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Author(s): C. Scott Dixon
Source: Central European History, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Mar., 2007), pp. 1–33
Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of Conference Group for Central European History of the American Historical Association
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/20457197
Accessed: 08-03-2017 23:12 UTC

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Urban Order and Religious Coexistence in the German Imperial City: Augsburg and Donauwörth, 1548–1608

C. Scott Dixon

In the writing of the German Reformation, there has long been a strong association between urban history and the evangelical movement. The sentiment has been around since the days of Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), but it was the publication of Bernd Moeller’s *Imperial Cities and the Reformation* (1962) that turned the rather casual notion into a research paradigm. Moeller imagined the Reformation in terms of the medieval citiescape. “It is important to recognize,” he wrote, “that the Reformation was introduced almost everywhere according to the forms prescribed by the city constitution, and that it had its foundation in the city's communal mentality.”1 Constitutionally, there was a clear filiation of development to account for the later Protestant church. Throughout the medieval period urban communes had been securing rights and privileges extending the claims and functions of local sovereignty, from the regulation of the immediate economy, the control of taxation, and the administration of lesser jurisdiction, to the guardianship of parish religion.2 In a similar manner, when Moeller spoke of the collective mentality of the German city, he did so in order to draw attention to the norms and values of urban governance and the similar reserve of norms preached in early evangelical theology. In its origins, the Imperial city was characterized as a political association, bound by oath, joined by common will, created in order to preserve the peace. The urban values underwriting this myth of community were those that placed collective welfare above the interests of the individual—concord, unity, justice, love, peace, and the common good (*Gemeinnutz*). Further legitimation of the communal ideal was provided by the medieval affinity to imagine the city in terms of a sacral corporation (*corpus Christianum*), with the religious standing of each member of the union bearing upon collective salvation. Little separates this cast of mind from evangelical theology and its stress on brotherly love, peace, and

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the community of believers. God’s Word, to use the phrasing of the town clerk of Nördlingen, heals the divisions of the commune as it heals the divisions of the soul.3

Despite its essential truths, some aspects of this model can prove deceptive. To begin with, drawing parallels between the social and political dimensions of urban reform and the reading of evangelical theology can easily overlook historical contingencies. In the hands of its many expositors, Scripture placed few limitations on interpretation; it spoke in general terms, in very free and approximate language, and it seemed to offer an almost limitless context for the idea of reform. The urban Reformation, in contrast, was a calculated attempt to control interpretation, domesticate visions of religious change, and construct a public understanding of Reformation that did not threaten the status quo.4 In Nuremberg, for instance, the council responded to the movement by containing it: censorship was stepped up, preaching was regulated, the public space was stripped of all religious propaganda, the clergy was policed. The “pure Word of God” became synonymous with Lutheranism; Zwinglianism was excluded, Anabaptism was excluded, the Sacramentarians were excluded, and each preacher in Nuremberg’s lands was examined to ensure that he honored the mandates. The council became, in effect, the bishop in the city, with the church subject to civic law and the clergy subject to secular obligations. The magistracy even set its stamp on tropological readings of Holy Writ. The council granted that brotherly love was equivalent to the ideal of the common good, but the common good was not equivalent to an extension of rule or the dissolution of social distinctions. Civic welfare could only be preserved if God’s will was realized, and that meant rule by the elite. The citizens of Nuremberg were left in little doubt about how the Lutheran church, from its doctrine to its ecclesiology to its social values, should be understood. Public religion, as a set of practices and doctrines, was synthesized, legitimated, and enforced by the urban authorities, and there was little sense that it was the outcome of an open dialogue with other notions of corporation or identity.5


URBAN ORDER AND RELIGIOUS COEXISTENCE

The other contingency was the complexity of the actual process of change. Once it became a historical event, the pull of religious reform was often more centrifugal than centripetal, the very consequence of the efforts made to centralize and normalize the movement. Different results occurred in different settings, but all evangelical cities experienced, to some extent, a transformation of social and political norms, a new dynamic of urban rule, increased tensions and a heightened potential for conflict, and a more complex political landscape as communes, councils, princes, estates, and Emperors vied with each other in efforts to enforce their will. Perhaps the most dramatic examples of this occurred in the Hanseatic communes in the north. In these towns the Reformation took shape as a conflict between principles of communal governance, led by the guilds and the influential evangelical burghers, and the council oligarchy, those Catholic members of the ruling elite who were associated with closed systems of rule. In these locations the Reformation had revolutionary potential and could bring about, as in Lübeck, a momentary change of the ruling elite. But even in large Imperial cities such as Nuremberg and Strasbourg, where the implementation of the Reformation was effectively controlled by the council, the change of religion exposed social and political fault lines. In Strasbourg, for instance, tensions and ruptures soon occurred as the council divided between the radical evangelicals, the moderates, and a minority of the aristocracy who remained religious conservatives. In this city, as in many others, urban politics was fractured as political discourse became "biblicized" and the language of power turned to theology for legitimation. As the study of events in Augsburg and Donauworth will illustrate, this potential for political conflict remained in evidence throughout the sixteenth century—and in fact, within the biconfessional cities, as will be demonstrated below, the terms of the Peace of Augsburg made conditions even more fragile.


In many parts of Germany, the historical reality in the civic setting was a mix of religious communities, some public and some clandestine, but all aware of the existence of the others and in contact at a certain level. After the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the credal landscape grew extremely complex, with biconfessional and triconfessional cities and territories, enclaves of Protestant subjects in the midst of Catholic domains (and vice versa), and even parishes and churches divided between faiths, with services taking place in different areas or scheduled at different times. But even before the Peace established the conditions for the religious plurality of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the German lands were home to mixed forms of religious culture. A number of reasons account for this, ranging from issues of jurisdiction and sovereignty (divided lordships, overlapping boundaries of rule, the legal status of a power within the Empire, dispensations or agreements within a territory), changes of rule, or conversions of rulers, to the historical reality facing the first few generations of Protestants: simply put, the Reformation was slow to take hold in some German lands; in many others, reform was only half-hearted, piecemeal, and incomplete. The situation in the towns and cities of the Empire, while similar in terms of the reasons that confessional communities were able to evolve or endure, was nevertheless unique in terms of the problems presented by the relatively closed setting. Unlike the rural parisioners, the indwellers of an Imperial city would have seen and experienced encounters among the various religious communities on a regular basis. This could make the urban communes fairly volatile settings, especially during the first phase of the Reformation; yet it did not preclude the possibility of multiconfessional environments, and it did not dissuade the ruling elite from preserving the conditions that safeguarded religious minorities in the commune.

For a recent discussion of the literature and conceptualization of the theme of plural-confessionality, see Dagmar Freist, Toleranz und Konfessionspolitik. Konfessionell gemischte Ehen in Deutschland 1555 bis ca. 1806 (unpublished Habilitationsschrift, Universität Osnabrück, 2003), 141–170.


The difficulties posed by religious plurality must be understood against the backdrop of the sixteenth-century idea of tolerance, which was not equivalent to the modern notion of neutrality of attitude. None of the magisterial reformers developed or defended the idea that religious ideas might be left to the judgment of the individual or might vary or proliferate according to conscience. Martin Luther counseled some degree of mildness at the start of his career, speaking out against the coercion of beliefs and placing trust in the persuasive powers of the Word; but by mid-career he was as fanatical and persecutory as the Catholics he condemned. Other reformers, Philipp Melanchthon and Jean Calvin in particular, thought in similar terms, and the churches they helped to build absorbed the same spirit. It could hardly be otherwise, given that the first few generations of reformers, who now claimed to represent their own strains of absolute truth, were the spokesmen of an age in which the idea of religious unity remained axiomatic and society was not yet familiar with the long-term experience of religious change. Lacking both a conceptual framework and the ability to defuse present tensions by drawing on past precedent, the authorities in Germany tended to justify the existence of religious minorities by claiming that external factors (usually economic and political) made it a necessity, or they spoke in terms of the temporary nature of the arrangement, a state of affairs that would pass once the religious problems in the Empire had been resolved. But nowhere in the German lands was the idea of tolerance championed as a religious or a philosophical principle, and this was very much in step with the rest of Europe. Degrees of toleration were thus not the corollary of a positive approach to interconfessional relations; where they emerged, they were made possible by the absence

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14 Even in the Dutch Republic, a land famed for its high threshold of acceptance, "intellectual relations between the different confessions generally remained tense and exclusivism was the order of the day, however much coexistence actually imposed itself in everyday relations and was accepted as a reality". See Willem Frijhoff, Embodied Belief. Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History, Studies in Dutch Religious History, no. 1 (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 48; for Germany, see Bob Scribner, "Preconditions of Tolerance and Intolerance," in Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 39: "In essence, only a very meagre degree of toleration was possible in sixteenth-century Germany, and then it existed only on an ad hoc basis"; for the broader framework and range of literature, see Winfried Schulze, "Pluralisierung als Bedrohung. Toleranz als Lösung," in Der Westfälische Friede. Diplomatie—politishe Zäsure—kulturelles Umfeld—Rezeptionsgeschichte, ed. Heinz Duchhardt, Historische Zeitschrift, Beihefte, no. 26 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998), 115–140; Ronald G. Asch, "Das Problem des religiösen Pluralismus im Zeitalter der 'Konfessionalisierung': Zum historischen Kontext der konfessionellen Bestimmungen des Westfälischen Friedens," Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte 134 (1998): 1–32.
of a perceived threat, a temporary state of relations that could defuse the
tensions and render the intolerable acceptable or unessential.15

