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(Article begins on next page)

CHAPTER FOUR

PEACE AND RELIGION

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There are various possible perspectives for thinking about how peace and religion interact in the early modern age. Each of them would involve adopting specific periodizations and concentrating on different geographical spaces. If we interpreted peace as union, we might start with the failed attempts of the Greek and Latin churches to unite in the decades leading up to the fall of Constantinople (1453). If we looked at the area of the Mediterranean where members of the three so-called “religions of the book” (Christians, Muslims and Jews) had been living side-by-side for centuries, we might examine the cohabitation between Christians and ‘infidels’ that developed despite conflicts and religious antagonism, dwelling on the peace treaties, trading agreements and cross-cultural exchange with the Muslim empire. From there we might move on to the world of the *pax ottomana* (‘Ottoman peace’), which held together the mosaic of ethnic groups and juridical-religious communities in the huge domain of the sultan. If we shifted our attention to the role of the peacemakers, we might analyse the action of those transcultural go-betweens across the globe who were the missionaries – the Jesuits in particular.

Instead, in the following pages I shall be considering Europe, starting from Luther’s Reformation (1517), as that religious break radically changed how the old continent thought and lived, posing new problems. The European space then became the theatre of many practical attempts by various historical actors to build a religious peace and coexistence between different faiths that would enable the community, the state and society to survive.

Europe in the Form of a Virgin

In 1537 a woodcut map by the Tyrolese poet Johannes Putsch was printed. Putsch’s map is an example of an embodied map. It shows the continent in the form of a queen standing: the Iberian peninsula is the head, France is her breast, her right arm extending into the Mediterranean is Italy, her left arm bent over the Baltic sea is Denmark, and her heart is Bohemia. The centre of the scene is occupied by the symbols of imperial power: the crown set on the queen’s head, the sceptre and globe surmounted by the cross in her hands. This image is also known as *Europa in forma virginis* (“Europe in the form of a virgin”), referring to the myth of the virgin seized by Zeus, and is the archetype of a series of manuscript and printed adaptations that circulated in the late sixteenth century, in a radically different political context. It shows us how one might imagine the continent of Europe in the first half of the sixteenth century: as a political and religious body united under the Christian emperor.¹ [Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 here]

This idea of unity was rooted in the Middle Ages, but made an emphatic return in western culture in the early sixteenth century, after Charles of Habsburg had been elected emperor (1519). For almost two generations, and for the first time in seven centuries since Charlemagne, the name of emperor was no longer an empty title, but was associated with an immense territorial power. The emperor could now present himself as the supreme authority and guarantor of universal peace. It was not just propaganda, but a shared way of looking at reality, encouraged by the fear of the growing Turkish threat. Different figures in different parts of the continent, from Valladolid to Vienna, and from Brussels to Naples, began to use the images of the ancient myths to celebrate the return of the Golden Age of peace, prosperity and justice. Not only reformers and prophets, but poets too, such as Ludovico Ariosto in *Orlando Furioso*, saw in Charles V the artificer of the renewal of Christendom and celebrated him through evangelical metaphors (“*Che sotto a questo imperatore/solo un ovile sia, solo un pastore*”, 15:26 (“That under this emperor/there may be only one sheepfold, only one shepherd”). Peace and justice were two concepts closely associated in

western culture – ‘Righteousness and peace have kissed each other’ in the words of Psalm 85:10. The hope that they could finally be achieved was reflected even by the popular songs circulating in the public squares.ⁱⁱ

However, not only did Europe not enjoy peace, but it was in this very period that the reference points which for centuries had made it possible to think of western civilization as an organic unity were lost. The medieval *Respublica christiana*, that religious background common to Dante Alighieri and Charlemagne, to Abelard and Eloise, to Geoffrey Chaucer and Marco Polo, ended forever with the spread of the Reformation. Together with its religious unity, the ideal of the political unity of the West was swept away by the new Europe of states, political entities independent of any other law and power. It was precisely from the consolidation of their religious identity that they found the opportunity for development, since the religious choice was also a political matter. The German princes who adhered to the Reformation, for example, consolidated their own power at the expense of the emperor’s, became richer because they confiscated Church property, and reinforced their authority within the state by acquiring control over the ecclesiastical institutions.

When, in 1556, Emperor Charles V, defeated and tired, divided his domains, and abandoned power to retire to a monastery in Spain, Lutheranism was now widespread and Calvinism was beginning a period of powerful expansion. Half Europe regarded the pope as the antichrist and the Church of Rome as the incarnation of the whore of Babylon in the Apocalypse.

