *ad hoc toleration* of “People of the Book.” On the eve of the current war, however, Syria's religious politics were particularly complex and messy, in the sense that within its diverse Muslim population, a politically dominant Alawite (Alevi Shi'a) minority enjoyed a *privileged* position over the (diverse) Sunni majority, while the Christian and Jewish populations continued to enjoy *ad hoc tolerance*.

Myanmar, by contrast, has a very different pattern of religious diversity, with a *privileged* Buddhist majority alongside smaller Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and folk-religious minorities. Its distinctive religious facts on the ground are reflective of Burma's very different history of foreign domination that was filtered through the experience of British colonialism since the mid-nineteenth century. After independence as Burma in 1948, the religious politics of Myanmar's military-dominated governments veered toward a newly minted Buddhist Nationalism, which exclusively and emphatically *privileges* its Buddhist core over its ethno-religious peripheries.

In all three cases, however, long-standing patterns of generally peaceful coexistence have been disrupted to the extent that they have produced large flows of religious refugees. What they have most clearly in common with early modern Europe is authoritarian intolerance—that is, political actors with ready access to coercive means have, in situations of rapid change or political uncertainty, exploited narratives or allegations of historical grievance to *polarize* previously peaceful relations among religious groups and to *demonize* their religious “enemies,” thereby consolidating their own political/military advantages and precipitating refugee flows. As I found in early modern Europe and I believe Peter van der Veer has shown in recent German experience, the experience of forced (religious) migrations can be (re)produced in both wartime (Bosnia and Syria) and in relative peace (Myanmar).

Still, as European history shows, accounts of authoritarian intolerance (cf. Terpstra 2015) miss at least half of the story, because they ignore or underestimate the *agency* of the apparent “victims.” These potent actors recurrently make consequential choices in difficult situations: choosing to “conform,” to leave, or to “resist.” These choices are consequential, today as much as in early modern history, in the sense that concerted efforts to compel conformity or even violent campaigns of annihilation have recurrently failed to recreate the “unity and purity” of some imagined past, whether in the “ethnically cleansed” Republika Srpska, the religiously “purified” Islamic State, or the militarily “pacified” Myanmar. In all these cases, recurrent mechanisms have combined to move the process of religious expulsion, with a limited range of outcomes.

Regarding the other end of the forced migration process, which is the focus of this volume, thinking historically can be equally illuminating—that is, in describing and accounting for the variant experience of (religious) accommodation in the places of refuge. Here I will focus on European examples, which I know best, though I think the analytic strategy would work well for non-European countries, as well. The key is to situate our observations of the present in the context of prior experiences of migration and accommodation. In considering the accommodation process, it is critically important, I think, to consider both historical legacies and the full cast of consequential actors. I will explore briefly the examples of the UK, France, and Germany, each of which represents a distinctive national “template” that descends from the early modern period.

In the UK, both England and Scotland have had established or *privileged* churches since the end of the seventeenth century, a national template that has enjoyed a long historical continuity. Although the connection between political

and religious authority remains strong, the nature of the privilege has changed significantly over time, largely through the extension of *ad hoc tolerance* to a succession of religious groups: first, Protestant “dissenters,” following the Glorious Revolution (1688); then, Catholics in the mid-nineteenth century; and in the course of the twentieth century, a broad range of religious “newcomers,” including Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists, especially from their (former) colonies. The preeminence of the Anglican Church in England and the Presbyterian Church in Scotland is still unmistakable, but this national template has recurrently proven to be capable of accommodating a wide range of religious diversity, as it did in the early modern period.

In France, by contrast, the politics of religious diversity have been disrupted recurrently by political upheavals, though there are nevertheless elements of long-term continuity in its national template. The French national experiment with *integration* emerged, much earlier than the British template, through a series of edicts of “pacification,” beginning in 1563, by which the royal government guaranteed freedom of religious conscience and became the protector of both the established Gallican (French Catholic) Church and the national network of Huguenot (Calvinist) churches. Under the Edict of Nantes (1598), which was the most famous and enduring, the Huguenot population of France was granted equal political and civil rights, which dramatically reduced, in principle, the salience of religious identities in public politics, and in a secret agreement, the royal government even financed the Huguenot clergy, in compensation for the fact that Protestants still had to pay the tithe that supported the Catholic Church.