Mindful of the volatile nature of local confessional relations, early modern
urban councils took great pains to map out a religious landscape on the city,
regulating where the communities could meet and worship, limiting those
areas of the public space where Catholics and Protestants might gather for
celebration, ceremony, or any form of ritual display, and placing clear
boundaries between the two communities, so that the points of contact
and intersection were kept to a minimum.16 Religious pluralism only
existed insofar as each religion was kept within its specified bounds.
There was nothing novel or unusual about this type of dissection of the
urban environment. Boundaries were essential features of the age, both as
physical and symbolic divides, and not only those that established divisions
between jurisdictional or legal areas or those that separated the urban
spheres of the sacred and the profane: even at the level of the household,
boundaries clearly defined relations between the social, secular, and spiritual
worlds.17 Nor was it a concern that had been created by the Reformation.
The late-medieval city was no less a patchwork of sacred and secular
enclaves, and in some sense it was even more fragile than the later biconfes-
sional commune in that there was only one corpus of religious truth for all
sides of the contending arguments.18 Nevertheless, the confessional divisions
of the sixteenth century did present the secular authorities with a com-
pletely new feature of the urban landscape—religious plurality—and it
forced the magistracy of the cities to introduce measures that made it
possible for antagonistic communities to coexist.

Different regions adopted different measures. In the Dutch Republic, where
the public church was Calvinist, the Catholic faithful were forced to worship in
discrete areas of the cities, such as private chapels or any other area set aside
by the authorities. By granting religious dissenters their own space in the city, the
urban officials not only diffused potential conflicts, but also “they neutralized the

15 As Frijhoff remarks, “coexistence” captures the state of affairs during this period better than the
word tolerance. Willem Frijhoff, “Dimensions de la coexistance confessionnelle,” in The Emergence
of Tolerance in the Dutch Republic, ed. Christiane Berkhens-Steventinck, Jonathan I. Israel, and
G. H. M. Posthumus Meyjes, Studies in the History of Christian Thought, no. 76 (Leiden: Brill,

16 On the relationship between the sacred and the secular, see now Will Coster and Andrew Spicer,

Modern Germany,” in Religion and Culture in Germany (1400–1800), ed. Lyndal Roper, Studies
in Medieval and Reformation Traditions: History, Culture, Religion, Ideas, no. 81 (Leiden: Brill,
2001), 302–22.

18 Cf. J. Jeffery Tyler, Lord of the Sacred City: The Episcopus exclusus in Late Medieval and Early Modern
Germany, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, no. 72 (Leiden: Brill, 1999).
threat posed by dissent to the identity and thus to the very integrity of communities.” In France, where ceding space to a rival faith was first imagined in terms of pollution and corruption, it took many years of deliberate policy to give the urban environment a semblance of safe or neutral ground, a type of “active forgetting” (oubliance) that worked to erase the public memory of the bitter divisions of the Wars of Religion. As Keith P. Luria has demonstrated with his study of coexistence in Poitou, the construction and preservation of a sense of religious identity was conditioned by a complex framework of concerns and values: on some occasions, religion was the paramount determinant; on other occasions, the importance of religion was overshadowed by other values, whether economic, familial, or social. Local conditions determined local relations. As Luria writes, “the permeability of the confessional boundary depended on the context within which and the issues around which it was erected.”

In Germany, with its interwoven sovereign territories and overlapping jurisdictions, each city tended to deal with confessional plurality on its own terms. Of course, there were similar trends: the ordering of urban space, the suppression of public debate, the manipulation of religious discourse, and the regulation of religious gatherings and symbolic display. Some cities, among them Oettingen, Kaufbeuren, Biberach, and Wetzler, tried to overcome the problem by forcing the communities to share the parish church, either by creating architectural partitions or legislating the times of worship. But there was no general approach to dealing with relations between Protestant and Catholic communities in the urban setting, nor could there be, given the range of problems that multiconfessional relations could bring to the surface. To offer some examples, in Essen, the main concern was city sovereignty, destabilized by the open disputes between Lutheran and Calvinist clergymen; in Regensburg, relations between Catholics and Protestants were complicated by the intricate legal landscape of the city, with the result that religious divisions were soon felt in matters relating to rights, taxation, dues, fees, and medieval immunities; in Oppenheim, the religious conflict was waged in large part as a struggle between the communities


over the right to monopolize public religious display; in Naumburg, the site of contestation was a narrow cobble street running from the market square to the cathedral church that became, in effect, the locus of the struggle between the Catholic chapter and the evangelical council over civic sovereignty. The city councilors of Augsburg and Donauwörth had an equally complex setting and approached the regulation of religious affairs in a similar way. They, too, endeavored to ensure that Catholics and Protestants remained within specified sacred and secular boundaries. This made coexistence feasible over the short term, but it did nothing to eliminate the grounds or the potential for conflict.

The Peace of Augsburg (1555) and the Biconfessional Cities

The importance of fixed boundaries is borne out by the history of confessional relations in those urban communes where the religious settlement remained a compromise. In the German Imperial cities, the turning point in the history of religious coexistence came with the Peace of Augsburg (1555). At Augsburg, the territorial rulers of Lutheran and Catholic states secured the right to determine religion in their domains (cuius regio, eius religio). Histories of tolerance often find a point of origin in this settlement, and it did create the legal framework for biconfessionality in the lands of the Empire. In the Imperial cities, however, the same right of reform (ius reformandi) was not extended to those communes where both religions were practiced at the time of the Peace. Article twenty-seven read as follows:

Since, however, in many free and Imperial cities both religions, namely our old religion and the religion of the Augsburg Confession, have been practiced for a number of years, so should the same [religions] henceforth remain and be


preserved in the same cities, and the citizens and other indwellers of the free and Imperial cities, of both the secular and the spiritual estate, peacefully and considerately live with and next to each other, not forcing the abolishment of the other religion with its practices and ceremonies, nor attempting to force the other out; rather, in accordance with the Peace, each party should leave the other in a peaceful and tranquil state in its religion, faith, church services, orders, and ceremonies, as well as its property and goods and in all other things, as stated above and as has been resolved and decreed for the sake of both religions of the Imperial estates.25

The essential purpose of the article was to preserve the Catholic communities re-established by Emperor Charles V. After having defeated the Protestant princes at Mühlberg (April 24, 1547), Charles took his revenge on the evangelical cities by imposing massive war indemnities and forcing through a stop-gap solution to religious division, the Interim. The Interim made some concessions to the Protestants, but it was in essence a Catholic formulation of the faith and many Lutherans refused to accept it. By 1555, however, it had been in force long enough in some of the southern Imperial cities to restore the Catholic communities after decades of evangelical dominance. As a consequence, at the time of the signing of the Peace of Augsburg, both Protestants and Catholics had equal claims on the sacred and the profane in some urban communes.

The article was a formula for dissention, as most of the Imperial estates recognized. Even before the city representatives arrived in Augsburg, few held out any hope that the diet would provide a lasting solution in religious affairs.26 Ultimately, this sense of melancholy was justified. Despite urban protestations, Ferdinand I confirmed the inclusion of the article in the final recess and its conditions were enforced. Legally and politically, however, its implications were never made clear. Did it apply to all cities or just those where biconfessionality was in force at the time of the peace? How many members of a faith made up a religious community? What sort of institutional and constitutional conditions should be guaranteed within the city for the maintenance of the faith? What degree of independent power should be granted to the minority community, both with respect to the running of its own churches as well as the role of its members in urban governance? The Peace did not answer any of these questions directly. Nor did it provide a basic framework or principle for the exercise of power between the two religious communities (which was usually a relationship between unequal partners, a majority and a minority). No stipulation was made that guaranteed rights for the two communities in equal measure. The main concern, and

indeed the ultimate purpose of the Peace of Augsburg itself, was to maintain
the status quo. As a consequence, none of the communes designated as bicon-
fessional could be certain of the political or jurisdictional conditions that
would make such a state of affairs possible.27

Understanding the reach of the article was fundamental to understanding the
legal and political status of the cities in the Holy Roman Empire, and it would
occupy the Imperial jurists for the rest of the century. For most of the Imperial
cities, it was not an immediate problem. Those Lutheran communes that had
never introduced the Interim, as well as those that had quickly abolished it,
were essentially monoconfessional at the time of the Peace and thus did not
have to contend with a Catholic congregation. Equally, in the Catholic cities
where the status quo had been preserved, there was no need for concessions.
In the south, however, there was a clutch of Swabian communes that were
confessionally mixed at the time of the Peace. These were the cities (Augsburg,
Donauwörth, Kaufbeuren, Leutkirch, Biberach, Dinkelsbühl, and Ravensburg)
that would be a type of laboratory for the Imperial solution to the problem of
religious change. In these cities, both faiths were in evidence when the Peace
was signed and religious coexistence was legally preserved by suspending the
_ius reformandi_. The problem, however, as has been suggested above, was that
this condition ran counter to the nature of urban religion, for it was difficult
to accommodate religious plurality in a commune where the religious settle-
ment was a compromise, where both confessions had the right and the latitude
to compete for space and power within the city walls, and where both confes-
sions had a public forum and a shared language for their claims.