In this framework, the rival Christian churches (Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinist) entrenched their positions, like citadels fortified against each other. We should not forget that religion at that time was not just a matter of individual convictions and feelings. Religion shaped society. Birth, marriage and death took on different meanings, according to whether one was catholic or protestant. But if the sense of these rites of passage changed, the meaning that was attributed to the individual, the family and the relations between generations changed too. The clergy were different: among the Protestants, ministers were often married men, and there were no longer monks and friars. Teaching and education were structured differently in the respective schools and universities. Reading, too, had a different sense: in catholic countries such as Spain and Italy there was a centralized system in the hands of the Church for the censorship and control of books, and not only those with a religious subject, but literature, university textbooks, and books of history and science. The word of God reached the faithful in a different way: the Germans could read it translated by Luther into their own tongue, while in Italy the Bible could be explained by a priest or read in Latin alone – reading the vernacular Bible was a matter for the Inquisition, and forbidden until the mid-eighteenth century. Even the forms of worship no longer resembled each other. Protestant faith had no use for images, rosaries and candles, or the cult of the saints and the Virgin Mary – ways of relating to the sacred that gave help and comfort to Catholics. In this chapter we shall see how even small, apparently insignificant, daily gestures could become formidable obstacles to peace between Christians.

After the Reformation, new demarcation lines between different faiths were drawn within the same country, the same city or the same family. These differences were accompanied by agonizing conflicts as we gradually enter what Henry Kamen has called the ‘iron century’, the period running from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth century.ⁱⁱⁱ In this time-span, France was torn apart by wars of religion between Catholics and Huguenots, in Paris as in the most remote villages. In England the catholic Bloody Mary was succeeded by the protestant Elizabeth, who was excommunicated by the pope. In 1649, under the Stuarts, a revolution in which religion played a central part cut off the king’s head. The Low Countries, where Calvinism had spread, rebelled against the dominion of the catholic Philip II in a long and bloody war with Spain. In catholic Europe, in Spain, Portugal and Italy, heretics tried by the tribunals of the Inquisition were burnt at the stake. The hardening of the opposing orthodoxies (Lutheran, Calvinist and Catholic) led to a European war that lasted thirty years, from 1618 to 1648, and devastated Germany.

The image of Europe that circulated in the iron century was always that of a maiden – but one unlike the figure in Putsch’s anthropomorphic map. We might take as an example the painting by

Peter Paul Rubens entitled *The Consequences of War* (1637-38). [Figure 4.3 here] Both painter and diplomat, during his life Rubens took part in peace negotiations, witnessed dynastic marriages designed to consolidate peace, and attended baroque celebrations with fireworks and music designed to convey an emotional sense of the new-won peace to the people. He belonged to that world of international relations that was developing and increasingly professionalizing after the outbreak of the Thirty Years War in 1618. He died without seeing the end of that long war ratified in the peace of Westphalia in 1648.

Painted while the conflict was still raging, *The Consequences of War* shows a frenzied scene: the temple of Janus is open, leaving the god Mars (ineffectively held back by Venus) and the fury Alekto free to perform their work of devastation. They trample down the arts and charity, the christian virtue *par excellence*, who, following classical iconography, is shown as a mother with a babe in arms. To the left, slightly to one side, stands Europe – a young woman in despair, dressed in mourning and with her dress torn, raising her arms to the heavens. The imperial globe has ended up in the hands of a terrified *putto* who seeks refuge in her robes. An illustrated German leaflet of the same period is entitled *Europa querula et vulnerata* (*Europe weeping and wounded*). It is an anti-catholic variation on the theme of a famous work published in 1517, Erasmus' *Querela pacis* (*Complaint of peace*). The leaflet was printed during the terrible siege of the protestant city of Magdeburg, and it depicts the young Europe dishevelled and barefoot, pierced by the arrows of a catholic army that is raising the banner of the devil (a Jesuit can be seen among them).^{iv}

In this divided Europe, what meaning did the concept of peace have? Amid the clash of arms and the flames of burning heretics, what form could religious peace assume? The answer in this chapter will not be found in the history of ideas, or in the suggestions of such exceptional figures as Erasmus, Sebastian Castellio, Montaigne, or minority groups and movements like the Anabaptists and Socinians. All of them developed their ideas of peace and tolerance in opposition to the dominant values of the society and community they belonged to. It is with this in mind that we shall be asking other questions. What obstacles prevented everyone else – the majority of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century men and women – from sharing their ideas? What was the nature of these obstacles, and what was the soil in which they grew? What solutions were sought and tried out to make the violence cease, to prevent the self-destruction of society and the body politic, and to make religious pluralism possible in a city or a community? And finally: what did 'live in peace' mean for individuals of different religions?

The Obstacles to Religious Peace

The positions of the theologians were one of the obstacles to peace. After the fracture of the Reformation, their voice acquired growing importance. Rival churches, each claiming to possess the truth, reinforced their internal unity and confessional identity by rigidly defining orthodoxy and controlling behaviour. There was no longer room for either dissent or doubt – i.e. that form of the critical use of intelligence exercised by the non-theologian Erasmus and displayed in his writings. Returning the heretic to the straight and narrow of orthodoxy was more of a duty than ever, as it meant saving his soul. Tolerating his presence in the community was a sin against God. Concepts central to the christian tradition, such as forgiveness and charity, did not apply to the heretic. The doctrinal reference point was St Augustine's *Compelle intrare* ("Compel them to come in"), based on Luke's Gospel (14:23): the principle by which it is admissible to force heretics to repent and return to the bosom of the Church. In line with this theological premise, from the mid-sixteenth century on, the Churches put in place practical and institutional mechanisms of coercion.

