

## Acknowledgements

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When I moved to Basel in January 2018, I had already been working for six years on making the dream of a PhD in Practical Theology possible. The final step in the process, prior to moving, was securing my visa to live in Basel for one year in order to conduct ethnographic research, as part of my doctoral work at the University of Basel, about home, church, and asylum-seeking. It is fitting that my final hurdle before diving fully into my PhD work was the Swiss Migration Office. For two sleepless days I marshalled all of my resources, including numerous staff members from the Theology Faculty and International Office at the University of Basel, who wrote letters, tracked down information, and responded to my many frantic emails. As I investigated migration policies, called numerous offices, and hounded staff at the Swiss Migration Office, the many privileges that made this dogged pursuit possible became clearer to me. My financial and cultural resources, including educational attainments, U.S. citizenship, a savings account, and access to university and legal support, all helped me to finally secure a visa. As I learned more about the lives of asylum-seekers, who interact with this same system, the disparities in socio-economic privilege between myself and them, based entirely on place and circumstances of birth, became viscerally apparent to me.

The level of effort, partnership, and support required to navigate the immigration system, as well as a willingness to reach beyond my comfort zone, came to define my work on this project. In the end, this book is so much more about relationships, surprising turns in the road, building trust, and a willingness to reflect, reevaluate, and sit with uncertainty, than it is about any final product. Yet, here, at least, is that final product, which would not have been possible without the creativity, humor, brilliance, and generosity of so many people.

First, I extend my deep, heartfelt thanks to my doctoral advisor, Prof. Dr. Andrea Bieler, Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Basel, who walked into my office at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, in the spring of 2012 and invited me to come to Europe to work with her and pursue a PhD. It took me six more years, another master's degree, two more higher education jobs, and tireless planning and preparation to finally take Dr. Bieler up on the invitation. I could not think of a better, more dedicated advisor with whom to complete a dissertation, es-

pecially one in the areas of migration and theology. This book would not have been possible without Dr. Bieler's extensive academic knowledge, especially her work on vulnerability, trauma, conviviality, and pastoral care; her leadership in the field of Practical Theology; and her willingness to explore new questions and perspectives. In addition, Dr. Bieler is committed to cultivating partnerships across disciplines, continents, and languages and to encouraging scholarship and students that bridge these divides. This commitment strengthened my written work and made it possible for me to complete many of the practical aspects of this book. Dr. Bieler's dedication to this project included advising and guiding me during countless formal and informal meetings; organizing colloquia, workshops, and conferences; and providing connections and opportunities to expand and share my work. When I returned to the United States, and the COVID-19 pandemic further disrupted the ability to meet in person, she was regularly available to meet via Zoom to guide this project to completion.

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