The truth of this remark is borne out by a study of events in Augsburg and
Donauwörth at a time when the claims of the confessional communities
could no longer be held in check by the urban landscape. In both communes,
concerns arose that made it possible for religious ideas to intersect directly
with an urban crisis. In Augsburg, it was the issue of time and thus control of
the secular and the spiritual order. In Donauwörth, it was the issue of space
and thus power to determine degrees of separation and proximity. Both instances
are noteworthy because they laid bare the limits of coexistence in a setting where
claims to justice and legitimacy were rooted in antagonistic claims to absolute
truth. As Olivier Christin has remarked, “... the gravest tensions arose there
where the distinction between the profane and the sacred, between the public
problem and the affair of conscience, vacillates, and where a community
appeared by itself to determine the lot of an entire city through the impos-
tion—by voluntary means or otherwise—of its own religious choices. The

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27 Axel Gotthard, Der Augsburger Religionsfrieden, Reformationsgeschichtliche Studien und Texte,
no. 148 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2004), pp. 252–64, 253: “Tatsächlich funktionierte die Bikonfessio-
nalität dort, wo sie praktiziert wurde, nur unter großen Schwierigkeiten, und es war vielfach ganz
unklar, ob sie in einem Gemeinwesen zu praktizieren war.”
conquest, the management, and the control of space and time thus provoked, on a number of occasions, conflicts of exceptional length and scope.”

Augsburg and the Gregorian Calendar

From the moment Augsburg became a Protestant city, the council directed the course of reform, placing a ban on Catholic preaching, restricting Catholic services to a minority of churches, compelling all clergy to adopt the evangelical faith or leave the city, and removing conspicuous objects of devotion from the churches. But the new Protestant order did not last. With the introduction of the Interim and the constitutional changes imposed by Charles V, religious relations were transformed. Protestants lost the right to worship in the main city churches; instead, Lutheran services were limited to the cloister churches or the smaller “preaching houses” adjoined to the Catholic foundations. Overnight, the confessional profile of Augsburg was inverted, with the Lutheran community, the faith of the majority of citizens, pressed to the margins, while the Catholics were handed the reins of power. Over time, partly in response to Lutheran grievances, partly due to the natural flux of political power, Protestants made a recovery; but it was always a fragile compact. Less than ten years after the signing of the Peace, rumors were circulating that there would soon be unrest in Augsburg. Indeed, the religious tensions began to color the reputation of the city. To offer an example, just after mid-century, having recently become a doctor in canon and civil law at the University of Ferrara, the native son and strict Lutheran Hieronymus Fröschel reconsidered his career prospects in the Imperial city, his main reservation being the fact that the Peace had preserved the exercise of both religions, with “one section of the citizenry serving Christ, the other serving Belial.” Catholics and Protestants frequently abused one another in public, screaming insults from windows, refusing to greet in the streets, and disrupting each other’s services. Tensions escalated

even further in the 1560s when the Jesuits arrived, with no less a figure than Peter Canisius at the fore. From the very moment the Jesuits appeared, claimed the Lutherans, they had worked incessantly to turn the Catholics against the evangelical congregation, admonishing separation, speaking of them as if they were the worst of all possible heretics, “indeed, even as beasts and dogs.”

The fragility of confessional relations was demonstrated by the difficulties that surfaced with the calendar reform. Pressed on one side by the Catholic duke of Bavaria, pressed on the other by the bishop of Augsburg, and mindful that the Austrian Habsburgs administered the neighboring margravate of Burgau, the Augsburg city council resolved in early January 1583 to introduce the Gregorian calendar. The councilors, most of whom were Catholic, defended their decision with reference to the importance of the lands of southern Europe to the economic welfare of the city. To use the wording issued in defense, the decision was reached “for purely civic and political reasons … without the least intention, however, of obstructing or interfering in any way in the teaching, belief, order, or ceremonies of one or the other of the two religions.”

Not all agreed with this decision. Four members of the council, three of whom were church wardens, submitted a supplication in protest. When this failed to have an effect, the protesters forwarded the appeal to the Imperial Chamber Court (Reichskammergericht). Unmoved, the Augsburg council, emboldened by the duke of Bavaria, the posting of a militia, and ultimately an Imperial mandate ordering the introduction of the new calendar throughout the Empire, held its resolve. As a consequence, relations between the two religious communities grew extremely tense. Many of the Lutherans refused to honor the new calendar and continued to observe secular and spiritual time as they had before. Protestant

Warmbrunn, Zwei Konfessionen in einer Stadt, 362.


First made public in the bull Inter gravissimus (February 24, 1582), the calendar was a scientific attempt to bring the religious calendar in line with the solar year. Over the course of time the inaccuracies of the Julian calendar meant that the spring equinox was off by ten days. This resulted in Easter (and other observances such as Lent and Pentecost) falling on the wrong days. Scholars had been aware of this problem for many years, but it was Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585), surrounded by a college of experts, who introduced the necessary reforms, the most profound being the removal of ten days from one of the calendar months during its year of introduction. Unsurprisingly, the calendar received a mixed reception throughout the lands of Protestant Germany, primarily because it was the work of the papacy, but also due to the manner of its introduction. Felix Steive, “Der Kalenderstreit des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts in Deutschland,” in Denkschriften der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München 54, Abt. 3 (Munich, 1880), 1–19; on reactions in Germany, see Alfred Wendehorst, “Die Folgen der Einführung des Gregorianischen Kalenders für das Wirtschaftsleben besonders in Franken und Schwaben,” in Wirtschaftskräfte und Wirtschaftsweg. II: Wirtschaftskräfte in der europäischen Expansion, ed. Jürgen Schneider (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1978), 381–91. Dates in this discussion of Augsburg will be given according to the Gregorian calendar.
preachers railed at the council from the pulpits and refused to accept any reforms that came from Rome.

Eventually, the tensions reached the breaking point. On June 4, 1584, the council sent the civic official August Weissier together with an armed guard to the home of Georg Müller, Augsburg's leading Lutheran clergyman and most vocal opponent of the calendar, with the orders to take him into custody and expel him from the city. It was nothing less than a kidnapping ("quick and Spanish" was how Müller described it), but it failed, for the alarm had been raised by his pregnant wife and a sympathetic crowd quickly gathered. With rumors circulating that a wagon was waiting to take him to Rome, the crowd dragged the clergyman away and hid him in a local bakery. Weissier, in the meantime, who had managed to escape, mustered the town militia. At that point it turned into a full-scale riot. The gates were shut, the arsenal was looted, shots were fired (one of which hit Weissier in the arm), while the councilors took refuge behind locked doors in the town hall. Order was only restored when the Lutheran clergymen advised the people to return to their homes. This fragile peace would hold in the days that followed, but it did nothing to create an understanding between the two confessional communities. Nor could it. Lutherans and Catholics were now at odds over the control of time.

One of the first Protestant princes to come to the aid of the Augsburg Protestants was Ludwig of Württemberg. Duke Ludwig commissioned his Tübingen professors to draw up a report on the calendar in support of the resistance. Undersigned by the rector, chancellor, doctors, and regents of the university (November 24, 1583), it condemned the introduction of the Gregorian calendar, claiming that the reordering of the church festivals was not only a clear violation of the religious peace (thus rejecting the contention of the Augsburg council that it was a matter of adiaphora), but an attempt to control the Christian calendar, by which was meant the ceremonies, the services, the very "memory" of Christ's own church.

“This calendar is thus not a political work (neither mere nor mixtum),” concluded the report, “but rather a spiritual work, which in truth concerns the exercitium Religionis Christianae.”\textsuperscript{36} A university debate on the same theme, presided over by Jakob Heerbrand, arrived at a similar conclusion, adding that it was no accident that the papacy was focusing its efforts at the very location where the Lutheran confession had first been revealed.\textsuperscript{37} Behind the calculations of Christoph Clavis and his fellow papal astronomers, the Lutheran professors of Tübingen saw the Antichrist at work, and they believed that the calendar was the first step in a campaign to weaken faith by perverting Christian notions of time. “For this calendar is nothing other than the first letter in his ABC,” ran the report. “Once we have to learn the first, little by little the others will follow on.”\textsuperscript{38}

The Lutheran theologians had a distinct understanding of sacral history, a complex narrative derived from Scripture, history, prophecy, and number reckoning, and for most orthodox thinkers, the Day of Judgment was at hand.\textsuperscript{39} In the trajectory of Lutheran belief, time had an order and an end. The calendar, however, rejected this conceit. “In the whole text of the Gregorian calendar,” wrote Michael Mästlin, “there is not the merest mention of the Day of Judgment. On the contrary, the work comes with the title \textit{Kalendarium Gregorianum Perpetuum}, the perpetual or everlasting calendar.”\textsuperscript{40} The calendar reform was thus not only a blasphemous attempt to rewrite the course of sacral history, but it was also a deliberate attempt to undermine the depth of belief in the Protestant church. For without a sense of ending, the Lutherans argued, faith would lack in urgency and ultimately wane. Moreover, with this eschatological backdrop in mind, Lutheran astronomers drew attention to the importance of signs, portents, and historical events for understanding the divine purpose. A reformed calendar would put everything out of joint—the present, the past, and future salvation. “And thus would we remain in darkness about


\textsuperscript{37}Martin Curbin, \textit{Disputatio, de adiaphoris, et calendario gregoriano} (Tübingen: Hock, 1584), 58.