We cannot give an account here of either the history or the geography of intolerance in Europe. Depending on the context, it could assume different faces, as the Churches were not only the custodians of doctrine, worship and liturgy, but were also historical institutions that produced laws and possessed the apparatus to apply them in society, within the framework of either cooperative or conflicting relations with civil powers. Intolerance could therefore manifest itself in many ways. It

could assume the form of a personal attitude like the ‘charitable hatred’ that in the complex religious situation in the England of 1630 an anglican pastor urged the faithful to display towards dissident neighbours.^v Or it could be exercised by means of tribunals and the sentences of ecclesiastical judges, focusing on outward behaviour in order to secure external conformity and obedience. Different again was the intolerance systematically exercised by the tribunals of the Inquisition in Spain, Portugal and Italy. They were genuine ‘tribunals of the conscience’.^{vi} They persecuted inner beliefs with the aim of making the guilty confess, repent and abjure before sentence was carried out.

Another obstacle to peace was the use of metaphors that were widespread and deep-rooted in the collective imagination. Those who strayed from orthodoxy were seen as tares to be uprooted, or a contagious sickness of the body, a form of ‘gangrene’ to be cured with surgical amputation of the infected parts. Behind these botanical and medical metaphors was the idea that the heretic endangered the spiritual salvation of the entire community in the same way as a diseased limb could compromise the health of the entire body. Dire events such as epidemics, earthquakes and famines were seen as indicative of divine punishment for the sins of the community. According to common belief, there were essentially two ways of expiating and purifying the social body: celebrating collective penitential rites and cutting away the diseased limbs that caused the infection, which were usually identified among heretics, infidels and witches.

Another obstacle to peace was the different way in which Protestants related to the holy. The iconoclasm of the Calvinists in particular – their rejection of sacred images – clashed with catholic tradition. The crosses at crossroads in open country, which for Catholics exorcized the dangers of the unknown, were unacceptable forms of blasphemy for Calvinists. Before the Reformation, space and time in cities and villages were marked in the same way by the sacred. Rites and devotions defined the order of daily life even at the level of the senses, through the sounds of bells, the smell of incense, liturgical chants, and religious images which were not confined to the interior of the churches. The community saw itself as a single body. When under threat, it turned to the patron saint and organized a procession along the city walls, where the sacred image or the holy relics were shown to the outside world that was the source of the danger. That is what the inhabitants of the French coastal town of Toulon did in 1543, invoking the Virgin protectress of the city while the Turkish fleet wintered menacingly in the harbour.

The people believed in the apotropaic functions – their capacity to ward off malign influences – of objects and practices. During the spring processions they recited the litanies, did penance, and carried the relics through the fields. All manner of beliefs and lore collected around these practices. They had propitiatory functions designed to guarantee a good harvest from God and procure peace before the arrival of spring, the season when wars were resumed. The rite was also supposed to ensure the control of the passions, and so of the humours circulating in the human body, for, as they could read in Varagine’s *Legenda aurea*, the blood was warmer in spring than in other seasons. They were polysemic practices: the ritual processions in the fields also had the social value of establishing the confines and ratifying legal possession.^{vii} The Reformation burst into this world of traditional devotions, stigmatizing them as papist, idolatrous and superstitious, and set about constructing a different world of beliefs and customs.

The obstacles to peace were not only cultural, and did not just concern how ‘others’ were perceived collectively or their relation with the sacred. The Church exercised a public function: its baptisms and marriages had a civil effect. Through baptism the ecclesiastical authorities gave an identity to the new-born baby in the eyes of the state too. The marriage that was legally valid for the civil authorities was the religious one celebrated in the parish church, the basic institution of religious life, which could legally define a village as such, rather than as a mere cluster of houses. In this framework, peaceful coexistence between different confessions required not only a change in convictions, ideas and ways of feeling, but a reorganization of the system of relations between Church and State, as well as a sharper separation of their ambits.^{viii}

The lore concerning power was another formidable obstacle to religious peace. In the treatises of political theology and in the way ordinary people saw things, the legitimate sovereign was the guarantor of the religious unity that was necessary for the health and spiritual salvation of the body politic. The jurist Jean Bégat, who was against the legal recognition of two confessions in the kingdom of France, summarized his conviction like this: ‘The sovereign who thinks he can be the protector of two religions finds himself (in the words of the proverb) between two saddles, on the ground’.^{ix}

Religious Peaces

In the medieval and early modern periods the allegories of artists return again and again to the same figurative elements to symbolize the positive effects of peace. Cornucopias overflowing with fruit and flowers, children, jewels, musical instruments and books symbolize the abundance, fertility and development of the arts in time of peace. With the Reformation this fundamental value came into conflict with that of religious unity. To preserve the peace, confessional division needed to be accepted. To prevent violence bringing down the state, some European countries found themselves forced to reconsider shared ideas, ways of thinking and feeling, and to fix new rules that allowed the peaceful coexistence of different faiths.