The first disruption of France’s template came by royal decree in 1685, when Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, an act of profound authoritarian intolerance—*repression*—that occasioned one of Europe’s largest forced migrations. Then, in the 1790s, the French revolutionary government disestablished the Gallican Church, seizing its enormous properties, and restoring, in effect, an even more rigorous version of the *integration* template. The Catholic Church was restored under both the empire (1811) and the monarchy (restored after 1815), and it enjoyed a position of *privilege* through the Second Republic, the Second Empire, and the early years of the Third Republic. Finally, the famous law of 1905 declared a formal separation between church and state (often referred to as the principle of *laïcité*, or secularism), which once again returned France, in principle, to a strict version of its *integration* template.

In Germany, a national template also emerged early, in the sixteenth century, and it, too, was recurrently disrupted by political upheavals. In this case, the *Religionsfriede* (Religious Peace) of Augsburg (1555) introduced a *parity*

relationship among Holy Roman Empire's many rulers, who had been deeply polarized as defenders of "the old religion" and adherents of the "Augsburg Confession" (which was an early summation of Lutheran religious principles); it also endorsed parity between Catholics and Protestants in the Empire's many cities, large and small. This national template for religious peace was destroyed by the Thirty Years War, which precipitated another forced migration from Bohemia, but the *parity* template of the *Religionsfriede* was restored "in all its Points and Articles" in the Treaty of Osnabrück as part of the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which updated it to include provisions for the restoration of corporate religious diversity, where it had been disrupted by the war, and introduced the principle of freedom of individual religious conscience. This national agreement was rendered moot by the dissolution of the Empire in 1806, as smaller territorial jurisdictions regulated their own religious affairs. Germany's Catholic and "Evangelical" (as used in Germany, this term is generally inclusive of both Lutherans and Calvinists) communities were once again polarized nationally during the so-called *Kulturkampf* (Culture War) in the early years of the Second Empire (1871–1918), in which Bismarck promoted Evangelical *privilege* and sought to subordinate the Catholic Church.

Following the First World War, the Weimar Republic introduced a national *integration* template, guaranteeing religious freedom, but this was quickly undermined by the rise of Hitler and the establishment of the Third Empire. Under foreign occupation following the Second World War, Germany was divided between the officially secular German Democratic Republic (DDR) in the east (political *integration*) and the German Federal Republic (BRD), which reintroduced a form of religious *parity*. Under the federal constitution, all religious groups that are recognized and formally licensed are supported by a "church tax," which is a surcharge on the income tax of those affiliated with a recognized and licensed community of faith and collected by the government. Following the reunification of Germany in 1991, the BRD's *parity* template has been applied to the constituent states of the DDR as well. Still, the legacy of the division is reflected in the "facts" of religious diversity on the ground: in the six states of the DDR, the majority of the population is not affiliated with a religious community, while in the ten states of the original BRD, with the exception of Hamburg, the majority of the population is still affiliated with a Christian denomination, though that percentage is declining.

Each of these "national" templates—within which there is room for a great deal of local and regional variation—has been flexible enough, historically, to accommodate a wide range "newcomers." After sending out emigrants

between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, each of these polities has, in the last century or more, absorbed a variety of immigrants, both “migrants” and “refugees” (to echo Peter van der Veer’s distinction in this volume): from elsewhere in Europe, especially Eastern Europe; from (former) colonies around the world; and, most recently, from a variety of crisis situations, in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia, in particular. But their structural differences do make a difference, presenting religious refugees variant sets of opportunities and challenges, just as they did in the early modern period.

The *privileged* religious template of the UK seems to offer religious refugees the paths of least resistance to safety and accommodation. There is, in principle, no requirement for religious refugees to declare a religious affiliation at all, inasmuch as more than one-fifth of population in the UK is unaffiliated with an organized community of faith; still, as William Wheeler’s research shows (in this volume), the formal asylum process seems to reward both claims of religious “persecution” initially, and paradoxically, “genuine conversions” to Christianity, once asylum has been denied.⁷ For non-Christian religious refugee communities, the UK’s (Christian) *privilege* template also affords the prospect that “organized” communities of faith can be granted *ad hoc tolerance*, as various Christian “dissenters” and religious “others” have in the last several centuries, as long as they keep their heads down and avoid trouble. Such *ad hoc* accommodations of religious difference remain low-cost gestures for the places of refuge because their *ad hoc* increments do not fundamentally disrupt the privilege of the established churches.