\textsuperscript{38}Sattler, \textit{Geschichte des Herzogtums Württemberg}, 58.


\textsuperscript{40}Cited in Steive, “Kalenderstreit,” 27; similar observations were made in Lucas Osander, \textit{Bedencken, Ob der neue papsitische Kalender ein Notsuiffi bey der Christenheit seie} (Tübingen: Gruppenbach, 1583), 12; Heliasius Rößlin, \textit{Kurtz Bedencken von der Emendation defl Jan, durch Babt Gregoriam den XIII. fürgenom, un[fd] von seinem Kalender, nach ihm Kalendarium Gregorianum perpetuum intituliert} (Strasbourg: Rübel, 1583), 9; and Tobias Moller, \textit{Kurtzer bericht, Von der eigenschaft dieser Jare und unserer gegenwerti gen Zeit} (s.l., 1585).
this as well,” warned Mästlin, “of when God had created the world, and when and how he had revealed himself through prophecy, through histories, and finally through his precious son.”41 The heavenly signs had to correspond to an accurate understanding of earthly time. Without this knowledge, there would be no way of knowing when the prophecies of Daniel would be fulfilled, including Daniel’s prediction that a certain mark of the Antichrist’s coming would be an attempt to alter the course of time.

Inside the city, relations between the two confessional communities reached an impasse. No compromise or simulacrum could neutralize a disagreement over something so fundamental to notions of order as the passage of time. Instead, by way of public gestures and hostile discourse, members of the Lutheran community distanced themselves even further from the Catholics and placed clear boundaries around their faith. Artisans and shopkeepers refused to honor the Gregorian reforms, making a show of working on holidays or strolling through the city streets in Sunday clothes as the Catholics went to work. Butchers refused to slaughter according to Catholic time, thereby forcing the council to hire outsiders for the job. Lutheran members of the city court declined to attend during their holidays, often giving cause for the condemned to question the justice meted out by a rump session. On one such occasion, even the hangman wondered aloud, “Must I work on holidays as well?”42 Holidays, including Christmas and New Year’s, were observed on different days, and the Lutherans made a point of celebrating in a manner that caught the attention of the authorities, carrying their gifts through the streets or dressing up for the occasion. The seasons were out of joint, as one of the many almanacs, in half-gest, explained.43

To a greater extent than ever before, the Lutherans began to think of the Catholics as a separate community within the city, ill-meaning and antagonistic, now not only set apart by the principles of their theology and the nature of their faith, but also by the very timeframe in which they lived, worked, and worshiped. Catholic time was viewed as godless, outside the bounds of the true corpus Christianum. Georg Kölderer, the Lutheran city chronicler, saw evidence of this as he took stock of events through the

41Michael Mästlin, Aufführlicher und Gründlicher Bericht Von der allgemeinen, und nunmehr bey sechszehn Hundert Jaren, von dem ersten Keyser Julio, bis auff jetzige unsere Zeit, im ganzen H. Römischen Reich gebrauchter Jarrechnung oder Kalender (Heidelberg: Müller, 1583), 2.

42Benedikt Mauer, “Gemain Geschrey” und “teglich Reden.” Georg Kölderer—an Augsburger Chronist des konfessionellen Zeitalters, Veröffentlichungen der Schwäbischen Forschungsgemeinschaft, Series 1, Studien zur Geschichte des bayerischen Schwaben, no. 29 (Augsburg: Wißner, 2001), 188–9; Warmbrunn, Zwei Konfessionen in einer Stadt, 363–5; Kaltenbrunner, “Der Augsburger Kalenderstreit,” 519–20. Faced with this type of recalcitrance, the Catholics would sometimes go out of their way to make sure that Lutherans were forced to work on their holidays. Georg Müller relates an example of this in Augspurgische Handel, Miv.

years—the fire in the Catholic quarter of the city, a run of bad harvests, monstrous births. At the same time, the Lutherans of Augsburg began to think in terms of their own local history, an account of events that illustrated that God was clearly on their side. Popular accounts of the day of the riot were replete with evidence of miracles testifying to Müller’s role as a type of Protestant saint, from the prevention of his abduction, his miraculous escape, and the appearance of the halo around the sun, to the death and burial of Müller’s wife, the first martyr of the cause, whose aborted child, it was said, made one final gruesome gesture to bring the moral to a close.44 Thinking within a broader historical panorama, the Lutherans also drew parallels with Old Testament histories such as the Israelites crossing the Red Sea or other biblical accounts of the favored people of God. Needless to say, the Augsburg Catholics were not considered part of this covenant.

Given the importance of religion for the ordering of the urban environment, it was inevitable that the religious quarrel would affect relations of power. Divisions surfaced during the attempts at negotiation between the council, the commune, the Lutheran clergy, and the external powers drawn into the affair. Tensions increased when the Imperial court reversed its previous decision and issued a mandate in support of the council (which ultimately led to the dismissal of the dissenting group from the council as well).45 A first attempt at resolution (June 1584), while securing the introduction of the calendar along with a guarantee “on oath and in writing” that the council would not violate the Peace, did nothing to overcome the tensions. In fact, matters grew worse with the rise of a dispute over the nomination and appointment of the Protestant clergy. Tensions flared up immediately, necessitating the arrival of an Imperial commission headed by Wilhelm of Bavaria (July/August 1584). The commission undertook a thorough investigation of the conflict and ended with a settlement, but the divisions remained, just as they remained after the conclusion of the second Imperial commission (August 1585).46 At this stage the council began to expel the more defiant evangelicals, most of whom went to join brothers in arms in the neighboring city of Ulm. Religious disorder had infected the body politic. Protestants began to speak openly of how the political schism was

45Warmbrunn, Zwei Konfessionen in einer Stadt, 365.
divided along confessional lines, roughly corresponding to the interests of the commune and the interests of the council—both legitimate, but fundamentally at odds. Even the Württemberg delegates stopped thinking of the Augsburg polity as a single sovereign body of rule (ein corpus). 47

From this point forward, religious quarrels and political tensions divided the public sphere. Fights broke out over the honor of Georg Müller, for while the Lutherans considered him a hero and a quasi-saint, the Catholics viewed him, even in absentia, as a rebel and an enemy of the common good. Threatening letters were tossed into stairwells, one of which was left for August Weissier, the official who first tried to expel Müller from the town, ending with the promise that Weissier would be strangled in his sleep. Lutherans—and not just the church wardens and the remnants of the original Lutheran clergy, but local members of the community—challenged the right of the council to interfere in church affairs. One group of women, for instance, agreed to attend the sermons of Johannes Rößler (a council appointment, put in office after the expulsion of Müller), but refused to have their children baptized by Rößler or any other clergyman appointed by the council. In protest, they sat with their backs to the pulpit. 48 Citizens grew suspicious of one another, not always certain whether neighbors were Catholics or Lutherans or perhaps members of more threatening communities—Flacians, Calvinists, Schwenckfelders, Manicheans. Georg Kölderer never really trusted the Lutheran clergyman Elias Ehinger, even after he had denounced Catholics and Calvinists from the pulpit, for he had been put in office after the onset of the calendar affair. “God knows, and we mortals certainly not, which party he belongs to,” wrote Kölderer. “These days, almost to a man, the pastors of the evangelical commune are neither warm nor cold.” 49 Even within the same confessional community relations began to stale and mistrust to grow. After he had returned to Augsburg to work for the city council, even the strict Gnesio-Lutheran legal counsel Hieronymus Fröschel fell suspect in the eyes of some people, including one of his oldest acquaintances in the city, the physician Dr. Adolf Occo, who refused to shake his hand when they met one day in
A settlement introduced in 1591 went some way toward defusing the tensions, for it granted the Lutherans an additional three church wardens and greater involvement in the appointment of the city clergy. But this had been more or less forced on the council by the neighboring Imperial cities, and it would be many decades before the confessional divisions stopped playing a role in local relations of power.

From the very outset of the conflict, the two Christian communities turned to external powers for a resolution. Since it touched on the public peace, the first instance of justice was the Imperial Chamber Court. Both parties appealed, but in neither case did the judgment bring a lasting solution. On the contrary, the stalemate over the calendar quickly drew in neighboring powers. Duke Wilhelm of Bavaria was the first to intervene; not only did he assume a role on the Imperial commissions, but it was the duke who was largely responsible for convincing the Emperor to establish them in the first place. Wilhelm of Bavaria made no secret of his support of the Augsburg council, going so far as to offer his own troops in its defense, for he believed it was more a political than a religious affair, the main issue being the commune’s attempt to resurrect the guild constitution. In response, the Augsburg Lutherans looked to Protestant powers, primarily Ulm and Württemberg, but later both Brandenburg and the Swabian Circle would intervene on behalf of the community. Protestants, no less than Catholics, considered it a matter that touched on the very principles of the Peace of Augsburg, and like the Catholics, they threatened to send troops (those of Württemberg) if the rights of the Augsburg Lutherans were not properly observed. Inside the city, this only worked to harden the divisions, as each community could now project the local quarrel onto a broader canvas and think in terms of German freedom or Imperial justice while defending local rights.