This did not happen in catholic countries such as Italy, Spain and Portugal, where the Inquisition’s firm repression of heresy, with the participation (somewhat reluctant in Italy) of the civil authorities, prevented the peace of society and the continuity of the institutions being imperilled, as happened in Switzerland, the Empire, and in France. The history of the ‘iron century’ is punctuated by these forms of more or less stable pacification: the peace of Kappel (1531) between the protestant and catholic cantons in Switzerland, the peace of Augsburg (1555) legalizing Lutheranism in the empire, the royal edict of Amboise (1563) and the later ones in France, culminating in the edict of Nantes (1598), which put an end to the civil wars and granted rights to the huguenot (calvinist) communities until it was rescinded in 1685. But the list should be extended to other religious agreements, such as the Warsaw Confederation (1573), in which the powerful aristocratic groups that governed Eastern Europe swore to live in peace despite their religious differences, and the pacification of Ghent, by which the northern and southern provinces of the Low Countries put aside their religious difference and united in revolt against the king of Spain (1576). At the end of the list, the peace of Westphalia (1648), concluded a European conflict lasted thirty years, and admitted Calvinism too to the empire.

Every religious peace has specific characteristics, depending on context, but Olivier Christin has shown convincingly both what they had in common and how important they were.^x The religious peaces put an end to religious wars, but the term ‘religious’ may be misleading: behind these peaces was a new idea – that the problem of peace was to be dealt with on a political, rather than a religious, plane.

This idea developed parallel to the process of forming the modern European state, and was fully affirmed in the peace of Westphalia (1648). No fewer than 109 diplomatic delegations, representing 140 German and sixteen European countries took part in the negotiations. It was a great event, which finally and fully imposed the principle – obvious to us today – that the European system of states should be regulated by international law (*ius gentium*) and not by theological concepts. The papal delegates walked away from the peace table in protest at the concessions granted to Lutherans and Calvinists. For the first time in centuries, the head of the Catholic Church abandoned the idea of presenting himself as the *Pacificator orbis Christiani* (supreme pacifier of the Christian world) and ‘common father’ – a neutral arbiter of the conflicts between the European princes.

Who were the promoters and artificers of the religious peaces? They were the civil authorities, after other means of pacification, such as the ‘religious talks’ promoted by the emperor (Regensburg, 1541) and the king of France (Poissy, 1562) had come to nothing, due to

disagreement between theologians. The protagonists of religious peace were not theologians, but jurists. It was not a doctrinal compromise, but a political and legal agreement, by which the civil authorities organized the coexistence of various religious beliefs and the conditions for public worship in a single political entity (a confederation, a state or a city). The aim was to put an end to the violence that was destroying the state.

Religious peace, then, was neither by nature nor in its aims a chapter in the history of tolerance or the history of ideas. Freedom of conscience was more a corollary than the main objective. It was an agreement drawn up and implemented by various mediators – counsellors, functionaries, minor local notables, officials – who were not so much pacifists as ‘artisans of peace’, for they were building peace, not on the basis of abstract principles, but by rules and procedures conceived as experimental and open to improvement.^{xi} Christin has brought out how the language of the peace edicts in sixteenth-century France refers to subjects needing to regain ‘tranquillity’ and ‘repose’, to resume the ties of friendship against special interests under the protection of the sovereign pacifier.^{xii} The word ‘tolerance’ was rarely used, and certainly not in the sense that we usually give it today of a fundamental moral value for human society.

The peace of Augsburg, drawn up in 1555 after a dramatic period of wars between the catholic emperor and the lutheran princes, established Germany as a bi-confessional country, legalizing Lutheranism. It recognized the right of a prince who held sovereignty over a given territory to choose between the two confessions. Subjects of the other faith had the right to emigrate – a choice that had a very high cost. Emigrating meant leaving home and friends for the unknown, scraping together ones goods and selling off quickly what could not be taken with one. It meant leaving behind the cemeteries where one’s forebears were buried. Nevertheless, it was a precious right, which refugees today do not have.

In this way the empire as a whole became bi-confessional, containing mono-confessional lutheran and catholic states. However, there were places where Catholics and Lutherans lived side by side. These were the free or imperial cities, independent city-states where both confessions were allowed and representatives of both faiths sat on the town council. Rich and important cities such as Augsburg and Ravensburg became, as we shall see below, a place for experimenting new peace practices. The area of coexistence tended to extend, and continued to do so during the Thirty Years Wars, as a result of the conquests and dynastic changes that might set a prince over a given territory whose subjects followed a faith different from his own.