In Germany, the *parity* template might seem, in principle, to be equally welcoming to religiously different newcomers; thus, individual refugees are afforded asylum and support on the grounds of religious persecution in their places of origin, although research presented in this volume underscores the challenges of the individual asylum process. But as is characteristic of parity regimes historically, the rules that govern official recognition/formal inclusion of communities of faith represent a relatively high bar regarding formal organization. Germany’s initial experience of parity only included Lutherans and Catholics under the sixteenth-century *Religionsfriede*, and in the Peace of Westphalia formal recognition was expanded to include Reformed (Calvinist) Christians, almost as an afterthought (te Brake 2017: 264). The revival of the *parity* template after the Second World War included primarily the Catholic and the (now conjoined) Evangelical churches, though other Protestant communities (Brethren, Baptists, etc.) were included via the organizational network of “Free Evangelical” churches. Religious “others” appear to face greater challenges in

achieving the benefits of formal inclusion, as communities of faith as opposed to individual refugees. Indeed, as outsiders, their communities may perceive religious *parity* as exclusionary *privilege*. For them, especially the large numbers of new Muslim refugees from the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia, lacking formally recognized religious organizations, it is important to worship discreetly and to keep their heads down in order to avoid trouble.⁸

In France, the *integration* template, known generally as *laïcité*, would seem to be the most inclusive regime of all. Still, the formal disestablishment of the Catholic Church—both 225 years ago and, again, a century ago—failed to alter the obvious religious “facts on the ground.” Indeed, France remains a majority-Catholic country, even if participation in its rituals or formal affiliation with the Catholic Church is no longer a salient feature in public life. Though the informal domination of its religious rituals (and holidays) has declined in recent decades, the cultural preeminence of the Catholic Church is still obvious, as evidenced by the “national” crisis that was occasioned by the tragic fire in the Cathedral Church of Notre Dame in Paris. For the new waves of (both Islamic and Jewish) religious refugees in the last decades, the inclusive promise of official *laïcité* is belied by the recent rise of popular anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, not only in France but throughout Europe.⁹ Meanwhile, for larger communities of faith, formal recognition of their religious organizations, which can be hard to achieve, still has important legal and security implications, even if all groups are formally “disestablished.” For them, too, French *integration*, like German *parity*, undoubtedly looks as exclusionary as, if not more exclusionary than, formal Christian *privilege* in the UK, especially when they are even prevented from wearing dress that expresses their religious devotion in public.¹⁰

Refugees and Religion, Then and Now

So, how does this kind of historical thinking improve our understanding of the more general problem of refugees and religion? To begin, I have proposed a vocabulary that allows us to compare the different patterns of religious coexistence (“facts on the ground”) and the formal or legal structures of religious diversity (“national templates”), both geographically and historically. Figure 1.3, for example, plots the array of national templates in the contemporary examples I have discussed onto my conceptual map of historical variation.

Within these national frameworks for the management of religious diversity, which are more clearly prescriptive or aspirational than descriptive of the facts

Figure 1.3 Variable templates of religious coexistence today. Created by Wayne P. te Brake.

of religious diversity on the ground, there is ample room for local and regional variation.

Recognizing local, regional, and national differences requires us, in turn, to attend to the powerful agency of religious “dissenters,” “outsiders,” and “newcomers”—this, in order to counteract the forceful pronouncements of those who claim political/religious authority and sometimes commit horrendous acts of authoritarian intolerance. Indeed, it is the subversive strategies that these religious actors deploy and the bargains that these political “subjects” make with their proximate “rulers” that account for the complex and messy patterns of religious diversity in the world today.

All in all, I have tried to demonstrate an analytic strategy—using the language of mechanisms and processes—that allows us not simply to observe where we are today—in this new era of exclusionary (religious) nationalism, following the refugee crisis of 2015—but also to account for how we got to be where we are today. Now, I freely admit that I can claim no special (political-scientific, sociological, or anthropological) expertise to give credence to my observations and analysis of where we are today. But that is precisely the point! Becoming critical observers of the challenges related to refugees and religion does not require expertise in all of their historical and contemporary dimensions. On the contrary, it only requires us to step outside our (academic or cultural) comfort zones in order to demonstrate the relevance of our special expertise to very big problems that are beyond the ken of any individual.