Donauwörth and the Battle of the Banners

In Donauwörth, as in Augsburg, the religious peace of 1555 secured the exercise of both religions. Unlike Augsburg, however, the Catholic community in Donauwörth was not a powerful presence in the city. Already within a year of
the Peace, the Catholics had been forced out of the parish church and consigned to three places of worship—the Benedictine monastery of Holy Cross, a chapel belonging to the Order of the Teutonic Knights, and a small chapel in the residence of the abbots of Kaisheim. As long as the Catholics did not move beyond the borders of these three sacral enclaves, the two communities seem to have lived in relative harmony. Surveying Donauwörth late in the century, Jacob Maier von Binicken, the neighboring pastor of Berg, claimed that Lutherans and Catholics had achieved a state of equilibrium in the city. Once the balance was tipped, however, or the sacral boundaries overstepped, it quickly led to tensions.

Troubles first surfaced in the 1560s when the abbot of Holy Cross began to extend the route of the processions and introduce observances, such as the ringing of bells, the carrying of candles and torches, the use of a stole during burial services, and above all the unfurling of banners, which were seen as “novelties” by the council and in violation of earlier agreements. Tensions increased, reaching a high point just after the turn of the century with the election of a new abbot, and then amplified again in 1604, when, inspired by a miracle reputed to have occurred in an outlying parish, the monks of Holy Cross joined up with hundreds of others and marched through nearby Protestant lands with as many as eighteen banners on show. This was a formula for discord. The council had already issued a mandate against the display of banners outside the limits of Holy Cross, thus when the procession took place one year later and the abbot was equally bold in the choice of route and the use of ceremonial display, the council turned to force. Urban officials stopped the procession in its tracks and confiscated the banners. On getting word of this, the bishop of Augsburg forwarded an appeal to the Imperial court in Prague. In response, the Imperial authorities issued a mandate, forbidding, under threat of ban, any further disturbance of the exercise of the Catholic religion in Donauwörth.

54 Von Binicken was providing details for the massive Swabian Chronicle of Martin Crusius. See Martin Crusius, Schwäbische Chronick, worinnen zu finden ist, was sich von Erschaffung der Welt an bis auf das Jahr 1596 in Schwaben denen benachbarten Gegend en auf vielen anderen Orten zugetragen, ed. Johann Jacob Moser, 2 vols. (Frankfurt: Metzler und Erhard, 1733), vol. 2, 446. The report was drafted on July 16, 1594.

55 In the later investigations, the very notion that the Catholic community had introduced novelties to the processions was dismissed out of hand. To begin with, reasoned the Bavarians, the resurrection of a rite that had fallen into disuse was not the same thing as introducing something new. But more than this, all of these observances were inseparable from the exercise of the Catholic religion itself, which had been secured in the city by the Peace of Augsburg. And in any event (they added), no Protestant could take refuge in the idea of precedent or possession in this sense, lest they exposed the flaws in their own arguments. See Felix Stieve, ed., Briefe und Acten zur Geschichte des Dreissigjährigen Krieges in den Zeiten des vorwaltenden Einflusses der Wittelsbacher, 12 vols. (Munich: Rieger, 1870), vol. 6, Vom Reichstag 1608 bis zur Gründung der Liga, 79.

Relations between Lutherans and Catholics broke down completely the following year, on the day of the St. Mark’s procession (April 25, 1606). Despite Imperial censure, the city councilors continued to warn the abbot of Holy Cross to leave off all “nontraditional ceremonies” (such as the use of unfurled banners) and stick to the street near the grounds of the cloister. In the churches, the Lutheran preachers railed against the impudence of the monks and mocked their claims that they would rather suffer death than march with banners concealed. Disregarding all of these threats, the monks of Holy Cross, led by prior Georg Beck and accompanied by a group of young musicians and members of the Donauwörth Catholic community (including the wife of a Fugger count), marched as planned from the monastery to the marketplace, where they were soon surrounded by a hostile Lutheran citizenry shouting abuse and threatening violence. “One should meet these staff-bearing sacrament rogues with staffs,” suggested one of the onlookers, “and serve up some knuckle sandwich.” Against the odds, the procession made it out of the city; but on its return to Donauwörth, things did not end so well. With the Lutherans still gathered and the magistracy watching on, local men armed with wheat flails and pitchforks, as well as a few swords and harquebuses, let loose on the Catholics as they entered the city. Staffs were ripped from hands, banners were shredded, crosses were smashed to pieces, and Catholic pilgrims were chased through the muddy streets, some making it back to Holy Cross, others taking shelter along the way. It ended quickly, but within days the “battle of the banners” had become a celebrated event in Lutheran Germany. Many Protestants thought it was a minor scrape rather than a call to arms and did not consider it a serious matter. “Had not the papist weather conspired against us,” wrote the pastor of Adelmansfeld a few days later, “Elizabeth and I would have gladly made our way over there and witnessed your war of staffs.” To the Imperial authorities at the court of Rudolf II, however, it was extremely serious, for it was nothing less than the violation of an Imperial mandate and thus grounds for the imposition of the ban.

Trouble had been brewing for years. Throughout the final decades of the sixteenth century, Lutheran pastors had begun to preach openly against any sort of cooperation with the Catholics in the city. The clergyman Johann Wieland repeatedly made disparaging comments about the papacy from the pulpit, speaking of the pope as the Antichrist and suggesting to his congregation that any association with the Catholics would lead to the devil. Wieland eventually published a collection of his Donauwörth sermons and at the heart of his message was the theme of separation. “For what has light to do with darkness?,” he asked. “What does Christ have in common with Belial? What business have

\[\text{Strieve, Der Ursprung, 43.}\]
\[\text{Ibid., “Quellenbericht,” 21, no. 3.}\]
believers with unbelievers . . . ?"59 He felt that coexistence could only undermine the faith, for it tended to create an atmosphere of leniency, and this in turn would end in false religion. Moreover, it just strengthened the resolve of the Catholics, who reveled in the confusion. Convinced that coexistence would end in damnation, Wieland even set his peripatetic sights on the city council, condemning them in public for allowing members to participate in Catholic ceremonies at the Holy Cross monastery. In response, the council dismissed Wieland from his post and exiled him from the city. Yet it is testimony to the tensions caused by Wieland’s preaching that the council thought it necessary to publish a defense, explaining to the commune that a few councilors had attended Catholic weddings on occasion, but only out of Christian love and a respect for the common good of the city. Wieland, they concluded, was a “restless, quarrelsome, confrontational, and extremely envious man,” whose only goal was to spread division.60 Even after Wieland’s exile, Lutheran preachers continued to emphasize the need for separation. The next to surface was the preacher Johannes Delzer, who, like Wieland, stressed that any sort of association with the Catholics in the city could only weaken the faith. Delzer even advised against greeting Catholics in the street, and he was in large part responsible for stirring up the congregation on the eve of the St. Mark’s procession in 1606.61

A curious window on the religious mind during the time of growing tensions was offered by the works and opinions of the local physician and apothecary Georg Amwald.62 It was Amwald, even more than Wieland, who had provoked the city council to publish its defense, for it had been two of his works, the Kurzer Bericht and the Vitae testimonia, that had done the most to discredit the policy of religious coexistence in the city. Amwald, who had acquired

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59Johann Wieland, Fünff Christliche Predigten wider die beywununge der Bäptischen Mess (Lemgau: Konrad Horn, 1593), Crv; the “sin” of coexistence was repeated years later in a work that tried to account for the city’s fall from grace. See Thonauwörther Gebet (Lemgau: Konrad Horn, 1617), Aiiv.
60Rechtmessige Defensio und verantwortung, oder gründliche und warhaftige außerliche Confutation und Widerlegung (Frankfurt: Lechler, 1593), 17, 19–26.
61Stieve, Der Ursprung, 21, 42–3, 125. Delzer left the city soon after the arrival of the Bavarians, a retreat that quickly became the subject of ridicule among neighboring Catholics. This was not the only occasion when Delzer became an object of Catholic censure. In the following year, the Jesuit Conrad Vetter, under the pen name Andreas de Cornu, wrote two mock defenses of Delzer against the claims made by Jacob von Stainitz, a provost in Styria, that Delzer had stolen a chalice from a church during his time there as a clergyman. In Cornucopiae (Ingolstadt: Angermeyer, 1608) and Mantissa (Ingolstadt: Angermeyer, 1608), Vetter managed to make a mockery of Delzer’s claims of innocence while casting aspersions on the Donauwörth clergy, who, Vetter suggests, like Delzer, were also willing to overlook the laws of the Empire when it became a question of need.
considerable fame in the German lands as the creator of the panacea amwaldina, a wonder drug aimed at every imaginable ailment, was a rigid Lutheran who did not believe that the two religions could intermingle without jeopardizing Protestant souls. He went so far as to suggest that those who approved of or overlooked Lutheran attendance at Catholic services (he had the councilors in mind) could not claim to be true Christians. Scripture, he insisted, makes it clear “that we should shun and take flight from blasphemy and idolatry, and not remain guarded or dissemble about our faith in Christ, but confess it openly.” The Word of God was not based upon compromise, and therefore any sort of concession to Catholicism, no matter how insignificant it may seem, was a corruption of the faith and a threat to salvation. Even in the natural world, Amwald saw evidence of God’s displeasure when his Word was not properly honored. In the heavens, he saw the proofs in a range of strange lights and a “fiery cloud” that hung over the city and, he asserted, would prove the final reckoning for those without true conviction. But above all he saw the proof of the essential relationship between purity and divine favor in his wonder drug, the panacea amwaldina. For this cure, like all of his products, was created in accordance with the Word of God, and in fact, it could only work when the patient had the proper faith in Christ—which meant, for Amwald, Lutheranism.