The first important religious peace in France was the edict of Amboise (1563), promulgated after the first war of religion (it had been preceded in 1562 by the short-lived edict of Saint-Germain). The king then officially recognized religious pluralism in his kingdom, devastated by conflicts between Catholics and Huguenots. The edict authorized the members of the high aristocracy (those who could exercise high justice) and their household to practise protestantism in their homes. The peace of Amboise changed the religious geography of the kingdom so that it could be perceived by any traveller, modifying the rules of cohabitation, not only in the castles of the nobility, but inside and outside the city walls. Each royal administrative district (*baillage* or *sénéchaussé*), excluding Paris and its region, had to choose a locality where the Huguenots could worship outside the walls. In the cities where they had already worshipped publicly, the Huguenots could maintain one or two temples. France too became a sort of patchwork in which people of different faiths lived side by side. In 1564 the young King Charles IX made his triumphal entry in Lyons, presenting himself as a restorer of peace. He was welcomed by children of the city, marching in pairs – one catholic and the other protestant.

Every religious peace stirred up fierce resistance as, by nature, it represented a break with deeply rooted ways of thinking. The peace of Augsburg was severely condemned by the pope, but the attempt to transform religious division into a principle of pacification was a misguided idea for most people of the time. The result was an avalanche of speeches and anonymous pamphlets scorning and criticizing these first agreements.

At local level the application of peace created endless conflicts over the choice and distribution of places of worship, the use of cemeteries, and the allocation of seats in the town council, down to the smallest questions, such as the right to sound bells. Hundreds of incidents could be set off in the sphere of daily relations in communities ‘divided by faith’, to quote the title of Benjamin J. Kaplan’s book.^{xiii} Yet, despite the resistance and obstacles they met, religious peaces made it possible to construct a new legal framework and a new way of thinking. When problems cropped up at local level, violence was not always the response. Instead, justice was sought in the law courts, and people accepted and exploited the laws to their own advantage, reporting any violation of them to representatives and commissioners of the central power, who were sent into religiously mixed areas to resolve disputes and mediate or arbitrate conflicts.

In some cities of France, local actors were even more decisive and autonomous in drawing up what were called ‘friendship pacts’. To forestall the danger of violence returning, believers of the two religions agreed to act from then on as ‘brothers, friends and fellow-citizens’, setting down in writing that they wanted to live ‘peacefully and in accordance with the king’s edicts’.^{xiv}

The ‘friendship pacts’ show that the peace processes were multidirectional and not merely guided from above. The initiators were not humanist champions of advanced positions on tolerance, but local notables, merchants, artisans and farmworkers who exchanged mutual vows to preserve the peace while civil war had set the rest of the kingdom ablaze. Fearing that discord might return to the cities, they swore to forgive and forget past wrongs. On a practical level, they promised to organize military defence together to protect the city day and night, help each other financially, and not foment discord with “false stories, false news and notices designed to stir up sedition and strong feelings”.^{xv}

These documents describe the efforts to build up an extremely fragile peace from the bottom. They emerged from the legal and moral framework set up by the king’s edicts of pacification, widely disseminated in printed, handwritten, and oral form, whose language they imitated. But what was used here was above all a specific modality of resolving social conflicts, great and small – one which was widespread in the early modern period.

This way of making peace, which goes back to the Middle Ages, made use of codified gestures (kissing, embracing, drinking together), not requiring any intervention by judges and tribunals. In Italy they were known as *paci private* (‘private peaces’) and drew on the Christian values of charity and forgiveness. But it would be a mistake to regard them as no more than the expression of an inner moral disposition.^{xvi} For the community and the civil authorities they were legally valid, thanks to the ritual gestures, which were still more important than the presence of a notary. I shall try to explain this with an example. In the past, the ritual gesture of a handshake constituted the validity of an agreement between two parties. Our custom of sealing a contract with a handshake is a pale echo of this way of seeing things. The difference now lies in the fact that the gesture has become only an accessory factor.

In the light of all this, we might conjecture that the friendship pacts between catholics and huguenots, who no longer shared the same church or the same religious rites, were accompanied by the exchange of ancient gestures: touching the other’s hand and shaking it, embracing, kissing, laughing, eating from the same plate, and drinking together.

Coexistence

In the late sixteenth century, the religious landscape of Europe had radically changed, marked as it was by areas in which different Christian faiths lived together. Montaigne recounts this Europe in his *Journal de voyage*, the diary of his journey from France to Italy. It was 1580. Before crossing the Alps and entering the mono-confessional area of the Italian peninsula, he describes the religious mixture of the French, Swiss and German cities, scrupulously noting details of this cohabitation: the churches, the liturgies, the rites and the mixed marriages. If Montaigne had continued on his travels across Europe instead of heading for the capital of the pope, he would have met other patterns of

confessional coexistence: in the Dutch Republic, Britain, and even Eastern Europe, with its complex and fluid political boundaries, where religious sects flourished and various ethnic communities were concentrated – Orthodox Christians, Jews, Muslims and others.

In all these places peace was the outcome of daily practice. It was the result of a search for concrete solutions to many different concrete problems, which tended to occur when one confession occupied the public space with its gestures and rites.

Processions were a constant source of conflict. At Agen, in South-East France, a Calvinist one day encountered a priest, who, preceded by an assistant ringing a little warning bell, marched solemnly through the street to the home of a dying parishioner, carrying the viaticum. As he passed the catholic crowd fell silent, knelt down, and the men raised their hats, but the Calvinist remained standing with his head covered. He barely escaped with his life from the violence of the furious crowd.^{xvii}

The cases reported to the civil authorities tell of Huguenots forced to kneel down and make the sign of the cross,^{xviii} and of catholic priests who silenced their bells before storming into the markets and streets crowded with Huguenots, or who assailed them with their fists or with the crucifix, as the victims reported to the king's commissars. Protestants who raised their hats also risked censure from their own churches. The lutheran ecclesiastical authorities in the imperial city of Augsburg and the calvinist consistories in France (judicial bodies that were half secular and half ecclesiastical, and that controlled customs) had to find a compromise. They decided not to punish their co-religionists for baring their heads as it was simply a gesture of good manners to those passing by and not to the Host, but forbade them to kneel down. Later, the ideal prevailed that it was better for the Huguenots to withdraw into the doorways or quickly slip away from the processions. Sometimes this was not enough, as is shown by the case of Toinette, which was heard before the Parliament of Bordeaux. She was a protestant maidservant who had not knelt down, and who had been chased by the priest with the Host in hand as far as her master's house.^{xix}

Calvinist iconoclasm against crucifixes, altars, statues, paintings and sacred relics included burning, roasting, smashing, ripping, urinating and defecating; such behaviour might set off reactions, during which the bodies of those who had been killed were butchered, mutilated and dragged through the streets. The research of Natalie Zemon Davis and Denis Crouzet has encouraged other historians to give more attention to the ritual significance of these savage actions.^{xx} **[Figure 4.4 here]**

The efforts and compromises with which people tried to live peacefully together stand out against this bloodstained background. The edict of Nantes (1598) established that the Huguenots could refuse to decorate the façades of their homes on the occasion of a catholic procession, but at the same time allowed Catholics to decorate them at their own expense. This does not mean that the regulation was always respected, as is shown by the case of a Huguenot who one day cut the strings of the tapestries that had been hung at the windows for the procession of the Most Blessed Sacrament.^{xxi}

Time itself could become a threat to peace. In 1582, when Montaigne had now returned to France, Pope Gregory XIII reformed the calendar to solve some astronomical problems. Ten days were removed, and so that year there was a jump from October 4 to October 15. This measure had an enormous impact on people's daily lives. It was also an extraordinary pretext for affirming the authority of the papacy, not only over Catholics, but over Protestants and the many Orthodox Christians in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the Venetian Republic.

University professors and German lutheran princes recognized that the catholic calculations were correct, but they still preferred to argue with the stars rather than declare themselves in agreement with the pope-Antichrist. This difference in reckoning time continued into the eighteenth century and created enormous practical problems in cities where Catholics and Protestants were living together but on different days. The local authorities were forced to find compromises to solve a collective problem that risked paralyzing the city and its economic activities. The kings of England, who were also the heads of the anglican Church, behaved in similar fashion to the pope

when they invented a new calendar that was marked by feast-days based, not on the saints, but on events concerning the monarchy.^{xxii}

The peaceful sharing of the same time between different religions was difficult to achieve, even without the pope and the English kings intervening. In Dutch cities catholic housemaids complained that their masters prevented them from not working on catholic holidays or observing fast days, while a protestant servant in Haarlem reported his catholic master to the magistrates for preventing him from working on saints' days, depriving him of his wages.

These stories of difficult coexistence have left written traces: we know them because one of the parties turned to the crown, local magistrates, or various lay and ecclesiastical intermediaries to have justice. This way of proceeding demonstrates that those involved had a sense of the limits of acceptable behaviour. The arguments they used tell us what they expected to be persuasive to the judges. They show there was an imagined justice which made them feel authorized to demand that the rules be respected. Assurances and rules fixed from above and applied at local level by an array of mediators had been assimilated and become values of the community, even if they did not always lead to virtuous or peaceful behaviour.