As in Augsburg, the religious crisis in Donauwörth pulled a number of major powers into its orbit. The plight of the Holy Cross monks was first brought to the attention of the Imperial authorities by the bishop of Augsburg. It was the bishop’s appeal in 1605 (one in a series) that resulted in the first Imperial mandate (October 24, 1605) and the initial threat of the ban. After the battle of the banners and a second mandate in 1606, the Protestant powers began to

63Georg Amwald, Vita testimonis, & propemptica (1592), 17; discussed and dismissed in Rechtmessige Defension, 1–13.
64Georg Amwald, Kurzer Bericht, Wie, was gestalt und warumb das Panacea am Waldina als ein einige Medicin . . . anzuwendern seye (Frankfurt: Basse, 1592), 62v.
66Georg Amwald, Vortrab . . . auff die in Truck aufgegerigte Spott und Schmaehkarten Andre Libavi (Hanau: Basse, 1595), 7–65. Amwald was responding to the attacks against the panacea amwaldina made by the antiparacelsian Andreas Libavius, who not only doubted the efficacy (and the safety) of the cure, but was willing to meet the claims of divine favor by raising a series of uncomfortable questions about Amwald’s reluctance to reveal the elements of the panacea. For surely, Libavius reasoned, any Christian with the ability to heal so many would make the cure as widely available as possible. See Andreas Libavius, Gegenbericht von der Panacea Amwaldina, auff Georg vom Waldt davon aufgegangenen Bericht (Frankfurt: Kopff, 1595), 55; Andreas Libavius, Neoparacelsia (Frankfurt: Kopff, 1594), 32–33. In total, Libavius wrote five works against Amwald and made it something of a personal quest to debunk the wonder drug and stop the sale in Germany. By the turn of the century, as his friend Sigismund Schnitzer informed him (January 3, 1600), he had registered some success. See Wolf-Dieter Müller-Jahncke, “Andreas Libavius im Lichte der Geschichte der Chemie,” Jahrbuch der Coburger Landes-Stiftung 17 (1972): 208.
intervene, offering advice to the city councilors in their negotiations with Prague. 67 Sebastian Faber, vice chancellor of the duchy of Württemberg, was perhaps the most prominent voice, but all of the neighboring Protestant powers were caught up in the affair, including Friedrich of Württemberg, Philip Ludwig of Palatinate Neuburg, the princes of Baden and Ansbach, as well as the cities of Ulm, Nuremberg, Nördlingen, Lindau, Schwäbisch Hall, and Augsburg. Several meetings were held among the Protestant powers in order to agree on a common approach to the problem. Military intervention was mooted, but in the end, the Protestants resorted to sending appeals to the Emperor and presenting their common grievances to the forthcoming diets. 68 The Catholics were not as cautious, primarily because Duke Maximilian of Bavaria had been entrusted with the Imperial commission and eventually the execution of the ban. At the vanguard of Catholic reform in Germany, Maximilian did not have many reservations about the justice or the urgency of his cause. As a consequence, it did not take long for the south German powers to recognize that events in Donauwörth would have serious implications for the status of confessional relations in the German lands. As the Bavarian delegates reminded the duke on their return from the city, “Augsburg, Speyer, Worms, and other mixed cities are keeping a close eye on the Donauwörth affair. The outcome there will determine which way they go, which is why there is the most imminent danger and certainly no cause for celebration.” 69

In the end, despite the saber-rattling of the Protestants and the lack of resolve demonstrated by Emperor Rudolf II (only constant pressure by Maximilian and his Jesuit confidant Laurent de Brindes forced a decision), the ban was eventually published and the Bavarian troops marched on the city (December 17, 1607). 70 Aside from the short-lived appearance of some troops from Neuburg, who briefly marshaled on the banks of the Danube and then disappeared, the Protestants offered no resistance. Maximilian, working under Imperial commission, invested Donauwörth and liberated (to use the language of Wilhelm Jocher)

67 One thing both the Imperialists and the Swabian Protestants could agree on was the ineptitude of the Donauwörth city councilors. During the Imperial inquiry, the commune confessed to the commissioners that the council was staffed by “etliche Bauernknöpfe vom Dorff herein.” Steve, Der Ursprung, 21. Apparently Donauwörth had a tradition of public incompetence. While compiling his report on the city for Crusius’s Schwäbische Chronic, Jacob Maier von Binicken unearthed the following adage: “denen Werdern werde es niemalen an Geld, wohl aber an Weisheit und an klugen und verständigen Männern fehlen.” Crusius, Schwäbische Chronick, 447.

68 The main legal objection of the Protestants was that the duke of Bavaria had been commissioned with the execution of the ban. As Donauwörth was in the Swabian circle, this responsibility should have fallen to the duke of Württemberg.


the Catholic community. The evangelical preachers, Delzer among them, fled from the city, the parish church was put back in the hands of the Catholics, and the city government was transformed to the advantage of the Catholics. In order to assure their safety, Protestants took to walking down the streets with rosary beads in their hands. “We are now a poor abandoned people,” claimed the Lutheran apothecary Ulrich Groß, “lacking a church, a leader, and a religion, in need of weapons, aid, and sympathy.”71

Confessional Conflict and Urban Sovereignty

As a survey of the effect of religious conflict on the constitution of the urban commune, three basic threads run through these two studies—the flare-up of religious disagreement, the breakdown of civic relations, and the intervention of external powers. On each occasion, discord first surfaced “wherever the existence of the confessional communities was made manifest, wherever it became public, wherever confessional matters touched on common experience.”72 From that point forward, coexistence was difficult to maintain. It happened in Augsburg, where Catholics and Lutherans collided in a discourse about time, and it happened in Donauwörth, where the struggle over a religious procession spilled over into a debate about the right to use urban space for worship. And in both instances, the vacuum created by the breakdown of civic relations necessitated the involvement of Imperial powers. Similar events occurred in the cities of Dinkelsbühl and Kaufbeuren, where the Lutheran communities, once the Catholic majorities had secured control over the towns, were momentarily pushed back to the very edge of survival.73 In short, religious coexistence in the Imperial city was possible up to a point—and to be precise, to the point where boundaries could no longer separate and dissimulation could no longer disguise—but it is misleading to speak of a state of parity until this condition was finally guaranteed (in select cities) by the Peace of Westphalia. Until this settlement was reached, there was only momentary and grudging tolerance until an advantage could be pressed.74

71Johann Dieterich Winckler, Anecdota Historico-Eclesiastica Nova antiqua, 8 vols. (Chemnitz: Stößel, 1751–1770), vol. 1, 397.
72Roeck, Eine Stadt in Krieg und Frieden, vol. 1, 188.
In both Augsburg and Donauwörth, there was a gradual buildup of tensions before the eruption of violence and unrest. As Georg Müller remarked, the dispute in Augsburg was not brought about ex abrupto by the calendar affair alone; the groundwork had been prepared over the course of a decade or more. By degrees, the points of disagreement began to multiply, the claims and accusations grew broader in scope, and the language became less formulaic and more transparent in its intentions, until the point was reached when the religious debate—through its urgency, through its inclusivity, and through its contingency—began to subsume the other unresolved tensions in the cities and focus the urban mind on the confessional differences. As a historical dynamic, it was a disparate process, and the experience would have been similar to the picture described by Will Coster and Andrew Spicer in their recent discussion of the adaptation, utilization, and transformation of sacred space in early modern Europe.

Paramount was the play of contestation, establishing the boundaries between the sacred and the profane. “In an urban context,” as Coster and Spicer observe, “confessional divides within communities necessitated the careful articulation of space to maintain separate and distinct places.” Clearly, in both settings, the need to map the confessional landscape was at the heart of the conflicts. In Augsburg, space was imagined in terms of a temporal plane—that is, the right to section and divide the run of time; in Donauwörth, it was the more direct issue of the right to occupy and use particular areas within the commune. But the dynamic worked at different levels as well: pales of liminality, such as the streets surrounding Holy Cross monastery or the gaps between the sacred and the profane in the Augsburg calendars, became zones where the two sides pushed for advantage; subdivisions emerged, the multiplication of discord, where the conflict took on a more personal aspect, as in Augsburg where the calendar affair was sometimes portrayed as a clash between merchant interests (associated with the Fuggers) and the evangelical artisans and other indwellers referred to as the “common man”; polarities formed, modalities of sense and perception through which the conflict was projected onto a broader plane, as in the mind of Georg Amwald, who imagined a natural world attuned to the contrasting charges of true and false religion; while different dimensions of perception and experience made the parishioners aware of the dispute, whether the symbolism and display of the Donauwörth processions or the ringing (or non-ringing) of the church bells in the Augsburg soundscape. All of this helps to explain the ways in which the two communities experienced the conflict and helps us to understand why the tenuous state of biconfessional

75Müller, Augspurgische Handel, Ei.
76Coster and Spicer, Sacred Space, 1–16. My analysis is based on the factors identified by the authors in their discussion of the utilization and contestation of sacred space.
77Ibid., 8.
relations eventually passed over into violence. But two aspects require further discussion in order to situate the conflicts in the two cities: first, the extent to which individuals contributed to the outbreak of the crises, and second, the reason that the status quo in the cities, however tenuous, could no longer be maintained.