Divisions could also be resolved without recourse to the magistrates by simply crossing confessional borders. Reformed ministers were often distressed by their co-religionists taking part in dances, parties and the fairs that were held on catholic feast-days.^{xxiii}

Mixed marriages were another way of transgressing religious boundaries. Cross-confessional marriages are a sign of the confessional border's permeability. When Montaigne reached the imperial city of Augsburg, he did not fail to note how frequent they were: "Marriages between Catholics and Lutherans are common, and the more ardent of the pair submits to the laws of the other. A thousand such marriages have been celebrated".^{xxiv} This was all the more significant if we consider that marriage was then not just a union between two individuals, but more of an alliance between families. In evaluating cases of this kind, however, we need to go beyond the tempting but somewhat overworked image of the porousness of the boundaries between different religions or cultures. We need to examine the legal, social and patrimonial aspects in the various contexts, follow the development of cross-confessional marriage in long time-span, consider gender distinctions, and, above all, reconstruct the incidence of conversion policies on the part of the Church towards one of the partners.^{xxv}

Spatial compromises

Peace was not merely the result of practical daily coexistence. It was also carefully negotiated and based on meticulously constructed agreements. Such agreements did not blur the confessional boundary. On the contrary, they defined in detail the rights of each group, dividing the civic space, starting from the churches.^{xxvi}

'Shared churches' (*Simultankirche*) began to appear in the empire even before the peace of Augsburg in 1555. As well as in the empire, they were to be found throughout Europe, wherever public worship by several confessions was allowed: in Poland, Moravia, Ireland and Valtellina. They were places used in turn by catholics and protestants, following a painstaking division of the spaces by means of walls and galleries. Formal contracts governed the times of worship, the division of the sacred space, and the use of the altars and baptisteries. Decrees of the authorities laid down what architectural modifications were permissible, such as the opening of a new door, and even the number and arrangement of the benches. **[Figures 4.5 and 4.6 here]**

Two centuries later, the Enlightenment would sneer at this kind of tolerance, which was not founded on the recognition of the equality of rights or on the growth of public opinion, but was more the result of a scrupulous division of quotas and officially imposed book-keeping. However, seen against its historical background, it was little short of sensational, compared with other situations and other ways of thinking. From the point of view of the Roman papacy, for example,

these arrangements, which allowed the enemies of the faith to use the house of God, were regarded as unacceptably monstrous.

If the shared churches allowed various confessions to occupy the public space, *Auslauf* ('walking out') shows that the problem of peaceful cohabitation of different faiths could find other solutions. This German expression refers to a new kind of religious commuting, which saw groups of dissenters crossing the city gates on Sundays, for all to see, so as to worship as they wished in another state, city or estate. This practice was common throughout Europe, from France to Moravia. It fostered peace and stability among opposing religious groups down to the Enlightenment in the changing geo-political and confessional patchwork of the Empire. *Auslauf* allowed the authorities to give one faith a monopoly of public worship in the city and channel any possible tensions to the outside.

Another of the creative solutions that people of the early modern age found to guarantee peace inside the city walls was the *Schuilkerk* ('hidden church'). The *Schuilkerk* was a solution that lasted a long time in European history. Many synagogues and Jewish oratories survived in certain periods and contexts in this form, well beyond the reforms of the Enlightenment. Its name indicates its Dutch origins, although it extended throughout Europe. In the tolerant Dutch Republic believers had freedom of conscience, but freedom of worship was limited to the domestic space, and applied to those who lived under the same roof. The Dutch reformed Church was the only Church that was allowed to perform religious functions publicly and to intervene publicly in moral affairs. A traveller who had walked the streets of Amsterdam would therefore have come across imposing churches whose whitewashed walls had been stripped of sacred images, their interior purified of any idolatry, as we can see from the representations of them in seventeenth-century Flemish painting. But if that same traveller had penetrated the rows of houses and entered the secluded building in the courtyards, he would have found a *Schuilkerk* able to house as many as 150 people, where dissenters (Catholics, Lutherans, Remonstrants, Mennonites) worshipped in secret.

The *Schuilkerk* was a kind of ghost church, as it had renounced any sign of its presence in the public space. It had no bell-tower, no crosses, no bells, no external ornamentation, it had discreet entrances and the faithful too were expected to show discretion on approaching them. According to Benjamin Kaplan, these places of worship were an 'open secret'.^{xxvii} Both the local authorities and the neighbours were aware of their existence. In 1691 the city authorities of Amsterdam fixed precise rules for the new 'hidden church' of the Catholics: an entrance set back from the road, no parking for carriages in the surrounding streets, no beggars, no groups of people or visible objects of devotion such as rosaries and prayer books. Sometimes these hidden churches were so little hidden that they appeared in travellers' guides. In this way dissenting religious traditions were able to survive in particular periods and contexts, thanks to the tolerance of the city authorities, local officials and neighbours.

The legal context and the social fabric that allowed the development of hidden or clandestine churches dissolve if we cross the invisible border that divided multi-confessional Europe from catholic, inquisitorial and intolerant Europe. In the 1520s and 1530s, following the Reformation, various '*conventicole ereticali*' (clandestine gatherings and communities of dissenters) had spread in Italy, Spain and Portugal. By the end of the century these clandestine communities of 'heretics' had now been uprooted, thanks to an intransigent policy that had banned any form of dissent, including freedom of conscience. Even the social relations on which community life was based had been modified by the sharpening of the policy of repression. Denouncing one's neighbour on suspicion of heresy had actually become a duty, and every good Catholic now had not only to answer to God for this, but also to the judges of the Inquisition.

Conclusion

This study has tried to describe a new concept of peace that gradually took shape after the Reformation. Peace was no longer seen as the consequence of the political and religious *unity* of

Europe, as was the case in Putsch's anthropomorphized map, but was now thought of as the coexistence of different faiths, and so as the result of *division*.

After the fracture of Christendom, religious diversity was no longer limited to the familiar face of the Jew, the Muslim or the Orthodox Christian. It no longer concerned a minority, which could be controlled. Religious diversity now had the aggressive features of a rival confession that threatened to become the majority and to invade the vital spaces, of a disease that could spread through the whole of society and the body politic. To prevent religious violence from destroying that body, some parts of sixteenth-century Europe set up processes of pacification between different faiths. These processes were later implemented and constantly transformed by a great variety of mediators who made the enactment and enculturation of peace practices possible.

There emerged a leopard-skin Europe of mono-confessional catholic areas and areas where Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists attempted a difficult cohabitation. It was a different Europe from that imagined by the early-modern pontiffs, who continued to act as supreme peacemaker in order to unite all catholic princes in the 'just war' against the enemies of the Church, the 'infidels' and the 'heretics'.^{xxviii} It was those same crusading ideals of the 'just war' that had propelled an intolerant Spain to conquer the New World in the late fifteenth century. In the following century, the result of the combined action of conquest, evangelization and destruction of other cultures was called the '*pax hispanica*' (Spanish peace).

But, returning to Europe, the peace that was constructed in everyday practice in specific places, not in the rarefied air of the world of ideas, did not develop straightforwardly. There were retreats and sudden advances, and a mixture of minor and major compromises, provisional rules and solutions, which, as time passed and contexts changed, might alter their meaning, set off new aggressive dynamics, or prove obsolete.^{xxix} Thus, for some Europeans, preserving religious peace became the result of compromises and negotiations, only a few examples of which have been given in the previous pages.

'Living in peace' was therefore an exceptional and precarious achievement in the contested space of Europe, where religion continued to be perceived as the 'difference that makes a difference', and where tolerance had become a practice that placed clear boundaries between communities divided by faith. Despite the rise of contacts, interconnections and circulations between the various regions, empires and cultural areas of the world that occurred in the early modern period, religious identity continued to condition even trade and economic decisions.^{xxx} Those who travelled had the sensation that conflicts and tensions for religious reasons could break out without warning. A mere gesture was enough to spark them off, as the semantics of many gestures – even the most common – was religious in nature. In the 1550s, the printer Giulio Accolti ordered some boiled chicken one Friday in a German inn. He understood German, and had realized that the Lutherans at the next table intended to attack and kill him as a papist if he fasted. When he returned to Italy, he was put on trial by a papal court as a heretic. But, on the other side of the Alps, the act he was accused of had saved his life.^{xxxi}

ⁱ Prosperi 1999; Meurer 2008.

ⁱⁱ Yates 1975; Niccoli 1990.

ⁱⁱⁱ Kamen 1971.

^{iv} *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* 1980, no. 223.

^v Walsham 2006: 278.

^{vi} Prosperi 1996.

^{vii} Benvenuti 2006.

^{viii} Brambilla 2006.

^{ix} Cited by Christin 1997: 58.

^x Christin 1997.

^{xi} The term is Christin's 1997: 73.

xii Cited by Christin 1997: 39, 49, 181.

xiii Kaplan 2007.

xiv Cited by Foa 2011: 241.

xv Cited by Christin 1997: 125.

xvi Niccoli 2007.

xvii Hanlon 1993: 232.

xviii Benoist 1693, II: 592.

xix Kaplan 2007: 80-86; Christin 1997:108-117.

xx Zemon Davis [1973] 1975; Crouzet 1990.

xxi Plancher 1781: 564.

xxii Cressy 1989.

xxiii Sauzet 1979: 173-178.

xxiv Montaigne 1983: 126.

xxv Safley 1984; Seidel Menchi (ed.) 2016.

xxvi Kaplan 2007: 172-234; Te Brake 2009; Spicer ed., 2012.

xxvii Kaplan 2007: 183.

xxviii Prosperi 2005; Visceglia edr. 2013.

xxix “Divided by toleration” is the provocative title of an article by David Mayes (2015), which shows how the solutions for coexistence (*Auslauf*, *Simultankirche*, *shared church*) had a different sense before and after the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which created new dynamics of conflict. The same approach in relation to the Edict of Nantes (1598) in Roussel and Grandjean edrs. 1998.

xxx Burkhardt edr. 2007; Antunes, Halevi and Trivellato edrs. 2014.

xxxi Bonora 2011.