Any effort to explain the timing of these events must take into consideration the extent to which the atmosphere could be influenced by a vocal minority. In Donauwörth, the role played by Johann Wieland and Georg Amwald has already been discussed; there is little doubt that their jeremiads contributed to the unease in the city. Augsburg is even more instructive, not only in demonstrating how words could fire imagination, but also in the extent to which agitators were able draw on local developments in order to confirm general fears.

According to the Catholic party, the main offender in Augsburg was the Lutheran clergyman Georg Müller. Despite repeated warnings from the council, Müller continued to preach against the Jesuits and their supporters and spoke openly from the pulpit about their plans to dominate in the city. Evoking images of the fall of Babylon and the rise of a new Babel while urging the Lutheran community to gather even closer in faith and fellowship, Müller’s sermons deliberately provoked anxieties and heightened the sense of anticipation. “Verily, dear friends,” he warned his listeners just two years before the calendar affair, “we have nothing more certain to fear than a most worrisome and dangerous change: God’s mighty punishment stands before the door.” What gave Müller’s prophecies such urgency was the way in which he rooted them in local developments. His primary claim was that the Jesuits were determined to win back the city to Rome and eliminate all vestiges of Lutheranism. Given the climate of confessional relations in Europe at the time, this was hardly a radical claim, and in fact like all claims of its kind, there was a degree of truth in it. But Müller went one step further by claiming to offer proofs. When he spoke of the Jesuit strategy of eradicating the Lutherans, he made reference to the spate of recent conversions (Protestant to Catholic) in high-profile Augsburg families, he cited well-known instances of mixed

78 See Tradel, Währner gegenbericht, Cii; Georg Müller, Christliche Predig bey der traurigen Leicht und Begräbnuß ... Johann Baptist Haintzels (Laugingen: Reinmichel, 1581), Di; Georg Mylius [Müller], Ein Christliche Predigt vom alten und neuen Babel (Wittenberg: Krafft, 1585); Georg Mylius [Müller], Sieben unterschiedliche Christliche Predigten (Laugingen: Reinmichel, 1584).

marriages that had left Protestants disadvantaged, and he spoke of the rumored Jesuit admonitions to avoid all contact (social and economic) with the Lutheran community. To strengthen his allegations that the Jesuits aimed at dominating the city, he drew attention to the growing ascendency of the Catholic faction on the council, and he reminded his listeners of how much property the order had acquired over the years through the favor of powerful Catholic interests. And for those of his congregation who were still unable to see the signs, he provided more tangible proofs—the growing frequency of Catholic processions, the reintroduction of the Ave Maria in the hospital, and the increased number of soldiers in the streets. Most of these developments were isolated instances rather than part of a general pattern, while others were simply projections of anxious speculation or pure misrepresentation, but they conformed to daily experience and thus fit the perceived historical "facts" well enough to confirm the overall message.

In both cities, the collapse of urban order occurred when the antagonistic religious discourse (with its synchronization of fact and perception) began to intersect with the methods and the principles of rule. This occurred in both settings, though to different degrees and with different results, and it became a crisis once the conflicts began to challenge the two foundation stones of urban order, jurisdiction and sovereignty. In each instance, the religious conflict drew relations of power at the most basic level into the gravity of its concerns and undermined communal relations. This can be illustrated with a closer look at developments in Donauwörth, where the religious procession exposed the fault lines in urban jurisdiction, and Augsburg, where the calendar affair raised basic questions about the spheres of civic sovereignty.

In Donauwörth, when the conflict between the Protestants and the Catholics first came to the surface, both the accusations and the fears were articulated with reference to space. To an extent it was metaphor—the familiar idea of the body politic—with each of the communities speaking of the other as a type of infestation spreading through the urban constitution. A legal counsel referred to the local Catholics as "vermin" and warned against compromise. Georg Beck, prior of Holy Cross, spoke of the Protestants as a type of illness or plague (thus drawing on the loaded language of heresy as disease). At issue was not only the right to use public space for the exercise of religion, but the very possibility of establishing a topography of urban relations (districts, borders, frontiers) capable of containing antagonistic religious beliefs.

In the defense of the council's actions published soon after the appearance of Müller's Augspurgische Handel, the Stadtpfleger Anton Christoph Rehlinger and the jurist Georg Tradel offered a point-by-point refutation (or contextualization) of the various charges made by the clergyman. See Tradel, Warhaffer gegenbericht, B9–Gii7.

Compare Luria, Sacred Boundaries, 84–99.

Stieve, Der Ursprung, 21, 27.
A few years after the execution of the ban, two published apologies appeared claiming that the problem was the deliberate misuse of urban space in the name of religion. The Catholics were the first in print with the *Donauwertische Relation* (1610), a dense legal tract written by the Bavarian counselor Wilhelm Jocher. According to Jocher, the Protestants had used religious reform as a means of territorial conquest. Lutheranism had been forced on the populace, despite the Emperor’s efforts to restore Catholicism, and despite the fact that the bishop still had jurisdiction in the diocese wherever the Catholic faith was exercised. Even after the state of religious coexistence had been guaranteed in 1555, the Protestants continued to press the Catholics back to the margins of the city.

To make his point, Jocher cited the words of a local legal counsel, who is alleged to have advised the magistracy that if they closed the city to Catholics, abandoned the monks to their cloister, and put an end to further intermarriage, “in time the rest would simply die out, and there would not be a monk left to ring any bells beyond the cloister.”84

In reply to this Catholic broadside, Sebastian Faber, chancellor of the Protestant duchy of Württemberg, drafted the *Beständige Informatio Facti et Juris* (1610), a work that not only reversed the claims made by Jocher by speaking of the Catholics (and the Jesuits in particular) as the aggressive faction in the whole affair, but also made it clear that the Catholics had no claims on any public space in the city beyond the confines of Holy Cross. Advocate and guardian of the monastery was the city council; the foundation fell within its legal jurisdiction, it was subject to civic taxation, and all patronage was in the hands of the council as well. Nor did the abbot (or the bishop of Augsburg) have any claims to parish jurisdiction in any of the churches in the city (as established in 1552). The abbeys had no rights once they left the monastery, which meant, in effect, that the exercise of the Catholic religion in the public sphere was only made possible by the goodwill of the Lutheran council, which had made it quite clear that the processions were not to stray more than a “few steps” beyond the cloister. Thus the elaboration of religious ceremonies, or any change in the processional routes, was both a breach of this goodwill and a violation of the Peace of Augsburg.85

The issue for Faber, as it had been for Jocher, was how to establish clear jurisdictional boundaries in the city—how to justify, in a sense, how far the writ of each religion ran.

84 Wilhelm Jocher, *Donauwertische Relation, das ist: Gründlicher wahrer bericht und beständige kurze erzehlung, alles deß genugen, was ein zeit her vor, bey und nach dem, wider die Statt Schwäbisch: oder Donauw erh unlangst angestellten Process, Achtserklärung und darauff erfolgte Execution sich zugetragen* (n.p., 1610), 16–17, 22–23.
Within the commune, this abstract legal deliberation was played out in the course of events. In the view of the Catholics, the Lutherans had been on a forward march since the introduction of the Reformation. It had begun in 1552 with the plundering of the monastery, and over the years the community had continually been placed under siege. That is why the processions became more elaborate and extensive in the late 1590s, just as the council fell under the sway of a group of hard-line Lutherans. It was self-defense. There was probably some truth in Sebastian Faber’s claim that the monks of the Holy Cross let their banners fly “in a military fashion,” for it was no less than the gesture of a religious community who marched to preserve their right to exist. For their part, the Lutherans were wary of a religious community led by men educated in the Jesuit schools of Dillingen. As the processions became more elaborate in the final decade of the century, the Protestant community began to fear the forward march of a campaign set on the capture of the city and the eradication of the faith. After all, the Lutherans did not have to look far in southern Germany to find examples of aggressive post-Tridentine Catholicism. Faber reminded his readers of the fate of Protestants in other cities, where even a patch of cool earth for a Christian burial was often forbidden to the “Lutheran dogs.” By the time the threat of an Imperial ban had become a reality, some of the Donauwörth Lutherans suggested removing the Catholics altogether from the landscape of the city. “Why are we wasting our time discussing this banner affair?,” asked the councilor Kaspar Hochschild; “one quick stab at filling up the cloister with powder and we will have both peace and the certainty of justice.” But at that stage, it was too late. A Bavarian agent, disguised as a confessant, had already paid a visit to Georg Beck, prior of Holy Cross, and asked to be taken to the top of the monastery tower. Once there, he sketched a plan of the city—its rivers, bridges, gates, ditches, and walls—and measured the dimensions of urban space. It was an advance reconnaissance to plan the best route of assault for the Bavarian troops.

In Augsburg, a similar pattern of overlap and intersection occurred in the sphere of political power. Because the religious conflicts touched on such fundamental issues in such inclusive language, they cut across the boundaries that separated offices and functions and drew the issue of civic sovereignty into the debate. Even Georg Müller claimed a distinction had to be made between a time when civic government was free of confessional bias and the period when religious prejudice began to distort the nature of rule. Throughout the 1570s, the Fugger faction, which was predominantly Catholic, began to...
gain more ground in the city while the Protestant faction (associated with the Welser and Herbrot families) lost some of its influence. The turning point came in 1575 with the election of the Catholic Anton Christoph Rehlinger to the office of Stadtpfleger (the other Stadtpfleger being Marx Fugger, who left most things to Rehlinger). Thus when the calendar affair first surfaced, there was already a fragile state of political relations in the city as the balance between Protestants and Catholics began to tip.  

That this state of relations reached an impasse was due to the fact that the conflict associated with the introduction of the calendar ultimately found a point of intersection with the exercise of power in the city and raised a number of issues associated with sovereignty and rule. In the face of continued resistance by the evangelical clergy, the council assumed the exclusive right to nominate, present, and appoint the local Lutheran clergy, thereby depriving the Kirchenpfleger and, by association, the Lutheran community of a right they considered essential to the welfare of the church.  

Once this occurred, not only did it strengthen the resistance of the hard-core group of evangelicals in the city, but it also transferred the religious debate to the political realm. The Lutheran group began to question whether the council had any right to exercise sovereignty over their church, and they began to speak in terms of separate estates within the commune—a Catholic and a Protestant—that ruled distinct spheres.  

As ever, the most extreme voice was that of Müller, who projected the usurpation of the right to nominate and present as the final stage of a calculated series of events designed to secure Catholic dominance. From the imposition of the calendar, the stationing of the troops, the stockpiling of the weaponry before the arsenal, and the locking of the gates to the silencing of the storm bells—for Müller, all of this was evidence of the Catholic scheme to dominate the city, now brought clearly to the light of day through their appropriation of the ius vocandi, nominandi, et praesentandi—which, he added, struck the citizens as so foreign and uncommon, “it was as if the mighty Turk from Constantinople had arrived in Augsburg.”  


Müller, Augspurgische Handel, Giv; Giv–Giv. Müller offered a one-sided picture of events, among other things neglecting to mention the fact that the right to nominate the clergy, which had only been in the hands of the Kirchenpfleger since 1552, had no legal foundation in the city beyond the “good will” that had been extended by the Stadtpfleger. See the report of the council in Tradel, Warhaffter gegenbericht, Biv–Biv. The Lutheran clergy nominated and appointed by the council during this period also offered a defense of the legality of their appointments, adding that there was a clear distinction between private faith and public function. Gegründte Christliche Antwort, Civ.
In the end, what began as a quarrel about the ordering of time ended as conflict over urban sovereignty. Before the calendar affair had run its course, both the Protestants and Catholics were speaking in terms of liberty, tyranny, and the destiny of the German Nation. Few readers in the Holy Roman Empire would have missed the wider implications of Müller’s charge that the Catholic powers in Augsburg were set on conquest, that they were running roughshod over the conditions of the Peace of Augsburg, and that their plans would end in the enslavement of both the religious and political freedom of the Protestants. For the citizens of his own city, Müller spelled out what this meant: that from the day Anton Christoph Rehlinger claimed the right for the Stadtpfleger to act independently in affairs that concerned the Lutheran church, the Imperial city was no longer a free republic but a principality, ruled by an elite that had become a monarchy and a dictatorship (or in this case, a duumvirate). At the other end of the spectrum sat Catholic inhabitants such as Georg Müller, who refused to recognize the divisions between the secular and the spiritual, stirred up the common man, and wanted to subject the magistracy to the rule of the Lutheran clergy. Taking refuge in “matters of conscience,” Müller and his supporters opposed the efforts of the council to rule over them, claiming that the evangelical clergy was a separate estate in the Empire and thus, in effect, putting a wall in place between two types of authority in the city. According to Rehlinger, the ultimate aim of Müller and the other Lutherans was to undermine the authority of the secular arm and assume power for themselves, a point made with some force by the Jesuit polemicist Christoph Rosenbusch, who was keeping a close eye on events in Augsburg:

It has been remarked by many people that my lords, the preachers, want to place their pulpits in the town halls of the cities, in the courts, in the council rooms, and demand that the people recognize them (by which they mean the ministry) as the most worthy member ... and consult them when there was a matter that had to be undertaken.

96 Müller, Augspurgische Handel, Hilf; for his continued claims that the council had no power over the appointment and dismissal of the Lutheran clergy, see Müller, Send und Trostbrief, A3’. Many of the charges made by Müller were also made by the Lutheran parishioners who gave evidence at the Imperial commissions. Wärmbrunn, Zwei Konfessionen in einer Stadt, 368–71; Wallenta, Katholische Konfessionalisierung, 113–16.
97 Tradel, Warhaffter gegenbericht, Lii–Lii’; Mii; Müller also wrote an open letter to the city of Cologne, where he emphasized that the Bürgerschaft had the power to appoint and dismiss the city council. Wärmbrunn, Zwei Konfessionen in einer Stadt, 365–66.
98 Christoph Rosenbusch, Antwort und Eherrettung (Ingolstadt: Sartorius, 1586), 51.
In essence, the religious history of the biconfessional cities was a window on the broader patterns of development in the German lands. Although the Peace of Augsburg created the conditions for one of the longest periods of peace in modern German history, the settlement, due to its vague wording and its secret clauses and provisions, was unable to serve as the foundation for any lasting agreement. It was by its very nature a compromise solution, a deliberate act of rhetorical legerdemain, and it never sought to offer a permanent way out of the religious deadlock of mid-century. All hopes were pinned on a future resolution, either a council or a diet or a miraculous change of religious heart; but there was no serious expectation that the Peace would provide a lasting solution to the dilemma of confessional relations in the Reich.\(^9\) As a consequence, all of the unanswered issues and inconsistencies of the Peace came to the surface in the final decades of the century. Paramount were the problems relating to ecclesiastical property and rights of sovereignty over the church, and these would translate into open hostilities, especially in the cities, as the histories of Augsburg and Donauwörth demonstrate. There were too many provisions and reservations built into the Peace for the absolute claims of the confessions to be satisfied.\(^10\) As a result, mutual suspicion and lack of dialogue plagued the German lands during the later decades of the sixteenth century and the period of the seventeenth leading up to the outbreak of war. After the Peace, the Imperial Chamber Court gradually lost its former standing and ceased to function effectively, the Imperial Aulic Council (Reichshofrat), with its Catholic constituency, was labeled biased and untrustworthy by the Protestants, the Reichstag was hamstrung, and the Emperor Rudolf II, a pious Catholic slowly declining into a state of madness, proved himself to be largely incapable of rule.\(^11\)

The conflicts in Augsburg and Donauwörth were thus indicative of the state of confessional relations in the German lands in the final decades of the sixteenth century. The Peace of Augsburg, which had been formulated with a view to preserving the mid-century status quo, had limited application once the

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\(^10\) Martin Heckel, Deutschland im konfessionellen Zeitalter (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 82.

\(^11\) All of this, and in particular the prejudice and unsuitability of the powers of the Reichshofrat in the Donauwörth affair, was spelled out in detail in Faber, Informatio Facti & Juris, 58–207, esp. 178.
confessional dynamic gathered pace, and in the end it was the very clauses and the provisions of the settlement that provided the basis for further conflicts. Even before the calendar affair in Augsburg, for instance, the struggle between Catholics and Protestants in the city of Aachen had raised the issues relating to the right of reformation of the Imperial cities and the claims to sovereignty of the two confessions in an urban setting. Similar disputes would emerge in the cities and the bishoprics, above all in Cologne, where the attempt of the archbishop to convert to Lutheranism while maintaining his office proved something of a turning point as it forced the estates to begin speaking openly about the unresolved issues of the Peace and the growing points of conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants. Ultimately, the Empire began to collapse in on itself, and to an extent, it was the battle of the banners in Donauwörth that proved the final straw. Soon after execution of the Imperial ban and the occupation of the city by the Bavarian troops, the Imperial diet met in Regensburg in 1608. Anxious in the face of post-Tridentine expansion and confronted by the inflexible Catholicism of the Archduke Ferdinand, who ensured that a copy of the Donauwörth ban was posted on the town hall while the deliberations were underway, the Protestants pressed for a reconfirmation of the religious peace. Aggrieved by the incessant Lutheran grab for ecclesiastical property, the Catholics began to air demands for restoration and restitution. Lutherans and Calvinists, previously divided, now viewed events in Donauwörth as the shape of things to come and thus the grounds for a common alliance. After a tense and fruitless series of meetings, the diet ended without publishing a recess, and the Protestants left to discuss a military league, an initiative that led to the foundation of the Protestant Union (May 14, 1608) and the first stage of the final disintegration of Imperial relations that would end in the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War.

The Queen's University, Belfast

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102 These were the issues that occupied the Augsburg Reichstag of 1582, another factor that contributed to the increase of tensions and violence in the city on the eve of the calendar affair. See Rudolf Reuter, Der Kampf um die Reichsstandschaft der Städte auf dem Augsburger Reichstag 1582 (Augsburg: Reichel, 1916).
